



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Over 13,500 local children help bring Christmas to life at Waddesdon Manor

This festive season, Waddesdon Manor invites visitors to step into the enchanting world of "Sounds of the Season", a community art display created by over 13,500 local children from 74 schools across Buckinghamshire, Berkshire and Oxfordshire. Presented in the Coach House Gallery at The Stables, this immersive walk-through installation celebrates festive music, song and sound through a vibrant array of imaginative artworks, alongside original recordings created by pupils from Waddesdon C of E School.

Guided by Waddesdon Manor's Learning Team and supported by a host of professional artists, children aged 2 to 18+ years old have collaborated on this ambitious project. The installation brings classic festive music to life – from traditional carols to seasonal musical stories and tales – with inspiration ranging from WHAM's *Last Christmas* and Mariah Carey's *All I Want For Christmas Is You* to *Hark! The Herald Angels Sing* and *In the Bleak Midwinter*.

Highlights of the installation include a moving recording of *Little Donkey* performed in British Sign Language by Aylesbury Vale Academy Primary, a charming automaton illustrating the carol *I Saw Three Ships*, engineered by Design and Technology students, and a series of large-scale sculptures, including a willow reindeer and sleigh full of presents, and a green man figure from folklore formed from leaves made using recycled tin cans.

Waddesdon Manor's Learning Team, supported by talented local artists, worked with schools and community groups across the region through a mix of in-person workshops and online sessions to bring this large-scale project to life. Preparations began in July, with workshops taking place throughout August, September and October.

Sarah Dewberry, Head of Learning at Waddesdon Manor, said: "We are delighted that so many local schools and community groups participated in our Christmas display this year. Every year, the creativity shown by local young people is incredible, and we hope their work will raise a smile for all our visitors".

More Christmas Magic at Waddesdon:

"Sounds of the Season" is part of the wider *Christmas at Waddesdon* experience for 2025. Alongside the children's artwork, visitors can enjoy:

- **An extraordinary new light show:** Outside, the beautiful Manor and surrounding gardens are transformed by a new, **first of its kind, fully immersive light show** curated by Woodroffe Bassett



Design. Featuring specially commissioned digital projections, lighting effects and music all choreographed to wrap around audiences, it promises to transport visitors on a Grand Festive Tour through Europe.

- **Beautifully decorated interiors:** Inside the Manor, see the Grand Festive Tour brought to life with exquisite decorations, light art, and soundscapes. From Sweden's candle crowns to sugared delicacies in Paris and the serene lakes of Switzerland, each stop on this festive journey reveals a different way of celebrating the season.
- **A mesmerising light trail:** Winding through the colour-drenched woodland outside, a new light trail blends captivating new installations with seasonal favourites.

Event details:

- Christmas at Waddesdon runs until Sunday 4 January 2026.
- Entry to 'Sounds of the Season' is included with Christmas at Waddesdon Grounds admission.
- For detailed information on opening times, ticket prices and booking, visit:
www.waddesdon.org.uk/christmas.

NOTES FOR EDITORS

HIGH RESOLUTION IMAGES FOR MEDIA USE CAN BE DOWNLOADED BY CLICKING ON THIS LINK

- Christmas at Waddesdon 2025, Coach House © Waddesdon Manor Image Library. Photo Will Amlot

Artists Involved:

This project involved contributions from local artists, including Michelle Dufaur, Patrick Bullock, Protean Art, Katie Allen, Sandrine Case, Anne-Marie Abbate, Cathy Ebbels, Jane Charles, Paige Denham, and Waddesdon Learning Volunteers.

Local Schools and Groups:

The project brought together over 74 schools and community groups from across Buckinghamshire, Berkshire and Oxfordshire. A full list of participating organisations is available upon request.

OPENING DATES, TIMES AND TICKETS

Visits to the House and Grounds can be pre-booked online to avoid disappointment, including National Trust members.

National Trust prices start from £13.00 adults, £6.00 children (off-peak). Full details of prices and online booking information, here www.waddesdon.org.uk/christmas

Christmas at Waddesdon

Wednesday–Sunday, 22 November 2025–4 January 2026 (plus Monday 22, Tuesday 23, Monday 29 & Tuesday 30 December 2025)

Closed: Thursday 25 & Friday 26 December 2025

Grounds: 12noon–7pm

House: 12.30pm–7pm

Full details of prices and online booking information, here: www.waddesdon.org.uk/christmas

Waddesdon Manor was built at the end of the 19th century by Baron Ferdinand de Rothschild in the style of a French early 16th-century château. Baron Ferdinand was an inspired collector, and the house was designed to showcase his exceptional collection of English and Dutch paintings, French 18th-century furniture, Sèvres porcelain, and other decorative arts. When Ferdinand died in 1898, he left Waddesdon to his sister, Alice, who also was a great collector. Upon her death the house passed to her great-nephew, James de Rothschild, who inherited a substantial part of his father Baron Edmond's great collection. In 1957, to ensure its future in



WADDESDON

perpetuity, Waddesdon was bequeathed to the National Trust. The Rothschild family continues to run Waddesdon through a family charitable trust, the Rothschild Foundation. Until February 2024, it was under the chairmanship of Jacob, 4th Baron Rothschild. His eldest daughter, Hannah Rothschild, is now the Chair. More at <https://waddesdon.org.uk/about-us/press/notes-for-editors/>

For more information on Waddesdon and its events and exhibitions, visit www.waddesdon.org.uk, like @WaddesdonManor on Facebook and follow @waddesdonmanor_nt on Instagram.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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