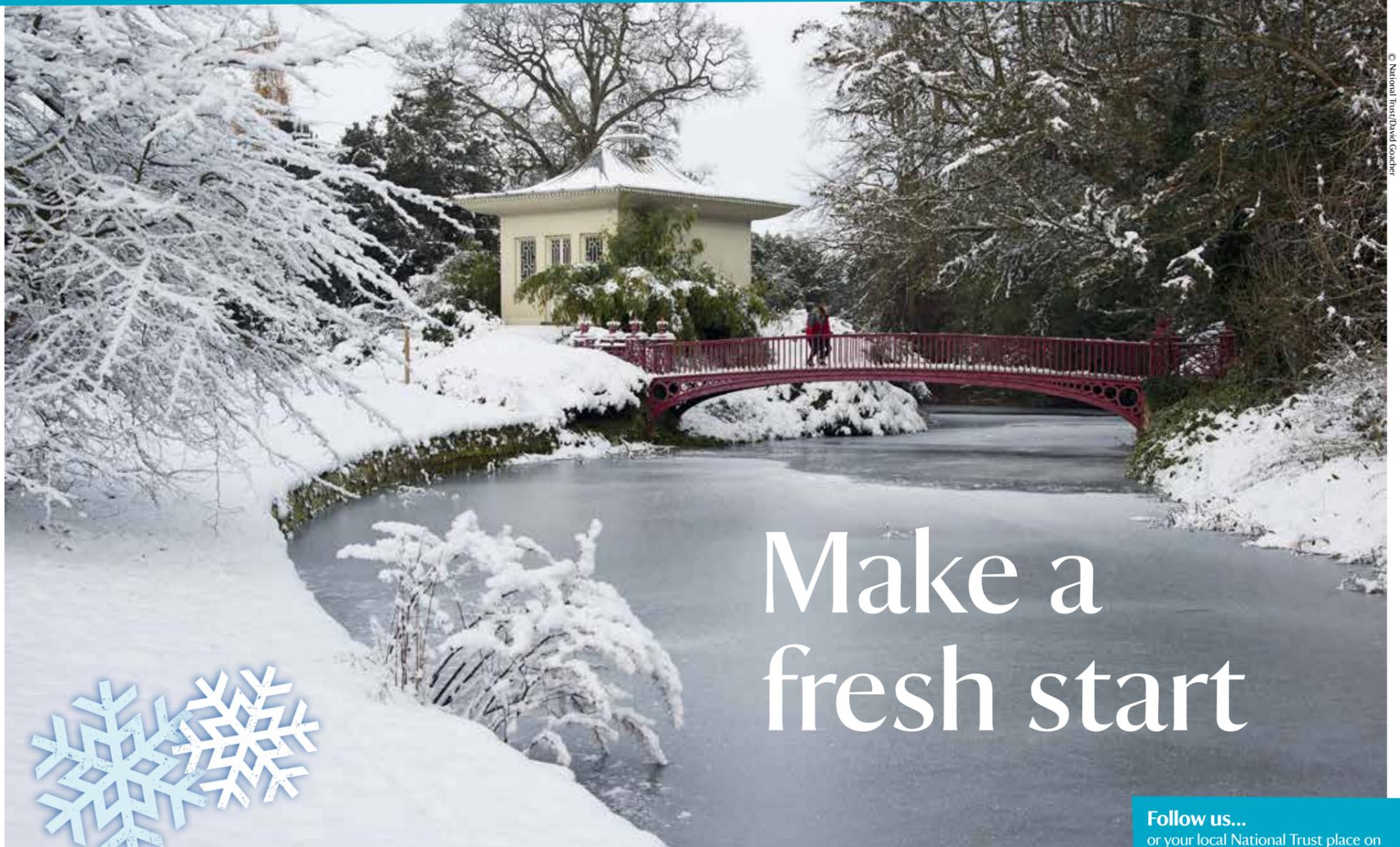




National Trust

News and events for spring 2019
Herefordshire | Shropshire | Staffordshire
Warwickshire | West Midlands | Worcestershire

Near you



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Make a fresh start



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or your local National Trust place on social media. Share your days out with us and get the latest updates on spring flowers, Easter and much more

   #NTMidlands

Celebrate the first signs of spring

After the bleakness of winter, spring is a welcome change of the seasons. Mother Nature springs into life with bulbs pushing through the ground, tree leaves in bud, the sound of birdsong and longer days.

At Clent Hills in Worcestershire see how this haven in the Midlands is transformed as carpets of intense colour appear under the canopy of trees and on the hills, an ideal habitat for bluebells.

Lambs are a quintessential part of spring and at Carding Mill Valley and the Long Mynd in Shropshire and at the Shugborough Estate over the border in Staffordshire; you can see the lambs playing in the spring sunshine, and if you're lucky you may catch one being born.

At Hanbury Hall in Worcestershire the parterre ribbon border bursts into bloom as 5,000 bulbs, including hyacinths



© National Trust/Simon Atherton



© National Trust Images/Chris Lacey

and daffodils, begin to flower. While at Dudmaston in Shropshire you can explore the 3,000 acres of Comer Woods on foot or bike and then reward yourself with a hot drink in a re-usable cup from the Shepherd's Hut and take in the view over Heath Meadow.

The highlights for this season are spring flowers, lambs and carpets of bluebells, a sure sign that spring has arrived. You help us protect these signs of spring.

Thank you

The New Year is a time for making resolutions and fresh starts. Perhaps you'd like to get active, spend time with friends and family, learn a new skill or give something to others – all great for boosting your wellbeing.

Wrap up warm for winter walks at Charlecote Park in Warwickshire and be rewarded with their new walking loyalty card. At Wenlock Edge in Shropshire there are 18 miles of footpaths and bridleways – ideal for running. Follow the contours of the Edge for an easier run or take the tracks and holloways which criss-cross the Edge for a more intense work out. Brockhampton in Herefordshire has several walks on the estate that offer vistas through the woods and in the wooded valleys that can only be seen in winter and are not to be missed.

During half term it's all about family time. Join the team at Attingham Park in Shropshire for lantern making (19 Feb, booking essential) and then join the Lantern Lit Procession (23 Feb, booking essential). At Croft Castle and Parkland in Herefordshire you can follow the Jack Frost trail (16 Feb – 24 Feb) to banish the winter from Croft and herald the arrival of spring. And don't forget, half term is a great time to start your

'50 things to do before you're 11¾' activities that are happening at lots of our places.

Volunteering is a great way to make new friends while working in amazing places – there are so many opportunities. Sunnycroft in Shropshire is opening on a Tuesday for the first time this year and would love to hear from you if you'd like to be part of the team. At Berrington Hall in Herefordshire, welcome hosts are needed to make the welcome at the Hall as warm as possible. While in Warwickshire, Baddesley Clinton and Packwood House are looking for volunteers to help with their varied events programme – no two days will be the same from Outdoor Theatre to Easter and Halloween trails.

The highlights for this season are frosty mornings, bare winter tree views and carpets of snowdrops, a sure sign that spring is on its way. You help us protect these winter wonders. Thank you.

For details of all there is to see and do, visit www.nationaltrust.org.uk/midlands or take a look at the 'What's On' section



From the Director for the Midlands



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Spring is just over the horizon. The turning of the seasons is always an uplifting time of year for me and it's time for a good spring clean, getting outside and savouring the natural world. In this issue you can read about how we are working to open up some new places to explore: the amazing curved walled garden at Berrington is an example, which is coming back into our care and will be part of a very exciting conservation project.

We also want to do more to ensure that everyone feels welcome in our places and that wherever we can we provide access to people of all abilities and backgrounds. The 'hands on, hands off' project describes one way in which we are trying to do this in our houses. You can also read about the next stage of bringing Shugborough (below) back to its best with the restoration of the Triumphal Arch and an important series of wall paintings.



Most of all though spring is a time for simple pleasures, which we increasingly understand to be important for our health and wellbeing. So please do join me in taking the time to notice birdsong and savour the orchard blossom, wherever you can find them.

Andy Beer

Growing partnerships for a garden of pleasure at Berrington

Plans are underway at Berrington Hall in Herefordshire to restore and re-design the Walled Garden and Pleasure Grounds experience for supporters, communities and future generations to enjoy.

The gardens, designed by Lancelot 'Capability' Brown, are an almost complete example of his final work before his death in 1783. Part of Brown's garden includes a rare and significant half-moon-shaped walled garden. One of only two surviving national examples of a curved walled garden, it is currently home to the livestock of the Cawley family, who were the last family to live at Berrington.

The garden was intended to supply produce to the household but also as a place to enjoy, relax and revitalise. Now there is a need for vital conservation to the half-moon garden, walls, paths and facilities but opportunities have also arisen to create a garden which provides a genuine benefit to the health and wellbeing of visitors.

From May 2019, the half-moon garden will be back under the care of the National Trust so that it can be restored and developed into a creative garden, designed with the help of community partners.

The team, led by project manager Ellie Jones have been developing partnerships with groups such as the Hereford College of the Arts and SHYP (Supported Housing for Young People). Ellie said: 'Working with local groups will help shape the experiences within the garden so that it can provide access to not only nature but to heritage, culture and horticulture for everyone.'

Further support is needed for this project to enable the vital conservation work to happen. You can help by making a donation to the Walled Garden and Pleasure Grounds Restoration Project or by visiting Berrington Hall. www.nationaltrust.org.uk/berringtonpleasuregrounds



The half-moon garden (highlighted) at Berrington

© National Trust Images/James Hargraves

Conservation support for Shugborough: What do you think?

Landscape, both real and imagined, is a major focus of conservation at Shugborough Estate in Staffordshire this year.

The temples and monuments dotted about the estate help to make it one of the most significant grade 1-listed designed landscapes in Britain.

The parkland contains exceptional structures by James 'Athenian' Stuart, one of the pioneers of Neo-Classicism and in particular the Greek style. The imposing Triumphal Arch, started in 1761, was probably the first of the park monuments undertaken by 'Athenian' Stuart and is certainly the most prominent.

A condition survey carried out last year, funded by Historic England, highlighted that repairs were required to the Arch, primarily removing moss growth, repairing stonework, re-pointing and replacing lead. Whilst the scaffolding is in place, to allow specialist conservators to carry out the

repairs, the marble statuary and medallions will also be inspected. The repair work, partially funded by the Wolfson Foundation, is due to commence later this spring. Another significant monument, the Tower of the Winds is also due to be externally conserved – trials and investigations will take place from June onwards.

Inside the Hall, there is a conservation project underway to repair and conserve the eight wall paintings in the 'Room of Imaginary Landscapes'.

The paintings, known as 'capricci', depict idealised landscapes and interesting architectural features such as pyramids, columns and temples. They are thought to have been part of the inspiration for the wonderful structures that you see in the parkland today.

The exciting part of this project is that there is so much to discover. House Steward Gemma Roberts said: 'As well as conserving these amazing paintings, we also hope to be able to identify the artist who painted them. It's currently a bit of a mystery as we're not sure if they are by Nicholas Dall, who created a number of the other landscape paintings in the hall.'

'Thanks to the ongoing support of our members and visitors we are able to start work on a large scale project to conserve these wonders.'

Discover more about the progress of these projects at: www.nationaltrust.org.uk/shugboroughlandscapes



© National Trust Images/Andrew Butler

Get out into nature this Easter

Bring the whole family together this Easter and treat your loved ones to the magic of our Cadbury Easter Egg Hunts! Get ready for a long weekend of fun and discovery as you spot the first signs of spring and experience nature bursting into life at the special places the National Trust looks after. Become a nature detective to follow bunny's clues and finish your adventure with a delicious, chocolatey treat.



in partnership with National Trust

A day in the life...

Ewan Chapman, Area Ranger, Kinver Edge

As Area Ranger at Kinver Edge I spend a lot of time creating and restoring important habitats – especially heathland, which is great for wildlife but increasingly rare in the UK. Our ambition is for our habitats to be bigger, better and more joined up. We hope to achieve this by connecting fragmented pockets of heathland to allow isolated populations of adders to meet, or creating woodland rides for White Admiral butterflies.

I also do lots of public engagement – at our annual Bioblitz we run free family activities like

bird ringing and pond-dipping, so children and adults can get closer to nature and make an emotional connection with the wildlife that lives on their doorstep. Another key job is spreading the word about how our visitors can help to protect these important species whilst enjoying the countryside – for example we are launching a new initiative where we are asking dog-walkers to 'take the lead' in the heathland to help ground-nesting birds and reptiles by minimising disturbance from dogs.

This time of year we do lots of wildlife monitoring. An exciting

research project we've done at Kinver Edge is radio-tracking of adders to understand their behaviour and thereby make sure our management is making their habitat better.

Find out more about the wonderful work that goes on to care for Kinver Edge at: www.nationaltrust.org.uk/kinver-edge



© National Trust

TOP FIVE

Places to sense the joys of spring

Everyday life is busy. So it's essential to take time out and enjoy the simple pleasures that nature can bring. Here's our selection of ways to taste, touch, hear, smell and see the wonders of spring. To find out more visit www.nationaltrust.org.uk/westmidssenses

1

Wenlock Edge, Shropshire

Wild garlic is not only a woodland staple, it has great health benefits too and an abundance of this aromatic herb appears in the woods at Wenlock Edge from April. You can also **taste** our Wild Garlic Pesto, which is made and sold at nearby Carding Mill Valley.



Croome Worcestershire

Escape to the quieter corners of the Capability Brown landscaped parkland at Croome and appreciate the **touch** and texture of bark on the various trees. Take your shoes off and feel the grass between your toes, and if you're brave squelch through some mud too.

2

Berrington Hall Herefordshire

The island at Berrington Hall becomes home to a cacophony of bird noise from late February through to April. Herons from near and far turn this site of special scientific interest in to their nesting ground, it is truly something memorable to **hear**.



3



Croft Castle and Parkland Herefordshire

Remove yourself from the hustle and bustle and **smell** the beautiful aroma of Croft's native British bluebells. These pretty blooms provide a fragrant aroma as well as a sea of colour in the wood pasture and along the carriage rides in Fishpool Valley at Croft Castle, in late April and into May.

4

Shugborough Estate Staffordshire

Playful lambs frolicking in the spring sunshine are a wonderful **sight** to behold. The Southdowns at Shugborough are a delightful traditional breed grazing the Grade 1 listed parkland. Don't miss the majestic Longhorn cows and Tamworth pigs too.

5



...and don't forget to share your spring images with us on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram



VISITORS ARE EARNESTLY REQUESTED NOT TO TOUCH THE EXHIBIT

Hands On or Hands Off?

When visiting National Trust properties are you sometimes unsure whether you can sit on a chair or walk on the grass? Do you understand why 'do not touch' signs appear in some locations and not in others? Is it all really rather confusing?

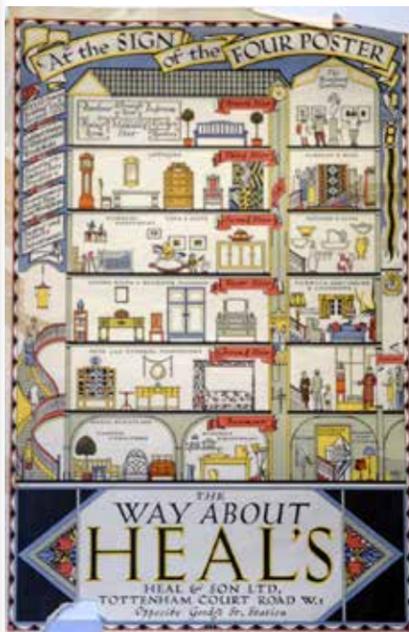
In our efforts to create new experiences and more informal ways of visiting our properties we haven't always been clear with our visitors about what the boundaries are and we've sometimes caused confusion. Hands On or Hands Off? is a Midlands project looking at how we can connect people with our conservation work in a consistent, clear and creative way.

Throughout spring and summer, a group of five properties are testing innovative ways to engage visitors with conservation messaging, using playfulness, creativity and humour. Look out for the following:

- Attingham Park, in Shropshire – showcasing damaged objects in a quirky 'Dark Museum'-style manner, demonstrating the effects of lack of conservation care.
- Greyfriars' House and Garden, in Worcester – creating an ironic 'rule book' for visitors.
- Upton House and Gardens in Warwickshire – testing new logos for signalling how visitors can interact with their surroundings.
- Sudbury Hall and the National Trust Museum of Childhood in Derbyshire – creation of a time-lapse film following the story of four chairs, two at the property and two touring public spaces in Derby, to see how they fare when subjected to wear and tear with no conservation constraints.
- The Workhouse in Nottinghamshire – 'If walls could talk' project, working with children to create sound recordings about caring for the walls and wallpaper in their own words.

We would like your help in evaluating which methods are the most effective, clear and memorable, so please visit and join in the trials. Discover more: www.nationaltrust.org.uk/midlandshoho

The art of advertising



From 9 March, Upton House and Gardens will be hosting a very special exhibition of rare 1930s posters from London's 200-year-old furniture store, Heal's. It's the first time this collection will be seen outside of the company's Tottenham Court Road store.

Tying in with Upton's 'Made to Measure' theme, the Heal's exhibition gives us a glimpse of inter-war interior design and the trend for modern living.

Visitor Experience Officer, Celia Hughes, says, 'Made to Measure tells the story of Upton's transformation after it was bought by Shell Chairman, 2nd Viscount Bearsted. Between 1927 and 1936 Lord and Lady Bearsted swept away the heavy furnishings of Upton's Victorian owners and introduced mod cons and home

comforts, making Upton a luxurious weekend country house'.

Upton is already home to a permanent collection of 1930s Shell oil posters which, like the Heal's posters, represent a new development in commercial art. Upton's Lord Bearsted, Chairman of Shell, and Sir Ambrose Heal were both keen collectors who saw the potential for art to transform the way people experience their everyday lives. Created by cutting-edge contemporary artists, the Heal's and Shell posters show an aspirational view of modernity which these two influential companies carefully marketed to their customers.

The Heal's exhibition can be seen at Upton from 9 March – 28 July 2019. Find out more at nationaltrust.org.uk/heals

Art at the heart of Dudmaston Hall

Last year, artist Faye Claridge asked visitors, volunteers, staff and residents at Dudmaston to suggest contrasts and links from the property and grounds. To present these suggestions, the conservation team moved objects and highlighted stories in new settings to create a change in perspective and to stir emotions.

We want to thank everyone who responded to 'Shaken and Stirred' and shared some personal memories and feelings with us. Your responses have helped Faye to shape a brand new art project for us all to experience at Dudmaston this year.

The story that provoked the greatest number of responses was suggested by visitors Faye and Jack



Holland, aged ten and six. They paired Barry Flanagan's 'Boxing Ones' with a 17th-century Dutch painting of Two Unknown Girls to illustrate their personal experiences of fighting and harmony as brother and sister – this chimes with the themes of family and children which has brought both joy and sadness to Dudmaston over the years.

Thanks to funding from the Arts Council and support from Trust New Art, the project will see Faye working with partners at Ironbridge Gorge Museums Trust to strengthen existing family links between the two heritage sites.

As a result visitors may notice a new presence at Dudmaston this spring. Playful family photos, an empty bed and a whispered welcome await those who tip toe inside. The Hall is hushed and waiting, longing to turn what is unknown into something more familiar. Discover what's new from Monday 1 April.

Discover more about this intriguing new project at: www.nationaltrust.org.uk/dudmaston-arts

Part of Trust New Art, the National Trust's programme of contemporary arts.



Supported using public funding by
ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND



One of the most welcome harbingers of spring is the blossom of fruit trees in traditional orchards. Throughout April and into early May plums, damsons, pears, apples and cherries provide a succession of flowering which is all the more attractive for being 'en masse'.

For large-scale, commercially viable fruit production, traditional orchards - of widely-spaced fruit trees, typically long-established local varieties grown on vigorous rootstocks, within a field which is grazed by livestock - have been replaced by intensive cultivation of dwarf varieties, which offer high productivity and easy harvesting but provide little by way of wildlife value compared to their traditional counterparts.

Old, open-grown fruit trees may have lost some of their productivity, but they provide a host of habitats for birds, insects, lichens and fungi. Holes in the tree provide nest sites for blue tits or perhaps a little owl or redstart, whilst a dead branch may attract the now rare lesser spotted woodpecker to excavate its own nest hole. Hidden from view, decaying wood is providing food for larvae of the noble chafer - a rare beetle largely confined to traditional orchards in the south-west Midlands.

You can enjoy traditional orchards at many National Trust places, often within or adjoining gardens, but to see an orchard landscape head to Herefordshire where the Brockhampton estate has over 20ha (50 acres) of traditional orchard - with more to be planted in the near future as the Trust implements its vision to enhance the estate for nature and people.

www.nationaltrust.org.uk/features/caring-for-orchards-in-the-midlands

Simon Barker
Wildlife & Countryside Advisor

Save Sunnycroft's Halliday conservatory

Sunnycroft in Shropshire is the most charming property. An increasingly rare example of late Victorian aspiration, it stands proudly as an intact 'estate in miniature'.

This year is an important year for Sunnycroft; we mark both 20 years of being open to the public and celebrate Mary Jane Slaney, the remarkable owner who gave the villa its distinctive additions 120 years ago.

The widow of a successful wine merchant, Mary Jane Slaney was a prominent figure within the community and owned several properties. At Sunnycroft, she made her mark through lining the drive with impressive Wellingtonia Redwoods and extending the house to encompass, amongst others, the billiard room, the turret entrance and commissioning the decorative Halliday conservatory.

Forming a centrepiece for the ornamental gardens at Sunnycroft, the Grade II listed Victorian glasshouse was built by R. Halliday and Co, who also supplied

glasshouses for the Rothschild family at Waddesdon Manor in Buckinghamshire. It is the only example within the National Trust and is believed to be one of just two surviving countrywide.

An appeal is now underway to fund vital conservation work to bring the conservatory back to its former glory and to preserve it for generations to come.

The project will involve a full survey and condition report, rescue and restoration of the stained glass and cast iron mechanisms, and retention of as much of the original woodwork as possible. We will use skilled craftsman to replace any unsalvageable parts. You too can appreciate Mary Jane Slaney's taste and aspiration, and support the fundraising appeal by making a donation or buying a raffle ticket at Sunnycroft.

To find out how you can support the Halliday conservatory restoration project visit www.nationaltrust.org.uk/Sunnycroft



© National Trust Images/Chris Bowersell

Revealing lost views in Fishpool Valley

As part of our project to revive the Picturesque Fishpool Valley, we're gradually opening up lost views by sensitively thinning areas of the woodland in stages over the next four years.

Our thinning work began in 2017; the next stage will continue in February until the end of March 2019. Our aim is to not only reveal lost views, but to also improve the diversity of the woodland structure and enable other species to thrive by increasing light levels in the valley.

Fishpool Valley was remodelled in the late 18th century in the Picturesque style. Carriage rides were

designed to follow the contours of the landscape, providing dramatic views across a wild, but beautiful, contrived scene. Sadly, these views have now been lost, but over the next four years you will be able to see them gradually revealed.

This work simply wouldn't be possible without the help of our supporters; everyone who's joined, visited, donated and volunteered has contributed to the revival of the Picturesque experience in Fishpool Valley. Thank you.

www.nationaltrust.org.uk/opening-views

News in brief

My National Trust

For an easy way to organise your membership and choose how you hear from us, remember to register and stay up to date on My National Trust.

Register for My National Trust at nationaltrust.org.uk/mynationaltrust and update your email settings to receive regular 'What's near you?' emails, plus an exclusive monthly member e-newsletter, packed with ideas and inspiration to help you enjoy every benefit of being a member.

Dome repairs set to start

Essential conservation work is underway at Berrington Hall on its historic Lantern Dome. Designed by Henry Holland, the Dome was created to not only allow light in but to showcase the highest Georgian architectural design. Water has been leaking in but thanks to your support we have been able to begin these vital repairs.

www.nationaltrust.org.uk/dome-repairs

Restoring Packwood's causeway

Since 2015 conservation efforts at Packwood House in Warwickshire have been focused on work to restore the causeway wall of Packwood's Great Pool. The wall, which also acts as a dam, had become worn over time so to stop it springing a leak Packwood began a four year project to protect this beautiful feature of the parkland. This work also means that the water source heat pump can continue to heat the house.

For more information visit www.nationaltrust.org.uk/packwood-house

The (vegetable) plot thickens

Regular visitors to Baddesley Clinton in Warwickshire might have noticed that the vegetable garden isn't where it used to be. In fact, the garden has been moved back to its original location, according to a set of 1848 plans. This is part of a wider conservation project to help us understand the history of Baddesley's gardens and make plans to look after them over the years to come.

Keep up to date with the progress in the gardens at www.nationaltrust.org.uk/baddesley-clinton

Volunteering



Our project volunteers

Exciting projects are happening across the region this year and volunteering supports many of them from concept to delivery.

The National Trust creates new opportunities for existing volunteers to be involved in projects and also recruits new volunteers with particular skills to support our work.

There are volunteers involved in projects such as the Peak District's People's Landscapes Art Project and planning visitor experiences at Shugborough.

Jerry Holgate, Project Board volunteer for the People's Landscapes project says 'I have been involved since the early planning stages and have found it most interesting, especially meeting the different groups involved in the project. As a volunteer I enjoy having an input into the project as it develops.'

Christine Harding, Experience Design Volunteer at Shugborough says: 'It is not only allowing me to learn more about my local



Jerry Holgate

© National Trust/Deborah Webster

community, but it also gives me the opportunity to expand my knowledge and grow in a more professional capacity.'

Volunteers have also been the driving force behind the Fishpool Valley Project at Croft Castle. Volunteer teams have been leading the way in every respect; from ecological work to archaeological excavations.

Find out about volunteering opportunities at www.nationaltrust.org.uk/find-an-opportunity

For membership queries please call 0344 800 1895

If you require this information in alternative formats, including the Talking Newsletter, please telephone 0121 224 7460 or email: mi.customerenquiries@nationaltrust.org.uk