

About Us

>> THE 21ST CENTURY CLAPHAM CONNECTION

Moggerhanger Park has considerable historic and Christian interest, being the home of Godfrey Thornton, Governor of the Bank of England 1793 - 1795 and a Director of the Bank of England in 1777 when the first Bank was built in Threadneedle Street by Sir John Soane. Godfrey became his friend and invited him to recast his country house at Moggerhanger. When his son Stephen, also a Director of the Bank of England, inherited the house he continued to develop it with John Soane throughout the latter's lifetime. Humphry Repton, the notable Georgian landscape architect, was drawn in to design the estate.

Godfrey was first cousin of Henry Thornton and William Wilberforce whose father married one of the Thornton daughters. These links with the Clapham Sect give Moggerhanger Park a unique opportunity to show how Christianity has been at the forefront of Britain's social and spiritual heritage and how Christians can make an impact in today's society through the various strands of our work. William Wilberforce described the aim of the Eighteenth Century Clapham Sect as being *'to make goodness fashionable'*. Clapham Connections has a similar aim today!

The national objectives of Clapham Connections based at Moggerhanger Park are:

- to develop a relational network of church leaders, strategists and politicians who have embraced the ethos of community transformation for the 21st Century.
- to cooperate with others to agree staged objectives as part of a long term strategy for changing the social values of the nation in line with New Testament teaching.
- to develop think tank groups to give in-depth consideration to current issues in post-modern British society and to develop strategies of creative change.
- to carry out historical research to discover how social issues were successfully tackled in the past and to provide evidence of trends that give understanding of the present position.
- to carry out on-going research and to cooperate with other researchers in producing empirical data on major social, moral and spiritual issues.
- to identify and prioritise particular campaign foci which have the intent both to shape opinion and result in legislative reform where this is appropriate.
- to develop a 'grass roots' network of concerned Christians who will provide activists to support particular campaigns.
- to mobilise prayer support and to ensure that all activity is directed by God.

The local objectives of Clapham Connections based at Moggerhanger Park are:

- ❖ to develop the links between Moggerhanger House and the eighteenth century Thornton family's involvement with the reform movement of their day
- ❖ to build on the heritage of the Clapham Sect by using Moggerhanger House as a base for the on-going work of ministries involved in social, moral and spiritual issues of today.
- ❖ to develop specialist facilities at Moggerhanger House
 - Library and Resource Centre
 - Study Centre
 - Soane, Clapham and Wilberforce Exhibitions
- ❖ to use the residential and other facilities at Moggerhanger House for conferences, consultations and educational purposes.
- ❖ To co-operate in, and promote, the 2007 celebrations for the bicentenary of the Abolition of Slavery

- By being part of Set All Free, the CTE initiative
- By gathering together and hosting a residential gathering at Moggerhanger Park for the descendants of the Thornton Families and the Clapham Sect.