



Patron: George Coventry
(13th Earl of Coventry)

THE FRIENDS OF CROOME

November 2023

Dear Friend

I am pleased to have this opportunity to thank you for your support as a member of the Friends of Croome and your enthusiastic participation in our fundraising activities. Our Events Team have, once again, organised an excellent programme of visits and talks this year, with trips to Windsor Castle and Buckingham Palace (during Coronation year) proving especially popular.

Your support means we are able to continue to make significant financial contributions to Croome's ongoing restoration. In the last few years we have funded the conservation and installation of a section of the Robert Adam library bookcases in Croome Court, funded repairs of important Coade stone statues in the parkland, funded extensive re-laying of floorboards on the first floor of Croome Court and the fitting out of the restored Sergeant's and Orderlies' building at Croome.

Croome's second-hand book shop started life over 15 years ago and has made a huge contribution to our funds. However, since the start of Covid and the increasing use of card payments we have been unable to raise as much money as before and to be able to keep proper track of non-cash payments. In line with bookshops elsewhere on National Trust sites, the day-to-day running of the Croome bookshop will, therefore, transfer to the National Trust from 1 March 2024.

This decision has not been reached lightly. The Friends of Croome Committee has thoroughly investigated all possible solutions to retaining ownership of the bookshop, but increasing regulation around fundraising and cash handling means we are unable to operate our own card machine in the bookshop and therefore cannot reliably monitor our income. This is especially disappointing, as our, independent bookshop is such a popular part of visitors' experience at Croome.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our volunteers for their magnificent efforts in running the bookshop so successfully for so many years. The National Trust will benefit from all their hard work in creating such a successful operation. I hope many of our volunteers will continue to help in the bookshop – their know-how and experience will be greatly appreciated and welcome. Although the running of the bookshop will be passing to the National Trust, the Friends of Croome will continue to have a say in how income from the bookshop will be allocated to projects at Croome in the future.

Thank you for your continued support and understanding. I would like to end by wishing you and your families a very happy Christmas and a healthy and peaceful New Year.

Yours sincerely
Chris Wynne-Davies
Chairman