

Painting a picture of artistic genius in Suffolk

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Study session at Gainsborough's House Gainsborough's House
Who's your favourite Old Master painter? Thomas Gainsborough, the 18th-century artist famed for his portraits of Britain's 'great and good', is a perennial popular choice.

His paintings have international resonance, but have you ever wondered about his birthplace and where he took his inspiration from?

Legacy building

With a grant of £4.5million from The National Lottery, [Gainsborough's House](#) visitors will be able to understand much better the legacy of this much-loved painter. A five-year project is helping transform it into a national centre celebrating the life of Gainsborough.

Meteoric rise

Gainsborough, the son of a clothier, began his life in the rural market town of Sudbury. His Grade I listed childhood home is on course to become a national centre, telling the story of his meteoric rise from merchant's son to high society portraitist and founding member of the Royal Academy.

[quote=Nicole Farhi, Sculptor]"Gainsborough's House is a perfect National Lottery project."[/quote]

Sculptor and fashion designer Nicole Farhi is a long-term supporter of Gainsborough House and welcomed news of this support: "Gainsborough's House is a perfect National Lottery project. Not only will it help disseminate the work of a great British artist, its ambition will bring both people and prosperity to Sudbury, the town of his birth."

Thriving silk industry

Gainsborough lived at his family home in Sudbury from his birth in 1727 until he was a teenager. The market town and Gainsborough family were intrinsically linked to the wool and silk industry; Sudbury is one of the UK's biggest exporters of silk goods and Gainsborough House backs onto Vanners Silk Weavers, producers of silk since 1740.

Boosting the region's economy

The revamped museum will contribute around £5.4m to the local economy through an increase in visitors and the creation of 90 jobs - 60 temporary and nine permanent.

HLF's Chief Executive Ros Kerslake commented on this important impact: "Once completed, The National Centre for Gainsborough will be a landmark tourist attraction, bringing a significant amount of income into Sudbury and beyond."

Gainsborough's House already has a reputation for working with the wider community. There will be a community gallery and free visiting opportunities for National Lottery players.

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The new centre will tell the story of Gainsborough's meteoric rise from merchant's son to high society portraitist

News

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