

RHS Garden Wisley RHS and Clive Nichols

RHS Garden Wisley has secured support for a £4.8m grant, thanks to National Lottery players.

The ‘home of horticulture’ will restore an historic laboratory, secure the future of its incredible specimen archive and create new space and learning opportunities for visitors of all ages.

Digging up the past

A specimen collected by Charles Darwin on the *Beagle* and a piece of lavender dating back to 1731 are just two of more than 100,000 plant and insect specimens in RHS Wisley’s nationally and historically important collection.

Many of these treasures are now set to be cleaned, restored and put on display for the very first time. Virtual visitors will be able to access the collection as records of some of the plants and insects will be shared digitally.

The garden’s historic laboratory will also be brought back into the heart of Wisley’s story. Dating back more than two centuries, the building houses old botanical labs, the original lecture theatre and a Herbarium. The project will restore these features and open up part of the building as an art gallery and museum space.

[quote=Stuart McLeod, Head of HLF South East] “Wisley is such an important site in the history of plants and gardens – a superb setting for some rare and fascinating plant specimens." [/quote]

Sowing the seeds for the future

The project will revive Wisley's original purpose as a learning garden.

A new Centre for Horticultural Science and Learning, complete with atrium and events space, will be built to house collections and share learning with visitors and researchers.

Three new 'Future Gardens', exploring themes of Gardens as Nature Reserves, Health and Wellbeing and a World Kitchen Garden, will be created next to the Centre.

Stuart McLeod, Head of HLF South East, said: "Wisley is such an important site in the history of plants and gardens – a superb setting for some rare and fascinating plant specimens along with thousands of books, artefacts and photographs. This project will help build on the traditions of the place to reach out and attract new visitors and ensure people come here to learn about and enjoy horticulture for many years to come."

RHS Garden Wisley has been awarded £212,000 to develop project plans and will apply for a full grant of £4.8million at a later date.

Find out more about the garden on the RHS website.



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