

MID SUMMER OUTING

On Wednesday 17TH July 2019

The Haslemere Gardening Society visited

Haslemere
Gardening
Society

Houghton Lodge Hampshire



Houghton Lodge Gardens have been described as 'the jewel of the Test Valley'. It is a Grade II listed fishing lodge on the River Test in Hampshire, England and built c.1800, possibly by John Nash for the Pitt-Rivers family in the "Cottage Orn " style. It is surrounded by mature trees and lawns sweeping down to the banks of the river. The estate has been owned by the Busk family since 1910.

The estate sits on the west side of the River Test, with water-meadows in the eastern part of the estate. An area of 5 acres (20,000m²) of parks and lawns surround the house. A square planned grotto was built to the south west of the house in the early 19th century. Its brick vault and walls are entirely lined with flint nodules and it has small haphazard turrets in each corner. The grotto received a separate grade II listing in 1986.

The early nineteenth century walled kitchen garden measures 95 m by 65 m, and is Grade II listed. The walls are rendered chalk cob, with greenhouses built against the west wall. One of these now houses a hydroponicum, demonstrating hydroponics, a system of growing plants without soil. A long herbaceous border flanks the exterior of the east wall. A topiary garden (known as the Peacock Garden) sits to the north of the house.



The walled garden boasts vast espalier fruit trees including 32 different varieties of apple tree. There is a wonderful herb garden and the fruit cage is home to both golden and red raspberries. Vegetables grow in raised beds, and you will see wild flowers, sweet peas and dahlias providing a kaleidoscope of summer and autumn colour.

The water-meadows are designated an ESA (Environmentally Sensitive Area) and are managed appropriately, without the use of any fertilisers, herbicides or pesticides. A 15-acre (61,000 m²) meadow walk has recently been developed here. The grounds are open to visitors year-round but the house is only open by prior appointment to organised groups.

website

houghtonlodge.co.uk

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