



PRESS RELEASE

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£6 MILLION RAISED TO SECURE THE FUTURE OF GREAT DIXTER - BUT £2 MILLION STILL URGENTLY NEEDED

Today, the £8 million plan to safeguard the essential spirit and legacy created by Christopher Lloyd at Great Dixter, internationally famed for its house and inspirational garden, received a major boost when the Heritage Lottery Fund confirmed its £3.79 million award. Gifts from major donors and the Friends of Great Dixter have brought the total raised so far to £6 million.

Fergus Garrett said: "We are incredibly grateful to the HLF and all our supporters, in particular the Monument Trust for a £500,000 grant and the Friends of Great Dixter who have raised another £450,000. This funding has provided the critical momentum to secure the remaining £2million of our fundraising needs."

Great Dixter, set in 57 acres of rural East Sussex, is the achievement of five brilliant individuals – the great early 20th century architect Sir Edwin Lutyens, his clients Nathaniel and Daisy Lloyd and their son Christopher Lloyd, OBE, one of the most influential gardeners of recent times, and Fergus Garrett, now the head gardener, a pre-eminent plantsman to whom Christopher was a mentor and muse.



For more than 40 years Great Dixter has been a place of pilgrimage and a training ground for gardeners from around the world. It sets trends in new planting that promote, create and maintain exceptional standards of horticulture. The full £8million will allow the Great Dixter Charitable Trust, led by Fergus Garrett, to secure the future of Great Dixter, without compromising any of its essential character.

£1.8million will be spent on renovating Dixter Farm, designed and built by Nathaniel Lloyd. These redundant farm buildings will be converted into long term student accommodation as planned four years ago by Christopher Lloyd and Fergus Garrett. Space in the barns will also be provided for a learning room, offices and storage.



£750,000 will be spent on repairing the north face of Great Dixter House, which is still regularly used for short term student accommodation. The Great Hall is one of the largest surviving medieval timber-framed halls in the country.

£400,000 will be spent on repairs to the historic and architecturally inspiring Great Barn; a Grade II* listed, largely medieval, timber framed barn and three 19th century brick built Oast Houses. For the first time, visitors will be able to view the kilns, drying floor and hop press from the newly restored mezzanine floor. The original external staircase will also be reinstated to give a view of the inside of the oast houses. The rest of the building will remain a



working barn, where the Dixter team will continue to practise traditional skills, such as stripping and splitting chestnut and hurdle making.



£500,000 will be spent on a curatorial project to catalogue and conserve Great Dixter's range of 17th and 18th century furniture, textiles and ceramics, acquired by Nathaniel and Daisy Lloyd in the early 20th century, as well as Christopher Lloyd's collection



of contemporary furniture by Rupert Williamson and ceramics by Alan Caiger Smith. Extensive family papers and photographs give an insight into life at Dixter including a large archive of plans and correspondence between Nathaniel and Lutyens about the extension of the house in 1910. When combined with holdings on Great Dixter at the British Architectural Library, these provide one of the most complete records of a Lutyens house in existence.

For the latter part of his life, the late Christopher Lloyd shared ownership of the Dixter estate with his niece. When he died in 2006, he left his share to the Great Dixter Charitable Trust. Now the Trust is in a position to consolidate and enlarge the estate by acquiring the niece's share and purchasing Dixter Farm. When this has happened, work will begin on the four year conservation programme, subject to funding.

To reinforce the holistic management and environmental sustainability of the house and estate, new technologies for heat and power will be incorporated sympathetically into the plan. Traditional management of the ancient woodlands and surrounding grasslands for biodiversity and productivity will continue.

Dame Jenny Abramsky, Chair of the Heritage Lottery Fund, said:

“As spring approaches and the daffodils come out, I cannot think of a nicer place to spend time than Great Dixter. The Heritage Lottery Fund's support is helping secure the future of this beautiful garden as well as telling the story of Christopher Lloyd and his contribution to inspiring novice and professional gardeners across the world.”

Fergus Garrett, Head Gardener and Chief Executive of the Great
Dixter Charitable Trust said:

“This is terrific news for the international gardening community and the heritage of this country. This money will go to strengthen Great Dixter, not change it. All its extraordinary qualities will remain intact as we go into the future, under the guardianship of the Great Dixter Charitable Trust. I want to thank the Heritage Lottery Fund and all our Friends and donors for recognising the value and the importance of this magical place.”

Work is expected to start in November 2009. A Lutyens seminar is proposed for 2010. Donations to Great Dixter can be made by visiting the website www.greatdixter.co.uk or contacting Great Dixter on 01797 254048.

Ends

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NOTES TO EDITORS

Great Dixter house and gardens are open from 1 April to 25 October 2009, Tuesday-Sunday and Bank Holiday Mondays. Gardens 11.00am to 5.00pm (last admission). House 2.00pm to 5.00pm. Admission with Gift Aid (standard charges in brackets): house and garden: adult £8.80, (£8.00) child £3.85 (3.50). Gardens only: adult £7.15 (£6.50), child £3.30 (£3.00). Children under five are admitted free of charge. Great Dixter, Northiam, Rye, East Sussex is situated half a mile north of Northiam on the A28. Further information www.greatdixter.co.uk or 01797252878

Christopher Lloyd formed the Great Dixter Charitable Trust in 2004, to receive his estate and to carry on managing it in the same spirit of innovation. Following Christopher's death in 2006, Fergus's Garrett became Chief Executive of the Trust.

Using money raised through the National Lottery, the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) sustains and transforms a wide range of heritage for present and future generations to take part in, learn from and enjoy. From museums, parks and historic places to archaeology, natural environment and cultural traditions, we invest in every part of our diverse heritage. HLF has supported more than 28,800 projects, allocating over £4.3billion across the UK. Website: www.hlf.org.uk. For more information, please contact Katie Owen, HLF Press Office on tel: 020 7591 6036 or mob: 07973 613820.