

Fulham Palace Trust is pledging to place carbon reduction and environmental issues at the heart of its work. We all face an ecological and climate emergency that threatens the future of our planet.

The 13 acre site of Fulham Palace that you see today is a remnant of a once extensive country estate on the banks of the River Thames, stretching from Chiswick in the west, to Chelsea in the east, and up to Willesden in the north. It was owned by the Bishop of London from 704 to 1974 and was his country house from the 14th century. The Palace has been a country house, a farm, a manorial court, a banqueting house, a hospital, and offices. I believe that our story of survival and re-invention is an inspiration for what we must do in the future to not only preserve the Palace, but to save the planet for future generations.

Fulham Palace Trust is committed to reduce our own environmental and pollution footprint, increase biodiversity, and inspire others to do the same. The Palace is not yet as green as it could be, and there is more that we can and must do.

Sian Harrington, Chief Executive of Fulham Palace Trust

Over the past 15 years the restoration of Fulham has delivered within this green oasis a museum, café, shop, education centre, wedding & events venue, residential accommodation and commercial office space. The income we are able to generate from these sources enables the Trust to provide free access to the museum and garden 365 days per annum.

In the garden we have re-introduced plant varieties first grown at the Palace over 300 years ago (many for the first time in the UK and even Europe), established a volunteer-run beekeeping programme, and re-planted the walled garden where we grow organic fruit, flowers and vegetables for sale on our market barrow. Alongside this our learning and engagement programme provides opportunities for involvement for a range of audiences and volunteers. The result is a freely accessible green lung in the heart of London, helping to tackle nature deficit for people living in the city.

The Palace site has many important statutory designations such as scheduled monument status, Grade I & II listed buildings and a Grade II* listed garden. The palace grounds are part of, alongside Bishop's Park and All Saints Churchyard, a non-statutory Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) that is designated of 'Borough Grade 1' importance.

We cannot return the site to a past ecology due to the scale of the architectural and landscape interventions by previous Bishops of London over

1,300 years. Furthermore, we must now plan for a resilient future in the light of climate change.

Future plans for developing and supporting the site's ecology will be based upon available evidence and expert advice from London's natural history community and urban ecology specialists. These must take account of the site's various historic and landscape designations.

Fulham Palace Trust is committed to:

- introducing more planting schemes in its gardens which encourage biodiversity
- encouraging and inspiring visitors, volunteers, staff and tenants to reduce their own pollution and carbon footprint
- reflecting ecology and climate issues in our events programming
- using green electricity and gas tariffs
- using environmental and energy efficiency best practice when managing our estate, and when undertaking restoration and improvement.

This declaration follows a number of changes the Palace has made to green its working practices.

Already the Palace has undertaken the following work:

- installed bird boxes and bird feeding areas
- We have a volunteer beekeeping programme in the walled garden
- planted over 120 fruit trees (apples, pears, peaches, almonds) in the walled garden since 2012
- planted over 100 species of plant in our Cultivation Compton beds in 2019, massively diversifying the range of plants on the site
- We have planted a herbaceous border consisting of over 150 different types of plants
- Have a succession of flowers throughout most of the year starting with early daffodils selected for their benefits to pollinators and alliums etc
- Reduced the number of sycamore trees of similar age which were crowding out other plants and creating a 'mono-culture' on site. Healthy woodland habitats depend upon having trees of varying age.
- Growing fruit and vegetables in our walled garden according to organic principles, for sale on our market barrow, contributing to local health and wellbeing
- We use biological controls to control pests in the vinery and orchard
- We control and if necessary remove invasive species of plant such as Japanese knotweed and tree-of-heaven. These species have a can have a negative impact upon biodiversity and the built environment.
- We have installed a water collecting tank which we use to water plants in the walled garden

- We have built a composting area where we are able to produce leaf compost as well as compost and mulch for our planting areas
- We leave patches of nettles, have established log piles throughout the site and a bug hotel
- We use brushwood to stake our perennial plants using sustainable coppices hazel from the site.
- We have put in wattle fences made from sustainably cut hazel
- We have put in dead hedges to create a habitat for small mammals and other wildlife when we have surplus woody garden waste – rather than burning or skipping
- We consider soil health and leave herbaceous plants un cut for as long as possible through the winter to prevent soil compaction and which also act as a winter food resource for birds.
- We have purchased trimmers and hedge cutters that are battery powered rather than petrol
- We have changed bulbs in the buildings over to LED bulbs wherever possible
- Café takeaway cups, plates and cutlery are biodegradable
- We have increased the number of vegetarian and vegan menu items available in the Café where we also provide water for re-filling water bottles
- We have been running an Apple Day for 5 years, highlighting the traditional celebration of the harvest and focussing on our home grown apples and honey.

Going forward we are making the following commitments:

- To form an expert panel of biodiversity and sustainability specialists to advise us
- To hold an annual fair to mark Earth Day and continue to develop our Apple Day message of seasonality and food miles
- We will survey the Palace's wildlife and research historic records in order to produce an action plan for long term habitat management. This will include supporting natural regeneration and, where suitable, planting environmentally resilient and ecologically suitable plantings as well as other measures to support biodiversity.
- We will create a special 'Palace mix' of grassland plants that fit the history of the Palace with the aim of creating resilience against future climate change.
- We will create a special 'Palace mix' of wild flowers that are drought resistant to colonise the moat area at the front of the Palace
- We will reduce mowing in areas of the Palace where a tightly cropped lawn is not necessary, and develop a mowing plan to try to maintain a variety of grass habitats and different lengths.

- We will continue to monitor developments in the garden machinery market and introduce battery powered equipment as it becomes proven technology
- We will continue to put up more bird boxes and bat boxes
- We will produce a long term tree planting and natural regeneration plan to ensure that we have different age cohorts of trees and that we are managing our tree stock with the long term aim of supporting biodiversity and that fits the history of the Palace.
- We will support trees in crisis such as ash and elm, allowing them to grow in the hope that some will have resistance to disease, and if they die we will use their trunks for log piles and create greater habitat diversity.
- Engage a wider range of visitors and community groups to access the Palace and the work we are doing in the areas of biodiversity and climate change
- We will investigate the longer term possibility of re-introducing water into the moat which will provide opportunities for water habitats
- We will increase bike storage and bike parking on site for visitors, staff and volunteers