



CHATSWORTH
HOUSE TRUST

REVIEW

2025





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OUR MISSION

Chatsworth is more than a house.
It is a home of *creativity* and *community*
and a driver of *positive change*.

As a charity, we work with our communities
to address the urgent issues of our time,
from health and wellbeing, to the climate
crisis, to fostering greater understanding,
empathy and inclusion.

We want people to feel inspired, to learn
and to enjoy all that Chatsworth has to
offer, onsite, online and around the world.

Through the work of Chatsworth House
Trust, we have an opportunity to harness
this ambition to make a tangible positive
impact on everyone's lives, through
culture, nature, and learning, creating life-
changing opportunities for those in our
immediate and extended communities.

*Right: Visitors on Salisbury Lawn
for the Friends Garden Party*



As a charity, we are committed to having a positive impact through the work we do.



Jane Marriott
Director
Chatsworth House Trust

We know how important spending time in nature is for supporting people's wellbeing and mental health and in order to ensure that as many people as possible could experience these benefits within the unique environment of Chatsworth, we made the natural world the key focus of our programme throughout 2025.

Our exhibition, *The Gorgeous Nothings: Flowers at Chatsworth*, shared artworks and intricate decorative objects from the Devonshire Collections which are inspired by and imitate nature. Displaying these alongside thoughtful responses from contemporary artists and loans from major galleries and museums, the exhibition invited audiences to consider the links between botany and humanity. It highlighted both the fragility and the resilience of nature – a relevant message of hope and strength as we face up to the impact of climate change both across the world and on our doorstep. An accompanying public programme created opportunities for deeper engagement with the natural world, and for trying something new, such as Tai Chi by the Cascade, forest bathing, and botanical drawing inspired by the Chatsworth Garden. These events ran in addition to our annual festivals, the Family Festival and Garden & Plant Fair, and new events, Celebrating Jane Austen and The Queen's Reading Room Festival. Our focus on nature extended throughout the Christmas period with *The Enchanted Garden*, which celebrated the quiet beauty of midwinter and utilised natural materials and garden-inspired commissions from local makers.

As a charity we are committed to finding ways for as many people as possible to benefit from the incredible heritage and landscapes under our care. In 2025 we significantly expanded the number of discounted tickets available to recipients of Universal Credit and associated benefits. Over 18,000 people were able to enjoy a day out at Chatsworth using these tickets last year; people who might not otherwise have been able to visit. We have been listening to their feedback and Universal Credit tickets now also offer a discount on food and drink – helping to make the whole Chatsworth experience more accessible to more people.

In June it was a joy to host our second Kids in Museums Takeover, this time with pupils from Cavendish Junior School in Chesterfield. 99 pupils aged 7-11 ran Chatsworth for the day. Their duties included caring for animals in the farmyard, checking for pests in the house, scanning tickets and planting areas of the garden. Before the Takeover, the pupils came on 'Get to Know Chatsworth' visits - helping to ensure that they were comfortable and confident enough to take ownership of the day. Later in the year they returned to help us shape our future programmes – evaluating the family appeal of our Christmas experience, developing reading lists for our 2026 exhibition and participating in research for interpretation in the house. Partnerships like this one are essential. They help us to shape the unique things that Chatsworth has to offer, so that they can be most useful to the communities that are closest to us and have the greatest impact.

We recognise that post-COVID our role in society is even more relevant, as we support people to connect with each other and with nature. Because of this, our planning throughout 2025 for our restoration of the Cascade – our most significant restoration project of the decade – has focused as much on the needs of our local communities as it has on the material needs of the Cascade. Our successful application to The National Lottery Heritage Fund in 2025 was a significant milestone in bringing this project to the point of realisation and we look forward to the delivery of all of our plans over the next three years.

This could not happen without the continued support of a host of people and organisations who care about and understand the impact that Chatsworth can have, and we are deeply grateful for this. We want to make a real difference, and the support you generously give us, whether volunteering time or making a financial contribution, enables us to do this. Thank you.

FOREWORD

I wrote last year about the impact that Chatsworth House Trust can have in broadening horizons and raising aspirations for young people.

We have a unique opportunity to welcome people to this amazing place, encourage their curiosity and show them experiences and career opportunities they might never otherwise encounter. It is therefore a source of immense pride that 2025 saw this being recognised through the achievement of a NEON Widening Access Partnership Award for our 'Rise High Highfields' programme with the University of Derby. Recognising a disparity in the number of young people from schools in rural and semi-rural areas of Derbyshire progressing to university and moving on to join the workforce of organisations like Chatsworth House Trust, we came together with the University of Derby to devise this innovative programme to show the wide range of career opportunities available in rural settings and how to access the Higher Education courses which can act as gateways to these opportunities.

This was Chatsworth House Trust's first award for social impact and it feels entirely appropriate that it should have been awarded in recognition of an initiative which could only be conceived by working in partnership with another organisation, one whose future is equally committed to the success of the wider county and region of which we are so intrinsically a part. I am proud too that it is an initiative involving individuals and teams across the whole charity, coming together to share the incredible range of skill, talent and experience that helps to make Chatsworth House Trust the unique and special organisation that it is. I am deeply honoured to chair an organisation with such a talented and committed workforce of colleagues and volunteers who care about the impact that Chatsworth can have and are generous in sharing their talents to support initiatives like this, which reach way beyond the day job. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank each and every one of the team.

The day job itself is, of course, no small task and I hope that you enjoy reading the Annual Review for a flavour of everything that this involves and some highlights of what we have achieved together in 2025. I would like to express my thanks to everyone who buys a ticket to visit us, as well as our Friends, Patrons, donors and sponsors – for it is your generosity makes all of this possible.



Lord Burlington
Chair
Chatsworth House Trust



RESILIENCE

As a charity, we care for our heritage, landscape, and cultural assets in order to protect and share them for generations to come. To safeguard their future, we are investing in our resilience to ensure we have the resources we need to achieve our ambitions and further our impact.



Right: Investigative works for the Cascade restoration project

Celebrating *the Cascade*

Our project to restore the Cascade, supported by The National Lottery Heritage Fund, charitable trusts and foundations, and individual donors, will safeguard this much-loved 17th-century water feature for future generations and enable us to share it and the wider Chatsworth garden with new audiences.

In 2025, Chatsworth House Trust was awarded a grant of £4.6 million from The National Lottery Heritage Fund to support the restoration of the historic Cascade and create a major new learning and audience development programme for the Chatsworth Garden. This award followed a £422,000 grant in 2023 to kick-start the project.

Reflecting the Heritage Fund's vision, this ambitious restoration project will revive and sustain the Cascade for the enjoyment of everyone, long into the future; to celebrate Chatsworth's heritage, and to reach new audiences.

Built over 325 years ago, the Cascade is recognised as a significant feat of engineering and nature-inspired design that has delighted generations of visitors. It has also provided a focal point in the garden for everyone to enjoy. However, the water has been switched off as the Cascade is now urgently in need of repair due to severe water damage and structural decline.

The total cost of the project is estimated to be £7.3 million. In 2024 we launched a public fundraising campaign to raise £250,000 from our Friends and supporters towards the project. At the heart of the campaign is the opportunity to 'sponsor a stone' in their name or that of a loved one. In addition to receiving a certificate with details of their particular stone, donors will have their names added to the Cascade Donor Honour Roll in the Devonshire Archives and to the thank you board in the Cascade Hub in the garden.

By the end of 2025 over 1,600 people had donated to the campaign, raising over £190,000 in just eighteen months, with additional generous contributions from a number of Trusts and Foundations. The challenge now is to raise the remaining funds, in the region of £750,000 over the next twelve months.



“Chatsworth’s Cascade is beloved by many, as the strength of public fundraising efforts shows. We’re pleased to award Chatsworth House Trust with £4.6 million to restore this remarkable piece of historic engineering and make a step change in how Chatsworth engages with local communities and visitors.”

Liz Bates, Area Director, Midlands & East at
The National Lottery Heritage Fund

ACCESS, INTERPRETATION AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Whilst saving one of the country’s oldest and most loved water features from risk of collapse, a wraparound programme of access, interpretation and public engagement will ensure that the restoration project is used as a catalyst to reimagine how we use Chatsworth’s heritage to connect with the needs of our communities today. Schools are at the heart of this programme.

Throughout 2025 we have been developing our partnership with the Minerva Learning Trust, a multi-academy group of Sheffield and Chesterfield state primary and secondary schools. Together, we have devised a programme of impactful, child-led educational experiences, which build life-skills alongside curriculum learning. Over the next two years, we will be further developing and testing these programmes and then rolling them out to benefit the 10,000 children and young people who come to Chatsworth on educational visits every year.

Throughout the Cascade project we will work with 3,600 children and young people, many of whom have limited opportunity to access heritage sites. During 2025 we have been designing new Cascade-themed garden adventures for children from early years to lower secondary school age, which foster life skills such as teamwork, decision making and creative thinking, as well as exploring curriculum areas, with options including geography, engineering, the environment, creative writing, art and music.

Building on this work, in 2026 pupils will act as consultants as part of our interpretation works – helping guide our decision making when it comes to creating child-and family-friendly Cascade-themed trails around the garden.



Left: The new Garden Adventure activity map

Right: The Cascade Hub



Cascade Chronicles

We are working with Dunston Primary & Nursery Academy on an oral history project, training students to collect and record people’s testimonies about what the Cascade means to them and how it’s been a site for personal moments and memories. Through the project the students will develop interview and journalistic skills alongside knowledge and understanding of archival practices. Five new cross-curricular programmes for secondary schools will also be created, with areas of focus to include nature connection, geography, STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths), creative content production, and health and wellbeing.

As well as this important partnership with the Minerva Learning Trust, in 2025 we have been making plans with a wide range of organisations that deliver vital services for and with our communities locally. The need for experiences that support positive mental health and wellbeing is clearly and consistently felt across these community partnerships. Through the Celebrating the Cascade project, Chatsworth House Trust will work collaboratively to address this need and have a positive impact on people’s lives.

Preparing for the restoration

This year we opened the Chatsworth quarry at Burntwood near Beeley to extract stone for repairs to the Cascade. Stone from Burntwood was used during the Masterplan, the £32.7 million restoration of Chatsworth House, completed in 2018. We successfully quarried a considerable amount of large stone blocks, which will now be cut to create the stone blocks we need to repair the Cascade.

This year we also undertook detailed specialist surveys of the Cascade in preparation for beginning the restoration work. This involved lifting and testing stones in the Cascade to see how they had deteriorated over the years. We also examined the direction and control of water in and around the Cascade, to help us better understand its condition and conducted structural surveys of Paxton’s Tunnel, which was constructed underneath the Cascade in the 19th century to transport coal to the Great Conservatory. All these investigative works have given us a greater understanding of the scope of the upcoming restoration work ahead of spades in the ground in 2026.

Caring for our *Historic Structures*

As a charity, we care for our heritage, landscape, and cultural assets so we can protect and share them for generations to come. We manage an extensive programme of planned preventive maintenance – the essential work required to keep our historic structures sound – as well as larger, more complex restoration projects. Most of this work is funded by income from ticket sales, Gift Aid, and Friends and Patrons memberships.



Chatsworth's Grade I listed Stables are considered by many to be the grandest example of an 18th century stable block in the UK.

Originally known as 'The Great Stables', it was designed by the architect James Paine (1717-1789) for William Cavendish, 4th Duke of Devonshire (1720-1764), and constructed between 1758 and 1763. 'The Great Stables' formed part of the 4th Duke's extensive remodelling of the outbuildings and grounds at Chatsworth, which also saw him create a new bridge over the river; the entrance most visitors still use to arrive at Chatsworth today.

During a routine review of Chatsworth's historic structures in 2022, we discovered problems with the Stables clocktower that had been caused primarily by a leaking roof. Water ingress into the roof space had damaged the original oak roof beams, undermining the structural integrity of the building. Following temporary works to shore up the structure in early 2023, this year we undertook an extensive programme of restoration on the west entrance to the Stables. This ranged from urgent structural repair and reroofing of the building's distinctive clock tower, to cleaning masonry and removing 20th-century lead flashings to reveal Paine's original Palladian-style stone plinths. New stone was carefully added where the original stone was too damaged. The stone roof will be inspected regularly to monitor how it fares in the Derbyshire climate.

The total cost of the restoration has been £1.8 million, funded by the Chatsworth House Trust Charity with income generated from ticket sales, Gift Aid, and Friends and Patrons membership. We are grateful to our visitors and members for their valued support.



Chatsworth House Trust looks after 74 historic structures across the parkland. 48 of these are listed, including nine Grade I listed structures.

The original roof beneath the clocktower itself was found to be beyond repair, so its oak beams and trusses were removed and replaced. The original slates were put back, along with additional reclaimed slates and special bat-friendly slates – raised slightly to allow the two species of bat found to be living in the Stables roof to continue to roost there in the future.

Investigative work by specialists working on the project revealed that the clock faces originally featured Arabic numerals at five-minute intervals. This was in addition to the larger Roman numerals, a combination which was typical of clock styles at the time. At some point in the Stables' history, most of these Arabic numerals were removed, remaining at quarter hour intervals only. The clock faces have been restored to include all the Arabic numerals in the same sophisticated mid-18th century font as the originals, returning it to its original style.



Top: The original Arabic numerals just visible before restoration

Bottom: The restored clock face

Garden & Landscape

We recognise the importance of nature connectedness to health and wellbeing. We manage the landscapes in our care with nature, people, and the future in mind; caring for flourishing habitats and creating restorative visitor spaces which will thrive in a changing climate.



Habitat Improvements around Swiss Lake and Frog Pond

While repairing Swiss Lake we have taken the opportunity to create richer, more diverse habitats in the lake and its surroundings, honouring the heritage of this part of Chatsworth's water management systems whilst making them fit to cope with more extreme weather events.

Swiss Lake was created in the early 18th century, after alterations made to the Cascade in 1702 rendered the earlier Frog Pond inadequate to supply the Cascade with enough water to run for a full day. The changes doubled the length and width of the original Cascade, and the Cascade House was added, with its rooftop fountain and water jets.

With a capacity of 60,000 cubic metres, Swiss Lake provided a more robust water supply for the improved Cascade, as well as the Willow Tree and Sea Horse Fountains. The lake's original construction of a clay embankment fronted by a drystone wall had remained intact until part of the embankment collapsed in 2017, forcing the complete draining of the lake.

This year we repaired the embankment, using the same combination of clay embankment and drystone wall as the original. The earlier outflow pipe, added by Joseph Paxton in the 19th century to divert water to his new Emperor Lake to the north, has been replaced to meet current regulations, enabling us to release water to the larger Emperor Lake in the event of an extreme rainfall event. The lake has been re-filled slowly so that the clay can absorb the water gradually, retaining its structural integrity.

Top right: Swiss Lake

Bottom right: The collapsed embankment of Swiss Lake



During the eight years that Swiss Lake lay empty, new habitats developed on the lakebed, formed largely of self-seeded silver birch trees. We have recreated this new habitat in the Frog Pond by partially damming smaller streams to create a new woodland wetland area. Invasive rhododendron ponticum has also been cleared from the existing woodland between Swiss Lake and the Frog Pond. These improvements mean that we have created richer and more diverse habitats, now including the open water of the lake once more, where additional species can thrive.

As Swiss Lake refills, waterfowl are returning, with mallard, teal, eider and mandarin already sighted. Little grebe, great crested grebe and goosander are just some of the other species that are expected in future.

RESILIENCE

Chatsworth House Trust is working to document and better understand the species that live in or utilise the estate to help improve existing environments and create new ones where these species can thrive. By enhancing nature, we can strengthen the ecosystem and the natural resources it provides, which ultimately benefits humanity.

Bioacoustics

The team have installed small boxes fitted with microphones in a variety of locations across the estate. The boxes can record sounds from birds and bats up to 500 metres away. When the boxes are collected, specialist software identifies the species picked up by the microphones.

We now have more than a year's worth of data to act as a benchmark for resident and migratory species in each location. The boxes also enable us to identify which sites are rich in different species, and chart the prevalence of any birds and bats listed as being of UK conservation concern.

The baseline data we now have will enable us to quantify the impact of the habitat improvements we are making – so we know what works and how many species are benefitting from the work we do.

We have identified a wide variety of birds such as chaffinch, wren, robin, blackbird, blue tit, siskin, stonechat, treecreeper, meadow pipit, jackdaw, crow, pheasant, greater spotted woodpecker, redstart, blackcap, willow warbler and species on the Bird Conservation 'Red List', including the linnet and the cuckoo.

Below: A Willow Warbler bird spotted on the estate



Future Proofing Our Garden & Landscape

Chatsworth House Trust cares for 1,822 acres of parkland on the banks of the River Derwent, chiefly designed by Lancelot 'Capability' Brown in the 1760s. The park's distinctive trees, planted singly, in groups and in larger areas of woodland, were designed to serve both practical and decorative functions, providing cover for deer and creating views through the landscape that are at once natural and carefully contrived. Many of the tree species chosen by Brown, and by William Kent before him, including English oak, beech and horse chestnut, have been struggling in recent years due to changes in climate and disease.

As we look to the future, we are planting a diverse palette of trees that will be better placed to thrive during extremes of weather. Our Garden & Landscape team is looking to the Mediterranean and parts of North America to identify species of tree, such as walnut and hybrid oaks, that will maintain Brown's vision for the park but also endure in a changing Derbyshire climate.

The years between 2015 and 2023 were a period of major planting in the garden, with more than 250,000 plants added. As these plants are now maturing, they are creating beautiful spaces for our visitors as well as habitats for pollinators.

By using modern horticultural practices to improve the health of our soil, we are helping the plants to thrive in a changing climate. Sustainable mulching techniques are enabling us to suppress weeds, retain water during periods of dry weather and contribute to improved soil amelioration across the garden.

The team used 'cut and drop' mulching extensively across the garden in 2025. This practice involves dropping the removed parts of the plant to mulch in situ, instead of removing them to compost elsewhere before being returned to the original site. Cut and drop uses less labour than traditional methods, and helps to keep the plants and soil healthy.

During 2025's prolonged hot, dry weather, we saw a number of plants struggling and have therefore made adjustments to reduce this. Helping our plants to thrive in a changing climate makes Chatsworth garden more resilient for the future.



RELEVANCE

We build on our history and creative legacy, working with the greatest artists and thinkers and addressing the urgent issues of our time – from health and wellbeing to the climate crisis – to create programmes that build connection, empathy, and understanding with our communities. In doing so we ensure that we remain relevant to audiences today.



The Gorgeous Nothings: Flowers at Chatsworth

Drawing together historic treasures from the Devonshire Collections with contemporary works of art and new artist responses, this exhibition built upon the historic links between art and botany at Chatsworth and invited audiences to reconsider their own relationship with nature.

Flowers in all their forms took centre stage in our exhibition *The Gorgeous Nothings: Flowers at Chatsworth*, which ran from 15 March – 5 October. Curated by Allegra Pesenti, the exhibition was inspired by Chatsworth itself, from the rare botanical volumes and illustrated manuscripts in the library to its garden and grounds.

The exhibition took its title from a poem by Emily Dickinson and referenced the author's habit of composing poetry on assembled scraps of paper and used envelopes. The 'gorgeous nothings' she referred to in one such poem were vital and existential matter to her. They were not dissimilar to the specimens of ferns in one of the albums on display, which represented a world unto its own to the specialist who assembled it in the 1800s.

The Gorgeous Nothings built on the work of an important lineage of landscape designers, gardeners, scientists and botanists at Chatsworth over the past six centuries. The thematic display featured historical and contemporary works of art from the Devonshire Collections, supported by key loans from national and international museums, and new artist commissions.



Left: Herbarium, the rare book of pressed plant specimens, unknown creator, France, Mid-1700s



Specimens of scientific nature, such as flower fossils and minerals collected by Georgiana Duchess of Devonshire (1757-1806), or the over 400 species of British algae catalogued and photographed by Anna Atkins in the 1840s, found visual echoes in the works of contemporary artists such as Simryn Gill, Elliott Hundley, Liza Lou, Alessandro Piangiamore and Elias Sime.

The practices of collage and assemblage featured prominently in *The Gorgeous Nothings*. Modulated surfaces and found items converged on the canvases of 'scavenger' painter Frank Bowling, while the sculpture of a regal female figure by Chiara Camoni was composed of myriads of components of botanical elements in clay.

The Gorgeous Nothings explored the parallels between botany and humanity, with a particular focus on the contrasts and complexities of human nature. Hunters and gatherers, beauty and horror, permanence and the ephemeral, sexuality and the senses, mythology and magic were some of the themes encountered on the visitor route.



Top: Paintings in the Sculpture Gallery including *Portrait of Elizabeth Boyle, Countess of Thanet* by Sir Peter Lely, c. 1662

Bottom: Photographs of British Algae vol 1, by Botanist Anna Atkins using cyanotype photography

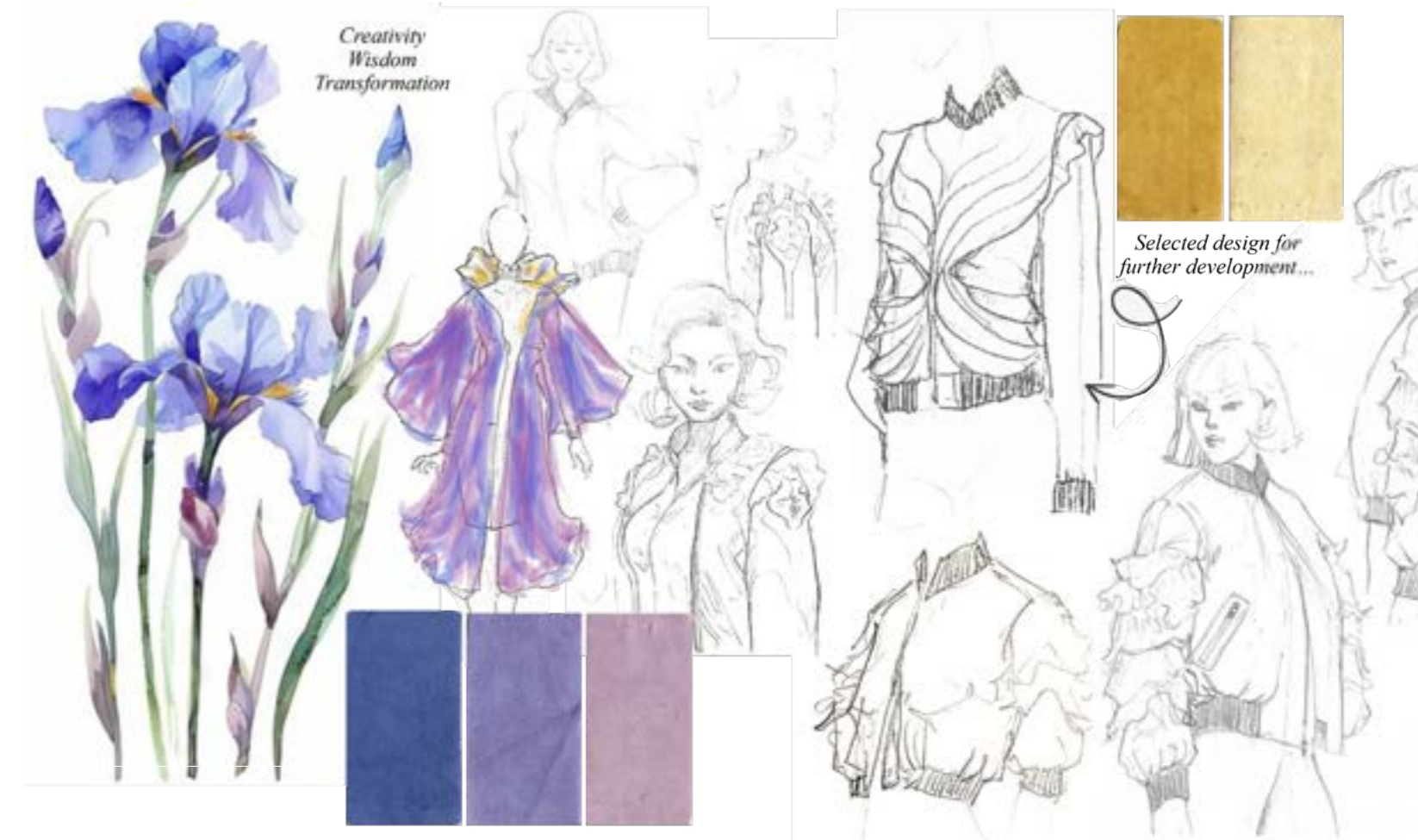
“The eclectic charge of the installations in this exhibition voices the urgency of the environmental condition in the world today, but also the resilience and persistence of nature. Each flower represented here is associated with deep-rooted myths and symbolisms. Individually, they may be considered gorgeous nothings, but together, they manifest life and endurance against all odds.”

Allegra Pesenti, Curator

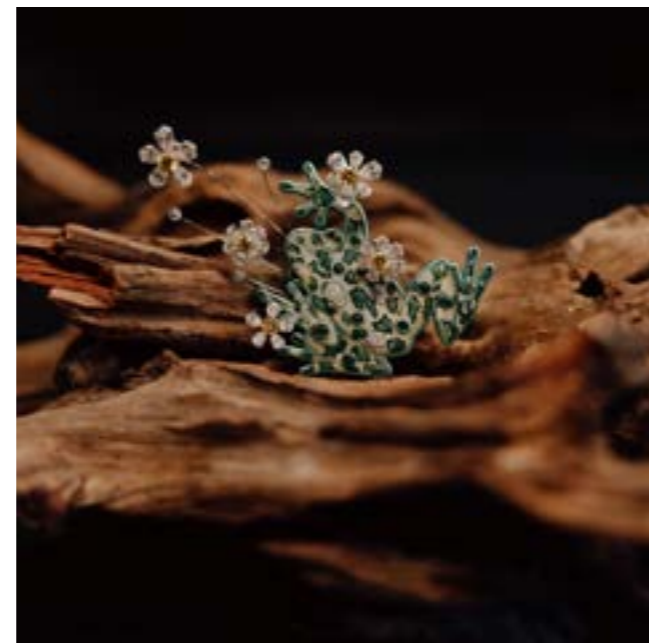
In Kapwani Kiwanga’s immersive installation *The Marias* – which was here displayed for the first time in an historic house setting – reconstructions of flowers depicted in Suriname by the 17th-century botanist Maria Sibylla Merian pointed to the slavery and persecution of women during colonialism. The mystery and wonder of the botanical world were evoked in new commissions by Konstantin Kakaniyas, David Wiseman and Maurizio Fioravanti.

Female botanists such as Elizabeth Blackwell, who historically remained in the shadow of their more famous male counterparts, were featured in this context, together with an extraordinary and newly-discovered 18th-century herbarium which is a unique intersection of science and fiction.

The exhibition’s focus upon the connection between humanity and nature was supported by our public programme of wellbeing and nature-connectedness events. These included riverside tai chi, cascade yoga, and mindful waterways walks, as well as creative activities such as watercolour and jewellery-making workshops inspired by the garden at Chatsworth.



Left: Grotto Mirror by David Wiseman, 2025



Right: Micro-mosaic jewellery by Maurizio Fioravanti

Inspiring the next generation of designers

As part of our long-standing strategic partnership with the University of Derby, this year we invited second-year BA Fashion Design and Fashion Design & Marketing students to visit *The Gorgeous Nothings* exhibition and take inspiration from the works of artists across centuries.

The course lecturers created a whole module focused on the exhibition, with students designing embroidered jackets inspired by the themes and works of art on display. Even early in the creative process it was rewarding to see what concepts resonated with each student and they translated these into their own original creations – continuing the centuries-long tradition of Chatsworth as a place of inspiration for contemporary artists and designers.



Top: Shalina Perera design work, University of Derby student

Bottom: University of Derby Fashion students at Chatsworth

The Enchanted Garden was the culmination of a year spent honouring the beauty and resilience of the natural world at Chatsworth. Visitors were invited to pause, explore, and celebrate the quiet magic of the season.

Created in collaboration with acclaimed British artists and animators, this immersive, multi-sensory experience invited visitors into a realm where the mystical spirit of the outdoors reigned. In the house a trail of light, flowers, tree silhouettes and natural textures led visitors through woodland-inspired spaces. Together, these elements created an enchanted setting encouraging connection with nature, building on the central theme of our year-long programme.

Award-winning mixed-reality artists Studio McGuire created bespoke animations, projections, and music, enriching the experience with layers of storytelling. Thirteen specially designed flower fairies, each with their own name and personality, appeared throughout the house and garden, captivating younger visitors in particular.

In the garden, visitors discovered enchanting spaces where reality and magic intertwined along an immersive light trail. The journey concluded with a spectacular animated light and sound projection on the house, inspired by the enchanted garden theme and brought to life by Studio McGuire.

*The
Enchanted
Garden:
Christmas at
Chatsworth*



Left: Animated enchanted fairies by mixed-reality artists Studio McGuire

Right: Giant Dandelion sculpture by Peak District artist Amy Wight



WORKING WITH LOCAL ARTISTS

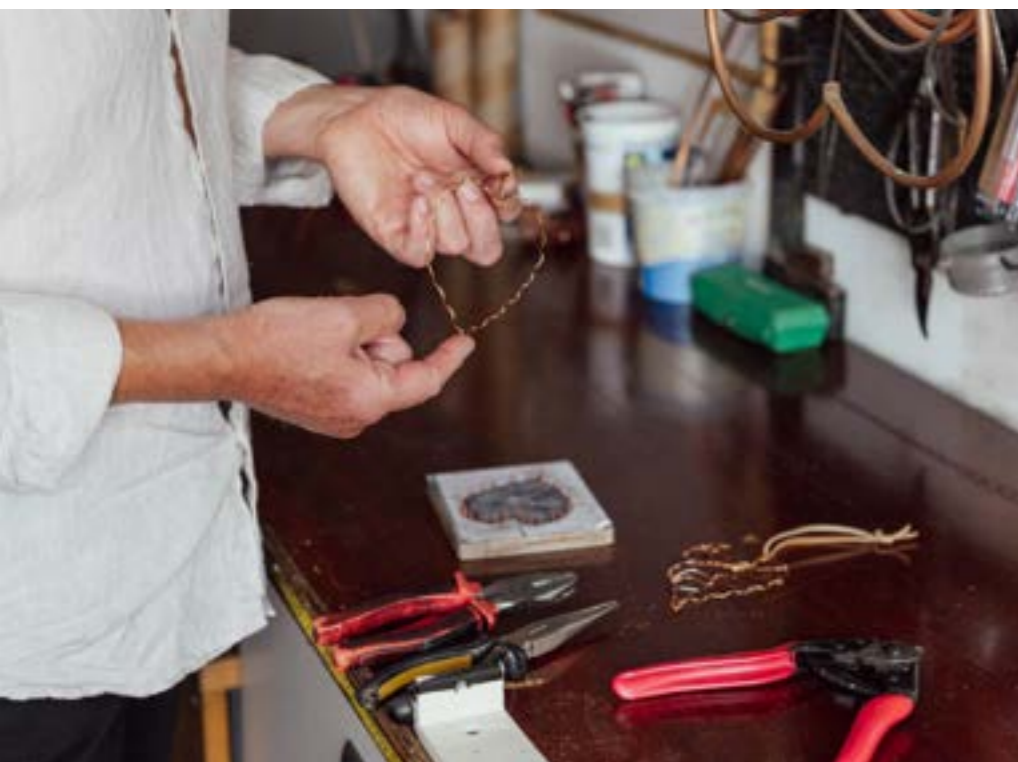
“Slip casting is now classed on the heritage endangered crafts list. Chatsworth were actually our first ever stockist; they believed in us and took a chance on us.”

The Wirksworth Pottery Company

Chatsworth has a long history of working with contemporary creatives, and Chatsworth House Trust is committed to continuing this legacy. We commission artists who understand both the spirit of Chatsworth and the practicalities of working within an historic environment, whilst allowing them the creative freedom they need to produce something spectacular.

In the Chapel, artist Emma Stothard created willow animals and a large willow seating structure. Peak District artist Amy Wight crafted a series of spiral archways of windblown copper oak leaves, and a giant gathering of copper-leaved mistletoe suspended from the glass dome above the Oak Stairs. She also lent a series of spectacular giant dandelion heads, which cast amazing shadows throughout the Sculpture Gallery.

The displays also featured decorations made by local artists, including handcrafted wooden toadstools by Waney Grain, ceramic decorations with pressed ferns by The Wirksworth Pottery Company, and enchanting wireframe fairies and copper mushrooms by Winning Works. Chatsworth House Trust’s own Textiles team created a miniature fairy village in The Oak Room, where tiny fairy houses nestled within mossy tree trunks.



Left: Creation of the windblown copper oak leaves

Right: Amy Wight’s giant gathering of copper-leaved mistletoe



Events & experiences

We seek to deepen our visitors' engagement with Chatsworth by creating programmes of events and experiences that are relevant, accessible, and that resonate with audiences today.

Public programme & family engagement

Bringing together the skills and enthusiasm of our in-house experts and guest speakers, artists and makers, our public programme of talks, tours, workshops, and experiences builds on the theme of the cultural programme. This year our public programme was focused upon the benefits of nature connectedness for mental and physical wellbeing, as part of the Celebrating the Cascade project and reflecting the theme of *The Gorgeous Nothings* exhibition.

Across the summer holidays, the Learning & Engagement and Farmyard teams created a coherent family engagement programme with linked activities taking place across the site, including in the Stickyard, The Old Potting Shed, the Oak Barn, and the Adventure Playground. The programme lasted for four weeks, with each week focused on a specific topic linked to the overarching theme of nature connectedness; butterflies, trees, flowers, and being active outdoors. In Butterfly Week, for example, visitors could decorate their own butterfly wings and wands, and take part in the nationwide citizen science project The Big Butterfly Count.

Tree Week saw the return of The Big Tree Climb in Stand Wood, as well as themed crafts in the Adventure Playground, nature walks, and face painting. All activities (apart from The Big Tree Climb) could be attended on a drop-in basis and were included with the ticket price.

Left: Families visiting for Friends Day

Right: Flowers from the Garden: Watercolour Workshop artwork



5,100 ADULTS
2,659 CHILDREN

Attended our public programme of events in 2025

EVENTS FOR EVERYONE NEW REGENCY AND LITERARY FESTIVALS

Chatsworth hosts a busy programme of events throughout the year, including annual favourites such as the Chatsworth Country Fair, Bonfire & Fireworks, and the Christmas Markets.

These provide a crucial source of income for the charity, and with the variety of our events programme we aim to ensure that there is something for everyone. In 2025 we introduced two new events to our summer season of festivals.

We celebrated the 250th anniversary of the birth of Jane Austen with a long weekend of talks, garden tours and dressing up opportunities inspired by the Regency era. September saw the flagship event of Her Majesty Queen Camilla's charity, The Queen's Reading Room Festival, staged at Chatsworth for the first time in partnership with Chatsworth House Trust. Well known authors including Jilly Cooper, Richard Osman and JoJo Moyes took part in literary discussions in venues throughout the house and stables.

This sell-out event provided an opportunity to attract new audiences to Chatsworth and demonstrated the relevance of Chatsworth to modern literary lovers, as well as those more interested in our historic library collection.



Left: The Queen's Reading Room Talk in the Chapel

Top: Celebrating Jane Austen: Regency Festival, afternoon tea in the Old Glasshouse

Bottom: Chatsworth Country Fair, motorbike stunt show in the Grand Ring



REACH

Chatsworth House Trust exists to benefit everyone and aims to have a positive impact on people's lives. We reach out to our audiences onsite, online, and around the world, to share our stories and to inspire, engage, and welcome the world.



Right: Local choir performing in the Rose Garden

Learning & Engagement

As part of our commitment to ensure that everyone can benefit from the heritage and landscapes in our care, we reach out and work with schools and community groups in Derbyshire and the surrounding area, connecting young people with opportunities that they might not otherwise get to experience.

Chatsworth Takeover

In early June we hosted our second Kids in Museums Takeover Day, this time in partnership with Cavendish Junior School in Chesterfield, with whom we had conducted outreach work in late 2024. In preparation for the big day, all pupils, teachers, and support staff from the school visited Chatsworth in May to carry out familiarisation activities and training.

On the day of the Takeover, 99 pupils from Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 spent the whole day at Chatsworth, carrying out activities such as scanning visitor tickets, cleaning paddocks, setting pest traps in the house, and planting in the tropical garden. Each pupil was given a branded polo shirt to wear, which were deliberately chosen to be the same colour as the pupils' sports kits, so they can be re-used indefinitely. Coverage of the Takeover was featured on BBC Breakfast news, sharing the impact of our work with a national audience.

This was just part of a much longer period working with pupils from Cavendish Junior School. A focus group of twelve pupils visited Chatsworth in October to begin devising content for a children's tour of the house, which will be launched in 2026. Following this, in December, all pupils from the school visited *The Enchanted Garden* Christmas experience and shared feedback in response to specific prompts, which will help us to ensure that Christmas is relevant and appealing to younger visitors.

2025's Takeover built on the success of the previous year's, for which Chatsworth House Trust was shortlisted for the 2025 Museum and Heritage Award's Learning Programme of the Year.

Left: Kids in Museums takeover with Cavendish Junior School

Top: Outdoor activities as part of the Countryside Classroom event



Continued engagement with schools

Partner schools are always identified on the basis of need, which is based on the levels of pupils receiving free school meals or pupil premium. By working with schools that might not otherwise be able to visit Chatsworth due to cost and other barriers, we can maximise the positive impact of projects such as the Takeover.

We are also committed to ensuring that our engagement with schools is consistent, and not limited to a single project or event. We have continued to work with pupils from Athelstan Primary school, who participated in the 2024 Chatsworth Takeover, by bringing them on board as young consultants as we redevelop interpretation in the Farmyard. Testing out key themes of the new interpretation and designs with the children enabled us to tweak the tone and content towards what children want to think, do and feel when in the Farmyard environment.

New interpretation will be implemented in early 2026. Athelstan pupils also selected nature-related books for children, which were included on the visitor route in the house during our exhibition *The Gorgeous Nothings*.

Countryside Classroom

In September we hosted our first Countryside Classroom event with Countryside Learning, a charity dedicated to inspiring and educating young people about the countryside. 160 pupils from six targeted schools experienced tasters facilitated by Chatsworth's Landscape, Learning & Engagement and Farmyard teams, as well as forestry and farming colleagues from the wider Devonshire Group.

The pupils took part in activities such as yoga, learnt how to estimate the height of trees, and competed in the dead hedge challenge, where groups raced to complete the best hedge. This new event enabled us to reach more young people and share what Chatsworth has to offer with new audiences.

We were delighted to be awarded a NEON (National Education Opportunities Network) Widening Access Partnership Award this year for our partnership work with the University of Derby, 'Rise High Highfields'. We were also shortlisted for the Historic Houses Frances Garnham Award for Education.



Welcoming *the World*

Chatsworth should be relevant to all and out of reach of no-one. Broadening and diversifying the range of people we reach is an ongoing goal. We are working to break down the barriers to access and engagement, including any preconceived perceptions of what Chatsworth is, and who Chatsworth is for.

Universal Credit Tickets

We recognise that price can be a barrier to visiting Chatsworth. In 2025 we significantly expanded our Universal Credit ticket scheme, which is available to those in receipt of Universal Credit, Pension Credit, Working Tax Credit, Child Tax Credit, Employment and Support Allowance, Income Support, or Jobseeker's Allowance. These tickets were priced at £3 for adults and £1 for children and were available throughout the main season and during Christmas at Chatsworth.

18,621 people visited using these tickets during 2025. Our research shows that not only are we reaching people from lower socioeconomic groups through this scheme, additionally, 58% of visitors using Universal Credit tickets stated that they visited with someone with a disability or long-term health condition in their group; this is significantly higher than visitors who were not using Universal Credit tickets.

In response to feedback from visitors using the Universal Credit tickets during the previous year, we also introduced a 25% discount for purchases from our catering outlets for Universal Credit ticket holders, enabling these visitors to enjoy more of what Chatsworth has to offer.

Helping schools and community groups reach us

We know from our partner schools, and evaluation of our learning programmes, that getting to Chatsworth presents a significant barrier as travel costs can make school trips unaffordable. Our travel subsidy has been available for many years, and in 2025 we welcomed 2,111 children and 465 adults to Chatsworth using this scheme. 60% of the groups who benefited from the subsidy during the year had not done so previously, demonstrating the importance of this scheme for making Chatsworth accessible to new audiences.

Right: British sign language house tour



Embedding access and inclusion in our learning and public programmes

We want everyone to experience the benefits of nature connectedness that the landscapes at Chatsworth can offer. This year we worked in partnership with the Royal School for the Deaf in Derby to deliver tailored sessions for their pupils. Being outdoors can pose additional challenges for children who are d/Deaf, which can hamper their enjoyment of the natural world. Implementing a slower pace and increased sensory exploration meant that the sessions offered a more rewarding experience for the young people, enhancing their connection with nature and building confidence in being outdoors.

In 2025 we piloted British Sign Language (BSL) house tours led by a Deaf art guide. Following positive feedback, these tours will be offered free with a house ticket from April 2026 to help us share our stories with broader audiences. This builds on work undertaken in 2024 with the High Sheriff of Derbyshire, including collaboration with d/Deaf community groups and BSL-interpreted events.

We are always looking at ways to remove barriers and make Chatsworth more accessible to audiences. In 2025 several team members completed training around facilitation and interpretation for learning disabled and neurodivergent visitors, partly in collaboration with SEND In Museums (special educational needs and disability). One of the direct outcomes of this work was the creation of a revised visual story of Chatsworth, available on our website. Working with Portland College's Occupational Team, we reviewed the sensory experience of Christmas this year and the impact that these elements could have on visitors. Visitor Experience colleagues were given tips and tools to recognise this, in order to better equip them to support visitors with additional needs.

Our SEND bags, launched in 2024, continue to be popular with visitors, and are now a staple element of the visitor offer. The contents of these bags are constantly reviewed and updated in response to visitor and expert feedback.

332

SEND bags were used by visitors in 2025



Volunteers

Chatsworth benefits from the support of more than 250 volunteers, who collectively donated 42,038 hours of their time to the charity in 2025. We offer meaningful opportunities for volunteers to contribute to our goals for the heritage and landscapes in our care.

Our ever-expanding volunteer programme offers a supportive environment for people looking to develop their skill-set for career growth or for those wanting to embed themselves within a sociable environment. Volunteers make a meaningful contribution to the charity’s work across a wide range of teams, including Visitor Experience, Garden & Landscape, Learning & Engagement, the Farmyard, Collections, and Archives & Library. Volunteers also support major events and projects such as Celebrating the Cascade, the Family Festival and The Queen’s Reading Room Festival.

We are committed to diversifying the volunteering opportunities at Chatsworth, to meet the needs and interests of a wide range of people and ensure that our offer is relevant and inclusive. We have therefore introduced more informal, short- and medium-term opportunities for people to volunteer at Chatsworth. These are designed to suit people who want to develop a particular skill before continuing their career, or who don’t feel ready or able to make a long-term commitment to volunteering. We have also developed opportunities that people can get involved with offsite in their own homes, for those who may face barriers in travelling to Chatsworth.

In partnership with Derbyshire County Council, in 2025 the first cohort of Chatsworth volunteers took part in the Volunteer Passport Scheme. Complementing our work with partners such as Chesterfield College and the Department for Work and Pensions, this accredited programme formalises a range of training and development gained through volunteering, supporting volunteers to demonstrate transferable skills and experience to other organisations and prospective employers.



“There’s a special connection for me – I found out a few years ago that my great- great- great-grandfather was Thomas Paxton, Joseph Paxton’s elder brother – who knew! So to have that family connection to this place as well is slightly overwhelming at times.”

Garden volunteer



Left: Farmyard volunteers picking pumpkins



East Attic Stores Project

In May this year we launched a new volunteer project to inventory and improve storage of objects in the East Attic Stores. The objects in these stores – housed in old servants' bedrooms – are, at present, not stored in an organised way, meaning that they are vulnerable to damage.

A small team of 6 volunteers are now sorting and cataloguing these items, which include pewter, photographs, and lamps, helping to give us a better understanding of what we have here in the house. The team are playing a crucial role helping to protect those items by reorganising and storing them in an appropriate manner. Volunteers are gaining experience in object handling, identification, and cataloguing, which will support those who wish to pursue a career in heritage or museums and galleries.

Top: Collections volunteer working on the East Attic Stores project



“I’ve been volunteering since August 2024 and love being involved with the Farmyard. The children are excited, the adults appreciative, the animals are so lovingly cared for and the team so welcoming always with a smile. I always feel better – mentally and emotionally – at the end of a shift whether I’m litter picking, making up crafts or handling guinea pigs.”

Farmyard volunteer

“I have been fascinated by the history of the Devonshire family for many years, so it is special to be able to clean documents going back to the 18th century – I love to tell people that I spend a day, sitting where I can see Paine’s bridge, cleaning and looking at old documents – bliss!”

Archive volunteer

Right: Collections volunteer completing archival cleaning



Loans

Chatsworth is committed to sharing our incredible heritage with audiences in this country and around the world, including through our far-reaching loans programme. In 2025, more than 470,500 people were able to see works of art from the Devonshire Collections outside Chatsworth.

Chatsworth House Trust also borrows from many museums and galleries to support our own cultural programme and enhance the experience of visitors to Chatsworth. This year, visitors were able to experience works of art from collections in Australia, Denmark, France, Italy, London, the USA, and elsewhere in the UK.



'Zenobia, Queen of Palmyra' ball gown made for Louise, Duchess of Devonshire by the House of Worth

REACH

Worth: Inventing Haute Couture *Petit Palais, Paris*

5 May – 7 Sep

This was the first large-scale exhibition dedicated to the legendary fashion house founded by Charles Frederick Worth (1825-1895) and its role as the originator of haute couture. Chatsworth House Trust lent the striking 'Zenobia, Queen of Palmyra' ball gown that was made for Louise, Duchess of Devonshire (1831-1911) to wear to the 1897 Devonshire House Ball in honour of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee.

Linder: Danger Came Smiling *Hayward Gallery, London, and Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh*

11 Feb – 5 May / 23 May – 19 Oct

Linder Sterling was artist in residence at Chatsworth from 2017 to 2018. Over a period of six months, she immersed herself in the life of the estate and created a new image bank to provide a resource for future photo montages as a way of taking Chatsworth 'out into the world'. Four of these photomontages were lent to this touring exhibition.

Linder Sterling, *Pythia*, 2017



Rory McEwan *Tulip Petal III*, c. 2015

The Summer Season in London *Sotheby's, London*

22 May – 30 Jun

A loan to Sotheby's of *Tulip Petal III* by Rory McEwan coincided with an event hosted by Chatsworth at the gallery on New Bond Street to celebrate our exhibition *The Gorgeous Nothings: Flowers at Chatsworth*.

Paolo Veronese (1528-1588) *Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid*

27 May – 21 Sep

This was the first major monographic exhibition in Spain devoted to Paolo Veronese, one of the most brilliant and admired masters of the Venetian Renaissance. It featured a drawing by the artist lent from Chatsworth; *Virgin and Child enthroned with Saints John the Baptist and Louis of Toulouse, a donor and his wife*.

Postures: Jean Rhys in the Modern World *Michael Werner Gallery, London*

12 Sep – 22 Nov 2025

Gwen John's painting *Girl in a Red Shawl* was lent from Chatsworth to this exhibition.



Paolo Veronese, *Virgin and Child enthroned with Saints John the Baptist and Louis of Toulouse, a donor and his wife*, c. 1546

Dessins des Carrache – La fabrique de la galerie Farnèse *Louvre Museum, Paris*

5 Nov 2025 – 2 Feb 2026

This exhibition focused upon the decorative interiors of the Palazzo Farnese (current seat of the French Embassy in Italy), which were completed by Annibale Carracci, his brother Agostino, and their students, in the early 17th century.

Many of the preparatory drawings for the scheme were displayed and the vaulted ceiling of the Farnese Gallery was recreated digitally. Five drawings by Annibale Carracci travelled from Chatsworth to Paris for this exhibition, including *Hunchback Boy*, which is considered one of the artist's finest drawings and taken from life.

Acquisitions

Chatsworth House Trust sometimes acquires works of art that improve our understanding of our history, help us to tell the stories of Chatsworth, or otherwise enhance the Devonshire Collections.

The Art Purchase Fund was created in 1996 with an endowment from the Devonshire family to enable the charity to acquire works of art for public benefit. The charity made two important acquisitions in 2025.

Portrait miniature of Lady 'Bess' Foster

The charity has purchased a portrait miniature of Lady Elizabeth (Bess) Foster, later Duchess of Devonshire (1758 – 1824), by renowned miniaturist George Engleheart. Bess was the second wife of the 5th Duke of Devonshire and a close friend of Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire, who was one of the most widely recognised and complex characters in Chatsworth's story. The miniature is after a celebrated portrait by Sir Joshua Reynolds that visitors may see on display in the South Sketch Gallery at Chatsworth.

This acquisition deepens our understanding of Lady Elizabeth's place within the Devonshire story. Bess exerted a significant cultural influence that extended well beyond the complexities of her personal life. During her widowhood, she became a central figure in European intellectual and artistic circles, corresponding with leading writers and thinkers such as Madame de Staël and Lord Byron. Her introduction of Antonio Canova to the 6th Duke she is in part to thank for Chatsworth's incredible collection of neoclassical sculpture.

Neon sculpture by Tracey Emin

Chatsworth has always been a place of creativity where contemporary artists and creators are celebrated, and this remains true today. Thanks to a generous donation from John Booth, a neon artwork by renowned British artist Dame Tracey Emin has joined the Devonshire Collections. Emin's neon works use her own handwriting and feature personal notes or phrases, creating an emotional connection through the industrial medium.

One of the best-known examples of this is a twenty-metre-long sculpture in London's St Pancras Station, which reads 'I want my time with you.' *More Solitude* is now hung on the back staircase of Chatsworth House.



Top: Portrait miniature of Elizabeth Foster, by George Engleheart

Right: Dame Tracey Emin, *More Solitude*, 2014 © 2025 Dame Tracey Emin. All rights reserved, DACS Images. Image courtesy White Cube

Sharing *our stories*

We share our collections, heritage, and stories with audiences onsite, online and around the world, through events, talks, and images, to encourage everyone to use them as a source of inspiration and storytelling.

In 2025 we introduced a new Behind the Scenes experience for our visitors, inviting them to explore the more hidden areas of Chatsworth including historic working and service areas rarely seen by the public, such as the old kitchen, confectionery and cellars, as well as the plunge pool and theatre.

Revealing new areas of the house to our visitors, under the expert direction of our knowledgeable guides, allows us to tell more stories about what life was like for the people who have lived and worked at Chatsworth over the centuries. 750 visitors enjoyed these new tours during the 2025 season.

Alongside these tours, we delivered the new Chatsworth Guided Experience – a small group tour of the house, garden and Belvedere Tower. With a maximum of five visitors per tour, expert guides can tailor the tour to the individual interests of the group, creating a special and memorable experience.

Below: Behind the Scenes tour, the Chatsworth Cellars

Right: Behind the Scenes tour, Confectionery Kitchen





Two new fellowships confirmed

Chatsworth House Trust is delighted to confirm two brand new fellowships in the fields of horticulture and collections, which will commence in 2026.

The inaugural Devonshire Collection Fellowship, supported by the Art Fund, will lead the way in the establishment of a new model for provenance research across the collections, and will have a focus on the ancient and classical holdings in the Devonshire Collections.

We are also pleased to be convening the John Sales Horticultural Leaders Fellowship, which is the first leadership programme dedicated to those working in the field of horticulture. It is named in honour of the late John Sales, who was for many years a key figure in the restoration and conservation of historic gardens. Recruitment for the first cohort of fellows will begin in spring 2026 ahead of a launch event in September.

“John Sales was brilliant at mentoring horticulture professionals to become inspiring leaders. We are proud to be launching the Fellowship, supporting and empowering the next generation of horticultural leaders.”

Jane Marriott, Director of Chatsworth House Trust

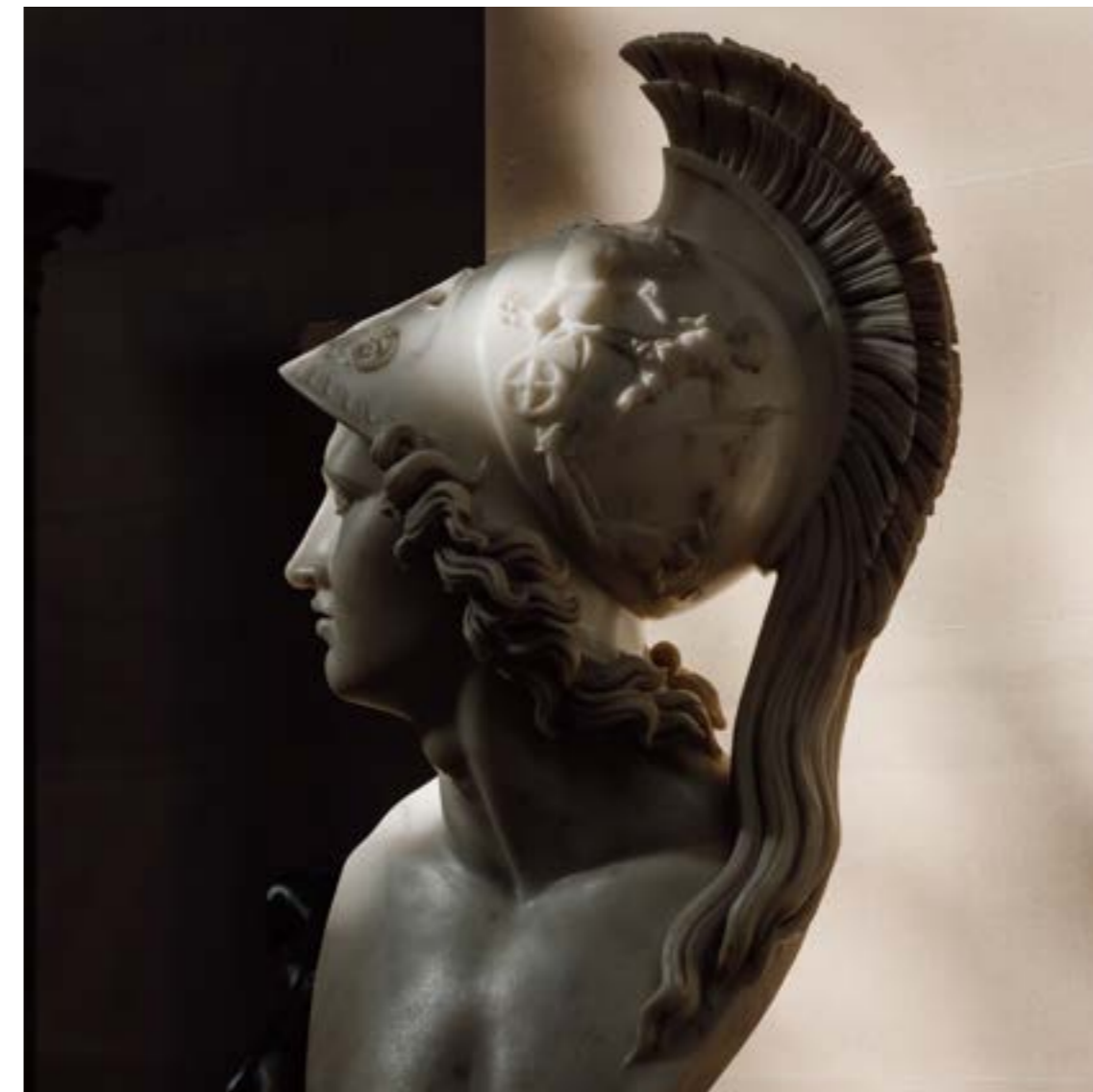
New insight into historic interiors

A new digital project, developed in collaboration with the outreach programme of the Furniture History Society’s database, British and Irish Furniture Makers Online (BIFMO), has offered insight into the evolution of two interior spaces at Chatsworth and the objects within them.

As part of this project two Masters students were invited to investigate watercolour paintings depicting historic interior views of Chatsworth, which provide detailed records of how rooms were presented historically. The images contain accurate visual representations of furniture, porcelain, textiles, and other objects, many of which are still in the Devonshire Collections today.

Two paintings were chosen for closer investigation – the Library by William Henry Hunt c.1826, and the Great Chamber by Frederick Beaumont c.1929 - and the students used historic inventories, published sources, archival plans and photographs, to create a link between the objects depicted in the paintings and the physical objects remaining in the Collection.

Their research went beyond merely identifying individual pieces; it considers the design, history and materiality of the objects, as well as their use and display within the space. We hope that this layering of information will encourage greater reflection on both the space and the pieces themselves, demonstrating their historical and cultural significance, while telling the story of how Chatsworth continues to evolve and change, just as it has over the last half-century.



Left: The Great Chamber at Chatsworth painted by Frederick Beaumont c. 1929

Right: A colossal bust of Achilles, marble, by George Rennie 1826

Supporters

As a registered charity, Chatsworth House Trust relies on income from ticket sales, Gift Aid, Friends memberships, patrons, sponsorship, donations, grants and legacies to preserve and share Chatsworth for everyone to enjoy.

Every penny of income generated is reinvested into the charity to fund essential conservation and our ambitious programme of exhibitions, events, learning and community outreach.

Fundraising is crucial to ensure that the charity remains resilient for the future. Demands for conservation and maintenance are always far in excess of what the charity can support – the cost of addressing outstanding conservation need is estimated to be in excess of £30 million. Continuing to secure fundraised income is also of vital importance to ensure that we achieve our significant ambitions to grow our audience reach, create ground-breaking and relevant programmes, and maximise our impact in order to enrich lives.

Thank you to everyone who supports Chatsworth House Trust.

DONORS

*Richard & Sheron Reynolds
And those who wish to remain anonymous*

LEGACIES

Sheila Streek

CORPORATE MEMBERS

*Diocese of Derby
Henry Boot
West Special Fasteners*

GRANT GIVERS

*Art Fund
Duke of Devonshire's Charitable Trust
Garfield Weston Foundation
Historic Houses Foundation
The Adrian Swire Charitable Trust
The Michael Bishop Foundation
The National Lottery Heritage Fund
The Nineveh Charitable Trust*

SPONSORS

*Rathbones
Selfridges
Sotheby's*

CORPORATE SUPPORTERS

*Boodles
Land Rover Chesterfield
Laurent-Perrier*

*Left: Christopher Woodward, Director of Garden Museum, curator Allegra Pesenti, and Lady Burlington took part in an *In Conversation* event hosted at Sotheby's London to mark the opening of *The Gorgeous Nothings* exhibition.*



Patrons

Our Patrons are important ambassadors for the charity, and play a key role in supporting our ambitions to preserve and share Chatsworth for everyone. As part of their membership, Patrons enjoy the benefits of a close relationship with Chatsworth and our colleagues. This includes entry to Chatsworth for themselves and a guest, access to our Patrons' events programme, invitations to ad hoc events and previews, as well as discounts at our local hotel, inns, shops and restaurants.

This year our Patrons enjoyed an evening exploring the work our GIS team has been undertaking on historic maps from the Devonshire archive, a curator-led tour of *The Gorgeous Nothings* exhibition, an evening discovering Old Master Drawings from the collection under the guidance of our Senior Curator, and a bioacoustics tour of Dobb Edge with colleagues from our Landscape team. Additionally, for the first time, in 2025 Patrons were taken 'on tour' to Edinburgh, where they enjoyed exclusive curator-led tours of the National Galleries of Scotland and a delicious private dining experience.

If you would like to become a Patron and support the work of Chatsworth House Trust, please visit chatsworth.org/support-us/patrons.

PATRONS

*Marie & Martin Bonyng
Sarah & Andy Bruce
Stefan Cars
Justine Fletcher
Anne Galer & Paul Frost
Elizabeth Gilder
Sally Hall
Dianne Jeffrey
Kate & Roddie MacLean
Louise Potter
Elizabeth & James Rutter
Mary Samworth
Fiona & Oliver Stephenson
Yvonne & Richard Vining
George Wigglesworth
Trudy & Tim Wilson
Edward Wint*

And those who wish to remain anonymous

Top: Chatsworth Patrons at the Echoes of the Estate private guided tour



Friends

7,404

*Number of members
at the end of 2025*

We are proud of our growing community of Friends and grateful for their continued support of the charity.

Celebrating our members

Membership of the Chatsworth Friends scheme is at an all-time high, with 7,404 members at the end of 2025. Friends enjoy unlimited visits to the estate throughout the year, allowing them to immerse themselves in the stunning beauty and rich history of Chatsworth. As well as unlimited tickets to the house, garden and farmyard, Friends have access to Christmas and the Christmas market, plus complimentary tickets to Chatsworth Country Fair. Alongside this, Friends also have access to special events, exclusive discounts at onsite shops and restaurants, and invitations to unique gatherings.

All income from membership goes directly to the charity and is reinvested in the preservation, improvement and upkeep of Chatsworth, essential conservation work, and our learning and community outreach programme. By becoming a Chatsworth Friend, you can join us in celebrating this success, and in our mission to safeguard Chatsworth for the future.

To find out more, please visit chatsworth.org/Friends

Gift Aid

Gift Aid is one of the simplest and most effective ways of giving to charity. Gift Aid is a tax incentive that enables charities such as Chatsworth House Trust to claim back the basic rate of tax from the government on every pound that has been donated by our supporters.

Any visitor to Chatsworth who is a UK taxpayer can choose to Gift Aid their admission to the house, garden and farmyard by opting to purchase a ticket 'With Donation'. This enables the entire amount (entry cost plus the donation) to be treated as a donation for Gift Aid purposes. Gift Aid is extremely important to Chatsworth House Trust, generating more than £1 million income for the charity in 2024-25.

In 2025 we reduced the cost of family memberships to encourage more family visits to Chatsworth and broaden access to our growing Friends scheme.

Left: Visitors in the Chatsworth garden enjoying the Friends Day celebrations

The annual economic impact of Chatsworth House Trust is £54.17 million, of which £40.56 million is impact on the local economy alone

DEVONSHIRE GROUP
IMPACT REPORT 2023-2024

Year in numbers

4.88m

Website visits

10,222

Visits from pupils and students

300k

Instagram followers

5,100

Adults and 2,659

235k

Facebook followers

Children who attended public programme events

679,232

Total visitor numbers

18,621

Universal Credit tickets used

25,601

Multimedia headsets used

7,404

Friends memberships

314

School and educational group visits

42,308

Hours donated by volunteers

Financials

The full financial statements for Chatsworth House Trust are audited annually, filed at Companies House and lodged with the Charities Commission (Charity number 511149).

The accounts are available on request by contacting the Company Secretary, Chatsworth House Trust, Derbyshire, DE45 1PP.

Incoming Resources

The charity's main source of income is from visitor admissions to the house, garden, farmyard and adventure playground during its open season from mid-March to early January, including income from our Friends Memberships. A particularly successful summer saw high visitation, which continued over the Christmas period, with an increase in visitor numbers overall (up 3% from 611,130 in 2023-24 to 630,114). Whilst visitor numbers were up, a high proportion of visits from those able to benefit from unlimited visits through Friends and Patrons Membership and a preference towards lower value tickets, including the success of our Universal Credit Ticket Scheme, meant that admission income fell to £13.3m (2023-24: £13.8m), which represents 69% of the charity's total income.

The second main income stream is trading activities, which includes major park events such as the Chatsworth Country Fair. Other trading activities include rental income from retail and catering outlets operating in premises located at Chatsworth, as well as other income from our partners of Chatsworth and grant funding. Income from trading activities was £4.8m in 2024-25, increasing from £4.6m in 2023-24.

In addition to this, a donation from the Trustees of the Chatsworth Settlement represented by the provision of housing occupied by Chatsworth House Trust staff for which rent is not charged and one off donations and income from investments generated £0.6m of income. Total income for the year ended March 2025 was £19.4m (which is comparable to the previous year).

Charitable Expenditure

The charity's income has been applied in pursuance of its charitable objectives. The largest proportion of expenditure is on the cost of operating the house, garden, farmyard and adventure playground to support public access, maintenance, repair and general upkeep of these assets and the art collection, as well as costs of operating subsidiary trading operations. This accounted for 99% of all expenditure in 2024-25, which was similar to 2023-24.

Total expenditure for the year ended March 2025 was £17.4m, decreasing from £17.7m in 2023-24.

Over the long term, all net income generated is reinvested in the conservation and restoration of the house, garden, park and art collection. During years where major works are undertaken, some of the funding may come from reserves which are replenished in years where there are fewer restoration or other major projects underway.

Consolidated statement of financial activities for the year ended 31st March 2025

		TOTAL YEAR ENDED MARCH 2025	TOTAL YEAR ENDED MARCH 2024
		£000	£000
<i>Income</i>			
CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES	Admissions	13,340	13,833
TRADING ACTIVITIES	Park Events	2,087	2,481
	Rental Income	1,025	951
	Other Income	1,713	1,131
DONATIONS & LEGACIES	Staff / Pensioner Housing	368	372
	Other Donations & Legacies	219	118
INVESTMENTS		600	518
TOTAL INCOME		19,352	19,404
<i>Expenditure</i>			
CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES	Admission expenses	4,255	4,513
	Maintenance, repair and general upkeep of the House, Garden and Park	5,749	5,331
	Maintenance of the art collection	412	400
	Governance costs	188	175
	Other costs, including support costs	4,579	4,826
	Preservation & Maintenance	24	24
RAISING FUNDS	Subsidiary trading operations	2,168	2,458
	Investment fees	18	12
TOTAL EXPENDITURE		17,393	17,739
NET INCOME (EXPENDITURE)		1,959	1,665
	Net (loss) / gain on Investments	180	2,151
	Actuarial (loss) / gain on Pension Scheme	751	630
	(Loss) / gain on Investment Properties	240	0
NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS		2,130	4,446
TOTAL FUNDS BROUGHT FORWARD AT 1ST APRIL		33,859	29,413
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD AT 31ST MARCH		33,859	29,413

The figures are for the year to 31 March 2025 with comparative figures for the year to 31 March 2024

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Chatsworth House Trust Council of Management (Trustees)

Lord Burlington, DL – Chair
Dr Nicholas Cullinan, OBE
Duke of Devonshire, KCVO, CBE, DL
Mark Fane, MBE
Katrin Henkel
Edward Perks
Nishi Somaiya
Henry Wyndham

Finance, Audit & Conflicts Committee

Guy Monson – Chair
Mark Fane, MBE
Edward Perks
Nishi Somaiya

We would like to thank all our colleagues at Chatsworth House Trust and the Devonshire Group for their assistance in the production of this Review.

Credits

Photography

Edmund Austin
Ellie Bell
India Hobson
Jenny Macare
Pighill Illustrations
Saul Brown
White Cube

Design

93FT

