



Paxton House Trust

Paxton House, near Berwick-upon Tweed, is a Grade A listed historic country house and estate which was gifted to the nation in 1988. The Paxton Trust, a registered charity, manages the property, combining objectives of preservation, access, education and social welfare. The preservation aspect of the work should not be under-estimated: the Trust is responsible for a range of national assets, including the house itself, a historic waterwheel, the gardens and notable collections of furniture and costume. The House provides work for 8 people (5 of them full-time), as well as 15 seasonal workers and contractors.

Local engagement with a nationally important historic site

Paxton House benefits the local community in a number of ways. It is a popular place to volunteer, with interesting opportunities to work in the garden, at the historic waterwheel, taking boat-trips and in the archives. Volunteering is an important social event for many. The Trust has also hosted a community payback team to help build a stairway down to a historic waterwheel: community payback is when unpaid offenders work on projects that benefit local communities.

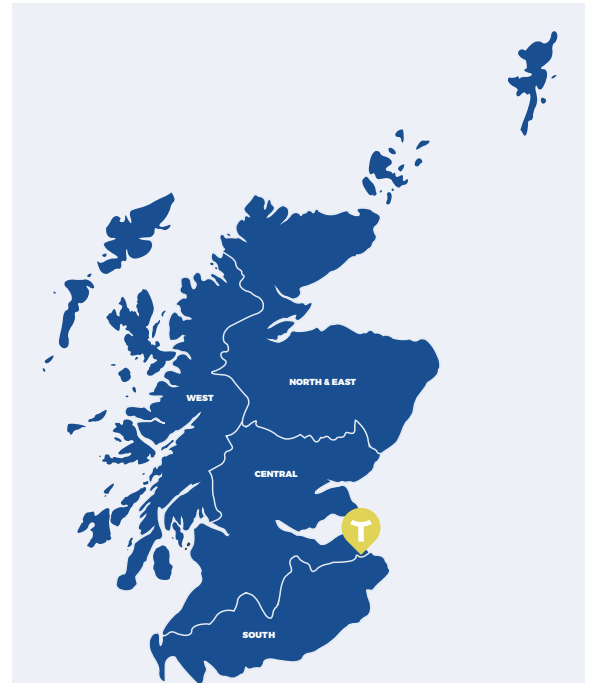
The Trust has an active education programme. With its gardens, grounds and historic house, and its location at the Scottish-English border, Paxton is able to offer visits that are relevant to a number of subjects in both the Scottish and English curricula. A costume exhibition addresses the House's links with slavery and organised for local school pupils to meet with Caribbean descendants of slaves.

A variety of trails, activity sessions and fun days are organised for children of all ages during school holidays. Activities help families to engage with history, nature and outdoor activities, including bug-hunting and tree-climbing. These activities are run on a non-profit basis (charging only for consumables) and are provided free when funding permits.

The Trust has a number of partnerships with local groups. A collaboration with Union Chain Bridge benefits both organisations: Paxton House has a Lego model of the bridge and runs bridge-making events. Plans are being developed to work with ReTweed, a nearby award-winning social enterprise, which offers women a new way to think about their futures by gaining the skills to work in creative industries, whilst producing original furnishings and fashion. With its costume collection and historic furnishings, Paxton House offers an inspiring adult learning venue.

“Places like Paxton offer so many educational opportunities for all ages. We offer everything from pond dipping to Victorian Experience Days. We have indoor and outdoor venues and can relate our house and grounds to many different subjects including history, art, nature, engineering and textiles.”

Helen Deane-Hall, Education Officer, Paxton House



Location: Paxton, Scottish Borders

Type: Do, buy, eat, enjoy & stay

When Set Up: 1992, 30th anniversary June 4, 2022

How Funded: South of Scotland Enterprise, Museums Galleries Scotland, Museums Association, National Lottery Heritage Fund, Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, Visit Scotland, Art Fund, The Leche Trust, Fallago Environment Fund. Initial capital funding from National Heritage Memorial Fund.

Beneficiaries: A nationally important historic asset preserved; visitors; volunteers, local schools, community groups and individuals who can access services provided by the Trust

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