

Audley End House



Interpretation Plan for The House

(nursery, coal gallery, state rooms)

Draft 1 - February 2013

Draft 2 – April 2013, revised May 2013 after research findings

Final – June 2013

Sarah Tatham, Interpretation Manager



ENGLISH HERITAGE

This interpretation plan deals with the 3rd phase of investment at Audley End and focuses on opening up the Nursery and Coal Gallery on the top floor of the house, as well as presentation and interpretation improvements to the first floor state rooms. The new spaces will open to the public for Easter 2014.

These interpretation works are part of a £1.1 million investment in the maintenance and presentation of the house, which include works to the roof, internal structure and windows.

Project Team description

Project Board Members

Steve Bax (Chair)	Historic Properties Director (East & London)
Anna Eavis	Curatorial Director
Simon Larbey	National Collections Finance Manager
Ian Whittick	Property Maintenance Manager

Main Project Team Members

David Brown	Project Manager
Sarah Tatham	Interpretation Manager
Sarah Lambarth	Senior Collections Conservator
Andrew Hann	Senior Properties Historian & Team Leader
Susan Jenkins	Senior Curator of Collections
Lynsey Coombs	General Manager
Shelley Garland	Properties Curator (maternity leave from June 2013)
Amber Xavier-Rowe	Head of Collections Conservation (maternity leave from Sept 2012)

Other team members

Beate Neumerkel	Design Team Lead Consultant (architect)
Tom Boggis	Curator
Pippa Smith	Education Team Leader
Linda Mellor	Marketing Manager

Feedback incorporated from:

David Thomas (25/4/13 and 21/5/13)
Susan Jenkins (6/3/13)
Tom Boggis (6/3/13 and 30/5/13)
Anna Eavis (4/06/13)

Introduction

Location

Audley End House, its gardens and parkland, lie by Saffron Walden in Essex. The area under English Heritage guardianship is approximately one third of the original extent of the parkland, the remainder of the park remaining in the ownership of the Braybrooke Estate. Despite this divided ownership, the parkland has not been developed and Audley End House retains the historic relationship to its immediate landscape. Similarly, the house is largely furnished with its historic collections, brought to the house by the owning families over the last two hundred years.

Ownership

Audley End was purchased for the nation in 1948 and put into the care of the Ministry of Works. It includes the house and service buildings, about 100 acres of parkland, 12 acres of kitchen gardens. The majority of the paintings remain in private ownership but most of the furniture was purchased from the family in 1971.

Key commercial statistics

AEH is only one of only a handful of country houses in EH's care and forms part of the top 20 properties with the highest visitor numbers. AEH has an annual turnover of £1.1 million. It has the highest visitor numbers for the East of England with 135,000 visitors annually. It is closely followed by Wrest Park (which re-opened in 2011) at around 110,000 visitors annually. The site still runs at a deficit of £266,000 annually and the main commercial imperative is to reduce this deficit.

Recent interpretive works

The plans to re-interpret and re-present the house are the third element of a substantial interpretation strategy developed in 2007.

- The first element to be delivered was the PDP project at the Service Wing (2008 – interpretation budget £358k), followed by:
- the PIP project at the Stable Yard (2010 – interpretation budget £340k). The kitchen gardens also benefitted from new interpretation in the form of a panel scheme delivered in 2010 at a cost of 20k.

Since the improvements in the interpretive provisions of the Stable Yard and Service Wing the visitor numbers have risen significantly to its current all time high. The house, however, has been left largely unaltered in its presentation for at least 20 years. As a result, it offers a rather staid and passive experience and only 45% visitors to the site currently visiting the house, preferring instead the more visitor-friendly experience of the Stable Yard and Service Wing.

Background to the project

Audley End has seen substantial investment in its presentation and interpretation since 2007. After the service wing and stable yard improvements, it was decided to focus on the house, which has been little altered since the major Ministry of Works restoration in the 1970s. Although the site as a whole has increased in popularity of the years, less than half of the visitors to the estate actually visit the house. In particular, family audiences, won over through the last 2 phases of work, are ambivalent about visiting the house.

The initial estate-wide interpretation strategy developed in 2007 (*Audley End House and Gardens – Interpretation Strategy*, led by the former Head of Interpretation Emma Carver) planned a number of interventions inside the house. They included:

- An interpretive hub for the house in the Housekeepers Room
- Enhancement of the historic rooms (Adam suite, 1st floor state rooms) through improved presentation and discreet interpretation (room sheets, lecterns or paddles)
- A 5 year programme of annual temporary exhibitions in the ground floor rooms (GR28-30)

The first 2 phases of investment at AEH (2007 and 2010) have led to significant changes in visitor profiles and audiences (for e.g. there are now 135,000 visitors annually as opposed to 109,000 in 2005; half of all visitors are now members, as opposed to a third in 2005), which has changed many parameters key to the original strategy document. In parallel, the global financial crisis, severe budget cuts to the public sector and massive organisation restructure internal to EH leading to payroll cuts have had a dramatic and lasting effect on project investment. This has led to a change in internal funding policy and project investment appraisals.

When the project team was put together it had been tasked with developing new presentation of the 1st floor state apartments. The team proposed a *Day in the Life* concept, where visitors accompanied the daily routines of the 1840s Braybrooke family through a day in the house, from breakfast to bedtime. A number of ground floor rooms were also earmarked to contain an exhibition on the house through the ages, from its Jacobean to 20th century reinventions.

Although the proposal was popular and well-received during visitor evaluation (September 2012); the investment appraisal failed to identify either a significant increase in visitor numbers or increased spend per head opportunities, which would undermine the success of the investment in commercial terms through little or late payback. As a result, a number of alternative concepts were presented and evaluated. Opening up the previously off-limits nursery and coal gallery was met with the most enthusiasm and provided the most scope for a new, innovative experience and was therefore retained. In addition, funding was made available to

improve the visitor experience through improved interpretation and presentation of a number of rooms in the first floor state rooms.

Proposed interpretive works

In order to increase overall visitors to the site and in particular to the house, a new project has been created focussing on representing the house. This project has been a year in planning (2012-13) and will be delivered in April 2014.

As part of £1.5 million project, £200,500 have been made available for the interpretation. This will be used to

- Present and interpret the **nursery suite** on the second floor. The dates will be 1830-40s, when all eight of the 3rd Lord Braybrooke are born and show a diversity of ages and childcare requirements.
- Present and interpret the **coal gallery** and the technological improvements currently on display. As part of the technology presentation, two panels are planned away from the space: one on bells and communication in the bell lobby (by the Servants Hall) and one by the lamp room (by the Kitchens).
- Improve the presentation and interpretation of the **first floor state rooms** through room sheets, interactive displays (drawing room, saloon, Howard dressing room) and an AV projection in the Howard sitting room telling the story of the preparations for King George's III visit).
- Improvements to aid orientation from the **VIC**: films/virtual tours of the house and a new leaflet.

Summary of aims

Broadly, it will seek to:

- Significantly improve the interpretation and visitor experience of the house.
- Open new and never before seen parts of the house to offer a fuller experience
- Increase overall visitor numbers to the site and specifically to the house without increasing pressures on payroll.
- Encourage families to visit the house.
- Provide an education package that extends beyond the service wing and incorporates the house
- Establish Audley End House as a benchmark for dynamic visitor engagement with the house.

Section 1: Importance and significance of Audley End House and new works.

1.1 General introduction

Audley End is one of the few fully-furnished country house in the English Heritage portfolio of properties, which lies fairly intact in its preserved setting of parkland and service yards.

Audley End has rich history and archaeology from various periods:

- Prehistoric: there was an Early Iron Age hill fort and traces of Roman roads within the old parkland.
- Medieval: Benedictine abbey buildings are underneath the present house. Sir Thomas Audley remodelled the ecclesiastical house into the first secular house after the Dissolution of the Monasteries from 1538.
- Jacobean: Audley's house was demolished and the present Jacobean mansion was built, to palatial scale, from 1605. It was one of the largest, and probably the most expensive, houses of its period. As a result of this over-reaching expenditure, the house left family ownership in 1668 when Charles II purchased it. It remained a crown property until 1701 when it was returned to the family.
- Georgian: The massive outer court and the rear ranges of the house were demolished by 1753. This date marks not only the general form of the present house but also the start date for the refurnishing of the house, the creation of the service buildings and the elements of the designed landscape that survive. This process of addition continued until 1916.
- Second World War: The house was occupied 1942-44 by the Polish section of the Special Operations Executive and elements of the 1940 home front defence lines, some of the best preserved in the area, are still visible today.
- It was purchased by the State in 1948.

1.2 Significance

AEH has been identified in 2001 Conservation Plan as a complex historic site of exceptional significance, in particular through:

- Its complex historical development
- The association of buildings, gardens, landscape and collections
- Its origins as the greatest prodigy house of Jacobean times
- Its place as a foremost example of 18th c landscape design
- Its character as an outstanding example of 19th century Jacobean Revivalism
- The quality and extent of the documentation and research

1.3 The house

The development of the house and its landscape over five centuries bears witness to changes in fashion and the fortunes of its owners. The remains of the Benedictine abbey of Walden lie beneath the house. The significance of the house can be described as follows:

- Its origins as a **prodigy house**: despite partial demolition, AEH remains one of the most impressive monuments of the Jacobean age, still comparable to its nearest contemporary Hatfield and of great importance in the development of English architecture.
- The reconstructed **Robert Adam's 18th century Great Apartment** based on extensive archive material and collections survival.
- A prime example of 19th century **Jacobean revivalism**. 3rd Lord Braybrooke comprehensive recreation of the Jacobean style at Audley End in the 1820s gave Audley End its unique appearance.
- The **survival** of key rooms such as the State Apartments on the 1st floor. Upstairs, in a virtually untouched setting are the nursery suite, the family and guest bedrooms, and the service/coal gallery.

Not all areas of significance will be explored since the new interpretation and presentation will only focus on parts of the 1st and 2nd floor. The new projects at the nursery and service gallery will enable us to present a less well-known story of the site.

1.4 The collections

The historic contents and furnishings of the house have exceptional significance. They are particularly so in their:

- **Scope and completeness** - their survival in the house with only minor losses since 1948 are of exceptional significance and allow for an unusually full and authentic demonstration of room planning and furnishing over time, as well as advancements in country house technology, particularly by Sir John Griffin and the 3rd and 4th Lords Braybrooke.
- **Association with the house** – AEH is an important example of the benefits of keeping house and contents together which has since been established as an important principle.
- **Extent of the documentation** – Substantial 18th and 19th century catalogues, inventories and accounts show the purposeful collecting of particular individuals and give us unique insights into their political and cultural aspirations. The full survival of many sources such as vouchers and accounts are particularly significant.
- Although the significance of the collection lies principally on the insight they give us into their owners and their taste as collectors, research has shown that many works are of **high individual quality**. The meticulous research on the collections, dating from the early 1980s onwards allows us accurate representation of interiors, apart from many of the upper floor rooms.

1.5 Advancing knowledge and new research

New research carried out to answer questions raised during this research and planning year has included new research into:

- Children of the 3rd Lord Braybrooke and their lives as children and adults. This research also included the staff employed to look after them, such as tutors and governesses.
- The creation and use of the nurseries in the 1810s – 1850s.
- The use and layout of the coal gallery.
- Investigations in house technology, including the service bells, sanitation, water supply and lighting.
- Paint and wallpaper analysis of the upper floor landings, nursery and coal gallery.
- Interiors and furnishing research into Nursery, Coal gallery and State Rooms
- Archival research into the running of the nursery, including expenses.
- Analysis of the procurement of furniture and furnishings for the State Bed suite.
- 19th century toys suitable for the nursery.

1.6 Summary of presentation plans

The layout of the 1st floor rooms is largely a result of painstaking research carried out from the late 1970s onwards, focussing on presenting the house around a mid-19th century setting. The quality of the furniture, furnishings and decorative schemes prevent any major representation of the room. New research and opening up to the public some of the rooms in the northern part of the second floor will provide visitors with an exciting addition to the current experience and offers us the possibility of using innovative means and devices for the new interpretation and presentation of these spaces.

In particular, the coal gallery will expand on service story of the house and estate. Although the servants' story is a common and well-developed story here and at other country houses throughout Britain, we will be able here to use it as a vehicle to present a fuller story of technology in the country house. Through the nursery, the usually untold story of the children will be fully explored and will enable visitors to establish a more immediate rapport with the families that lived here. The presentation of bedrooms in a night-time setting on the first floor will also offer a more intimate experience of the grand house.

Section 2. Visitors and audiences

2.1 Visitor numbers

The following tables provide visitor statistics for Audley End:

Audley End	Yr2001/02	Yr2002/03	Yr2003/04	Yr2004/05
Total Non-Paying Site Visitors	38,045	42,169	47,307	47,384
Total Paying Site Visitors	44,889	60,303	71,403	61,850
ADMISSIONS	82,934	102,472	118,710	109,234

Admission type	Yr2005/06	Yr2006/07	Yr2007/08	Yr2008/09	Yr2009/10	Yr2010/11	Yr2011/12	Yr2012/13
Adult	19,418	17,714	19,204	16,135	16,958	17,203	17,905	16,902
Family	4,201	2,301	3,955	2,670	3,137	4,387	4,134	4,407
Concession	10,247	9,769	11,060	10,694	10,863	11,996	11,017	10,503
Child	1,268	1,175	1,752	1,296	1,320	1,500	1,431	1,475
Event pre-paid	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	194
Group	4,832	3,353	4,401	4,217	4,777	4,527	4,043	3,680
Overseas Pass	163	222	281	334	272	426	487	505
GBH pass	187	182	169	222	163	194	146	0
Total Paying Site Visitors	40,316	35,377	40,822	35,568	37,490	40,233	39,163	37,666
Schools	2,362	1,605	1,837	2,580	2,886	3,562	3,927	3,305
Members	24,395	26,077	32,785	38,300	46,766	66,144	77,039	79,023
Other free	9,431	11,115	9,869	10,361	11,000	14,882	15,196	15,675
Total Non-Paying Site Visitors	36,188	38,797	44,491	51,241	60,652	84,588	96,162	98,003
Total Visitors	76,504	74,174	85,313	86,809	98,142	124,821	135,325	135,669

The site's total visitor numbers has been mixed in the last decade, with 2003/4 volumes not being recovered until 2010/11 (when the stable yard was opened). Since 2007, visitors have been rising consistently and have now reached an all time high. In 2012/13 Audley End attracted 135,669 visitors.

58% of these visitors were members and the ratio of member to non-member has increased every year, causing paying adult admissions, the second largest admission type after members, to decrease. In 2003/04 adult admissions made up one third (39,697) of all admissions, they now only correspond to 12% of total visitor numbers.

The trend in the UK staycation market is most likely a contributory factor in the overall rise in visitor numbers to Audley End and the rise in membership globally. The introduction of the Service Wing in 2008 did not seem to result in a significant and immediate rise in visitor numbers, however, the development of the Stable Yard and children's play area has had a positive impact. This was introduced in 2010 offering more family friendly activity and events.

2.2 Audience segmentation and mapping

Many organisations use a form of segmentation to identify key types of people to target, the people whom they believe they can serve best. Understanding

the needs of the different types of people is essential to be able to give them what they want.

English Heritage has developed a set of visitor segments for the “Days Out” market. In 2011/12 the top three segments recorded at Audley End via the annual visitor survey were:

- 38% Culture Seekers
- 28% Experience Seeking
- 17% Child Pleasing

	Central motivation for visiting	Core behaviour	Key demographics
Experience Seeking	To enjoy places that deliver a wide range of absorbing, engaging experiences	They enjoy a broad range of leisure interests that include heritage and culture. They want to absorb themselves in the experience and they like to go with other people	There is an even gender split (m 51%/f 49%) Ages are evenly spread Mostly visiting without children (71%) 68% are ABC1
Culture Seeking	To learn and discover new things about the past and pursue their own personal interests	They visit historic sites, museums and galleries and indulge their own personal interest. They are independent minded and prefer to dig themselves	There is an even gender split (m 51%/f49%) Heavily represented by people aged 55+ (53%) Mostly visiting without children (89%) 82% are ABC1
Child Pleasing	Those with children are generally motivated by their desire to keep their children happy Those without children expect children to be present and for the attraction to have a strong child-friendly offer	They will tend to visit heritage sites that have child orientated offers. They seek out places that are fun and are willing to travel. Their own needs are usually secondary to those of the children in the party.	There is an even gender split (m 51%/f49%) Half are aged 35-54 (50%) 48% have children visiting with them 80% are ABC1
Comfort Zoning	To have a reassuring and unchallenging day out. They love the things they love	They are reluctant to try something different and will visit the same places time and time again. They love to browse and shop.	They are more likely to be female (m32%/f68%) More than half are aged 55+ (54%) 42% have children visiting with them 73% are ABC1
Passive Following	To support someone who has an interest perhaps for an easy life, to please their family	They will visit but they will tend to be taken along by someone else rather than a strong desire to be there themselves. They are passionate about their own pursuits.	They are more likely to be female (m44%/f56%) Around two in five are aged 55+yrs (42%) Mostly visiting without children (69%) 61% are ABC1

Within a 30min drive time of Audley End:

Attitudinal Segment	30 mins				
	Sum of Target	Sum of Target %	AEH by %	EH by %	UK Leisure by %
Child Pleasing	30,754	28	18	17	24
Culture Seeking	35,472	32	27	38	19
Experience Seeking	21,736	20	35	28	18
Comfort Seeking	9,254	8	13	5	18
Passive Followers	14,020	13	8	11	21
Grand Total	111,236	100	100	100	100

Within a 60min drive time of Audey End:

Attitudinal Segment	60 mins				
	Sum of Target	Sum of Target %	AEH by %	EH by %	UK Leisure by %
Child Pleasing	290,835	29	18	17	24
Culture Seeking	261,931	26	27	38	19
Experience Seeking	186,934	18	35	28	18
Comfort Seeking	98,247	10	13	5	18
Passive Followers	178,656	18	8	11	21
Grand Total	1,016,603	100	100	100	100

There is a potential untapped pool of visitors within a 60 minute drive time. However it is currently unclear as to whether just an improved interpretive offer in the house will encourage them to visit.

2.3 Current visitor interaction with the site as a whole

Annual visitor survey results

Between August and September 2012 the annual visitor survey was conducted. 142 respondents took part. 62% of respondents were repeat visitors. The results of the survey need to be viewed with caution due to the low sample size.

According to the 2012 visitor survey, the top three areas of the site most visited:

- 72% Wider grounds
- 62% Organic Kitchen garden
- 59% Service wing

Least visited areas of the site:

- 58% Stables
- 45% House

Site strengths:

- * Being in tranquil and beautiful surroundings
- * Efficiency and knowledge of staff
- * Quality of the play area
- * Opportunity for children to have fun
- * Opportunity to explore at my own pace

Site weaknesses

- * value for money (overall and in the retail and catering outlets)
- * opportunities for children to learn new things

2.4 Target audiences

Key target market 2013/14

Recent research (Autumn 2012) commissioned for the Audley End investment appraisal suggested that family audiences were still not aware of Audley End's breadth of offer, especially around the stables and interacting with the horses, and the play park facility. This needs to be addressed in 2013, possibly through the inclusion of more family-friendly imagery, ahead of launching the project in 2014.

Our second key target audience is culture seekers, especially outside of holiday periods, given continued high attendance figures from this segment. Audley End's offer has strong appeal amongst culture seekers and there are a high percentage of culture seekers in the 60 minute drive time.

The third target audience are experience seekers - Audley End offers more than a typical stately home offer and therefore appeals to this segment.

Independently from this project, which focuses on the house, the Coach House shop is closing in May 2013 and a small interactive exhibition exploring horse-riding in Victorian times will be opening in 22 May 2013. This experience is aimed at family audiences and should increase the popularity of the stable yard, especially in inclement weather.

The interpretation proposed in this document and focussing on the house, will therefore be aimed at the following audiences :

- **Culture and experience seeking segments** - the project will aim to enhance their visit to the property and appeal to the broadest interests at all times of the year by offering a coherent, but varied experience.
- **Child pleasing segment** - there is scope to significantly develop the offer for this segment by providing opportunities to learn something new in the house in engaging ways for families at all times of the year in an environment suitable for family groups.
- **Return/member visitors** – the site has an unusually high number of member visitors. We will aim to provide them with a wide range of experiences, mostly interactive in nature, so that each visit feels unique.

- We will also improve the appeal of the new interpretation and new spaces to **education groups** and secondary school visitors.

The audience focus will vary dependent on time of year and also time of the week. There needs to be a degree of flexibility to allow the overall offer at Audley to respond to target visitors at different times of the year. In terms of interpretation providing different choices (e.g. offering particular tours more at certain times of the year) and add on events maybe one way to achieve this.

Section 3. The wider context

3.1 Comparators and competitors

As part of the process of interpretation planning it is important to review both national/international comparators (places providing similar offers) and local competitors. This will help us to develop a unique offer at Audley End.

Below is a table of national historic house/castles attracting 130,000+ visitors per year. Data is taken from the Visitor Attractions Trends in England Report 2010 prepared for VisitEngland.

Region	Site	Visitor Nos
East Midlands	Chatsworth House	716,616
South East	Leeds Castle	559,261
London	Hampton Court Palace	547,105
South East	Blenheim Palace	524,593
South East	Dover Castle	349,182
South East	Waddensdon Manor	326,080
East Midlands	Belton House	264,239
London	Kensington Palace	251,426
South East	Polsden Lacey	246,537
Yorkshire and Humber	Harewood House	247,745
South East	Osborne House	232,276
East	Anglesey Abbey	231,289
Yorkshire and Humber	Castle Howard	216,566
South West	Lanhydrock	210,362
North East	Wallington House	199,024
North West	Dunham Massey	197,797
South West	Tintagel Castle	190,246
South East	Chartwell	188,705
South East	Montisfont	189,072
South East	Bodiam Castle	176,193
East Midlands	Hardwick Hall	163,000
South West	Killerton	161,196
East Midlands	Sudbury Hall and Museum of Childhood	159,178
South East	Claremont House	157,270
North East	Bamburgh Castle	142,446
East	Blicking Hall	135,000

Figures based on 2010 results. 2011 results yet to be published.

The following is a link to the latest ALVA results which shows some places have seen huge increases <http://www.alva.org.uk/details.cfm?p=423>

The main competitors for Audley End providing a similar offer within a 45 km radius are

- Anglesey Abbey (NT)
- Wimpole Hall and Estate (NT)
- Ickworth (NT)
- Ingastone Hall
- Knebworth House
- Hatfield House
- Layer Marney Tower

Appendix 1 provides some detail about competitors.

3.2 Stakeholders

At the moment the key stakeholders have been identified as the following:

- The Braybrooke family as the paintings and many of the furnishings are on loan from them
- Saffron Walden/Cambridge local communities, especially as a source of volunteers
- The Friends group, who fund a number of small projects.
- The Saffron Walden Historical Society, an enthusiastic and vocal local group with a keen interest in the site over all phases of history

Section 4: Current Visitor experience for the house

4.1 Current facilities

Parking

Visitors currently access the site through the front gates where they acquire their entrance ticket at a booth from their car, then drive past the house and park between the pond and the parterre. On very busy or event days, visitors park on the east garden then walk to ticketing booths where the normal car park is located.

On very busy event days, visitors might park on the west garden between the river and the road and pay for their ticket by the bridge.

N.B: The parking facilities are not currently deemed to be satisfactory and a new investment project is looking at improving those facilities, particularly for coaches as they are not able to park on the site.

Facilities

Close to the house

The former Servants' Hall is the restaurant and the House keeper's room offers an additional dining space. The main toilets are located outside between the restaurant and the kitchens. The shop is located in the Service Yard in the former brewhouse. The Visitor Information Centre is part of the Service Yard and will hopefully play a more important role in orientation. The new virtual tours will be housed there.

By the Stables and Kitchen Gardens

A smaller tea room and toilets are situated by the playground offer facilities away from the house at high visitor times.

A playground is situated by the kitchen gardens and is currently, until the coach house opens in May 2013, the only child-focussed activity.

N.B: Apart from the creation of a new interactive exhibition space in the Coach House, there are currently no plans to review facilities on site. Access and ticketing might, however, change if the new car park plans materialise, but this is unlikely to happen before 2015.

4.2 Current Interpretation

Guided tours

Due to current staffing levels the house is open to visitors mostly through guided tours (ca. 92 days a year), providing basic interpretation of the interiors and contents as well as the story of the owners. The tours last either 30 minutes or an hour and are available throughout the day. They are carried out

by permanent seasonal staff (6-8 staff). There is a maximum of 20 visitors per tour.

At weekends during high-demand periods and school holidays the house is open free flow (ca. 74 days of a year) with rooms manned by 18 members of staff for security provision. Visitors rely on the guidebook and room stewards to understand the rooms they visit.

During 2013 the house staff will be trialling a number of options for visiting the house by guided tour, with different tour lengths and parts of the house explored.

Guidebook

The colour guidebook was published in 2010. It is available for purchase for £4.99 at various points on site, including currently in the bucket hall. The guidebook team currently plan to update the guidebook to incorporate the new parts of the house open to visitors and reflect the changes in visitor routes this will entail. This revised edition is unlikely to be available on site before June 2014 as many rooms won't be available for photography until completed at Easter 2014.

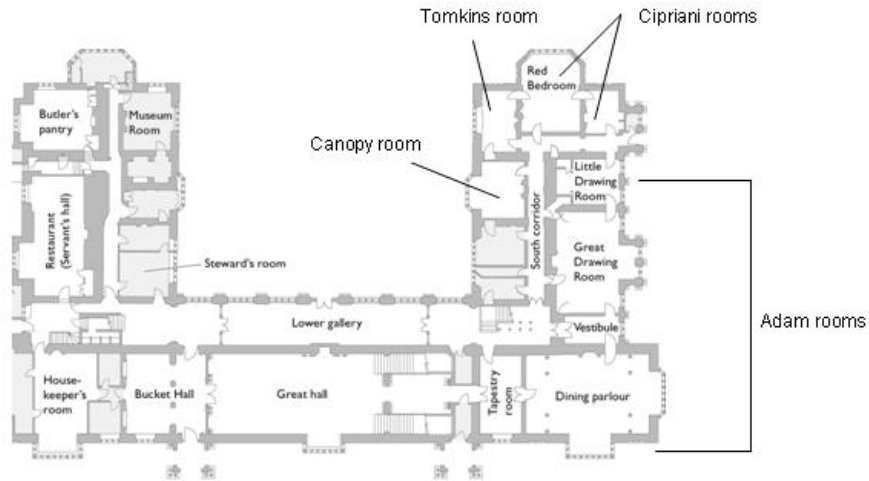
If the 20th century story of the house and estate was developed in later phases of investment, the guidebook team will consider rewriting the guidebook in order to reflect these new stories.

Current visitor route

The state rooms on the first floor are always accessed through the Great Hall and exited through the north staircase.

The South Wing ground floor is open to the public differently depending on whether it is a guided tour or free-flow day. The reconstructed Adam rooms (Dining Parlour, Vestibule, Great Drawing Room and Little Drawing Room) are always open to the public; the Cipriani Room, adjoining dressing rooms and the Canopy Room are open only on free-flow days. Visitors then exit by returning to the Great Hall.

The rooms beyond the Adam suites are open only during busy days. The two Cipriani rooms have some interpretation in them, the larger one, also known as the Red Bedroom, contains the Dolls House and recently two new showcases contain some of the contents of the dolls house. The Tomkins room has paintings mounted on the walls and the Canopy Room has a table and chairs. The canopy room has not been open to visitors for a number of years but will house temporary display of newly acquired objects from Easter 2013.

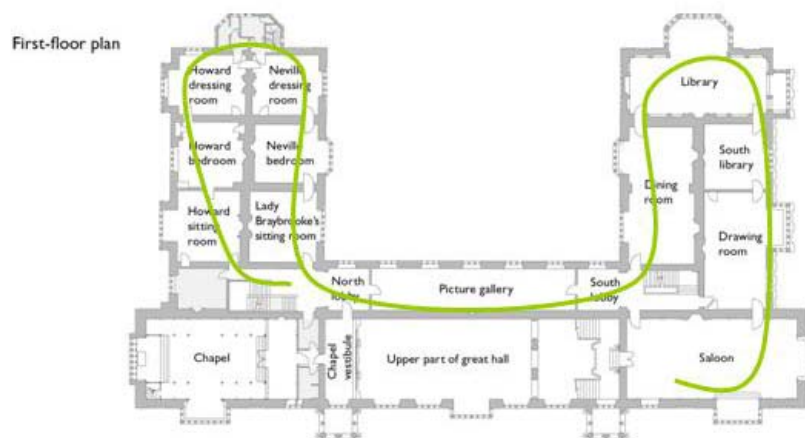


Walkthrough current route

During guided tours the visit starts in the Bucket Hall, Great Hall, upstairs to the Saloon, Drawing Room, South Library, Library, Dining Room, Picture Gallery, Chapel, Lady Braybrooke's sitting room, Neville Bedroom, Neville Dressing Room, Howard Dressing Room, Howard Bedroom, Howard Sitting Room and exit through the North Stairs.

If part of a longer tour, visitors then continue through the Lower Gallery and Vestibule, the Dining Parlour, the Great Drawing Room and the Little Drawing Room.

During free flow days visitors are free to choose their own route which roughly follows the guided tour apart from the fact that they access the Adam suite of rooms through the Great Hall and exit through the South Corridor and are able to view the exhibition in the Cipriani, Tomkins and Canopy rooms.



4.2 Comprehension issues (Intellectual/cultural access)

Current access issues

- No provision for physical and intellectual access to the upper floors of the house for people in wheelchairs e.g. virtual tour
- Lack of provision for people with hearing impairments on guided tours
- Limited seating available for visitors who may find the length of the tours/visit rather long
- When producing new forms of interpretation a range of accessible formats need to be considered. A virtual tour of the first and second floors will need to be created and housed in the VIC.

N.B - No provision for foreign visitors, further research should clarify if this needs to be addressed

Passive traditional roped experience

This traditional interpretive experience is fairly standard of the majority of country houses in Britain that are open to the public on a regular basis. The National Trust favours a free-flow approach with room stewards (usually volunteers) and room sheets. Historic Houses Association, such as Hatfield House, also occasionally propose audio guides (purchased separately).

Historic Royal Palaces in London is one of the few organisations that propose a more innovative and immersive experience in their properties (Hampton Court, Kensington Palace and Kew Palace).

Limited interpretive devices

Interpretation at the house is solely imparted through guided tours and the guidebook, which greatly reduces some visitors' receptiveness for stories. The complexity of five centuries worth of remodelling and an intricate family tree quickly overwhelms visitors. This has been partially addressed by presenting parts the site (Service Wing and Stables) through a single narrative (AEH in the 1880s), which means that some of the other themes, such as the Jacobean palace or its role in the Second World War are only explored in guided tours, special events and the guided book.

Narrow presentation of stories

The focus of grand rooms in stiff set-dressings ignores the many and varied stories that are of interest to visitors (the supporting staff, the craftsmen, the house technology aspect, the family stories). The popularity of TV shows such as *Downton Abbey*, *Brideshead Revisited* and *Pride & Prejudice* to name just a few, and which have turned the fortunes of Highclere Castle, Castle Howard, Lyme Park and Chatsworth so dramatically, offer ultimate proof that there is a current interest in stately homes. These television shows, however, concentrate on the human stories and the every day aspect of stately home living, for both the aristocracy and the people in service, offering a unique and intimate insight and portrayal of the country house as a microcosm of society. The new groups of visitors might be labelled '*Narrative enthusiasts*'.

Since 2011, the curatorial team combined with the live re-enactments provided by Past Pleasures for the Victorian Christmas events has contributed to presenting the house in a more intimate setting to suggest a more lived-in feel. No evaluation has been undertaken, but it would appear this presentation is popular with visitors.

The 1940s fortifications or the Special Operations Executive (SOE) story is explained on special tours and the Events programme. The Station 43 book and the couple of pages in the guidebook also explore these stories. Site staff often comment that there is a strong visitor interest in these stories, particularly as they are of living memory and that the local Polish community is growing, it would be worthwhile to attempt to introduce these stories in permanent interpretation. There is funding currently available until June 2014 to interpret the 1940s GHQ fortifications at Audley End as part of an Interreg IV-funded project with Essex County Council looking at the 1940s fortifications across the county.

Summary

Although this traditional approach is expected by many visitors and is probably much favoured by culture seekers and those of scholastic leanings, it offers very little in terms of an engaging experience attempting to appeal to a broader spectrum of visitors, especially those who fall outside the culture seeker segment. It focuses very much on a passive experience where the quality of the collections and decorative schemes are the main emphasis of a visit. This appeals to a narrow type of visitors, and puts off many family groups, who are daunted by the fragile nature of the schemes and the numerous ropes. It does little to engage visitors who would not normally visit stately homes but have been stimulated to do so by enjoying costume dramas on the television or a nice day out in pleasant surroundings.

Section 5: New interpretation and presentation proposals

5.1 Theme table

Overarching theme:

AEH has been extensively modified through four centuries of use as needs, fortune and visions changed and is now revealed as a family home.

Sir John Griffin Griffin was responsible for new investment in the house as he attempted to make it fit for a king's visit.

- Following the decline of the Jacobean palace and the destruction large parts of the house, the 18th century was a time of rebuilding and investment.
- By 1797 he had created the coal gallery (then called Brick Gallery) to connect the south and north wings to a design relatively unchanged since.
- He updated the decorative scheme and commissioned in the Adam reception rooms in the ground floor of the south wing, completed in 1771.
- The State Bed suite was created in the hope that King George III would visit and seal Sir John GG's standing in society.

Sir John Griffin Griffin was a forward thinking man who invested heavily in the latest technological innovations.

- He considerably modernised sanitation (including Bramah's new and expensive flushing toilets) and water supply.
- He was a very early adopter of the Argand oil lamps, a pair of which survive in the dining room.
- He invested in cutting edge development in communication and installed one of the first bell systems of the country.

Audley End was the principal home of a large family in the 19th century.

- Many building works were carried out to accommodate the 3rd Lord Braybrooke's growing family and the house largely acquired its present layout.
- The nursery is one of the latest and biggest change of the house. Documentary evidence survives to provide information on room use and layout.
- The eight Braybrooke children offer a unique insight of childhood in Victorian times and much is known about their character and education.
- The doll's house and the watercolours are unique and personal witnesses of AEH as a family home and provide information on daily life.

Stories nursery

Creation and use

The nursery was created in 1825 and used for 20 years by the 3rd Lord Braybrooke's children from infancy until they left home. The nursery was adapted as the needs of the children changed. The rooms were used as a nursery from 1822 until 1842, when the youngest son Grey left for Eton. Thereafter, it was used as a living space for the girls until they married and moved away (1852 & 1853).

Other children used the nursery (1859-1879 & 1918-?), but the Lord B's use was the most significant. Many records survive offering us glimpses into how the nursery functioned (e.g. bills for haircuts, clothes, shoes, toys, etc).

Staff

A number of staff worked here and looked after the children. In the early years they comprised of a governess, wet nurses and nursery maids. Later tutors were brought in to teach specialist skills, such as painting.

Ms Mary Dormer joined the family as a governess in 1836. She stayed at Audley until xxxx and was associated with the family until her death in xxxx. She would have had three nursery maids and a tutor assisting her.

Bringing up the children

Boys and girls would have started formal learning around the ages of 4/5 years and would have learned together until 8/9 yrs. At 11-12 the boys went to Eton and completed their education there as boarders, only returning home for holidays.

The girls, however, stayed at home and were taught by tutors, with emphasis on skills needed for entertaining. They seemed particularly proficient at painting and many of their watercolours survive.

The dolls house is one of the few objects to survive from the nursery, and is a rare survival. Bought just before dolls houses became common nursery toys, it tells us much about early dolls houses, and the children's contributions to it provide a touching legacy.

The family and children

A number of accounts survive to give us an intimate portrait of the family. Although very much a marriage of convenience, Lord B's marriage seemed to have nevertheless been a successful one. He was quiet and academic, his wife more vivacious ("*ne tait pas*") who enjoyed entertaining. The children were brought up in a liberal and affectionate manner and encouraged to pursue their interests.

As adults, the fate of the children was varied. Henry and Grey tragically died in the Crimea War within a week of each other in 1854. The brothers combined their duties as country squires with their interests in academia and civil service. The girls, apart from Mirabel, married and moved away.



The day nursery as depicted in the 1830-40s



The day nursery now.



The three youngest children: Latimer, Grey and Lucy



Probably Charles and Henry, possibly dressed for Eton



Lucy aged 2, painted by a family member



Richard, 4th Lord Braybrooke?



Louisa and Mirabel as young women.



The coal gallery in its present setting

Stories Coal gallery

Main purpose

The gallery, in operation since the 1790s, is a domestic hub at the heart of the house. It now provides us much information about some of the earliest examples of domestic technologies used in country house.

Coal

The primary purpose of the coal gallery had been for storing coal, from where it could be carried to fireplaces in rooms on the first and second floor. It was delivered in a bucket of no more than 25kg in capacity to the gallery by a crane mounted under the central window of the east wall of the gallery.

Hot water

Sinks were installed in the late C18th to fill cans or buckets with water for use on the first and second floor; and braziers or stoves and a later copper enabled servants to heat up water. This was the main source of hot water inside the house until a piped water supply was installed.

Heating

The calorifier survives and remained in use until the second half of the C20th. It dates from the first decade of the C20th and is an early central heating system.

Toilets

Sir John GG was early to introduce flushing WCs to AEH. Five Bramahs were installed in 1785, only 7 years after Bramah had taken up his patent. Three types of C19th toilets can be found in the house.

Bells (panel in bell lobby)

Communication bells were introduced by Sir John GG between 1784-6 when he modified the layout of the house and prepared for the King's visit. On October 29th 1785, Messrs Willerton and Green, Jewellers of Bond Street, were paid £1.4.5 for an 'ivory and gold bell handle'. One was also purchased from Wedgewood. Chipchase and Lambers also supplied 'a silk and gold tassel for the bells'. It is likely that the changes brought to the south wing by the 3rd Lord Braybrooke necessitated a reorganisation of the bells system. It is not clear when they stopped being in use.

Argand lights (panel by lamp room)

AEH was quick to adopt Argand oil lamps within 2 years of their introduction in Britain. The first 'vase lamp' was purchased in 1785 at a cost of 15s. A further 20 were later ordered. The average expenditure in the early C19th on lamp oil, wax candles, lamp repairs and other consummables was £222 per year. The lamp room was used for lamp cleaning and repairs and the distinctive smell of oil lamp remains. It is unclear whether gas lighting was ever adopted at AEH.

Stories State Bed

Howard dressing room - Preparing the visit

The new Lord Howard

The bed and its associated furniture was made for a royal visit proposed in 1784, following Sir John Griffin Griffin's elevation to the peerage in 1784 (now Lord Howard). The visit was intended to be made in 1786 by King George III and Queen Charlotte.

Receiving the king

Information survives on how the Howards should receive the royal couple: A detailed letter explains how Lord and Lady Howard should receive the royal couple, including how they should retire at bedtime: "The King & Queen will give notice when they will retire at night [...] your Ldp will light the King with one candle to his apartment and Lady Howard will do the same by the Queen".

The new state apartments

New double state apartments were created for the visit, which included the manufacture of a state bed and associated furniture including: stool, armchairs and portrait of Queen Charlotte. The bed was originally made for the State Dressing Room on the first floor of the south Wing (now the South Library).

Howard Bedroom – the bed and its highlights.

The state bed

The bed is one of the most important surviving late C18th beds and was made by the London firm Chipchase and Lambert in 1786 at a vast cost. Newspaper accounts of 23 July 1787 state that : "Lord Howard's great new bed [...] is now so high and so soft – that majesty will scarcely be seen in it". There is much information on how the bed was made and its vast cost.

Moving the bed around

The current location of the bed is not in its original room. After the remodelling of the state apartment it was located on the ground (below the Library), then moved back to the first floor by the Ministry of Work. It is now too fragile to be moved.

Howard sitting room - Other users of the state bed

The royal visit that never happened

In spite of the intensive preparation and two attempted trips, the king never visited AEH and Sir John GG died without receiving his royal visit.

The Duke of Gloucester's visit 1819

His successor, the 2nd Lord Braybrooke, received George III's daughter Princess Mary and her husband the Duke of Gloucester who visited in 1819. Although etiquette was simpler, it was still a splendid occasion. Additional furniture (such as the day bed) was acquired and 37 people sat down to dinner in the new Dining Parlour. The bed was 30 years old, still in its original location and protection, although it had started to fade.

Mrs Bancroft's visit 1847

The 3rd Lord Braybrooke moved the bed and its accompanying furniture to the new suite of guest rooms on the ground floor, where they were used by Mrs Bancroft and her husband, an American diplomat. Her accounts, published as Letters from England 1846 – 1849, include the following description: "The bedroom, with the state bed of blue and white damask, and the sofas and chairs also, and it was surrounded by pictures, among others a full length of Queen Charlotte, just opposite the foot of the bed, always saluted me every morning when I awoke, with her fan, her hoop and her deep ruffles."

The significance of the State Bed

Although many state beds survive, this State Bed is particularly magnificent and significant.

Moving around

As with most of the house, room uses and arrangements changed through time and the state bed and associated furniture was eventually brought to this suite in the 1970s. The large desk in this room originally came from Sir John's library.

NB: the location of the presentation of these stories between the rooms might change depending on the AV.



The State Bed in its current location

5.2 Concept evaluation

Background

The main focus of the historical and curatorial research taking place in 2011-12 was to support new interpretation and presentation of the first floor of the house.

When the initial concepts, costs, feasibility and investment appraisals were carried out they failed to generate sufficient support. The project team was then tasked to propose a number of concepts, five of which were evaluated by the company TNS to inform investment potential and reception.

Concepts

The proposals were:

- the original *“Day in the Life”* option, where visitors were invited to experience a day in the life of the Braybrooke family at home in 1853. The first floor was shown as a day with breakfast in the saloon and night-time in the bedroom.
- the State Bed option, described as *“A bed fit for a king”*, where the state bed and the rooms either side of it focussed on the preparations for George III’s visit and presented a display of the finest furniture evocative of a luxurious lifestyle.
- *“Opening the nursery”* suite of rooms, offering an interactive experience for the whole family.
- opening the coal gallery showing *“Behind the scenes”* stories of servants in the house.
- Re-creating the museum room to reveal past gentlemanly pleasures and precious treasure, described as *“Past Pleasures and Treasures”*.

Another concept was prepared but not submitted for evaluation: the 20th story of the house, including the SOE soldiers and conservation issues.

Summary findings

The most popular concepts during evaluation were *“A Day in the Life”*, *“Behind the Scenes”*, and *“Opening the nursery”*. The other two concepts were felt to be more of a niche interest and least likely to appeal to Child Pleasing and Experience Seeking audiences. Full results are in Appendix 3.

As a result of the evaluation, the project team were tasked to retain some elements of the Day in the Life and seek to improve the current visitor experience in the first floor, open up the nursery and the coal gallery.

5.3 The vision

Interpretation objectives and approach.

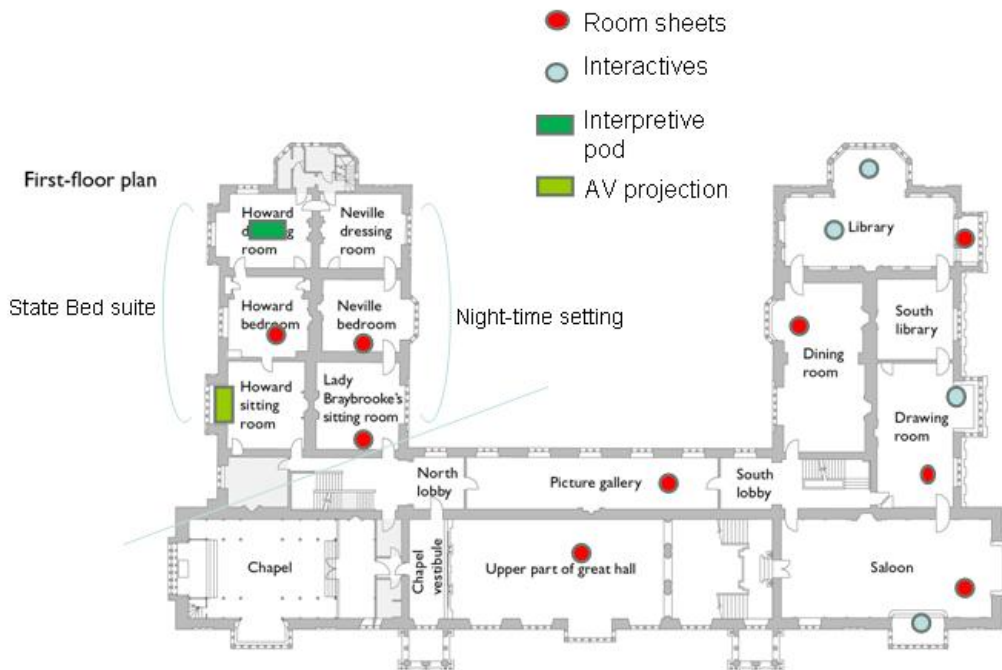
The project will focus on the following sections of the house:

- First floor interpretation and presentation improvements, including a night-time setting of the bedroom suites.
- Opening and representing the nursery suite.
- Opening and representing the coal gallery.
- Improvements to the VIC to augment physical and intellectual access for visitors unable to explore the house.

The current main objectives of this project are to:

- Transform the interior of the house in terms of atmosphere: bringing something rather gloomy and static to life
- Provide a series of shorter experiences rather than a single 1-2hr visitor route
- Give visitors interpretative and presentational options to select from rather than a monolithic experience
- Tell more stories about the people associated with the house, in particular the children and the servants
- Open, present and interpret the Coal Gallery and explore the hidden stories of the inner workings of a large country house, such as communication and sanitation
- Develop a distinctive and bespoke offer
- Lead in the presentation and interpretation of historic house interiors

5.4 First Floor improvements



These rooms will receive improved interpretation through room sheets and a couple of interactives. The bedroom suite shown at night-time will evoke a more intimate setting. The State bed suite will explore Sir John Griffin Griffin and his preparation for the visit of George III.

South Wing 1st floor

Selective presentation improvements will be made in the Saloon, Drawing Room and Library to better evoke the use of these rooms by the family. The current presentation of these rooms is to an unspecified date in the mid-19th century; the improvements will enhance the existing presentation, rather than significantly alter the date to which the rooms are presently displayed. Room sheets will provide new interpretation, and new display material evoking life will be focussed in specific areas – for example, the window bays in the Saloon and Drawing Room. A couple of interactives in the Drawing Room (e.g. an easel with watercolours) and Library (e.g. a replica scrapbook, a working piano) will provide a more dynamic dimension to the visit.

Lighting will be improved throughout these three rooms plus the South Library. The use of an eyemat (new visitor matting replicating the design of the historic carpet underneath it to protect it from footfall) and new druggets will lessen the visual impact of the visitor route, and ropes will be removed to give greater access to the Library as a whole, and to the Saloon and Drawing Room window bays. Additional seating in the Library will allow visitors to rest.

North Wing 1st floor

a) Bedroom suite

The most appealing aspect of the “Day in the Life” concept for both visitors and project team alike was to present the bedroom of the Braybrooke/Neville suite in an intimate night-time setting. This provides a charming experience that is not replicated at other properties. It is proposed that the suite of three rooms (Lady Braybrooke’s Sitting Room, the Neville Bedroom and the Neville Dressing Room) are shown at night time – shuttered and dark, but cleverly lit to give the sense of candlelight and fire light. Preparations for bed will be in evidence: a discarded evening dress, costume jewellery glinting by candlelight next to discarded hairpins, bed turned down, washstand in use, nightdress laid out and novel at the bedside.

b) State Bed suite

The 1786 Chipchase & Lambert State Bed of embroidered Chinese silk, created by Sir John Griffin Griffin for an anticipated visit by George III, will be represented with upgraded lighting. The inner canopy will be lit with concealed lighting, and the overall aim is to make the bed glow. The story of the State Bed will be introduced in the Howard Dressing Room through an interpretive pod, which interprets the contents of the associated State Dressing Room and where the lighting will also be improved. The interpretive pod (graphic panel or other simple interpretive device) will inform visitors that the State Bed Suite of rooms contain the displaced contents of the former State apartments and introduce the visitors to the story of the state bed. This should make it clear that, although the bedroom suite is presented in a dark setting, the State Bed with very few notable exceptions, was not really a bed for sleeping in and is not part of the same suite of rooms as the Braybrooke/Neville suite.

In the State Bed room itself, a room sheet will provide specific information about the State Bed, focussing on the details and richness of its decorative scheme. Improved access will allow visitors to stand a moment and admire the bed.

In addition to minor changes to the room’s presentation, a short projection in the Howard Sitting Room will tell the story of the State Bed and its acquisition. Seating will be made available to visitors. This room will serve a number of purposes: provide a respite area for visitors, lift the mood of the last room of on the first floor and prepare visitors for a different type of presentation and interpretation in the upper floors. The AV can be used or turned off as required during guided tours.

There are conservation (heat and location of the projector) and operational (creating a bottleneck during busy free flow periods) issues to be taken into consideration for the AV. The option of a simple graphic scheme accompanied by a handling collection focussing on the craft element of the bed’s creation will also be investigated.

The original State Bed concept, which included an exhibition on the preparations for the royal visit, received a lukewarm response from respondents to the evaluation, only igniting interest when craftsmanship was

explored. Focussing on an improved presentation with atmospheric lighting, focussed interpretation on furniture will assist on widening the appeal of these three rooms. Since these rooms are visited during all guided visit, the interpretation will be discreet so that it does not jars with the experience.

5.5 Opening the second floor

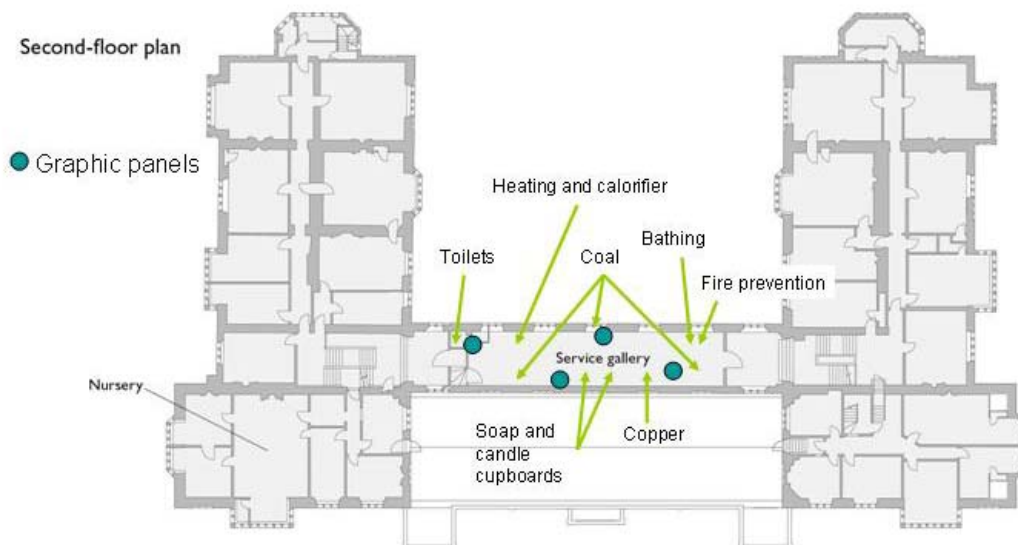
Coal gallery

The coal gallery is located on the top floor of the house links the South and North wing. It was a service area in the house and it will be presented in keeping with the Service Wing in a 19th century presentation. It will not just be a tale of services, through the theme of technology, it will explore its origination in the 18th century and explain the later additions that are still visible to visitors, such as the WC cistern.

The evaluation has shown that men and passive follower audiences engaged very strongly with the coal gallery. The focus on house technology and engineering was felt to appeal to those less interested in the sumptuous furnishings of stately homes, and the perceived feminine stories of the nursery.

The stories associated with services are not currently explored in the house and are limited to the service wing and stable yard. This presents a number of problems:

- It polarises the tales of the site and its inhabitants, creating an artificial separation between the family and the people who served them.
- It puts visitors off, we know that the details of aristocratic life is not a draw for everyone. Schools do not frequently visit the whole house interiors as the themes explored do not match any in their curriculum.
- It ignores the fascinating aspects of country house technology that contribute to making this site unique and significant, such as sanitation and bells systems.



The existing collections in this space – hip baths, foot baths and fire pumps – are likely to be retained, but augmented with props to present the space more evocatively such as coal buckets and filled bunkers. The objects, fixtures and fittings will populate the space. There are three phases to the gallery:

- The technological improvement brought by Sir John Griffin Griffin in the 1760-97, when he created what was then called the Brick Gallery as part of a complex redesign and modernisation of the house.
- The amendments by the 3rd Lord Braybrooke in the 1820s as part of the remodelling of the house as a home for his family.
- The space was then largely unchanged until ca. 1904. The tenant Howard de Walden's brought many improvements around 1904

The presentation of the room will be similar to the current Service Wing which mixes objects and reproduction spaces with discreet graphics and will allow live interpretation to take place in the space on event days.

The presentation will be broadly the 19th century without focussing on a specific date as many features belong to later periods. A specific narrative can be constructed for live interpretation days. Discreet interpretation, probably in the form of a panel scheme similar to the service wing will focus on the narrative of preparing a bath for one of the bedrooms. Through this narrative, the following elements will be interpreted:

- Heating water (explaining the calorifier, the coal bunkers, the copper and baths)
- Coal with a label by the window explaining how it was brought up
- Toilets and sanitation in the toilet cubicle
- Inside the cupboard: a graphic on the soap and candle cupboard

The research commissioned by the historian team has unearthed many aspect of technology brought in by Sir John Griffin Griffin that are fascinating but not best suited to the coal gallery. It is therefore suggested that part of the budget is used to create two graphic panels:

- The service bells in the bell lobby by the restaurant
- The Argand lights by the lamp room

These will be designed in a similar vein to the nearby Service Wing panels and provides the added advantage of providing queuing visitors for the restaurant with something to read.

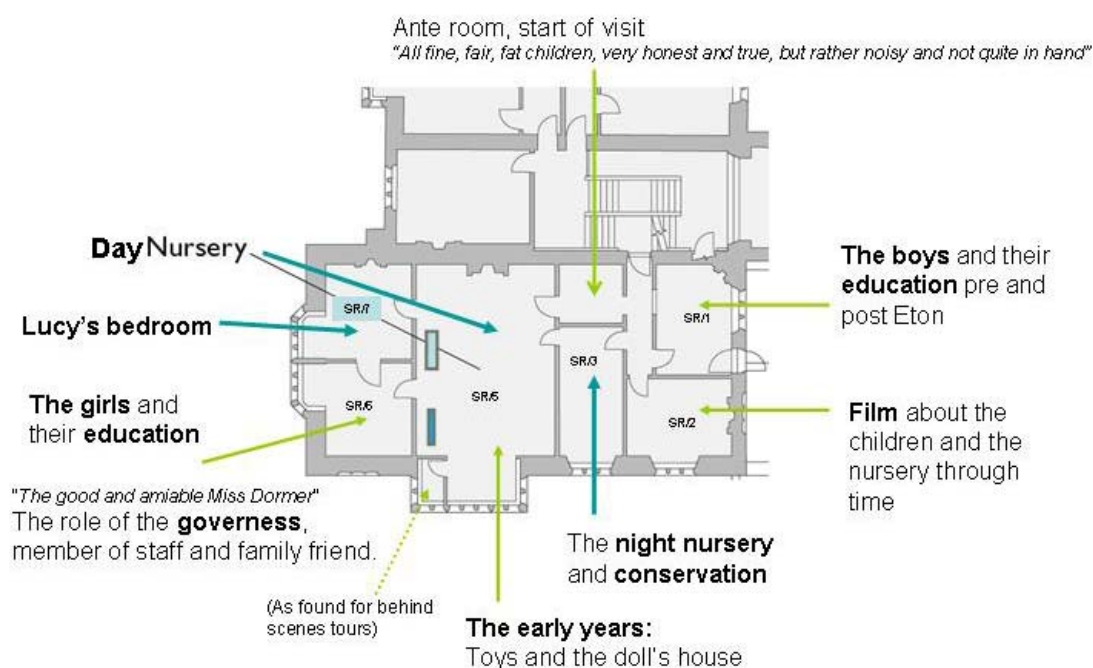
Nursery

The Nursery Suite, currently closed to the public and empty, will be refurbished and the historically presented room shown in the 1830s, when all eight Braybrooke children were born and representing the broadest range of ages to illustrate Victorian childhood and education.

Opening the nursery was the most popular during the evaluation and was felt to appeal equally to adults and children alike, and to provide a space that child pleasers could enjoy.

Few original collections are known to exist for these rooms - the intention is to source appropriate historic or reproduction furnishings which will be robust and allow for a hands-on visitor experience. The Audley End Dolls' House will be displayed in a specially designed case. There might be scope to exhibit replica coronation clothing worn by one of the boys.

There will be no prescribed visitor route in these spaces and children will be able to play with replica Victorian toys and fully interact with the spaces. Interpretation will be discreet, with graphics kept to a minimum, and integrated to the room presentation.



Specifically, the presentation and interpretation will cover:

- The eight Braybrooke children's lives and personalities. They will be reflected throughout the nursery rooms.
- The transformation of male servants' quarters into a nursery suite in 1825, its adaptation through time and the archival material available (mostly covered in the film in SR/3).

- The continued use of the nursery by the young ladies and the watercolours that survive illustrating the rooms and their occupants.
- An insight in the staff that worked in the nursery, particularly the role of the governess, Miss Mary Dormer, of which much is known.
- Gender-focussed education, where girls were home educated in the arts, deportment and domestic crafts, whereas boys were sent to Eton from the age of 11 or 12
- The film in the night nursery will explore the nursery through time, from its origination and the later use of the space during a number of periods: 1) 1840s-50s when the Braybrooke boys go to Eton and the girls finish their home schooling; 2) occupation by 3 female cousins (daughters of the 4th and 5th Lord Braybrookes) in the 1860-70s; 3) occupation of the last children in the house, the two 8th Lord Braybrooke's sons in the 1920s.

Although the nursery will be largely dressed as an 1830s space, when the children were young and teenagers, the interpretation will be nuanced to offer a full picture highlighting various uses throughout those 20 years and reference will be made to the other children who used the space (mostly through the film and the governess room).

Since the discovery of the beautiful portraits of 5 of the children currently in possession of the Braybrooke family we will look into recreating some of the costumes.

SR/4 will welcome visitors to the nursery suite. SR/5 will be dressed as a day nursery and contain toys and the doll's house. Replica Victorian toys for use could include a tea set, a doll or two, some spinning tops, cup and ball games, possibly a boat, a few picture puzzles, an optical toy of some description, flat soldiers, and some simplified board game. The doll's house replica will also be relocated to this space.

The cupboard by the large bay window in the day nursery will not be accessible apart from behind the scenes tours when visitors will be able to look at an unaltered space, untouched by the new presentation. SR/7 will be dressed as per Mirabel's watercolour of Lucy's room, a comfortable room for a young lady. SR/6, of which no illustration exists will be used to explore the watercolours, the education of the young ladies and the role of the governess. A large amount of information has been found on Miss Mary Dormer, the governess that worked from 1834, then stayed with the family until her 90s, it seems to be a natural choice to explore her role, and that of nursery staff, when presenting the children's education. It is likely that the current wall paper (a later c19th date) will have to be retained.

SR/3 which might have been the night nursery will have its original wallpaper conserved and kept as found, so the light levels will have to remain low. The vulnerability of the wallpaper and the low light levels required for its conservation will be limiting factors for the access of visitors into the room. It will therefore be presented as a night nursery for younger children. This will also be an opportunity to present the conservation aspects of the project.

The original purpose of SR/1 and SR/2 has not been clarified by research, although we know that SR1 was the governess room in the early 20th century. SR/1 will be used to explore the boys lives and education, including when they were sent to Eton during term-time. In SR/2 a short film will introduce visitors to the children of the nursery and present a quick summary of their life as children and adults through the changes in the use of the nursery. The film will also acknowledge the other generations of children who used the nursery.

5.6 Media and costs (summary)

Business summary:

The new interpretation and presentation project at Audley End House currently includes:

- the re-opening and redressing of the nursery suite
- the opening and interpretation of the coal gallery
- improved presentation of the first floor state rooms, including the bedroom suite
- re-display of the state bed suite
- the creation of virtual tours/film for mobility impaired visitors to view from the VIC.

The total interpretation costs have been calculated in the following manner:

£100k	Nursery (including AV)
£46k	Coal gallery, including panels in bell lobby and by lamp room
£17k	1 st floor improvements
£25k	State bed (Howard) suite (Including AV)
£12.5k	Virtual tours/films in VIC and new orientation leaflet
£200.5k	Total interpretation costs

Costs from curatorial, conservation and design team (i.e. estate and architects for the building costs) are detailed elsewhere.

Three tenders will be advertised: one for the AV elements (virtual tours, films for the state bed and nursery, soundscapes in the coal gallery). One for the nursery (excluding the AV) and one for the rest of the house (excluding the AV). Separating the AV into its own contract should aid long-term maintenance of the installations.

£48k	AV contract (2x AV films, soundscape, virtual tour in VIC)
£75k	Nursery contract (incl. film seating)
£70.5k	The rest of the house contract (including orientation leaflet)
£7k	Dressing up & costumes (for nursery)
£200.5k	Total

Section 6: Project parameters and operational issues

6.1 The house and specific areas

Conservation

The effect of wear and tear on historic fabric, some of it very sensitive such as the staircase, original paint finishes of the landing and corridors, historic doors will need to be suitably assessed. Visitor numbers have been capped for conservation and fire safety to 140 visitors at any one time.

A concern of introducing non-collection furniture and furnishings in the house for visitor use is that it could confuse them as to which items they are allowed to touch. Items that can be touched will therefore need to be clearly identifiable. For new visitor sitting, it will be preferable to have seating that, although aesthetically appropriate for the interiors, cannot be confused with collection items.

The Bedroom suites

The issue here will be making sure that visitors understand that the State Bed suite, although a bedroom suite in its own right, was not part of the mid-19th century presentation of the house. It is possible the majority will just enjoy the intimate night-time/atmospheric setting without worrying about the chronology of the rooms, but in order to avoid confusion, a graphic panel in the Howard Dressing Room will help visitors to understand the three rooms they will encounter.

The Nursery suite

If the Chapel ceiling is successfully anchored to the walls rather than the Nursery floor as it currently is, the visitor number allowed in the space at any one time will be increased from 10 to 50. It is hard to predict the success of the space and the expected dwell time, and it might be necessary to have to reduce dwell time during very busy periods.

Since interaction will be encouraged but staff/volunteer levels kept at a strict minimum of one roaming steward, it will be difficult to keep the rooms clean and tidy. Objects and toys might get soiled and damaged at a quicker rate than expected, and the level of maintenance funding after the lifecycle of this project is of yet unknown. The theft or loss of objects will also have to be assessed. It is likely that the presence of a member of staff at all times will reduce loss and damage and keep the suite of rooms tidy.

Another concern is the responsibility of maintenance of the conservator for furniture and furnishings acquired by the curatorial team which although some may be historic, they will be props rather than part of the collection.

The Coal Gallery

There are no major issues currently identified with the Coal Gallery, beyond visitors understanding the space accurately and artefacts such as coal not

being dislocated from the display and causing damage in other parts of the house. This might be prevented by the presence of a member of staff or volunteer.

6.2 Operational issues

Parking and facilities

Operationally the biggest challenge will be offering parking and facilities, which are already currently under pressure, for all the new visitors that wish to visit the house and gardens. There will be additional needs for orientation and signage, which are being investigated as part of this project.

Staffing

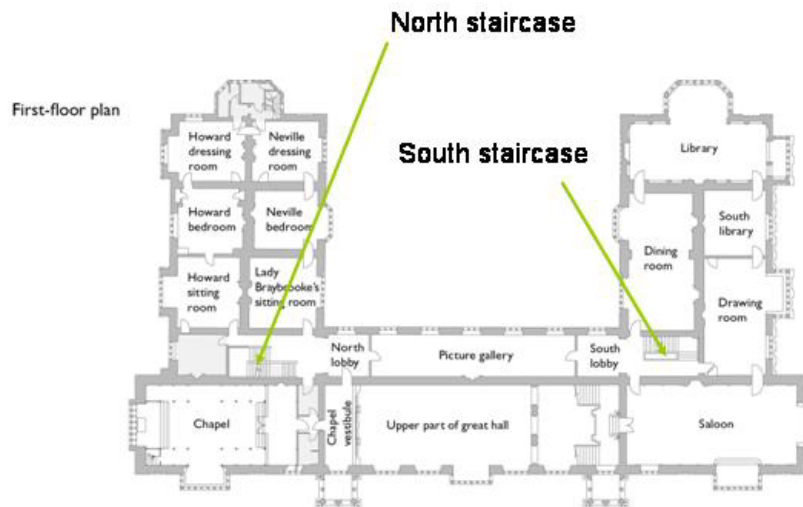
It will not be possible to increase staff presence in the house beyond the current numbers, although staffing will be dictated by the EH Security Adviser's recommendations. It is likely, however, that additional presence will have to be made up of in large parts by volunteers, particularly in the new areas to be opened such as the nursery and the coal gallery. The nursery and coal gallery, presented in an immersive setting will probably benefit by having a number of roaming members of staff or volunteers.

Orientation & visitor route

The visitor route will attempt to be as clear as possible, but since the visitable house will cover a large area over three floors visitors should be able to choose which route they favour. We will be offering more choice, and smaller, more digestible routes through the house. The new orientation leaflet will aid visitor navigation. Additional seating planned in the Library and the Howard Sitting Room on the first floor will seek to address museum feet fatigue experiences by less mobile visitors who might tire without the possibility of sitting down for a while to recover.

It is likely that the orientation leaflet for the site already in existence will need to be reviewed so that the range of experiences within the house are clearly identifiable. A new orientation leaflet, or an additional house leaflet, has therefore been costed. New directional signage, however, has not been costed but can be investigated on request. It would be advisable to have it in a style that complements the orientation leaflet.

6.3 Visitor flow



The visitor flow needs to be carefully monitored so that bottlenecks are avoided and some areas not too overcrowded. It might be necessary to consider time-ticketed entry to the house, even on free-flow days. As a general rule, on guided tour days access up and down the house will be restricted to the North Staircase. On free flow days, the North Staircase will be used to go up and the South Staircase, accessed via the Coal Gallery, will return visitors to the ground floor. Directional signage and additional roping has not been costed in this plan.

Various routes will be proposed by the project team and site staff once operational parameters have been confirmed to deal with visitor flow at different times of visitor volume.

Guided tour days

A number of guided tours will be proposed to visitors. A 30 minute and 60 minute tour will be proposed and focus on a section of the house. It will no longer be possible to visit the whole house on a guided tour.

The guided tour will end by the north staircase and visitors will be encouraged to visit the nursery and coal gallery at their own pace. A volunteer at key areas will ensure there is no visitor bleed throughout the house. Visitors will then exit through the north staircase and be let out by staff by the bucket hall.

A major difficulty will be balancing access to the ground and first floor during guided tour days, with the nursery and coal gallery always free-flow. It is imperative that routes remain flexible so that staff can adapt to visitor volume.

Free flow visit

Fundamentally the choice once in the Great Hall from visitors will be 1. Adam rooms, 2. 19th century first floor room, 3. bedrooms or 4. Nursery and Coal Gallery.

For visitors wanting the visit the whole house, the suggested route could be as follows. From the hall visitors will be able to visit the Adam rooms and then the other ground floor rooms that are only occasionally open. They will exit via the Lower Gallery and return to the Great Hall. They will then go up the stairs to the Saloon and follow the usual route.

The visit of the first floor will end by the bedrooms, visitors will then go up to the Nursery, followed by the Coal Gallery and exit through the South Staircase by the Lower Gallery.

6.4 Evaluation and maintenance

As with all projects, especially those benefitting from significant investment, it is strongly advised that summative evaluation be carried out to find out how well the project has delivered on stated aims and the level of visitor satisfaction.

As it is a new approach, it will be particularly interesting to assess the popularity of the bedrooms in nigh time setting. It will also be important to evaluate the success of visitor flow.

A sum of £5k is proposed to be set aside for the yearly maintenance of the interpretation elements. In particular, dressing up costumes, toys and interactives will accumulate substantial wear and tear. The replica doll's house will be particularly susceptible to damage and loss. Each doll currently costs £50 (doll and dress).

Section 7. Appendices

Appendix 1. Education summary

(provided by Pippa Smith, Education Manager (East))

Current Education Offer

A Discovery Visit 'Victorian Values', is led by a team of volunteers. In 2012-13 this was delivered to 1500 pupils (50 individual groups), these were mostly from Key Stages 1 and 2. The Discovery Visit is backed up by a house tour which is a shorter tour than that offered to the general visitor and is delivered by a small team of room stewards who have been trained in working with this age group. Feedback for both the Discovery Visit and House Tour is very positive. Audley End House also has a Teachers Kit which was updated in 2010 <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/publications/audley-end-teachers-kit/>

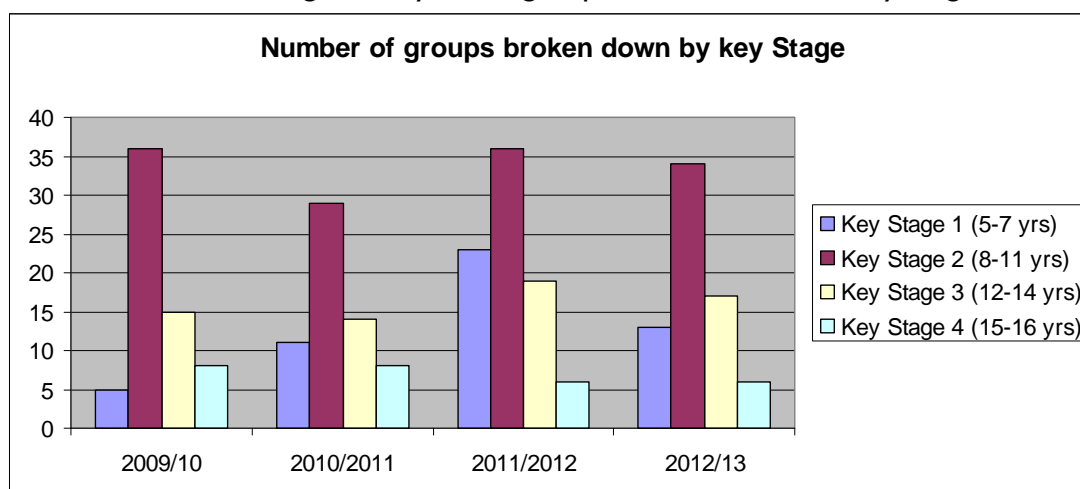
Current Audience

The overall number of education visitors to Audley End House has increased since the initial Service Wing project in 2008. The year before the project we welcomed 1837 education visitors with 2580 coming the following year. This reflects the introduction of the Discovery Visit and the publicity around the project. Numbers peaked at the site in 2011-12 with 3927 visitors with a slight decline last year to 3305.

In general the refocusing of the story at Audley End to the Victorian story has made the property more appealing to younger Key Stages as both age groups visit to support Houses and Homes (KS1) or Victorian life (KS2).

A closer analysis of the bookings database shows that although adult education groups do visit the majority of education visits are from school age groups with 35% of all groups being adult learning groups in 2009-10 decreasing to 28% in 2012-13

A breakdown of school groups over the last four years show that Key Stages 3 and 4 do visit but there are significantly fewer groups from these older Key Stages.



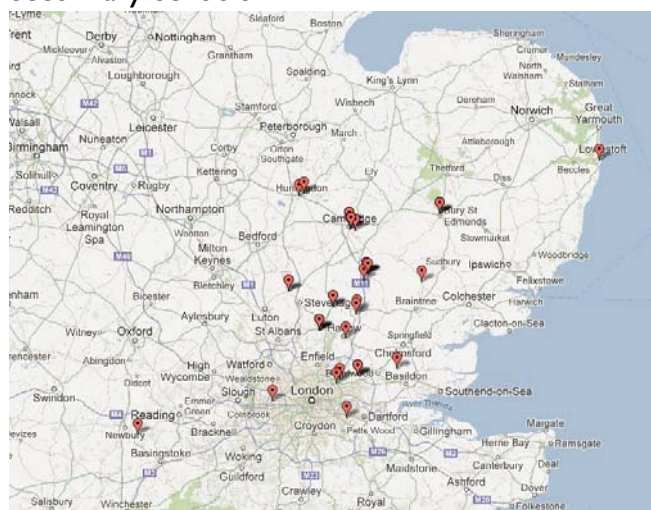
If UK secondary schools are further looked at there are only 23 individual schools who have visited the property over the last 5 years compared to 94 primary schools. The maps below show their geographical distribution and suggest that most groups are fairly local to the site. A few do travel more significant distances but these are probably using nearby residential centres.

Location of UK schools visiting Audley End House between April 2009 and end March 2013

Primary Schools



Secondary Schools



There are 130 secondary schools within 25 miles of Audley End House and 663 primary schools so there is considerable scope to attract more visitors.

National Curriculum Links

Currently there is uncertainty about the National Curriculum from autumn 2014 as there is a major review underway. If the proposed changes do take place then study of Victorian era will move from KS2 to KS3.

Capacity

Although a large property there is limited opportunity to greatly increase capacity at Audley End due to the lack of covered space available for education groups. If the weather is nice than groups are well served with picnic space for lunch breaks but, apart from the education room, there is no covered space for these groups.

There is little capacity to increase the number of Discovery Visits as at times (particularly in the Autumn Term) the visit is fully booked. The redisplay of the Nursery and coal gallery will enable the accompanying House Tour to be altered and improved but it is unlikely that it will be possible to greatly increase the number of KS 1 and 2 groups visiting the property.

What will potentially make a new story for the property is the innovation of the technology introduced by Sir John Griffin Griffin. This approach is rare for a country house and can be used to encourage KS3 visitors. Targeting this age group will also give us some certainty around the curriculum as currently at KS3 there is a focus on the development of industrialisation from 1750 and changes in society caused by this. The proposed new curriculum talks about the development of a modern economy including technological innovation and social conditions. By ensuring that we look at the improvement in working and living conditions at Audley End and linking this to the technological innovation introduced there we can make the property relevant to KS3 groups whichever curriculum is being followed. Focusing this on a country house will also offer something unique to teachers of this age group as the majority of teaching resources focus on towns, cities, factories, mines and transport.

Rather than propose a new Discovery Visit which then would rely on use of an education room it is suggested that a suite of resources be supplied for this age groups enabling them to access this story both directly (that is materials written for this age group) and via teachers. Designing a self led visit which could last for half a day will remove the problem of lunch space. Partner visits to the Museum in Saffron Walden will be investigated to enable schools to make the most of coach travel.

Possible resources

There is a great deal of research being undertaken on the technology of Victorian Audley End and this can be adapted for the target audience and made available on line and at site. A number of enquiry based trails will be devised to help teachers and pupils investigate the innovations of Victorian Audley End and to access information from experts in a variety of different formats. The final suite of resources will be decided after consultation with local secondary schools at an event planned for September 2013.

Budget

There is no budget within the project for education resources. The consultation event will be funded from within the current East of England Education budget. Much can be achieved by using material currently planned for the interpretation scheme and adapting it for the appropriate audience. The major expense is likely to be rewriting academic research for a KS3 audience however; some funding for this can be found from within the Education Resources budget as long as material written can be adapted for use at other properties

Appendix 2 – Evaluation of the replica doll’s house

Easter 2013 period, ongoing until September 2013

Initial questionnaire responses - 60 respondents

Who played with the doll’s house:	Mostly girls , fairly evenly spread between ages 2-5 and 6-10 years
How long for:	Majority was up to 10 minutes , then less than 5 minutes. No one was longer than 20 minutes (possibly due to its setting in the VIC)
What they enjoyed most:	Just being able to touch and play , the dolls (especially the costumes and the baby), the furniture (especially the rocking horse and the harp). Many said “all of it”.
One word to describe it:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wonderful, amazing, lovely, awesome, great, excellent, wow, epic. • Detailed, beautiful, interesting, fascinating realistic. • Accessible, big, fun.
Did it improve their visit that day:	yes (only one no, who had nonetheless described the doll’s house as being “excellent”)
Why:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New experience (especially for regular visitors). Unexpected. • Imagination, fun and enjoyable, interactive. • Good for children and made for children.
Would they have enjoyed an exact replica more?	Yes
Would a digital one have been as much fun?	No , I don’t think so
Is there anything we could improve?	Overwhelmingly no . Suggestions included more furniture and dolls, stairs, better access to top floor.
Did it make them think about children’s lives in the 19 th century?	Overwhelmingly yes
Would they have enjoyed more information on toys of the period?	Overwhelmingly yes

Compiled by Sarah Tatham, Interpretation Manager 3/05/13

Appendix 3 – Planned events 2013/14

Date	No of days	Title	Visitor target	Target audience	Comment	Online Booking and Early Bird Offers
Fri 29 Mar	4	Easter Family Fun Trail	2,000	Child pleasers	Tie into start of season – no specific media spend required	
Sat 4 May	3	Grand Victorian Fayre	5,500	Child pleasers, experience seekers	Highlight event – First May bank holiday	Online bookings and 10% early bird until 2 weeks prior
Sun 26 May	2	Audley End Through The Ages	4,000	Child pleasers, experience seekers	Highlight event – Second May bank holiday	Online bookings and 10% early bird until 2 weeks prior
Tues 28 May	4	TTG...tbc	3,000?	Child pleasers & experience seekers with children	Spring half term event	
Mon 22 Jul Mon 29 Jul Mon 5 Aug Mon 12 Aug Mon 19 Aug	5 each	Time Travellers Go...	3,000	Child pleasers and experience seekers with children	Summer holiday childrens' event programme	
Sun 25 Aug	3	WWII	5,500	Child pleasers, experience seekers	Highlight event – August bank holiday	Online booking but no early bird offer
Sat 28 Sep	2	Apple Weekend	2,000	Child pleasers, experience seekers &	Niche event but popular-limited spend	

Sat 26 Oct	9	Game Week	6,000	culture seekers Child pleasers, experience seekers	available for this October half term event	
Sat 23 Nov	2	Victorian Christmas	4,000	Child pleasers, experience seekers & culture seekers	Highlight event spread across two weekends	Online booking but no early bird offer
Sat 30 Nov	2	Victorian Christmas	4,000	Child pleasers, experience seekers & culture seekers	Highlight event spread across two weekends	Online booking but no early bird offer
Sat 15 Feb	9	Everything but the Squeak Week	6,000	Child pleasers, experience seekers	Feb half term offer	

Appendix 4 - AEH competitors in the area

Main houses(within 45 km radius) Compiled by Sarah Tatham 31/05/12

AEH competitors in the area

(within 45 km radius)

Main houses

Anglesey Abbey (NT)

Lode, by Cambridge. 20 km from Audley End as the crow flies.

<http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/anglesey-abbey/>



Description: Jacobean house with large gardens and watermill. Abbey that became a house and house and was largely remodelled by Lord Fairhaven in the early 20th c. He loved clocks and collected around 40 for his home.

Offer: Free flow most days (room stewards and room sheets). Also “Experience a day in the life of a house that ran like clockwork” tours Mondays and Tuesdays lasting 45 minutes (additional £3 fee).

USP: Invitation to delve into 'a day in the life' of Lord Fairhaven and opportunity to discover his love of clocks and his vision of English country living.

Wimpole Hall and estate (NT)

Royston. 25 km from Audley End as the crow flies.

<http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/wimpole-estate/>



Description: 17th c house with Sir John Soane yellow drawing room, Gibbs 1730 library Reconstructed collections (house acquired empty)

Offer: Usual tours. In addition:

Below stairs servants quarters in basement – special basement monthly tours

Family trails: top hat trail (lord of the house) or mob cap trail (servants)

Behind the scenes house-keeping tours.

USP: A working estate still guided by the seasons, with an impressive mansion and home farm.

Ickworth (NT)

5m from Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk. 35 km from Audley End as the crow flies.

<http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/ickworth/>



Description: Arts & architecture inspired house created by a man with a passion for art, Italy and parties. Extensive collection of “treasures”. (Eastwing now luxury hotel).

Offer: Ickworth Lives – learn about workers of the estate who kept in running and share their memories. Discover what upstairs downstairs domestic life was like in out in new 1930s servants’ quarters displays (new £2 million HLF project opened March 2012).

Living history days, eg currently Victorian cooking

Studio silver today exhibition of Goldsmith Company’s work.

Geocache, artist in residence

USP: A Georgian Italianate palace in an idyllic English landscape, stunning architectural oddity, all with a story to match. New servants displays.

Ingastone Hall

Open Easter- Sept. 40 km from Audley End as the crow flies.

<http://www.ingatestonehall.com/index.php>



Description: 18 generations of the Petre family have lived and still own the hall. Mostly Tudor and presented as the family home it still is. Former home of the Essex Records Office.

Offer: 90 minutes conducted tours or free-flow at peak times. Guided school visits. Civil War and Tudor re-enactments.

USP: 450 year old family home.

Knebworth House

Stevenage, visits April – Sept. 35 km from Audley End as the crow flies.

<http://www.knebworthhouse.com/>





Description: Mostly Victorian, with Jacobean banqueting Hall, high Gothic state drawing room, Regency bedrooms, 20th c. designs in entrance hall, dining parlour and library. 25 acres of garden. Famous for open air rock concerts (125,000 attendance: Led Zep, Robbie Williams, Oasis...) and film location.

Offer: Guided and free-flow tours during peak times. Downloadable audiotour. Hands on education team (Sandford Award).

USP: Walk through 500 years of British history; the Stately Home of Rock

Hatfield House

Hatfield, Beds. visits Easter – Sept. 40 km from Audley End as the crow flies.

<http://www.hatfield-house.co.uk/>





Description: Mostly 17th c Elizabethan with large Victorian components, gardens. Superb example of Jacobean craftsmanship (e.g. grand staircase, Marble Hall. Adventure play area with large scale model of the house. Farm. Stable yard. Park and garden. Used in films such as Shakespeare in Love, Elizabeth.

Offer: Guided and free-flow tours with room stewards. The original Kitchen in the House has recently been restored. Visitors can see how the staff prepared a banquet for Queen Victoria's visit in 1846, learn about everyday life and experience the atmosphere of a Victorian Kitchen. Audiotour available. In the park there is Bloody Hollow, a new 2.5 metre high model of Hatfield House play area, which features a range of play items for children up to 12 years old, ranging from a rope bridge, aerial runway and a tree house, plus all the favourites such as swings, springies and a see-saw., Excellent website with downloadable PDFs. Tudor Living History educational programme (Sandford Award)

USP: "400 years of culture, history and entertainment", one of the Treasure Houses of England.

Layer Marney Tower

7m SW Colchester, Essex. visits April – Sept. 45 km from Audley End as the crow flies. <http://www.layermarneytower.co.uk/>



Description: Red brick Tudor house with grand gatehouse offering stunning views of the area. Also conference and wedding facility. Popular with school groups studying the Tudors. Extensive gardens with regularly updated blog written by entertaining Head Gardener Libby.

<http://thesproutlingwrites.wordpress.com/>

Offer: Restored tower rooms including history room with model of the house. as it might have looked had Lord Marney had completed his vision. Specialist school tours.

USP: Manderley the doll's house (pictured), perfect example of Tudor architecture popular with school groups.

Smaller houses

Hedingham Castle

By Sudbury, Essex. Visits: April – October. 25 km from Audley End as the crow flies. <http://www.hedinghamcastle.co.uk/>



Description: 12th century keep built by Aubrey de Vere and still owned by one of his descendants. Conference and wedding venue.

Offer: 4 floors to explore, including the Banqueting Hall, Bringing medieval history alive education workshops.

USP: Explore the castle's rich history of kings, knights, battles and legends.

Even smaller houses close by:

Cressing Temple, Oliver Cromwell's House, Denny Abbey, Octavia Hill Birthplace House.

Compiled by Sarah Tatham 31/05/12

Appendix 5 – Concepts for evaluation (pdf)

Appendix 6 – Evaluation results (pdf)