



## Parks & Gardens UK Project Moving Forward

The Parks & Gardens UK (PAGUK) project has seen much progress over the last few months. The establishment of Parks and Gardens Data Services Limited, the company to support the project directly, is complete, and our soft launches in October, in York and London, heralded the database and the website going live - a culmination of much effort by everyone.

Building on the records received from the existing UKPG database, this marked the point where invitations to submit further records could begin, from the County Gardens Trusts in particular, as well as contributions from other interested organisations. We are pleased to have our first volunteers involved in doing their first data entry via the Hampshire Gardens Trust. Our goal is to achieve 6000 records for England and Wales, with a further 1000 from Scotland and Northern Ireland. Of these, 500 records will include further detail such as maps, plans and images. The website will also feature a range of articles and educational materials.

To date we have 2400 park and garden records and 430 people records published on the website. The updated Volunteer Training Manuals have now been printed and are ready for distribution, which will further assist those involved in research and data entry. It is intended that training workshops will continue to be offered as needed, to help facilitate this process.

Feedback gained from the soft launches has been invaluable, and is forming the basis for further refinements to the website. It was suggested that the

general appearance of the website should have greater visual impact to draw in a wider audience, with the generous inclusion of evocative images to help toward this end. Effective user friendly navigation systems were also supported, especially with search and menu functions and links to other websites.

The scope of the user groups for this website were considered widespread. Four key groups were identified:

- Professionals who would use it in their work, particularly those associated with planning.
- Those involved in education and research at all levels.
- Related organisations/special interest groups
- Those using it for social or recreational reasons.

The County Gardens Trusts identified several main benefits for themselves, especially to showcase what they are doing and to facilitate their research work, tracking across county borders.

The inclusion of themed elements, good resource links and an appeal to tourism and the media were also given credence, to enable the website to further encourage more people to be interested in historic parks and gardens.

All that remains is to get on with it, and with everyone's help we shall. Happy New Year to you all!

*Marilyn Elm*



The Association of Gardens Trusts

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## New Faces on the Team

**Marilyn A Elm**  
**Communications Officer**



Marilyn has a background in art and design, with a BA degree in Interior Design and Masters Degree in Landscape Architecture. She has worked as a designer in both public and private practice. As part of her professional development she attended courses on Historic Parks and Gardens at The King's Manor, York and became involved in early research and documentation trials for the first register of parks and gardens. She now lectures and tutors widely on garden and landscape history and design for several academic institutions, organisations and societies, including the RHS, National Trust and NADFAS.

Passionate about every aspect of garden history and keen on promoting this to the general public, she has become increasingly involved in writing and the media, having made contributions to BBC and local radio programmes, the Discovery Channel and BBC TV programmes as the Gardener's World Roadshow with Chris Beardshaw and Monty Don. She was involved in the interpretation and press presentation for the Gardens Through Time, constructed at RHS Garden Harlow Carr and forming the basis of the programme broadcast on BBC TV, as part of the bi-centenary celebrations of the RHS.

Marilyn is a member of the Garden History Society, the Garden Writers Guild, and a founder member of the Yorkshire Gardens Trust.

**Louise Wickham**  
**Marketing Officer**



After graduating in Economics and Politics, Louise has been involved in business, in a variety of capacities, for over twenty years. Her key skills are in marketing, market research, strategy and customer management. She has also acted as the commercial advisor in many transactions involving the sale of companies to venture capitalists, private equity and other financial institutions. Since 2004 she has worked as an independent management consultant and is a member of the *Boardroom Associates* consultancy. Her clients include Heinz Europe, Britvic Soft Drinks, Sirdar, STA Travel, BP Castrol Industrial Division, Philips and Humber Knowledge Transfer Consultancy (supported by Yorkshire Forward).

After getting hooked on garden history through a Leeds University course run at RHS Garden Harlow Carr by Marilyn Elm, she progressed to complete a Masters degree in Garden History from the University of Greenwich. Louise has continued this interest as a Council member of the Yorkshire Gardens Trust, responsible for its archive at the Borthwick Institute (at University of York) and the Newsletter. She is also a keen gardener and garden visitor, constantly looking for ideas to inspire her, both in this country and around the world. Islamic gardens have been a favourite, but her current interest is in Japanese gardens and she is looking forward to a trip there in the spring.

## Common Issues Discussed

### What and how should CGTs record for the project and how should the research be carried out?

The PAGUK project does not wish for CGTs to alter their methods of research and recording. The database and website are developed to accommodate current research and recording practices. User manuals and training workshops are available to CGTs in order to assist in understanding how current and new research can be submitted for the project.



### What if a private owner is unwilling to have the private research included on the website?

Information, gained privately by a CGT or researcher, will only be available to the public on the website if consent from the owner is obtained. The owner can also specify whether the information can be included in the database, but as confidential, and not available to the public on the website. If no consent is obtained, the information will not be included. Only information that is in the public domain will be included.



### Does the size of garden make any difference?

No. If the garden, whatever size, contains 'special' or unique features that are worthy of note and the researcher feels should be recorded, it can be included.



### How will we the PAGUK project ensure data quality control?

We have a multi-layered system of quality control:

- \* Volunteers and Gardens Trusts are asked to review their records carefully before submission.
- \* Our data entry team are well-qualified in the subject area, as well as having strong data entry experience.
- \* Key fields in the database are controlled by

an extensive thesaurus to ensure consistency of terminology.

- \* Information entered into the database is spot-checked for grammatical accuracy and consistency by our editor.
- \* Approximately one in five records are screened by a consultant garden historian for accuracy, quality and terminology.
- \* Contributors can check the published records and submit corrections as necessary.



### Who are the Data Entry team?

The PAGUK project has a data entry team who have demonstrated skill and knowledge both in the area of historic parks, gardens and landscapes as well as in data entry. The project has appointed one member to serve as a lead data entry staff member who focuses on the more complicated submissions. In addition, the project strongly encourages CGTs to involve their own Data Entry Volunteers and enter records directly into the system from within the CGTs. PAGUK can provide training, if required, for those interested in doing this. Further guidance can be obtained from the new Volunteer Training Manual.



### What are the 'fields' on the database and how does this correspond to the research and recording forms?

The research and recording forms will provide guidance on how this works. The fields in the database will be quite numerous as a result of how the information is organised for viewing online. Those providing data entry for the project as well as those volunteers who wish to do their own data entry will be pulling information out from the recording forms and placing it into the correct fields in the database. Much of this description will come from the descriptions provided by researchers. It is therefore important that all researchers make their information succinct and appropriately detailed where possible, especially in such areas as

## Common Issues Discussed

Cont:  
the history of the site description, listing of owners names, and periods of development.



### Do we need to fill in every field ?

This would be impossible! Only fill in the fields where you know the information is correct. If you don't know, leave the field blank. Some sites will have very few fields filled in, others will have many.



### Do we need to provide photographs to back up our recording?

We need as much imagery as possible to enliven

and inform the Website. Make sure that written consent is given for any images to be used.



### What sources do we need to list, and how do we do this?

*Can we just say for example: Council leaflets or 'Management Plan' for the said park or would we have to be more precise and specify the original source of any information?*

Sources need to be as specific as possible for further academic research. Forms are available with fields for all the information necessary for the different types of source material. (Bibliographic citations will be laid out in MHRA *Modern Humanities Research Association* format, as this is the most suitable for garden history research.)

## Forthcoming Events

### LONDON

**Monday 14 January 7.00pm Christine Lalumia**  
*Paintings of London Gardens*

The Geffrye Museum is currently presenting a series of four exhibitions of paintings showing domestic interiors and gardens from the eighteenth century to the present. Christine Lalumia, curator of the exhibitions, will consider what they reveal about private London gardens of the twentieth century. [www.geffrye-museum.org.uk](http://www.geffrye-museum.org.uk)

### NORFOLK

**The Assembly House. Norwich at 7.00pm**  
**Wednesday 16 January 2008**  
*Gardens of the Loire - Joanne Kidd*

An illustrated talk revealing the garden styles and preoccupations of their owners, and demonstrating social and historical change in planting, use and design in gardens two hundred years before the creation of Versailles.

### BUCKINGHAMSHIRE GARDENS TRUST

**The Power House Waddesdon Manor**  
**Saturday 26 January 2008 at 2.30pm**  
*The Arcadian Friends - Tim Richardson*  
**Saturday 23 February 2008 at 2.30pm**  
*Avenues - Sarah Couch*  
**Saturday 15 March 2008 at 2.30pm**  
*Planting as Architecture - John Phibbs*  
**Book by phone: 01296 653 226**

### GLOUCESTERSHIRE GARDENS TRUST

**Parmoor House, Cheltenham**  
**Friday 8 February 2008 at 7.00pm**  
*Historic Gardens of South Wales - Liz Whittle*

### LONDON PARKS AND GARDENS TRUST

**Museum of Garden History, Lambeth**  
**Monday 11 February at 7.00pm**  
*Suburban Landscape- Elizabeth Lebas*

If you have an event which you would like us to include in future editions of  
**Parks & Gardens News**

or if you would like any further information do please contact:

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