



Summary of our business plan

2021 to 2026



A prime heritage venue for the benefit of all

Summarising our business plan for the next ten years

Rivington Heritage Trust is the charity that works with partners and volunteers to lovingly restore and maintain the historic and beautiful Rivington Terraced Gardens.

Over the past three and a half years, we have worked with Groundwork Cheshire Lancashire and Merseyside, United Utilities and hundreds of dedicated local volunteers to revitalise the unique site, establishing it as a regional visitor attraction.

Money for this huge £4.2 million conservation project came from the National Lottery Heritage Fund, with sizeable additional resources raised from a calendar of popular activities.

Like many attractions, the Gardens' capacity to welcome visitors was severely constrained in 2020 by the coronavirus pandemic, just as our National Lottery Heritage Fund grant is coming to an end.

As we look to the Gardens' future, the Trust is more determined than ever to harness the energy of the last three years by building on the solid foundations created by the hard work of so many.

The Trust has a 25 year lease from United Utilities and this plan explains the immediate actions we're planning and the resources we need to make sure Rivington Terraced Gardens remains a delight for generations to come.

As a partnership, our vision is that Lever Park and Rivington Terraced Gardens will be a prime heritage venue for the benefit of all.

This means maintaining and enhancing the Gardens and the high-quality visitor experience people expect through a sustainable, well-resourced strategy which identifies and manages risks.

Our first business plan sets out our five year vision for the Gardens and is probably our most important document since the Trust's inception.

It explains the immediate actions we're planning and the resources we need to make sure Rivington Terraced Gardens remains a delight for generations to come.

Thank you to everyone who has contributed to making Rivington Terraced Gardens and the Trust a success. The future is looking very bright and we can't wait to get started on the next chapter.

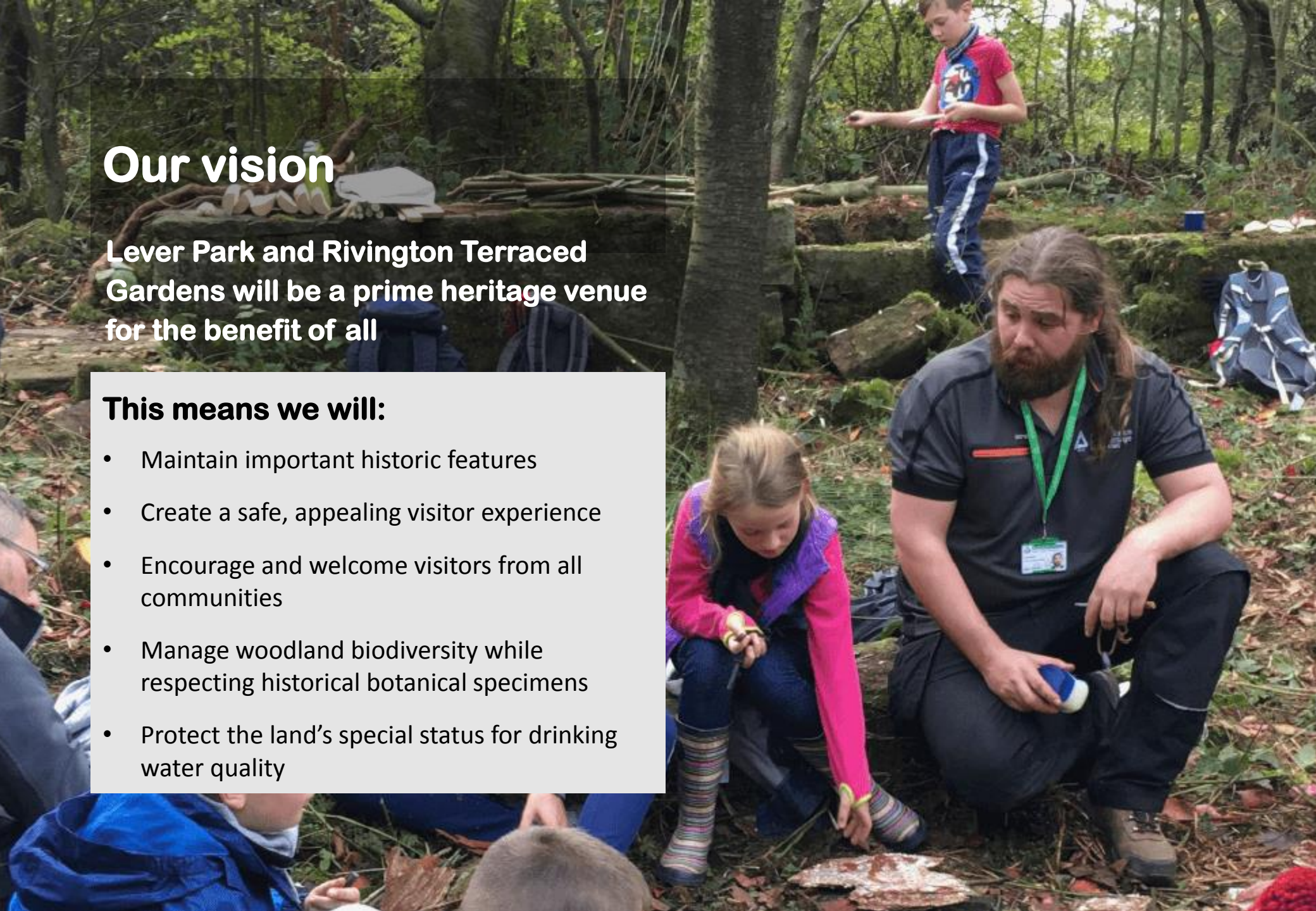
Chris Matthews
Chair of Rivington Heritage Trust

Our vision

Lever Park and Rivington Terraced Gardens will be a prime heritage venue for the benefit of all

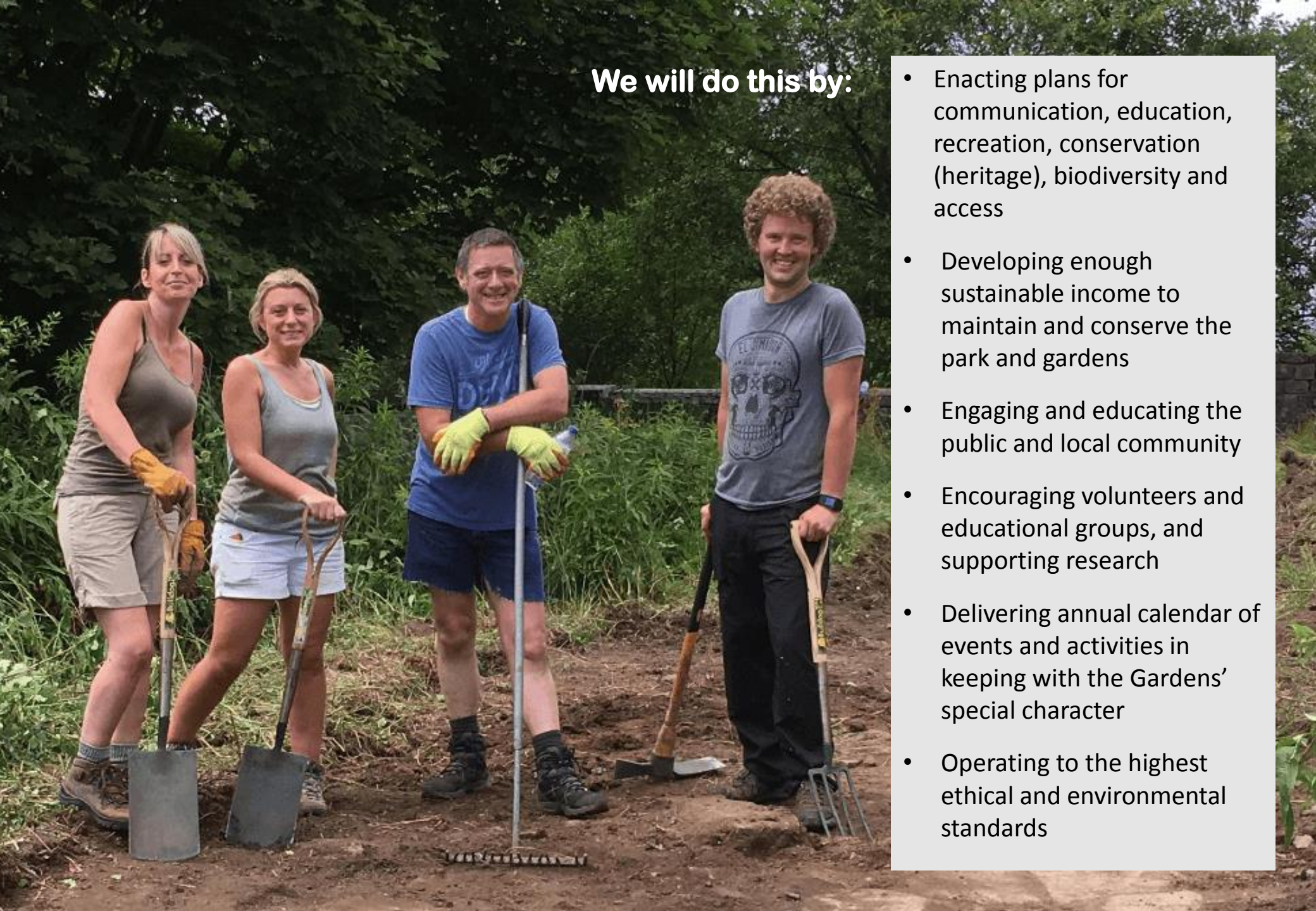
This means we will:

- Maintain important historic features
- Create a safe, appealing visitor experience
- Encourage and welcome visitors from all communities
- Manage woodland biodiversity while respecting historical botanical specimens
- Protect the land's special status for drinking water quality



We will do this by:

- Enacting plans for communication, education, recreation, conservation (heritage), biodiversity and access
- Developing enough sustainable income to maintain and conserve the park and gardens
- Engaging and educating the public and local community
- Encouraging volunteers and educational groups, and supporting research
- Delivering annual calendar of events and activities in keeping with the Gardens' special character
- Operating to the highest ethical and environmental standards



The business plan

Our business plan outlines the work that the Trustees, our Friends Group and delivery partners (the Partnership) will do to meet our vision over the next one and five years.

The next five years: Our plans from 2021 until 2026

We have set three high-level objectives as well as two specific objectives.

Our high-level objectives to 2026	How we will gauge success
Management: Good management delivered by a robust and transparent partnership structure with well-defined roles	Performance targets and a risk register where risks are managed and reduced, with progress published annually on our website
Financial: Financially robust with diverse income streams and six months' budget surplus	Annual financial statement
Client-facing: Recognised for strong local and regionwide engagement, including a very active and well managed volunteer presence	Key stakeholders clearly identified and relationships built; footfall measured; feedback from the public; number of sponsors and volunteers, and the annual general meetings of the Trust and the Friends groups

Our specific objectives by 2026	Details
To explore options to enhance the visitor and educational offering within the area	Develop a plan to enhance visitor experience to the area while also increasing educational opportunities in consultation with stakeholders and interested parties
Submit a 'Resilient Heritage' bid to the National Lottery Heritage Fund	This would cover two years of staffing costs plus Heritage Skills Academy seed funding

The next 12 months: Our plans for 2021

Our partnership with Groundwork has changed

From early summer 2021, there will be no more National Lottery Heritage funds. The Trust has entered a new partnership agreement for the management and maintenance of the Gardens with Groundwork, underpinned by a formal contract. We have agreed objectives and activities, and will work with volunteers and the Friends of Rivington Terraced Gardens (FoRTG) to overcome obstacles, such as lack of funding.

Maintenance

Our *Management and Maintenance Plan* is based on clear experience from the past three years and will deliver costed activities across different character areas identified in our *Conservation Management Plan*. Although reviewed annually, key activities are not likely to alter greatly over the next 5 to 10 years.

Activities and engagement

The robust income and delivery strategy we have already built around events and engagement grew significantly over the last three years and is expected to keep growing. We are keen to maintain this momentum.

Our *Activities and Engagement Plan* outlines activities which will follow the same broad calendar as previous years, ranging from guided walks and open days to Good Friday and the Summer Solstice. These activities are not primarily focused on fund-raising, although collectively they do raise significant funds.

The next 12 months: Our plans for 2021

Our objectives in 2021	How we will gauge success over the year
Management: Robust governance and the delivery of Management and Maintenance Plan	Effective roles, responsibilities and actively managed risk register in place; quarterly review against annual plan; annual general meeting; and compliance with all charity requirements
Financial: Deliver financial requirements of annual plan	Monthly monitoring and quarterly review
Client-facing: Active engagement with stakeholders	Quarterly interviews/feedback with public, sponsors and volunteers

Our objectives in 2021	Details
Enhance the governance and transparency of the Trust	Create training and recruitment strategy so the Trust ensures ongoing charitable compliance
Agree key elements of income strategy with United Utilities	Reliable and varied sources of income are a vital part of the income strategy
Agree contract work for United Utilities to raise additional income	Seek to agree a contract to expand heritage activity
Build on our successful annual events programme	To include 4 large income generating events, and to work with delivery partners to create corporate and other private events, and other offerings



Major events

Unlike activities, events are delivered at scale and, whilst enhancing engagement significantly, are focused on fundraising. They target income after costs of at least £10,000 per event, and need significant staff and volunteer time.

Our medium term strategy is to host four major events each year, with a committee comprising a Board representative, the Staff team, a member of the Friends group and volunteers.

There are two in our calendar for the year so far: the Festival of Light in April, and the Rivington Music festival in July. We are also exploring the contribution other private events can make to our efforts to achieve a diverse income base.

How we want to do it

As the coronavirus pandemic has shown, event-based income can be disrupted by factors outside of our control. The Trust needs a diverse income strategy that includes resilient elements such as sponsorship.

The Trust's high-level financial objective is to build a substantial financial buffer to protect against lost income.

Resources

The Board considered various options for future resourcing, ranging from the very basic option of employing a single "Garden Manager" to the most ambitious option of maintaining a team similar in size to the one which delivered the National Lottery Heritage Fund project.

After considering the pros, cons and costings, the Board decided the benefits of maintaining the existing team would easily outweigh the increased financial risk. The team could "hit the ground running", continuing to provide a varied and high standard of events for all visitors to raise all-important funds to maintain and enhance the gardens and wider area for the benefit of all.

Expenditure

The key elements of expenditure are staffing and the on-going management and maintenance costs. A minimum of some £20,000 will be needed in the bank to cope with month to month variations, and to ensure a positive cash flow. The Trust's policy of maintaining reserves equivalent to at least 6 months expenditure will be a more than adequate financial buffer.

Income strategy

Our business plan commits us to create a viable, credible and diverse income strategy which builds up the income generated from year 1 and brings new sources of income on stream in subsequent years. The Board is currently exploring several options to generate more income and is committed to engaging with local stakeholders to discuss these. While it may not be possible to cover all the expenditure in years 1 and 2, the plan shows the Trust moving into profit in year 3 and maintaining that position.

Overcoming income volatility

Our Business Plan seeks to address the risk of the volatility of income streams by:

Including reliable and diverse income streams

It makes sense to include as many significant and reliable income streams as possible. We will achieve this through a combination of events we know to be popular, sponsorship, new offerings, events and services, and identifying new grants and other funding opportunities.

Building up financial reserves

Extreme years like 2020 can wipe out considerable income. The aim is to increase the level of reserves to at least 6 months' worth of expenditure.

Business risk management

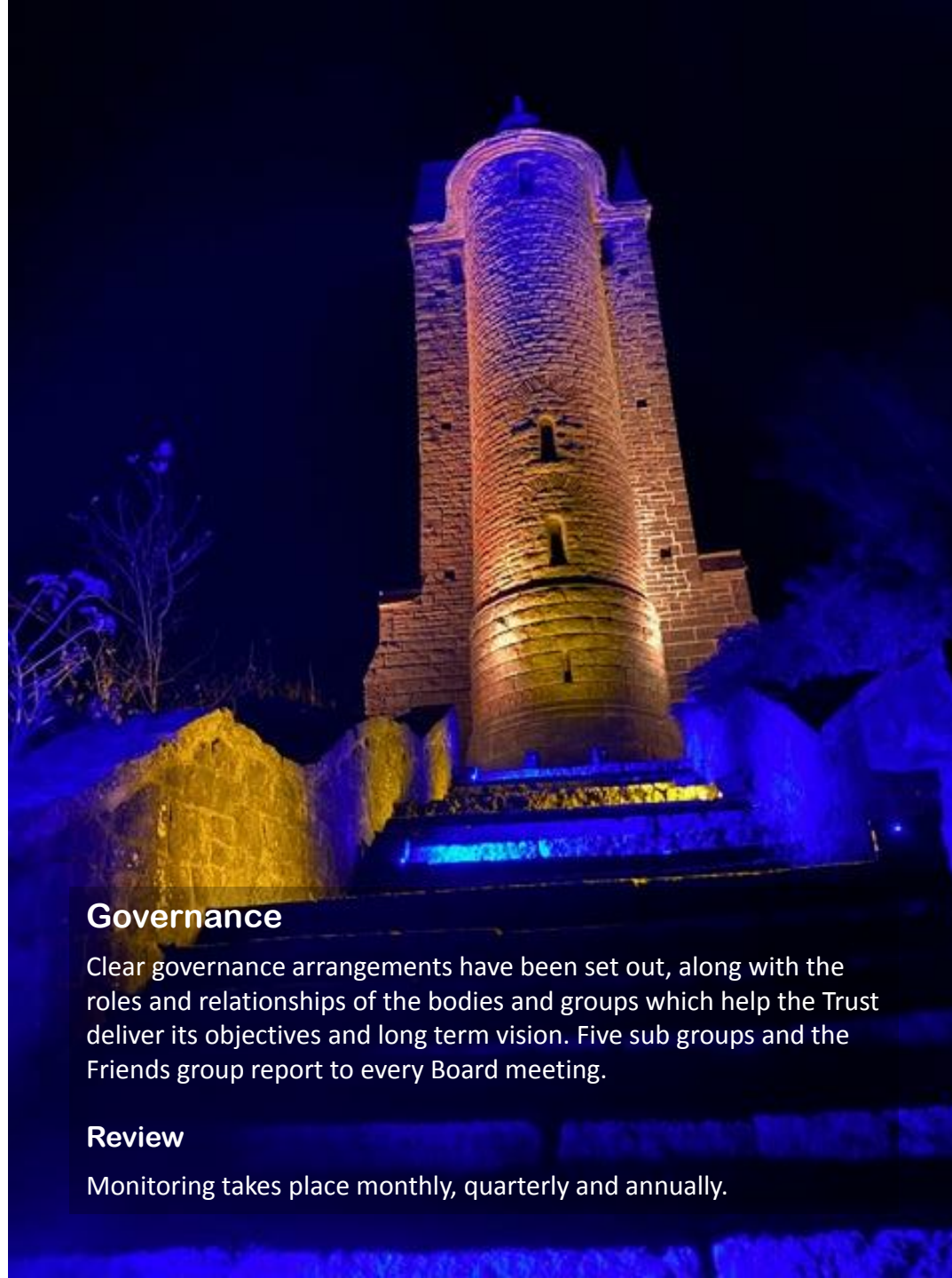
The Trust has put a business risk process in place to assess and manage risk across all activities which is reviewed in detail every quarter.

Governance

Clear governance arrangements have been set out, along with the roles and relationships of the bodies and groups which help the Trust deliver its objectives and long term vision. Five sub groups and the Friends group report to every Board meeting.

Review

Monitoring takes place monthly, quarterly and annually.





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Water for the North West



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