

SUFFOLK GARDENS TRUST

NEWSLETTER 59

SPRING 2025



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WE WELCOME

your suggestions for features, news and
photographs to include in our Newsletter

Copy deadline for the Autumn 2025 issue :
no later than 1 July 2025

Disclaimer

Views expressed in this Newsletter are those of the contributors and do not necessarily represent those of the SGT. Whilst every effort is made to check the information provided, the Editor and the SGT cannot be held responsible for any inaccuracies contained in this publication.

Front cover:

Aerial view of
Framsden Hall, where
we will hold our
Garden Party on 28
June – photo courtesy
of Xa Tollemache



SUFFOLK
GARDENS
TRUST

The 30th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

will be held in the
Victory Hall,
Hasketon
on **Saturday 17
May 2025 at 2pm**
See page 21

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From the Chairman



A dark, dank day in October is not an auspicious time to start anything, or so I thought back in 2021 when I commenced my second term as SGT chairman. As with my first term, I had come in at a low point in the SGT's fortunes and there was a very real possibility that the trust would have to be wound up. But with the unflagging support of our Patron and a new Council we have managed to do more than just survive. We produced a new and more informative website in 2022, and that same year we started the Suffolk's Unforgettable Garden Story (SUGS) project in collaboration with The

Garden Trust and Historic England. By the time of the official end of the project in 2024, six new Suffolk sites had been added to Historic England's Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest, and two additional garden structures had been Listed. The efforts of the volunteer researchers were also recognised by a Heritage Champions Award from the Suffolk Preservation Society, plus nominations for a national award and another county award. And despite the official end, the volunteers' efforts are continuing, with at least three other sites still in the pipeline for designation.

This year we have taken the lead in securing a stand in the Flower Tent at the Suffolk Show in May for the keen gardeners in Hollesley Bay Open Prison. In this we have had great support from the staff at Hollesley Bay, the Suffolk Agricultural Association, the Police Commissioner for Suffolk, and most particularly, the gardeners themselves, who are even now keenly growing-on items for the show.

But we are going to lose some of our key people this year. After a heroic 30 years as our Patron, Gabriella, Lady Marlesford, has sadly asked to stand down. She has shown unwavering support in many ways to the SGT through all that time, and I am personally very grateful to her for her support when the SGT was facing difficult times. We are, however, very fortunate in getting the agreement of the celebrated garden designer, Xa, Lady Tollemache, to be our next Patron, and she is already assisting with our Hollesley Bay initiative. Stephen Beaumont is resigning as Treasurer at the next AGM. He too has been an invaluable supporter of the SGT, having been Chairman from 2013 to 2017, and returned to help as a Vice-Chair and Treasurer from 2021. We are very fortunate that Archana Bhatia has agreed to be our new Treasurer from May. Loesje Houghton has also agreed to take on the role of Secretary. And I too am leaving, having many other obligations and commitments to fulfil, but I am confident that Patience Shone will be an excellent successor.

■ *Edward Martin*

News from the Suffolk Gardens Trust

A Fond Farewell

Gabriella, Lady Marlesford



It is hard to believe that 30 years have passed since the Suffolk Garden Trust was formed at a meeting at Haughley Park on the 24 March 1995. Over 160 people attended the launch, where they were welcomed by the indomitable and irrepressible Gilly Drummond, Chairman of Hampshire Gardens Trust, and President of the Association of Gardens Trusts. She had recognised the deterioration of some of our parks and gardens in both private and public ownership and had started the Hampshire Garden Trust in 1984 to try counteract this decline. From this she developed a vision of county gardens trusts that would help identify, record and conserve parks and gardens of national, regional and local importance, particularly those that fell through the nets of the National Trust and what was then English Heritage.

In Suffolk, the vision was taken up and spear-headed by Paul Miles, a garden designer who had been a horticultural advisor to the National Trust in the 1970s. Aiding him in the first committee were Lyn Dicker (of Suffolk County Council's countryside section) as secretary, Guy de Moubray (formerly of the World Bank) as treasurer (and writer of our first constitution), Caroline Cowper, Commander Mike Eveleigh (who kept us all in order), Edward Martin, John Mosseson, Adam Paul, and Barbara Segall as editor, together with Steve Coghill and Anne Harrington of Otley College as co-opted members. I was asked to be patron, a rather awesome title. Some early reshuffling brought in James Carr, who arranged our first exciting visits, Sue Paul as secretary (who also started making her incomparable egg sandwiches for our meetings!), Polly Burns and Nigel Surry as co-editors of our newsletters, and Edward as our second chairman in 2004. Membership grew slowly but steadily. We learned along the way.

We tackled some things out of our depth like the Umbrello at Great Saxham, an 'at risk' folly but had to admit defeat and we tried to save the glasshouses at Elmshurst Park in Woodbridge but bureaucracy got the better of us. On the other hand, the exhibition 'Pastimes of Pleasure' (with an accompanying booklet) in 2000 was a resounding success with pictures and drawings from all over Suffolk in an exhibition held in Bury St Edmunds. We visited exciting gardens all over the

county and not only gardens but ancillary things like brickworks. Some gardens were established ones, others in the process of being established, some we repeat-visited, and always these visits were well attended and we were warmly received by generous hosts. A word of thanks here is due to these hosts as we all know how much effort it takes to get a garden 'visitor-ready' and how frustrating it is if the



weather is inclement. Even though the SGT members are a tough lot, it is testing to appreciate a garden in the driving rain!

The SGT had organised talks on garden subjects from its earliest days, but the upheaval caused by Covid in 2020 led us to introduce on-line Zoom lectures from the September of that year, giving



access to a wider and more diverse audience. We had already taken our first steps towards a wider outreach with the setting up of our first website in 2012, and in 2014 we published the *Walled Gardens of Suffolk*, a masterly example of how to write a fairly short but very comprehensive book. In 2016 we celebrated the Tercentenary of Capability Brown with a memorable event at Heveningham Hall, followed by an equally successful event at Henham Park in 2018 to celebrate Humphry Repton's Bicentenary. And now Suffolk's Unforgettable Gardens Story (SUGS) is the latest SGT success, receiving a Heritage Champions award from the Suffolk Preservation Society in 2024. The Gardens Trust is rolling out this project in other areas 'using the knowledge and experience from the Suffolk volunteers'. Along the way I found myself among most knowledgeable and interesting people, many of whom became good friends. All the heavy-lifting of course, was done by the chairman and the council who were often over-burdened and short-staffed. I am so grateful to you all for the time and effort put in to make the SGT the success it now undoubtably is. But now the time has come, after 30 years, to regretfully retire as patron. The SGT is astonishingly lucky that Lady Xa Tollemache has agreed to be the new patron. Anyone interested in gardening will know of her own wonderful garden at Helmingham that she created and of the many gardens in Suffolk and abroad that she designed. She is also a superb gardener, enthusiastic and energetic, imaginative and a delight to be with. As my children said of her many years ago 'she makes every day a party!'

We are going to the Show !



We are delighted that the SGT's initiative to help the keen gardeners at HMP Holllesley Bay to show their capabilities with a stand in the Flower Tent at this year's Suffolk Show is progressing well. With the help and support of the prison staff – particularly David Daddow, the prison governor, Claire Penrice, the head of education, skills and work, and Sharon Hadley, the horticultural instructor – Chris Ellis of the Suffolk Agricultural Association, and our patron-to-be Xa Tollemache and her gardener Roy Balaam, the work on preparing a stand is well underway. Seeds have been planted and plants are growing! Do take an opportunity to visit the stand if you going to the Show!

And the SGT will have a stand at the Show too, so do visit us as well.



The SGT's Humphry Repton Bursary Scheme



The SGT's Humphrey Repton Bursary Scheme, named after the famous Suffolk-born garden designer and landscape gardener, welcomes applications from Suffolk-based students. Two £500 bursaries are awarded every year and can be

used for approved course fees, as well as incidental course costs, such as books, travel, stationery or equipment. See our website for an application form. It is important that the courses offer recognised awards, such as the Royal Horticultural Society's Certificate and Diploma.

If you are interested in applying for a bursary in 2025, we would be pleased to hear from you – please contact Judith Gowland at sgt-bursaries@hotmail.com.

A bursary recipient writes ...

Having been a grateful recipient of the bursary I am pleased to report I passed the RHS level 2 exams in the principles of plant growth and development in September 2024. Having completed the WFGA (Work and Retrain as a Gardener) scheme in March 2024, the time had come to move forward in my career, having put what I have learnt into good practice. I decided to leave my part time position at the garden centre (where I certainly learnt about a wide range of plants) and venture into the world of self-employed gardening. I now tend to some lovely gardens of various sizes and designs with a great mixture of planting. Having started at many of them in the autumn I am very much looking forward to seeing them flourish in spring and summer.

As and when I can I volunteer at the Colchester Hospital Wellbeing Garden. The group is run by the RHS and we help maintain various areas around the site not just the new garden in front of the main entrance to the hospital which was designed by Adam Frost (of BBC's 'Gardener's World' fame). As Adam said 'we have been given a toddler to look after'. It will be interesting to see it develop and take shape. I am now looking forward to seed sowing, talks, garden visits and of course lashings of tea and homemade cake! ■ *Laura Maxim*



Laura (4th from right) and Colchester Hospital volunteers with Adam Frost

'A Garden Well Placed. A designer's harmony between house and garden' A talk by Xa Tollemache (our Patron to be!) October 2024

Having not as yet explored garden design it was an informative afternoon in Earl Stonham with Xa Tollemache. The scene was set for a look into the architecture of the house, those that live there and the surrounding landscape to then produce a design for the site. The idea being that the garden is curtsying to house. What would be appropriate in the design? A tunnel with a seat at the end, a folly, sculpture, or perhaps a water feature, or, in some cases, restoring Victorian water cascades!

We were taken on a journey to the far north of Scotland where I was surprised to hear of 15ft delphiniums growing at Dunbeath Castle, considering its position on a clifftop, but within the shelter of the walled garden, and journeying down south to Castle Hill in Devon where the copper domes on the roof inspired the planting of *Quercus ilex* which in time would be clipped into dome shapes to draw attention to the roof domes.

The design of the 'cell block' in Chester Street, London has stuck in my mind. A space transformed by creating a canal as the centre point, the formal lines and symmetry of evergreen planting in raised beds and pots and the flowering zantedeschias were striking. In addition, the design of The Cloister Garden at Wilton House where inspiration was taken from the patterns on the Venetian wellhead in the centre of the courtyard, is impressive. The design used few plants so as not to distract the eye from the paintings and sculptures within the house. The planting around the wellhead consisted of box, bay and santolina. Both these designs certainly stood up well to the house.

Tip of the talk – use yoghurt to age stone! It will encourage lichen and moss growth.

Fact of the talk – echinacea comes from the ancient Greek word *echinos* which means hedgehog. The large seed heads resemble the spines of an angry hedgehog!

Following on from the talk I have borrowed Xa's *A Garden Well Placed* from the library to learn more about garden design.

■ Laura Maxim



'Fullers Mill, A Plantsman's Garden'

A talk by Jude Law

January 2025



Jude is the volunteer plant curator at Fullers Mill, West Stow, for the horticultural charity Perennial – formerly the Gardeners' Royal Benevolent Society – and was the perfect person to deliver a talk in January about the wonders of the garden at Fullers Mill created by Bernard Tickner MBE and developed until his death in 2017, aged 93. He and his wife Bess, who was also key to the development of the garden, had no children and so The Fullers Mill Trust was created in 2004 to ensure the future of the garden. It was gifted to Perennial in 2013 and is now largely managed by volunteers.

Fullers Mill Cottage was built c.1665, but the earliest recorded fulling mill on the nearby site on the banks of the River Lark and the Culford Stream dates to 1458. Jude explained that as part of the thriving local wool industry, fulling was the process of shrinking wool to make it smooth and thicker by passing it through a series of wooden mallets driven by a water wheel, effectively felting it. The cloth was then dried on tenterhooks to prevent further shrinkage.

Bernard Tickner grew up in Hadleigh. He had a career as an innovative head brewer and production director at Greene King in Bury St Edmunds, responsible amongst other things for the development of Abbot Ale. When he bought Fullers Mill in 1958 he initially planted cricket bat willows as a cash crop, some of which remain. Bernard lived on his own at Fullers Mill until his marriage to Bess in 1966. Surprisingly Bernard professed to know nothing about gardening at this stage although he had done some gardening as a child. He later carried out extensive academic botanical research and read avidly, taking inspiration from the writings of gardening greats such as Alan Bloom, Cedric Morris, Beth Chatto and Christopher Lloyd. Friends, including Derek Fox, Ivan Dickings and Maurice Mason, encouraged the plantings and exchanged plant material with him. He became an expert plantsman who not only collected and bred a wide variety of unusual



Euonymus oxyphyllus.
Photo: Jude Law.

shrubs, perennials, lilies and marginal plants, but also combined them to remarkable effect, given the mixture of sandy and silty soils. From rough scrub, he and later Bess, created seven acres of extraordinary garden.

We were reminded that Bernard was red-green colour blind, hence the emphasis on texture, architecture, shape and seedheads particularly within the Low Garden and Quandary. When asked why the Quandary, Jude explained that Bernard and Bess were in a quandary over naming the area. His focus was always on creating form and structure through planting and he saw no need to include garden ornaments in the overall design.

Jude showed us beautiful slides of different areas and views of the garden to convey the atmosphere and skilled designs apparent in different seasons. Individual rare and unusual plants, shrubs and trees in all their glory were impressive in their range. One particular example of his ability as a plantsman is the silver birch *Betula pendula* 'Silver Grace' in a small grove in the Top Garden. This was a form that Bernard selected from a tree growing at Fullers Mill. The grove is set off by a gravel mulch and *Ferula communis*, and *Elaeagnus* 'Quicksilver'.



The grove of *Betula* 'Silver Ghost', a form selected by Bernard Tickner from trees growing at Fullers Mill. Here seen through a malus in full bloom. Photo: Jude Law.

Always a keen naturalist and conservationist, Bernard was instrumental in the creation of the neighbouring Lackford Lakes Nature Reserve. Given the proximity to Lackford Lakes, and the wonders of the wildlife within the garden, Jude was asked how none of the plants in the photos seemed to be nibbled. She explained that the garden is fenced off

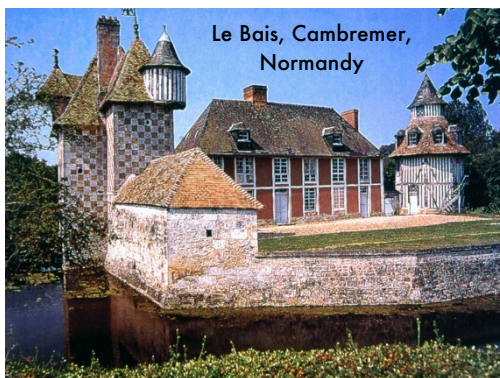
from rabbits, deer etc, but that the muntjac and other deer regularly waded up the river into the garden and cause a great deal of damage.

It was a fascinating talk which reminded us of the recent visit by the SGT, and no doubt will have encouraged those present to visit again.

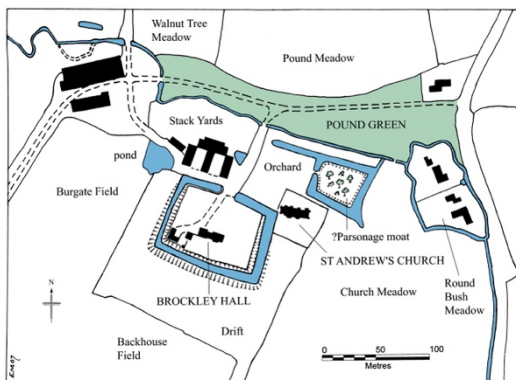
■ Patience Shone

**‘Designed For Display:
Medieval & Tudor Moats in Suffolk and beyond’
A ZOOM talk by Edward Martin
February 2025**

Moats may not be the most obvious garden features, but they played an important part in medieval and Tudor designed landscapes in Suffolk. Moats are water-filled features surrounding houses and other important assets. They share an ancestry with castles, but are not true defensive works. What they lack are the ramparts, palisades and strong walls that define a true castle. Moated sites are found across much of north-west Europe and Continental documentary evidence explicitly confirms that these ‘defences’ were to be minimal, even to the extent of stipulating that the moats should be relatively shallow. The Continental evidence also makes it clear that the primary purpose of moats was as status symbols. In Holland, moats denoted freehold farms, which by the 15th century were referred to as ‘knightly homesteads’ (*ridderhofsteden*). In a lawsuit of 1465 Coen van Foreest of Kasteel Oosterwijk at Beverwijk attempted to prove his knightly (*ridderlijke*) status by stating that although he had sometimes driven a horse and cart on his farm, this was only for pleasure, and that he belonged to the knightly class because he lived ‘on a moated site with bridges and a gate’. Along with a moat, the other desired status symbols were a gatehouse and a dovecote – and at Le Bais in Normandy there is a wonderful expression of this – a flat site *fossoyé* is graced with a monumental gatehouse and a dovecote that rivals the house in size.



In England, moated sites appear around 1300, at about the same time as a distinct knightly class becomes apparent, adopting heraldry as yet another way of displaying status. Some of the earliest moated sites, as at Acton Hall in Suffolk, are circular, aping ringwork castles but lacking their defence. It therefore not a surprise that Acton church also contains the fine monumental brass, with heraldry, of Sir Robert de Bures (d. 1331), the owner of the Hall. Rectangular moats are, however, much more numerous, like that at Brockley Hall in Suffolk. Here a moated site of 1.2 acres contains a timber-framed house that is tree-ring dated to 1317-19, when it was owned by Sir Alexander de Walsham. This moated site is close to



the church – a confirmation of its status as the principal manor in the parish. Also beside the church is a smaller moated site of 0.33 acre which probably hosted the parsonage. This pattern is frequently repeated – principal manors have moats of about an acre, while parsons, and freehold farmers have half-acre moats, which are sufficient to distinguish their houses from the unmoated farmsteads of ordinary farmers.

The greatest concentration of moated sites in England is in East Anglia, where there are over 2,500, with Suffolk and Essex vying for first place. Moats are most easily constructed on water-retentive clay soils, and their distribution closely mirrors that of the region's clay deposits. It was usual for the house to sit on the moated platform, with perhaps a garden or orchard around it, accessed by a bridge or causeway, often guarded by a gate structure, from an outer courtyard which held the barns, stables and other more utilitarian structures.



From the 15th century onwards, brick was increasingly used to enhance the visual appeal of moats – the sides were made straight and vertical with brick revetments (but usually only in frontal areas where they would be seen – as at Crow's Hall, Debenham), and corner turrets, brick bridges and gatehouses could be added to further underline the owner's wealth and status. And by the 16th century the importance of the garden had grown so much that sometimes a garden received its own moat, as at Shelley Hall, where the early Tudor house sits beside its moated garden, as is confirmed by a survey of 1519-33. Other examples of Tudor garden moats are to be found at Kentwell Hall and at Helmingham Hall.

If you missed the talk, it was recorded and is available for viewing for a limited period – if you would like to receive the Zoom link to see it, please send a request to suffolkg.t.chair@gmail.com

Somerleyton Hall's rare Listed glasshouses saved by £120,000 grant

It was announced in February that Historic England was making a £120,000 grant towards the restoration of the glasshouses at Somerleyton Hall. These historically important structures are said by Historic England to 'form part of one of the finest Victorian kitchen gardens in England' and were constructed as part of Sir Morton Peto's extensive remodelling of the gardens of Somerleyton Hall in the 1840s and 1850s. There are parallels with similar innovative structures at Chatsworth, Derbyshire, by Sir Joseph Paxton, and he may have been responsible for the design of the structures at Somerleyton too. They are included in the designation of Somerleyton as a Grade II* Registered Park and Garden (one of only nine Grade II* parks and gardens in Suffolk). The Kitchen Garden, including the glasshouses, is also a Grade II* Listed Building, and the glasshouses also have a separate Grade II listing. These overlapping designations emphasise the importance of these structures.



But, unfortunately, the glasshouses are showing signs of structural vulnerability and brickwork decay and were placed on Historic England's 'Buildings at Risk' register in November last year. A charitable trust will be established to maintain and manage the buildings, with the intention of restoring the peach houses as working plant houses, using the ridge-and-furrow glasshouses for educational activities, and creating new spaces within the walled kitchen garden.



The Suffolk Gardens Trust holds Somerleyton to be one of the iconic gardens of both Suffolk and England, and we were fully supportive of the application for

funding to restore these important structures.

Somerleyton's head of gardens and conservation, Simon Gaches, said the news was 'very exciting, not just to have safe and beautiful working glasshouses, but also to be able to share the history.'

Lord Somerleyton, said: 'We are indebted to the team at Historic England for the guidance, expertise, support and this vital grant that paves the way for the long-term restoration and care of our glass houses'.



Gardens and Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPS)

The Gardens Trust is launching a new volunteer training project examining NSIPS – large scale projects in England and Wales that are deemed critical to our national economic sustainability and climate resilience. It will research and record the designed landscapes within the areas around them and they are inviting you to take part.

Climate change increasingly presents problems for the survival of our historic parks and gardens: extreme weather, drought, flooding, plant diseases, and more, are all growing threats. Climate change, coupled with rapidly growing population, also demands immediate, collective action to mitigate its consequences and ensure a sustainable future for generations to come. The tricky part is achieving the right balance between the development needed to support a sustainable future of the country versus the potential impact on the significance and value of historic parks and gardens.

What are NSIPs? : NSIPs fall into five main categories of transport, waste, water, energy and wastewater, which can typically include reservoirs, very large solar arrays, windfarms, new motorways and trunk roads, and railways. In order to ensure that these critical projects are delivered more quickly, the Planning Act 2008 defines a bespoke process where developers apply to the Planning Inspectorate (PINS), rather than a local planning authority, for a Development Consent Order (DCO) rather than planning permission. An application would then go through six tightly prescribed stages, where the proposals are examined in detail by PINS on behalf of the Secretary of State, who makes the final decision. Since the establishment of the process in 2008 there has been a steady increase in both the number and complexity of applications, as the impacts of climate change have become more evident, population pressures have increased, and policy changes have become more frequent in response to the changing economic environment and global insecurity. In response the government have committed

to a 'better, faster, greener, fairer and more resilient' NSIP process that ensures the effective processing of critical infrastructure projects that will be able to meet our infrastructure, energy and environmental needs.

NSIP concentrations : In England the regional breakdown of the more than 200 live NSIP applications shows that the majority are in the eastern regions, the densest concentrations being, at the time of writing, in the South- East (31), the East Midlands (33), Yorkshire and Humberside (45) and the largest number in the East of England (47). This concentration along the eastern coastline is due to a combination of higher levels of sunshine, its proximity to Europe and the North Sea which present optimal opportunities for solar arrays, piped energy and offshore wind farms. The UK is presently the global leader for offshore wind energy with an ambition to power every home in the UK this way, by 2030.

The South-East and East of England are also the most densely populated regions in England and have the hottest, driest summers, combined with more concentrated days of torrential rainfall. When these circumstances arise, rainfall runs off the hardened and developed land as surface water into rivers or causing flooding, rather than penetrating the ground to refill our aquifers (below-ground bodies of water). As both regions are heavily reliant on ground water (aquifers) for everyday needs, new surface water storage infrastructure, such as the proposed Fen Reservoir, is essential to capture that excess water and ensure taps continue to run, long into the future.

How might NSIPS affect Historic Parks & Gardens? : National infrastructure, particularly that related to climate adaptation, is essential to provide the UK with a resilient, sustainable and secure future and needs to be delivered quickly if we are to stay ahead of the environmental changes we are witnessing, year on year. The NSIP process is in place to ensure that the government's ambition is delivered but that appropriate checks and balances are in place to protect our most significant historic and natural assets and take account of our places of historic merit and note.

In order to achieve this level of informed decision making, Historic England has recognised that a considerable number of designated and non-designated historic designed landscapes are likely to be impacted by NSIPS over the next few years and that a concerted effort of research is needed to better understand the nature and extent of that impact on these historic assets.

Green Futures – the new project : The Gardens Trust has received funding from Historic England which will allow them to run a two-year volunteer training project – Gardens and NSIPs. Working with the six East of England County Gardens Trusts (Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex, Bedfordshire, Hertfordshire and Cambridgeshire), but sharing the online learning nationally, with the other CGTs and beyond. They will train volunteers to understand what NSIPs are; how to assess and engage with an NSIP application; and how to research, record and understand the significance of historic designed landscapes that may be affected by them.

By adding this research to the historic record, via platforms like Historic Environment Records and the National Heritage List for England, so that it is available to all, we can all help developers, planners and statutory consultees like Historic England and the Gardens Trust to take into account the effect of NSIPs on historic parks, gardens and other designed landscapes, so that their most important aspects are protected.

Much of the training will be online, starting summer 2025: learning about NSIPs in May-June; and how to research potentially affected designed landscapes and record what remains on the ground in August. Key findings will be worked into a travelling exhibition in public libraries in the East in summer 2026.

Get involved ! All the learning will be suitable for absolute beginners and they would love anyone with an interest to take part, whether you are a volunteer, landscape owner or manager, or someone working in the sector.

You can get involved or stay updated on the project by contacting The Gardens Trust's Engagement Officer: frankie.taylor@thegardenstrust.org.

Other News



John Morley: Artist Gardener Exhibition at The Garden Museum, London

19 March to 20 April 2025

Snowdrop specialist John Morley paints what he knows and loves: the plants from his garden, and the East Anglian landscape in which he has lived and worked for the past 30 years. His extraordinary Suffolk garden contains over 300 varieties of snowdrops, as well as old daffodils, fritillaries and auriculas, and his knowledge of them is encyclopaedic. This, his first solo exhibition for over 30 years, is a rare opportunity to see his paintings and pastels of flowers, fruits and garden plants many of which have never been publicly displayed.

Born in 1942, Morley studied at Beckenham School of Art and Ravensbourne College of Art, before attending the Royal Academy Schools in 1963. In 1973 he and his wife, the painter Diana Howard, moved to the house and garden at North Green, near Beccles in Suffolk, where he lives and works to this day. His passion for rare and unusual snowdrops goes back to the early 1970s when he became friends with Cedric Morris who introduced him to the Suffolk plantswoman Jenny Robinson (who was appointed as Morris' 'plant executor' in his will).

For more information, and to book a visit, go to:

<https://gardenmuseum.org.uk/exhibitions/john-morley-artist-gardener/>

With hundreds of different daffodils thought to be found in the UK, the RHS are calling on you to log where daffodils are blooming in your area. They will ask some basic information such as colour, type and height. RHS scientists will use this information to help understand environmental influences on daffodils, buyer preferences and spread.

To record your daffodils, go to: www.rhs.org.uk/science/daffodil-diaries

They are also calling on you to join the search for three daffodils that are either at risk or thought to be extinct in the UK. Locating these daffodils will help aid their survival, better understand our gardening heritage, and even enable preservation of genetic material that could be valuable for future breeding of daffodils in the face of a changing climate.



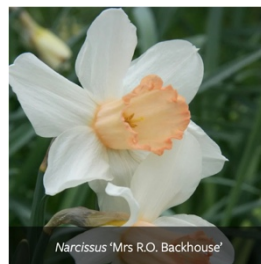
Narcissus 'Mrs William Copeland'

Narcissus 'Mrs William Copeland'. A white, double-flowered daffodil named after the wife of breeder WFM Copeland. Not for sale in recent years, but known to be gifted via an American grower in the early 2000s to a direct descendant in the UK.



Narcissus 'Sussex Bonfire'

Narcissus 'Mrs R.O. Backhouse'. One of the first pink daffodils, with a solid coral pink trumpet and ivory flowers. Thought to have been bred by leading female hybridiser of the era Sarah Backhouse and named for her by her husband after her death in 1921. The daffodil is known to exist in national collections, but its whereabouts beyond that are not known. The majority of reported discoveries have turned out to be 'Salome', whose yellow trumpet matures to peach.



Narcissus 'Mrs R.O. Backhouse'

Narcissus 'Sussex Bonfire'. A double-flowered yellow and orange daffodil bred by Noel Burr, an amateur breeder from Sussex who registered 58 new cultivars of daffodil, naming many after local places and people. 'Sussex Bonfire' has never been located, and Plant Heritage's Sussex Group would be delighted to add this to their shared National Plant Collection of daffodils.

Mrs E. Martin

[Chairman's footnote: His namesake and distant cousin, Edward Martin (1856-1940) of Bosvigo Gardens, Cornwall, was a daffodil breeder, but alas, of his 40-odd cultivars, only 'Silver Chimes' (1916; AGM 1922) is readily obtainable. But, luckily, 'Mrs E. Martin' (1923) still survives in a Sudbourne garden!]



A new view of a 17th-century Suffolk garden ! Lady Bacon and Brome Hall

Edward Martin

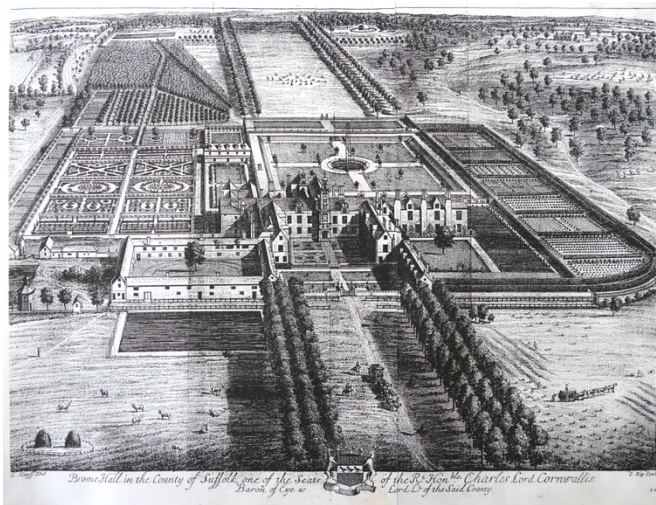


Attributed to Nathaniel Bacon, Public domain, via Wikimedia

In a recent article in *The Burlington Magazine*, Professor Karen Hearn of University College, London, has presented compelling evidence for the re-

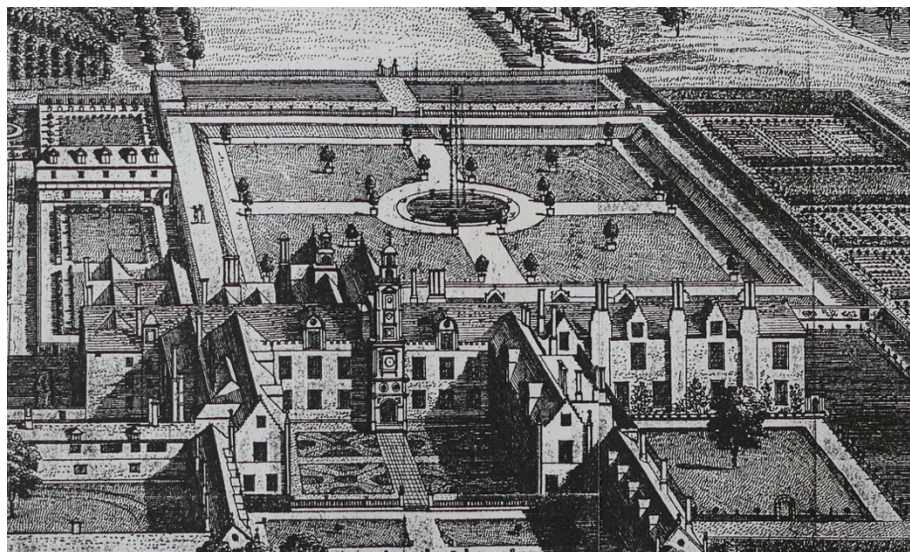
attribution of a stunning picture in Government House, Sydney, Australia.¹ According to the label, this was 'The Lady Santry' by the 18th-century painter Angelica Kauffman (1741-1807), and that it had come from the 'Santry Hall Collection' and had been presented to Government House by Lord Carrington, Governor of New South Wales 1885-1890. It is traceable to a sale in Sydney in 1889 of items said to be from Santry Court, near Dublin in Ireland, and then to a bankruptcy sale at Santry Court in 1875, but then the trail goes cold.

In 2019 Tim Knox, Director of the Royal Collection Trust, noticed the painting on a visit to Government House and realised that it clearly dated to the 17th, not the 18th century. He suspected that this might be a painting by Sir Nathaniel Bacon (1585-1627), best known perhaps for his rather voluptuous painting 'Cookmaid with still life of vegetables and fruit'. Knox contacted Professor Hearn, who curated the Bacon exhibition at Tate Britain in 2005-6. She was able to confirm the stylistic attribution to Bacon, but was also able to identify the house in the background as Brome Hall in Suffolk, by comparison with the 1707 engraving of the Hall by Johannes Kip. This has enabled her to identify the sitter as Bacon's wife Jane. Born c.1585, Jane was the daughter of Hercules Meautys of West Ham, Essex, and she married, firstly, Sir William Cornwallis of Brome Hall. He died in 1611 and she remarried in 1614 Sir Nathaniel Bacon of Culford. The style of the



clothing, and the fact that Jane is shown as pregnant, dates the picture to c.1614-17 (her daughter Anne was born in 1614 and her son Nicholas in 1617). Jane died in 1659 and is buried at Culford, where she, Sir Nathaniel, and their children are commemorated by a monument by Thomas Stanton.

¹ K. Hearn, 'A newly identified portrait by Sir Nathaniel Bacon', *The Burlington Magazine* vol. 164, no. 1432, July 2022, pp. 641-9, '

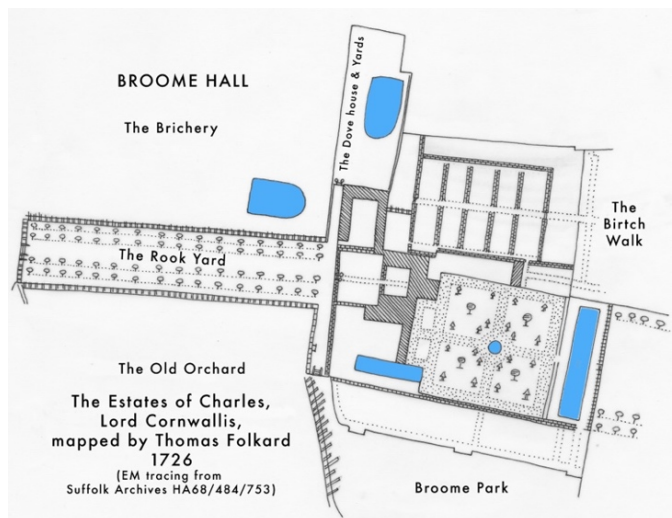


Although it is of great art history value to have another painting by Bacon, as only another nine can be securely attributed to him, it is what is in the background that is of greater interest to garden historians, as early 17th-century paintings of English gardens are very rare. A formal garden is

depicted, consisting a square divided into four quadrants (only two are actually shown) separated by paths. The inner sides of the quadrants are shaped to form a circle around a feature (unfortunately not shown) surrounded by a circular path at the centre. Within the quadrants are grids of rectangular beds planted with flowers. Plants are also trained up the walls on the sides and a gardener appears to be attending to some of these while ladies and a gentleman stroll in the garden.

Sir Nathaniel is known to have been interested in gardens and the monument in Culford church states that 'experience and observation had made him most knowledgeable in the history of plants'. In a letter to Lady Bacon in 1618 the Countess of Bedford asked for 'som of the little white single rose rootes I saw at Brome, & to challenge Mr Bacon's promis for som flowers, if about you ther be any extraordinary ones; for I am now very busy furnishing my gardens', and a month later the Countess wrote again to Jane asking her to thank Sir Nathaniel 'for furnishing me with such helpes for my garden'. His best-known painting shows his interest in fruit and vegetables, and in 1626 his wife's cousin, Thomas Meautys, wrote to her saying 'yf he comes to town, I will shew him melons forwarder then his at Broome'.² And the 1634 plant catalogue of John Tradescant the Elder included, in its fruit section, 'Sir Nathaniel Bacons great Peare'.

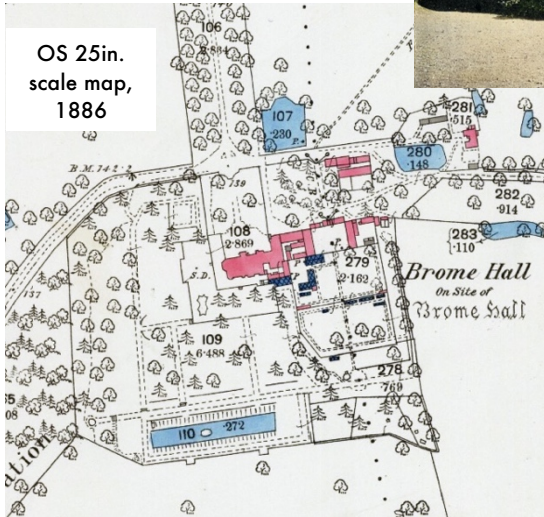
Comparison with the 1707 engraving by Johannes Kip indicates that this garden lay on the inner, south side, of the Hall, but that by 1707 the garden had been enlarged by the removal of the wall on the right-hand side of Bacon's painting, expanding it to front the projecting wings with their elaborate crow-stepped gables. The enlarged garden had a similar layout with four quadrants around a circular pond with a fountain in the centre. However, an estate map of 1726 suggests that although the quadrant garden existed, it is likely that some of the other garden features were aspirational rather than real.



The Hall was considerably altered for Charles, 2nd Marquess Cornwallis, in 1815 by George Wyatt and in 1819 by Lewis William Wyatt. Just before the Marquess's death in 1823 the Hall was sold to Matthias Kerrison, who had also recently bought nearby Hoxne Hall (later renamed Oakley Park). Further alterations were made for Matthias's son, Sir Edward Kerrison, by Thomas

² Lord Braybrooke (ed.), *The Private Correspondence of Jane Lady Cornwallis (1613–1644)*, 1842, pp. 57-8, and 164.

Hopper. The resulting building was dominated by a large polygonal and battlemented tower. By 1886 elaborate formal gardens had been added, which are described in a *Country Life* article of 4 June 1898.



This mentions a terrace along the south and west fronts which overlook a larger terrace 'laid out with patches of green turf, and with box beds of geometrical design, dotted with English yews of perfect symmetry ... but the arrangement adopted for the box beds at Brome Hall does not at all commend itself to the writer. It is peculiar, and properly speaking, is not

gardening at all, for the beds are inlaid, as it were, with broken tiles, such as are used for paving entrance halls, with the purpose of introducing colour ... mostly of blue, grey and white'. Attention was also drawn to the 'interesting walks' intersecting the grounds in various directions - 'One extends the whole length from east to west, and is

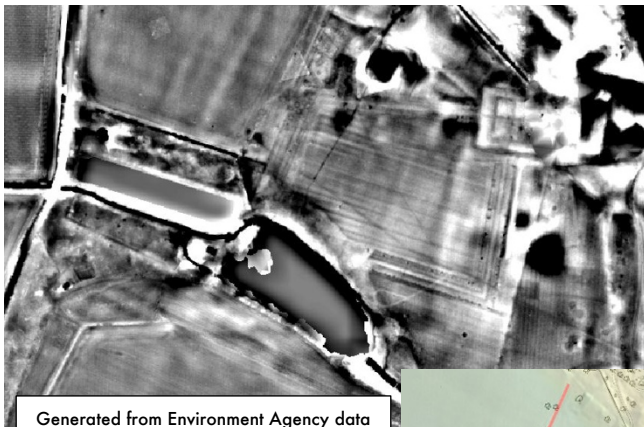


delightfully picturesque and quaint. The formality of Brome Hall is rarely, if ever, extravagant; but here, as the visitor walks along between the yew fences that flank the way, his attention is attracted by the curious figures formed in the leafy growth - animals,

heraldic designs, and other strange devices'. The gardens were, however, considered worthy of inclusion in Charles Holme's *The Gardens of England in the Midland and Eastern Counties* in 1908. But the estate was sold at the death of Sir Edward Kerrison's daughter, Agnes, Lady Bateman, in 1918, and sold on again in 1924 to Maude Tacon, who died in 1952. By then, in poor condition, it was sold to the tenant of the Home Farm and finally demolished in 1958. A new house now stands on the site.



Lidar reveals a forgotten formal garden in Tendring Park, Stoke-by-Nayland



Generated from Environment Agency data licensed under Open Government Licence version 3.0. Data processing & rendering by John Rainer 2025

Airborne lidar ('light detection & ranging') measures the height of the ground surface with a very high resolution and accuracy and can reveal hidden, very slight, earthworks – as has recently happened at Tendring Park, where

a rectangular formal garden and associated avenues have been revealed in work by John Rainer, a Suffolk-based lidar analyst. Preliminary research suggests that the garden remains date from the first half of the 18th century.

■ Edward Martin



Sketch, in red, of the main lidar features, overlain on the 1904 OS map

SGT Garden Visits 2025

To book a place on a visit, you can now book and pay on the SGT website – www.suffolkgardenstrust.org - or you can send an email to suffolkgt.chair@gmail.com

Saturday, 17 May 2025 at 2pm
30th Annual General Meeting of the SGT
Hasketon Victory Hall, Tymmes Place, Hasketon IP13 6JD.
Opposite Hasketon Church, ample parking available.

AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence (Officers and Council only)
2. Minutes of the 29th AGM held at Bart's Hall, Orford, on 6 July 2024
3. Reports from the Council
4. Election of Officers and Council Members
5. Any other business (of which prior notice has been given to the Chairman)



Afterwards, a chance to visit **John Dyter's** wonderful garden at **Manor Farm House, Hasketon**, about half a mile from The Victory Hall

Saturday, 17 May 2025, from approximately 2.45 to 4.30 pm.

Manor Farm House, Hasketon IP13 6JA. (Members £9, Guests £12)

By kind permission of John Dyter. Members £12, Guests £15. Tea afterwards.

After leaving the car park beside The Victory Hall, turn left into Blacksmiths Road, follow the road past various houses, then watch for a large grey house on the right - the entrance drive is 100m further on, also on the RIGHT (SGT signs will be in place). Park as instructed in the meadow by the house.

John is a consummate plantsman, with knowledge and experience forged in a long career with Notcutts Nursery and as a steward of Flower Tent at the Suffolk Show, on top of this, he was a founding member of the SGT in 1995 and was Chairman from 2017 to 2021. His garden reflects both his knowledge and his enjoyment of plants. Shielded from the road by its high outer hedge, once inside, the lower scalloped hedges by the drive provide an early view of a broad, stately, oak tree of about 350 years, backed by rolling meadows. The garden is wrapped around the house and old farm buildings, with flower borders in most conditions except moist shade. In front, a Monet-style bridge graces an enlarged old horse pond, whose densely-planted banks, water lilies and other pond plants give summer-long interest. Specimen trees - usual and unusual - add lasting interest, along with the topiary. To the rear, a former polythene tunnel is being transformed into a rose arch which, in turn, leads to a Rosemary Verey-style 'pottager' cum soft fruit garden.



Saturday 28 June, 6.00 to 8 pm.

SGT 30th Anniversary Garden Party at Framsdon Hall IP14 6HL

By kind permission of Lord and Lady Tollemache.

Members £20, Guests £25. Canapes and wine provided. Toilet available.

We are delighted that our patron-elect has kindly agreed to host this, our Anniversary Garden Party, at her home. Almost hidden behind 19th-century red-brick farm buildings and a monumental barn (the largest in Suffolk!), Framsdon Hall's pink-painted plasterwork conceals a fascinating timber-framed building, built in the late 15th century by Thomas Radcliff (d. 1488) or his son Geoffrey (d. 1505). The 12-bay barn shares construction details with the Hall and must be of the same date. The Tollemache family acquired it almost 500 years ago, in 1550. The horseshoe-shaped moat to the side of the house is small for a manorial site and may always have been intended to enclose a garden or perhaps a dovecote, as is known from some other Tudor sites. It has been reincarnated as Lady Tollemache's new Moat Garden, designed in 2018, featuring wavy hedges of Osmanthus and varieties of Lavender, with a horse head statue by Tom Hiscocks in the centre. There are more areas of garden currently being enlarged and



Saturday 12 July, 2.00 to 4.30pm. Marlesford Hall IP13 0AU

By kind permission of Lord and Lady Marlesford.

Members £12, Guests £15. Tea afterwards.



Photo © Keith Evans (cc-by-sa/2.0)

In 1783 Sir John Soane visited Marlesford with the then owner, George Smith, and it is possible that he played a part in the design of the Hall. Originally a road ran in front of the Hall, but it was moved in the 1790s when William Shuldham, the ancestor of the present owners, created the park that surrounds the Hall. For a time, the road became the access drive, but in the mid 19th century it was replaced by a new drive from the SE corner of the park. He also created the large walled garden that lies behind the Hall. An Edwardian sunken garden leads to the main walled garden, with an axial path and a central sun dial. To one side are two glasshouses of 1911 by John Weeks of Chelsea. The potting shed with a decoratively tiled roof contains wonderful echoes of Edwardian country-house life: flower boxes inscribed with the family name and with individual buttonhole vases inside, for sending to London by train. There are also apple storage racks, syringe sprayers and leather lawn-mowing shoe for horses (to avoid hooves damaging the lawn during mowing).



Outside, in the park, there is a late 20th-century rotunda, and a porticoed building that was rescued from Boulge Hall when it was demolished, and erected here in 1962. Other rescued items are a pair of pyramidal stone pinnacles that came from Henham Hall when it was demolished and a pair of stone lions from the Abyssinian pavilion at the Great Exhibition of 1851. The park also has fine cedars and sequoias.

Saturday 30 August, 2.00 to 4.30pm. Henstead Exotic Garden, Yew Cottage, Church Road, Henstead NR34 7LD.

By kind permission of Andrew Brogan. Members £12, Guests £15.

The visit will include a guided walk with Andrew, the garden's creator, along with



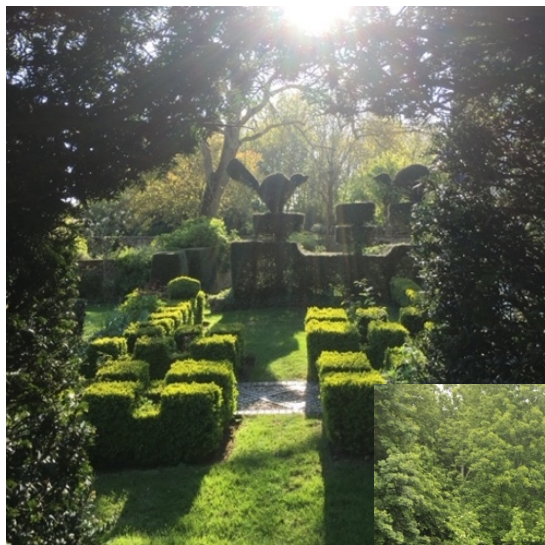
refreshments and a slice of homemade cake, all served in a gingerbread-style summerhouse! And there is a nursery with 1000s of plants, many not available elsewhere and nearly all produced there and with their own compost.

Situated just 3 miles from the coast, between Beccles and Southwold, in north-east Suffolk, this exotic garden has attracted extensive media

coverage – it was Alan Titchmarsh's favourite garden in his 2015 ITV series

Britain's Best Back Gardens, and it has also featured in *Gardeners' World*, *Homes and Gardens* magazine, *The Daily Telegraph*, *The Daily Mail*, and much else. Surprisingly, it was only created about 20 years ago. Set out on different levels and with some rock walkways, the two-acre garden is packed with hardy exotics, including 200 bamboos, 100 palms, and 25 bananas. As well as the plants, garden features include three ponds, two streams, 60 tons of rock, and a Thai-style pavilion on stilts.



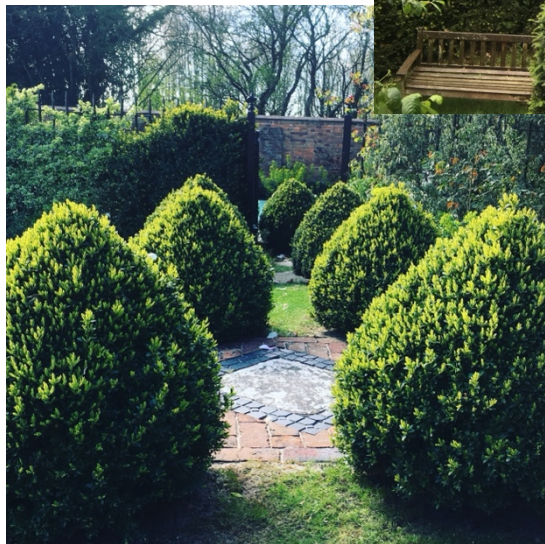


Sunday 5 October, 2.00 to 4.30pm **Hungerdowns,**
Hungerdown Lane,
Ardleigh, Essex CO7 7LZ.

By kind permission of Sarah Vermont. **Members £12,**
Guests £15.

Hungerdowns is a typical Georgian farmhouse in North-East Essex with its garden laid

out since 1993 within the walls of what were originally farmyards around the house. There are many old roses and a wide palette of perennials, bulbs, shrubs and climbers taking the garden through the seasons. There is



a 6-acre wood of broad-leaved deciduous trees with a mature yew maze in the middle. There are vegetable gardens, a pond and two orchards and many examples of yew, beech, box, holly and holm oak topiary created in the last 30 years.

Additional date for the Diary



Suffolk Agricultural Association's 11th Biennial Gardening Conference **MOVING FORWARD**

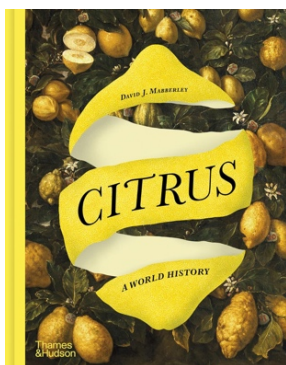
will be held on
THURSDAY 6 NOVEMBER 2025
Events Centre, Trinity Park,
Ipswich IP3 8UH

Dealing both with current and possible future issues, the four speakers will be:

- The **Rt Hon Lord Deben** who, for ten years, has been chairman of the government's Climate Change Committee (and perhaps better known as a former local MP – John Gummer) he now runs an International Consultancy.
- **Sue Townsend** is a well-known Suffolk garden designer with an interest in planting influenced by climate change of local conditions.
- **Tony Kirkham**, MBE, VMH, the former Head of Arboretum, Gardens and Horticultural Services at Kew, whose contribution to the 2015 SAA conference was much appreciated, will speak probably about his favourite topic of trees for the future.
- and the day will end in the Royal Parks (at least metaphorically!) with **Matthew Pottage**, Royal Park's Head of Horticulture and Landscape Strategy, who, until recently, was Curator of Wisley Gardens - the youngest person to hold that post.

For the latest information on the conference, prices and tickets, go to:
www.suffolkshow.co.uk/gardeningconference

The ticket price includes morning coffee, a two-course hot lunch, also tea.
A selection of trade stands will also be there.



A little taster ...

For those of you who were attracted to the wonders of citrons at Paul Marsh's recent talk, perhaps this well-illustrated book is for you!

Citrus, A World History by David J. Mabberley,
Thames & Hudson 2024, £35.

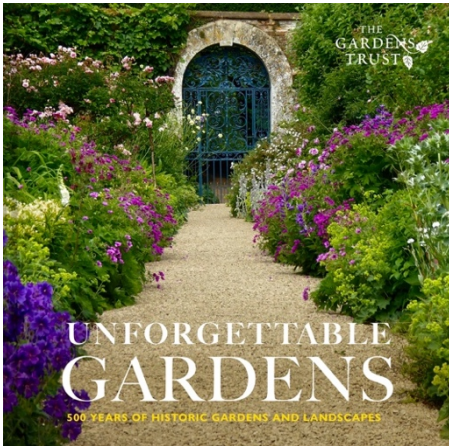
Book review

Unforgettable Gardens. 500 Years of Historic Gardens and Landscapes

Edited for **The Gardens Trust** by **Susannah Charlton**

Published by Batsford, 2024. Hardback, 256 pages; £30.

ISBN 978 1 84994 903 3



The back cover forthrightly declares this as 'A glorious celebration, this landmark book is an exploration of the greatest gardens, parks and landscapes in Britain, with stunning photography accompanied by insightful text from leading garden historians and conservators.' The celebration was occasioned by the 10th anniversary of The Gardens Trust and 30th anniversary of the first entries in the national Register of Historic Parks and Gardens of Special Significance, created by Parliament the year before (there is therefore a link to

our Suffolk's Unforgettable Garden Story project, which provided new entries for that Register, which does get a mention in the Introduction). This well-illustrated volume features 56 memorable gardens, arranged chronologically, with introductory essays for each century dividing the entries (16th century by David Marsh, 17th by David Jacques, 18th by Tom Williamson, 19th by Jane Bradney, and 20th by Katie Campbell). The focus is very much on 'great gardens' and Suffolk gets a look-in with an article on Shrubland Hall by Tom Williamson. It is perhaps unfortunate for Suffolk to be represented by this particular Grade I garden which is currently on Historic England's 'Heritage at Risk' register; though Tom does admit that 'the gardens are no longer regularly opened to the public and their condition has deteriorated'. Perhaps an understatement.

England gets the greatest coverage (47 gardens), with five for Scotland and four for Wales. Within England, London and Yorkshire have four gardens each, with Buckinghamshire, Gloucestershire, Northamptonshire and Sussex coming in next with three gardens each; and two each are granted to Devon, Derbyshire, Cheshire, Oxfordshire and Surrey. The most surprising total omission is Cornwall. It is always difficult to make a selection, but perhaps The Gardens Trust missed an opportunity to ask each of the 37 county gardens trusts to nominate a garden to represent their county – that way no county would have felt forgotten.

■ Edward Martin

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The Suffolk Gardens Trust is affiliated to The Gardens Trust, the national organisation to which around 35 County Gardens Trusts are affiliated:
www.thegardenstrust.org

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