

# **Ardentinny Community Trust**

## **Annual Report**

### **April 2014 to March 2015**

**The Trust has only one project - The Glenfinart Walled Garden and the Trustees are the working group for this project.**

**Therefore the Trust's Annual Report can only focus on the garden.**

The opening for the season 2014/2015 was held on Easter Monday in conjunction with the Forestry Commission, Scotland's Easter Event. The garden was open to visitors for seven days a week from April until September, then four days a week during September with closure to the public after the Harvest Fair on 9<sup>th</sup> October. There was ongoing work in the garden throughout the winter and visitors were welcome if the gate was open or by appointment.

Glynn Toplis our part time gardener ran monthly 'Masterclasses' from May to September 2014 covering numerous subjects pertaining to gardening. Unfortunately Glyn left in October when he accepted a full time post at Inveraray Castle.

Funding was secured to employ Consultants to produce a Restoration Plan for the damaged wall surrounding the garden and a Feasibility Study and Business Plan for the Trust. The interview process started in June 2014. Venturei Networks with Manor Architects being appointed in July 2014. Local professionals and a representative from Argyll Voluntary Action assisted with leeting and the interviews. The consultation process began with a meeting between the Trustees and the consultants in August then with the Local Community in the Village Hall, in October. After further consultations with Stake Holders and the Wider Community, Manor Architects produced a Conservation Plan for the Walled Garden in February 2015.

By March Venturei Networks had completed the Business Plan and Feasibility Study which enabled the grant from Heritage Lottery to be signed off. With the help of Venturei Networks we hope to secure a grant to restore the wall and make it safe.

A grant from The Robertson Trust and an anonymous donation provided the funds required to employ another gardener. The post of Gardener/Volunteer Coordinator for one year, 18 hours per week was advertised in March 2015. Franziska Schmidt was the successful candidate.

The Trustees undertook Governance Training.

The Trustees had tables at Blairemore's Farmers' Markets, Kilmun Flea Market, at the village hall, Dunoon Dazzle and at an information day in the Burgh Hall. Historic Kilmun invited the Trust to share their Pop-up Shop in Dunoon.

The Community Payback Teams continue to be a great asset to the garden. They come weekly, undertaking anything from gardening, planting, building ornamental fences and raised beds, strimming and cutting grass to helping construct the paths within the garden, the list is endless.

A golden rowan tree, which was donated by friends of a local couple, was planted in the garden to celebrate their Golden Wedding Anniversary.

Another couple had a bespoke seat commissioned for under the beech tree.

Snowdrops have been planted in memory of a local who died this year, aged 100.

A talk was given to SWRI, Sandbank. Five presentations (three after March 2015) were given at the Job Centre in Dunoon and four unemployed people showed an interest in carrying out work experience.

A school student who was holidaying at the caravan park in 2014, volunteered in the garden as part of his Duke of Edinburgh Award and a local pupil completed two parts of his award in the garden.

The EXP, Youth Group spent a MAD (Make A Difference) day during the summer holidays. Groups who visited the garden were: Strone Primary, The Colintrave Walking Group and Glasgow Art Students who were staying at the outdoor centre spent 3 days sketching and painting within the wall. Carers from ENABLE and ASSIST brought their clients to enjoy the space.

National Park Rangers regularly visited and NP Volunteers attended our Action Days on the last Saturday of the month. The Forestry Commission provided us with marquees for our events. The village hall lent us tables and chairs.

## **Ardentinny Community Trust AGM In Village Hall 12/08/14 @ 7.15 p.m.**

**Present:** Trustees: Jimmy Gordon, Dennis Gower, Lynn Kerr, Bill and Anna Williamson.

Vicky Fairley, David McDowell, Eileen Connel, Marion Norris, Margaret Robinson, Val Kennedy, Roy Harrison, Chris Emmett and Dougie Menzies.

1. **Apologies:** Trustees: Linda Naismith and Ian Kerr, Letty Dempster, Sandra Primrose and Merle Ferguson

2. **Last Year's Minute and Matters Arising**

The meeting planned in the last paragraph didn't happen due to John Forth, of the National Park's illness. Proposed: Anna Williamson      Seconded: Bill Williamson

3. **Convenor's report – Jimmy Gordon**

The report was distributed round the hall and Jimmy went over the main points.

He also outlined the process which led to the appointment of Venturei Networks with Manor Architects as the consultants to complete a Feasibility Study and Conservation Plan for the Walled Garden and a Restoration Plan for the wall.

4. **Financial Report – Dennis Gower**

A copy of the financial report was made available to everyone present although the original was still with the auditor. Dennis went over the main points.

Val Kennedy asked 'Was Beechgrove worth the money?' It was agreed that although it had been a huge undertaking and had cost the Trust more than was earmarked, it had been. The programme had raised the profile of the garden, there was now a beautiful place in which to sit and relax and there was something for visitors to see. The shortfall had been made up by successful fundraising events. Most of the money in the account is grant money and ring fenced.

The accounts available were for the Walled Garden Project. The Community Trust account has approximately £41. This is money from members' fees and pays for the hire of the hall for the AGM, insurance and office supplies.

Dennis reiterated that although the Trust had been resurrected for the sole purpose of purchasing the Walled Garden any group within the village could take forward a project under the auspices of the Community Trust provided they became trustees.

5. **New Trustees:** At this point all trustees stood down and Roy Harrison stepped in to chair while the new Trustees were appointed.

Jimmy Gordon Proposed: Bill Williamson      Seconded Anna Williamson

Dennis Gower Proposed: Jimmy Gordon      Seconded: Lynn Kerr

Ian Kerr      Proposed: Jimmy Gordon      Seconded: Vicky Fairley

Lynn Kerr      Proposed: Bill Williamson      Seconded: Eileen Connel

Bill Williamson      Proposed: Vicky Fairley      Seconded: Jimmy Gordon

Anna Williamson      Proposed: Eileen Connel      Seconded: Vicky Fairley

Linda Naismith Proposed: Margaret Robinson      Seconded: Lynn Kerr

6. **Appointment of Auditor**

Eric Wishart      Proposed: Dennis Gower      Seconded: Jimmy Gordon

7. **Next AGM: August 15<sup>th</sup> 2015**

Vicky Fairley gave a vote of thanks to the members of the Trust.