

Boston Beach, Jamaica Refurbished And Reopens

Boston Beach, the famous beach in Portland, Jamaica has been refurbished at a cost of \$27.7 million and was officially reopened by Minister of Tourism and Entertainment, Hon. Dr. Wykeham McNeill, on Thursday, January 14, 2016.

In his remarks Minister McNeill said that the rehabilitation of Boston Beach is a part of the National Beach Development Programme funded by the Tourism Enhancement Fund (TEF) and which is being implemented by the Tourism Product Development Company (TPDCo). "I believe that the potential for this parish is huge and there is so much that we can do but it's not something that can happen overnight. We know that this is the birthplace of tourism in Jamaica but there is still a lot of work that needs to be done." He said that the Ministry of Tourism and Entertainment "is looking at taking control of the best beaches across the island to rehabilitate them in perpetuity and provide free access to the public". Entry to the beach is free but Minister McNeill said there would be a fee to use the offices, gazebos, changing rooms, bathroom facilities, and concession areas in order to maintain the facilities. He also noted that the beach is also wheel chair accessible for the physically challenged to ensure that it can be accessed by all. Dr. McNeill added that, "Jamaica is going through the largest boom in investment in the tourism sector that it has ever had. We have over 2,500 rooms either opening or under construction in Jamaica. It is the largest construction of hotel rooms in a concentrated period of time in history that will create jobs when they are up and running. We have over 7,000 rooms coming on stream to be built after that so there is tremendous potential for what is happening. People have come to us and said we still want to invest in Jamaica and what we are doing now is talking to these investors to turn their eyes towards the east, the eastern side of this island." "There are a number of things that have to be done. The first thing and probably the most important thing is the development of roads; the building of the highway that will go throughout the eastern side of this island from Kingston to Morant Bay and from Morant Bay to Port Antonio that will open up development in a serious way," the Minister said. He also pointed out that the necessary utilities like water and sewage needs to be in place for this development to take place. It was pointed out that the rehabilitation project provided jobs for 128 people. Minister McNeill challenged Portlanders to take care of the facility which will complement other iconic attractions in Portland like rafting on the Rio Grande, Boston Jerk and hiking trails.