

Park group wants council backing over conservatory

6th May 2019

BLACKBURN WITH DARWEN

EAST LANCASHIRE

BLACKBURN

DARWEN

LANCASHIRE



By Neil Athey

News Reporter

[@NeilAtheyJourn](#)

Share



19 Comments

A GROUP working to bring an iconic conservatory back into use is set to hand over a refurbishment plan to the council in a bid to gain its support.

The Corporation Park Supporters Group has designed a 'conservatory refurbishment strategy' which it believes will be a sustainable way of breathing life back into the historic Corporation Park conservatory in Blackburn.

The building, which opened in 1857, has fallen into disrepair with several of its large glass panels being smashed and plants left overgrown.

The group wants the borough council's support and for the authority to back funding applications.

The strategy includes potential sources for funding, and outlining uses, security and maintenance plans, as well as plans to promote the park through social media.

Tony Hopwood, speaking on behalf of the group, said the conservatory was an intrinsic piece of Blackburn's history that should not be lost.

He said: "We would like to have a constructive long-term discussions with the council and would like to work with the council on refining and actioning a workable strategy to bring the conservatory back to its former glory and be an attraction for the town.

"We would really like to understand what the council's vision for the conservatory is.

"In the immediate term we would like the council to help stop the vandalism by implementing low cost solutions such as repairing the lighting and getting the cameras working again.

"In the longer term, we would like the council to support applications for funding, support the group in approaching local industry and be proactive with the supporters group in developing the strategy for making the conservatory an asset to the town again."

In November the site was put on Historic England's 2018 heritage at risk register.

It has been the target of vandalism over the years, with windows broken.

"Not only will it be a pleasure for many, but it has potential to be used as an educational resource, a location for wedding photographs and an attraction to bring more visitors to the park."

Cllr Jim Smith, the environment boss for Blackburn with Darwen Council, said: "We are more than happy to look at any legitimate plans and speak with this group about it.

"I would love to see the conservatory brought back to how it was."

Mr Hopwood said: "We want to restore a sense of pride in a building that is over 100 years old.

"Money is being poured into town centre development but nothing is being done for a very important part of our heritage.