

The Auckland Project

Saturday 21st September 2024

The Auckland Project – Auckland Gardens

The Auckland Project, Bishop Auckland, County Durham, DL14 7PG

Time: Meet for 10am outside the clock tower (Main castle entrance, at the end of the Market Place)

What3Words: ///body.strut.remit

The Auckland Project is a regeneration charity working to establish Bishop Auckland as a must-visit cultural destination. Their attractions bring the rich and surprising story of Bishop Auckland to life for our visitors and the local community through the arts, culture and heritage. Part of this project has included the restoration of the gardens surrounding Auckland Castle including the historic Walled Garden. Our guided tour will be led by Andy Nesbitt Head Curator of Parks, Gardens and Landscapes.

Built in the 17th Century as part of Bishop Cosin's grand vision for Auckland Palace and its grounds, the Walled Garden provided food for the lavish feasts hosted by the Prince Bishops of Durham. Exotic fruit such as pineapples and grapes were grown here, with a glasshouse range developed in 1757 by Bishop Trevor to house a pinery and vinery. The Prince Bishops yielded extraordinary power and wealth during this time, and the horticultural knowledge of their gardeners must have been remarkable. The two gardens were amalgamated in the late 18th Century to create the garden you see today.

In recent times, the team of gardeners have used their skills and talent to restore the Walled Garden, which reopened to the public in May 2024. The lower, upper and western Walled Gardens have been designed and reimagined by landscape architect Pip Morrison, and remain true to their historic purpose, growing fruit, vegetables and flowers. The striking and contemporary ridge and furrow glasshouse on the upper terrace has been designed by Mawson/Kerr. This glasshouse is a working space for the Auckland Palace estate, as well as being open to the public. The fresh produce grown in the Walled Garden is served in our cafés and restaurants and shared with local community groups. More information about The Auckland Project is available at aucklandproject.org

Lunch + Branch Annual Meeting

The visit will be followed by lunch and the Branch Annual Meeting, where members are invited to review the branch activities over the past year, contribute to planning future events and elect the branch committee. Many hands make light work, and we would welcome more volunteers to join the committee.

Cost: Members £10, Guests £15, cash on the day please or by prior bank transfer.

RSVP: Jason Daff via email: northern@horticulture.org.uk

All members, guests and students are welcome to join this visit, please get in touch if you are interested in arranging car sharing opportunities.

Parking is available in North Bondgate Carpark using the postcode DL14 7PG, Charges apply (£3.50 for a stay of over 2 hours). A 5 minute walk to the clocktower.