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## **Northumbria awards Duchess of Northumberland with honorary degree**

The Duchess of Northumberland has been awarded an honorary degree from Northumbria University, Newcastle to recognise her significant contribution to the region.

The Duchess has played host to hundreds of thousands of international visitors at The Alnwick Garden since its launch in 2002. Over the past ten years it has attracted £150m into the North East thanks to her creative approach to tourism.

As the largest visitor attraction in the region, The Alnwick Garden was the brainchild of the Duchess, whose husband ran the estate and suggested she transform forty-two acres of abandoned land to create a new site for tourism.

She has since captured the imagination of the young and old alike with her unique events programme. From Cage fighting to Harley Davisons, visitors to the Alnwick Garden have been inspired by its magical grounds, charitable programmes and horticultural expertise.

Boasting an Ornamental Garden, a Treehouse and the UK's largest collection of European plants and the intriguing Poison Garden, The Alnwick Garden was awarded the Enjoy England Excellence Award in 2005, just three years after opening.

The Alnwick Garden Trust, also established by the Duchess, is a registered charity which not only contributes to the running of the Garden, but also provides educational and arts programmes for the community. Additionally, the Duke and Duchess are patrons of over 160 charities across the North East, reinforcing their commitment to regional causes. The Duchess was awarded The Variety Club Silver Heart for her services to charities in the North East which is the highest accolade awarded by The Variety Club.

The Duchess graduated with students from Northumbria's arts, design and social sciences programmes, during a ceremony held at the University's Sport Central Arena. The recipients of honorary degrees are nominated by the University's staff for their achievements, their links to the University, and their inspirational qualities.

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If you have a media enquiry please contact our Media and Communications team at [media.communications@northumbria.ac.uk](mailto:media.communications@northumbria.ac.uk) or call [0191 227 4571](tel:01912274571).

## Contacts



### **Rik Kendall**

Press Contact

PR and Media Manager

Business and Law / Arts, Design & Social Sciences

[rik.kendall@northumbria.ac.uk](mailto:rik.kendall@northumbria.ac.uk)

07923 382339



### **Andrea Slowey**

Press Contact

PR and Media Manager

Engineering and Environment / Health and Life Sciences

[andrea.slowey@northumbria.ac.uk](mailto:andrea.slowey@northumbria.ac.uk)

07708 509436



### **Rachael Barwick**

Press Contact

PR and Media Manager

[rachael.barwick@northumbria.ac.uk](mailto:rachael.barwick@northumbria.ac.uk)

07377422415



### **James Fox**

Press Contact

Student Communications Manager

[james2.fox@northumbria.ac.uk](mailto:james2.fox@northumbria.ac.uk)



### **Kelly Elliott**

Press Contact

PR and Media Officer

[kelly2.elliott@northumbria.ac.uk](mailto:kelly2.elliott@northumbria.ac.uk)



### **Gemma Brown**

Press Contact

PR and Media Officer

[gemma6.brown@northumbria.ac.uk](mailto:gemma6.brown@northumbria.ac.uk)