

Report on Highgrove trips – 11th July and 7th August 2012

The 11th July trip set off with a non-so-good weather forecast, however when we arrived it was fine. We had a very nice guide, although she did have a very soft voice which was a little hard to hear if you were near the back of the party. The gardens looked good and there had been some recent plantings in parts of the woodland area since last year. The meadows were in bloom with many wild flowers, some of which we do not see in Derbyshire, so the tour took us around these and to the front of the house which overlooks a beautiful rural view. From there we were led back through the flower gardens and away from the house and back to the Visitor centre, tearoom and shop. The weather held and as we were eating our cream teas, we noticed the party after us had their umbrellas up, so we were very lucky. There were a few plant purchases to accommodate before we drove off back home down the motorway.

The 7th August trip set off slightly earlier to a visit at midday, stopping as usual at Webbs of Wychbold for a “drivers stop and coffee stop”. We were making very good time until we found the Tetbury road had been closed with diversions. After a very helpful conversation with a lady at Highgrove, the driver followed his road map to get us there – the policeman who met us said the diversion was causing a nightmare. However, we were slotted into a later timing and whizzed through straight onto the tour by a very capable guide. She was exceptionally good on plant names and history of the garden and as the meadows had not been totally cut, we looked around these as well. She answered most questions without reference to her notes and it turned out she has worked for Highgrove for 13 years and was Head Gardener for 9 of those – no wonder she was good. We all went back for a snack and chat at their tearoom, bought plants and mementos and off we departed, having had good weather again.