



# LSE Gardens Programme: Objectives & Overview 2017-2019



National Trust

**Our vision is to be at the forefront of Heritage Gardening creating emotional connections through inspirational places for everyone.**

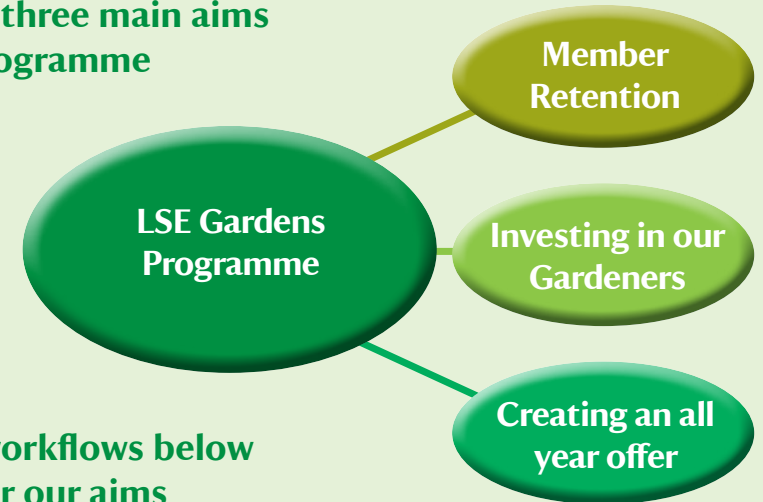
## Introduction from Nicola Briggs our Regional Director

Gardening is one of the top 5 interests of our members, and in London and South East we have over 3.7 million visitors to our broad range of gardens each year. Yet we actually have a relatively low profile in terms of our members' awareness of our gardens offer across the region. I see this as a great opportunity. That's why we're investing in a three-year programme 'Inspiring Excellence in our Gardens' to really focus on our gardens and their teams, so we can offer our visitors more and really build a reputation as exemplars in horticulture and conservation.

In November 2016, during the first LSE Gardens Conference, our gardening community developed the five key workflows that structure the delivery of the new programme. In 2017 these areas are really starting to develop momentum and later this year our work really begins!

Through a co-ordinated approach across the region, facilitated through the programme, we'll make sure that our historically diverse gardens are maintained to an excellent horticultural standard, by teams who feel supported. We'll encourage visitors to keep coming back, increase member retention and build a stronger emotional connection with our supporters.

There are three main aims for the programme



The five workflows below will deliver our aims



### Improving our Web Content

Gathering content from properties that deepen visitors' understanding of what we do

Building better images of our gardens all year round that help tell our stories



### Investing in our Gardeners

Focus on specialist horticultural training across the region

Creating Accessible Heroes through better media training



### Programming

Focus on four key gardens: Nymans, Batemans, Mottisfont & Polesden Lacey developing them as programming showcases

Bringing together a regional garden offer and market 22 gardens across the year



### Presentation Standards

Using the expertise of our garden consultants to support those gardens that need extra help in raising their overall presentation standards



### All year round gardens

Working with a team of gardeners and specialists to develop great case studies that address the challenges around keeping our gardens open all year

# Inspiring Excellence in our Gardens

## More on the programme aims

### Member Retention

We want to reach existing members who love gardens and give them a reason to stay with the National Trust through developing a great garden offer and by being innovative in our approach.

#### We will achieve this through:

- Better Presentation standards in our gardens
- Increasing the profile through better web content and marketing
- Encouraging repeat visits throughout the year
- Targeted focus around innovation

### Investing in our garden teams of staff and volunteers

We want the focus to be on garden teams and to raise awareness and promote the great work they do in the region.

#### We will achieve this through:

- Improved horticultural standards and practices through investment in training
- Improved internal communication and annual conference
- Measuring staff satisfaction for the garden community

### All year round offer

We will encourage off-peak visits by putting in place excellent programming that promotes our gardens when we can offer our visitors a great experience.

#### We will achieve this through:

- Better programming across the region focusing on four key gardens
- Increased profile of seasonal highlights and diversity of planting
- Better marketing practice backed by imagery of our gardens in all seasons
- Sharing best practise and learning from others in the region

## Raising awareness of our gardens offer

Research from our National insights team tells us that we have a real opportunity to raise awareness of our gardens offer amongst senior and mature audiences who already have an interest in gardens.

We will work alongside Whole Trust colleagues on promoting our gardens to these groups, with targeted marketing to raise the profile of all the fantastic work that takes place.

Look out for the new booklet we're producing to promote 22 of our key gardens, with contributions from their gardens teams. It will be delivered in the autumn.



## What is the timeline.....



## Key Contacts

**Philip Barnes:** Programme Lead, Gardens  
Tel: 07826 950071

[Philip.barnes@nationaltrust.org.uk](mailto:Philip.barnes@nationaltrust.org.uk)

**Kelly Hanchett:** Propositions Manager –Heelis  
Tel: 07824 320853

[Kelly.hanchett@nationaltrust.org.uk](mailto:Kelly.hanchett@nationaltrust.org.uk)

**Michelle Baxter:** Business Support Co-ordinator  
Tel: 01962 794120

[Michelle.baxter@nationaltrust.org.uk](mailto:Michelle.baxter@nationaltrust.org.uk)