

# Painting a picture of artistic genius in Suffolk

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Study session at Gainsborough's House Gainsborough's House

Who's your favourite Old Master painter? Thomas Gainsborough, the 18th-century artist famed for his portraits of Britain's 'great and good', is a perennial popular choice.

His paintings have international resonance, but have you ever wondered about his birthplace and where he took his inspiration from?

## Legacy building

With a grant of £4.5million from The National Lottery, [Gainsborough's House](#) visitors will be able to understand much better the legacy of this much-loved painter. A five-year project is helping transform it into a national centre celebrating the life of Gainsborough.

## Meteoric rise

Gainsborough, the son of a clothier, began his life in the rural market town of Sudbury. His Grade I listed childhood home is on course to become a national centre, telling the story of his meteoric rise from merchant's son to high society portraitist and founding member of the Royal Academy.

[quote=Nicole Farhi, Sculptor]"Gainsborough's House is a perfect National Lottery project."[/quote]

Sculptor and fashion designer Nicole Farhi is a long-term supporter of Gainsborough House and welcomed news of this support: "Gainsborough's House is a perfect National Lottery project. Not only will it help disseminate the work of a great British artist, its ambition will bring both people and prosperity to Sudbury, the town of his birth."

## Thriving silk industry

Gainsborough lived at his family home in Sudbury from his birth in 1727 until he was a teenager. The market town and Gainsborough family were intrinsically linked to the wool and silk industry; Sudbury is one of the UK's biggest exporters of silk goods and Gainsborough House backs onto Vanners Silk Weavers, producers of silk since 1740.

## Boosting the region's economy

The revamped museum will contribute around £5.4m to the local economy through an increase in visitors and the creation of 90 jobs - 60 temporary and nine permanent.

HLF's Chief Executive Ros Kerslake commented on this important impact: "Once completed, The National Centre for Gainsborough will be a landmark tourist attraction, bringing a significant amount of income into Sudbury and beyond."

Gainsborough's House already has a reputation for working with the wider community. There will be a community gallery and free visiting opportunities for National Lottery players.



The new centre will tell the story of Gainsborough's meteoric rise from merchant's son to high society portraitist Gainsborough's House

## **Gainsborough's genius to be celebrated**