The Archbishop and his wife Caroline planted a flowering cherry tree in Lambeth Palace on Wednesday morning, celebrating decades of partnership with the National Garden Scheme.

Neil Turner/Lambeth Palace

The cherry tree is a gift from the National Garden Scheme, which first partnered with Lambeth Palace in 1938 (see index card image below).

National Garden Scheme
The cherry tree will flower in early spring with pale pink flowers and provide a nectar source for Lambeth Palace bees.

Lindsay Schuman, Head Gardener at Lambeth Palace, said: “We’re delighted to be celebrating this partnership with the National Gardens Scheme who are such champions of nursing, health and caring charities.

“We love being able to support their work by sharing the Lambeth Palace Gardens with the public each year on one evening in spring. It’s very special. We’re grateful for the gift of this beautiful cherry tree to mark this milestone and look forward to many more years of collaboration with the National Garden Scheme in the future.”

George Plumptre, Chief Executive of the National Garden Scheme, said: “The garden at Lambeth Palace is very special to us. Our partnership contributes to the consistent and generous funding that we’re able to give to our beneficiary charities which include some of the UK’s best-loved nursing and health charities. We’d like to thank the generosity of successive Archbishops of Canterbury for their valued support.”
The Archbishop of Canterbury, the Most Revd Justin Welby, said: “Caroline and I are so happy to have planted this tree as a sign of appreciation for our partnership with the National Garden Scheme. It’s a privilege to be part of this scheme that gives people the chance to experience the physical and mental health benefits of gardens – while also raising money for nursing and health charities.

“The cherry tree will look beautiful in the spring and summer, and for many years to come. How we care for God’s earth is one of our priorities in the worldwide Anglican Communion, and here at Lambeth Palace we take that very seriously. This cherry tree is a small but important sign of that commitment, as well as celebrating our decades-long work with the National Garden Scheme.”

Before the tree planting, the National Garden Scheme team joined the Archbishop and the Lambeth Palace staff for Morning Prayer in the Crypt Chapel.

The National Garden Scheme gives visitors access to over 3,500 private gardens and raises money for nursing and health charities through admissions, teas and cake.

Lambeth Palace Gardens is just one of the gardens that open for the Scheme and in 2024 will open to the public on Monday, 20th May from 5pm to 8pm.

- Learn more about the National Garden Scheme.
- Find out more about Lambeth Palace Garden.