How has National Lottery funding helped the



As Fulham Palace reopens following a major restoration, we find out what has been happening in the Tudor gardens.

“I absolutely believe that having public access to natural areas, gardens and open spaces is so good for wellbeing.”

Standing in Fulham Palace’s beautiful walled garden, Head Gardener Lucy Hart’s words couldn’t ring truer.

A group of volunteers is hard at work in the vineries and flowerbeds, toddlers are exploring the wildflower meadow which is buzzing with bees, and an excited group of children dressed as Tudors are on their way to tend their own vegetable patch.

Accessible and free

A National Lottery funded project has just finished here. It reinstated a path, part of the original Tudor design, to make the garden fully accessible all year round for the first time.

> “It’s things like this funding that enable us to stay open for free, seven days a week, for all.”

There are certainly plenty of reasons to visit. Beautiful plants, Tudor gateways and plenty of tours and activities to join. The volunteer-run Fulham Palace Wagon sells plants to the public as well as honey from its own beehives, which is so popular it sells out nearly straight away.

Rare plants

A key part of the project was building Fulham Palace's collection of rare plants.



Lucy explains: "There's been a garden here since the 1500s. Bishop Compton used his clergymen, who were overseas, to send rare plant species back, including from North America, the Mediterranean, India and Jamaica."

Many examples of those plants are now flourishing in specially created flowerbeds just outside the walled garden.

This horticultural history and the wider history of the Bishops that called it home is brought to life in a new museum inside Fulham Palace, also funded by the National Lottery.

Thank you National Lottery players

In fact, £9million of money raised by National Lottery players has been invested in Fulham Palace and the surrounding Bishop's Park.

The Tudor courtyard, complete with fountain, has also just reopened following painstaking restoration.

“I hope National Lottery players understand what their ticket has enabled us to do, it’s given us the biggest boost we’ve had to date and it’s put Fulham Palace on the map.

“They might not have won, but they have certainly helped this wonderful heritage site!”