



Historic Landscape Strategy

2024-2029



This strategy sets out English Heritage's vision and action plan to ensure that the historic landscapes within our care are better understood, conserved and enhanced.



The Parterre Garden, Audley End House, Essex

English Heritage cares for over 400 historic monuments, buildings and places. Many of these places are significant landscapes in their own right, whilst others are landscapes that provide the setting to significant buildings and places.

From the formality of Wrest Park to the rolling parkland slopes around Kenwood House, from Queen Victoria's garden at Osborne to the exotic Quarry Garden at Belsay Hall, we look after gardens throughout England and from almost every century. We also help to care for World Heritage Sites, such as the Stonehenge landscape and Hadrian's Wall, and the fortifications and earthworks of medieval castles.

Our landscapes are diverse and dynamic, requiring complex management and maintenance approaches to ensure we conserve their significance. They need to inspire and delight, providing opportunities for education, enjoyment and improved mental wellbeing, and they need to impress, displaying the highest possible standards of presentation.

This strategy sets out our aims and priorities for our landscapes, identifying how we will engage with a broad range of stakeholders to better understand, conserve and enhance these special places.



Veteran London plane (*Platanus x hispanica*) in the Elysian Garden at Audley End, Essex

Our responsibilities

Protecting nationally and internationally important landscapes

The landscapes that we care for are almost all recognised and protected by at least one of the following designations, and often by a combination of these:

World Heritage Sites - sites designated by UNESCO for having cultural, historical, scientific or other form of international significance and which are of outstanding value to humanity. These can include landscapes, or landscape settings. It is important that sites are cared for in a way that reflects their World Heritage Site status. English Heritage helps to care for World Heritage Sites at Stonehenge & Avebury, The Frontiers of the Roman Empire (Hadrian's Wall), Ironbridge Gorge, Studley Royal Park & Fountains Abbey and the Tower of London.

Scheduled Monuments - sites that are recognised for their historical importance. They include archaeological sites and often encompass gardens and landscape settings around monuments. It is a criminal offence to destroy or damage a scheduled monument, to undertake works that would cause damage, or to remove objects from it without consent. Over 90% of the sites within our care are scheduled, in whole or in part.

Listed Buildings - buildings and structures recognised for their special architectural or historic interest, which can include garden features such as fountains, sculptures, gateways and follies. There are important rules that apply to the care and conservation of listed buildings and structures, which are intended to protect them. The listed structures in our care include follies, ice houses, glasshouses, orangeries, fountains and garden statuary.

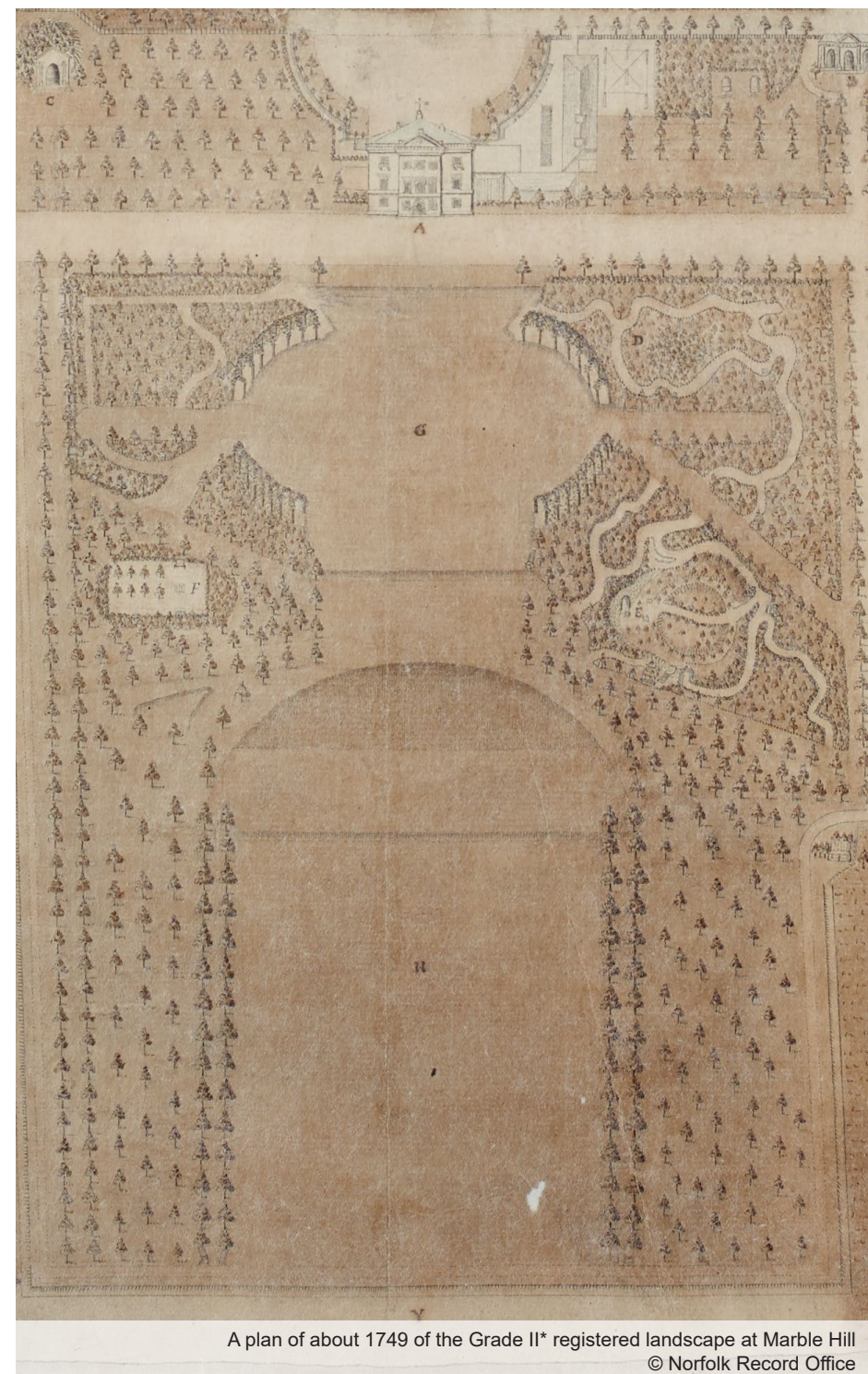
Registered Parks and Gardens - the Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest, maintained by Historic England, identifies over 1,700 sites assessed to be of particular landscape significance. English Heritage is involved in the care of over 30 sites included on the register, and registration is a material consideration in the planning system. Lack of repair and maintenance can result in landscapes being categorised as 'at risk'.



Cawfields, Northumberland (Frontiers of the Roman Empire World Heritage Site)

National Parks - there are 15 National Parks in the UK, each one designated as a protected landscape because of its special qualities. Many of our sites lie within National Parks, which are administered by their own authority. We have a duty to work with these authorities to help conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of these landscapes.

Tree Preservation Orders and Conservation Areas - Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) are designations made by a local planning authorities in England to protect specific trees, groups of trees or woodlands. Conservation Areas are locally designated for their special character, which includes the trees within them. All trees with TPOs or within Conservation Areas are protected and works must not take place without consent. Over 180 of our sites lie within Conservation Areas and many others contain trees with TPOs. We have a responsibility to care for these trees to prevent them from loss or damage.



A plan of about 1749 of the Grade II* registered landscape at Marble Hill
© Norfolk Record Office

PROJECT FOCUS

Marble Hill Revived

Marble Hill was built in the 1720s for Henrietta Howard, mistress of King George II when he was Prince of Wales, as a retreat from court life. The house is a textbook example of Palladian architecture, whilst the gardens were designed with advice from Alexander Pope and Charles Bridgeman, later royal gardener to George II. It is now the last complete survivor of the elegant villas and gardens that once bordered this part of the Thames.

The Marble Hill Revived Project was completed in 2022, thanks to a grant of over £5m by the National Lottery Heritage Fund and the National Lottery Community Fund. As well as refurbishment of the house itself, the landscape has been conserved following an estate plan from about 1749, including reinstatement of a lost 18th century grotto, tree works to reinstate designed views and avenues and works to reveal and restore gardens in the 'woodland quarters'. New interpretation helps guide visitors through the landscape, whilst a restored nine pin alley, meadows and orchards have enriched and enlivened the site.

A complex and significant designed landscape, Marble Hill is a public park, a Grade II* registered landscape and contains four listed buildings. It lies within a Conservation Area and was saved from development by an Act of Parliament in 1902 because it lay at the heart of the famous view from Richmond Hill. It also contains a fine Black Walnut (*Juglans nigra*), which is over 250 years old and the third largest specimen in the UK.

Photo : New orchards and wildflower meadows at Marble Hill



PROJECT FOCUS

Contemporary Heritage Gardens

Between 2000 and 2003 English Heritage provided funding and project support to create new gardens at six of its properties, under the Contemporary Heritage Garden Scheme.

The project launched in April 1999, following the popularity of the new garden designed by Penelope Hobhouse and created for HM Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother at Walmer Castle in Kent. Its aim was to create contemporary gardens appropriate to their historic settings, improving the presentation and interpretation of the properties and applying the best standards of finish and construction to help create future heritage. Through a design competition notable garden designers were appointed to design and deliver the projects:

- **Eltham Palace, South London - South Moat Border**
Designed by Isabelle van Groeningen
- **Osborne - The Walled Garden**
Designed by Rupert Golby
- **Lincoln Bishop's Palace - Terrace Garden**
Designed by Mark Anthony Walker
- **Richmond Castle - Cockpit Garden**
Designed by Neil Swanson of Landscape Projects
- **Portland Castle - The Former Governor's Garden**
Designed by Christopher Bradley Hole
- **Witley Court - Wilderness Garden**
Designed by Michael Ibbotson of Colvin and Moggridge

Photo : The South Moat border at Eltham Palace © Louise Hudspith



Our challenge

Managing a diverse and complex collection of landscapes

No two landscapes within our care are the same, and this means that there is no 'one size fits all' way of managing these special places.

- **Brodsworth Hall** in South Yorkshire has unique Victorian gardens that are notable, not just for their horticultural excellence, but for the many unique structures they contain: a Victorian privy; a game larder; a target range for archery with a Swiss-style chalet; a fern dell with stone bridges oversailing it.
- **Marble Hill** in London is a recently restored 18th century landscape containing a grotto, wildflower meadows, orchards and a nine-pin alley. However, it is also a public park, freely accessible to visitors at all times of year and with sports fields and playing pitches that are also maintained by English Heritage.
- **Rievaulx Abbey** in North Yorkshire is an important complex of monastic buildings, but is also significant as part of a much wider landscape. Reimagined as 'romantic ruins' in the 18th century, the site is a key focal point in designed views from Rievaulx Terrace, a dramatic garden cut into the hillside above.
- **Mount Grace Priory**, also in North Yorkshire, is a rare 'Arts and Crafts' garden. Its landscape has undergone a renaissance in recent years with the input of garden designer Chris Beardshaw, who has helped us revive this hidden gem.
- **Bratton Camp** in Wiltshire is home to the White Horse, a striking local landmark, visible for many miles around. The extensive chalk grassland surrounding it is an essential foil for the monument, but also provides a habitat for a diverse range of insects, including the rare Adonis Blue butterfly and the scarce forester moth.



Bratton Camp and the White Horse, Wiltshire

PROJECT FOCUS

Down House

This was the home of the great scientist Charles Darwin, who lived here for 40 years until his death in 1882. After moving to the house in 1842, Darwin and his wife, Emma, remodelled the house and its extensive gardens, which Darwin used as his 'living laboratory'. It was here that he developed his theory of evolution by natural selection and wrote his groundbreaking work 'On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection' (1859).

Darwin believed that animals and plants adapted to their environment and that those with special features that helped them survive would then reproduce and pass on these special features to the next generation. Darwin's experiments into adaption are a showcase into how he worked, carefully observing and recording his findings.

At Down House today, gardeners, volunteers and academics continue to record, monitor, and observe the garden, as well as carrying out many of Darwin's experiments he conducted here. A recent interpretation project has helped visitors to understand this fascinating history as they explore the site.

Photo : The Glasshouse at Down House show a range of plants with adaptations and special features Darwin studied



Ensuring we fully understand and appreciate the landscapes in our care

Our diverse landscapes help us to tell different chapters of England's story, and many of these have features that are very obvious and easy to read. A castle landscape, for example, might be easily recognised by its defensive earthworks and moat. Likewise, it is difficult to enter a formal garden such as Osborne and not recognise the grandeur of its statuary and the spectacle of its bedding displays, all designed to impress and excite.

However, we have many other sites where landscape significance is more fragile, difficult to interpret or easily missed altogether. In some cases our landscapes are at risk simply because we don't know or fully appreciate what we have. In order to protect the range of landscapes in our care, we need to understand what is special about them and share that information with others.

- **Audley End** in Essex has a fascinating monastic history that pre-dates its Capability Brown landscape, but there is currently little interpretation for visitors to explain this particular history, meaning some parts of the site are less visited than others. We want to address this, so that visitors can appreciate the full history of this unique heritage site and its landscape
- **Down House** in Kent has beautiful gardens surrounding the house, but their significance can only fully be appreciated by understanding that this was once Charles Darwin's 'living laboratory' where he developed his theory of evolution.
- **Ashby-de-la-Zouch** in Leicestershire is an outstanding example of a late medieval castle, but is also significant for the unusual amount of evidence that survives for its surrounding gardens in the 16th and 17th centuries. This history is evident in aerial photography of the site, but much harder to decipher on the ground.



Pollinating helleborine orchids in the Sand Walk Woodland at Down House

PROJECT FOCUS

Wrest Park

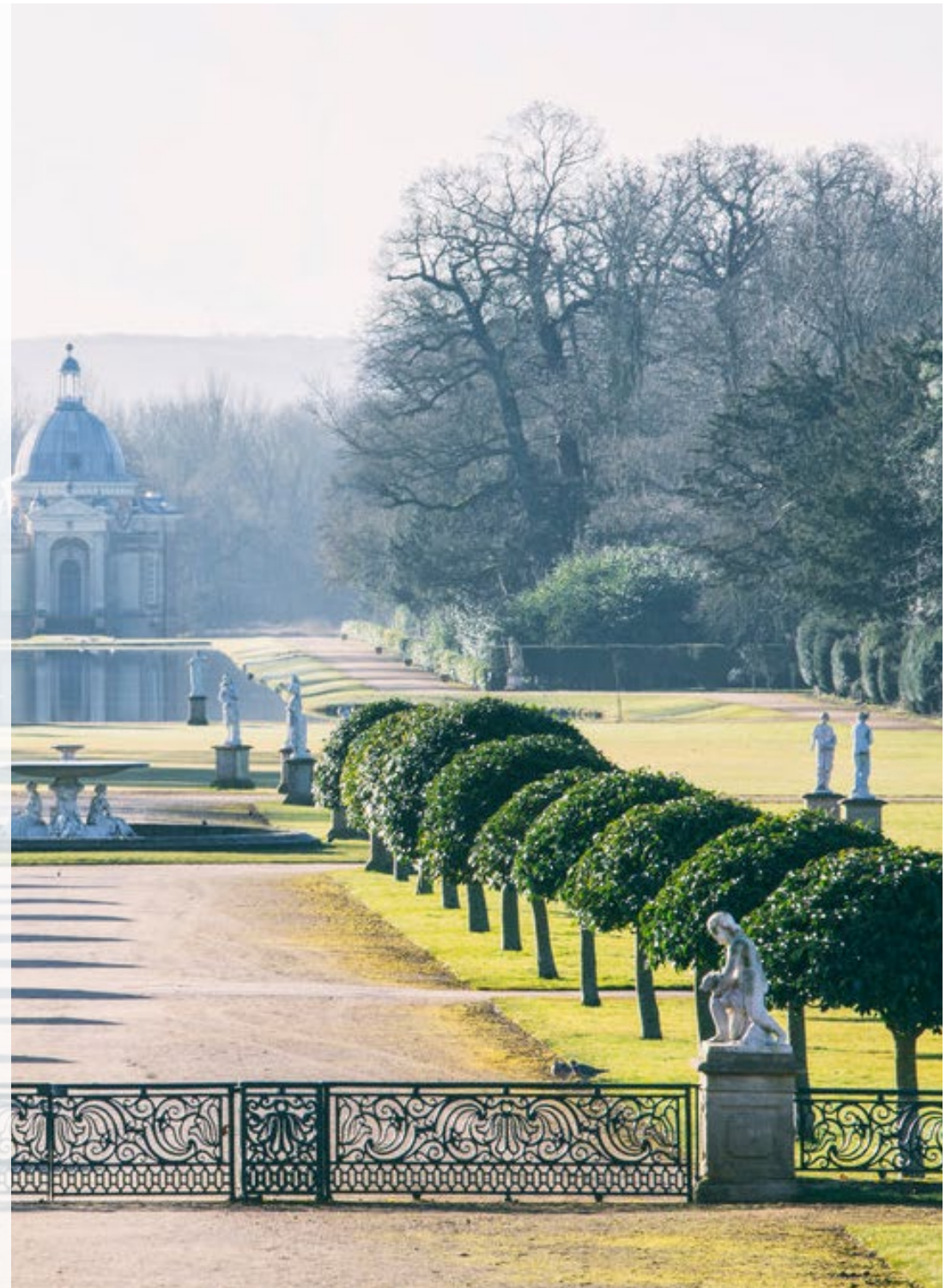
Wrest Park is an exceptional rarity – a magnificent house of the 1830s, set in an outstanding restored garden landscape originating in the 17th century. Its grounds are a glorious amalgam of three centuries of English garden design, and contain one of the few remaining formal gardens of the early 18th century.

Throughout the 20th century the house and grounds gradually fell into decline. In 2006 English Heritage took over the site and began an ambitious 20-year project to return the gardens to their pre-1917 state.

The project, which is ongoing, has been a combination of careful conservation, repair and restoration. Silted-up waterways have been re-opened, lost avenues and axial views reinstated and fine dramatic seasonal displays reintroduced to the parterre gardens.

The final stages of the project will see further watercourse management to bring the gardens back to their former splendour.

Photo : The Archer Pavilion and Long Water at Wrest Park



Maintaining significance in landscapes that are dynamic and multi-layered

Landscapes are dynamic, requiring constant care and attention in order to retain their significance. This includes day-to-day activities, such as grass cutting and hedge trimming, as well as more infrequent tasks such as repainting railings or carrying out footpath repairs. Without high standards of horticulture and landscape management, these places can quickly lose detail and appear neglected.

We must also plan for long-term repair and maintenance. Removing self-sown trees from woodland areas or de-silting a lake might not seem like essential work, but allowing views to close-in or open water to return to bog can result in the steady erosion of landscape character. Keeping on top of small tasks can save larger and more expensive restoration work later.

As fashions and designs change, so features are added and adapted. When landscapes that were once wild become more tightly managed, they acquire a different character. Similarly, when highly manicured landscapes are left unattended they begin to lose their form and structure. Over time, landscapes acquire different layers, of differing complexity and significance, and it is often a challenge to decide on the most suitable conservation approach.

We are also faced with challenges that may be beyond our control, or beyond our boundaries, such as shifts in land management or land use, climate change, pests and diseases, or pollution. These factors can have a detrimental effect upon landscapes themselves, as well as the landscape setting of other historic assets.



Seasonal bedding displays in the Italian Parterre at Wrest Park

PROJECT FOCUS

Historic and Botanic Garden Training Programme

The Historic and Botanic Garden Training Programme (HBGTP) began in 2006, with an aim to ensure that the skills needed to work in a historic or botanic garden were passed on to those passionate and committed to a career in horticulture.

Since then, the programme has provided garden placements for over 300 trainees. We're proud to have opened doors for so many passionate and talented horticulturists, with placements at English Heritage gardens and other historic gardens throughout Britain. Through sharing professional skills and strengthening gardens teams, the HBGTP has made a significant contribution towards securing the future of historic gardens.

The scheme represents a truly exceptional opportunity for committed and enthusiastic horticulturists to progress their careers. By working alongside the professional teams within exceptional British gardens, trainees build a solid technical knowledge and acquire high-level practical skills. Placements are fully-funded, with a salary of at least the National Living Wage.

English Heritage gardens participating in the scheme include Audley End, Osborne, Walmer Castle and Wrest Park.

Photo : Head Gardener Louise Ellis supervises a trainee in the Victorian Kitchen Garden at Audley End, Essex



Making sure our staff have the skills needed to manage complex historic landscapes

Our landscapes need to be cared for in a way that conserves their significance. This requires well-trained horticultural staff and landscape managers with expertise in heritage skills, who are able to apply techniques and methods appropriate to the landscape they are maintaining. They must also have an understanding of the historic development of our sites and what makes them special, curating and presenting some of the most unusual landscapes in England.

- **Wrest, Osborne and Brodsworth** all have flower beds presented following Victorian traditions, with edges neatly profiled and the beds heaped in order to display complex seasonal bedding arrangements
- **Audley End** is framed by a striking yew hedge that is cloud-pruned each year to maintain its spectacular topiarised form and the Walled Kitchen Garden is used to grow rare and historic varieties of fruit and vegetables
- **Boscobel** has hay meadows grazed by rare breed sheep and contains an area of re-established oak pasture, a once common landscape that is now very rare and which requires oak pollarding
- **Mount Grace Priory** contains a Monk's Cell Garden that displays plants with an historic precedent, that were important to monastic communities for their medicinal properties
- **The Kings Meadows** initiative, launched in 2023, will transform our grassland management, improving or creating traditional meadows at 100 sites



HBGTP trainees, Wrest Park, Bedfordshire

PROJECT FOCUS

Living History Events

Audley End is an important designed landscape, but it is important to remember that it has not always been as tranquil as it is now. Temporary landscape changes, many of them now reversed, once gave this place an entirely different character.

During the Second World War, the house and grounds were used by the Polish Section of the Special Operations Executive to train Polish special forces soldiers. Known as the Cichociemni (the Silent Unseen) these soldiers were elite paratroopers trained in covert operations, sabotage and intelligence-gathering. Their base at Audley End was known as Station 43.

An assault course was set up in the wooded area north-west of the house, including a rope crossing over the river Cam. There was also training in close combat, and a target range in the woods. Activities such as wireless operation and field craft took place in East Park. For recreation, football, volleyball and tennis were played on the grassed-over parterre behind the house.

Living history events, such as the one pictured here, help to re-enact these forgotten histories, enlivening the landscape with people and events that once shaped these places.

Photo : Second World War re-enactment event on the Cam, Audley End



Bringing the history of our landscapes to life

English Heritage is committed to telling England's story. This includes our landscapes, which have been shaped and re-shaped by our predecessors and which have witnessed some extraordinary events in our history. Landscapes which today are peaceful and serene were once the sites of ferocious battles; private gardens that were once the preserve of royalty are now open to all; former military defences and wild frontiers welcome tourists and day-trippers.

Events at our properties help to interpret and share this evolution and our landscapes play an important role in supporting these. Medieval jousts, traditional food fairs, falconry displays and military re-enactments are just some of the activities that take place. These events help us to imagine what landscapes looked like in times gone by, as well as helping us to understand their changing form and function.

However, we must also strike a balance between interpreting past histories and protecting the special qualities these places have now. Our landscapes can be easily damaged and we must ensure that, in welcoming visitors to our landscapes, we continue to protect and conserve these fragile heritage assets.



Jousting at Carisbrooke Castle, Isle of Wight, Hampshire

PROJECT FOCUS

Boscobel & the Royal Oak

Boscobel is a very special place, a carefully conserved site that has been enhanced through a combination of repair, restoration and new management approaches.

It is significant as the site of 'The Royal Oak', where King Charles II sought refuge during the Civil War. It also contains a restored 17th century garden with box hedging and plants such as peonies and artemisias, commonly found in parterre gardens at the time and a recreation of the 'pretty arbour' in which King Charles II is said to have spent time relaxing.

However, Boscobel is also a 'living landscape'. The site also encompasses a 19th century planned farm, which now houses rare breed animals. This helps to bring the landscape to life for visitors, but it also enables us to manage the landscape more sustainably, using sheep to graze the grassland.

Meadow areas have been re-established and saplings grown from seeds of the Royal Oak have been planted in the field around it. This successional planting ensures continuity, as well as helping to re-establish the woodland that once occupied this area.

Photo : Rare breed sheep grazing the meadows at Boscobel



Managing change in our landscapes to support wider organisational aims

The historic landscapes in our care are significant heritage assets and safeguarding this significance must be our primary concern. They are also visitor attractions, hubs of community activity, places of learning and education and home to rare species and habitats. Any proposed changes, enhancements or interventions must balance a variety of competing interests.

We need to manage short and long-term change, everything from seasonal events to major development projects and the impacts of climate change. Events and development projects can help support growth in visitor numbers, helping more people to enjoy and appreciate our sites, but they can also increase wear and tear, damage fragile landscapes or have adverse effects upon views and tranquillity. The impacts of climate change may necessitate changes to how we conserve and manage our historic landscapes as we respond to extreme weather events, pests and diseases, extended growing seasons, water shortages and different planting conditions.

Some changes, if carefully planned, can be beneficial to landscape character and contribute to more integrated management approaches. For example, introducing rainwater storage tanks to more of our garden sites could help manage run-off, providing a source of water for horticultural activities and helping contribute to the aims of our climate action plan.

Changes in landscape management can encourage more species-diverse grasslands and wildflower meadows, such as those being created through the King's Meadows initiative. This helps to enhance habitats, encourages more traditional land management practices and improves visual amenity, as well as supporting the aims of our nature strategy.



The 'pretty arbour' at Boscobel
© Louse Hudspith

PROJECT FOCUS

Brodsworth Hall & Gardens

At Brodsworth Hall a big challenge has been agreeing the best way to present the house and gardens. The house and contents are conserved 'as found', with minimal changes in its presentation since it came into the care of English Heritage. The gardens, on the other hand, have undergone painstaking conservation and restoration in order to re-establish its character as a strikingly manicured Victorian formal garden.

This has required a collaborative approach. Historians and archaeologists have researched its history, whilst the team of gardeners have worked to reinstate the lost and overgrown landscape structure. Volunteers help with day-to-day maintenance tasks and the site is a host garden for students participating in the Historic and Botanic Gardens Training Programme.

Discrete projects, such as the restoration of the game larder, have been completed with the assistance of external consultants. These have supported the visitor business by providing new marketing opportunities to engage visitors with. The plant collection is now being mapped as part of our plant records initiative, which will contribute to a searchable database of the botanical collection across the whole organisation.

The landscape continues to develop, slowly and carefully, with ongoing contributions from a broad range of internal and external stakeholders.

Photo : Hoeing annual bedding displays along the Target Range at Brodsworth



Ensuring effective decision-making and knowledge-sharing

Our landscapes are looked after by a wide range of people. This includes our landscape management and garden staff, who guide the day-to-day management and maintenance of these places and advise on conservation and restoration activities. We also benefit from the time and energy of our volunteers, who help with horticultural activities, act as garden guides and support the care and maintenance of our free sites.

Sometimes specialists need to be consulted to help with more specific tasks: arborists to help advise on the health and safety of our tree collection; hydrologists to advise on the management of our waterbodies; archaeologists to oversee landscape research and investigation; ecologists to help us understand habitats and wildlife value; landscape architects to help guide landscape change and champion sustainable design; stonemasons and metalworkers to assist with repair and maintenance of heritage features; soil and turf specialists; plant specialists. We also work closely with partner organisations who provide specialist knowledge and expertise to help us care for our sites.

We must ensure that management and maintenance of our landscapes is co-ordinated, bringing together the skills and enthusiasm of all these different groups, so that our conservation approach is co-ordinated and shared with all parties who contribute to its delivery.



Volunteers working in the gardens at Brödsworth Hall

PROJECT FOCUS

Audley End House & Gardens

The Kitchen Garden at Audley End is a productive garden, set within a purpose-built brick-walled enclosure that was constructed in the late 18th century. In 1990 the paths and structures in this area were restored and it has since offered visitors the opportunity to see a wide range of food crops and seasonal flower displays. The gardens also contains over 150 varieties of apples.

Within the walled garden there are a range of garden buildings, including glasshouses, a vinery and a root store. Volunteers, trainees and full-time garden staff work together to look after this area, and living history events help visitors to understand the life of a Victorian gardener. The Apple Festival is a popular annual event, encouraging visitors to the site to celebrate the annual fruit harvest.

Run entirely in compliance with Soil Association organic standards, all the food grown at Audley End is put to use, either in the menu created by our catering team, through sales to visitors or sold to a local organic box scheme that delivers throughout Cambridgeshire.

Photo : Cloches in the productive gardens at Audley End



Our vision

Our vision is for **all the historic landscapes in our care to be fully understood and maintained so that their significance is conserved.**

However, we must go beyond simply safeguarding what we have. Our landscapes are often special because they have been changed and developed over time creating a multi-layered history.

We will **strive for thoughtful and constructive change**, investing in our landscapes to build upon what makes them special, bringing back lost features and revealing hidden layers, ensuring they continue to surprise and delight for generations to come.

We will **bring our landscapes to life** by showing visitors how they are managed, demonstrating heritage skills wherever possible and supporting the reintroduction of traditional landscape management techniques.

We will find ways to **make our landscapes more sustainable**, reducing intensive maintenance where appropriate and making space for nature.

Above all we will **involve a wide variety of people in their care**, showcasing the skills of our horticultural teams, supporting the gardeners of the future, encouraging the enthusiasm of our volunteers and harnessing the knowledge of our own staff and specialists, to help attract the visitors that will support and benefit from our work in the future.



Victorian garden interpreter in the Walled Garden at Audley End, Essex

PROJECT FOCUS

Clifford's Tower

Clifford's Tower in the City of York is home to one thousand years of history. This raised earthwork was once the site of a timber keep built by William the Conqueror and was the site of one of the worst anti-Semitic massacres of the Middle Ages.

In 1190 the city's entire Jewish community was trapped by an angry mob inside the tower. Many members of the community chose to commit suicide rather than be murdered or forcibly baptised by the attackers.

The planting of 'February Gold' daffodils on the tower mound, whose six-pointed shape echoes the Star of David, provides an annual memorial around the anniversary of the massacre. It was originally planted as part of a community project in 1992, which established 200,000 bulbs on the slopes. This was refreshed in 2023 with the planting of another 100,000 bulbs, to ensure the continuity of this memorial.

Although not an historic landscape design feature, the daffodils at Clifford's Tower have become an iconic feature. By introducing this single species, this monument has become more easily recognisable and its history made more vivid. The planting of the bulbs has also helped to engage with the local community, ensuring this history is more widely shared and understood.

Photo : Daffodils in bloom on the slopes of Clifford's Tower, York



Our priorities

Our vision will be achieved by aligning our work with four priority areas. Each area includes a number of aims and actions which we will use to guide our efforts over the remainder of the corporate strategy period of 2022 to 2025.

Our priorities will be: to research and better understand the evolution and significance of our historic landscapes in order to conserve them; to enhance them where possible; and to involve a wide variety of staff, volunteers and external specialists to ensure they continue to be well cared for.

Understand

Conserve

Enhance

Involve



Exploring the chalk grassland at Grimes Graves, Norfolk

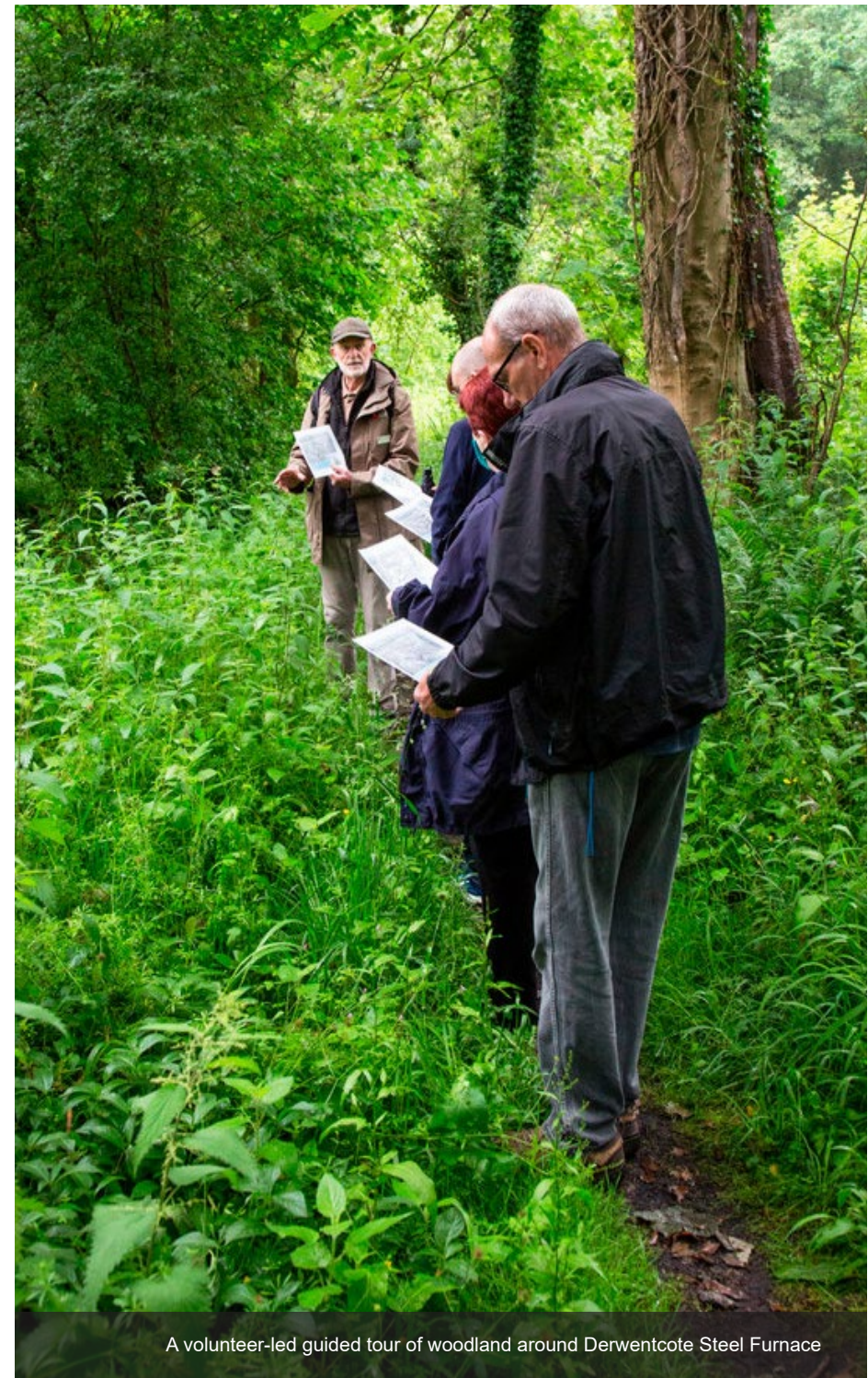
Our priorities: Understand

We will research the historic designed landscapes in our care, so that we fully understand their significance, and we will share this information with others

Our responsibility to protect the assets within our care is defined in heritage legislation, and part of the fundamental reason we exist as a charity. This includes historic and designed landscapes. However, in order to protect these landscapes we must first understand their historic development and significance, as well as their condition.

We will ensure that all the landscapes in our care are researched and their history and development documented, so that we understand what is special about them. By understanding these landscapes we can make informed and balanced judgements about their future care and management, ensuring that their significance is retained.

We will make this information available to all staff within the organisation, with the volunteers who help care for our sites and with the visitors who come to enjoy them.



Our priorities: Understand

| Item | Action | Lead | Support |
|------|---|-------------------|-----------------------------------|
| U1 | Ensure there is an up-to-date Conservation Management Plan for all complex historic designed landscapes, and review this not less than once every 10 years | G&L | HPD / Estates / Commercial |
| U2 | Introduce a programme to review Statements of Significance, to ensure that landscape is considered within their scope | Property Curators | G&L |
| U3 | Commission research and surveys to fill gaps in our knowledge about garden and landscape history and ecology on our sites, with prioritisation given to masterplanning | G&L | Property Curators / HPD / Estates |
| U4 | Ensure condition surveys for all garden structures: e.g. glasshouses, waterbodies and footpaths are included in quinquennial AMP surveys, allowing us to identify those that are failing or at risk of loss and to plan repairs or conservation works that are required | Estates | G&L / HPD |
| U5 | Gather data about plants and trees to populate a new Plant Records System, helping us build a record of our botanical collection and its significance | G&L | Volunteers / HPD |
| U6 | Ensure access to Statements of Significance and Conservation Management Plans on the English Heritage intranet or using the Sharepoint system currently under development to make sure they are readily available for all staff to consult | G&L | Property Curators |
| U7 | Offer guided walks and tours of our gardens for special interest groups and visitors, to help share information about their history and any conservation or restoration projects | G&L | Volunteers / HPD |
| U8 | Historic landscape research will be shared through new interpretation schemes on sites, with web-based content to support this and through garden marketing campaigns | Interpretation | G&L / Property Curators |
| U9 | Publish plant records data online, to create a searchable record of our botanical collection, and ensure that this connected with Alloy so that health, safety and significance data are connected | G&L | Estates / HPD / Volunteers |

Our priorities: Conserve

We will ensure that all historic designed landscapes are appropriately cared for, delivering best practice in horticulture and landscape maintenance so that they retain their significance and continue to delight visitors

Conservation, as defined by the Burra Charter, is the process of looking after a place so as to retain its cultural significance. It includes maintenance and may, according to circumstances, include preservation, restoration, reconstruction and adaption. Often it is a combination of these.

As the organisation responsible for the care of these special places, we will ensure that our conservation approach addresses urgent issues of repair and maintenance, conserving what is important.

The sites in our care represent some of the most important and fragile landscapes in the country. We will strive to maintain them to the highest possible standards, so they can be fully enjoyed and appreciated and so they are conserved for future generations.

Each of our landscapes is unique and demands a bespoke and appropriate conservation response.



Cloud pruning at Walmer Castle, Kent

Our priorities: Conserve

| Item | Action | Lead | Support |
|------|--|---------------------|--|
| C1 | Establish a programme of Management and Maintenance Plans for all garden sites, so that there is a clear and costed plan guiding their ongoing care | G&L | HPD / Estates |
| C2 | Ensure all Conservation Management Plans, Statements of Significance and Management and Maintenance Plans are updated not less than once every 10 years, providing a framework for short-term, mid-term and long-term activities | G&L | HPD / Estates |
| C3 | Continue to invest in training and knowledge-sharing events for landscape managers, head gardeners and garden staff, to ensure all people who care for our landscapes are up to date with the latest guidance, technology and best practice | G&L | Estates / HPD |
| C4 | Continue to invest in the Historic and Botanic Gardens Training Programme (trainees and apprentices), ensuring that we have horticultural staff with appropriate training and heritage skills to help us manage our most significant gardens | G&L | HPD / Property Curators |
| C5 | Continue to invest in garden machinery for our staff, ensuring that management and maintenance activities can be carried out efficiently, safely, sustainably and to a high standard | G&L | Estates / HPD |
| C6 | Ensure the Gardens & Landscape team is consulted on any interventions that might affect the historic significance of our designed landscapes and monument settings | G&L | Property Curators/ Estates/HPD |
| C7 | Update all Landscape Advice Notes, aligning them with the latest Historic England guidance, best practice, legislative changes and our Environmental Management System | G&L | Property Curators / Estates / HPD |
| C8 | Champion the implementation of the Nature Strategy and carbon reduction programme and the successful integration of cultural and natural heritage values | Estates / G&L | All Departments |
| C9 | Highlight landscapes that are at risk of encroachment or damage from environmental impacts or development pressure | Curatorial | Estates / HPD / Properties Curators |
| C10 | Be alert to proposed planning development around our sites and challenge development proposals that threaten the historic landscapes or landscape setting of historic assets in our care | Portfolio Surveyors | HPD / Estates |

Our priorities: Enhance

We will enhance the presentation of our historic designed landscapes by seeking opportunities to restore lost features or views and investing to deliver these improvements

Our landscapes must not simply be preserved. Allowing appropriate changes that enhance the historic significance will allow our landscapes to grow and develop, supporting wider organisational aims.

Using the research and knowledge we have gathered, we will provide clear advice around landscape constraints and sensitivities, as well as identifying opportunities for landscape enhancement and improvement.

Working together across the organisation, we will identify opportunities to improve the presentation and care of our landscapes.



Our priorities: Enhance

| Item | Action | Lead | Support |
|------|---|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| E1 | Undertake regular site visits to assess condition and presentation of landscapes, ensuring any issues are appropriately prioritised within available resources and identifying opportunities for change or improvement | G&L | Estates |
| E2 | Identify ways to reduce the carbon footprint of our horticultural activities, seeking ways to recycle and re-use materials and to conserve water and natural resources | G&L / Estates | HPD |
| E3 | Continue to champion historic horticultural skills, combining the best of modern and traditional methods for a sustainable future showcasing the past, such as through bedding displays, glasshouse and meadow management | G&L | Estates / HPD / Marketing |
| E4 | Ensure that all masterplanning undertaken by English Heritage considers opportunities for enhancing historic landscapes and landscape settings as part of its scope | HPD | G&L / Estates |
| E5 | Seek funding opportunities to enable discrete landscape enhancement works or small projects to take place, that will both enhance garden sites and help to build visitor numbers | G&L | HPD / Estates / Development |
| E6 | Seek opportunities for landscape enhancement through overlap with other projects, whereby investment in landscapes can support wider organisational aims, or support other initiatives, such as biodiversity net gain | G&L | HPD / Estates / Development |
| E7 | Develop and maintain good relationships with other neighbouring landowners, local communities and those with a shared interest in the management and maintenance of our landscapes | HPD | Estates / Curatorial / Commercial |
| E8 | Consider as part of our forward planning (up to 25 years ahead) opportunities to acquire additional land or property, where this would help to safeguard historic designed landscapes, assist with operational activities, or offer opportunities for enhancement of an existing site by re-assembling lost features or views | Curatorial | Estates / HPD / Commercial |
| E9 | Review management agreements, including agricultural tenancies to ensure that the management and maintenance activities being undertaken are compatible with the presentation of our sites and with our values | Free to Enter Sites / Commercial | Curatorial / Estates |

Our priorities: Involve

We will involve staff, volunteers and visitors in the care of our historic designed landscapes, engaging specialist help where needed

We will bring the right people together when making decisions about the management of our historic landscapes, ensuring that staff and volunteers understand their historic significance, and working together to care for them in a manner that conserves this and brings their history to life.

We will work collaboratively, ensuring that all relevant parties are consulted and informed about changes or activities that might impact the presentation or character of our landscapes.

We will also seek help where needed, ensuring that we follow appropriate specialist advice to keep these features fully functional and compliant with health and safety and environmental constraints.



Our priorities: Involve

| Item | Action | Lead | Support |
|------|--|---------------|--|
| I1 | Encourage closer working between curatorial colleagues, to ensure that understanding of landscape significance is integral to our understanding of heritage value as a whole | G&L | Curatorial |
| I2 | Ensure that events and visitor operations that might impact on the historic landscape are planned in consultation with property curators, landscape / garden advisors and landscape managers, to make sure that potential negative impacts can be considered and mitigated | HPD | Curatorial / Estates / Marketing |
| I3 | Improve the quality and standards of our landscape management and improve value for money | G&L | Estates |
| I4 | Continue to nurture relationships with external organisations to share knowledge, skills and appreciation of historic landscapes | Estates / G&L | HPD |
| I5 | We will consult external specialists, where appropriate, to help advise and guide complex decision-making about landscape research, care and maintenance | G&L | HPD / Estates |
| I6 | We will work across English Heritage to champion the delivery of King's Meadows across our sites and deliver on the aims of the Nature Strategy, working in partnership Plantlife and supported by Buglife and RSPB | Estates / G&L | HPD |
| I7 | Work alongside partners to highlight to DEFRA and the Environment Agency the importance of securing changes to regulations to allow commercial green waste to be recycled | Estates / G&L | HPD |
| I8 | We will make sure that all garden and maintenance volunteers are well trained and fully briefed before commencing any works within historic landscape sites, to ensure they understand the heritage value and any site sensitivities | HPD | Estates / G&L |
| I9 | We will make sure that all volunteers have access to research and interpretation material relating to our sites, so that they are aware of their heritage significance and can share this with other volunteers and visitors | G&L | Estates / HPD |

Other Resources

Other strategies and guidance that might be helpful when considering historic landscape management:

- Nature Strategy 2022-2025 (English Heritage)
- Climate Action Plan 2022-2025 (English Heritage)
- Guidance for the Conservation and Management of Historic Landscapes (English Heritage)
- Conservation Principles (Historic England)
- Technical Guidance: Looking After Parks, Gardens and Landscapes (Historic England)

English Heritage also works alongside and in partnership with over 20 external organisations who help support our work on climate change, biodiversity, ecology, skills training, horticulture, historic research and landscape management.

This strategy will be reviewed and updated periodically as required.



Produce from the Victorian Kitchen Garden at Audley End, Essex



