

# Gainsborough's House

## Appointment of Director

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Saxton Bampfylde

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# An introduction from Professor Simon Ofield-Kerr, Chair of Trustees



Thank you for your interest in becoming the next Director of Gainsborough's House.

The recent transformation of the museum provides an incredible opportunity to identify and lead on delivering a vision for the next ambitious phase, establishing Gainsborough's House as an international centre for the presentation and study of Thomas Gainsborough and an unmissable destination in Suffolk, playing an integral role in the development of Sudbury.

As the newly appointed Chair of Trustees, I am committed to supporting an exciting vision and strategy that builds on the significant achievements of the previous Director, Mark Bills. A vision that brings together the strengths of a regional location and the opportunity to be an international centre of research and curatorial excellence.

As Vice Chancellor of Norwich University of the Arts, I have a commitment to East Anglia's creative sector and the role it plays in enhancing the economy, the opportunities and the daily life of local people. As a former trustee at Turner Contemporary in Margate, I know the difference a cultural institution can make to a town and have an absolute commitment to open and engaged governance that will support the success of the new Director.

Professor Simon Ofield-Kerr  
*Chair of Trustees*



# About Gainsborough's House

## The National Centre for Thomas Gainsborough

Thomas Gainsborough (1727-88) was born in Sudbury and was baptised at the Independent Meeting-House in Friars Street on 14 May 1727, the fifth son and ninth child of John and Mary Gainsborough. In 1958, Gainsborough's House Society was formed to purchase the house and establish it as a centre for Thomas Gainsborough. The Museum opened to the public in 1961 and has remained open ever since, operating as an independent charitable trust.

In 2019, the House commenced a transformational refurbishment, supported by The National Lottery Heritage Fund and led by the acclaimed architectural firm ZMMA, with £10m invested into the site. For the first time in its history, the House closed its doors for 3 years to welcome this upgrade. The vision was to build upon the rich history of Gainsborough's House while also making the museum experience more accessible, exciting for visitors and to truly celebrate Gainsborough along with his followers and contemporaries. The museum aims to bring light to other Suffolk based artists like John Constable and Cedric Morris who greatly admired the works of Thomas Gainsborough.

The House re-opened to the public in November 2022 following this

transformational redevelopment to create a national centre for Thomas Gainsborough, and the largest gallery in Suffolk.

The opening displays present the world's most comprehensive collection of Gainsborough, telling the full story of the artist's life and work, as well as showcasing the widespread influence he had on his contemporaries, and succeeding generations.

For the first time, Gainsborough's House will now host major exhibitions in the new building's Timothy & Mary Clode Gallery and in the Sudbury Gallery.

The £10 million transformational redevelopment comprises a new three-storey building, designed in locally made brick and flint, housing a new entrance and four innovative galleries. On the third floor, the new Landscape Studio provides a flexible space for learning and events, featuring a Camera Obscura and spectacular views across the Suffolk landscape captured by Gainsborough in his painting.

The scheme has also included careful restoration of the Grade I listed late medieval, Georgian and Regency townhouse, complemented by a rich

palette of colours throughout the atmospheric galleries, and study centre. The reorganisation of the existing Weavers Lane Cottages has opened up access to the historical print workshop, the largest of its kind in Suffolk for established and emerging printmakers, offering traditional skills in printmaking to a new generation. The print workshop is a critical component of the transformation of Gainsborough's House, creating an opportunity for printmakers to show and sell their

work in seasonal exhibitions in the Sudbury Gallery. In addition, the open glass-faced Watering Place café and terrace create a tranquil environment overlooking the walled garden with its new serpentine 'crinkle-crankle' boundary wall, at the centre of which is a 400-year-old mulberry tree.

You can [read more about Gainsborough's House here](#) and [view financial statements and annual reports here](#).



## Mission Statement

To promote the wider knowledge, appreciation and enjoyment of the art of Thomas Gainsborough within the context of the eighteenth century and the inspiration of the Suffolk landscape and to preserve and enhance Gainsborough's House and its collections for the benefit of present and future generations.

## Vision Statement

Gainsborough's House, the childhood home of Thomas Gainsborough is a national centre for the exploration of Gainsborough's art, the development of the English landscape and the art of printmaking. With Thomas Gainsborough as its inspiration it seeks to bring to life the art and ideals of Thomas Gainsborough to inspire a new generation of visitors.

Workshop



*"A complete joy."*

Museums Journal, April 2023

*"An astonishing achievement."*

Burlington Magazine, November 2022





# The role

After over a decade as Director, Mark Bills stepped down in August 2023, having initiated and delivered the capital project, *Reviving an Artist's Birthplace: A National Centre for Gainsborough*. Since August, there has been an interim Director in place and the Board of Trustees now seeks candidates for the role of Director.

Having reopened in November 2022 to huge critical acclaim and public interest, and appointing a new Chair earlier this year – Professor Simon Ofield-Kerr – Gainsborough's House is at the cusp of an extremely exciting new chapter of its history, and the new Director will play a key part in this.

The Director will work with the Chair of Trustees, the Board and a range of stakeholders to identify and deliver the next phase of Gainsborough's House ambitious development, with day-to-day responsibility for the museum's operational management through the leadership of its staff and body of committed volunteers.

## **Main responsibilities**

### **Strategic Leadership and Management**

- To develop a clear vision and a well-articulated strategy for Gainsborough's House, encompassing all areas of the House's work, defining and articulating its core aims and mission, setting and achieving key objectives;
- Lead the organisation, working effectively the Chair and Board of Trustees and advisory boards, observing good governance practice;
- Lead the staff team, ensuring a cohesive working culture and strategic alignment and provide thoughtful and inspiring leadership to staff and volunteers;
- Lead the museum's fundraising effort, working with the Board of Trustees to nurture existing relationships and cultivate new sources of support, to ensure its future ambitions and sustainability are realised;
- Promote a collaborative and supportive working environment in which talent can develop and thrive;
- Promote and embody a commitment to equity, diversity, inclusion and access;
- Be the lead ambassador and advocate for Gainsborough's House and nurture key stakeholder relationships, including the community of artists and key donors;
- Secure the museum's long-term sustainability by setting medium to long term financial goals;
- Working closely with the team, promote an entrepreneurial approach to

income generation;

- Champion high ethical standards across the organisation, protecting the museum's reputation and mitigating risk.

### Programme and Collections

- To lead the artistic vision for Gainsborough's House and create a vibrant programme of exhibitions, displays of the permanent collection, touring and partnership projects;
- To lead a programme of public engagement aimed at raising the profile, developing audiences at Gainsborough's House, and increasing public accessibility to its collections through events, learning and engagement, the site and audience development;
- To direct the care, maintenance, security, development and management of the Gainsborough's House collections;
- To lead on identifying and making appropriate acquisitions for the collection and identify, cultivate and secure appropriate gifts and bequests to recommend to Gainsborough's House Trust;
- To maintain high standards with a view to sustaining visitor numbers achieved in the opening year and enhancing the visitor experience.

### Financial and Fundraising

- To lead business planning to ensure the sustainability of a dynamic institution;
- To lead the fundraising for Gainsborough's House for the revenue and project budgets, to develop a fundraising strategy, and work with existing and new funders from public funds, trustees and foundations and individual donors. Identify and steward key patrons, supporters, sponsors, donors and broaden the base of donors and supporters;
- To work with trustees in developing fundraising opportunities for Gainsborough's House and ensure that existing relationships are maintained.





# Person specification

The ideal candidate will be a dynamic and inspirational leader and will bring all or most of the following attributes;

- A strong track record of senior leadership, preferably gained in the arts and culture sector, although the candidate need not have previously led an organisation;
- The ability to think strategically, with sound business planning skills and experience of defining, setting and delivering on strategy;
- A demonstrable commitment and track record of fundraising through donor development, engagement with trusts and foundations, and the making of multi partner grant applications;
- Knowledge and credibility in relation to the research into and presentation of the life and work of Thomas Gainsborough, other artists of the period and his influence;
- A collegiate and inclusive leadership style with the ability to motivate and inspire staff at all levels;
- A demonstrable commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion;
- Communication skills effective with a diverse range of audiences, fluency in writing and speaking, and an ability to engage stakeholders internally and externally, maintaining and growing patrons and supporters;
- The ability to represent Gainsborough's House nationally and internationally at the highest level and inspire within the museum world and beyond;
- The ability to be an external advocate and to maintain and build good relationships with existing and new stakeholders and supporters;
- The foresight to have a sense of what is coming in the sector and an ability to navigate the complexities of the national museum world.





# Terms of appointment

The role is based at Gainsborough's House in Sudbury.

Salary: £75,000 - £85,000 with some possible flex for outstanding candidates.

Annual leave: 30 days.

Pension: Aegon UK Pension Scheme; Gainsborough's House contributes 8%.

# How to apply

Saxton Bampfylde Ltd is acting as an employment agency advisor to Gainsborough's House on this appointment.

Candidates should apply for this role through our website at [www.saxbam.com/appointments](http://www.saxbam.com/appointments) using code **EGAIB**.

Click on the 'apply' button and follow the instructions to upload a CV and cover letter and complete the online equal opportunities monitoring\* form.

The closing date for applications is noon on **Monday 20<sup>th</sup> November 2023**.

*\* The equal opportunities monitoring online form will not be shared with anyone involved in assessing your application. Please complete as part of the application process.*

## GDPR personal data notice

According to GDPR guidelines, we are only able to process your Sensitive Personal Data (racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, trade union membership, genetic data, biometric data, health, sex life, or sexual orientation) with your express consent. You will be asked to complete a consent form when you apply and please do not include any Sensitive Personal Data within your CV (although this can be included in your covering letter if you wish to do so), remembering also not to include contact details for referees without their prior agreement.



# Gainsborough's House

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[gainsborough.org](http://gainsborough.org)



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