

THE GARDEN

AT MISERDEN

We are delighted to welcome you to Miserden and we hope you enjoy your visit to the Gardens. We have provided an overview below of some of the fascinating history of the village, Estate and gardens. If this piques your interest, then do let us know as we can also offer bespoke tours for the garden (and occasionally the house) – perfect for the garden and history aficionado's amongst you.

Misarden Park was bought in 1913 by Frederick Noel Hamilton Wills and the current owner Nicholas Wills moved in during September 2016. Today the whole of Miserden village, except for the Carpenter's Arms and village school, is owned by the Estate which comprises 3000 acres in total.

The village is served by a biomass system installed May 2016 and this heats the whole village via wood chip. Fired from chip sourced exclusively from the Estate, it provides heating and hot water to over 40 buildings. A programme of tree planting began in the late 1940's after being depleted by the contribution of timber to the war effort and the proactive woodland management has continued ever since. Today there is over 750 acres of woodland on the Estate.

Once heralded as having the worst internet speed for any British village, Miserden has since entered the 21st Century with the installation of fibre optic broadband and a mobile mast in 2016. This has greatly helped with enabling a thriving community of commercial businesses to operate in and around the village. You also might notice there are no telephone poles in the village, all the lines were buried in 1965 in an aid to keep the village looking tidy!

The garden, designed in the 17th Century has spectacular views over the Deer Park, and extends to 12.5 Acres, (5 hectares), is 222 metres above sea level. This adds a particular challenge to the growing conditions.

The gardens are now tended by only 1 full time gardener with part time help a few days a week, rather than 10 gardeners we had in the 1930's. The gardens are always evolving and the long-mixed borders which are 92 metres long and 5 metres wide, are amongst the largest in the country privately owned. Replanting and new soil was undertaken a few years ago, and the planting is split into different colourways to now give colour throughout the whole summer.

The house and gardens were originally designed 1620, with influences by Italian and French designs, commissioned by Sir William Sandys. Original stone was used from the 12th century motte and bailey castle located just above Miserden lake.

In 1919 a serious fire broke out in the east wing causing extensive damage. Sir Edwin Lutyens was appointed as architect to re build this and to incorporate the Loggia. The triple arched shape is almost a replica of the Loggia at Villa Medici in Fiesole, constructed in 1453. This is overhung with the most wonderful specimen of wisteria and magnolia soulangeana.

Lutyens was also attributed to the yew topiary and grass steps on levels of the lawn, with blue campanula like a waterfall between the lawn levels. At the foot of the main lawn there is a fine mulberry tree believed to date from the early 1600's, when King James I attempted to start a silk industry. Poorly advised, most of those planted were of the incorrect variety to yield silk, including that at Miserden, but it is still the oldest item in the garden, probably planted when the original house was built in 1620.

The yew hedges were planted in 1925 and are clipped annually at the end of August. We currently have a 5-year replanting scheme where the hedges are being cut back to straighten and being replanted. To the left is the fruit cage and espaliers of pears, apples, fig and white peaches.

Close to the fruit cages are the dalila beds, planted in a captivating spiral to provide cut flowers for the Estate and a late bloom late in the gardening season. Below this is the parterre of hebes, lavender, alliums and tulips bringing Spring colour to the gardens.

Closer to the manor house are the rill and summerhouse built to commemorate the millennium and creating a calming area at the lower end of the walled garden.

From here you walk down to the scented garden below the main house, setting off the fine lead sculpture from the famous Henry Crowther of the winged Hermes a model of the famous media mercury of 1580 now found in Florence.

Please do take the time to wander and enjoy the gardens. Those looking for refreshments can enjoy teas, coffees and a delicious assortments of light bites at the Garden cafe trailer located at the entrance to the garden.