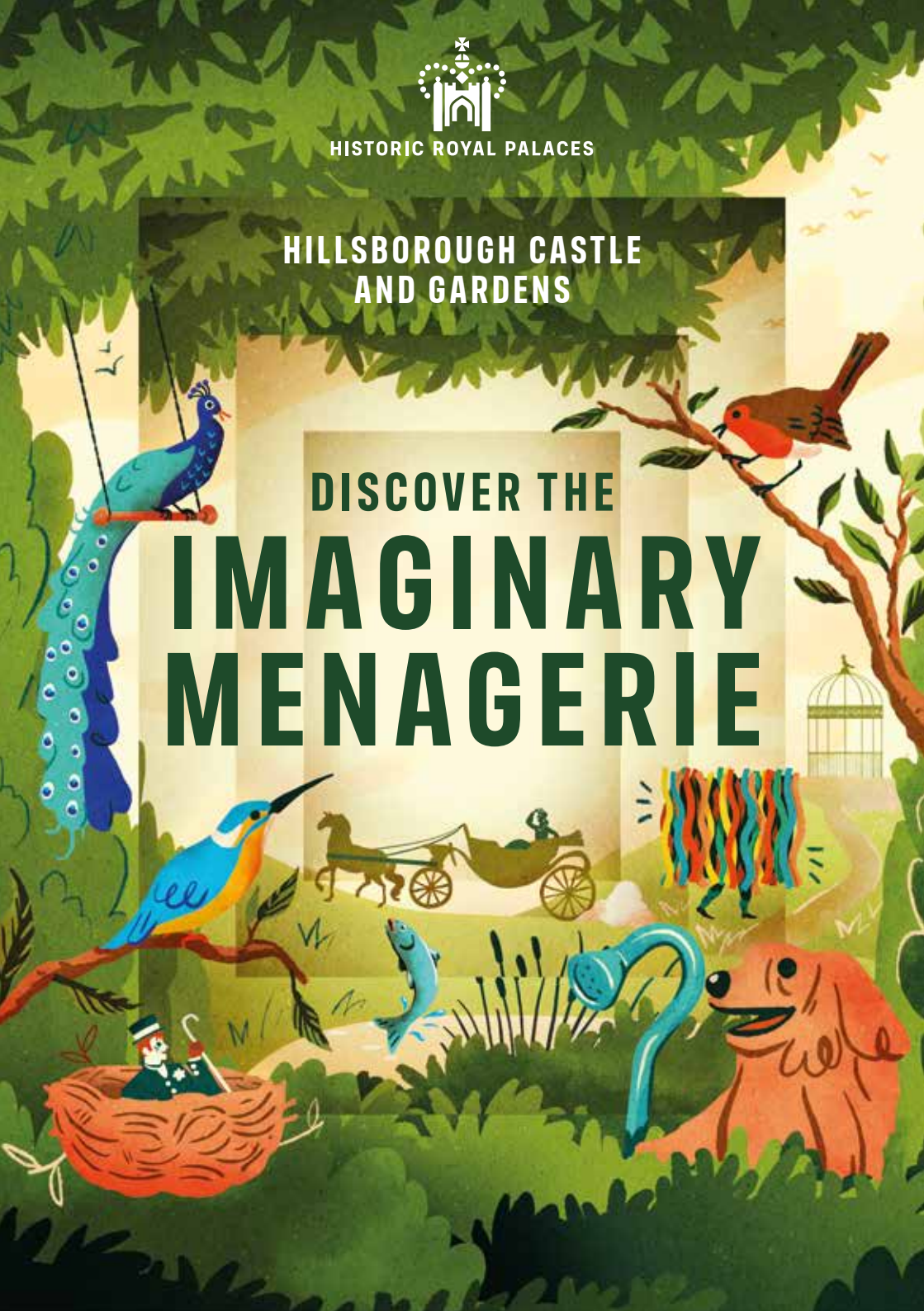




HISTORIC ROYAL PALACES

HILLSBOROUGH CASTLE AND GARDENS

DISCOVER THE IMAGINARY MENAGERIE





WELCOME TO THE IMAGINARY MENAGERIE

where you can uncover the stories of the pets that have lived at the Castle and the wild animals that continue to make Hillsborough their home.

Follow the kingfishers and the robins and discover magical places to play, marvel, or simply relax with your family and friends.



Look out for the kingfishers and robins!



THE KINGFISHER TRAIL



This trail takes you around the Lake and will take about 30 minutes plus extra time for play. The trail is step-free and mostly flat, apart from the paths down to the Sound Forest and to the Bee Hives which are steep and uneven.



Can you spot the kingfishers? Follow them around the trail and see what you can find – look out for the real live kingfishers near the island on the Lake.



SENSORY WALK

Step into a space designed to awaken your senses. Listen, look, touch, balance and explore. There's something to discover at every turn. Take your time, play gently and let curiosity lead the way.

If you have time, step into the Shepherd's Hut to try out your heritage building skills!

A SHOAL OF FISH

Created by local artist Kevin Killen, this magical sculpture commemorates former Governor of Northern Ireland Lord Erskine's passion for his pet tropical fish.



SOUND FOREST

Push your way through the forest of wooden chimes designed by leading German artist Hansjorg Palm and create marvellous music.





BEES

Hillsborough's native Irish honey bees are busy making honey and helping all the flowers, fruit and vegetables to grow. See if you can find their hives – but don't get too close!

CARRIAGE

In the early 19th century, the Hill family had several carriages including a barouche like this one. They also kept coach dogs who lived in the stables and bonded with the horses. If they were well trained they fought off highwaymen too!



*Went out in the barouche.
Took out Surryalla the beautiful coach
dog to make him follow the carriage,
but he soon ran home again!*

Journal of Lady Charlotte & Lady Mary Hill

COWS HELPING NATURE

Our local rare breed cows are helping to manage the meadow – they trample the seeds into the earth and encourage lots of different plants to grow.

Even their dung supports many insects which in turn provide food for birds, foxes and other animals.



BIRD HIDE

Shhhh! Hillsborough's Lake is home to many birds including our majestic swans. If you are quiet and still you might spot our resident kingfishers and little grebes too.

BIRD FEEDING STATION

Bread isn't good for our wild water birds, but they love to eat grain.

HILLSBOROUGH'S HOUNDS

Many dogs have made Hillsborough Castle their home. In 1815 Lord Arthur Hill bought 'a pretty little dog named Rosette for Mama' and in the late 19th century, Lady Alice Hill regularly showed her borzois at Mr Cruft's dog show.

The Castle even had its own corgi, Bridie, who lived here with Lord Wakehurst, Governor of Northern Ireland in the 1950's. Some of the Castle's canine residents have been brought to life by sculptor Tessa Hayward using natural materials such as *bark!*



*'A pretty little dog named
Rosette for Mama'*



THE ROBIN & KINGFISHER TRAILS

AT HILLSBOROUGH CASTLE AND GARDENS



THE ROBIN TRAIL: 1km



40 minutes walk plus extra time to play

- | | |
|------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 Gardens' Summerhouse | 4 Sounds of Nature |
| 2 Shell House | 5 A Cage of Exotic Birds |
| 3 A Family Nest | 6 Willow House |



THE KINGFISHER TRAIL: 1.2km



30 minutes walk plus extra time to play

- | | |
|-------------------|-------------------------|
| 1 Sensory Walk | 6 Cows |
| 2 A Shoal of Fish | 7 Bird Hide |
| 3 Sound Forest | 8 Bird Feeding Station |
| 4 Bee Hives | 9 Hillsborough's Hounds |
| 5 Carriage | |



Weston Pavilion





THE ROBIN TRAIL



This trail takes you past Moss Walk and through the Lost Garden and will take about 40 minutes plus extra time for play. The path is step-free but is steep and uneven in places.



Look out for the robins. Follow them around the trail to see what you can find.

THE GARDENS' SUMMERHOUSE

The Gardens' Summerhouse is full of fascinating facts about the birds, woodland animals and tiny creatures who live in the gardens. Open up the drawers and cupboards to see some of our furry and feathery friends up close and learn about their habits and habitats!

THE SHELL HOUSE

Take a peek inside the Shell House, can you spot some geometric patterns on the walls? These marks have been left behind by shells which were set into the wet plaster – a popular way to decorate garden buildings in the past.

A FAMILY NEST

There's room for everyone in our huge nest. Pretend to be a giant bird, brood and nestle down!



SOUNDS OF NATURE

Do you know what sound a robin makes? What about a fox? It's fun to talk to the animals and birds at Hillsborough. Why not speak to your friends using our special talk tubes too?



A CAGE OF EXOTIC BIRDS

We know that when he built his house in the 1750s, Wills Hill planned a menagerie of exotic birds. This would probably have included pheasants, parrots and fancy chickens.

We don't know if he ever completed his plans but if he did do you think it might have looked something like this?



Look out for the sculpture!

The entrance to the castle is to be a court with spaces laid out for a Menagerie or rather foreign birds

Mary Delaney, celebrated botanical artist on a visit to Hillsborough in 1758

The birdcage sculpture was designed by All Creative Branding and fabricated at Ballinliss Forge, Newry

WILLOW HOUSE

Starting in the 1820s, the Marquess and Marchioness of Downshire used to invite all the school children on their estate for a party in the gardens. Each September, thousands of children would gather on the lawn, where they were provided with baskets of beef and bread. You might be surprised at what the children were given to drink at the party – barrels of beer! In Victorian times, children were often given diluted beer to drink, it was known as 'small beer'. The barrels of beer were kept cool in the shade of a large tree in the middle of the lawn'

The willow house was made by Clive Lyttle





REMEMBER THE RULES

KEEP SAFE AND HAVE FUN!

1 FAMILY

The Imaginary Menagerie is designed for the whole family, whatever their age and ability, to play and explore together. There are places for adventurous play and places for quiet play.



2 SUPERVISION

Though children are safe in the Gardens, they should be supervised by a responsible parent or carer at all times. We don't allow unsupervised visitors under 16 in the Gardens. If we do find an unsupervised child and can't find their carer within 30 minutes, we may contact the Local Authority to report an abandoned child. There are lots of adventures for children of all ages. Parents and carers need to decide which play equipment is right for their children's age and ability.

3 CHILDREN'S CLOTHING

The Imaginary Menagerie includes sand, water, pebbles, bark and a range of play equipment, some of which could graze sensitive young skin. Please make sure your children are appropriately dressed for these conditions.

4 KEEP TOGETHER!

Please stay with your children at all times as the Imaginary Menagerie is designed for adventure and exploration – and is full of places to disappear!

5 SMOKING AND ALCOHOL

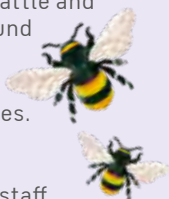
No-one is allowed to smoke around the Imaginary Menagerie installations and alcohol is forbidden too.

6 PICNICKING

We want visitors to be able to play all over the Imaginary Menagerie. Please don't set up any picnic blankets and chairs that will get in the way of children playing. There are lots of lovely picnic spots around the Gardens and you can always come back to play later.

7 RESPECT OTHER CREATURES

You will encounter bees, cattle and large wild water birds around the Imaginary Menagerie. Please obey the signs and respect our fellow creatures.



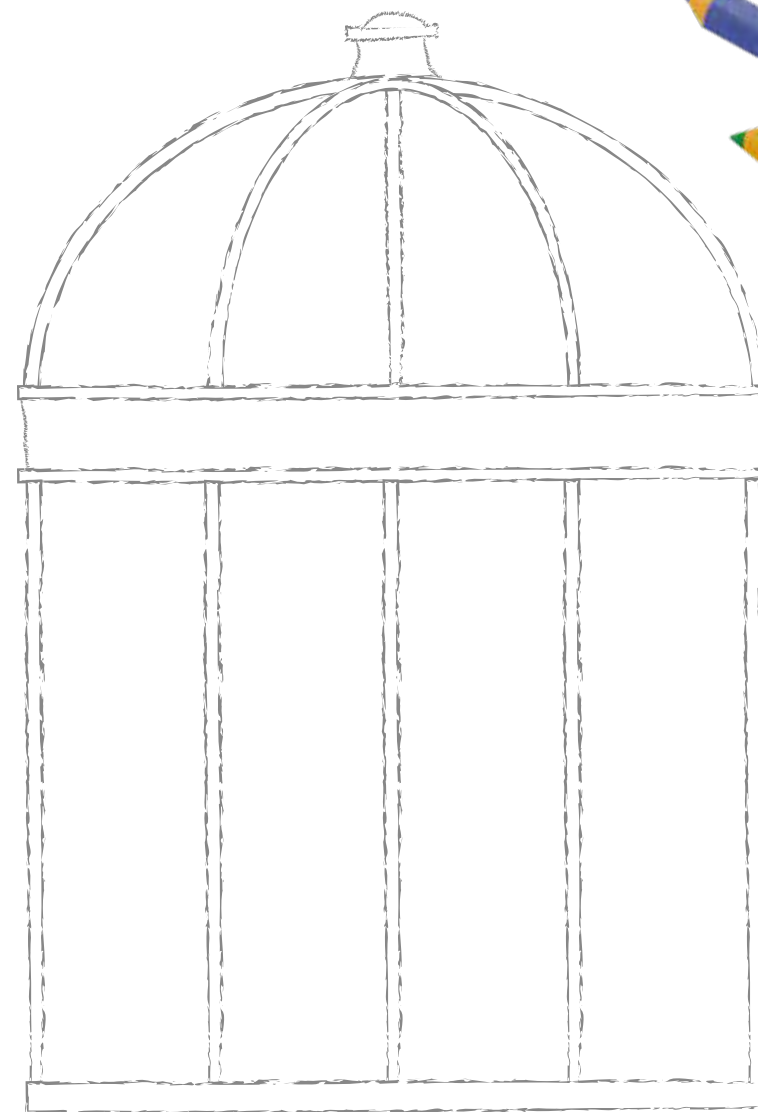
8 FIRST AID

There are first-aid trained staff on hand at Hillsborough at all times – just ask any member of staff and they'll call a first-aider for you. All of our staff are trained in safeguarding.



DRAW YOUR OWN IMAGINARY MENAGERIE!

Let your creativity run riot and fill this birdcage with your own exotic birds.





Share your experience
online and follow us here

 Hillsborough Castle

 @Hillsboroughcastle

 @HillsCastle

 **HERITAGE
FUND**