The museum works closely with other galleries, museums and private collectors to help tell the story of Handel to the general public. The interiors are a scholarly restoration of the rooms as Handel would have known them.

The museum organizes a lively series of concerts, lectures, storytelling events and interactive activities for children, and hosts all levels of school groups.

Handel House has worked closely with the RNIB to develop special programming specifically designed for blind or partially sighted visitors in remembrance of Handel’s own blindness.

The Handel House Composer-in-Residence Scheme uses the talents of composers to engage with Handel’s music and his house in new and innovative ways, creating new works inspired by different aspects of Handel’s music.

One of the recent projects was: Graininess and Sheen using improvisations on the three keyboards in Handel’s house, recordings of creaking floorboards and other sounds made by the house, and interviews with museum volunteers.

Listen to a podcast of this wonderful work by Kerry Andrew and find out more information about visiting the museum on the Handel House website.

The House in Handel’s Time

From The London Daily Post and General Advertiser, Monday, January 9, 1743

Mr. HANDEL proposes to perform, by SUBSCRIPTION, twelve times during next Lent, and engages to play two New Performances (and some of his former Oratorios if time will permit.) Each subscriber is to pay Four Guineas at the Time he subscribes which entitles him to one Box Ticket for each Performance ...

Those Gentlemen and Ladies who have already favoured Mr. Handel in the Subscription are desired to send for their Tickets, at his House in Brook-street, where Attendance will be given every Day (Sunday excepted) from Nine o’Clock in the Morning until Three in the Afternoon.

Handel was the first tenant of the townhouse in Mayfair, a new London subdivision with wide streets and large public squares. He paid 60 pounds per annum in rent, as a foreign national, he was forbidden from owning property. The Westminster Poor Rate Book shows that Handel moved in by August 8.

The kitchens were in the basement. Kitchen equipment listed in Handel’s Estate Inventory from August 27, 1759 shows that Handel was able to entertain many guests. The Estate Inventory also describes Handel’s red canopied bed in the front room on the third floor.

There was a fine collection of 80 paintings and 64 engravings in the house. It is not possible to know what the exact paintings were, but they were described in detail in the catalogue of Handel’s estate auction at the London firm of Abraham Langford. Earlier catalogue from 1749 and 1770 identify six paintings bought by Handel, including a large landscape by Rembrandt for which he paid 29 p. 18 s.

Some of the works composed here were:

- 30 operas, including Rodelinda, Ariodante and Alcina
- 25 oratorios, including Israel in Egypt, Messiah, Semele and Hercules
- Coronation Anthems
- Concerto grosso Opus 6
- Music for the Royal Fireworks

Did you know...

Jimi Hendrix lived next door! For a brief period in the late 1960s Jimi Hendrix lived at 23 Brook Street. The officers of Handel House Museum now occupy this space, which has been restored with the decor of Jimmy Hendrix’s time. Learning that Handel used to live next door, Hendrix went to One Step Record Shop in South Molton Street and bought LPs of Messiah and Water Music.