



*Sledmere House*



*Members enjoying lunch in the Coach House*

## Yorkshire Gardens Trust AGM Saturday 26 March 2023

The AGM of the YGT has become an event to be anticipated, held in an historic venue with potential for an afternoon guided exploration. Thanks to the Events Team who found Sledmere House for this year's venue. The meeting took place in the newly converted Coach House Barn suite at Sledmere House, and was chaired by Vice-President Nick Lane-Fox. He thanked the committee for their hard work in organising the day and for bringing beautiful garden flowers to decorate the room.

YGT Treasurer Maddy Hughes reported that income in the year had been £12,000, (largely from Donations, Subscriptions and Events). Expenses had been around £7,500, (including Newsletter printing and distribution and the cost of the new website), resulting in an operating surplus of £4,500. Grants awarded amounted to £7,000 - including Schools, Bursaries and Small Grants, resulting in a net reduction in reserves of £2,500.

The Chairman, Chris Webb, in his report, commented on how much work the Trust does largely with small teams of volunteers. The future of the Trust looks interesting but there are potential problems related to planning laws and the impact climate change is going to have for our gardens and gardeners. The draft Development Plan for the YGT for the next five years was circulated in February 2023 and it is discussed in the *Spring Newsletter* at p.11.

The Research and Recording team report by Louise

Wickham, its chairman, was read by Chris Webb in her absence. Sixty-six completed reports have now been loaded on to the much improved website. Louise has also worked hard on a blog this year which introduces a new audience to the trust's work.

The Conservation and Planning team's report was given by the ex-Chair Val Hepworth. Chris Webb is currently chairing the team's meetings. Organising the Lotherton Edwardian Gardens Study Day with Leeds City Council was the highlight of their efforts during the past year. The team were pleased to be able to resume site visits. In terms of number of planning responses made, Yorkshire and Hertfordshire are well ahead of all the

other CGTs. A detailed report of the Conservation committee's latest work appears at p.24

The Membership and Engagement team's report was given by Vicky Price, its Chairman. Last year eleven visits were arranged, ranging from looking at snowdrops at Wentworth

### Contents

Bursary Report .....	20
Conservation Report .....	24
Events Diary 2024 .....	29
Friends of Roman Aldborough .....	32
From the Chair.....	7
Gardens Trust News .....	33
Notes from Editor .....	6
Research and Recording Training Day at Kiplin Hall .....	30
Sledmere House afternoon guided walk .....	4
Study Day at Newburgh Priory .....	14
Summer Picnic at Jervaulx Hall .....	18
The Making of a Landscape .....	2
Visit to Londesborough Hall.....	8
Visit to Thirsk Hall Sculpture Garden .....	12
YGT for Schools .....	32
Yorkshire Gardens Trust AGM .....	1

Woodhouse, to the historic landscape at Boynton Hall and the first ever wildlife park at Waterton. Vicky Price with Maddy Hughes, also organised the first series of Unforgettable Gardens on-line talks with The Gardens Trust, which included two about Castle Howard; one about Old Durham Gardens; bringing us up to date with garden designer Tom Stuart-Smith who talked about his designs for Yorkshire gardens; and Mark Newman and our own Gail Falkingham gave a talk on 'Mr Aislabie's Other Places'. In late May there was the biennial joint lecture with the Yorkshire Philosophical Society, when Louise Wickham gave a talk about Thomas White based on the book she has recently written with Deborah Turnbull.

Membership has not risen in the past year and it is hoped that this might change as we have been invited to take part in the Harrogate Autumn Flower Show which is to be held at Newby Hall in mid-September see p. 29. We have a pagoda stall and an installation on the west lawn, which we hope will reach a new audience and potentially new members.

Christine Miskin explained that, after a period of experimentation on the publication schedules for the Newsletter and e-Bulletins, the Newsletter would in future appear in hard copy in April and October (with the electronic version being available on the website) and the e-Bulletins would be published in December and July.

Chris Beevers reported on the Bursary Award scheme and introduced Rachel Higgins, the winner of a 2022 bursary who told us how grateful she was for it. Rachel got her work placement at Renishaw to enable her to complete her RHS Level 2. Her detailed final report appears at p. 20.

Sue Lindley updated us on the Schools Teams work. This year's theme was "recycle your garden"; she sent out leaflets and blue lupin seeds. She reported an increase to 67 of interested schools. This success has been put down to the website which shows photos for a Grounds Development Award in the new Schools Section

Brendan Mowthorp is responsible for the Small Grants Scheme which offers grants up to £3000.00. He has revised the application form this year. One application for £600.00 was given to Moorgate Cemetery, and three other grants were considered.

Penelope Dawson-Brown expressed the importance of YGT refugee events as previous ones had been extremely successful. She suggested that one should be arranged for next spring and thought Castle Howard would be the perfect venue. She offered to organise the occasion and encouraged others to help. The official Minutes of the AGM will be produced by our Company Secretary Gillian Parker.

The Accounts for the year ending September 2022 were adopted and the accountants were re-appointed. Valerie Hepworth, Victoria Price and Christopher Webb were reappointed as trustees.

The Development Plan for 2023-2028 was accepted.

In Any Other Business Peter Goodchild said that it is becoming very evident that historic parks and gardens are under increasingly serious pressure from a widespread lack of knowledge about how to protect them from avoidable damage and how to manage change in an informed and sympathetic way. He is anxious to address this by education and training and he recommended that the YGT should consider how it might increase its current education provision.

(He has subsequently submitted a comprehensive report on the subject which the Council are currently examining closely - Editor).

*Jane Ingham*

## **The Making of a Landscape**

Following the AGM David Neave gave us a clearly illustrated talk entitled *The Making of a Landscape*. He has studied the estate records of Sledmere over many years and other landscaped parks and gardens especially in East Yorkshire.

Sledmere was a large township of some 5,600 acres, over 150m high up on the Wolds of East Yorkshire. When acquired by Mark Kirby, a wealthy Hull merchant in 12 separate purchases between 1721 and 1745 it consisted of about 60 farms and cottages around a large green with the pond or mere that gave the village its name. To the north stood a church and manor house, to the south the road from York to Bridlington. It was one of many estates that Kirby bought but he remained living in Hull until he moved to Beverley a few years before he died in 1748. He had no children and Sledmere was left to his nephew Richard Sykes (1706-1761) also a Hull merchant.

Richard Sykes, fond of hunting, decided to build a new house at Sledmere, the first stone of which was laid in 1751. In order to provide a suitable setting for the house he demolished about half the village houses and created a large lawn flanked by narrow plantations which diverged to form the Avenue, closed off on the high ground to the south by another plantation at right angles. A ha-ha was built to divide the grounds nearest the house from parkland beyond, and to hide the York-Bridlington Road from view. Sykes was succeeded by his brother Mark, a clergyman, and 1st baronet, who handed over the running of the Sledmere estate to his son, Christopher, who became 2nd baronet on his father's death in 1783.



*Thomas White's Plan*

*(Reproduced with the permission of Sir Tatton Sykes)*

It was Sir Christopher Sykes (1749-1801), trained in surveying with a great interest in architecture and agricultural improvement, who did most to create the Sledmere landscape of today. He had the township surveyed in 1774, and the next year obtained an Act of Parliament enabling the enclosure of the open fields. He cleared away the remaining village houses, moved the main road to the north of the house, where it remains today, and commissioned Thomas White to draw up proposals for improving the landscape. White's plan of 1776 involved planting belts of trees around the boundaries of the estate and a scattering of clumps throughout the parkland. Sykes also had a plan drawn up by Capability Brown in 1778 covering a smaller area. Neither plan was fully implemented, elements of both being used, particularly in relation to the siting of the plantations. Sir Christopher undertook grand planting schemes on his estate. Between 1771 and 1800 he spent at least £8,648 on



*Capability Brown's Plan*

*(Reproduced with the permission of Sir Tatton Sykes)*

planting and in the 6 months ending April 1779 at least 177,201 trees were planted at Sledmere

Thomas White's plan covered the whole area of the township and marked the sites of three farmhouses that were built as 'eyecatchers' from Sledmere House: Marramatte and Life Hill Farms designed by Sir Christopher Sykes himself, and the most distinctive Castle Farm designed by John Carr. A deer house was built in the park in 1792, and an elegant greenhouse near the House in 1786 (demolished in 1850s). The surviving large octagonal walled kitchen garden, built 1784-6, east of the house, prospered and in 1809 a visitor reported on the Sledmere apple and the figs in the greenhouse that the family liked. The gardeners (there were 6 in 1907) had produced a raspberry x bramble which "fruited til Christmas". A slip wall enabled both sides of it to be used for fruit growing which is maintained to this day.

Christopher was succeeded in 1801 by his son Mark Masterman Sykes, married to Henrietta Masterman of Settrington, who insisted that he take her surname too. They had no children and the estate passed in 1823 to Mark's brother Tatton Sykes, 4th baronet, a celebrated breeder of horses and sheep. He erected a rotunda over the village well with an inscription extolling his father's achievements in transforming the agriculture and landscape of the Yorkshire Wolds. Sir Tatton died in 1863 and was commemorated by the imposing memorial erected on Garton Hill, paid for by his tenants and friends.

It was Sir Tatton Sykes, 5th baronet (1826 – 1913), who created the present Sledmere village. Cottages were built, some in pairs from plans by John Birch who recommended no more than four in a row. The renowned architect G E Street architect designed Sledmere school 1874-75 which was enlarged by Temple Moore in 1895-96. Moore was also the architect of the Eleanor Cross in the village and St Mary's Church, the grandest of the 17 churches that the 5th baronet built, rebuilt, or refurbished in East Yorkshire. Most of the villagers were Methodist, and it was only for political reasons, after agricultural labourers gained the right to vote, that two chapels, Primitive and Wesleyan, were built at Sledmere in 1889.

The Sledmere estate covered thirty-six thousand acres, being the largest one in East Yorkshire in the late nineteenth century. It was managed by an efficient agent, a cousin of Sir Tatton, for whom a new house was built in the 1890s in the village along with a post office, head forester's house and clerk of works' house all designed in red brick by John Birch.

In 1911, two years before Sir Tatton the 5th baronet died, the House caught fire and was completely gutted. Most of the furnishings were saved and the house was rebuilt in its original form, with some changes, by the architect Walter Brierley of York.



The rebuilding was overseen by Sir Mark Sykes 6th baronet, who succeeded in 1913. A great traveller in, and authority on, the Middle East, he had a Turkish room completely walled in amazing blue tiles installed in the house. Sir Mark raised a regiment made up of the skilled waggoners from the Wolds farms, that provided vital military transport during the First World War. In the commemoration of their service and those who died, Sir Mark designed the delightful Waggoners' Memorial, possibly the most unusual contribution that the Sykes family have made to the landscape of Sledmere over three hundred years.

*Jane Ingham with thanks to David Neave for his help*

## Sledmere House afternoon guided walk



*David Neave*

After lunch the visit continued out into the grounds of Sledmere House led by David Neave. Starting on the South Front which had been altered after the fire of 1911 we looked out over the ha-ha to the rising land. The remains of the early avenue planted by Richard Sykes (circa June 1751) as the house was being built may still be there, three rows of beech on one side and 4-5 rows on the other, but the line is not now clear. It was not quite central to the axis of the house. In the distance the eyecatchers are still there: Maramatte Farm, Castle Farm and Life Hill Farm but mature trees must be cleared to maintain these views. On the horizon are those shelter belts that we heard about this morning. The plans were influenced by Thomas White and Capability Brown in the 1770s.

The land was chalky with deep wells, formerly barren land used for rabbit farming. There was a Warreners Cottage in the way of the view, having 6,500 rabbits reared for their pelts and for meat in the 1777 records, but it was demolished in the grand plan. Out of the 5,000-acre township 500 acres were arable land. The Improver, Christopher Sykes, used bone manure

from hound meal as fertiliser. The farms successfully grew barley on the thin soil of the Wolds and greatly improved their fertility.



*The Mere*

The mere was restored as a round pond in the 20th century. We stood on the top of the ha-ha and admired the bastion-like strength of it, rebuilt after the road from York to Bridlington was diverted and the school was removed. It was held back by triangular, rectangular, and semi-circular buttresses. At either end were pavilions, now long gone. The stepped lawns seem to blend smoothly into the Deer Park beyond. Walking to the west end of the ha-ha we came across a drive and a fine pair of gate piers in Sylvia's Grove probably from the late 19th century.



*Sylvia's Gate Piers*

Walking back across the lawns in front of the Hall covered in scaffolding we reached the very special octagonal walled garden designed and built by Sir Christopher in 1783-1786 and recently replanned by the previous Head Gardener, Andy Karavics (Now at Scampston) who said, "It was designed to maintain its formal and traditional style in keeping with its history but giving it a contemporary twist".





*Jan Lathan Head Gardener*

We met the current Head Gardener, Jan Lathan, who gave us a tour round it. You enter the first slip or double wall which surrounds two thirds of the garden, and which enabled both sides of the brick walls to be used for fruit growing. From there you pass through a second gate into another half dozen sections of garden. There is a formal potager and cutting garden, an exotic border, Lady Sykes' Rose Garden, a croquet lawn and the reflection garden. The redesign is still ongoing, but the maintenance of the fruit trees and of the roses is immaculate.



*Exotic Border and Lady Sylvia's Rose Garden*

The greenhouse and tender garden are at the north-west side with an apple tree border, succulents, and tender garden plants amongst others. In 1809 a visitor reported that "there were two and a half acres with hothouses – in the latter were found many fig trees – the family are partial to this fruit".



*Apple Tree Border*

She saw a large apple which they named the Sledmere apple and a shrub cross between a raspberry and a bramble which fruited until Christmas. By 1907 there were six gardeners some of whom lived in Gardeners Row on the North side of the Walled Garden.

It was now time to go back to the courtyard and say our farewells at the end of a very productive day.



*Delightful spherical pruning*

**Jane Ingham**

**Photos © Philip Ingham**



# Notes from the Editor

Now that we are slipping into Autumn, the excellent 2023 programme of visits is coming to an end. As I write this, our final visit to Ledston Hall is about to take place and our penultimate visit, to Brodsworth Hall, which was awe-inspiring in terms of the huge amount of work that the gardening team under Michael Klemperer, English Heritage's Senior Gardens Adviser and Dan Hale, Head Gardener undertake, took place last week.

This issue includes a report by Jane Ingham on our AGM, which was held in the glorious surroundings of Sledmere Hall, in East Yorkshire. Not only did Jane write about the proceedings, but she also reported on David Neave's excellent lecture entitled *The Making of a Landscape*, which gave us a good picture of both the history of the landscape and of the owners who shaped it. We walked around the grounds after lunch and Jane then also wrote up the this report of the tour - I am extremely grateful to her for all her hard work. See p.2.

Paul Knox and Malcolm Pickles have provided a comprehensive report on the visit to Londesborough Hall, again in East Yorkshire, which was once one of the great estates of northern England. Now sadly only ruins remain, but it sounded like an excellent day out, with a comprehensive talk on the estate and its owners, once again given by David Neave. See p.8.

We visited Thirsk Sculpture Park in May and Valerie Greaves kindly provided the write up. In June we visited Newburgh Priory at Coxwold in North Yorkshire. This was another visit with two parts to the day: a visit to NYCRO in the morning, where Moira Fulton, who studied the Newburgh landscape as part of her MA Thesis for Leeds University, gave us an introductory talk and we were able to study several site plans. In the afternoon Moira led a walk through the grounds. By all accounts it was another very good day and thanks to Chris Beevers for the report at p.12.

In July we held our Summer Picnic at Jervaulx Hall by kind permission of Mr and Mrs Woodrow. They also are busy transforming their 8-acre garden and progress so far is very impressive. My thanks to Rosalind Earl and Elizabeth Carrick for their write up at p.18.

In this *Newsletter* we also include Chris Webb's Report from the Chair, together with the usual detailed report from the Conservation and Planning Committee; the Events team report includes information about a new project for us, manning

a stall at the Harrogate Autumn Flower Show to promote the YGT to a wider audience. The Research and Recording team's report is about the very successful training day held at Kiplin Hall in June. The Schools Group is going from strength to strength and its membership has increased from 54 to 76 in the last year. The Bursary Scheme has also had an extremely successful year and there are two reports from our recipients. Rachel Higgins has successfully passed her Level 2 qualification in Practical Horticulture and see her final report at p.20.

Sarah Rose Collings has submitted an extremely thought-provoking article relating to her Long Border Design for the RHS Flower Show at Tatton Park this summer, for which she received a bursary. It was entitled *Plants that Sense*. She undertook a great deal of research on how plants use their senses, and the resultant border received an RHS Bronze Medal and was featured on *Gardeners' World*.

Very well done to both our recipients!

**Christine Miskin**  
**Editor**



# From the Chair

In the last few months YGT has encountered several important events betokening change inside and outside our Trust. Inside, we have seen Gail Falkingham retire as a trustee, the appointment of Lynn Watkinson as our new administrator, replacing Lucy Bennett, and the challenge of meeting the welcome level of demand for our grant funds. Outside, probably the most important planning application we have ever encountered, that for a new Visitor Centre at Studley Royal Canal Gates.

Gail was elected as a trustee in 2019 and re-elected for a second term in 2022 and has been active in some of the most significant areas for us ever since. Her skill set and knowledge has enabled YGT to expand its outreach activities in ways we could not have imagined or executed before Gail joined us. In particular, Gail introduced YGT to Instagram. Her use of it in a joint campaign with the Gardens Trust demonstrated that using different online platforms as an integrated whole reaches wider audiences than a single platform, thereby getting the most out of source material and effort and recruiting interest and influence beyond core audiences. Gail's deftness of touch in introducing Instagram, building on existing online platforms, has convincingly demonstrated its usefulness and consequences in an unchallenging fashion. One long-serving trustee comments: Gail has 'kick-started YGT properly into a social media presence'. Trustees now understand the of social media in broadcasting to a new audience and attracting people to participate in YGT's activities. Gail continues to contribute to our Instagram and other social media platforms, as well as working with Conservation and Research.

But Gail has contributed much more than the above suggests. She conceived and managed the idea of taking part in the Harrogate Autumn Flower Show this September before she stepped down; and her background as an archaeologist and her employment at the North Yorkshire County Record Office has been, and continues to be, enormously helpful to us. Gail's curation of exhibitions at NYCRO based on material used to research YGT sites has been a significant outreach success. Moreover, it has raised the profile of garden history within the record office, improving the knowledge of staff to share with researchers; while YGT has used Gail's exhibitions and blogs to help our researchers and potential researchers to be more confident about approaching archives in the comfortable, supportive and welcoming environment that NYCRO provides. See further at p 7.

## **Our new administrator, Lynn Watkinson, writes this to introduce herself:**

*Hello everyone, just a short note to introduce myself. I am a proud Yorkshire lass from Hull and have lived in the Dales for the last 30 years. I have a background in biological sciences, technology and administration with an interest in history. I like to keep busy and in my downtime I enjoy reading, crafts and love to take my Springer Spaniels in my campervan for walking trips.*

*I look forward to meeting you at future events.*

**Lynn Watkinson**  
**lynn.ygt@gmail.com**

Over the summer the Council of Management has been looking at our budget for the next and future years and encountered a positive, pleasing, difficulty. The success of our grant programmes now outruns our ability to meet the applications we would like to fund. To some extent this is inevitable, and a good problem to face; but we would like to do more. Please be reassured, WE HAVE ENOUGH MONEY to meet our requirements for running YGT into the foreseeable future. But to continue our grant-giving, and to expand our activities, we would need a larger revenue stream. Have you any ideas how we might achieve this? Council have discussed some, together with our committees and panels that distribute grants, but we would like to hear from members, too.

The National Trust's task in looking after the Studley Royal and Fountains Abbey World Heritage Site is loaded with difficulty. In general, the more visitors that are attracted to a historic landscape or building the more likely it is that the site will build up support in a never-ending quest to raise funds for its conservation and maintenance and build a buffer of support against inappropriate development. Studley Royal has always attracted visitors, whose numbers increased massively with the coming of the railway to Ripon in the 1840s and grew again with the advent of motoring and the shift to private cars away from public transport. Studley rightly attracts much public admiration and love; it is a privilege to live near enough to visit regularly, and to see the great improvements NT have made to the site since the 1980s. There is a point at which the numbers of visitors begin to harm the landscape they visit; too much admiration and love poses a huge problem for the people tasked with managing the landscape. Just how do NT gauge the tipping point where visits made today begin to harm the landscape, thus depriving future visitors of the joys and healing we derive from our own visits?



The difficulty of the task is compounded by the fragility of the landscape, its maturity (a plus and a minus), the fact that NT have full control over only 60% of the site, and the inevitable and unavoidable fact that there are, of course, more future visitors, many not yet born, than all of us who visit now and who have visited in the whole of Studley's past. On top of this, climate change compounds the difficulty. Any set of curators will make judgements over the years that are at best guesses in the face of unknowns, and which will attract criticism in the present day and with the benefit of hindsight. The present planning application is a vivid demonstration, over thousands of words and expert opinion, how fraught

these judgements can be. YGT has studied the application pack carefully, and is working closely with the Gardens Trust, who will construct the statutory response on behalf of the landscape.

Further responses from the public would be welcome and helpful. If you do respond we would be pleased to know what you have said: this application is likely to be current for some time, and there will be many twists and turns along the way. For our part, YGT will keep members as up to date as we are able about our involvement with this important and significant development.

**Chris Webb**

## Visit to Londesborough Hall Saturday 15 April 2023

### Introduction

Driving across the Yorkshire Wolds along the A614 today it can be hard to believe when passing signs for Market Weighton that a mile or two to the north, in what is now a somewhat sleepy estate village, was once one of the great houses and estates of northern England. On Saturday 15 April 2023 around 30 YGT members met to hear about, and see what remains of, the Hall and gardens of Londesborough with its astonishing and illustrious past.

The day was cool and overcast as we parked near the church and were guided to the village concert hall in the heart of the estate village. Once inside, we were greeted by a fine visual shock of the painted walls depicting horse-drawn carriages and folk in fancy finery which we learned later had been painted by a prisoner of war. We had been warned that it may be cold, and several layers of clothing were indeed needed. After coffee and biscuits members settled to an engaging illustrated talk by David Neave, who has done much to unearth the history of Londesborough, its houses, pleasure gardens and parkland.



*YGT Members in Concert Hall*

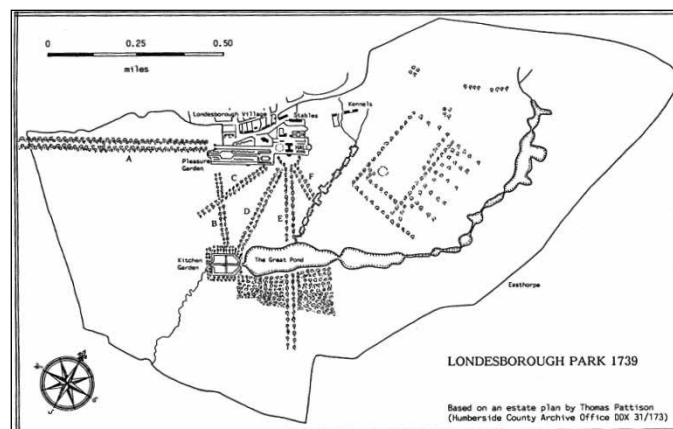
### The history of Londesborough Hall: two depictions allow glimpses into the past

The history of the Londesborough houses and landscape is extensive but for evidence of what

the gardens and landscape looked like as they developed in their heyday, we must be thankful for the few available depictions in historic documents, notably a print by Kip and Knyff of c. 1700 and the Thomas Pattison estate plan of 1739. These provide two crucial time points to unravel the past and understand Londesborough's glory days.



*Londesborough c.1700 by Leonard Knyff,  
Engraved by Johannes Kip*



*Thomas Pattison estate plan of 1739 (taken from  
Landscaped Parks and Gardens of East Yorkshire by  
David Neave and Deborah Turnbull. Georgian Society  
for East Yorkshire 1992)*

To put things briefly we can start with **Francis Clifford** (1559-1641), later Fourth Earl of



Cumberland, who built a house close by the church in 1589. The estate was then passed to his relatives the **Boyle/Burlington** family. In the 1680s **Robert Hooke** (1635-1703) was asked by the first Lady Burlington (Elizabeth Clifford) to add wings to the Elizabethan Hall and to design pleasure gardens and a park. At this time there was a walled garden to the north and a yew avenue to the east, as seen in the depiction of 1700 which shows associated formal gardens, orchards and avenues. Hooke was a startling polymath multi-tasker of his day being a major architect, scientist and a pioneering microscopist (through viewing of a thin slice of cork he was the first to develop the notion of a cell – so fundamental to biology). The estate was then passed to **Richard Boyle**, 3rd Earl of Burlington (Lord Burlington, 1694-1753), a major figure of his day and an architect and arbiter of taste. He extended the estate and led the transformation of the gardens from Baroque to a more natural style as seen in the Pattison estate plan of 1739. The estate then passed to the **Dukes of Devonshire** whose energies were focused elsewhere (Chatsworth) and the house and gardens were neglected. As far as is known there were no great garden transformations after Lord Burlington's time, just the oscillations of neglect and maintenance. The Hall was demolished around 1818 and in 1839 the Victorian house that remains known as Londesborough Park was built a short distance to the east. The estate passed through the hands of **George Hudson**, the Railway King (to enable control of nearby railways) and in 1850 was sold to **Lord Albert Denison** (formerly Conyngham) who in the same year was created **Lord Londesborough**. He and his descendants restored and resuscitated the gardens. From the turn of the 19th century we have recollections from **Osbert Sitwell** (his mother was a Londesborough) of visits to his grandparents in Londesborough Park and the delights of exotic plants and fruit in the hothouses and the kitchen garden. He also recalled how dead trees remained unfelled in the avenues due to his grandmother's strictures. The Fourth Earl of Londesborough sold the estate in 1923 and in 1935 it was bequeathed to **Dr and Mrs Richard Ashwin**. The Ashwin family continue the Londesborough story with careful management and preservation. We were very lucky to be joined for the day by **Anthony Ashwin** who had been brought up in Londesborough Park.

As we broke for lunch the sun could be seen shining through the concert hall windows which boded well for our afternoon tour.

#### **Afternoon tour - By Hooke or by Burlington?**

After lunch we met at the church. There we viewed what is surprisingly the only memorial to Burlington, which is his coffin plaque now displayed on the aisle

wall. In the churchyard there is an obelisk memorial for the botanist/gardener **Thomas Knowlton** (1691-1781) who is a major figure in the Londesborough story. As a side note, the English wit Sydney Smith was rector of Londesborough in the 1820s.



*Church*

#### **Foundations of Londesborough Hall**

Anthony Ashwin led the afternoon walk around the gardens. He proved to be a match for David Neave in enthusiasm and they formed a complementary pairing for our explorations. Leaving the church, we entered through gates set in a brick arch just to its east and into an attractive small space/almost a grotto, known as the sanctuary garden, that in fact housed the old east window tracery as a backdrop and a small pond where eager YGT members spotted great crested newts.



*Great Gate Piers*

We then entered through two great surviving gate piers, perhaps designed by Burlington, which formed the gateway to the gardens at the rear of the hall and the space where Londesborough Hall had once stood. This area is now maintained as a lawn. Hooke is thought to have extended the house and laid out

gardens in the 1670s and, to provide a suitable site, he raised the ground to the south and east of the hall behind a terrace wall with a series of arches. He also designed stables and alms houses in the village that survive. From the centre of the terrace opposite the south front were placed a flight of stone steps leading into the park. The terrace and steps with four urn-topped pedestals survive from the Hooke plan. Anthony Ashwin paced out and walked the H-shaped foundations of the extended hall (aided by a faint colouration to the grass which had been vividly revealed in the dry summer of 2018).



*Anthony Ashwin walks the Foundations*

Several members mused on the hall's orientation as it had faced to the east with a formal fountain garden leading to a sunken garden. We heard about the underground cellars that remained beneath our feet.

### **The Terraced Steps**

After viewing the space where the hall had been and then the sunken garden, a survival from Hooke's plans but now ruinous and overgrown, the group moved to the terraced steps. There we looked out on the parkland and tried to identify the remnants of avenues of walnut and Turkey oak that radiated out from the steps and that had been added by Burlington to the central avenue seen in the depiction of 1700. Descending the steps and looking to the east we could see the foundations for the raised eastern terrace, and its arches now known as the deer house.

Burlington inherited the estate in 1704 and turned his attention to the gardens in the 1720s as indicated by increasing expenditure on trees and plants from the appointment of Knowlton in 1726. Burlington is thought to have done little to alter the hall, as shown in the 1700 depiction. What was implemented and

achieved by Burlington can be gleaned from the estate plan by Pattison from 1739 that shows the transformation from a formal to a more natural style, including a string of ponds and lakes in the valley bottom and the planting of clumps of trees beyond. At this time the parkland was extended from 200 to 700 acres and absorbed the village of Easthorpe.

Knowlton is an important figure and was already an eminent gardener when engaged by Burlington. He remained at Londesborough until his death in 1781. He was also a botanist and antiquarian and developed hothouses in the new kitchen gardens that at this time were moved from the north of the hall to the west of the largest lake in the valley bottom. His botanical collections impressed the antiquarian William Stukeley who visited in 1740. Knowlton witnessed the passing of the estate's heyday but continued to grow his famous pineapples in the kitchen garden hothouses.



*Descending the Steps and Eastern Terrace*

### **Exploring the Wilderness**

At the time of the Burlington transformation of the estate to the south of the hall, things also changed to the west. The Hooke yew avenue survived but was now flanked to the north (by demolishing some village buildings) and to the south by the Wilderness with winding paths and, in the southern part, paths that opened into formal spaces marked by urns. This was where we headed next. Burlington is known to have made annual visits to Londesborough from 1720 to his death in 1753 and in later years was accompanied by **David Garrick**. We were led through the yew avenue, bordered by lush ransoms/wild garlic, and known as Garrick's walk, to the fine gates, gate piers, flanking walls and abutments (that the Historic England site claims may be by Hooke) that marked the entrance to the Elizabethan estate. The avenue was later extended further west across neighbouring land to the York Road. Where George Hudson's railway line crossed the long avenue, he built a private railway station. We then split into two groups; the more intrepid were led by Anthony



Ashwin creating routes through thick carpets of ransoms to the remains of plinths that had been part of Burlington's plan for the south part of the wilderness. The future sixth Duke of Devonshire, on a visit in 1812, had commented in a letter *'but one part of the walk... is rather nuisanced by the smell of the wild garlic which cannot be got rid of, or rooted out'*. A few years later he decided to pull down the hall.



*Western Gates*

### **Ponds and water features**



*Entrance to Wolds Way*

Regrouping and returning to the village roads we then joined the Yorkshire Wolds Way and paused at the gates that marked the entry to the parkland. Anthony extended the tour for some of us down to a pond to the southeast that on the 1739 plan had been pond number two in a curious string of eight small cascading ponds that had fed from the north

down to the largest lake of the chain of lakes and water features that stretched along the valley bottom. All the water features are likely to have been part of Burlington's transformation, involving drainage and water works, in the 1730s/1740s. From the side of the pond we could glimpse, through the trees, features of the current Londesborough Park built from the 1830s onwards. On the day of our visit the rivulets connecting what remains of the sequence of ponds were marked by a strikingly profuse growth of reproductive non-photosynthetic horsetail stems, ahead of the leafy growth later in the spring, which may also be considered a nuisance.



*Pond*

Members returned to the village concert hall for tea, cake and a final consideration of the day. It was a most memorable visit, and many thanks are due to David Neave and Anthony Ashwin for facilitating our glimpses of Londesborough's most glorious and significant past. Many gardens and landscapes that YGT members visit are viewed in prime and pristine states and all one needs to do is walk through them to savour them. Londesborough though is a case of a glorious past that has almost vanished. After David Neave's morning talk Peter Goodchild had further emphasised what an important site Londesborough is and that a ruined garden is still a garden but one that a modern visitor must put together in their mind. In 1724 Defoe claimed that Londesborough *'stands deliciously and has a noble prospect'*. Three hundred years later fragments remain to stir the mind of any traveller on the Yorkshire Wolds Way national trail as they walk on the stretch through Londesborough between Market Weighton and Millington.

***Paul Knox with contributions from Malcolm Pickles***

***Images © Paul Knox***



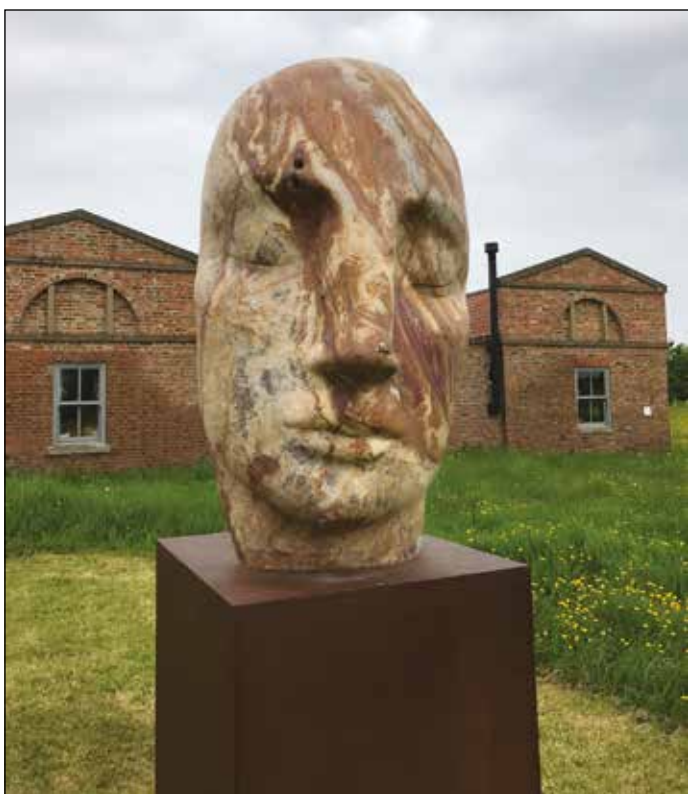
# Thirsk Hall Sculpture Garden

## Thursday 18 May 2023



*Front Elevation of House with Sculptures*  
(Image © Valerie Greaves)

A few years ago, I was in Thirsk visiting the church and I looked at Thirsk Hall and wondered if the high brick walls on either side concealed an interesting garden. Indeed, they did, with 20 acres of parkland and a changing collection of modern sculpture which about 40 YGT members enjoyed visiting on a sunny May afternoon. We were taken round by one of the owners, Bill Gerrish, whose wife Daisy Bell inherited the Hall from her father John Bell. He and his other two daughters live nearby, running related businesses.



*More Sculptures*  
(Images © Valerie Greaves)

Twelve generations of the family have lived there since buying the site in the 1720's from the Earl of Derby, and building the original house, which was soon extended upwards and sideways to designs by John Carr. His original lead rainwater goods still exist, decorated appropriately with bells. They bought more land from the church and extended the parkland, adding a promenade and ha-ha, and a kitchen garden with greenhouses. Carr also embellished some of the farm buildings. The house retains most of its original contents with modern pieces added by the latest occupants.



*Herbaceous Border and Outbuildings*  
(Image © Chris Beevers)

The early 19th century Bells were keen on horse racing, and they used the parkland for grazing and built a new racecourse, for which Carr may have designed part of the grandstand. The late Victorian owners created more elaborate gardens, but the current owners are trying to regain the Georgian feel of the parkland and gardens, with wildflower meadows in the parkland and shrubberies with herbaceous plantings and wildflowers.





*Wildflower Meadow*  
(Image © Chris Beevers)

Daisy and Bill are art dealers and consultants in London but decided to move back to Thirsk during lockdown with the aim of restoring the house and the outbuildings as a business, using the parkland and gardens to display modern sculpture for sale. The landscape artist Norman Ackroyd, who is a friend, thought that the space was perfect for a sculpture park, and they felt that this would complement the other Yorkshire sites at Yorkshire Sculpture Park, the Hepworth, and the Henry Moore Institute in Leeds, and would also add to Thirsk's development as a cultural hub.



*Our Group in front of the Art Gallery*  
(Image © Chris Beevers)

One of the buildings has become an art gallery, with a programme of exhibitions, but is also used for talks, concerts and drawing classes. A Thirsk Hall Festival has been started with live music and entertainment and a glamping site is being developed. The overgrown kitchen garden has been cleared and is being used by community volunteers to produce food for local foodbanks.



*Restored Kitchen Garden*  
(Image © Chris Beevers)

The park and gardens are open to the public for part of the week, allowing locals and tourists a chance to finally see what lies behind those high brick walls. Of course, a YGT visit needs tea and cake and we were fortunate that the weather was kind to us so that we could eat and socialise on the terrace overlooking the park after a thoroughly enjoyable afternoon.



*Buttercup Meadow*  
(Image © Chris Beevers)

**Valerie Greaves**

# Study Day at Newburgh Priory

## Wednesday 21 June 2023

### Introduction

The NYCRO/Newburgh Priory study day on 21 June was a two-site event beginning with a visit to the North Yorkshire County Record office (NYCRO) in Northallerton in the morning, followed by an afternoon exploring Newburgh, situated in the Howardian Hills near the village of Coxwold.

The day was planned to provide a detailed preparation for the afternoon visit by using the expertise of YGT's Moira Fulton and investigating the superb primary source materials available at NYCRO, excellently organised by YGT's Gail Falkingham, who works at NYCRO.

Our morning began with Moira's informative presentation on Newburgh and its historic landscape, guiding us through its complex and fascinating history.

Newburgh's 18th century landscape and its earlier history was the subject of Moira's 1999 Master's dissertation. By sharing her detailed knowledge acquired over two decades, she provided us with a clear direction for the rest of the day.

She outlined Newburgh's ownership history, the key phases of its historic landscape development and the resources which provide the evidence base for this.



*Newburgh Priory South Front*

### Newburgh Priory Historical Overview - Moira Fulton

Newburgh Priory came into the possession of the **Bellasis** family in 1539 after the dissolution of the Priory.

- William Bellasis (1523 -1604) inherited Newburgh from his Uncle Anthony Bellasis. William created the early house and gardens after 1552 by demolishing much of the monastic structure.
- His son Sir Henry Bellasis (c.1555-1624) commissioned a survey of Newburgh and Coxwold

in 1605, after inheriting the estate. He was created a baronet in 1611. He "kept up a considerable household at Newborough, and his hospitality was famed throughout Yorkshire". Remodelling of the house and grounds continued to complement his increased status. His interest in gardening was recognised in William Lawson's dedication to Sir Henry in his 1618 book *A New Orchard and Garden*.

- Henry's son Thomas was created Viscount Fauconberg in 1642.
- Henry's grandson Thomas Bellasis (1627–1700), the 2nd Viscount, was created an earl in 1689. He shared his grandfather's interest in gardens and probably introduced certain features into the wider landscape, such as the Mount and the avenues.
- By 1700 Newburgh's designed landscape was very much established. Two very large paintings in Newburgh's private collection (on display in the house) are an invaluable record of the 17th century gardens and landscape. They are not dated but are likely to be c.1680 although the artist is unknown. (Images of these paintings can be found in two publications, one by John Harris and the other by Roy Strong- see references). A description of the paintings is included in the next section.
- The most significant period of change at Newburgh between 1720 and 1760 was initiated by Thomas 4th Viscount Fauconberg who commissioned the 1722 plan shortly after inheriting Newburgh in 1718.
- The 4th Viscount who was created First Earl Fauconberg of the second creation in 1756, was responsible for the complete remodelling of the house and the grounds, as shown in the 1744 plan.
- In 1825 Newburgh passed by marriage to the Wombwell family. (Today it is in the ownership of Sir George Wombwell).
- The family archive is patchy for this period. The 18th century steward's accounts are a good source of more detailed information e.g. such as the substantial sum of £3,142 spent on tree planting 1734–1743, the trees purchased from Telford's.
- The most valuable source of Newburgh's landscape history is the impressive collection of estate maps held at NYCRO which comprised the next part of our visit.
- Much of the earlier landscape has now been lost. Detailed 19th and 20th century OS maps document Newburgh's subsequent changes to the present day.

### NYCRO Search Room Session – Gail Falkingham

Gail had organised exclusive use of the search room for the YGT event which was much appreciated and gave ample opportunity for detailed examination, discussion, and deliberations of NYCRO's fascinating historic plans for Newburgh, as you can see.

Photographs of these large documents do not do



justice to the detail they contain. A visit to NYCRO to examine them is highly recommended not only to view the content but also to appreciate the skills of the 17th and 18th century surveyors who made them.



NYCRO Search Room

The estate plans we examined were as follows:

1. **Detail from the 1605 Survey commissioned by Henry Bellasis – the earliest surviving estate survey (Surveyor: Francis May of Terrington) (©North Yorkshire County Record Office Ref: ZDV)**

Moir's dissertation provides a useful summary of



the 1605 survey:

*"The 'plat' depicts the surviving monastic feature of a large fishpond, the 'Stanke' and the palisaded deer park. A gabled house with an entrance court can be seen, with gardens to the South, and an orchard and outbuildings to the West. A square island surrounded by a moat is to the East, presumably a monastic servatorium fishpond, all contained by a walled enclosure."*

2. **Detail from a 1722 Plan by William Palmer and William Jones (©North Yorkshire County Record Office: ZDV VI/4) Commissioned by Thomas 4th Viscount Fauconberg**

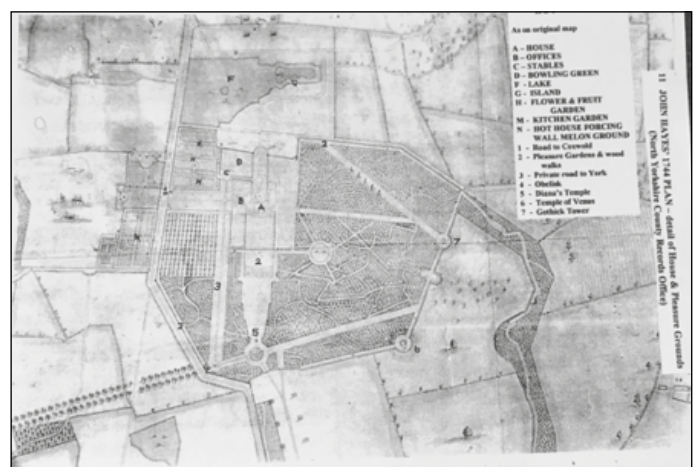
The gardens and landscape have altered little from



those recorded in the 1680 paintings. Notable features are:

1. The house (marked in red) with the approach still to the north via an entrance court.
2. Kitchen gardens adjacent to and beyond the entrance court to the north, with the large bowling green to the west.
3. To the south of the house a walled garden and parterre.
4. A canal adjacent to the eastern wing of the house.
5. Two old moats either side of the parterre.
6. Large orchard to the west.

3. **1744 Plan surveyed by John Hayes. Figure 11 from Moir's Dissertation showing a detail of the house and pleasure grounds using a copy of North Yorkshire County Record Office REF: ZDV VI/7.**



This plan is a mixture of changes to the landscape which were implemented and survived; changes which may have happened and have not survived; and those that perhaps never happened at all. Geometric avenues and rides to the east.

Key surviving features from this plan include :



- The Entrance which was moved to the West.
  - The Kitchen gardens are now Northwest of the house.
  - The Lake (formerly the Stanke) is marked.
  - The larger of the moated sites to the east has become a circular pond – now Basin Pond.
- Geometric avenues and rides to the east, radiating from the Basin Pond.

The specific designer of this landscape is unknown. The extent to which the plan was implemented is difficult to determine due to the lack of documentary evidence. The obelisk, Diana's Temple, the Triumph of Venus and the Gothick Tower would have been statement features in Newburgh's landscape, reminiscent of those at neighbouring Castle Howard. To complete the chronology of evidence for the evolution of Newburgh's 17th and 18th century historic landscape, a description of the 1680 paintings should be inserted after the 1605 survey. Moira's dissertation summary highlights:

*“an obelisk entrance lodge in front of the walled courtyard; a carved fence with heraldic beasts surrounding the bowling green; a canal with swans at the east side of the house; a Banqueting/Prospect House at the southern end of the garden; the south side gardens consisting of symmetrical oblong beds, a circular fountain; garden ornaments separated by an intricate carved wooden fence from an elaborate late 17th © parterre.”*

### Exploring Newburgh Priory

With our recently acquired knowledge from the morning session, we made our way to Newburgh to explore the site, looking for any surviving elements of its earlier history and of how it has evolved over subsequent centuries.



*Entrance*

Passing through the recently restored ornate entrance to Newburgh, we were welcomed by the Bellasis motto “Bonne et Belle Assez” – Good and beautiful enough (a play on the Bellasis surname). On either side of the drive stand the two immense yew Earl's coronets, thought to have been planted between 1740-1800.



*Yew Earl's coronets*

Moira began our site visit with an initial orientation walk to explain the ‘mish mash’ of Newburgh's buildings, linking aspects of the landscape which we had seen and heard about in the morning session with additional information.



*The remains of the Long Gallery on the East side of the house, which incorporates the old chapel*

The South side of the house, now a vast lawn covers the site of the former elaborate late 17th century gardens, where a fountain and parterre once existed. No evidence of the banqueting house has survived.



*South Lawn*

Using the 1856 and 1892 OS maps we spent the remainder of the afternoon exploring Newburgh's later developments throughout the 19th and 20th centuries. To the east of the House at the edge of the South lawn is a fine collection of trees commemorating royal visits to Newburgh between 1877-1923.

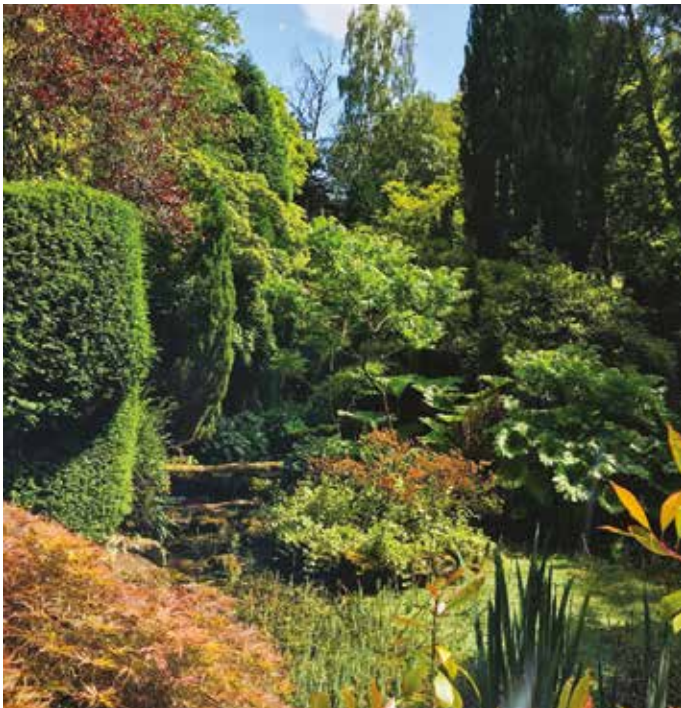




*1877 Royal Trees*



*The Basin pond in spring, which was formerly the moated site in the plans from 1605 to 1722*



*The delightful Water Garden created by Captain Wombwell in the 1950s.*



*The 18th century Kitchen Garden is thriving. It is fitting to end a visit to Newburgh enjoying the*

view across one of its oldest surviving landscape features – the lake, formerly ‘The Stanke’.



*The Lake*

### Conclusion

After a full and informative day steeped in Newburgh's historic landscape (and complemented by fine weather), the Bellasis family motto of ‘Good and beautiful enough’ is certainly an appropriate one to which ‘fascinating’ should be added too.

I would like to express my grateful thanks to Moira Fulton (YGT); Gail Falkingham (YGT and NYCRO); Margaret Boustead and NYCRO staff for their very informative contributions to our day, and to Maddy and Geoff Hughes for providing the refreshments.

**Chris Beevers**

**Photos © Chris Beevers**

### References

Fulton, M. (1999) A Nobleman, a Gentleman and Gardener's Re-creation: an enquiry into the landscape garden and park at Newburgh Priory University of Leeds, Dept of Fine Art)

Harris, J. (1995) The Artist and the Country House introduction John Harris and Strong, R. (2009) ‘The Artist and the Garden’

## Online talk by Lisa White - Alexander McKenzie



Online talk in December for the London Historic Parks & Gardens Trust on The Early Life of Alexander McKenzie, the 19th Century Horticulturist and Landscape Designer.

**Monday 11 December at 6.00pm.**

<https://londongardenstrust.org/whatson/talks/the-early-life-of-alexander-mckenzie-the-19th-century-horticulturist-and-landscape-designer/>

Lisa White is a PhD research student at the University of Sheffield Landscape Architecture Department. She has also written a blog for the Alexandra Palace Trust.



# Summer Picnic at Jervaulx Hall

## Wednesday 19 July 2023

### Introduction

Visitors to Jervaulx Abbey will have noticed the garden of Jervaulx Hall just beyond the outer edge of the ruins. On Wednesday 19th July the YGT summer picnic was held in this garden by the kind permission of Phillip and Olwen Woodrow. The Abbey ruins themselves are privately owned by the Burdon family. The Abbey was originally founded in 1145 by the Cistercian order and in 1156 was moved to its present location. It lies in a valley formed by two low hills, the one on the east covered in trees and the one on the west forming part of the gardens of the Hall. The Abbey was renowned for breeding horses which may well be a reason why horseracing is still so important to nearby Middleham. At the height of its prosperity the Abbey owned half the valley and had many stone buildings, the foundations of some of these lie under the gardens of the Hall.

The Hall itself (dating from before 1800) had been part of the Bruce family shooting estate and the site has now been scheduled as an ancient monument. The eight-acre garden lies along a ridge of land which backs on to the river Ure and rises steeply behind the Hall. There is a splendid view from the top of this rise looking north over the river and farmland. Queen Victoria visited and apparently sat in the summer house while Albert went fishing.

Phillip and Olwen Woodrow moved to the Hall about ten years ago and began to embark on their ideas for the grounds. They have redesigned the garden having had their plans vetted and approved by English Heritage because the site is adjacent to the Abbey ruins. They subsequently discovered that a ruined building that had previously been thought to be a folly was in fact the site of the Abbey mill. It has now been carefully preserved.



*The Restored Abbey Mill*

We approached the Hall and garden through a covered entrance thought to be Jacobean leading to a courtyard in front of the main house. This area was dominated in the centre by a beautiful fountain made by local sculptor, Kay Latto.



*The Courtyard and Fountain*

When looked at closely it is full of intricate carvings of abbey life and shells. The garden then stretches out to the north and east, the lower part lies on the flatter land on which the Abbey was built.

After a short introduction to the garden by Phillip Woodrow we were directed to wander the garden at will. He told us about their vision for the development of the garden and how it is being achieved with the help of a main gardener and supporting help. Standing in the courtyard and looking to the left there was a most spectacular bank of lavender stretching up behind the Hall.



*The Lavendar Bank*



## Sculptures in the garden

The scent pervaded the air above the area where we eventually had our picnic in the side courtyard.

At the base of this area was placed a very large piece of rectangular marble sculpture which formed simple yet compelling patterns of curved wavelines. We soon discovered as we continued along the paths that there were many other pieces of sculpture set amongst the rest of the garden. Some were abstract shapes, others depicting natural plants and flower shapes and human figures.

There had obviously been much thought as to the positioning of the pieces to give added atmosphere to some vistas. One sculpture was found tucked into a corner in which there was a gate in the boundary wall between the Hall and the ruins. Seated by the gate was a life size sculpture of a hooded monk, creating an atmosphere of quiet guarding and contemplation reminding one of the place it had once been. Above the gate was a stone plaque with an inscription dated 1557 referring to the abbey as being Yorevale Abbey with a date 1141. This was because Yorevale was the original name for the Abbey before it moved to its present site. The Earl of Ailesbury seems to have commissioned the plaque to mark the clearance of the Abbey site at this time but it is rather worn so not easy to read.



*The Monk at the Gate*

Another unusual feature was an old sycamore that had been felled recently leaving the lower part of the trunk behind on its small mound looking just like another rather beautiful sculpture.

On the south path was a small parterre area edged with box hedges that led up to a splendid glass house where much work is carried out. Behind this was a vegetable garden and to the side a croquet lawn.



*The New Glasshouse and Parterre*

To the side of the main path and sitting into the slope we came across a crescent shaped wall made of tufa stone. This is a new feature that the Woodrows have built recently.



*New Crescent Shaped Tufa Wall*

The tufa stone had already been discovered in the garden and must have been transported into the grounds at an earlier date. They have begun to plant the wall and base with a variety of suitable plantings such as alpines and succulents. It is an ongoing task that promises to be intriguing. The island beds were a splendid display of colour and variety with some particularly striking tall, dark red dahlias amongst the herbaceous plants.

It is not possible to go anywhere in this garden without finding unusual plants. It is a plantsman's garden, for example there are a large number of rare acers and magnolias. Some of the plants obtained by Mr Woodrow are so rare that it is almost impossible to find them elsewhere. The comparatively new planting is set off by some magnificent old trees, some of them hundreds of years old.

On moving further away from the Hall several vistas have been cleverly constructed so that standing on top of strategically placed steps one can look down on mixed beds placed in areas of sweeping lawns, in a wide variety of colours. We were told that the steep banks on the north side were carpeted with snowdrops, daffodils and bluebells in the spring.

Finally, at the most easterly part of the garden was a tall mound mounted by old yew trees which may have been there since the time of the monks. It is not known how the mound came to be there except that it is possibly the site of the Abbey waste heap that has matured over the years.

### **Conclusion**

The Woodrows have created this garden from their own imaginative ideas using the original landscape to produce a beautifully restored and redesigned garden fitting in so well with the ruins of the Abbey. The weather was kind to us. We had our picnic with the now traditional delicious strawberries for

dessert. Our grateful thanks go to Phillip and Olwen for giving us the opportunity to see their unique and beautiful garden and to YGT for providing the strawberries and cream. Phillip has informed us that the money we gave him in lieu of our entrance fee has been donated to Yorkshire Cancer Research.



*Ruins of the Abbey*

***Elizabeth Carrick and Rosalind Earl***

***All photos © Elizabeth Carrick & Rosalind Earl***

## **Bursary Report**

We are delighted to include the two following reports from our recent Bursary recipients. They are such splendid illustrations of the continuing success of the Scheme.

### **2022 Bursary Award Student: Rachel Higgins – Final Report**

#### **Introduction**

This is the second part of Rachel's reports to us about her experiences as a Bursary Student. The first part appears at p.29 of the Spring 2023 *Newsletter*.

The last year exploring the world of horticulture has been a varied and interesting one. I have worked several days a week at a garden centre, volunteered at Renishaw and studied for the RHS Level 2 in Practical Horticulture. I have managed to immerse myself in plants for five days a week and the garden centre job has helped with my plant ID skills. It is good to chat to people about their garden plans, help them with their plant choices and advise on plant care. This has perhaps been the most valuable take-away from there. The two managers have worked

there for years and so I have been trying to absorb as much knowledge as I can. Horticulture is a vast subject and the more I learn, the more I realise I will be learning it for the rest of my life!

The practical experience I have gained from Renishaw has been an important part of my journey and has helped me to gain confidence and apply what I have learnt at college. I would certainly recommend every RHS Level 2 Practical student to find a voluntary placement. I hope to return to volunteer there whenever I get the chance, as it was a valuable and thoroughly enjoyable experience.

The course did not run as smoothly as I would have hoped as the first tutor left suddenly in February, but another took their place in April. In the interim period, my classmates and I decided to continue to meet up and work together to keep the learning momentum ticking over. We organised a tree planting session at a community garden and helped out on a flower farm. We also set up our own plant ID sessions, testing ourselves on plants collected from our own gardens.





*Tree planting at a community garden*

When the course started up again, the new tutor put in a lot of effort to get us through the syllabus but were it not for the motivation and conscientiousness of the group, I am not sure we would have succeeded. We are all very aware of the sustainability aspect of gardening, a major feature in the new syllabus, and so it has featured naturally throughout our discussions.

We did a good job of getting the Eco centre site (where the classes were held) into a functional state and I can see its potential now. There is a wide variety of established plants and wildflower areas, and even several small ponds which we cleaned up and re-planted as part of one of the units. Mr Frog, who was hopping around whilst we worked, now has an easy access route to the water!



*Quadrat surveying to determine percentage of forbs*



*Lawn edging in the rain when you have no other day to practise!*

## Conclusion

As for future plans, I am still weighing things up. I have received notification that I have passed the course and I am thrilled about that. The Eco centre is running the Level 2 theory course in September, and I have met the tutor who seems to be on the ball. I have registered for the course which will be a half day once a week. Although I had already started the course online, I have decided I would rather learn with the group, so I will fit it into my week. There is not much horticultural work around and what is available is so poorly paid that I am having to consider my financial needs above my desires.

I am very grateful for the assistance provided by the YGT. It has enabled me to achieve a good starting point and I am hopeful that this will help me to find some appropriate work soon.

*Rachel Higgins*

## Footnotes

**Quadrat sampling** is a classic tool for the study of ecology, especially biodiversity. In general, a series of squares (quadrats) of a set size are placed in a habitat of interest and the species within those quadrats are identified and recorded.

A **forb** or **phorb** is a herbaceous flowering plant that is not a graminoid (grass, sedge, or rush). The term is used in biology and in vegetation ecology, especially in relation to grasslands and understory.



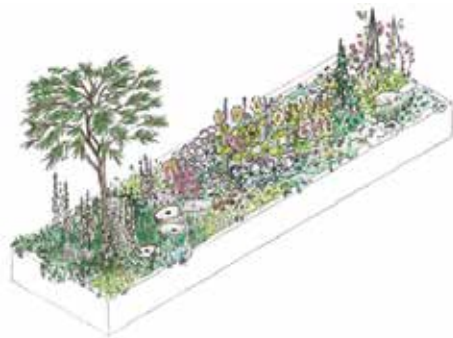
## Bursary report by Sarah Rose Collings

### Plants That Sense: Exhibiting at the RHS Tatton Park Show, 2023

How do plants sense the world around them? This question was the basis of *Plants That Sense: A Living Laboratory*, my Long Border Design at RHS Flower Show Tatton Park, 2023. I am a student of Landscape Architecture at the University of Sheffield, and this was my first ever RHS exhibit, made possible thanks to funding from the Yorkshire Gardens Trust. In this article, let me share more about the research behind my design and introduce you to the fascinating world of plant senses.

#### Sensory Long Borders

The theme for this year's RHS Long Border category was "Sensory". My first reaction to the theme was to think about traditional sensory gardens. These gardens focus on humans' sensory response to plants: their colour, texture, scent, or taste. I love these types of gardens because they are often more engaging and accessible, particularly to people with disabilities or health conditions.



*My initial sketch of the design, created for my application to the RHS.*

However, during my research, I came across a fascinating article that made me look at the idea of "sensory" from a totally different angle. *Sound perception in plants* was a 2019 research paper from Tel Aviv University which proved that certain flowers responded to the sound of pollinators by sweetening their nectar. The increase of sugar could be measured within minutes of the plant "hearing" the pollinators' wings. The article shifted my perspective; we often consider plants as objects, there for our own enjoyment and consumption. However, considering how plants sense us, and the world around them, shifts them to "subjects". They are living beings, after all.



*With my garden on judging day.  
The Long Border was a 2 x 7m raised bed.*

#### Choosing the plants

My design concept was to create a garden for an amateur botanist who wanted to learn more about how plants sense. I went down a rabbit hole learning more and more about how plants use their senses. I already knew about the five human senses: seeing, hearing, feeling, tasting, and smelling. However, I learned that animals and plants have more than five. Plants actually have at least **15 ways of sensing the world** including sensing which way is "up" and what time of day it is.

My research led me to choosing plants which all had notable responses to external stimuli. Here are some of my favourites:

- I chose my tree, the *Albizia julibrissin* 'Summer Chocolate', because of the similarity between the tree's leaves and the touch-sensitive *Mimosa pudica* (the "sensitive plant"). While the tree does not react to touch in the same way as *Mimosa pudica*, it does close its leaves at night (and windy weather, as I found out on site during 40 mph gusts!)
- *Dictamnus albus*, known as "burning bush", releases volatile oils in hot weather. This means you can set it on fire, the oils will burn but the plant is unharmed. The seed pods also have a lovely smell.
- How are hardy geraniums hardy? Well, they tolerate low temperatures by changing their biochemistry, increasing the concentration of sugars in their cells so that they will freeze at lower temperatures.
- I chose two touch-sensitive fruits: *Cyclanthera exfoliens* and *Ecballium elaterium*. Both are known as "exploding cucumbers" but only *C. exfoliens* are edible. Once ripe, the fruits react to touch by exploding, so their seeds are spread more widely.



You can see more about the plants I chose on my website, where I have a complete plant list.



*The Albizia julibrissin tree has leaves which are reminiscent of Mimosa pudica. They close during strong winds or at night.*

### **An outdoor laboratory**

My theme of an “amateur botanist” led me to researching Charles Darwin’s Living Laboratory at Down House. I really like the idea of a laboratory which is alive: after all, isn’t that what our gardens always are? Every gardener I know is constantly experimenting, measuring and learning about their plants and the conditions they are grown in. At Down House, Darwin often used found materials to conduct his experiments. One is still visible: the worm stone, made from millstones, that he used to measure how worms were moving earth beneath our feet. Inspired by Darwin, I wanted my Long Border to look like a garden that a scientist would make from things they found around them.

To achieve this effect, I turned to more contemporary artwork. At an exhibition of sculptor Jessica Rost at the Yorkshire Sculpture Park, I saw how Rost uses a “permaculture” philosophy in her work, choosing abundant materials and re-forming them into beautiful artworks. Inspired by this approach, I collaborated with designer Tom Fenwick to create millstones and bespoke planting structures for the

garden. Each item had a function for my imaginary botanist: for example, the mill stones created shade and held rain gauges. The planting structures were formed from reclaimed metal (old gates, a farmer’s baler tines and bicycle frames), and were brilliant for showing how climbing plants use their tendrils to wind their way towards the sun.



*Finishing touches before judging at RHS Flower Show Tatton Park. The plant structures were made from reclaimed metal.*

### **Learning from experience**

As a student who is only at the beginning of their design career, exhibiting at the RHS show was a huge challenge which taught me a great deal. At university, we only design things in theory, and never get to build gardens; making one of my designs into a reality, then showing it to the thousands of visitors at the Flower Show was a fantastic learning experience and I think it made me into a more confident and skilled designer. It was wonderful to receive feedback from visitors and RHS staff. The Long Border was awarded an RHS Bronze Medal and also featured on BBC Gardeners’ World.

Although we had to dismantle the garden at the end of the show, it still lives on. I partnered with Gatis Community Space in Wolverhampton to re-home the plants and hard landscaping features to their community garden. Their expert horticulturalists are already working with the plants to propagate them using seeds and cuttings so the legacy of the design will continue to engage people for years to come.

I want to end by saying a particular thank you to the Yorkshire Gardens Trust for their financial and emotional support, and for cheerleading me throughout this process.

***Sarah Rose Collings***

## Further Reading

1. “Flowers can hear buzzing bees—and it makes their nectar sweeter”, Michelle Z Donahue (2019)
2. “Why sunflowers follow the sun”, *Science Magazine* (2016)
3. “Metal Tolerance of Scented Geranium (Pelargonium sp. ‘Frensham’): Effects of Cadmium and Nickel on Chlorophyll Fluorescence Kinetics”, Tereza V. Dan, Sankaran Krishna Raj, and Praveen K. Saxena, *International Journal of Phytoremediation*: Vol 1, No1, pp 91-104 (2000)
4. *RHS Botany for Gardeners: The Art and Science of Gardening Explained & Explored*, Royal Horticultural Society (2013)
5. Darwin’s Living Laboratory, Down House.  
<https://www.english-heritage.org.uk/visit/places/home-of-charles-darwin-down-house/history/darwins-living-laboratory/>

**Sarah Rose Collings** is a gardener and designer, currently completing an MA in Landscape Architecture at the University of Sheffield. Previously, she trained in ‘Gardening, Park Design and Park Maintenance’ at the Valencia Municipal School of Gardening. Sarah began retraining in horticulture after working for 8 years in the charity and education sectors. She gardens as a renter and is passionate about bringing the joy of plants to as many people as possible, particularly those who may not own a garden. She shares her gardening progress on her Instagram, @sarahrosegrows.

## Conservation Report

### The Sunlight on the Garden

In c.1938 Louis Macneice wrote his short poem, *The Sunlight on the Garden*, at a time just after the Spanish Civil War and with the gathering clouds of what became the Second World War, it combines deep thoughtfulness with what I think is a light touch. He would have been 31 years old when he penned the poem. Macneice was a politically committed poet, a member of the Auden group, his work was widely appreciated by the public and from 1941 until his death in 1963, he was a scriptwriter and producer with the Features Department of the BBC... and he died too young.

I will return to *The Sunlight on the Garden* as I complete this piece. As rather a contrast to the joys of being outside, my eye has been caught by an article that I read on indoor allotments: vertical walls of hydroponically grown leafy greens under artificial light. A far cry from traditional allotments developed in the nineteenth century for the labouring poor to feed themselves. Now some of the largest companies are hoping to make their workplaces more interesting and healthier with salad crops in the office. There are plans afoot for ‘vertical farms’ that could be planted in vacant shops and office units in city centres and in new housing developments.

The idea for green walls is not new but I was pleasantly surprised to see one on a recent visit to my family in Sheffield. This one is near the traffic lights in Broomhill.



*The Green Wall at Broomhill, Sheffield*  
(Image © Alex Evans)

A living wall made up of over 2220 plants. The notice writes that ‘It provides an essential habitat for insects, reduces noise pollution and improves urban air quality so we can all breathe easier’. It is a fine contrast to the debacle of Sheffield’s street trees recently.

In 1908 the Small Holdings and Allotments Act placed a duty on local authorities to provide sufficient allotments according to demand. The Allotments Act 1925 established statutory allotments which local authorities could not sell off or convert without ministerial consent, known as Section 8 Orders. Allotments give so many the joy of growing food, companionship with other holders and good exercise outside. YGT has never been approached about allotments before, and strictly they are not usually in our sights as they are not normally designed in any



aesthetically creative sense. So, it was interesting that via YGT's website we were approached by a resident of Harden, Bingley about the possibility of creating some allotment gardens on open parkland on the boundary of part of the **St Ives Estate**. Roger (Lambert) fielded the enquiry and wrote that we support the creation of allotments generally but as allotment sites frequently develop a delightful if muddled appearance, often with multi-coloured huts, repurposed bits of metalwork, radio masts etc we would expect any proposal to create allotments within the boundary of a Registered estate would be strongly resisted. At St Ives they would be at odds with the Ferrand's wild and romantic landscape.

In addition to notifications from Local Planning Authorities directly to the Gardens Trust (GT), as a member of the Joint Committee of National Amenity Societies (JCNAS), the GT now receives a weekly list of planning applications potentially affecting historic parks and gardens that have been logged by JCNAS. The first one for Yorkshire that had not been notified to GT by the Local Planning Authority was for a new house in the garden of St Olave's Vicarage, 52 Bootham York. YGT Chairman Chris went to look at any impact on **Museum Gardens** and we were able to respond that this is extremely unlikely, but we did give advice on the landscaping for any new development and the potential archaeology.

We are receiving a steady stream of extra planning applications via JCNAS, some that are of no concern to us as a Statutory Consultee, but some that may affect the setting of a Registered Park and Garden (RPG) such as the proposed partial demolition of an area of park wall south-east of East Lodge at **Wentworth Woodhouse** and its rebuilding and realignment to make the highway safer. We were grateful for Brendan's (Mowforth) local knowledge and fortunately had no concerns. However, we were somewhat dismayed to find that it was only via JCNAS that we found out about works on the registered area at the University of York.



*University of York  
(Image © Win Derbyshire)*

Designed by Robert Matthew, Johnson-Marshall &

Partners (RMJM), Campus West was registered due to its historic and design interest, landscaping, designers, degree of survival and group value of the University buildings. The need for a student centre is undisputed and welcomed. We also welcome the demolition of the buildings on the site of the proposed building, and the remodelling of Market Square.

Chris and Win's (Derbyshire) extensive knowledge of the campus was invaluable for our response, and we are concerned at the proposal to remove the canopies to the Library Bridge and towards Vanburgh College. This is part of the overall system of covered walkways through the designed landscape, a visual and practical thread in the design. The Grade II listed concrete ramp is itself a covered walkway and the canopies on the Library Bridge and to Vanburgh College are part of a continuous pedestrian route. We wrote that it is important that they are retained and if necessary, they could be reconfigured to accommodate the ground works and landscaping schemes.

In July we heard that Leeds City Council Planning Department had decided on a temporary trial to remove from their planning portal public comments submitted in response to planning applications. Statutory Consultee responses remain posted but not other public comments such as from non-statutory but knowledgeable organisations such as Leeds Civic Trust. This is unfortunate as we value consultation responses from other organisations that are helpful in our understanding and analysis of an application enabling us to give good professional advice. This lack of public information has been the situation for some time with Barnsley MBC so eg in the past for Wentworth Castle, I have had to go directly to HE and the National Trust for their views which is an added pressure for me and time-consuming. Recently I noticed that Rotherham MBC (Wentworth Woodhouse) did not have any consultee or public comments.

On a happier note, it was a delight to hear from Friend/Volunteer Janet Worrall about progress at **Boston Park and Cemetery**, Rotherham. She writes:

‘... the first good news is that Yorkshire Water have finally departed the park after nearly four years disruption and the playing field has been re-grassed and will be ready for use very soon. Work in the cemetery has progressed well and we hold two clean up events every month. We have also been working with the Community Payback Service, who enjoy working in the Cemetery and have been hard at work, clearing graves and pathways. You may remember visiting the dell in Boston Park several years ago and the Trust funded a conservation management plan. Whilst my volunteers and the Community Payback Service have worked tirelessly, there is still

much to achieve. The Service awarded us the Golden Shovel, in recognition of our work in the dell and to commemorate 50 years of the Service.



*Boston Park Friends/Volunteers  
(Image ©Janet Worrall)*

We have also been awarded a King Charles III bench, which has been made in prison!! As with most projects there is always a downside. Whilst working on the hillside in the dell we encountered a huge number of bricks and rubble which the Council had dumped several years ago, not recognising that it formed part of the Victorian listing. Unfortunately, because we are not allowed to use power tools or heavy machinery this is going to prove problematic and may prevent the project coming to fruition. The Wildlife Trust have also invested in the dell and its environs but have now departed. We sent for Ordnance Survey maps and have been recreating the original footpaths, which has been very rewarding. I live in hope that one day the Council may recognise the importance of the site. We thank the Trust for their past help and encouragement.

Historic England's Chris Mayes, our well-respected regional landscape architect, returned from paternity leave in June and is now National Landscape Advisor for HE. We are delighted that his skills will be used nationally but in the North of England we remain without an HE Landscape Architect. We understand that recruitment will begin again this September.

### **Forestry Commission Consultations**

Between mid-April and early September 2023, we have responded to three Forestry Commission Consultations.

We had no objection to the felling and restocking of a compartment at **Wentworth Woodhouse** that lies at the entrance to the car park, south-west of the Stables, Riding School and Mews, where six large Black Poplars are to be removed with a restocking at 5 to 1 ratio with yew, holly, pedunculate oak and small-leaved lime planted as individual trees.

The other consultations were the result of Statutory

Plant Health Notices (SPHN) due to *Phytophthora ramorum* having been identified within the rhododendrons at both the Yorkshire Sculpture Park/Bretton Hall and at Wentworth Castle. We know that Diana Beaumont's period is too early at Bretton for "Hardy Hybrid" rhododendrons, but later generations of the Beaumont family added rhododendrons around the house and amongst the follies. As Hardy Hybrid rhododendrons are impossible to identify when out of flower, we advised that any surviving ones at Bretton will hopefully have been identified prior to any clearing so that suitable replacement varieties can be sourced and returned. We also advised that measures are put in place to protect features/archaeology as they are significant parts of the heritage assets at Bretton Hall/YSP. Similarly, at Wentworth Castle where the consultation was for The Wilderness near Stainborough Castle, we have written to the Forestry Commission to reinforce the horticultural heritage significance of the site, the importance of genetic material being preserved and protected, and a properly researched and informed plan of action. However, we are aware that the protection of UK commercial forestry stock will take precedence over historic landscapes.

### **Other Planning Consultations**

Between mid-April and early September 2023, we have responded to fifty- five planning consultations and re-consultations.

### **East Yorkshire**

In August we were re-consulted on **Thwaite Hall**, Cottingham. However, the new documents submitted were not detailed enough to ensure the future security of a significant registered park and garden. The management proposals should treat the site as one cohesive unit with detailed proposals for each area. More than five years and up to twenty years is too vague for no detailed defined management of the area round the lake and the woodland. We asked again for a Conservation Management Plan. HE also has concerns.



*View Towards the Lake glimpsed in the centre of photo in 2021. Thwaite Hall (Image © Val Hepworth)*



## North Yorkshire

We have written two further letters regarding the planning application from the Dean and Chapter of **Ripon Cathedral** for the Cathedral Extension Building including responding to queries from the agent Mr Adrian Rose via the planning officer about our earlier responses.

The saga about the setting of **Allerton Castle** continues with planning applications within the registered park and garden at Allerton Grange Farm and Gardeners Cottage. However, the major consultation was for reserved matters connected with the Employment/Business Park that was granted permission in 2021. This is phase 3 and the design has not got any better, in fact the opposite. The proposed landscape plan is diminished from the Landscape Masterplan of the outline application and the views from the Temple of Victory are unresolved. Like HE we think that the application continues to have insufficient regard for the settings of the highly designated heritage assets in Allerton Park and the Registered Park and Garden.

With the re-consultation for Home Farm at **Forcett Hall** we were pleased that our advice in the earlier consultation had been acted upon and we had no objection to the principle of converting the redundant traditional farm buildings into residential dwellings.

The new Mediterranean garden on land east of **Beningbrough Hall**, is an exciting new venture. One of the main characteristics of this area of Beningbrough's gardens has been that of regular change over the generations and we support a new design of modern appearance, reflecting the needs of contemporary visitors and contributing to the sustainability (financial and environmental) of the Hall and grounds over the coming years.

Information about the planning consultations for **Canal Gates at Studley Royal** is elsewhere in this *Newsletter* at p.7.

## South Yorkshire

**Wentworth Castle** has also featured in two planning applications. One for a temporary visitor information shed for 5 years and the other for resurfacing of existing paths with a resin bound surface in the Union Jack Garden.

We advised about our concerns regarding the siting of the shed as the 'sheds' of shed lane have always been hidden from sight from the House and Long Barn, being situated behind and parallel to the Kitchen Garden's Eastern wall. We advised that the proposed shed should be relocated along this part of the route or adjacent to the current free-standing visitor welcome and orientation sign.

The Union Jack Garden was part of the pair of Wildernesses planted in 1713 that combined the crosses of St George and St Andrew to commemorate the Union of England with Scotland in 1707. This was a key moment in the reign of Strafford's patron, Queen Anne, hence their local nickname: the Union Jacks.

We know from visits to Wentworth Castle that the paths can be difficult especially for buggies and wheelchairs in wet weather. In the past the GT/YGT has tried to encourage the use of self-binding gravels such as hoggin, Coxwell Stone or Breedon Gravel as far as possible as these sit more comfortably with the historic nature of a site. However, where a path is subject to extremely heavy traffic then bound resin may well be the only option and under the circumstances the Gardens Trust and Yorkshire Gardens Trust had no objection.

Those of you who have been to **Brodsworth Hall** recently will have been delighted with the outstanding care that is being given to the gardens and designed landscape by English Heritage (EH). I visited with family at the beginning of the school holidays and was interested to see the recent work on the Summer House and Eyecatcher.



*Hepworth family climbing to The Summer House at Brodsworth (Image © Val Hepworth)*

We have recently been sent a pre-application consultation for the Summer House's access improvements with a very interesting archaeological report indicating that stones from the earlier house at Brodsworth have been re-used, there was evidence for railings and even the remains of a rat and plant pots had been used in the backfill during construction! Dr Michael Klemperer, EH Senior Gardens Advisor (North/Midlands), has told me: 'The entrance to the Summer House mound is the old icehouse. There is a shallow depression in the nearby parkland lined with clay about 30 metres long and 10 wide and over a foot deep which was filled with water, this was used both for ice for the ice house in the winter months and possibly for curling/ skating. The 'pond' was investigated by geophysics, and part excavated by University of Sheffield Students about 10 years ago. Obviously in the Victorian era the lack of refrigeration

necessitated the need for long term storage in other forms, both the icehouse and game larder, and pantries in the house, helped with the food storage process. Both are from the Thellusson era circa 1861-onwards. The icehouse currently has no public access.'



*The formal gardens at Brodsworth  
(Image © Val Hepworth)*

## West Yorkshire

Two of our major consultations continue to be **Temple Newsam** and **Harewood House** but we have also had an outline application for up to 70 dwellings against the boundary of **Prince of Wales Park**, Bingley.

The HE Register for Prince of Wales Park notes that the north boundary allows "...views out over open fields rising to the north...". This is the land that is the subject of the application, and although we note that any such views will be substantially reduced by the boundary walling, and seasonally by the boundary trees, associated under-growth and relative ground levels, we have objected. Additionally, as the current application is Outline, there is no commitment to landscaping details, and the application is for "up to 70 dwellings", but all the drawings show only 54 dwellings. In our opinion, the currently presented layout and landscaped spaces are radically misleading.

Jane (Furse) and I have been continuing our discussions regarding the planning application for new recreational facilities at Temple Newsam and had a meeting with Emma Trickett (Parks), Stuart Daniel (Planning) and Dave Thorpe (Parks) in April. We are pleased that the section of cycle path near the possible Tudor Mount has been removed from the proposals and we hope that that there will be a planning condition to ensure that views from the House are kept at least as open as they are now, so vegetation in the old golf bunkers should be managed and there should not be any new tree planting in those areas.

We have also had a meeting with officers of Sustrans discussing the proposed Sustrans route from Rothwell to Temple Newsam House. The Sustrans officers had not dealt with heritage assets such as a Grade I House

and Grade II Registered Park and Garden before. We advised on setting and details of the track and materials.

There have been several changes in the management at the **Harewood House Trust** and we were delighted to be invited to a meeting on 6 th September with Kath Knight, Deputy CEO, Rachel Crewes, CEO, Trevor Nicholson, Head of Gardens and Grounds, and Guy from architects Bauman Lyons. Kath joined the Harewood House Trust about 18 months ago and part of her remit is to lead on the delivery of the Harewood House Trust's refocused masterplan. This is going to be very exciting, and I came home quite elated. It seems that the team there have a very good understanding of Harewood's significance and the importance of the designed landscape. We are looking forward to hearing more about the plans as they are finalised and go to planning.



*Meeting with Harewood House Trust at Harewood.  
(Image © Val Hepworth).*

My thanks as ever to the 'planning team': Win Derbyshire, Jane Furse, Geoff Hughes, Susan Kellerman, Roger Lambert. To David Rhodes for his expertise on Harrogate BC area and for particular advice from Peter Goodchild for Harewood and Temple Newsam, and our Chairman Chris Webb for York and the National Trust.

*And my extract from The Sunlight on the Garden.*

The sunlight on the garden  
Hardens and grows cold,  
We cannot cage the minute  
Within its nets of gold,  
When all is told  
We cannot beg for pardon  
... And not expecting pardon,  
Hardened in heart anew,  
But glad to have sat under  
Thunder and rain with you,  
And grateful too  
For sunlight on the garden.

**Val Hepworth**



# Provisional Events Diary 2024



As I write this, the start of the Harrogate Flower Show is only a couple of days away. The map of the showground has been published and on it a paragraph reads:

‘On the lawn between the fine architecture of Newby Hall and the beautiful rural backdrop towards the river Ure, awaits a collaboration between Landmark Collective and Yorkshire Gardens Trust – an epic Landscape Installation of a giant map of Yorkshire!’

The culmination of many hours of work by quite a few people. Let us hope that we are noticed by lots of new people, wondering “Who is this Yorkshire Gardens Trust?”

I am going to be brief about what the Events team have been organising for 2024. Our AGM next year will be on Saturday 6th April and will be held at Askham Bryan College in York. The talk after the AGM business will be given by Trevor Nicholson, the Head Gardener at Harewood, and after lunch there will be a tour of Askham Bryan.

Also in April, we have a walking tour of old nursery sites in York which will be led by Gillian Parker who will be joined by Peter Hogarth. Our Summer Evening party will be held at Ness Hall, a two and a half acre walled garden which has been created by three generations of the same family.

The Summer Picnic in early July will be held at Littlethorpe Manor, near Ripon, with four acres of stunning formal gardens, laid out since Mr and

Mrs Thackray purchased the property in 1985. The garden, as seen today, has been developed since 1998 with the appointment of Eddie Harland as Head Gardener. Later in July we will be visiting Dark Star Plants, a nursery which specialises in plants with dark coloured flowers or foliage, located in what was the walled garden at Rounton Grange, where Victorian adventurer Gertrude Bell lived.

We are also organising visits to Sewerby Hall and Gardens near Bridlington and Howsham Hall and Water Mill near York. There will be a visit to a garden in February to see a display of snowdrops and David Rhodes has very kindly offered to organise a study day about Knaresborough Forest.

We also have other plans up our sleeves, but nothing is yet fixed. Our full diary will be published later in the year.

## **For your 2024 diary, these dates are fixed:**

- |                       |  |
|-----------------------|--|
| Saturday 6th April:   | AGM at Askham Bryan College, York                                |
| Wednesday 24th April: | The Lost Nurseries of Central York walk                          |
| Tuesday 18th June:    | Summer Evening Party at Ness Hall, near Nunnington               |
| Wednesday 3rd July:   | Summer Picnic at Littlethorpe Manor, near Ripon                  |
| Friday 19th July:     | Dark Star Plants, East Rounton near Osmotherley, North Yorkshire |

***Vicky Price***



# Research and Recording Training Day at Kiplin Hall Monday 26 June 2023

## Introduction

For our annual training session, members of the Research and Recording team headed to Kiplin Hall in North Yorkshire (<https://kiplinhall.co.uk/>) on the 26 June. We were joined by Val Hepworth, Peter Goodchild and Chris Webb from the Conservation team, who had been invited to show them how the R&R group undertake site visits. In addition, Val had previously researched the site, so not only had she helped Louise Wickham and Gail Falkingham on the recce the previous month, but also her advice was invaluable on the day. Sadly Gail, who has been researching the site, could not join us.

The aim of the day was to help volunteers with site recording, specifically identifying features on the ground and understanding the historic layers. This is usually undertaken when desk research has been completed – see Guide 3 on the YGT website (<https://www.yorkshiregardenstrust.org.uk/research/methods>). Kiplin was chosen as it has many layers, many of which are now not visible. The hall was built between 1622 and 1625, but only a small garden area was laid out next to it judging from an estate map of 1723. For the next 200 years, changes were made to the designed landscape as documented by Gail in her blog - <https://nycroblog.com/2021/06/25/the-gardens-and-designed-landscape-of-kiplin-hall/>

The day was divided into two, with the morning spent looking at features in the wider landscape ('Route 1' on Figure 1) and the afternoon concentrated on the walled kitchen garden and adjacent gardens ('Route 2'). The participants were provided with a draft historic report, a pre-site visit report (Figure 2) and three maps from 1839 (tithe map), 1854 (1st edition 6" OS map) and 1891 (1st edition 25" OS map). The pre-site visit report and maps were used as guides to help look for features on the ground. In the initial briefing, I explained that the point of the trip was not to look at everything but to identify areas beforehand, where there were questions following the desk and archive research.



Figure 1: Routes taken on visit, together with key features. 1st edition 25" OS map, surveyed in 1891 and published in 1893.

National Library of Scotland. CC-BY

YORKSHIRE GARDENS TRUST HAMBLETON DISTRICT HISTORIC DESIGNED LANDSCAPES PROJECT SITE RECORD FORM				
Prior to your visit fill out the Site Record Form. Identify the FEATURE TYPE and their LATEST EVIDENCE, using your research, Ordnance Survey Historical maps and Google Earth images. Make any PRE-VISIT NOTES that will aid your recording on site. Print form and make any SITE NOTES on paper during the visit.				
After your visit, update any FEATURE TYPE & LATEST EVIDENCE. Confirm which features were visited on the ground. Use pre-visit notes and site notes to add a short SUMMARY if required. Then delete PRE-VISIT NOTES column to create final version of Site Record Form.				
Site Name <b>Kiplin Hall</b>	Date of Visit <b>26 June</b>	Recorder <b>Gail Falkingham</b>		
NGR: <b>SE 274 975</b>	Civil Parish: <b>Kiplin &amp; Bolton on Swale</b>	District: <b>Hambleton</b>	County: <b>North Yorkshire</b>	
FEATURE TYPE	LATEST EVIDENCE	PRE-VISIT NOTES	SITE NOTES (post visit, edit and change into SUMMARY)	Photos
Identify feature. Use P&G UK Theodolite.	Identify evidence. Confirm on the ground and edit as required.	Make notes prior to the site visit. e.g. things to check, access routes, maps/plans/images to use	Make notes during the visit. Note when actually visited on the ground. Write a summary after your site visit for those features that require extra detail, otherwise the latest evidence column will suffice.	Note if any taken.
<b>Entrances and Approaches</b>				
Lodge	Extant Building	NW of hall at SE 27188 97791		
Gates & gatepiers	Extant Structure	NW of hall at SE 27188 97791		
Carriageway	Earthwork/ Levelled Earthwork	From lodge via stables to northwest of hall. Check whether still in place.		
Lodge	Extant Building	East Lodge at SE 28079 97343		
Lodges	Documentary Evidence	Twin lodges at east entrance. Replaced by single northern lodge.		

Site Record Form, Kiplin Hall

Figure 2: Front page of pre-site visit record for Kiplin Morning survey – features in the wider landscape

We started by heading towards the northern lodge from the modern car park to examine the carriageway from it to the northwest of the hall. It first appeared on the 1839 tithe map, but the lodge is listed as late 18th century, so the carriageway may well date from that time. The building of the car park has obscured its southern end but the track from it to the lodge probably followed the original route, as large lime trees with diameters over 6ft were identified on either side. Heading back to the hall, we walked past the walled kitchen garden towards the shrubbery southeast of it. Although now somewhat overgrown, we looked for any remaining planting. For example, we identified butcher's broom (*Ruscus aculeatus*) which was a popular shrub in Victorian times, perhaps the offspring of earlier planting.

Of the two ponds shown in the northern section of Peninsula Wood, we knew from map evidence that only the eastern one remained. It had been remodelled as a lily pond and we looked to see if its type of construction was stone or mud-lined, but it was too overgrown to establish this. Similarly, we were unable to identify the exact location for the summerhouse shown on 1857 OS 6" map. We were able to find part of the ha-ha, which was along the east boundary of Peninsula Wood. Although much degraded, we could see that it was made of large stones. The date of planting in the Peninsula Wood was not known, but several old specimen trees were observed including a distinctive lime tree.

The final part of the morning was spent tracing the carriageway from the East Lodge to the entrance gates at the east side of the Hall. This was visible from the end of Peninsula Wood, so we retraced our steps back through the wood to the eastern end of the Lime Avenue, which was planted by Walter Carpenter from 1891. These trees appeared to date from this planting due to their size and regularity, with the exception of a notable gap about halfway down where the carriageway cut through.



### Afternoon survey – walled kitchen garden, orchard and “Lady Tyrconnel’s Garden”

After a well-deserved break for lunch, we started on the second part of the tour by making our way to the walled kitchen garden. This was possibly built as early as mid-18th century, although the first map evidence is from the tithe map of 1839. It was certainly no earlier than 1723, as it did not appear on the estate map of the time and in fact a public road is shown in its location. Evidence suggests that Christopher Crowe, the owner, had this road moved further east possibly by the early 1740s, when there are references to work on a ‘garden house’ (likely to be a greenhouse). The participants therefore looked for clues in the brick walls, which were mostly built with small handmade bricks. This would indicate that they were made before 1784, when the brick tax was introduced and bricks became larger, which narrowed the likely date of construction to the second or third quarter of the 18th century.

We then turned our attention to the interior and the three glasshouses shown there on 1893 25” OS map. The first on the eastern section of the north wall of the kitchen garden had gone with no evidence remaining, as parts of the wall appeared to have been rebuilt. This was also the case for the free-standing glazed structure just south of the northern gate of the kitchen garden. The one on the middle of western section of the north wall with the bothy behind had been rebuilt. Of more interest was the back wall where there was evidence this had been heated, possibly prior to the construction of the glasshouse.



*Figure 3: Rear of northeast wall of kitchen garden showing the old flues indicating a heated wall.*

*(Photo © Chris Beevers)*

Moving north to the orchard, which had been replanted in 2017, we looked for any old fruit trees but none were apparent. The vinery at the northern end of the orchard against the boundary wall was mid-19th century with later additions by Richardsons in the 1880s. Sadly, this was semi-derelict with just the wooden outer structure remaining and the interior covered by vegetation. Adjacent to the orchard was ‘Lady Tyrconnel’s Garden’, an open area surrounded by shrubbery, created in the second half of the 19th century. This was separated by a line of

possibly original conifers. Although some areas have been replanted, the eastern edge of the garden had merged with the woodland. Some of our eagle-eyed participants spotted some Turk’s cap lilies (*Lilium martagon*) just on the woodland edge. It is a prized bulb now and could well be the descendants of earlier ornamental planting.

One of the key features of Lady Tyrconnel’s garden was the pond lined with tufa. Having fallen into disrepair, there is now some work being done in reinstating it, but its current state gave few clues as to how it was originally built.



*Figure 4: Remnants of the tufa lined pond in Lady Tyrconnel’s garden. (Photo © Chris Beevers)*

The day ended with trying to find evidence for the conservatory attached to the outside of the south wall of the walled garden.



*Group discussing the location of the possible greenhouse/conservatory on southern wall of kitchen garden.*

*(Photo © Val Hepworth)*

A building is shown on the tithe map apparently exactly in the middle of the southern wall. On the 1st edition OS map though, which was surveyed some 15 years later, a building (later named a conservatory) is placed further to the east. Was this the same building (allowing for variations in the map) or two different buildings? Despite examining the walls for clues, we could not answer this. The conservatory has been demolished with a metal structure erected in its place, so this did not help us either.

### Conclusion

This taught us an important lesson as, while these site visits can be useful, sometimes questions remain unanswered.

**Louise Wickham**

# YGT for Schools

## Recycle in your Garden!

The Schools Group decided to make recycling their emphasis for this academic year of 2022/23. We kick-started this theme by sending all member schools Blue Lupin Seeds which can be dug into the soil before flowering as a green manure. One of our team wrote a booklet about green manure to accompany our gift, and it is now available on our website.

Also on the website is another home-produced PDF called *Recycle in Your Garden!* which was sent out in January to support the schools' efforts. Continuing with the recycling theme, we offered log planters and copies of *Pedro Loves Saving the Planet* by Jess French. YGT for Schools bookplates make sure that any such gifts are recognised. As usual, these offers were extremely popular.

Something we always offer are Grounds Development Awards, which give a sum of money to be spent on school gardening to schools we feel deserve the support. This year the four successful schools were: Ravensthorpe in Dewsbury who are developing a wildlife area to support the curriculum, involving the children in sourcing materials, by buying, scavenging or upcycling; Castleton near Whitby who are creating an area for small groups of vulnerable children, promoting a sustainable lifestyle across school, and growing produce for breaktimes and the school kitchen; Allerton in Leeds who created detailed plans to create an accessible, multi-sensory garden (with a 'dip-puddle') surrounding the SEN hut; and Saltergate in Harrogate where the children were, and continue to be, involved in every stage of the garden project, and who sent in their design drawings and ideas for making bug hotels, garden art and a fairy garden. Next year we plan to increase the number of Awards available, in line with our increased membership, so that we can support more inventive and exciting projects.

Lastly, we are very pleased to report that over the twelve months to July 2023 our membership increased from 54 to 76 member schools. We think this is due to schools spreading the word, but also to the new YGT website. Increased membership means we can encourage more schools and help more children to experience the value of gardening and to appreciate the gardens around them. We hope our topical theme for the new school year, Climate-proof your garden! will be a useful one.

**Sue Lindley**

# Friends of Roman Aldborough



## An invitation to YGT

In May 2022, The Friends of Roman Aldborough were delighted to welcome a visit by members of YGT to Aldborough Roman Site.

One of the features on the tour was the start of the Roman Garden Project. This is based on the Italic style of a previous garden. It is designed to showcase the wide variety of plants that the Romans grew and to educate visitors on the use of these plants.

Our invitation to YGT members is two-fold. We are offering you the opportunity to make new friends and enjoy the peace of the garden in return for some help in developing the garden.

If you are interested, please contact:

[secretary@romanaldborough.co.uk](mailto:secretary@romanaldborough.co.uk)

Here are some photographs showing progress on the Roman Garden Project





# Gardens Trust News



## Volunteer of the Year Award

The presentation of this award was made

on 7th September and there were four nominees, one of whom was our own Gail Falkingham. It was an extremely strong list of candidates, and the winner was Roger Last who volunteers with Norfolk Gardens Trust. Roger was nominated for his work in producing NGT's book *Enticing Paths* – not only did he work 'incredibly hard to produce this well-received 480-page hardback book containing over 500 colour images, but he did it during the most challenging of times, during Covid lockdown when archives were closed and travelling to take photos of people's maps, pictures or documents was very difficult'.



*Gail Falkingham*

The following is the text of Gail's nomination:

Nominated for: reaching out to new audiences to encourage interest and/or involvement in garden history.

Yorkshire Gardens Trust nominated Gail for 'her effectiveness in realising her outreach vision, leading to step-changes in YGT's outreach, and creating the foundations for further development'.

### **Gail's work with Yorkshire Gardens Trust's social media**

Gail set up the YGT Instagram account in May 2022, and recently collaborated on a joint campaign with the Gardens Trust. The source material was based on historic designed landscapes visited as part of the Gardens Trusts' Yorkshire Weekend 2022 – using an existing event to gather material. Gail took photographs during visits, and written material came from articles, primarily by YGT members, for the delegates' handbook. Gail turned this into weekly Instagram posts for 5 consecutive weeks and related blogs on YGT's website, signposted from Instagram. The GT collaborated, posts were broadcast on YGT

and GT Instagrams, under both brands, reaching both audiences and beyond.

### **Gail's impact on YGT's Outreach**

Because of Gail's work over the last 12 months, YGT will be a prominent part of the Harrogate Autumn Flower Show in September 2023. They will occupy a significant area of the garden at Newby adjacent to the Hall, close to main circulation areas, to showcase their purposes and achievements in the research and conservation of Yorkshire's designed landscapes. It will be staffed by new and long-standing volunteers.

Because of its heightened social media presence, YGT has attracted more new volunteers. The appeal for help at the Flower Show elicited responses from a range of people who have not volunteered with them previously. The Show gives YGT access to a receptive audience that might not otherwise find it. Attracting new volunteers helps to cement memberships and demonstrates in practice the real-world social importance of volunteering around our core interests. It has also enabled YGT to build a relationship with a major player in Yorkshire events, giving access to skills and resources YGT has previously lacked.

### **Gail's work with archives and garden history**

Gail's background as an archaeologist and her employment at the North Yorkshire County Record Office gives her a unique platform to showcase original materials from which garden history is derived. She has curated exhibitions at the North Yorkshire County Record Office (NYCRO) based on material used to research YGT sites. As always, she uses more than one platform to proselytize – NYCRO and YGT blogs and Twitter included.

Gail's work in NYCRO has raised the profile of garden history within the record office, which upskills the archivists and support staff, improving the knowledge of staff to share with researchers. YGT has used Gail's exhibitions and blogs to help our researchers and potential researchers to be more confident about approaching archives, to approach them in a comfortable, supportive and welcoming environment. This creates a foundation for further development in a critical area of activity for YGT and the wider gardens trust family.

Gail said: "I am honoured to have been nominated by my colleagues at YGT for this award, and proud to represent our beautiful county of Yorkshire and its rich garden heritage. It is a pleasure to champion the work of YGT and to reach a much wider and diverse audience than our members alone. Seeing this audience grow is very rewarding, as has been working closely with The Gardens Trust on our

recent social media collaboration. It has also been extremely enjoyable to share my enthusiasm for garden history by giving talks, organising events and encouraging others to find out more about their local areas.

This nomination is a lovely surprise, but I am one of a large team of dedicated volunteers at YGT and I couldn't do the things I do without their input and support!"

---

## **The National Heritage Act 1983 and the Register of Parks and Gardens**

This spring marks the 40th anniversary of the statutory powers to compile a 'register of gardens and other land ... appearing to them to be of special historic interest' (National Heritage Act 1983, Schedule 4 Section 8C) with the first registrations being published a year later in 1984.

The next 12 months offer a great opportunity for all of us to celebrate the Register and its development over 40 years. It's also timely to think about the next steps in the protection of our nation's designed landscape heritage. After all our own fortieth birthdays are often treated as signifying maturity and a new phase so why not for the Register too?

Shaped by Michael Hesletine, Secretary State for the Environment (1979-1983), the 1983 Act paved the way for the modernisation of the State's heritage responsibilities. It established key museums such as the V&A and Royal Botanic Gardens Kew as independent public bodies with boards of trustees, and a new Historic Buildings and Historic Monuments Commission which formally came into being on 1 October that same year. The Commission's first chairman, Lord Montagu of Beaulieu named it 'English Heritage'. The new non-departmental government body took on the roles of several Government offices, ministries and advisory boards to look after properties in the care of the State and designations. The Act defined these duties as:

- securing the preservation of ancient monuments and historic buildings
- promoting the preservation and enhancement of the character and appearance of conservation areas
- promoting the public's enjoyment of, and advance their knowledge of, ancient monuments and historic buildings and their preservation.

In order to fulfil these functions, the Act also conferred relevant powers to the new body such as property acquisitions (including gardens), grant-making, publishing, surveys and other operational requirements such as power of entry, governance, staffing, finance and accounting. Between 1900 and 1950 the State had amassed hundreds of buildings,

monuments and sites amassed as a national collection. English Heritage continued to add to this collection from 1983 to 2015 and grew a sizeable membership and income which contributed to the costs of maintaining and conserving the properties. Under Lord Montagu and later Jocelyn Stevens, acquisitions included gardens such as Brodsworth Hall (South Yorkshire) and its restoration. In 2015 the organisation was divided into the charitable English Heritage Trust and the public advisory body, Historic England (the Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission). (The Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England (set up in 1902) and the National Monuments Record had been merged with English Heritage back in 1999 and continue to part of Historic England's responsibilities).

The powers to compile a register of gardens stands out as the one new specific task for the new Commission. Protection for buildings and ancient monuments of national importance was already well established by the 1980s. Indeed, the history monuments protection goes back to an 1882 Act and the current listed building system has its roots in the 1947 Town and Country Planning Acts. The protection of historic wrecks had already been covered by a 1973 Act and further measures were added to the 1983 Act.

The need to protect our parks and gardens heritage had been widely recognised, including in Parliamentary discussions, for several decades ahead of the 1983 Act. There are two Gardens, Heritage & Planning blogs [<https://gardensheritageandplanning.com/>] that provide more detail on the evolution of the legislation. The Gardens Trust, as the former Garden History Society, the ICOMOS-UK Historic Gardens Committee and experts such as John Pendlebury had been championing statutory protection and how this might work, and there were lists of candidate sites.

During the 1983 Act's passage through Parliament, there was debate about the scope of interests that might be captured in a new national list such as architectural, historic, artistic, silvicultural and horticultural. However, the Government was generally reticent about increasing the number of designations and more lines on maps; and they had concerns about the capacity of English Heritage to take on the task. It was only in the last committee stage of the Act, that the power to compile a register was added however its purpose was focused down to historic interest.

The register was pioneering as a statutory measure as follows on smartly from the 1982 ICOMOS Florence Charter which highlighted the importance of identification and listing to ensure protection.



The English register was pioneering as a statutory measure. It was the first in the UK and a leader across Europe and further afield.

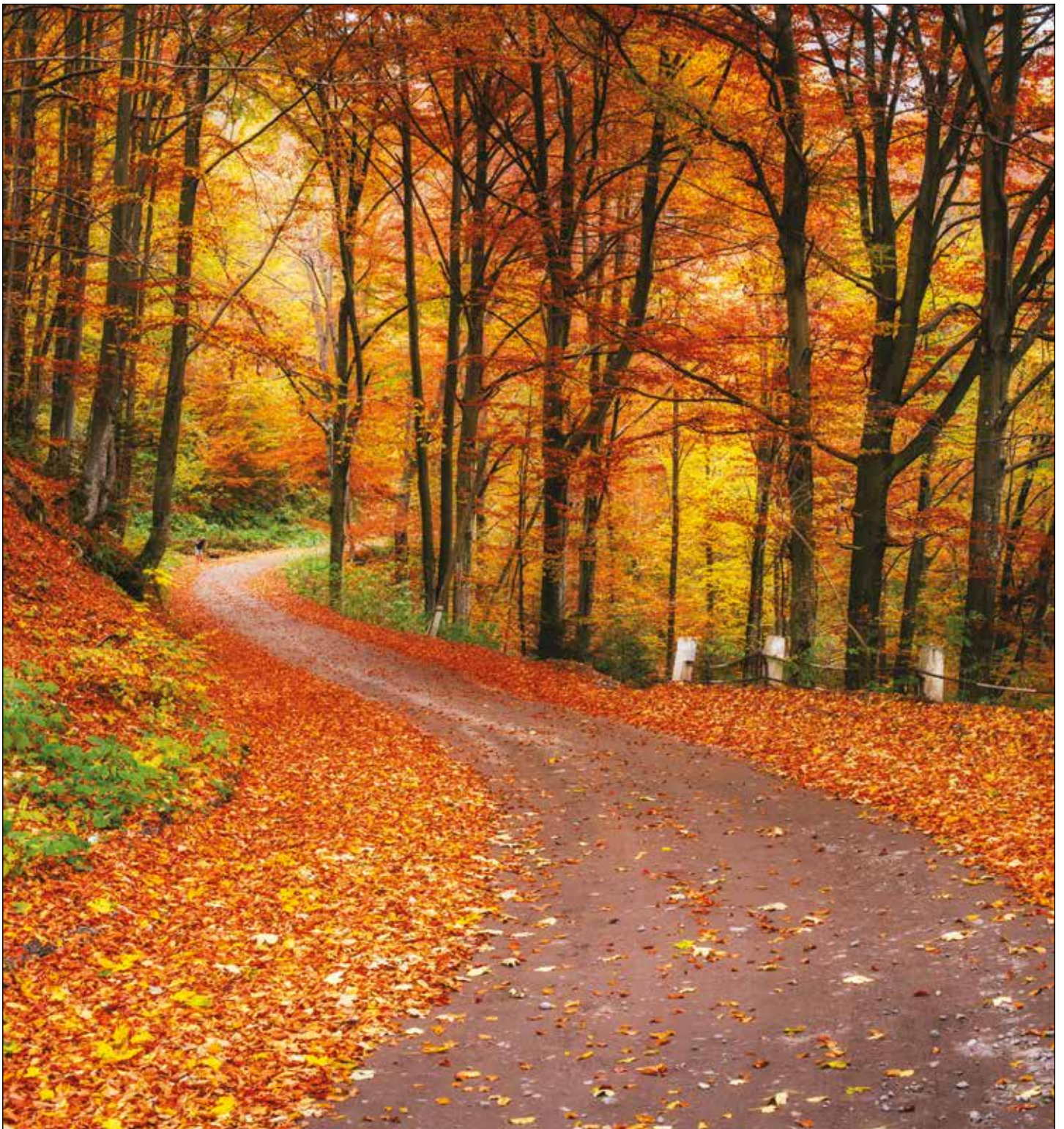
The first English registrations were published as county volumes. As knowledge and interest in the care, conservation and value of historic parks and gardens grew, and the demands of the planning system increased, English Heritage invested in a programme of work to upgrade the register entries between 1999 and 2003. Thematic studies were also commissioned from experts to guide the development of the register and most recently the Gardens Trust and members helped identify important post-1945 designs with 20 new

registrations listed in 2020. In 2016 all the register entries and maps became available online as part of the National Heritage List for England. There are currently 1,701 registered sites. The newest registration is East Dene on the Isle of Wight, an 1820s villa pleasure ground.

Over the next year, it would be great to explore the story of the register over the last 40 years and how registration has worked in practice and possible next steps in the protection of historic parks and gardens.

***Jenifer White***

***Former Principal National Landscapes  
Advisor, Historic England***





# Yorkshire Gardens Trust

President	The Countess of Harewood
Vice Presidents	Caroline Legard, Peter Goodchild, Nick Lane Fox
Chair	Chris Webb
Treasurer	Maddy Hughes
Company Secretary	Gillian Parker
Trustees	Christine Beevers, Penelope Dawson-Brown, Val Hepworth, Maddy Hughes, Roger Lambert, Brendan Mowforth, Vicky Price, Gillian Parker, Chris Webb

## Committees and Groups

Conservation	Vacant
Events	Vicky Price, Maddy Hughes and the Team
Membership/Engagement	Vicky Price
Newsletter/e-Bulletin	Christine Miskin
Research and Recording	Louise Wickham and the Team
Schools	Nicola Harrison
Small Grants	Brendan Mowforth
Webmaster	Louise Wickham

**Registered Company No 03256311    Charity No 1060697**

## Forthcoming YGT Publications

Publication	Copy deadline	Publication date
December e-Bulletin	1 December 2023	21 December 2022

**Please send items for inclusion to Christine Miskin: [cemiskin22@gmail.com](mailto:cemiskin22@gmail.com)**

Letters to the Editor are welcome; please send them by email to [cemiskin22@gmail.com](mailto:cemiskin22@gmail.com)

### YGT Contact Details

For general and membership queries: email [secretary@yorkshiregardenstrust.org.uk](mailto:secretary@yorkshiregardenstrust.org.uk).

Or, if you are already a member, use the 'phone numbers on your membership card to give us a call.

Registered Company No 03256311 Charity No 1060697

[www.yorkshiregardenstrust.org.uk](http://www.yorkshiregardenstrust.org.uk)



@YorkshireGardensTrust



@YorkshireGT