



# **PlantNetwork**

Connecting gardens, sharing skills

**Training day**

**Spirit of Place**

**12<sup>th</sup> July 2018**

**Nymans**

**@plantnetwork**

**#gardenplans**

9.30	Registration and coffee	
9.45	Welcome & introductions  Introduction to Nymans	Pam Smith, PlantNetwork and National Trust. Stephen Herrington National Trust
10.05	What documents do we need to manage our gardens? Where to start? An introduction to garden management planning.	Pam Smith. Garden and Park Consultant, National Trust Midlands' Region
<b>10.40</b>	<b>Coffee break</b>	
10.55	Spirit of Place at Nymans. What it means for managing the garden	Stephen Herrington
11.30	Garden tour	Stephen Herrington
<b>13.00</b>	<b>Lunch</b>	
14.00	Working with Spirit of Place in new design projects	Mark Lamey, Landscape Consultant
<b>14.45</b>	<b>Coffee</b>	
15.00	Workshops	All
16.00	Discussion. What do people need to carry on the process, sharing resources etc. How can PlantNetwork help.	
16.30	Close	

## Programme

## **Speaker Biographies**

### **Stephen Herrington, Programme Lead, London and South East Gardens Programme, National Trust**

Since 2014 Stephen has been Head Gardener at National Trust Nymans, one of the Trust's premier gardens. Previously he was Curator of Glasgow Botanic Gardens where he carried out extensive improvements to the tree collection with wild origin material and implemented upgrading of the plant records system. From 2005 to 2011 he worked at the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh and trained at Tresco Abbey Gardens, RHS Garden Wisley and has a BSc (Hons) in Horticulture and Plantsmanship awarded by Glasgow University. Stephen has been fortunate to go on several plant collecting/conservation expeditions over his career, most recently the National Trust led expedition to Tasmania in January.

Currently, Stephen is seconded to lead on the National Trust's pilot Garden Programme which looks at a number of key objectives around member retention, the all year round gardening offer and investing in gardeners. Stephen is also a PlantNetwork Trustee and Council member for Plant Heritage.

### **Pam Smith, Gardens and Parks Consultant, National Trust**

Pam works with property and garden teams in 22 gardens across the Midlands Region. Her role involves advising staff on presentation standards, staff skills and recruitment, restoration and new project work. Her main remit for the coming 12 months is to ensure all gardens have Garden Management Plans which reflect their history, Spirit of Place and resource levels. She is currently working with external consultants in the production of

two garden CMPs and is also working on two 18th C Pleasure Ground Restoration projects involving new garden design commissions.

Pam trained in horticulture at Askham Bryan College and later gained a PG Diploma with the Architecture Association in Conservation and Management of Historic Landscapes. Her career started in public parks in the NE of England followed by 8 years as Director of the University of Birmingham Botanic Garden. She later worked as a freelance horticultural and heritage consultant including working with Great Dixter Garden and a two-year research commission from English Heritage. Pam took up the National Trust role in 2011. Pam was Vice Chair of PlantNetwork from 2004 to 2013 before taking up the part time role of PlantNetwork Administrator.

### **Mark Lamey, Landscape Designer & Consultant**

Mark trained in horticulture at the RHS Gardens, Wisley and at the Royal Botanic Garden, Kew. He worked as Head Gardener for a private estate in Gloucestershire before becoming a freelance horticulturist and garden designer. In 2011 he was employed as a Gardens Adviser to the National Trust in the North of England and later for Sissinghurst and Nymans and in 2016 was Project Manager for the National Trust's Capability Brown tercentenary. He has a Masters in the Conservation of Historic Gardens and Cultural Landscapes and now works as a freelance Landscape Designer and Consultant, based in West Sussex. He is a judge for the Sussex Heritage Trust awards, Gardens and Landscape category and a Trustee for The Garden House in Devon.

The majority of the content of this booklet is kindly shared by the National Trust and the Trust's Garden researcher Rebecca Bevan.

## **Garden Planning**

In order to care for our gardens and parks, we need to have a good understanding of their history and what is special about them (their 'significance'). This understanding should inform all our decisions about how we manage, develop and present them. This is why evidence of conservation management planning is usually required for funding applications and development permissions.

There are different ways to ensure you have the understanding you need. A Conservation Management Plan (CMP) is the most thorough approach while a Conservation Statement is a useful summary version created in-house. For some gardens, drawing together existing surveys, a Statement of Significance and a detailed management and maintenance plan may be sufficient.

Historic England's preferred system of values is set out in the 2008 English Heritage publication *Conservation Principles*, which identifies four categories of heritage value – evidential, historical, aesthetic and communal – that together amount to the significance of a place. This approach draws heavily on The Burra Charter and the work of the late James Semple Kerr. Historic England commends this system of values to anyone proposing change to heritage assets because it allows the effects of change on what matters about a place to be set out clearly and any harm to be assessed.

A Statement of Significance is one of a number of formats in which the values attached to a heritage asset might be set out. The publication *Conservation Principles* explains that:

A 'statement of significance' of a place should be a summary of the cultural and natural heritage values currently attached to it and how they interrelate, which distils the particular character of the place. It should explain the relative importance of the heritage values of the place (where appropriate, by reference to criteria for statutory designation), how they relate to its physical fabric, the extent of any uncertainty about its values (particularly in relation to potential for hidden or buried elements), and identify any tensions between potentially conflicting values. So far as possible, it should be agreed by all who have an interest in the place. The result should guide all decisions about material change to a significant place.

### **What does your garden have as a Statement of Significance?**

If your garden is a registered landscape a description of its significance can be derived from the listing entry.

Many gardens have brief descriptions on the UK Parks and Gardens database. <http://www.parksandgardens.org/>

# Sprit of Place

**“Spirit of place (or genius loci) refers to the unique, distinctive and cherished aspects of a place. It is thus as much in the invisible weave of culture (stories, art, memories, beliefs, histories, etc.) as it is the tangible physical aspects of a place (monuments, rivers, woods, architectural style, pathways, views, and so on) or its interpersonal aspects (the presence of family, friends and kindredspirits).”**

ICOMOS, Quebec Declaration on the preservation of the spirit of place, October 2008

Spirit of Place is at the heart of how people feel about and experience our gardens and why they are relevant. It captures what make a place special and ultimately why people should love that place. To understand spirit of place we need to start with understanding significance and the people who come to our properties.

Our landscapes and places have been developed by people and by human activity, settlement and land-use in conjunction with natural processes and over long periods of time. Spirit of Place therefore relates to a wide range of subjective human responses, values and perceptions to the fabric and framework of the place itself as described in the statement of significance. The Spirit of Place goes further to reflect how the senses are stimulated by that framework.

Spirit of Place will be built by both its tangible qualities, such as its scenery, buildings, land-uses, colours, textures and smells, and also by intangible cultural elements such as:

- Cultural values, including religious and spiritual significance
- associations with past events or people, myths, etc
- traditional activities, including language, performing arts, craftsmanship, rituals and festivals which help define local distinctiveness and in which people can participate;
- aesthetic qualities: beauty, composition, design and quality (e.g. architecture), style, scale, naturalness, wildness, responses to seasons and climate, ecology;
- awareness of by-gone times or 'time depth', i.e. its antiquity
- emotions and spiritual qualities such as awe, delight, evocation of memories, closeness to nature, excitement, peace, inspiration, sense of involvement, tranquillity and so on

These may be experienced through emotions and senses, and we understand these best through listening to the range of perceptions and values experienced by individuals and communities of interest, including, of course, those who live and work in a place.

Spirit of Place may be reflected in the creative work inspired by that place, works that can in their turn enhance the inspiration felt by others. We must acknowledge that these are continually reconstructed by society and respond to the need for change and continuity.

Spirit of Place helps you to decide what is right and what doesn't fit. What style of interpretation, key messages, event types, shop style, planting styles etc. It is not necessarily a document that you share with your visitors, although it can generate useful themes and strap lines. It is a concept about the garden that should be

referred back to sense check how the garden is being managed and developed.

**What are the key phrases people describe your garden as? Useful to look at visitor feedback including Trip Adviser and Facebook. Ask staff and volunteers what makes the garden special?**

## **What is a Conservation Management Plan?**

CMPs are similar to Conservation Plans, Landscape Management Plans and Parkland Plans (though the latter two generally contain more specific details about management and maintenance). All these documents gather together information about a place, analyse it to identify what is significant and then set out policies and recommendations to protect that significance over a long period of time (up to 30 years or more).

A CMP will address the following questions about a place:

- **What is it? (Research and Understanding)** Existing information is reviewed and more research undertaken, if necessary, to establish a site's character, history and

phases of development. The historic research page provides information to ensure this critical phase is carried out effectively.

- **Why does it matter and to whom? (Assessing significance)** Information gathered from research, surveys and consultation is evaluated to understand the historic, aesthetic, environmental and cultural value of a place from all perspectives.
- **What is happening to it? (Issues, opportunities and constraints)** Current use, access arrangements, management practices and resource availability, and present and future threats are examined to understand the impact they are having on a place.
- **What are we going to do about it? (Policies and recommendations)** Policies and recommended actions are set out to inform long term management and development, ensuring significance is retained. These will feed into short term delivery/action plans which are usually separate documents created by property staff.

## **Do I need a Conservation Management Plan?**

What you need depends on what plans, surveys and research have already been undertaken and what level of guidance you require.

The starting point will be to retrieve relevant existing information from a variety of sources, internally and externally.

- **Full CMPs** are very useful on designated, distinguished or complex sites, where research has been insufficient, major changes are proposed, conflicting interests are apparent or funding is being sought.

- **Conservation Statements** offer a quicker and cheaper way of developing management policies based on existing knowledge pulled together in house. This is a useful approach where there is no budget for a CMP.

If good surveys, research and analysis already exist for the wider site or parkland but they do not cover the garden, elements that are relevant to the garden can be gathered together in a detailed **Garden Management Plan**.

For managers of gardens and parks, the Garden Management Plan includes guidance about how CMP recommendations should feed into planning and maintenance documents. GMPs are usually broken down into character areas.

## **Conservation Management Plan guidance**

### **Heritage Lottery Fund**

[http://ip51.icomos.org/~fleblanc/documents/management/doc\\_ConservationManagementPlans-Guide.pdf](http://ip51.icomos.org/~fleblanc/documents/management/doc_ConservationManagementPlans-Guide.pdf)

### **Historic England** (with further links)

<https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/technical-advice/parks-gardens-and-landscapes/maintenance-repair-and-conservation-management-plans-for-historic-parks-and-gardens/#>

**What research exists for your garden?**

# **The Gardens Trust Conservation Management Plan Project**

In 2011, Garden History, the journal of The Gardens History Society (now the Gardens Trust) published an open letter on Conservation Management Plans for Historic Landscapes by John Phibbs which, amongst other things, raised the issue of the unharnessed potential of CMPs as a large and significant body of research. Largely in response to the debate this sparked, in 2012 the GHS launched a project to compile a reference list of CMPs and related research for historic designed landscapes. This was managed by Linden Groves and made possible with sponsorship and support from Historic England (then English Heritage). More information and the list of CMPs is held by the Gardens Trust available from [www.gardenstrust.org](http://www.gardenstrust.org)

## **Garden Management Plans**

A Garden Management Plan will inform and guide future conservation through maintenance and development of the gardens and plant collections. If there is no CMP it can include an outline of the history and development of the gardens. Published sources can be collated which help to present the background to the key historic phases and significances of the garden. Even where there is a CMP it can be useful to include a brief history of the garden within the GMP.

A GMP is a document for recording discussion, interventions and actions. Recommended actions, as resources permit, will be guided by conservation management, the priorities of significance, the Spirit of Place and agreed standards of presentation.

It is a working document where actions are completed and new added. By dividing the garden into character areas it allows separate areas of the garden to be discussed with clarity. Character areas can be determined by garden themes or natural boundaries. Starting with a visitor map is often a useful way to get started.

**What character areas do you have in your garden?**

# **Example GMP contents:**

Example from Kedleston Hall.

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

1.1 Purpose of this plan

1.2 Scope

1.3 Published sources

## **2.0 LOCATION**

2.1 Area and acquisition

## **3.0 SIGNIFICANCE**

3.1 Historic designations

3.1.1 Extent of registered garden and park

3.2 Nature conservation

3.3 Statement of Significance

3.4 Spirit of Place

3.5 Significant plants

## **4.0 CONSERVATION VISION**

## **5.0 HISTORY**

5.1 The garden in context

5.2 Main dates/phases of garden design and planting

6.0 MAINTENANCE

6.1 Staffing and budgets

6.2 Visitors

6.3 Compliance

7.0 CHARACTER AREAS

7.1 Area 1 North + Village Lodge, Park House

7.2 Area 2 etc

APPENDIX 1. CHRONOLOGY OF MAPS AND PLANS

APPENDIX 2 18TH CENTURY AN OVERVIEW

## HISTORY, LEGACY, RESEARCH

CMP	Statement of Significance	External sources e.g statutory listing, UK Parks & Gardens Database
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## DECISIONS

CMP agreed recommendations	Spirit of Place	Garden Management Plan
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## ACTIONS and MEASURING

Presentation standards	Staff ownership & innovation	Action plans
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