





The Royal Parks

As Minister of State responsible for London's eight Royal Parks, I am delighted that British Land has chosen to highlight the Parks' special contribution to London life in its Annual Report & Accounts this year. Each visitor relates to The Royal Parks in a unique and individual way and this series of extraordinary photographs conveys a sense of the Parks' importance as "London's personal space".

With over 100,000 roses, 150 species of trees, 26 miles of river banks, 1,000 species of beetle, 20 football pitches and 220 historic fountains and monuments, there is something in the Parks for everyone to enjoy. We must conserve these for future generations as well as providing opportunities for their use by all sections of the community. With this in mind, the Royal Parks are undertaking two flagship projects. The first focuses on community sport in Regent's Park, a £5.3m initiative to renovate the football and cricket pitches and build a new sports pavilion. The second involves the restoration of Bushy Park and, in particular, the need to strengthen its education resources, safeguard the fragile ecology of the Woodland Gardens and improve facilities for visitors.

Many businesses today recognise the benefits of investing in the communities in which they operate and The Royal Parks hope to develop a wide range of corporate partnerships. In May 2003, the Charity Commission registered a new charity, The Royal Parks Foundation, an independent body committed to supporting the heritage of the Parks, encouraging access and community involvement, promoting education, protecting wildlife and increasing biodiversity. This will provide the business community with an unprecedented opportunity to become closely involved with one of Britain's most glorious green attractions.

I strongly support partnerships, like this one between British Land and The Royal Parks, which help to raise awareness of this joint responsibility. I hope it continues to be successful.

Baroness Blackstone

Pulling together. With the exception of brewers' drays, working horses have been absent from London's streets for fifty years. For environmental reasons, they have recently been reintroduced in Richmond Park, where they perform much heavy duty in the course of their doings.