

Capability Brown at Euston Hall



The restored river at Euston © Euston Hall

Capability Brown remodelled the water features at Euston Hall in the 1770s for the 3rd Duke of Grafton, creating the serpentine Broadwater, basin and weir.

The Duke contacted Brown in 1767, asking him to make changes to the river at his Euston Estate in Suffolk. Charles FitzRoy, 2nd Duke of Grafton, had earlier commissioned landscape architect William Kent to modernise the park during the 1730s and 1740s, including planting schemes and designing ornamental buildings. Brown's major contribution was to expand Kent's system of small lakes and rivulets into an extensive new lake.

Brown's involvement at Euston Hall continued for over 15 years, with his last visit to the estate taking place in January 1783, just weeks before his death. He was paid £900 (more than £1.5 million in 2015) for his work there between 1767 and 1769.

Euston Hall: www.eustonhall.co.uk

Particular thanks to Shana Kilbee at Euston for her help

For more information about Brown and his work go to capabilitybrown.org/research



Capability Brown

Lancelot 'Capability' Brown (1716-1783) was born in the Northumberland village of Kirkharle, and went on to popularise the English landscape style, advising on over 250 large country estates throughout England and Wales.

Formal gardens gave way to naturalistic parkland of trees, expanses of water and rolling grass. He also designed great houses, churches and garden buildings, and was skilled in engineering, especially with water.

This guide was created as part of a festival celebrating the 300th anniversary of his birth. Find out more about the man and his work at capabilitybrown.org/research

Portrait of Lancelot 'Capability' Brown, c.1770-75, by Richard Cosway (17421821)/Private Collection/ Bridgeman Images.



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Aerial view of Euston showing the broadwater and basin © Euston Hall

Creating the Broadwater

Brown's most important feature at Euston is the spectacular Broadwater lake in the pleasure grounds. The lake is 2 kilometres long and has a central island, designed to give views back towards the house through the trees. To the west of the woods in the pleasure grounds he built a weir to direct the flow of water from the River Blackbourne into the lake.

Little is known about how Brown carried out his scheme at Euston, but the work did include increasing the depth of the river. It is thought that part of Brown's design included landscaping to the river bank in front of Euston Hall and along the river to the south.

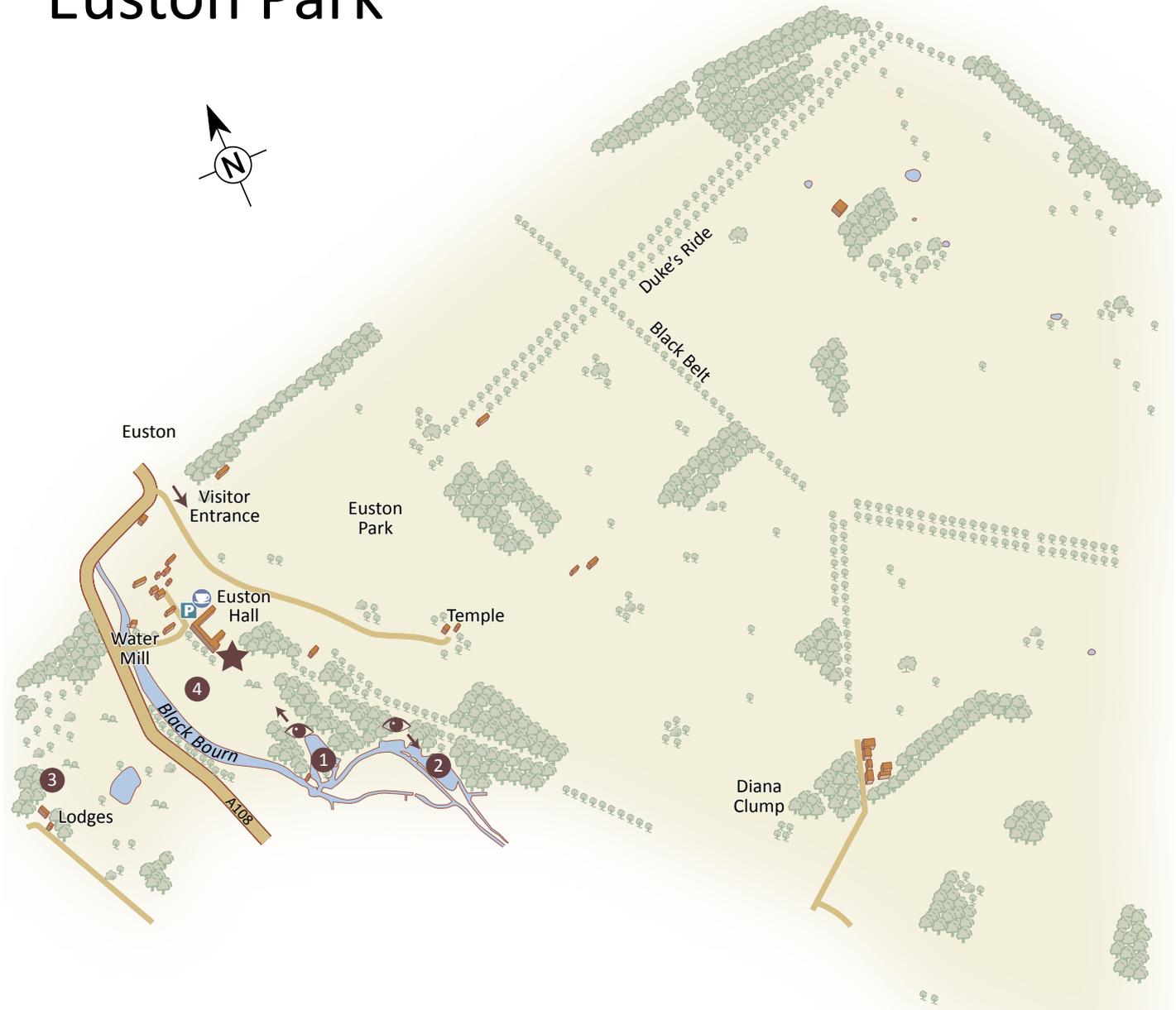
Some historians believe there are elements of Brown's style in the watermill (listed Grade II) at Euston, which is red brick with Gothic-style windows and was used to supply water to the fountains and the house.

Planting in the Park

William Kent is known to have designed planting schemes in the east, west and south of the park in the mid 1740s. Brown's later scheme included the trees by the lodges on the western boundary of the estate, and he was also asked to extend his design south and west beyond Euston New Park, close to Rymer.

Brown's plans can be seen on a map of 1772, credited to him and to James Parker of Thetford.

Capability Brown at Euston Park



Capability Brown features

- 1 Basin
- 2 Broadwater
- 3 Tree planting around Lodges
- 4 Landscaped river bank
- ★ Eye-catcher
- ↑ Viewpoint
- 👁️ Ha-ha
- 🌳 Specimen trees
- 🌲 Woodland or copse
- 🌳 Parkland trees
- 🌿 Shrubbery

- Visitor Centre
- Refreshments
- Toilets
- Parking
- Disabled Parking

500 yards
500 metres



Dredging the river © Euston Hall

Restoring the Broadwater

Over the 200 years following Brown's death, the build-up of silt in the waterway at Euston drastically altered its appearance. Some remedial work was done in the 1980s to shift the silt into small islands, but the condition of the Broadwater and basin continued to deteriorate.

With the help of grants from Natural England and English Heritage money was raised to restore the weirs, pools and rivers at Euston Hall. In 2012, the 12th Duke of Grafton began the huge dredging project to remove around 500,000 cubic metres of silt.

Brown's original waterway plans were used in carrying out restoration work to the basin and Broadwater, improving important historic views in the park. There have also been benefits to the environment.

Biodiversity at Euston Hall

At Euston Hall the parkland features support a variety of habitats including wood pasture and parkland, lowland meadow, lowland dry acid grassland, good quality semi-improved grassland, ancient woodland, deciduous woodland, mixed broadleaved and coniferous woodland and habitats associated with the lake and river including coastal and floodplain grazing marsh.



Euston Estate contains the Fakenham Wood, Euston and Sapiston Great Grove Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and comprises one of the largest areas of ancient woodland in Suffolk. Wider rides in the woods provide an important habitat for butterflies and support the strongest colony of White Admiral butterfly in Suffolk.

See www.capabilitybrown.org/garden/euston for further information about Fakenham Wood, Euston and Sapiston Great Grove SSSI

Euston Hall today

The estate remains in the ownership of the FitzRoy family. The park and gardens are listed Grade II*. As well as Brown's waterways, and Kent's designs in the park, visitors can also see the 17th century pleasure grounds, laid out by landscape gardener John Evelyn.