



Who are we?

Painswick Rococo Garden is the country's sole surviving complete rococo garden. It was designed and laid out in the 1740s and features a fantastical landscape of winding paths, natural pools, woodlands, a vegetable garden and follies of different architectural styles.

This is a place for fun, adventure and exploration. A place to relax, to restore, and to rediscover.

Our project

A Chance to Grow for Painswick Rococo Garden is our community outreach programme, made possible by a grant from the National Lottery Heritage Fund. It comprises three strands of activity:

- **Wellbeing visits**
- **Practical green skills sessions**
- **Heritage learning days**

Our community consultation revealed strong interest from several local beneficiary groups:

- Education institutions supporting young people with learning disabilities and neurodivergence
- Charities supporting young people with learning disabilities and neurodivergence
- Families who are home educating, many due to their neurodivergent children's needs not being met in mainstream education
- Carers
- Young carers
- Beneficiaries of the Holiday Activity and Food (HAF) programme

Contact with nature has long been recognised as having therapeutic benefits, and there is a growing evidence base for its effectiveness in supporting those with disadvantages to gain confidence and wellbeing. Our Community Outreach Project allows for both

passive enjoyment of the Garden through wellbeing visits, incorporating arts and craft activities if desired, and more active enjoyment through a year-round programme of horticultural activities, giving the chance to get hands-on alongside our Community Outreach Gardener, and play a part in the care of our historic garden.

The Rococo style was characterised by its fun and frivolity, and the Garden was originally designed for games and entertaining. It was a light-hearted style, revelling in nature, and we hope our community programme will reflect this. Among the activities that can be offered at different times throughout the year to our beneficiaries are the following:

Wellbeing visits

- Visiting/walking - simply come to the garden and explore at your leisure, taking time to take in the sights and sounds around you
- Photography/art – sessions can be designed to incorporate nature photography; sketching from life or from your imagination, inspired by the Garden; art using natural materials such as earth or charcoal drawing (perhaps with the opportunity to make the charcoal to make your art with!) or printing with leaves
- Collage – collecting natural materials and letting them inspire you
- Making seasonal decorations/crafts using natural materials found in the Garden
- Reading/writing - come along and sit quietly reading your favourite book, or journaling to get your thoughts in order
- Nature diary/nature table/scrapbooking - be inspired by nature and record what you see around you, or help us to document the life of the Garden and the progress of our community outreach project – we would love to be able to look back on an archive of all the things our beneficiaries have enjoyed during their time here
- Observing – there is always something going on in the Garden, from cleaning our famous plunge pool, maintaining the tractor, to visits from the beekeeper...enjoy watching the team doing some of the more technical tasks, and keep them on their toes with lots of questions
- Cooking/creating recipes – at certain times of the year there are gluts of produce from the vegetable garden. When the cafe is closed, we can use our well-equipped catering kitchen, or even learn to cook simple dishes over the fire outdoors for that unmistakable smoky aroma
- Mindfulness/silence - the garden has lovely peaceful corners, where you can switch off from the noise of the outside world and recharge your batteries
- Sensory experiences – walk or garden while paying attention to all of your senses, there is something here to feed every one of them, from sights and sounds to the wonderful smells of earth, leaves and flowers

- Mandalas/land art – collect leaves, petals, twigs and other materials on your walk around the garden, and create beautiful temporary designs on the ground – a meditative activity that leaves no trace after you are gone
- Using the elements – it takes all four elements - earth, air, fire, water – to create a garden...explore the elements as you experience the garden, to deepen your connection to the world around you

Practical green skills sessions

This strand comprises of organised hands-on tasks around the garden, and some practical ways of having fun in the Garden:

Horticulture/gardening:

- Bulb planting – part of our project is to extend the native daffodils in the garden
- Weeding – there is always lots of this valuable work to be done, helping the crops and flowers to be healthy, and keeping the garden tidy for our visitors
- From seed to table – sowing, pricking out and planting – creating new plants and nurturing them in the polytunnels until they are ready to plant out, then harvesting and using both vegetables and flowers
- Indoor plant care – working in the polytunnel with the seedlings and stock plants, caring for pots and keeping everything healthy
- Seed saving – collecting tree seeds, and saving the best from our vegetable and flower crops
- Pruning and coppicing – to maintain shape, promote healthy growth and flowering, and to use cuttings in craft and practical activities
- Harvesting and grafting from our heritage apple trees – we use the fruit to make cider, and want to preserve these local heritage varieties for future generations
- Understanding of organic horticulture – gain more knowledge and skills in natural gardening techniques

Conservation skills:

- Help maintain the trees and shrubs around site using pruning and coppicing techniques, then use the cut material to make plant supports, habitat piles and other wildlife friendly structures – nothing is wasted!
- Dead hedging – using coppice material to make natural wildlife friendly barriers around the Garden
- Willow structures – weaving and maintaining play and decorative structures
- Bird boxes/bug houses – make homes for
- Species counting – helping us monitor and record the all the wildlife that we share the Garden with

- Tree ID/mapping/measuring - explore and interact with the amazing mature trees around the site, and help us understand more about them

Bushcraft skills:

- Woodland camp/den building - have fun creating and using a camp in the woods
- Fire lighting – learn natural fire lighting techniques using materials we find in the woods
- Cooking on the fire/Kelly kettle – try out some simple fun cooking activities like toasting marshmallows and making bread
- Foraging/plant ID – there are many useful plants around us everywhere we go, learn to recognise and understand more about them
- Camouflage/stealth skills – practice being quiet and still, blending into the Garden to see what we can see
- Orienteering/map reading/navigation - do some simple map making to plot your favourite route around the garden
- Observing and recording the weather, make a simple weather station – we have lots of historical records of the weather in the 1740s when the garden was created, to compare with today's weather

[Heritage learning days](#)

Our project can offer an array of heritage activities that celebrate the Garden's unique 18th-century charm and natural historic beauty.

Heritage talks

- The History and Restoration of Painswick Rococo Garden
- What does Rococo mean? Looking at Rococo style, art and design
- Stories from the people of Painswick Rococo Garden, from the family who built the house and designed the Garden to the artist who painted it
- Snowdrops and their heritage – there are fifteen known varieties of snowdrops in the Garden, including the famous *Galanthus 'Atkinsii'*, first discovered in Painswick by estate worker James Atkins in the 1800s

Self-led heritage trails

- The entire Garden is (Grade II*) listed. This trail will uncover the heritage landscape of our Garden with its unique rococo layout
- The Garden contains nine Grade II*listed buildings. Discover these heritage follies on this trail
- Our Kitchen Garden was created in 1748 and appears in Thomas Robins' painting. This trail follows the heritage planting in the Garden and explains why our planting considers the heritage of the site.

- Water features of the Garden. The layout of our 18th century garden utilises natural springs to feed a plunge pool for bathing, ornamental ponds, reflective pools, a well, and streams. Follow these tranquil water features and learn about their importance in the design of the Garden.

Guided heritage walks

- The restoration of Painswick Rococo Garden.
- Orchard and vineyard walk with a focus on our heritage fruit trees and vines
- Entertainment and enjoyment in the Rococo era. The designers of the Garden imagined the space as a theatrical stage set. Learn about the fun, artistic and recreational pursuits of this flamboyant era.

Arts

- Examine the Thomas Robins painting from 1748 and create your own depiction of the Garden.
- Rococo was a style of art characterised by scroll-like ‘C’ and ‘S’ shaped forms, elaborate ornamentation and asymmetry. Learn about these words and find the forms in the Garden.

Tailored visits

We can tailor activities to suit need. Please let us know if you’re interested in experiencing or learning about an area not listed above, or if you’d like to combine activities.

Risk assessments

We have thorough safeguarding policies and risk assessments for all activities, which are available on request, and we would be happy to discuss any requirements or concerns you may have for groups or activities. As part of our sessions, we encourage all participants to understand risk, as appropriate to their age and understanding.

Contact details

For more information, please contact our Community Outreach Gardener, Lisa on community@rococogarden.org.uk or Marisa on fundraising@rococogarden.org.uk or call 01452 813204.