

The Gardens Trust Conservation Committee update

David Lambert, Gardens Trust Board member

Following the Garden History Society & Association of Gardens Trusts merger, the Joint Conservation Committee has become the Gardens Trust Conservation Committee, under the chairmanship of Dr Marion Harney. The excellent work of the core conservation team in providing a flow of information to the county trusts about planning applications continues, while it will continue to field major casework and responses to government policy consultations. We on the new Committee are acutely conscious of the fundamental role of county gardens trusts; as with all national amenity societies, we are dependent on volunteers and it is our role to support and amplify the views of those who really know a site and understand its historic interest.

When I was GHS conservation officer in the nineties (ancient history!) I was increasingly dependent on my little black book of friends in the county trusts with whom I could discuss casework and whose local knowledge, not only of the place but of the

local politics, far outstripped what I could glean from national sources. Over the years, county gardens trusts members have been tireless allies in putting together campaigns, letters to planners or proofs of evidence for inquiries. The key has been our shared passion for identifying and defending historic parks and gardens of every sort, registered or unregistered. William Morris summed it up, 'every man who has a cause at heart must act as if it depended on him'.

We are currently undertaking a review of casework and are finalising a leaflet for planning authorities, explaining the role of The Gardens Trust and of the County Trusts. The next *news* will describe a number of conservation concerns, such as post-war landscapes, public parks, gardens at risk, cemeteries and war memorial landscapes, and we look forward to hearing from County Trusts and working closely with them.

Update on 'Glamping' at Warwick Castle

Jonathan Lovie, Principal Conservation Officer & Policy Adviser

Members will recall the highly damaging development proposals for a permanent 'glamorous camping' development within the Grade I landscape at Warwick Castle which were described in the last newsletter by Christine Hodgetts.

Both Warwickshire Gardens Trust and The Gardens Trust made strong objections to Warwick District Council; and subsequently Warwickshire Gardens Trust requested the Secretary of State to 'call in' the application as it clearly went contrary to national and local planning policy and raised very serious issues of principle. A matter of days after receiving the call in request, and without any reference to The Gardens Trust in its role as Statutory Consultee, the Government Office (West Midlands) stated that it would not be calling in the application for determination. Within a few more days the application was rubber stamped by Warwick District Council.

We are shocked that despite the repeated assurance of

Government Ministers, including the Chancellor, that Government recognises the value of heritage and the historic environment, the Government Office made what appears to have been a knee-jerk judgment based on the political dogma of delegating decisions to the local authority, rather than considering (with appropriate expert advice) the real issues of the case and the devastating impact of the development on the historic environment.

As a result, and despite the Government's increasingly implausible protestations to the contrary, in 2016 (ironically the 'Year of the Garden' and the tercentenary of 'Capability' Brown, one of the designers of the landscape at Warwick), this Grade I landscape of European cultural significance will be permanently disfigured by a pseudo-mediaeval camp site.

Would we treat any other form of cultural heritage in such a cavalier manner?

From the Editor

There were one or two queries about why our regular summer (1 September) mailing went out as *news 96*. In my defence I was hoping to make my first century; so soon after the vote to join the two organisations together there were bound to be teething difficulties. I will be publishing a new look newsletter in the new year.

The question was also raised, by some, as to why they received several mailings under different covers; we had to get mailings out to several 'new' contacts. Of course in many cases the membership overlaps, with many of us wearing several hats. The new Board of **The Gardens Trust (GT)** has decided to mail a copy of our journal *Garden History*, along with six copies of the *news*, and related booking forms, to the individual County and Country

Gardens Trusts (CGTs) for dissemination to their members. The CGTs are also able to obtain electronic copies for wider dissemination, if they choose to; these are also available on our website. Our newly elected Chairman did of course urge each of us to go out and recruit another full member of the new **Gardens Trust**, and our publications and events aim to act as our ambassadors. We will also be publishing our CGT's *Yearbook* in the new year. All these decisions can of course be revisited.

We are currently working on a new **Gardens Trust** website, which we aim to have up and running early in the new year.

And finally you will notice that I have introduced our new logo in this publication; you will be seeing a lot more of it...

The Gardens Trust Events 2016 see our websites for details

TGT Winter Lecture series

See the enclosed Booking Form for booking information and details.

Capability' Brown in Yorkshire a celebratory Study Day at Wentworth Castle, near Barnsley on Friday 22 April

The Wentworth Castle Heritage Trust, in association with **The Gardens Trust**, will host the study day. The morning's speakers are **Karen Lynch, Johnny Phibbs** and **Patrick Eyres**. In the afternoon Jane Furse and Johnny Phibbs will lead a tour through the Brownian park.

Cost: £50. To book or for further information, please phone: 01226 776 040.

Garden Study Tour of south west Scotland Saturday 14 to Friday 20 May

At the height of Scotland's spring woodland and rhododendron season, we shall be visiting several important historic designed landscapes from the 17th century onwards. The very special climatic conditions of this area mean they are ideal for growing exotic plants and trees from the Himalayas, Chile, the Antipodes and other temperate zones.



The new walled garden at Drumlanrig Castle, one of the landscapes on our Study Tour

Our Study Tour will include the **Garden of Cosmic Speculation at Portrack, Dumfries House** and its new walled garden, **Drumlanrig Castle, Threave, Culzean Castle** on its cliff top overlooking the sea, **Logan House** and its adjacent Botanical garden and **Castle Kennedy**.

There will also be visits to significant private gardens too. Some places still available; please contact Kristina Taylor: wowkristina@hotmail.com

The Suburban Garden Annual Study Weekend at Rewley House, Oxford Friday 3 to Sunday 5 June

Considering the developments, conceptual and actual, of the British suburban garden from the early nineteenth century to the present day. Starting with the Loudons and their defining and prescribing the suburban garden, we shall look at phases or movements such as the Garden Suburb, 'Metroland' and post-war developments. There will be walking tour in North Oxford, including a visit to the private Park Town garden.

Cost from £131. Contact: ppdayweek@conted.ox.ac.uk or phone: 01865 270 380.

Paris Gardens Study Tour Monday 11 to Friday 15 July

A study tour of late 18th century landscapes and gardens of Paris and Ile de France with **Gabriel Wick** and **Robert Peel**.

We hope to visit the iconic sites of **Desert de Retz, Mereville** and **Parc Jean Jacques Rousseau** at Ermenonville as well as other

less famous but equally impressive examples such as **La Roche Guyon, Rambouillet** and **La Folie St James**.

Contact Robert Peel: 020 7121 8938 or: rma.peel@btopenworld.com

Lancelot 'Capability' Brown 300 years on; a celebration of his life and work in Cambridge

Summer Conference Friday 2 to Sunday 4 September

Includes garden tours, lectures and exhibitions on Brown's life and works, both executed and planned: a visit to

'Capability' Brown's Manor at **Fenstanton** and his enigmatic memorial in the parish church; tours of his major landscapes at **Wimpole Hall** and **Madingley Hall**; a visit to the renowned **Cambridge Botanic Gardens**; a guided walk along 'The Backs' to view what he did, and did not, implement there, and the **College Gardens**; lectures by **Steffie Shields, Patrick Eyres** and **Tom Williamson**.

The weekend will include our AGM and New Research Symposium

Further details from Ann Colbert: acolbert25@btinternet.com or phone: 01487 822 591

'Capability' Brown: perception and response in a global context with ICOMOS-UK

Friday 9 to Sunday 11 Sept, University of Bath

The landscape designer Lancelot 'Capability' Brown (1716–83) changed the face of 18th-century England. Yet Brown left no written explanation of his work. Much must be inferred from his surviving landscapes and by seeing his work in the wider context of the naturalistic style that developed in Europe and in countries influenced by Europe.

Practitioners will present Brown's work in a global context and explore the ways in which it has been interpreted over the last 250 years. Papers from the conference will be published by the Gardens Trust in the summer of 2016.

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micro-news Winter 2015

correspondence and items to
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news 1 copy deadline: 1 February