

Self-led teaching resources for Primary Schools

Introduction to the Kitchen Garden Chiswick House & Gardens Trust

What this Guide covers

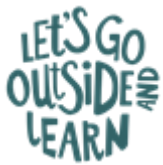
- Introduction to self-led teaching resources
- What is a Kitchen Garden?
- A brief history of Kitchen Gardens
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- Sketch Map of Kitchen Garden
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Introduction to self-led teaching resources for primary schools

These teaching resources are inspired by and written to be used in the historic Kitchen Garden at Chiswick House and Gardens Trust. They provide ideas for **self-led** curriculum-based activities, linked to **Art, History, Geography and Science**. Themes explored through these curriculum subjects also include **food growing, healthy eating and wellbeing**.

The lesson plans have been designed for **Key Stages 1** (lower and upper) and **Key Stage 2**. They should be used as guidelines which can be adapted depending on the cohort of students. The resources aim to:

- Introduce children to the Kitchen Garden and give confidence to teachers to use the space.
- Explore and enrich opportunities for outdoor learning in a historic setting.
- Easily adapted to include any curriculum topic.
- Easily adapted to the season and what is growing in the Chiswick House Kitchen Garden.
- Include extension activities in-school after the visit.



These resources have been developed in partnership with experienced outdoor learning practitioners **Lets Go Outside & Learn**

Made possible with kind funding from **The National Lottery Heritage Fund** and **The Linbury Trust**



What is a Kitchen Garden?

Kitchen Gardens are also known as vegetable gardens or a potager. They have a functional design to allow easy access to a supply of fresh fruit, vegetables and cut flowers:

- Ideally southwest facing and close to the house;
- Planting divided into sections for crop rotation;
- Hard-wearing gravel paths between the beds;
- Surrounded by brick walls or hedges to keep out animals, retain the sun's warmth and protect from frosts and wind; and
- With a high south-facing wall to maximise captured heat and shelter. It was usually against this wall that glasshouses were sited and soft fruit was planted (such as apricots, nectarines, peaches, grapes) that require sun to ripen.

There are several other working Kitchen Gardens that can be visited locally.

- Ham House Kitchen Garden (c.1671-2)
- Hampton Court (1689)
- Kew Palace, Kew Gardens (1631)
- Marble Hill House and Garden (1720s-40s)
- Osterley Park (Tudor walled garden)
- Walpole Park (c1740s)
- Fulham Palace (Tudor walled garden)

A brief history of Kitchen Gardens

The Kitchen Garden was crucial to the **ancient Romans** as fruits and vegetables were an important part of their diet. Cato, Pliny, and Columella discuss the siting, planting, and cultivation of the Kitchen Garden, listing in detail the plants to be raised. Kitchen Gardens were meant to support the family not only for their own sustenance but also for profit. At Pompeii and Fishbourne in Sussex there is archaeological evidence for Kitchen Gardens as far back as the first century. The garden is systematically laid out in rectangular plots separated by paths approximately 2.5 meters wide, which served as irrigation channels.

Medieval monks cultivated Kitchen Gardens that included medicinal herbs as well as food crops.

Georgian houses kept Kitchen Gardens separate from the rest of the residential ornamental garden with specimen plants and trees as well as lawn areas. It was used for growing edible plants and trees and shrubs and medicinal plants for use in the kitchen. The produce was for domestic use, though some seasonal surpluses were given away or sold.

In **Victorian England** Kitchen Gardens for well-to-do households would often feature cold frames and even glass houses. These would allow the cultivation of a much wider range of produce including figs, grapes, and nectarines, and even allow plants to be grown outside their usual season. The ability to serve guests with summer dishes in the winter was an impressive social talking point in an era before the electric refrigeration and food imports.

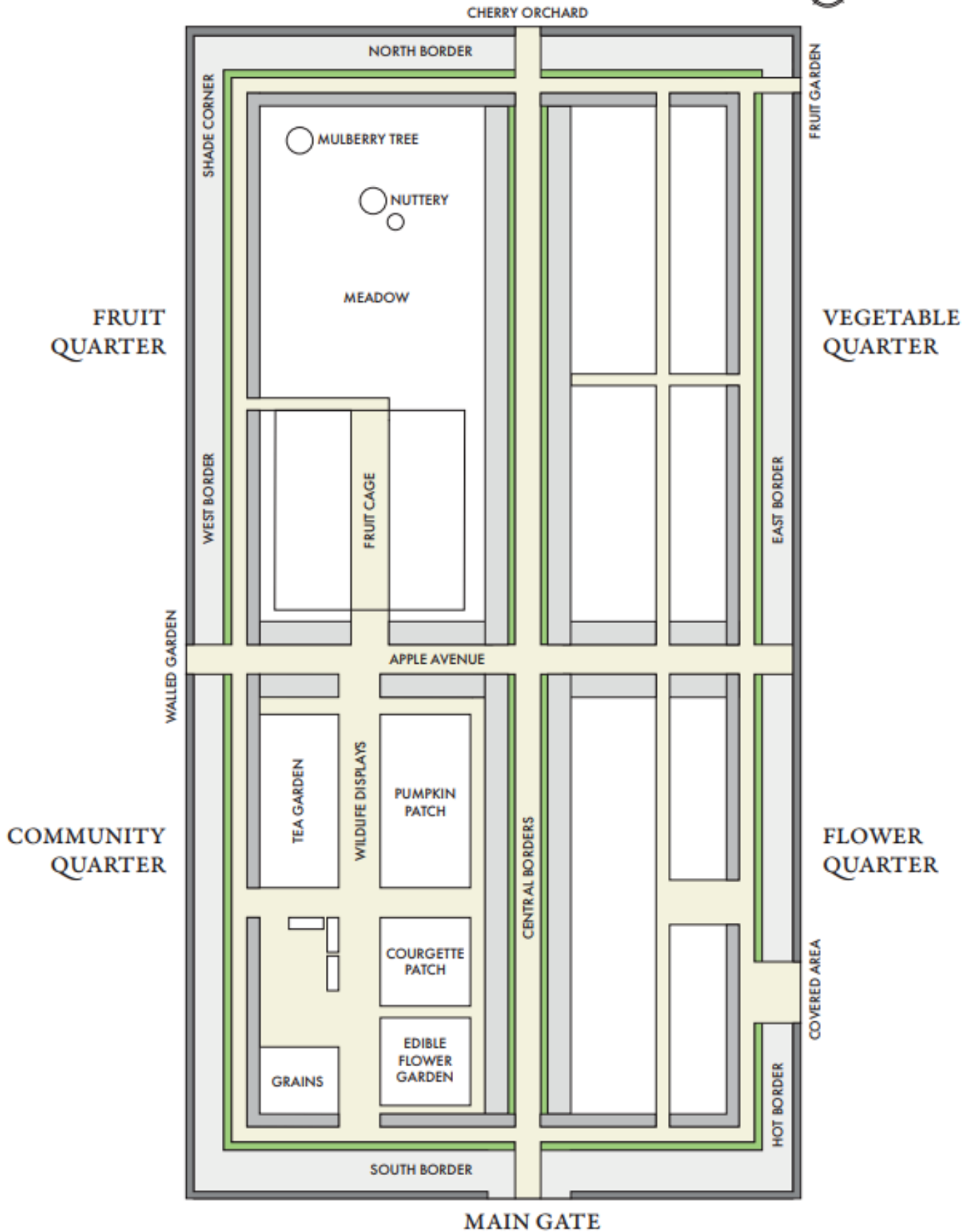
Chiswick House Kitchen Garden timeline

Date	What happened
1682	<p>The Walled Garden was originally built for Sir Stephen Fox to service his new house – Moreton Hall. The same year Lord Burlington bought Chiswick House and moved in next door and they both used many of the same craftsmen. The gardens were designed as pleasure gardens with grass and borders with clipped evergreens, such as holly and yew, shaped into rounds and standards.</p> <p>There were two 'walking gardens' behind Fox's house. The first is now the site of our Italian Garden and Conservatory. His 'second garden' is now the Kitchen Garden.</p>
1733	<p>Visitors were proudly shown pineapples grown there by the Head Gardener, Lewis Kennedy. Apart from the pineapples, there was 'a vast stock of Tulips, Hyacinths, Anemonies & Ranunculuses' and a Bignonia or Trumpet Tree.</p> <p>Keeping walled gardens and growing exotic fruits were often a status symbol for the wealthy.</p>
Late 17th /early 18 th century	<p>A black mulberry was planted in the Kitchen Garden.</p>
1812	<p>The 6th Duke of Devonshire purchased Moreton Hall and demolished the house, incorporating its walled gardens into the grounds of Chiswick House.</p> <p>What remains of Fox's first garden behind the conservatory was used as a working area, 'back of house', for growing plants and for doing other household tasks, like drying washing. The central path was retained, leading to the pair of very fine brick gate piers and elaborate wrought iron gates into the Kitchen Garden we see today.</p>
1929	<p>The Duke of Devonshire sold the estate to Middlesex County Council. Over the next two decades the condition of the house deteriorated badly, until in 1948 it was handed over to the Ministry of Works.</p>
1960s-1980s	<p>London Borough of Hounslow used the Kitchen Garden as a nursery ground for plants and sapling trees and it became overgrown and neglected.</p>
2005	<p>The walled gardens were cleared and regenerated, creating a community Kitchen Garden for teaching local residents, schools and community groups about growing food.</p>
2010	<p>Funding by the National Lottery Heritage Fund supported the conversion of the old stables in the Kitchen Garden into a Learning Centre and covered area providing additional covered and wet weather spaces.</p>
2010-to now	<p>Today, Chiswick House & Gardens Trust continue to run the Kitchen Garden which is tended by three gardeners and many dedicated volunteers. It is the location for our community programme, 'Growing Together at Chiswick House', generously supported by funding from the Linbury Trust.</p>



CHISWICK HOUSE
& GARDENS TRUST

The Kitchen Garden



A guide to the layout and planting in the Kitchen Garden

The Kitchen Garden is divided into four distinct areas. We grow over 200 fruit trees, a range of currant and berries, and many varieties of vegetables and flowers. The produce is sold on site, supplied to local partners or donated. Everything growing in the Kitchen Garden is labelled, so you do not need to worry about recognising the plants. Staff and volunteers onsite are always happy to help with identifying the plants.

Community Quarter and Tea Garden

This quarter has been developed with the help of our community groups. It has a sunken feature planted with edible flowers that offer food for both humans and pollinators. There is also a bed planted with grains used in bread-making and a tea garden where you can pick leaves to make your own tea. This area also contains examples of bug and pollinator habitats.

Fruit Quarter and Meadow

This quarter contains our fruit cage that protects our berries and currants, peas and lettuces from birds and other predators. There is a 300 year-old mulberry tree and a beautiful meadow that provides food and habitat for our pollinators. (For information about the history of mulberry trees in London see: <https://www.moruslondinium.org/>)

Vegetable Quarter

This quarter demonstrates traditional rotational vegetable growing (i.e. legumes, roots, fruit, leaf). The annual crops include beans, potatoes, garlic, cabbages selected for their robustness and to reflect the history of productive gardening. This is the most intensive part of the garden and provides opportunities for learning about growing and harvesting food.

Cut Flower Quarter

This quarter is dedicated to growing seasonal cut flowers. We have chosen flowers that are pollinator-friendly and drought resistant and we are growing increasing numbers of perennial plants for sustainability.

Borders

Several areas border the quarters and are an important part of the garden and its activities. There are historic apple and pear stepovers, there are four mixed and cut flowers foliage borders, a rhubarb border and the central access borders lined with fruit trees.