



National
Trust

Killerton

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Hello and welcome!

To a family home and a great estate.

A glorious landscape garden surrounded by parkland with fine 18th-century house.

Would you give away your family home for your political beliefs? Sir Richard Acland did just that with his Killerton Estate in the heart of Devon, when he gave it to the Trust in 1944. Today you'll find a friendly Georgian house set in 2 thousand 6 hundred hectares (6 thousand 4 hundred

acres) of working farmland, woods, parkland, cottages and orchards.

There's plenty of calm space in the glorious garden, planted year-round with rhododendrons, magnolias, champion trees and formal lawns. You can explore winding paths, climb an extinct volcano and discover an Iron Age hill fort.

Off the beaten track, you can discover three of Killerton's hidden gems:

- **Nestled by the River Clyst sits Clyston Mill, a working watermill.**
- **In the heart of Broadclyst you'll find Marker's, a medieval house steeped in history**
- **Just a stone's throw away from Killerton House is a 1950's post office with charming cottage garden.**

1 - Stable block

In the Stable block there is a café, second-hand bookshop, gift shop and plant centre. The staff in Visitor Reception will explain what events are

happening today. From here you can borrow the Trumper, get a lift to the house in the buggy and pick up alternative formats of this information. There is an accessible toilet in the Granary, based in the car park.

2 - The House

The house was meant to be a temporary residence but as the plans for the grander manor house took more and more time, the Acland family got used to the plain and simple stopgap.

In 1944, it was Richard Acland, an advocate for the abolition of private property, who gave the Killerton estate to the National Trust in order to pursue his

political agenda. The house first opened to the public in 1978.

Inside the house there are volunteer guides in all of the rooms. The route around the house may change according to conservation activities. Follow the route to visit all the rooms that are open today.

3 - The Entrance Hall

Sir Francis Acland commissioned for this rather informal entrance hall to be designed. There is a stone floor, coat-racks and a large oak table surrounded by comfortable sofas.

This would have been used as a waiting area for any guests and the family would use the space for informal receptions. The Entrance hall was quite badly damaged in a fire in 1924.

4 - Staircase Hall

The staircase was redesigned by Sir Charles and his wife Lady Gertrude in the early 1900s to suit their idea of what an Edwardian country house should look and feel like.

The staircase is lit from above by the impressive alabaster light fitting, designed by architect Randall Wells who also redesigned the Entrance Hall after the fire in 1924.

5 - The Dining room

The Dining Room was originally designed as the 'Great Parlour' in 1778 and reflected neo-classical designs.

In the Victorian times, the Dining Room was used every day. Dinner was often served as late as 10pm and was supposedly a very cold room to sit in and eat.

6 - The Library

The Library was originally designed as the 'Little Parlour' and for a long time was the Drawing room. Sir Charles remodelled the space as the library in the

Edwardian era. All of the books now in the Library are donated and can be read in situ.

7 - The Drawing room

The Drawing room was commissioned in 1900. There are two fireplaces with ornate marble surrounds and the clusters of furniture create a comfortable atmosphere. As with many of the changes at this time, the idea was to make it more suitable for country house entertaining. In this room there is a Broadwood grand piano, a rare 1802 six octave piano.

8 - The Music room

Originally this was the Dining room and now takes its name from the chamber organ, built in 1807. In the 1920s and 1930s the room was used by the family as a relaxed sitting room or playing games. It was also a favourite spot for gossip, political discussions and afternoon tea.

Visitors are welcome to play this piano.

9 - The Study

The study was built in 1900 and was often referred to as the 'bachelor wing' which was a popular feature in large

Victorian country houses. It originally had a billiard table situated in the centre of the room but eventually the room gave over exclusively to business. The far left door takes you out to the visitor toilets and was originally a separate entrance to enable servants, tenants and workmen to consult Sir Charles without entering the main building.

10 - The Laundry

The Laundry is an unusual survival. Many country houses lost their laundries during World War One and never re-opened them due to finding it difficult to recruit and keep domestic staff. However, Killerton's laundry employed

three full time female staff and remained open until 1940. The dirty laundry would be delivered on Mondays and by Friday afternoon the fresh laundry was distributed all over the Killerton Estate and the laundry maids would have the weekend off.

11 - Gardens

Between the 1770s and the 1830s, the garden had its biggest transformation. The talented landscape designer and nurseryman, John Veitch, wanted to create fine views and vistas all over the park and gardens. The garden became interspersed with swooping lawns, curving paths, open spaces, specimen

trees and romantic structures such as an Orangery. Veitch was also responsible for the important plant collection here at Killerton, there are many exotics including first introductions to the UK. The herbaceous border and decorative terrace beds near the house were created much later in the early 1900s.

In the garden there is a small hut, referred to as the Bear's Hut. This hut was originally built as an unusual summerhouse for the family but later was the home of a black bear called Tom, brought back from Canada. Tom eventually was taken to London Zoo.

Behind the Bear's Hut is the Rock Garden. The centrepiece of this garden is a basalt stone column brought back from the Giant's Causeway in the 1800s. Also in the garden is a memorial in the form of a Celtic cross. This was erected in 1873 to commemorate the much loved 10th Baronet, Sir Thomas Dyke Acland. It was commissioned by 40 of his friends who have their names inscribed on the base of the cross.

12 - The Chapel

Until the 1840s the Acland family used the old chapel at Columb John but as this was inconveniently distant in poor

health, Sir Thomas Dyke Acland decided to commission a new chapel at the heart of the Killerton estate. The seats inside are unusual in that they face each other rather than the altar.

Later, when Charles was living at Killerton, he expected everybody to attend chapel every Sunday, including all estate workers. Even into the late 1960s the chapel bell would ring every morning to call the men to work.

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