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PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

THE FREEMAN FAMILY FOUNTAIN

New public drinking fountain refreshes Hyde Park

On Wednesday 23 September 2009, the Royal Parks Foundation and The Royal Parks will unveil a new public drinking fountain in Hyde Park - the first for 30 years.

The Freeman Family Fountain has been donated by Michael Freeman, who is a Trustee of the Royal Parks Foundation and joint founder of Argent Group, the developer of King's Cross Central, which is the largest development currently being built in Central London.

The new fountain is situated 300 metres from Marble Arch and 100 metres from Cumberland Gate in a popular area of Hyde Park. It was designed by David Harber, who creates sundials, sculptures and water features across the world. The Royal Parks Foundation briefed David to make a unique and beautiful public drinking fountain, sculptural in form yet robust and practical to maintain. The fountain is a sphere 1.2 metres in diameter, set on a plinth of hammered granite. It is made from mirror-polished, marine-grade stainless steel, studded with petals of oxidized verdigris bronze. It has four separate drinking positions at varying heights to cater for different types of users, including a spout where water bottles may be filled.

Mayor of London, Boris Johnson, says: 'I applaud the arrival of a super stylish new public drinking fountain in Hyde Park. Free water will provide welcome on the go refreshment to millions of visitors to one of London's top destinations. I am a massive fan of drinking fountains and we are currently considering other ways of encouraging better access to tap water including drinking fountains.'

Joel Cadbury, Royal Parks Foundation Chairman, says: “The Freeman Family Fountain is a striking addition to Hyde Park and a great step forward in supporting future water provision in The Royal Parks. I am certain that it will be warmly welcomed by the thousands of runners, riders, dog walkers and cyclists who use the Park every day.”

Mark Camley, Chief Executive of The Royal Parks, says: “Five million visitors run, skate, cycle or just enjoy the sunshine in Hyde Park every year. That’s a lot of thirsty people. This fantastic fountain will provide refreshment where it is needed most and it will also help reduce the use of plastic bottles”.

Michael Freeman says: “I’ve been running in the Park for years, starting and finishing a few yards from where the fountain stands. I hope a great many people will enjoy using the fountain; and enjoy looking at it as well. I think it looks terrific.”

Designer David Harber says: “I chose the globe design to reflect London’s role as a world city and the role it plays in welcoming thousands of visitors every year. The crisp, spherical orb with its muted blue green oxidized bronze petals infers clouds, water and the oceans.”

The Freeman Family Fountain opens in time to refresh some of the 15,000 runners passing through Hyde Park as they take part in the Royal Parks Foundation Half Marathon on Sunday 11 October. Race Ambassador and Hyde Park Friend, Sir Christopher Chataway, will be present at the fountain unveiling, as will children from St Vincent’s Primary School, who completed a project on the Fountain and how it could benefit Park visitors as part of their studies last year.

To find out more about the Freeman Family Fountain visit www.royalparksfoundation.org

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Notes to Editors:

Royal Parks Foundation

The Royal Parks Foundation, the charity for London's eight Royal Parks, reaches out to make the Parks part of more people's lives and aims to help improve their financial future. Registered charity number 1097545 For further information please visit: www.royalparksfoundation.org

The Royal Parks

The Royal Parks is an executive agency of the Department for Culture, Media and Sport. The Royal Parks are: Bushy Park, The Green Park, Greenwich Park, Hyde Park, Kensington Gardens, The Regent's Park and Primrose Hill, Richmond Park, and St James's Park. For further information please visit: www.royalparks.org.uk

David Harber

David Harber has earned an international reputation for innovative, contemporary design based on the timeless interplay between light, shadow, water and the natural environment. He creates sundials, sculptures and water features around the world with an unswerving commitment to the highest quality standards. www.davidharber.com