

Facts and figures about The Level

- Funding for the restoration: The Level received funding totalling around £2.3m from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) and the Big Lottery Fund in 2012. Further finance of around £50K came from Veolia Environmental Trust (skatepark), Sport England's 'Inspired Places' scheme [£150K] – (Skatepark), Short Breaks capital funding [£65K] for the 'Changing Places' facility and additional equipment for the play area), plus developer contributions and city council funding.
- Volunteering and activities: The HLF funding contributes towards a community volunteer-led Activities Plan. Volunteers trained through the project are helping run Healthwalks and Play sessions, and local students helped renovate the stone walls as part of their BTEC coursework. Other activities are ongoing. History and heritage: The park has a rich social and cultural history, which volunteers were trained to research, including capturing local people's oral histories. These are featured in an exhibition in the MacLaren Pavilion and there is an accompanying "The People's History of The Level" book. www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/joinusonthelevel and www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/thelevelhistory
- Heritage features: The park's two pavilions, bridges, pergolas and columns, as originally conceived by former Park Superintendent Captain Bertie MacLaren in 1929, have been restored. The pavilions and rooms, with names reflecting park elements (MacLaren, Elm, Hornbeam, Holly and Rose), offer space for local community groups to hire. Sussex Police have a 'community hub' at The Level in the Hornbeam Room.
- Gardening: The Level is one of a few city parks with a full-time on-site gardener. Steve Peters has developed a plant database, enabling people to find out more about the park's planting scheme. In December 2013, volunteers helped plant 7,500 spring and summer bulbs at the park. Gardening clubs for all ages and abilities are due to begin in late summer 2014.
- The Level Communities Forum was set up in January 2013 and works in partnership with the city council to guide and shape the park's community future www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/lcf. New members are welcome - Email thelevelcommunitiesforum@gmail.com
- Skatepark: The Level's skatepark is an international-standard facility for wheeled sports. A busy and popular feature of the restored park, it hosts a regular and varied range of events including training sessions for young people

CONTINUED OVER >>>

- Trees and wildlife: The Level is framed by a number of elms, part of the National Elm Collection. Other trees around the perimeter include planes and hornbeams. The Elms are important for the lifecycle of the rare White Letter Hairstreak butterfly. This brown-coloured butterfly, with its distinctive “lightning streaks” on the wings, has been spotted several times at The Level since the restoration, and is also shown in the park’s artwork.
- Art: Community artists Sarah Arnett (illustrator) and Tom Hardiment (landscape Architect) were employed to work with the community to develop artwork reflecting local people and children’s thoughts and memories of The Level. The resulting 2-D artwork pieces are in the central path ‘crossroads’ in the park’s north, and as tabletop chessboards on the picnic tables in the park’s south end. Manufacturer ‘Graphic Relief’ developed the innovative cast mould process.
- Toilets: There is a fully-equipped “Changing Places” toilet facility at The Level for carers of disabled adults and children (it is at the north side of the café building). There is also a mix of family and disabled toilets at the park.
- Playground: The playground features a range of inclusive play equipment including a flock of seven wooden sheep and shark. These were designed and produced by local company Woodland Products, and named by local schoolchildren. www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/thelevelplay
- Café: The park’s Velo café features a wildflower-turf roof, rainwater harvesting system, air source heating and solar panels. The café is operated by tenants. www.velo-cafe.co.uk

More information about The Level: www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/thelevel