

NEWS RELEASE

OPEN GARDEN DAYS AT CHAWTON HOUSE

The gardens and grounds of Chawton House at Chawton, near Alton will be open to the public on Thursday 1 June, Tuesday 27 June and Wednesday 5 July from 10.00am to 4.30pm (last admission 4.00pm).

Chawton House Library is joining in THE HUGE HAMPSHIRE READ, a partnership between Penguin Books and Hampshire Libraries to celebrate the 60th Birthday of Penguin Classics in Hampshire, by inviting everyone to pick up a copy of Jane Austen's *Persuasion* and read it during the months of May, June and July when all sorts of Austen related events will also be taking place around the county.

At Chawton House the public will be able to picnic in the grounds and wander round the gardens on Thursday 1 June, Tuesday 27 June and Wednesday 5 July. They can visit the Walled Garden designed by Jane Austen's brother, Edward Austen Knight, between 1818 and 1822 which has now been replanted with the varieties of vegetables, fruits, herbs and flowers chosen by him, and see the newly restored ornamental iron gates, installed by Montagu Knight at the end of the nineteenth century.

Head Librarian, Helen Scott, is to lead reading groups in Jane Austen's literary classic of love lost and found on the same days that the gardens are open, but these sessions are now fully booked.

Entertainment in the garden will include Regency dancing and, of course, readings from *Persuasion*. Home made afternoon teas will be available. Admission £4, children free. Parking is easy and free.

16 May 2006

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:

Susie Grandfield, Press & Public Relations Officer, Chawton House Library
Tel: 01420 541010 Email: Susie.grandfield@chawton.net