



WHAT'S NEW IN GARDENS 2016

2016 marks the 300th anniversary of the birth of England's greatest gardener, Lancelot 'Capability' Brown, best-known for designing gardens at some of the country's greatest stately homes including Blenheim Palace, Chatsworth, Highclere Castle, Burghley and Compton Verney. Capability Brown's landscape gardens are synonymous with England's green and pleasant land, with their seemingly natural rolling hills, curving lakes, flowing rivers and majestic trees.

The Capability Brown Festival, a nationwide festival and programme of events, will take place throughout 2016, with the opportunity to visit over 150 Brown gardens and sites, including some not usually open to visitors. This celebration of the iconic and celebrated English landscaper is set to put a spotlight on and showcase the fabulous gardens and estates right across the country, from the grand Brown-designed estates to private urban gardens not usually open to the public (and everything in between).

Here, VisitEngland rounds up some of the biggest news, openings and developments in English gardens in 2016...

JANUARY

Painting the Modern Garden: Monet to Matisse, Royal Academy of Arts, London

30 January – 20 April 2016

This major exhibition will examine the role of gardens in the paintings of Claude Monet and his contemporaries. With Money as the starting point, the exhibition will span the early 1860s to the 1920s and will include Impressionist, Post-Impressionist and Avant-Garde artists of the early 20th century. It will bring together more than 120 works from public institutions and private collections, including 35 paintings by Monet alongside rarely-seen masterpieces by Paul Klee, Emil Nolde, Gustav Klimt and Wassily Kandinsky. A highlight of the exhibition will be a magnificent selection of Monet's water lily paintings including the great *Agapanthus Triptych* of 1916-1919 – it will be the first time this monumental triptych has been together in over 100 years, and the first time ever it's been seen in the UK.

www.royalacademy.org.uk

New Treetop Walkway at Westonbirt Arboretum, Gloucestershire

Late January

Westonbirt Arboretum has plans for a project including Treetop Walkway, which will be a new 'never-seen-before' perspective on the arboretum's trees and landscape. The walkway will transport visitors 13metres high into the canopy and give them the opportunity to learn more about trees and how they live.

www.forestry.gov.uk/westonbirt

WOWW Garden Trail, Farm Stay UK, Various locations

Year-long

In celebration of 2016's 'Capability' Brown anniversary, Farm Stay UK has launched a new *Capability Brown WOWW Garden Trail*, showing green-fingered travellers how to combine stays in quaint rural B&Bs on working farms with visits to some of the big names in Brown's portfolio nearby. This self-drive trail is best done over a week or more and the route traverses the Cotswolds, guaranteeing stunning driving scenery along the way. Taking in Wiltshire, Oxfordshire, Worcestershire and Warwickshire (nicknaming this the *WOWW Brown trail*) – the trail takes in some of Brown's most famous work as well as lesser-known gems; including Croome Court in Worcestershire and Lacock Abbey in Warwickshire, where *Downton Abbey* was recently filmed. A week's self-drive including seven nights' accommodation and breakfast following Farm Stay's WOWW Capability Brown Garden Trail, is priced from £272 per person.

www.farmstay.co.uk/CB300

NEW: The Gardener's Cottage at Newstead Abbey

January 2016

Opening in January 2016, visitors will now be able to stay in 'Byron's Backyard', in the original Gardener's Cottage in the beautiful grounds of Newstead Abbey, once the home of the romantic poet. Set within the heart of the grounds, the Gardener's Cottage is a charming Grade II listed cottage overlooking the original Rose Garden, refurbished to a very high standard while still retaining original features such as wooden floorboards and beautiful stone mullion windows. The Gardener's Cottage sleeps up to six people, with two double bedrooms, and also has its own private walled courtyard, perfect for an alfresco breakfast or a glass of wine after a day exploring rural Nottinghamshire. Newstead Abbey is known for its beautiful formal gardens, set over 300 acres and including a Japanese Garden, Walled Garden, Rose Garden and Spanish Garden.

<http://www.newsteadabbey.org.uk/hire-us/gardeners-cottage>

Hidden Gardens of Bath tours

Throughout 2016

NEW walking tours of Bath's private gardens - think 'Through the Keyhole' but for avid garden fans. Bath is a beautiful city with a long history and superb architecture. Its floral displays, hanging baskets and window boxes are highly regarded and Bath is deservedly 13 times winner of the Britain in Bloom competition. Yet, often unseen are the wonderful gardens which are hidden from view and are well worth seeking out. Hidden Garden tour guide Helen has lived in Bath with her family for thirty-four years. Flower arranging and a desire to grow her own food led her into gardening. "I love all aspects of gardening but especially good planting and design" says Helen. Choose from full day, afternoon and evening tours of Bath's well known and secret gardens.

<http://www.thehiddengardensofbath.co.uk/>

FEBRUARY

Brown at Blenheim Palace

13 February – 2 May 2016

Blenheim Palace will be host to a range of commemorative activities across 2016 to honour the life of 'Capability' Brown including an opening exhibition that will share his work across the 11 years he was commissioned (1763 – 1774) through detailed accounts of how he designed and executed such a masterpiece through photography, drawings, equipment and costumes. The exhibition 'Blenheim Palace and the Landscape of Blenheim Palace' will show the landscape Brown found when he was invited here by the 4th Duke of Marlborough, his plans and how those plans were executed, creating the wonderful landscape which exists today. A new trail of Brown's views of the gardens is also being launched, along with horse-drawn carriage tours of the grounds. The exhibition will be open to visitors who purchase a Palace, Park and Garden ticket. Prices are not yet set for 2016.

<http://www.blenheimpalace.com/>

New kitchen garden for Rockliffe Hall Hotel, Durhan

February 2016

Five-star Rockliffe Hall Hotel's kitchen garden opens in February, and will include a variety of herbs, plants, vegetables, edible flowers and fruit that will be used in the kitchens for dishes served in the hotel's restaurants and cocktail bar. The garden will be 36 square metres in size, and will be located next to the croquet lawns. An 80ft polytunnel in the greenkeepers' area will be used to start the seedlings off before they are transferred to the new kitchen garden.

www.rockliffehall.com

MARCH

Chelsea Flower Show garden re-planted, Chatsworth House

From spring 2016

Following the success of the Laurent-Perrier Chatsworth garden at Chelsea Flower show in May 2015, designer Dan Pearson will be working with Chatsworth to create a lasting legacy for the award-winning garden. Many of the plants, rocks and decorative features from the show garden at Chelsea will be returning to Chatsworth in autumn 2015, to be used in the regeneration of the Trout stream area of the garden. The results of the project will start to be seen from spring 2016.

www.chatsworth.org

New Capability Brown package, Syon Park

From 1 March 2016

In celebration of the 300th anniversary of the birth of Lancelot 'Capability' Brown, guests staying at the Hilton London Syon Park, which is set in 200 acres of parkland, will be offered the following garden-inspired activities from 1 March

- Access to Syon Park's Pleasure Gardens which are just moments from the hotel and were one of Capability Brown's first major commissions
- Tickets to Kew Gardens – some of his garden design is still there to see today
- A visit to Syon Park Garden Centre - opened in 1968 by HM The Queen Mother, it was the first 'garden centre' of its kind and has paved the way for a thriving industry
- A flower-inspired afternoon tea
- ☐ A Capability Brown cocktail
- Complimentary access to the spa facilities – Technogym Fitness Suite, indoor swimming pool, Jacuzzi, sauna and steam room

The package starts from £229 based on two people sharing a Queen Guest Room with breakfast included, and includes all the above.

www.londonsyonpark.com

Art of Landscape at Harewood

25 March – 30 October 2016

Harewood House is one of Yorkshire's best known country houses, boasting 1000 acres of "Capability" Brown designed landscape. Representing one of his most important designs, the Grade I listed parkland has remained unchanged since its creation. With soft, rolling hills and mature, established treelines, visitors can experience the iconic, picturesque views "Capability" Brown imagined for Harewood in the 1760s.

The *Art of Landscape* will show works from great masters who have engaged intimately with the vistas at Harewood. Watercolours produced in the late 18th century by celebrated artists including JMW Turner, Cotman, and Girtin will be displayed alongside photographs by pioneering Victorian photographer Roger Fenton, who captured the Brownian views in 1860. A contemporary response by Simon Warner will take you through the landscape in a new film titled "*North and South*".

www.harewood.org

NEW Magic Garden at Hampton Court Palace, London

24 March 2016

Hampton Court Palace has teamed up with a Chelsea-winning gardener to help plan the new Magic Garden, due to open 24 March. The garden will be an adventure playground with history at its heart and will feature a jousting arena, five tiltyard towers and a fire-breathing dragon.

<http://www.hrp.org.uk/HamptonCourtPalace/>

Re-opening of Spetchley Park, Worcestershire

25 March

2016 sees the gardens at Spetchley Park open on March 25th having been through one of the biggest revivals in its 400 year history. The garden lake has been completely restored, the old cart sheds have been converted into a heritage learning and interpretation centre and the park land put back to its 19th century landscape. In June Spetchley will be welcoming back its 19th century Sovereign Coach from being conserved by Fairbourne Coaches in Kent.

<http://www.spetchleygardens.co.uk/>

APRIL

Special 'Capability Brown' guided garden tours, Bowood House

April – October 2016

Special Capability Brown guided tours will run monthly from April -October (inclusive) 2016. This will be the first time that such tours will be staged and have been designed with the Tercentenary in mind. The day's programme begins with tea/coffee served on arrival at 11am ahead of the 90-minute guided tour. The Capability Brown trail then sets off from the Italianate Terraces that front the Robert Adam designed Bowood House looking out across the landscape he designed. The tour will head down to, and around, Brown's sinuous lake returning through the arboretum to the House for a two course lunch (main course and dessert) in the Stable Restaurant. (As the trail winds around the lake it will also take in Hamilton's Cascade and Grotto as well as the lakeside Doric temple.) Each tour is priced at £32.00 per person and also includes general admission to the House and Gardens. The 2016 season will also see the return of the monthly guided tours of Lord and Lady Lansdowne's

private four-acre Walled Garden that is situated behind Bowood House.

www.bowood.org/bowood-gardens

Brown's Walk to School, Wallington Estate

12 April 2016

Join rangers and follow in the footsteps of Capability Brown, tracing the route of his daily walk to school from Kirkharle to Cambo across the Wallington estate. Explore the countryside he would have known so well and take in the landscape that may have inspired his naturalistic designs. Normal admission charges apply & £5 per person. Booking essential. The site is also offering an exclusive tour of Rothley Lake to discover the history and archaeology of this designed landscape, find out about the part Capability Brown played in its design and glimpse the wonderful wildlife that now lives in this hidden site. Normal admission charges apply & £5 per person. Booking essential. This will be the first time that Rothley Lakes will be accessible for visitors. Wallington will also host some talks by Sarah Rutherford and the Trust's garden historian Richard Wheeler, and will host an exhibition centred around the original Brown drawings in their collection which have not previously been on display.

www.nationaltrust.org.uk/wallington

Changing Landscape at Burghley

April – September

Brown largely designed the parkland and gardens of Burghley House, in Lincolnshire, during the 18th century, but the Elizabethan house also provides a less well-known aspect of the celebrated landscaper's life – his architecture. Believed to be his longest commission, during which he not only landscaped the grounds but also constructed buildings, Brown later recalled his work at the house – on the edge of the Georgian stone town of Stamford - as “25 years of pleasure”. As England gears up for a year of celebrations during 2016 to mark the 300th anniversary of his birth, Burghley is in the midst of a major parkland project, part of which will help restore the views Brown created. Now centuries after Brown worked his magic on the landscape, the original views and vistas he created are being restored as part of the Parkland Management Plan. Re-creating the natural look Capability Brown designed for the gardens, Burghley hopes visitors will be able to enjoy his landscaping vision in all its glory in time for the Tercentenary. As well as the restored views on show for visitors - with new self-guided tours of the major elements being introduced for 2016 - a special exhibition will also be staged within the House showcasing Brown's involvement at Burghley. Specialist Capability Brown days will be run on 7 April, 4 May, 16 June and 14 September. The exhibition and self-guided parkland tour will be available throughout.

www.burghley.co.uk

Exhibitions at Petworth House and Park, West Sussex

16 April – 6 November

A number of new exhibitions will be taking place at Petworth to commemorate Brown's anniversary year. The CB300 exhibition will include films, display material from Tom Domett and digital sandboxes, while the 'Capability Brown in art exhibition' will feature aerial footage, films and interactive touchscreens.

www.nationaltrust.org.uk/petworth-house-and-park

'The Empress and the Gardener' exhibition, Hampton Court Palace, London

From 28 April

In April, Historic Royal Palaces will mark the 300th anniversary of Capability Brown's birth with a new exhibition, 'The Empress and the Gardener', exploring the famous English gardener's surprising influence on the Russian Empress, Catherine the Great, who was passionate about all things English and created English palaces and gardens in St Petersburg. The Empress settled instead for a collection of watercolours of Hampton Court Palace and gardens by Brown's draughtsman, John Spyers. Sold to Catherine the Great for 1,000 roubles, these evocative drawings are a remarkable record of Brown's tenure as Chief Gardener at Hampton Court in the 18th century, and will go on display at the palace for the first time since their rediscovery at the Hermitage Museum in St Petersburg in 2002.

www.hrp.org.uk/hampton-court-palace/

MAY

The World of Capability Brown National Trust book, by Sarah Rutherford

May 2016

Garden historian Sarah Rutherford has been commissioned to write a publication on the life and work of Capability Brown, which will chart the chronology of his work and set the context of the time in which it was being commissioned. It is an introductory [publication with 150 images and will make an attractive addition to bookshelves and coffee tables. Sarah Rutherford is a Kew-trained gardener with an MA in the conservation of historic parks and gardens from York University.

Jon Edgar Capability Brown Bust, various locations

From May 2016

Lancelot 'Capability' Brown never sat for a portrait bust. Sculptor Jon Edgar will use paintings and sketches of Brown to create a posthumous bust - the best information we have on his physical form and physiognomy – drawing on as many sources as are available. Work on assembling sources will begin in the New Year. A first public event at one of the Brown landscapes will take place during the clay-working period in the early spring; introducing the modelling process to visitors whilst working in one of the rooms from which Capability Brown might have perused his landscaping task ahead. The first results will be unveiled in late May ready for viewing at several of the Brown events in summer 2016. Jon Edgar is a British sculptor of the Frink School. His body of work includes many clay portrait sketches of eminent sitters.

www.jonedgar.co.uk

JUNE

Cycling tour of Grimsthorpe Castle

14 June 2016

An early evening cycle tour of a quintessential 18th century landscape in parkland visited by Lancelot Brown. Consider the views, discuss the planting and learn how the ground was remodelled to suit the fashions of the day. Bring your own bike or hire one at the castle. The event is free to all but cycle hire charge will apply if required. Pre-booking is recommended.

www.grimsthorpe.co.uk

Noble Prospects: Capability Brown and the Yorkshire Landscape, Mercer Art Gallery, Harrogate

25 June – 11 September 2016

The first ever exhibition dedicated to the Yorkshire landscapes of Lancelot 'Capability' Brown celebrates the tercentenary of Brown's birth and also marks the twentieth-anniversary of the founding of the Yorkshire Gardens Trust. Brown was the leading landscape designer of the second-half of the eighteenth century and there are around 20 sites in Yorkshire associated with him, one of the greatest concentrations in the country. The landscape garden is recognised as one of Britain's greatest artistic achievements and the designs of Brown and his contemporaries influenced gardens across the world. Featured in the show will be portraits of Brown and his Yorkshire clients, original plans, drawings and documents by Brown, paintings of his creations and works of art that inspired his landscapes. Courtesy of Harrogate Borough Council the exhibition will be held in the intimate setting of the North Galleries of the Mercer Art Gallery, Harrogate. New research will inform the exhibition which will be accompanied by a book considering each of the landscapes and with specially-commissioned photography.

www.yorkshiregardenstrust.org.uk/capability_brown_2016

Woburn Abbey Garden Show, Bedfordshire

25 - 26 June 2016

Set against the stunning backdrop of Woburn Abbey, 'The Gardener's Garden Show' takes place within the 28 acres of Abbey Gardens. Offering something for everyone in a friendly and accessible environment, you can enjoy an introduction to gardening, the opportunity to hone or learn new gardening skills and purchase wonderful plants and garden items. In 2016 the show will be welcoming gardening experts including Pippa Greenwood, a regular writer and blogger for BBC Gardeners World Magazine, and Martin Fish, Garden Writer and BBC Broadcaster. Live music throughout the day will keep everyone entertained. Entry to the Show includes free entry to the gardens including the 19th century hornbeam maze.

www.woburnabbey.co.uk

JULY

Garden Treasures Exhibition at Bodleian Library

8 July – 4 September 2016

A small exhibition about landscape gardens will be held in the Blackwell Hall of the Weston Library, Broad Street, Oxford.

<http://www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/>

'Capability Brown in Yorkshire: Moving Heaven and Earth' tour, Yorkshire

25 – 28 July

ACE Cultural Tours will celebrate the tercentenary year with a brand new tour Capability Brown in Yorkshire: Moving Heaven & Earth, led by the writer, lecturer and photographer Steffie Shields, who specialises in historic landscapes. The itinerary takes in some of Brown's most famous work, at Temple Newsam and Harewood

House, as well as lesser-known creations including Sledmere House and Scampston Hall. It will also include a private visit to Harrogate's Mercer Art Gallery for their special exhibition Noble Prospects: Capability Brown and the Yorkshire Landscape. Prices from £795.

www.aceculturaltours.co.uk/tours/capability-brown-in-yorkshire-moving-heaven-&-earth-cbyk-16

Celebrations in Capability Brown's final resting place, Fenstanton

July-August

The residents of the Cambridgeshire village of Fenstanton, site of Brown's final residence and the only land he actually owned, are already sowing seeds for a fantastic year as part of the national Capability Brown Festival celebrations. Plans already include a four-day music festival in July, themed around English Landscapes, under the direction of Clare College, Cambridge's Director of Music, Graham Ross. A sponsored bike ride from his birthplace in Kirkharle to his resting place in Fenstanton is planned to raise money for the much needed refurbishment of his memorial in the Parish Church, which . An open garden weekend and tour of Brown's Parish, along with the installation of village signs will welcoming visitors to Capability Brown's Parish. A memorial Cedar of Lebanon, Brown's signature tree, will be planted on the green at Hilton and a memorial event will be held in Fenstanton's Parish church over the weekend of his baptism in August.

AUGUST

Capability Brown Festival Weekend, Kirkharle Courtyard

26-29 August 2016

Celebratory events at Capability Brown's birthplace will climax with a birthday festival starting on August Bank Holiday Friday in Kirkharle's St Wilfrid's Church, where Brown was baptised on 30 August 1716. On Friday evening, Rothbury-born TV presenter and entertainer Alexander Armstrong will be in concert. On Saturday, historian and broadcaster John Grundy will deliver a talk about Brown, his Kirkharle life and the extent of his influence on English landscapes. A service of thanksgiving for the life and work of Capability will take place in St Wilfrid's on Bank Holiday Sunday and on Monday there will be a traditional fete, including displays of traditional crafts. Admission is free to Kirkharle Courtyard. Some scheduled events will be free and others by ticket only.

www.kirkharlecourtyard.co.uk

SEPTEMBER

Brown at Croome exhibition, Croome Court, Worcestershire

24 September – 18 December 2016

Painting and archive material about Brown will be displayed at Croome in autumn / winter 2016. The exhibition will include the Dance portrait of Brown (loaned by the National Portrait Gallery), a Richard Wilson landscape painting, and items on loan from the Hive (bills, letters, surveys etc). Croome will also host a series of CB lectures, an exhibition by the Embroiderer's Guild, and a celebration for Brown's birthday on 25th September 2016 (TBC).

www.nationaltrust.org.uk/croome

Remembrance Centre, The National Memorial Arboretum, Staffordshire

Autumn

£15.7m development to include new Remembrance Centre with exhibition, restaurant, café, classrooms and retail facilities, plus new interpretation in the shelters, audio guide and landscaping.

There will be a brand new Visitor Centre with cloistered courtyard and transitional garden to the Arboretum grounds. We will also have a new audio tour to help people navigate and understand the memorials in the gardens.

www.thenma.org.uk/

For more on England's gardens, go to visitengland.com/gardens

Ends

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Notes to Editors:

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- Our work is underpinned by robust research and customer insights. You can access the latest in-depth market intelligence and statistics on www.visitengland.org/insight-statistics

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- More information can be found on www.visitengland.com