

Gainsborough's House Society

# Appointment of Trustees 2024



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## Professor Simon Ofield-Kerr Chair of the Board

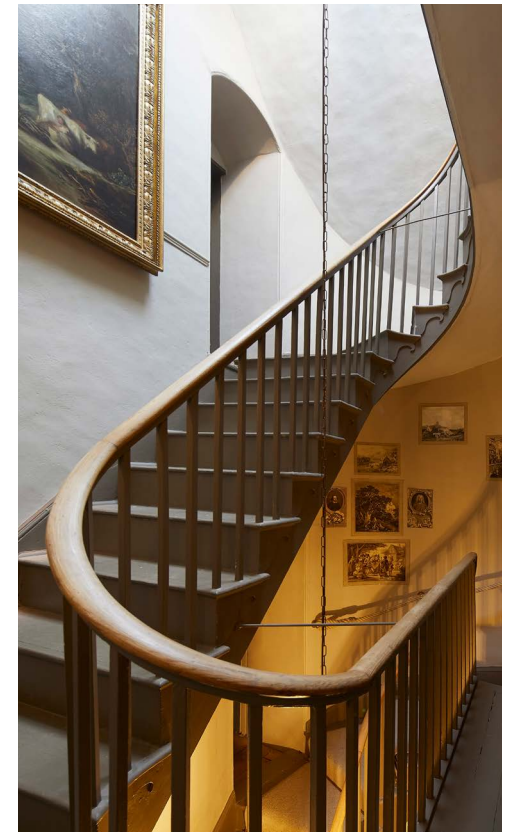
The physical transformation of Gainsborough's House has fundamentally changed this historic site, enabling it to become an international centre for Thomas Gainsborough and a cultural hub in the heart of East Anglia, all within the unique environment of the artist's birthplace and home. In addition, it is a significant venue for both historical and contemporary exhibition programming.

Gainsborough's House re-opened in 2022 following *Reviving An Artist's Birthplace*, an ambitious project to transform Gainsborough's House, Sudbury, into an international centre for Thomas Gainsborough (1727–88) in the unique setting of the artist's birthplace and childhood home. The new centre has opened up access to the most extensive collection of work by Thomas Gainsborough anywhere in the world, telling the story of his rise from merchant's son to celebrated portraitist and landscape painter, as well as founding member of the Royal Academy of Arts, London.

Today, Gainsborough is an iconic figure in British art and one of the few historic British artists to be celebrated internationally. With additional display space, the museum now highlights Gainsborough's widespread influence on his contemporaries and succeeding generations of artists. Dedicated displays examine in much greater detail the inspiration of the Suffolk landscape not only on Gainsborough but also John Constable and more recent artists such as Cedric Morris. *Reviving An Artist's Birthplace* has created a major step change for Gainsborough's House to become a regional hub for art,

and a landmark tourist attraction driving the regeneration of Sudbury, and showcasing the continued inspiration of Thomas Gainsborough and the Suffolk landscape; a change that will secure the future of this remarkable artist's home for generations to come.

The appointment of new trustees comes at a pivotal moment in our history, following the recent appointment of Calvin Winner as the Executive Director. For the first time, Gainsborough's House is able to present an international exhibitions programme in the new Galleries, making it one of the leading exhibition venues in East Anglia. It also has the opportunity to create a vibrant events programme and to develop its partnerships regionally, nationally and internationally.



## About Gainsborough's House

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 architectural firm ZMMA, with £10m invested into the site. For the first time in its history, the House closed its doors for 3 years. 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 an international 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.

Gainsborough's House will 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 and provides a unique venue for practising artists to explore and enjoy printmaking on site. 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.





## Trustees

Against the exciting backdrop of the newly opened galleries and the accompanying ambitious vision for Gainsborough's House to become an international centre for the artist's work, the board now seek new trustees to guide the Museum's development. The role of Trustees is to:

- Bring external expertise and experience to the Board and work with fellow trustees, the Chair, and the Director to achieve the vision of Gainsborough's House to be recognised as an international centre for Thomas Gainsborough;
- Attend board meetings and to work collegiately and effectively, making a full contribution in the fulfilment of all aspects of the Board's role and responsibilities;
- Ensure the Board maintains high standards of governance and probity and that the organisation acts in accordance with charity regulation and law in this regard;
- Act as an ambassador for Gainsborough's House, raising the profile of the gallery, representing it externally when required and playing a central role in helping the gallery to reach its fundraising targets, and;
- Ensure that the Board protects the mission vision; that the strategic direction and charitable objectives are delivered on and that it retains oversight of the activities of the gallery.



We are particularly interested in attracting applicants with experience in the following areas:

- Fundraising in the arts sector
- Marketing and audience development
- Estates development and placemaking
- Legal advice

**We believe that governance is best delivered by a Board that brings together diverse personal and professional experiences, and will be mindful of equality, diversity and inclusion throughout the appointment process.**

## Person specification

Trustees will bring all or most of the following attributes;

- A commitment to the mission and vision of Gainsborough's House, and an interest in the work of Thomas Gainsborough;
- A commitment to Sudbury, Suffolk and the wider region and the role of the Gainsborough's House in their development;
- A passion for arts, culture and heritage and the conviction that the arts have the power to transform lives and communities;
- A track record of strategic and visionary leadership and independent judgement;
- Sound business, financial and commercial acumen;
- An enterprising and innovative approach and experience of supporting organisational change;
- A demonstrable commitment to equality, diversity, inclusion and widening access;
- The enthusiasm to devote the necessary time and effort to their duties as a Trustee;
- An ability to inspire a wide range of people from diverse backgrounds;
- A co-operative and collaborative approach to team working;
- Non-executive experience in the private, public or charity sector;
- A full understanding of the role of Trustees in relation to the executive in the charity sector;

- A commitment to and experience of developing effective partnerships with keystakeholders such as Arts Council England, National Lottery Heritage Fund, local stakeholders and communities, and partner institutions in the sector, and;
- Strong and effective networking skills with a commitment to using personal networks for the benefit of the gallery.

## Terms of appointment

The role is unremunerated.

Trustees are appointed on a renewable three-year term, with a maximum of three terms, a total of nine years.

There are four Board meetings per year in Sudbury. There are also occasional away days and additional strategy sessions.





## How to apply

Candidates should apply for this role by emailing their CV and a covering letter to Simon Ofield-Kerr, [mail@gainsborough.org](mailto:mail@gainsborough.org)

The covering letter should directly and succinctly reference the role description and person specification, providing a clear indication of your interest in the role and the experience you will bring to the Board.

If invited to be interviewed, you will meet with two members of the Board for 45 minutes for a discussion about your interest in Gainsborough's House, the experience you will bring to the Board, and the contribution you want to make over the next three years.

We will also invite you to complete an online equal opportunities monitoring\* form.

\*The equal opportunities monitoring online form will not be shared with anyone involved in assessing your application. Please complete this form as part of the application process and send to Trudy Pickerin, [mail@gainsborough.org](mailto:mail@gainsborough.org) – you can access the form [here](#).



### *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.org](https://gainsborough.org)

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**Gainsborough's  
House**