

**Response from the National Trust to the Gardens Trust
10 September 2020**

Dear Mr Bartos,

Thank you for your recent letter. Our gardens are undoubtedly of vast significance and a much-cherished part of the heritage in our care.

As you will know, the Trust has been hit very hard by coronavirus and faces £200m losses this year. This has, very regrettably, left us with no option but to find savings across every aspect of our work. But as much as we possibly can, we will retain the right level of curatorial and conservation expertise to care for, research, interpret and engage audiences with our remarkable gardens, buildings and collections. We're trying hard to mitigate curatorial job losses and we're determined to keep providing world class conservation to the heritage in our care.

We are striving to minimise the impact of cuts on core conservation activities in our gardens and landscapes. Our most significant, most loved and most visited gardens will continue to be managed in the same ways with only small changes that visitors are unlikely to notice. However, in order to make necessary savings we will have to make choices about how we care for some gardens in keeping with their particular qualities. In some places we may manage certain areas less intensively - for example, some lawns may be mown less frequently. In other places we may manage borders differently to reduce work load - perhaps using lower maintenance perennials or shrubs. In all cases, we will use our horticultural skills and knowledge to make thoughtful decisions that are in keeping with the spirit and significance of each property.

These are without doubt extremely challenging times but I'm confident that our plans will ensure we can keep caring for remarkable gardens long into the future.

Very best wishes,
Hilary



Hilary McGrady
Director-General

**National
Trust**