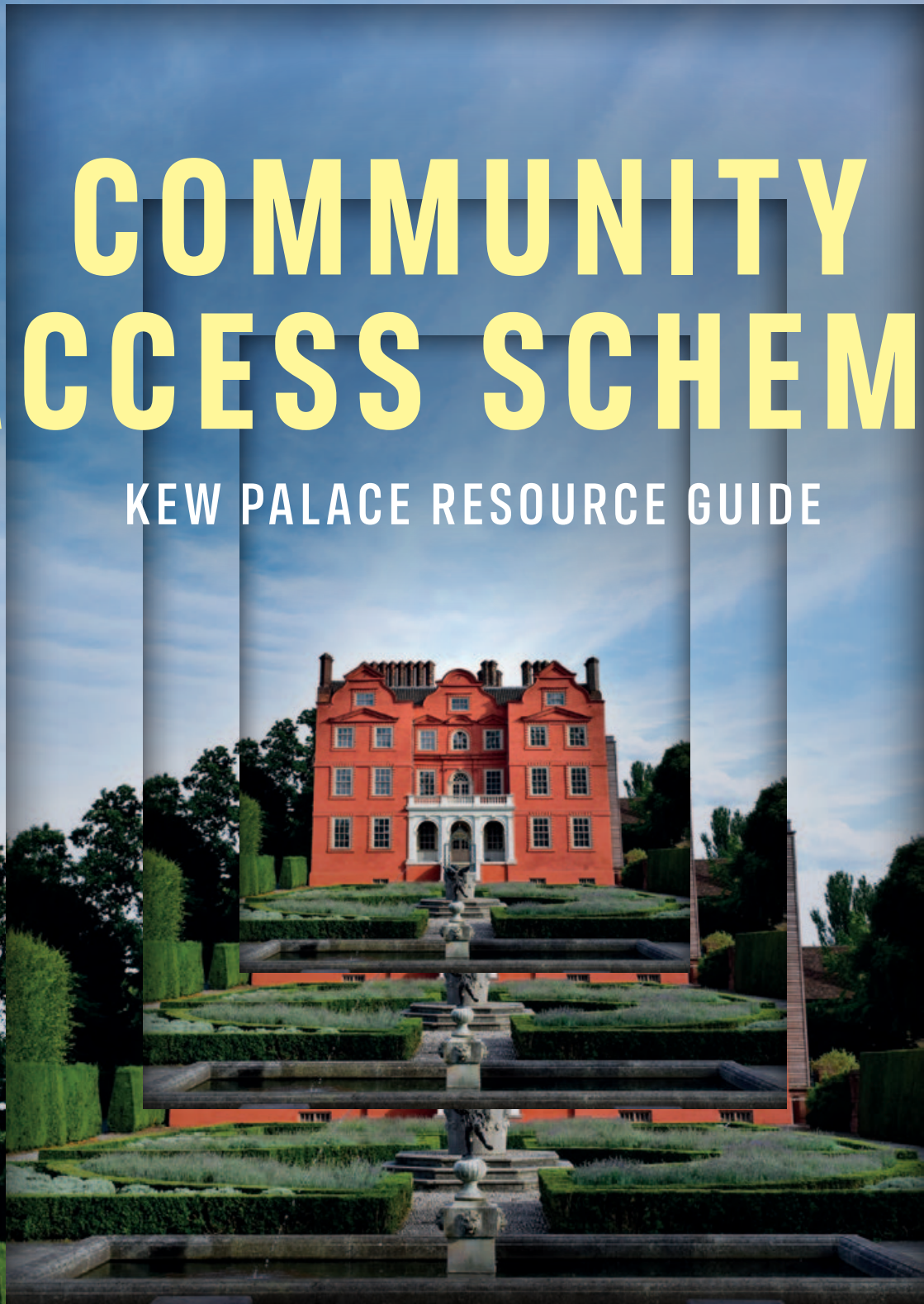




HISTORIC ROYAL PALACES

COMMUNITY ACCESS SCHEME

KEW PALACE RESOURCE GUIDE



SPACE TO STIR AND BE STIRRED

**TOWER OF LONDON · HAMPTON COURT PALACE · BANQUETING HOUSE
KENSINGTON PALACE · KEW PALACE · HILLSBOROUGH CASTLE AND GARDENS**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	5
Planning your visit to Kew Palace	7
Getting to Kew Palace	8
Guidelines for group visits	12
A short history of Kew Palace	14
Notable people at Kew	16
Explore Kew Palace, room by room	26
Mental health and wellbeing	38
Contact details	39



INTRODUCTION

KEW PALACE: A HIDDEN ROYAL HOME IN KEW GARDENS

Originally built as a fashionable mansion in 1631 for wealthy silk merchant, Samuel Fortrey, Kew Palace became one of the favoured lodgings of the royal family. In the 1720s, George II, Queen Caroline, and their children arrived, taking leases on the palace and several other houses in the near vicinity.

Kew Palace is perhaps most famously associated with being a place of respite for King George III. He experienced repeated bouts of mental ill health from 1788 before suffering a severe decline in 1810, and in 1811, a regency was declared. When Queen Charlotte died in 1818, Kew Palace was closed.

In more recent times, King Charles III took a keen interest in the restoration of Kew Palace and formally reopened the palace to the public on 5 May 2006, following a decade-long conservation and representation project by Historic Royal Palaces.

Today, Kew Palace reflects the intimate personal and domestic life of George III and his family. In 2021, an exhibition entitled “*George III: The Mind Behind The Myth*” opened to celebrate the achievements of this remarkable King. The exhibition explored the often-cruel treatment he experienced at the hands of his doctors at Kew. It aimed to change the ‘myth’ of the ‘mad king’ and reduce the stigma about how we talk about mental health.

You can learn more about the exhibition on our website here:
<https://www.hrp.org.uk/kew-palace/whats-on/george-iii-the-mind-behind-the-myth/>

HISTORIC ROYAL PALACES COMMUNITY ACCESS SCHEME

To celebrate and involve our local communities with the palaces in our care, we run the Community Access Scheme (CAS). This aims to enable more people to make personal connections with our palaces and help everyone explore the story of how monarchs and people have shaped society, in some of the greatest palaces ever built. This resource guide aims to support CAS group leaders to plan visits for their groups to Kew Palace. You can learn more about CAS on our website here: <https://www.hrp.org.uk/about-us/communities/#gs.tqci10>

ROYAL BOTANIC GARDENS KEW COMMUNITY ACCESS SCHEME

Royal Botanic Gardens Kew have a Community Access Scheme (CAS). It is a group annual membership for organisations that give support to people experiencing barriers to visiting Kew. The scheme is for service users and accompanying support workers, personal assistants, or next of kin. There are two levels of paid membership, which you find out more about on the Royal Botanic Gardens Kew website here: <https://www.kew.org/learning/community-and-access/kew-community-access-scheme>

PLANNING YOUR VISIT TO KEW PALACE

Kew Palace is open seasonally, from April-September every year. Please visit our website for the most up-to-date opening and closing times: <https://www.hrp.org.uk/kew-palace/visit/opening-and-closing-times/#gs.tqbmpo>

Kew Gardens is open all year round. Please visit Royal Botanic Gardens Kew's website for the most up-to-date opening and closing times: <https://www.kew.org/kew-gardens/visit-kew-gardens/opening-and-closing-times>



As a member of HRP's CAS network, you are able to visit Kew Palace (and Kew Gardens), for just £1!

Simply email communities@hrp.org.uk and let us know how many £1 Kew entry cards you would like for your CAS group, along with a full postal address. We will post these as soon as we can.

Once you receive your £1 entry cards, you can visit Kew Palace and/or Kew Gardens. You can pre-book your visit by following the instructions on the back of the card, or you can just turn up and exchange the card along with £1 to gain entry.

Each £1 entry card is for one visit for one person.

GETTING TO KEW PALACE

Please be aware our sites may be challenging for individuals with mobility needs. Kew Palace is situated in the Royal Botanic Gardens Kew, and walking distances from the gardens' gates to the palace vary greatly. Kew Palace and its surroundings have cobbled and uneven surfaces. Do let us know in advance if you have specific mobility needs.

Visitors can access Kew Gardens via four entrance gates:

- Victoria Gate (TW9 3JR)
- Elizabeth Gate (TW9 3AB)
- Brentford Gate (TW9 3AF)
- Lion Gate (TW9 2DF)



The Elizabeth Gate is closest to Kew Palace, and looks like this.

It is situated on the Kew Green, behind the St Anne's church.

PUBLIC TRANSPORT

LONDON UNDERGROUND AND TRAINS

- Kew Gardens Station (15-20 minute walk) – In zone 3 and served by the District Line and London Overground. *There is no level access from the westbound platform.*
- Kew Bridge Station (15-20 minute walk) – South West Trains run services from Waterloo to Kew Bridge Station, via Vauxhall and Clapham Junction. *There is no level access at Kew Bridge.*
- Richmond station has lift and level access. Take 65 bus (in the direction of Ealing Broadway) to Lion or Victoria Gate.

BUS

- Nearby stops include Mortlake Road and Kew Green.
- Routes 65, 237, 267 and 391 stop at the entrance gates or nearby train stations.

RIVERBOAT

Riverboats run in the summer from the following destinations:

- Westminster
- Richmond-upon-Thames
- Kingston-upon-Thames

Westminster Passenger Services (from Westminster)

Telephone: +44 (0)20 7930 2062

Turks Launches (from Richmond-upon-Thames and Kingston-upon-Thames)

Telephone: +44 (0)20 8546 243

BY CAR OR COACH

PARKING

- Restrictions may apply on the residential streets around Kew. There is no parking allowed on Kew Road (A307).
- **Brentford Gate**
Reached by Ferry Lane. £7.00 for a full day. Limited parking available.

DISABLED PARKING

- Brentford Gate car park has several dedicated parking bays for disabled visitors. There are three disabled parking bays near Elizabeth Gate on Kew Green. Parking is free for Blue Badge Holders.

COACH DROP OFF AND COLLECTION

- Groups can be dropped off and picked up at the Elizabeth Gate on Kew Green.
- There is no coach park at Kew.

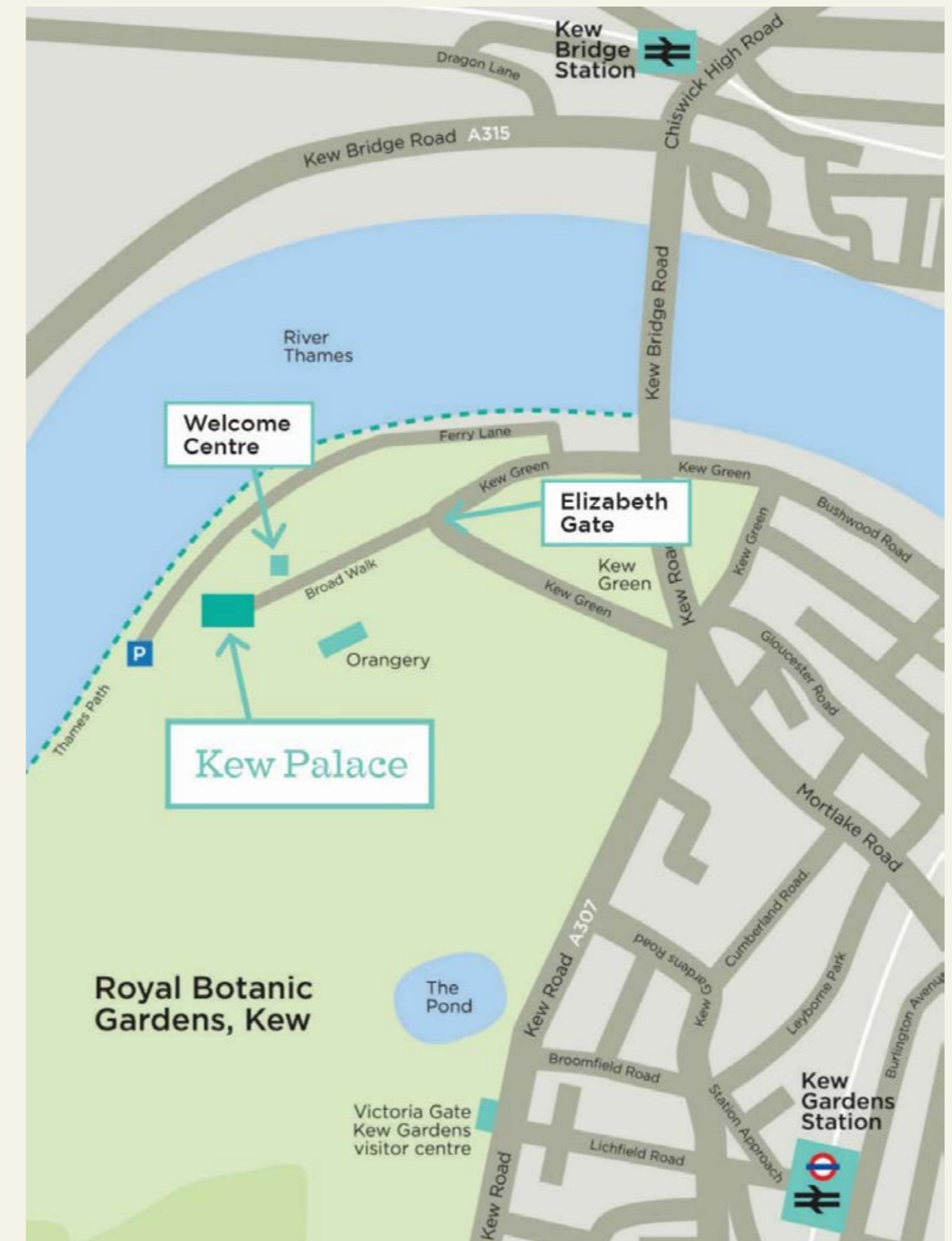
MOBILITY SUPPORT

- Manual wheelchairs are available within Kew Palace to use free of charge, on a first come first served basis. Please ask a member of staff if you require support.
- Kew Gardens Mobility scooters are available to hire from Elizabeth, Brentford and Victoria Gates, and must be booked in advance. Please contact the Kew Gardens Visitor Information office on 0208 332 5655 and select the Mobility Scooter option in the automated phone menu or email info@kew.org. We advise customers to check availability on Scooters before booking tickets as there is limited availability.
- All recognised guide, assistance or service dogs – including assistance dogs in training – are welcome in the Gardens. We ask that they are recognisable, with a lead or harness that identifies them as working.

FACILITIES

For further practical information about your visit to Kew Palace, please visit our website here: <https://www.hrp.org.uk/kew-palace/visit/facilities/#gs.tv6k8y>

ACCESS MAP:



GUIDELINES FOR GROUP VISITS

Please wear your CAS group leader card, as it identifies you to our Palace Hosts as a CAS group leader.

Due to the small size of Kew Palace, and the nature of its rooms, the maximum size of your group that can tour the palace together is six people. If you are bringing a larger group, the group will need to be split up into smaller groups of no more than six people.

Our palace interiors and collections are very precious and unique. Below are some ways you and your group can help us preserve our palaces for years to come.

Guidelines for general behaviours:

- CAS leaders are fully responsible for their group members and their behaviour in the palace
- CAS leaders and group members must be considerate of other palace visitors and staff at all times
- CAS leaders and group members must carry their visitor ticket with them throughout their visit
- CAS leaders must ensure group members remain with the group and do not wander into restricted areas of the palace
- CAS leaders and group members must abide by instructions from HRP staff when visiting the palace (e.g. leaving the palace during fire alarm)

Health and safety guidelines:

- CAS leaders must create their own risk assessment for their group visit and activity
- CAS leaders and group members must not plug in any electronic equipment without receiving permission from HRP staff (this includes mobile phones)
- CAS leaders and group members must take care when moving around the palaces as these historic buildings have uneven floors, narrow corridors, awkward doorways and low lighting levels

Conservation guidelines:

- CAS leaders and group members must not touch or lean on objects or walls
- CAS leaders and group members are only permitted to eat or drink in the designated areas

- CAS leaders and group members should be aware that there are no cloakroom or storage facilities at Kew Palace. Group Leaders should avoid bringing large, bulky or heavy items if possible but where necessary must leave all bulky items (e.g. large bags or cases) in a designated space before exploring the palace. Backpacks or rucksacks should be worn to the front of the body to avoid accidental contact with the historic collection.
- No objects may be moved; this includes interpretation
- No equipment or supplies can have contact with the objects on display
- No flash photography is permitted in the palace. If photography is restricted in some spaces, there are signs indicating this
- No tripods or selfie sticks are permitted in the palace
- No filming is permitted in the palace
- CAS leaders and group members must not use prohibited materials when visiting, including open flames, fresh flowers, some art materials, and sprays/aerosols etc.

Accessibility

Please do ask any member of the Palace Host Team if you require use of the lift to gain access to the first and second floors.

Due to the small size of Kew Palace, and the nature of its rooms, there can be a maximum of one small wheelchair on each floor at any one time. Manual wheelchairs are available within Kew Palace to use free of charge, on a first come first served basis.

Sensory Elements

The interior of this tiny, atmospheric palace tells the powerful story of George III, his mental illness and the members of his family who lived and died there. Some of the rooms are small, and dark (in part, to preserve historical objects), and some rooms have soft soundscapes to bring the history of the palace to life. The Palace Hosts are on hand to advise if you have any questions about the content of the rooms and carry torches to help illuminate objects and signage.

There is a wooden model of Kew Palace which informs visually impaired visitors about the scale, style and architectural detail of the Palace, as well as aiding way-finding to exterior access points.

Please speak to one of our hosts if you have any additional sensory needs as we have some elements which can enhance your visit.

A SHORT HISTORY OF KEW PALACE

Kew Palace is the smallest of all the royal palaces. It was originally constructed as a fashionable mansion in 1631 for French-born Flemish silk merchant, Samuel, and his wife Catherine Fortrey. Kew Palace was known as the Dutch House because of this. You can still see Samuel and Catherine Fortrey's initials above the entrance to the palace.

George II (r 1727-60) and Queen Caroline were first attracted to little Kew in 1728, thinking it a perfect lodging for their three eldest daughters- Anne, the Princess Royal, and the Princesses Amelia, and Caroline. They took leases on the palace and several other houses in the near vicinity, and Kew Palace became a place where the family could live normal lives, unrestricted by the rules of royal ceremony.

In 1731, Frederick Prince of Wales, acquired the lease on the White House, a building which stood opposite Kew Palace. It was his wife, Princess Augusta of Saxe-Coburg who founded the original botanic garden at Kew in 1759, including the Great Pagoda.

Growing up in the White House, George III inherited his parents' passion for architecture and gardens. He became heir to the throne on the death of his father in 1751, succeeding his grandfather, George II, in 1760. He was 22 years old.

In 1781, George III returned to Kew Palace, establishing it as a much-loved summer retreat to accommodate his growing family of 15 children. It was here however that George III would be incarcerated during the worst bouts of his mental ill health, where he suffered archaic treatment from a band of doctors in attempts to 'cure' him. When his wife, Queen Charlotte died at Kew Palace in 1818, the palace was closed off for many years.

The palace remained unoccupied until 1898, when Queen Victoria transferred it (along with Queen Charlotte's Cottage) to Kew Gardens to allow it to be opened to the public. It remained open to the public until 1996, when it was closed for a ten-year restoration by Historic Royal Palaces.

RESTORATION

After years of detailed archaeological and archival research, the interior décor of the palace's first floor rooms were returned to their former 19th century glory. Colour schemes featuring bright green wallpaper were contrasted with vivid black, gold, and red furnishings, and fitted carpets, a relatively new fashion in early 1800, were recreated using designs from an historic archive. Traditional techniques were employed to produce handmade green and black flocked wallpaper, and furnishing fabrics and chintzes were authentically woven.

The expression "if the walls could speak" really applies at Kew Palace. Over the years, much has been learnt about the building as well as the people who lived there, through the archaeology and physical evidence they left behind. Rather than cover up the bedrooms of Princess Augusta and Amelia on the second floor, the rooms have been left exposed for 21st century visitors to enjoy and explore in an unrestored, yet conserved state.

This illustration, by Jonathan Foyle, shows a reconstruction of Kew Palace based on documented evidence. It shows the estate in 1785- including Kew Palace and the White House (which George III demolished in 1802) to the left.



On the right of the illustration, you can see the housekeeper's cottage, the Royal Kitchen, laundry, and stables. The Royal Kitchen is one of the few buildings surviving from the complex which served the White House. At the time, 20 staff worked in the kitchens to produce food for the royal family and their household on their visits to the White House. In 1818, when Queen Charlotte died, the royal household officials simply locked the door to the kitchens and left. The kitchens were left untouched for nearly 200 years.

NOTABLE PEOPLE AT KEW

KING GEORGE III (1738-1820)

George III may have been the third Hanoverian monarch, but he was the first one to be born in England and to use English as his first language. He was home-schooled, mostly at Kew, and was the first king to study science as part of his education. His father commissioned the building of an observatory in Kew Gardens, where George became fascinated with the pursuit of accurate timekeeping and the world very nearly ended up with Kew - instead of Greenwich - mean time!

At the young age of 22, he was relatively unprepared to reign after his father died suddenly from a chill caught gardening at Kew (though some said his death was caused by an injury sustained while playing cricket). He married Princess Charlotte of Mecklenburg-Strelitz in 1761, and the couple went on to have 15 children, 13 of whom reached adulthood.

Art and science flourished under George's patronage. He founded the Royal Academy of Arts in 1768, and he started a new royal collection of books (65,000 of his books were later given to the British Museum) and



opened his library to scholars. During his reign, George III acquired the nickname 'Farmer George', in part due to his agricultural interests and in part as a playful pun.

Whilst George was known for his robust health and love of the outdoors, he was also a workaholic. In the summer of 1788, his tendency to be easily angered increased and developed into a serious illness. He experienced stomach disorders, developed a racing metabolism, and

became delirious. He was incarcerated at Kew Palace, away from the public gaze, where an increasingly desperate group of doctors tried to cure him.

The King survived being administered powerful emetics and laxatives, freezing baths and leeching. He was also put into a straitjacket if he refused

to co-operate. He recovered by 1789, but suffered recurrences in 1801 and 1804, before suffering a severe decline in 1810. His eldest son, George, reigned in his absence, eventually becoming Prince Regent in 1811, and King George eventually died at Windsor Castle in 1820.

QUEEN CHARLOTTE (1744-1818)

Queen Charlotte was wife to King George III. The first 25 years of the King and Queen's marriage were happy ones. They would attend plays and concerts together and duet on the harpsichord and flute. When not at court, their lives were rural and informal in their homes at Windsor and in Kew.

Together they had 15 children and the Queen was responsible for their early education, employing and supervising their governesses and tutors. Charlotte was among the most scientifically-minded of British queens. She surrounded herself with serious thinkers such as the botanists Joseph Banks, Daniel Solander and John Lightfoot, and the geologist, Jean Andre de Luc. She was also part of a wide network of intellectually-minded women known as 'Blue-stockings'.



Charlotte became very frustrated by the seemingly incompetent royal doctors who were trying to "cure" her husband, but for her own safety, she had no choice but to lead an increasingly separate life from the King. In 1789, Charlotte's hair had turned white under the stress of the King's illness.

By 1818, Charlotte's own health had deteriorated so badly that she was confined to Kew Palace. She suffered from dropsy, which causes painful swelling and eventual organ failure. She required round-the-clock attendance by her physician, but at other times she recovered for a short time. The end came in November, when Charlotte died in a black armchair, surrounded by her

DR FRANCIS WILLIS; PHYSICIAN (1718-1807)

When King George III fell ill in 1788, his royal doctors and physicians called his condition 'madness'. Modern doctors still argue over King George's medical notes and theories range from the rare disease, porphyria (notably named after the dark colour of a patient's urine) to bipolar disorder. Thought of as a leader in mental health treatment at the time, Dr Francis Willis was called in to help "cure" the King after his royal doctors could not. It was under his strict, and often at times cruel regime that the King was isolated at Kew Palace and restrained in a straitjacket if he refused to co-operate.

daughters Augusta and Mary, the Prince Regent and the Duke of York. Charlotte's state coffin lay in the dining room at Kew under a canopy, lit by six candles in large silver candlesticks, before being taken to Windsor Castle. Windsor's cobbled courtyards were covered with straw to prevent the gravely ill King hearing the sound of his beloved wife's funeral procession.

When the King recovered in 1789, Dr Willis was so pleased with the results of his treatment that he had his own medal commissioned. He also received financial rewards from the King of £1,500 a year. When the King relapsed again in 1801 and 1804, before suffering a severe decline in 1810, it was Dr Willis' sons who were called in to act as physicians.

FREDERICK LOUIS, PRINCE OF WALES (1707-51)

Frederick Louis was the eldest son of George II and Queen Caroline, and father of the future George III. He was brought up in Hanover in Germany until the age of 21. Frederick was loathed by his parents, and his younger sisters and brothers, who were born in England. The feeling was mutual. Frederick suspected his parents were making plans to give the throne to their second, more favoured son, William Augustus.

The strained relationship came to a head in 1737, when Frederick's wife, Princess Augusta, went into labour in the middle of the night at Hampton Court Palace. The whole family had gathered to witness the birth, but to spite his parents, Frederick bundled the queen into a carriage to drive the 16 bumpy miles to London. His reasoning was that St James's Palace was the 'traditional' birthplace of English monarchs.



Frederick spent much of his time in the White House, which was situated just in front of Kew Palace. This was a glamorous mansion and in the 1730s, he employed William Kent to enlarge and improve it. It would have been a spectacular place – an entire floor was devoted to scientific instruments.

PRINCESS AUGUSTA OF SAXE-GOTHE, PRINCESS OF WALES (1719-72)

Princess Augusta was 17 when she married Frederick, Prince of Wales. But it was only after her husband died that Augusta acquired the independence to pursue her own interests.

Augusta built upon Frederick's collection of exotic plants at Kew, and began the Physic and Exotic Garden in about 1759. Exotic plants and trees were sent to Augusta from abroad and by 1768, the herbaceous collection had over 2,700 species. The legacy of Augusta's plant collection is kept in a special area of Kew Gardens and planted out in strict Linnaean order and each plant labelled.



SIR WILLIAM CHAMBERS; ARCHITECT (1723-1796)

Sir William Chambers was commissioned by Princess Augusta to design the ten-storey Great Pagoda. Inspired by his travels and studies of the architecture of East Asia, the Pagoda was completed in 1762, and provided one of the first bird's-eye views of London.

In Georgian times, there was actually a trio of buildings in Kew Gardens designed by Chambers - the Great Pagoda, the Alhambra, and the Mosque. Unlike its namesake, the Alhambra (completed in 1758) was relatively small and consisted of a

single room covered by an intricate, multicoloured porch. It was destroyed in 1820 and is now a sunken garden. The Mosque (completed in 1761) featured two minarets and contained stucco palm trees, with leaves of straw and ribbon. The fate of the mosque is not fully known, but by 1785 it was gone. Today, the mound the mosque once stood on is occupied by the Japanese Gateway - a four-fifths replica of a temple structure in Kyoto, created in 1910 for the Japanese-British Exhibition.

KING GEORGE II (1683-1760) & QUEEN CAROLINE (1683-1737)

George II was the last British monarch to lead his troops into battle. Out of uniform, however, he was dull and self-important, and quick to anger. On occasion, he would tear off his wig and kick it around the room! At heart, the King was probably deeply insecure. While still a young boy growing up in Hanover, his mother Sophia was locked away for committing adultery and he never saw her again.

As a man, George found refuge in an obsession with facts and figures. The King would spend long hours describing obscure details of military uniforms and battles to long-suffering courtiers. According to one account, George II even had his underwear numbered according to days of the week!

By contrast, his wife Queen Caroline was amongst the most accomplished and intellectual women in Europe. Queen Caroline was entranced by the latest scientific experiments, including Sir Isaac Newton's experiments with refraction, which filled the palaces with rainbows. She also had a cabinet of curiosities containing 'unicorn horns' (which were in fact, the tusks of the artic narwhal).



THE CHILDREN OF KING GEORGE III AND QUEEN CHARLOTTE

Over the course of their marriage, King George III and Queen Charlotte had 15 children:

- George, Prince of Wales
- Prince Frederick, Duke of York and Albany
- Prince William, Duke of Clarence
- Charlotte, Princess Royal
- Prince Edward, Duke of Kent
- Princess Augusta Sophia
- Princess Elizabeth
- Prince Ernest, Duke of Cumberland
- Prince Augustus Frederick, Duke of Sussex
- Prince Adolphus, Duke of Cambridge
- Princess Mary, Duchess of Gloucester
- Princess Sophia
- Prince Octavius (died in childhood),
- Prince Alfred (died in childhood), and
- Princess Amelia

The King couldn't bear to see three of his beloved daughters married off to foreign princes, so he installed Princess Elizabeth, Princess Augusta, and Princess Amelia at Kew Palace. As their marriage chances waned, the princesses languished in miserable, if comfortable, isolation at what they called 'The Nunnery'.

PRINCESS ELIZABETH (1770-1840)

The third daughter of the King and Queen, Princess Elizabeth had a keen interest in interior design and followed contemporary fashions throughout her life. The interiors of the prominent architect, John Soane, inspired Elizabeth's decoration of Queen Charlotte's Cottage in 1805. During Elizabeth's lifetime, six books were published featuring her engravings and designs.

In a letter to her eldest brother, Elizabeth described Kew Palace with sarcasm as 'this beautiful chateau', so although the furnishings were certainly elegant, the house as a royal residence was not up to the usual royal standards.

As a young woman, Elizabeth expressed a desire to marry and to be free of the constant company of her mother. However, this did not happen until April 1818 when, at the age of 48,



she married Prince Frederick of Hesse-Homburg. Following her marriage, she moved to Germany with her husband and utilised her substantial allowance to improve the palace and gardens of her new home, Bad Homburg Castle.

PRINCESS AUGUSTA SOPHIA (1738-1820)

Princess Augusta Sophia was the King and Queen's second daughter and according to Fanny Burney, (later Madame D'Arblay), Second Keeper of the Robes to Queen Charlotte, Augusta had "a gaiety, a charm about her, that is quite resistless; and much of true, genuine, and very original humour" and that she conversed "with that intelligent animation which marks her character".

For much of her adult life, Augusta was in love with General Brent Spencer but her mother's control of her daughters' private and public lives made any prospect of marriage remote. The Princess never married but she outlived six of her brothers and three of her sisters and she became a favourite aunt of her niece, Queen Victoria.



PRINCESS AMELIA (1783-1810)

Amelia was the fifteenth and last child (and sixth daughter) of King George III. She was probably the King's favourite child, a role perhaps reinforced by her continual ill health which seems to have been tubercular in origin. Like her sister Augusta, she fell in love with a man she was never to marry, Captain Charles

Fitzroy. In hope, perhaps, rather than expectation, she ordered silver and jewellery engraved with their initials intertwined. Her death in 1810 at the age of 27 was a particularly heavy blow to the King who vowed to wear the ring she gave him on her deathbed for the rest of his life.

EXPLORE KEW PALACE, ROOM BY ROOM

There is a one-way route in place to enable a smooth and cohesive visit through the palace. Backpacks or rucksacks should be worn to the front of the body to avoid accidental contact with the historic collection.

THE GROUND FLOOR



THE LIBRARY ANTE-ROOM

The bust of the King is a copy of the original life cast made by Madame Tussaud in 1809. She provided notes on skin colour and texture to provide as good a likeness as possible. George designed and wears the Windsor uniform here, with original buttons. The bust stands at the height of the King, allowing visitors to come face to face with royalty. The linen-fold panelling in this room is 16th century and was placed here at a later date. It is possibly from an earlier house on this site.

THE KING'S LIBRARY

When George III was confined to Kew during his period of mental ill health in 1804, this room became his library and was lined with glass-fronted bookcases, as well as his favourite pictures. George III was an avid reader and collector of books and had libraries in each of his palaces. This room formed part of George's ground floor apartments, which included a now demolished extension.



THE PAGE'S WAITING ROOM

This room was the kitchen at the time of building. During the Georgian period, it was divided into a number of smaller compartments and corridors which connected to a serving wing to the west. The corner cupboard contained a piece

of paper listing the service bells, which would summon servants to wait upon the royal family. On display today are figures representing George III and his large family at the ages they would have been in 1784.

THE KING'S DINING ROOM

The main dining room of the palace is presented and furnished as it looked from 1804 to 1805 when George III was at Kew being treated for mental and physical ill health.

History Where it Happened

In April 1801, George III suffered from a second episode of mental and physical ill health and was taken to Kew Palace. The King became very insistent that he leave Kew and go riding. Dr Francis Willis tricked him into staying by bringing him into this room and pretending to enquire about the portrait of Van Dyck, placed above the fireplace. The King soon realised that he was being tricked and shouted at the Doctor, "Sir, I will never forgive you whilst I live". He jumped from his chair and attempted to flee the room, but the doctor's men blocked the door. Eventually, the King agreed to be treated on the promise that his family would remain nearby.



After her death in November 1818, Queen Charlotte lay in state in this room. The hook in the ceiling supported the black-draped canopy over her coffin. Members of the royal household were admitted by ticket to file past. On the morning of 02 December 1818, an honorary guard escorted the hearse to Windsor, where the Queen was laid to rest.

THE KING'S BREAKFAST ROOM

This small room was originally George III's schoolroom, before it was turned into an informal dining room where he often ate breakfast. His normal breakfast, even when well, was very small and consisted of unsweetened tea and dry toast. Despite the frugal meals eaten here, it was a very smartly decorated room. It was furnished with Grecian style chairs upholstered in red leather, mahogany tables and a bright carpet.

THE FIRST FLOOR



THE QUEEN'S BOUDOIR

This was a private drawing room used by the Queen and her daughters. Here, the Queen and her daughters would have passed many hours sewing, spinning, drawing, painting, and working on their embroideries. As they worked, servants would read aloud in French and English, and on Sundays, the Queen read sermons in German. They also liked to play cards.

The room is now presented as it would have appeared in the early 1800s. On the ceiling, the five senses are depicted through different figures- touch, hearing, sight, smell, and taste. The green wallpaper is hand-made and edged with a black Greek key pattern border, based on recently discovered surviving fragments. The striking black and yellow curtains have been specially woven using a contemporary pattern. The carpet has been similarly made.

THE DRAWING ROOM

This is the largest room in the palace. In the 17th century, it was used as the principal room for entertaining. Queen Charlotte used it as a drawing room for the formal reception of guests, who might have been greeted with tea or music recitals.

History Where it Happened

George III and Queen Charlotte had fifteen children. However, by 1817, it was apparent that their dynasty would not survive after the next generation unless one of their children produced a legitimate child. Their eldest son, Prince George, had a daughter, Princess Charlotte, but in 1817 she died in childbirth. This put pressure on George and Charlotte's younger sons to produce an heir.

Both William, Duke of Clarence and Edward, Duke of Kent, were forced to leave their unsuitable mistresses, and on 11 July 1818, they married appropriate German princesses in a double wedding here in this very room, so that the poorly Queen Charlotte could be present. William was paired with Adelaide of Saxe-Meiningen and Edward with Victoria of Saxe-Coburg-Saalfeld. An altar was set up, and afterwards, the Queen retired to her bedroom while the wedding party enjoyed a sumptuous meal in the dining room before travelling to Queen Charlotte's Cottage for tea.

Prince Edward's marriage was short-lived; he died in 1820. However, it resulted in the birth of a daughter, who in 1837, became Queen Victoria.



PRINCESS ELIZABETH'S DRESSING ROOM

In order to maintain privacy for the princesses, a small anteroom was used to create a buffer between the public corridor and the private bedroom. This anteroom also served as Princess Elizabeth's dressing room, where she would have dressed and prepared herself. In 1804, "a handsome mahogany dressing table neatly cross banded in satinwood, rising glass, scent bottles and tins for powder" was purchased for Princess Elizabeth's use in this room.

PRINCESS ELIZABETH'S BEDCHAMBER

Royal household accounts from the early 1800s provide a clear picture of the decoration and furnishing of Princess Elizabeth's bedroom. The room was decorated to the height of modern elegance, including a flamboyant Grecian couch bed. The walls were lined to create arched recesses in the style of the architect John Soane, and hung with green wallpaper. Traces of the original wallpaper can still be seen in the room today.

On three of the walls, you can see a recreation of how the room would have appeared when Princess Elizabeth lived here in 1804. The fourth wall was uncovered during conservation work in 2006, and reveals a former servant's door in the corner and coarse plaster made from animal hair. It is left uncovered to show the history of building and to create a contrast between modern recreation and original material.

History Where it Happened

By 1801, George III and Charlotte led almost separate lives and were only seen together for public events. The King's illness put a massive strain on their relationship. His emotional behaviour towards the Queen could be at once incredibly angry and dismissive or overly demanding. Elizabeth would often act as a 'go-between' for the estranged couple by passing on their messages and advocating on both sides to the various servants, politicians and doctors who gathered at Kew during the King's illnesses. In effect, she became mistress of the household. It was probably for this reason that Princess Elizabeth took the biggest and most centrally located set of rooms in the palace in 1804.



THE QUEEN'S BEDCHAMBER

This is Queen Charlotte's bedroom, which she used whenever she visited Kew. It is decorated as it would have been in the early 1800s, when much of the palace was renovated for the extended royal occupation on account of George III's illness. It was in this room that Charlotte spent much of the last few months of her life.



Unlike her daughters, Queen Charlotte had simple tastes when it came to the decoration of her apartment at Kew. She decorated her rooms with portraits of her family, religious pictures, and simple furniture. Therefore, in contrast to Princess Elizabeth's fashionable Grecian couch bed, Queen Charlotte's bed has been re-created in the plainer style and covered with a plain coloured, cotton cloth.

History Where it Happened

In 1818, Queen Charlotte's health began to deteriorate rapidly. On 22 June 1818, newspapers reported that the Queen had "gone to Kew for a few days". In fact, she was to stay here for the rest of her life. She spent most of her time in her bedroom and was taken to the boudoir for her meals. Charlotte's eldest son, George, the Prince Regent, visited his mother every day and sent her a reclining chair to provide her with some comfort during her illness.

Charlotte died seated in her bedroom just after 1pm on 17 November 1818. After her mother's death, Princess Mary said "we had the consolation of seeing her expire without a pang and a sweet smile on her face".

QUEEN CHARLOTTE'S ANTEROOM

When Kew Palace was in use by the royal family, anyone wishing to enter Queen Charlotte's bedroom would have been required to wait in this anteroom first. The observance of etiquette was of the highest importance to the royal family; bedrooms were never entered directly from a public corridor. Today, the room has been left in its stripped-back state to show the architectural history of the palace.

THE SECOND FLOOR



This floor explores the last days of Kew Palace after the death of Queen Charlotte. It retains the decoration, including the paint finishes, of the 1800s and contained the bedrooms for two of the princesses.

The expensive and elegant room furnishings at Kew could not disguise the fact that it was the smallest of the royal residences and did not always meet the standards expected of royalty. The politician and diarist Horace Walpole joked that the bedrooms of the princesses at Kew Palace were so small that they were forced to hang their dresses on the backs of their bedroom doors. Clearly, this was not the case, but it indicates the prevailing opinion of the family's relatively humble way of living.

PRINCESS AUGUSTA'S BEDROOM

Princess Augusta's bedroom has its own anteroom, much like the bedrooms on the first floor. Here you can see a fitted cabinet and a second small space separated by a sash window - this arrangement was known as the outer and inner 'light closet'. This small room may have been occupied by a personal assistant, and traces of earlier decoration can still be seen, including floral wallpaper and pink paint on the joinery.

PRINCESS AMELIA'S BEDROOM

Amelia's bedroom still bears the evidence of the bed-arch from the early 1800s when the gothic fireplace (likely to have come from the demolished Richmond Palace), was placed here, at her request. Her anteroom has a small room containing her water closet, a late Georgian flushing toilet, which was the latest technology in its day.

OTHER HISTORIC ROYAL PALACES BUILDINGS TO EXPLORE IN ROYAL BOTANIC GARDENS KEW

As well as caring for Kew Palace, Historic Royal Palaces also look after three other buildings within the grounds of Kew Gardens. These are open to the public at selected times throughout the year:

THE GREAT PAGODA

The Great Pagoda was designed by Sir William Chambers, for Princess Augusta, mother of King George III. It was completed in 1762 and was inspired by Chambers' visit to Canton in China. The Great Pagoda stands at 50 meters tall and boasts spectacular panoramic views across London. The building has been maintained sporadically, but we know that its appearance has been altered over time. The dragon decorations were removed, probably due to decay, when the original iron-slatted roof was altered in the 1780s. Over time, the Pagoda has gradually changed colour from the original delicate green and white tones to a more uniform red, as prevailing tastes changed. Now fully restored, it has returned to its original green and white colour scheme and all 80 dragons have been replaced.

The Great Pagoda is open daily from the start of April through to the end of September. An additional ticket is required. There is no lift in the pagoda. To see the views from the top, visitors must make the challenging climb of 253 steps.





THE ROYAL KITCHENS

200 years after it was last used, the Georgian Royal Kitchen next door to Kew Palace remains miraculously preserved. Today, you will see a little kitchen garden to the rear, with neat vegetable beds laid out between gravel paths, and fruit trees climbing the walls. Back in its heyday however, the real kitchen gardens were enormous and stood alongside the Kew Road.

Inside, you'll see the four preparation rooms where the bread was baked, the fish and meat stored, vegetables washed, and the lead-lined sink where the scullery boys would spend hours scouring pots and pans with sand and soap.

The Royal Kitchens are open on most days during the summer season (April to September) dependent on volunteer and staffing levels. Guided tours of the kitchen are free of charge and run regularly throughout the day when the kitchens are open.

QUEEN CHARLOTTE'S COTTAGE

Queen Charlotte's Cottage was built in 1772 under Charlotte's instructions as a 'rustic retreat' and reflects her personal tastes and interests. The Queen and the rest of the family could enjoy private picnics or take tea during long summer walks through the gardens. The building is a very early example of 'cottage orné', or picturesque cottage, a style which became popular in the late 18th/early 19th century for garden and estate buildings.

The cottage overlooked a menagerie, which must have delighted the growing numbers of royal children. It was first home to pheasants and other exotic birds, but by 1792 also contained some of the first kangaroos to arrive in Britain. By 1805 however, the menagerie closed and the area was replanted.

Queen Charlotte's Cottage is open at weekends and on bank holidays during the summer season (April – September), dependent on volunteer and staffing levels.

OTHER ROYAL BOTANIC GARDENS KEW BUILDINGS TO EXPLORE

THE ICE HOUSE

The Georgian Ice House was built to store ice throughout the year. Ice would be cut in blocks from frozen bodies of water, including the River Thames, and carried down into the underground vault. Ice from the Ice House would be carried to the Royal Kitchens and packed into barrels for a wide variety of uses, including to store fish, but also to make ice cream for the Royal Family and their guests.

It is possible to visit the Ice House, close to the Princess of Wales Conservatory. Access to the interior may be restricted at certain times of year.

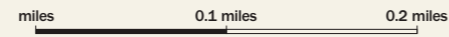
THE ORANGERY

The Orangery at Kew Gardens was the first of several buildings designed for the gardens and the largest in a classical style. Measuring a grand 28 x 10 metres (92 x 33ft), it was commissioned by one of the founders, Princess Augusta, and built-in 1761 by Sir William Chambers.

It was originally designed to overwinter exotic fruits, however, due to its sheer scale and the large portions of brickwork, it was never truly fit for purpose. In 1841, the resident citrus trees were temporarily moved to the Orangery at Kensington Palace whilst the building was renovated by Sir William Hooker. The improvements included giant glazed doors at either end, allowing more natural light to fill the space. The building could then be successfully used for plants that were too large for the other glasshouses.

The Orangery is now a restaurant and tea-room serving visitors to Kew Gardens. Open throughout the year during standard garden opening hours.

SCALE



Average walking times from Victoria gate:

- Palm House: 5 min
- The Hive: 10 mins
- Children's Garden: 15 mins
- Temperate House: 10 min
- Lake crossing: 10 to 15 mins
- Woodland walk: 25 mins
- Great Pagoda: 20 mins

Symbols

- Toilets
- Accessible toilets
- Baby change
- Baby feeding room
- Changing Places toilet
- Restaurant
- Café
- Shop
- Water
- Accessible entry
- Information
- Bus stop
- Sensory Spot
- Quiet Spot

Paths

- Fully accessible
- Lawn paths
- Steep path not suitable for wheelchairs, the chevrons point downhill



Richmond Station 1 km

Kew Bridge Station 0.8 km across Kew Bridge
 Kew Pier for river bus services 0.5 km

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING AT KEW PALACE

2020 marked the bicentenary of the death of King George III. The profound stories of George's treatments and the effects his health must have had on his family serve as a reminder of how modern attitudes and treatments for mental health continue to change and develop.

By talking about George's mental health journey, we hope to reduce the stigma associated with mental ill health and encourage visitors to practice self-care whilst on their visit, using the five ways to wellbeing.

1 | CONNECT

With the people around you, with family, friends, colleagues or neighbours, either at home or in your local community. Think of these connections as the cornerstones of your life and invest time in developing them. Building these connections will support and enrich you every day. This can be done in person, via social media or by phone.

Ask one of our hosts a question or start a conversation within the group about an object or room that interests you.



2 | BE ACTIVE

Go for a walk or jog. Step outside or cycle if possible. Play a game that gets you moving. Do some gardening. Dance. Exercise makes us feel good. Maybe join an online fitness group or simply stand up and do some basic stretches. Most importantly, try a physical activity that you enjoy and that suits your level of mobility and fitness.

Walk to one of the other historic buildings in Kew Gardens or even climb the Great Pagoda.

3 | TAKE NOTICE

Be curious. Catch sight of the beautiful. Remark on the unusual. Notice the changing seasons. Savour the moment, whether you are walking, eating lunch, or talking to friends. Be aware of the world around you, the sounds, smells, and textures. Reflecting on your experiences will help you appreciate what matters to you. Maybe try out a mindfulness app.

Take time to study a painting or admire the decoration of one of the rooms, listen to the music around the palace, or find a beautiful place to rest in the Queen's Garden.

4 | KEEP LEARNING

Try something new or rediscover an old interest. Sign up for that course. Take on a different responsibility. Fix a bike. Learn to play an instrument or how to cook your favourite food. Set yourself a challenge you will enjoy achieving. Learning new things makes us feel more confident as well as being fun, it can also be a really helpful distraction.

Choose one fact from your visit to share with a friend or read a book inspired by your visit to Kew Palace...

5 | GIVE

Do something nice for a friend, or a stranger. Thank someone. Smile. Volunteer your time. Join an online group. Look out, as well as in. Seeing yourself being linked to the wider community can be incredibly rewarding and creates connections with the people around you. Maybe phone someone and try to really listen to them.

Speak to one of our staff about volunteering with Historic Royal Palaces at Kew.

CONTACT INFORMATION

For more information about HRP's Community Access Scheme, please contact communities@hrp.org.uk

Website:
<https://www.hrp.org.uk/about-us/communities/#gs.q1pqbxb>

