



## 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 20<sup>th</sup> 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](http://www.royalacademy.org.uk)

#### **Landscapes: A celebration of Landscape, Lyme Park, Cheshire**

January – February 2016, (weekend days, 11am – 3pm)

Lyme's Winter Exhibition in association with SkyArts Landscape Artist of the Year. View the original paintings from Sky Arts Landscape of the Year and never-before-seen artwork from the Legh family collection. Take part in the arty garden trail and craft activities for all ages. £4 per person.

[www.nationaltrust.org.uk/lyme-park](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/lyme-park)

#### **Capability Brown Landscape Tours at Trentham Estate, Staffordshire**

18 & 21 January, 8 February 2016

The Trentham Estate - one of Brown's most celebrated successes during the 18th century - is now involved in what is currently one of the biggest parkland projects in the country. As well as hearing about the major restoration project, walkers will also learn about Brown's enormous impact at The Trentham Estate, from enlarging the lake to creating parkland. The tour will explore the restored connection between Kings Wood and the lake, point out a number of Brownian-aged trees between the amphitheatre and the bird hide, and visit the recently revealed Victorian Red Woods. Future plans - including the introduction of grazing, and the opportunity to reinvigorate some of the present-day lakeside attractions - will also be highlighted on the tour, which will take in the remains of Trentham Hall, the discovery of the once forgotten Ice House and the location of the world's

second oldest cast iron bridge, constructed in 1779.

[www.trentham.co.uk](http://www.trentham.co.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](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/westonbirt)

## **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/>

### **'Scene: A new way of looking', Wimpole Hall, Cambridgeshire**

From 26 February 2016

Wimpole Hall will host a neon art commission 'Scene: A new way of looking', launching on 26<sup>th</sup> February, and will host a collection-based display on Brown in the Red Room. Special walks will take place throughout the year and Wimpole will host a new play about CB in the Quantum outdoor theatre on Sunday 19 June. In October, autumn concerts will have a theme of music inspired by landscape and nature.

<http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/wimpole-estate/>

### **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](http://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](http://www.chatsworth.org)

### **New estates tour at Belvoir Castle**

From 13 March 2016

In the early 1800s, the Duke of Rutland's gardens at Belvoir Castle were largely considered to be one of the finest in the land. Rumoured to be the work of the country's greatest landscape architect, Capability Brown, they have been largely forgotten until now. A chance discovery of Brown's incredible plans for Belvoir Castle in its own archives, which had been lost for nearly 200 years, has led to the launch of a new book and estates tour to coincide with Brown's tercentenary. The Castle and Gardens will be open for the season from 13 March 2016. As well as the existing tours of the grounds, a brand new Capability Brown tour will offer the chance for visitors to experience the stunning views and vistas that Capability had planned for Belvoir over 250 years ago. Explore

previously un-trodden ground in some of the Estate's most beautiful gardens and woodland, and find out why the Belvoir plans give a fascinating insight into the inspirations of the latter stages of Brown's career. The book, entitled *Capability Brown and Belvoir*, is the Duchess of Rutland's story about her gardens' development and the fascinating people that made it happen. She shows how Brown's enduring landscape is still as appropriate for today and, crucially, for the next generations' agricultural, environmental and aesthetic purposes. Her candid and informative text is complemented by stunning photography and includes views of many private areas of the garden not usually open to the public.  
[www.belvoircastle.com](http://www.belvoircastle.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](http://www.harewood.org)

### **Garden Tours at Hill Top, Cumbria**

20 March, 17 April, 15 May 2016

Join Hill Top's very own Mr McGregor, gardener Pete, for a guided tour of Beatrix Potter's delightful farm house garden. Learn about the history of the garden, its plants and their deep connection with Beatrix Potter's life and work. Free event (normal admission charges apply).

<http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/hill-top>

### **Holkham Hall, Norfolk**

20 March 2016

The jewel in Norfolk's crown, Holkham Hall, is a living treasure house of artistic and architectural history and one of the finest examples of Palladian architecture. The hall is surrounded by 3,000 acres of scenic parkland, home to a large herd of deer and rich in wildlife. An exciting project is underway at Holkham to restore the 6 acres of walled garden which was originally laid out by Samuel Wyatt during the late 1700s. Visitors are invited to see how the work is progressing. Their first step will take them through Italian iron-work gates which were brought from Venice in 1908 and into one of the seven sections, known as 'rooms'. With the help of English Heritage, the large Victorian greenhouses have also been renovated back to their original splendour. A newly planted vineyard also hopes to provide fruits for grape juice and the table, once established.

[www.holkham.co.uk/](http://www.holkham.co.uk/)

### **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 tilyard towers and a fire-breathing dragon.

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

### **Fireworks at Kirkharle, Northumberland**

**Easter weekend**

Enjoy an evening fireworks display and torchlight procession round Capability's serpentine lake beside Kirkharle Courtyard. Volunteers, dressed in period costume, will be on hand to offer information and guidance, helping visitors to enjoy the whole 'CB' experience, with refreshments provided.

### **Berrington Hall, Herefordshire**

**March – September**

Berrington Hall is planning to completely restore its walled garden to its 18<sup>th</sup> century Brownian origins. The initial phase taking place in 2016 will be to remove an orchard and return the planting style to the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The entire project is expected to take three years. The Hall will also be restoring and reinstating the original design of

the park to reveal 'lost views', and is working with environmental artists RedEarth to produce a series of installations within the park to interpret the restoration. Berrington Hall will also offer:

- Brown Walks at Berrington from 1 March
- Boating on Capability Brown's lake, from 1 August – 2 September (the best way to see this 14-acre designed lake)
- Open air matinee play 'Historie of Capability Brown'. Dates TBC.

[www.nationaltrust.org.uk/berrington-hall](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/berrington-hall)

## 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](http://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](http://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](http://www.burghley.co.uk)

## 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](http://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](http://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.

### **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](http://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/>

## **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](http://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 25<sup>th</sup> September 2016 (TBC).

<http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/croome>

For more on England's gardens, go to [visitengland.com/gardens](http://visitengland.com/gardens)

**Ends**

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### **Notes to Editors:**

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