

## **Levens Hall & Gardens Launches Revealing Audio Tour**

Cumbrian visitor attraction, Levens Hall & Gardens, has launched a new audio tour facility, to help enhance the knowledge of those visiting during the 2022 season.

The Levens Hall & Gardens audio tour starts when visitors pick up an audio set at the entrance kiosk. The audio tour offers 16 tracks, with numbers linked to a map which visitors can also use, as they navigate their way around the historic and stunning gardens.

Whilst the audio tour is very much focused on the outdoor space, it also contains bonus tracks that offer insight into some of the fascinating things to be found inside the Bagot family's home, as well as revealing legends associated with the property and highlighting the amount of work that goes into maintaining the gardens as living gardens, which change not just seasonally, but every week.

The audio tracks certainly add value to a visit and there are some exciting things to learn. Visitors are regaled with information that will undoubtedly lead many to be examining the downpipes at the property, seeking out little golden hearts. These were placed there by former owner, Colonel Grahme, who became the owner of Levens Hall after his relative, Alan Bellingham, lost the property in a game of cards, supposedly on the turn of the Ace of Hearts.

They can also learn about the raucous 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century Radish Feast, which Grahme held here, to ensure that Levens Hall did not lose out to nearby Dallam Tower, when it came to being the place to be at the time of the Milnthorpe Fair.

They can hear how an old woman cursed the property, when being refused food and shelter, and how that curse seemed to come to fruition, when no male heir was born into the family for over 200 years.

The audio track also reveals how the red-twigged lime trees, which form 'tunnels' or pathways, were a modern intervention, to give a nod to Tudor times and the early use of the gardens by the resident family. They can hear about the different plant species in the two distinct Pastel and Red Borders and appreciate which varieties of rose spread their delightful scents across the gardens.

They can learn why the pond beneath the white water lilies has vertical sides and why Britain's earliest ha-ha was of particular benefit here. They can also explore a link between the Bowling Green and Sir Francis Drake and learn many of the official names of the species of plants they can see in the gardens. With the guide's help, they can also spot something special, and especially planted, growing on the apple trees in the Orchard and fully appreciate all of the hard work that goes into maintaining the world's oldest topiary garden, founded over 300 years ago, by Monsieur Guillaume Beaumont, in 1694.

Many features that might be missed or not seen as significant, can be understood with the help of the new audio guides, so Levens Hall & Gardens is hoping that many visitors will make good use of them.

Richard Bagot, owner of Levens Hall & Gardens, says: "We invested in the audio guides, because we want visitors to our gardens to gain as much pleasure as we do, from knowing all the little details that make this outdoor space so remarkable and historic. The audio guides explain why things exist and why they take the form that they do and offer just enough additional information to add value to the experience, without taking away the pleasure of reading a more in-depth

book or guide. We are sure that many visitors will find these a very welcome addition to their garden visit, as they head to us for what we hope will be our first full season here, since 2019.”

More information about Levens Hall & Gardens can be found at [www.levenshall.co.uk](http://www.levenshall.co.uk)

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### **Editors’ notes**

Levens Hall and Gardens opens Sunday to Thursday (closed Fridays and Saturdays) to October 6, 2022. Gardens’ opening hours are 10am to 5pm, with last entry at 4pm. The Hall opens at 10am for tours (subject to availability on the day) and at 11am for general admission and is open until 3.30pm (last entry at 3pm).

Levens Kitchen opens every day, from 10am to 5pm to October 6, 2022 and then closes one hour earlier thereafter, through to December 23, 2022. The gift shop opens from 10am to 5pm until October 6 and then opens from 10.30am to 3pm until December 23, 2022.

Adult entrance costs £14.50 for Gardens and tour of the Hall. A child’s ticket is priced at £5 and a family ticket at £36. Gardens-only tickets are priced at £10.50, £4 and £26, respectively. Hall and Gardens tickets currently have to be bought on the day, but Gardens-only tickets can be purchased online at [www.levenshall.co.uk](http://www.levenshall.co.uk)