

View of the terrestial sphere at Shakespeare's New Place Shakespeare Birthplace Trust

Today marks the formal opening of Shakespeare’s New Place, a re-imagination of Shakespeare’s family home in Stratford where he lived for 19 years, and where he died 400 years ago.

Thanks to National Lottery players this has been one of the biggest and most enduring projects anywhere in the world to mark the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare’s death in 2016.

A splendid new oak and bronze gateway frames the original threshold of Shakespeare’s New Place, inviting visitors to walk in the playwright’s footsteps, explore a dramatic new landscape and exhibition, and meet the man behind the famous works.

The £6million capital project has been supported by HLF, Historic England, and the Wolfson Foundation, and through public donations raised through a host of initiatives spearheaded by the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust.

Dr Diana Owen, Chief Executive Officer of the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust said, “Working with an outstanding community of artists, designers and craftspeople we have created together an extraordinary place of inspiration for everyone to enjoy.

"The re-opening of Shakespeare’s New Place means we can now tell the complete story of Shakespeare’s life from boyhood to father, husband, businessman and playwright and of his enduring ability to inspire artists today. New Place is a stunning and innovative addition to the precious landscape of our beautiful historic town.”

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Sue Beardsmore, Chair of the HLF Committee for the West Midlands, said: “In this anniversary year, 400 years on, Shakespeare appears more vividly in our hearts and imaginations than ever before. This exciting project at New Place, which ‘re-imagines’ his life and last home, ensures we can keep on telling Shakespeare’s stories to visitors and future generations, and we are delighted to have been able to support it, thanks to National Lottery players.”

## A family home

Shakespeare was 32 when he bought New Place in 1597, and it remained his family home until his death there in 1616. It was the largest house in the borough, a prestigious residence with 10 fireplaces, up to 20 rooms, and extensive gardens. Sadly, the last house to occupy the plot was demolished by the infamous Reverend Francis Gastrell in 1759, and the largest surviving part of Shakespeare’s estate has been preserved as a garden ever since.

Today, visitors can trace the footprint of Shakespeare’s lost house, discovered during the archaeological excavation of the site, outlined in engraved bronze inlaid in the spectacular stone paving.

The whole site is now fully accessible for the first time. Ingenious architecture, landscaping and planning ensure that the gardens as well as the exhibition are wheelchair friendly, and in total sympathy with the Grade I listing of the site, making it a 'New Place' for everyone to connect with Shakespeare.



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The timbered 15th-century Guildhall at King Edward VI School



William Shakespeare, 1564 - 1616



William Shakespeare

## A journey through Shakespeare’s Stratford-upon-Avon