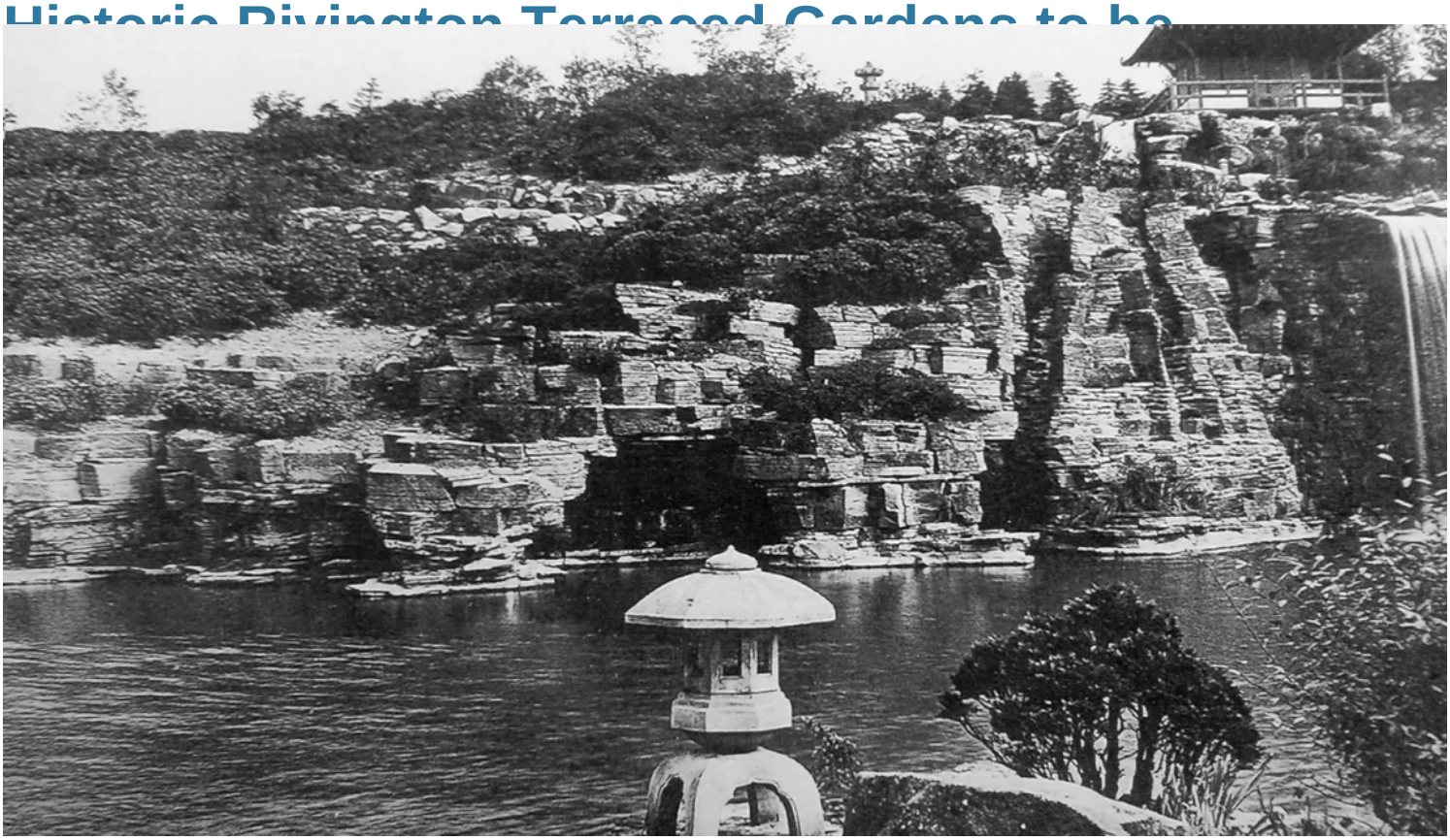
Historic Rivington Terraced Gardens to be



Japanese Lake at Historic Rivington Terraced Garden in the 1920s M D Smith

The historic Terraced Gardens at Rivington - built on the edge of the West Pennine Moors by millionaire soap magnate Lord Leverhulme early in the 20th century - will now undergo a three year programme of work by heritage experts to protect the buildings and landscape loved by local people.

The Rivington Heritage Trust, working with Groundwork Cheshire Lancashire and Merseyside, led the successful application to the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) and Big Lottery Fund (BIG) Parks for People grant programme.

The work to conserve, repair and protect the gardens will eventually lead to buildings like the Pigeon Tower being repaired and opened to the public for supervised visits for the first time in decades.

Improved information boards, an interactive website and guided tours will help visitors understand the historical significance of the mysterious wonderland.

Bryan Homan, chairman of the Rivington Heritage Trust, said he was delighted to hearthat HLF and BIG had decided to award them the money.

He added: “There was a real risk these gardens could have been lost forever if the bid had been unsuccessful, so we’re overjoyed to hear the news. This is a real victory for the local community, many of whom have already played an important role in our community forum. We hope even more people will now get involved and help us protect these great gardens for future generations to enjoy.”

Dave Partington, a volunteer with the Community Forum which helped to shape the application, said: “This is a great result for the area. The Community Forum has worked on this project from the very outset to ensure that the views of local people and Gardens users sit at the heart of the plans. A lot of volunteers have invested a lot of time in this process, and it’s fantastic to hear that we have received the National Lottery support.”

Lord Leverhulme worked with landscape architect Thomas Mawson on the design of the Terraced Gardens.

Lord Leverhulme died in 1925 and the gardens almost immediately fell into a state of disrepair, with a new landowner, Liverpool Water Corporation, taking ownership of the site for water supplies. They were opened to the public in 1948.

The Gardens are a Grade II listed park, and 11 of the structures, including the iconic Pigeon Tower and seven-arched bridge, are also listed at Grade II.

Recently, the site was identified as one of the top ten lost gardens in the UK, and was featured on a BBC Countryfile programme in November 2014.

The National Lottery money forms part of a wider £4m project to preserve and improve the gardens.

Ben Williams, project manager at Groundwork Cheshire, Lancashire and Merseyside, which is working alongside the Rivington Heritage Trust on the plans, said: “This decision is a real landmark in the ongoing story of Rivington. It’s been a privilege to lead on this application, and my heartfelt thanks go to all those from the Community Forum and from our professional team who have made this happen. We’ve put a lot of effort into achieving the right balance of heritage conservation and preserving the landscape so loved by local people, and it’s great that the National Lottery have supported our approach and plans.”

Today’s news comes as part of a £32m funding announcement for parks and cemeteries across the UK. Sara Hilton, Head of HLF North West, said on behalf of HLF and BIG: “Shrouded in drama and mystery, the Rivington Terrace Gardens are among some of the most atmospheric places to enjoy nature in the UK. Thanks to National Lottery players our investment will help save this special place from further dilapidation whilst preserving its much-loved character and opening up its important history to visitors.”

It is expected work will start on site in the spring of 2017, with the main works lasting through most of the year. Work on the project’s activity plan will start in 2016, providing more opportunities for people of all ages and backgrounds to get involved in the project and help to look after the gardens.

Notes to editors

To date, more than £776million of money raised by National Lottery players has been invested in parks since 1996.

Parks for People applications are assessed in two rounds. A first-round pass is given when HLF has endorsed outline proposals and earmarked funding. A first-round pass may also include an immediate award to fund the development of the project. Detailed proposals are then considered by HLF at second-round and as long as plans have progressed

satisfactorily and according to the original proposal, an award for the project is confirmed.

About the Rivington Heritage Trust

The Rivington Heritage Trust exists to champion the future of Rivington Terraced Gardens. They want to see the Gardens improved and enhanced for the benefit of the public and for the environment. They want to protect and celebrate the unique heritage of the Gardens, ensuring that they remain a magical place to visit for generations to come.

About Groundwork Cheshire, Lancashire and Merseyside

Groundwork Cheshire Lancashire and Merseyside is the product of recent merger between Groundwork Cheshire and Groundwork Lancashire West & Wigan – two of the founding members of the Groundwork movement. Groundwork CLM are both a charitable trust and a social enterprise that has been working to build more sustainable communities across Cheshire and Lancashire since 1985 and Merseyside since 2012. They do this by helping people and organisations to create better neighbourhoods, to build their skills and job prospects, and to live and work in a greener way.

Further information

HLF Press Office: Rebecca Lamm on tel: 020 7591 6207 and via email: Rebecca.Lamm@hlf.org.uk, or Katie Owen on tel: 020 7591 6036

BIG Press Office: Anupa Devi on tel: 020 7211 1888 and via email: Anupa.Devi@biglotteryfund.org.uk

Rivington Heritage Trust: Mark Donaghy on tel: 07795226691

Groundwork Cheshire Lancashire and Merseyside: Ben Williams on tel: 07793377398 and via email: ben.williams@groundwork.org.uk