



Ardkinglas Woodland Garden - Scotland's No 1

- Autumn colours have been particularly good this year, emphasizing that a visit to the garden is always a pleasure, at any time of the year.
- The area around the garden entrance is now much more open following the felling of a number of conifers. The aim is to give new visitors a better view of the garden beyond



Strachur Primary School children show how many arms are needed to encircle "The Mightiest Conifer in Europe"

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- In October, Scottish Field featured an interview with Ken Cox in which the many different types of gardens in Scotland were assessed. In the final "top ten" Ardkinglas Woodland Garden was awarded the number 1 slot.
- We continue to monitor plants in the garden for the damaging disease, "Sudden Oak Death". The nearest confirmed cases have been at Benmore, Strachur and Minard. We would be grateful if visitors to the garden would continue to follow the precautions set out at the kiosk.

Tree shop café home made soup and filled rolls.

Fair trade teas and coffees

Home baking

Ardkinglas Nursery

A large poly-tunnel has been installed at the Nursery. This will be used to over-winter stock. It will give protection from extremes of cold and, more importantly in our climate, excessive wetness. This will allow the Nursery to continue to expand its wholesale business to trade customers. An ever increasing quantity of home produced plants is sold through The Tree Shop, and the sales area at Crarae Garden creates a regular income.



Pheasant Field

In August we received news that our application under the new Rural Homes for Rent scheme had been selected for approval, against strong opposition. The ten houses in Pheasant Field will be amongst only 75 to be built in the whole of Scotland. The grant represents approximately 35% of the total cost so there is still much work to be done in putting together the financial package.

Pheasant Field Sketch



The Detailed Planning Application for this site has had a protracted journey through the necessary stages. The issue which caused most debate was the proposal for the road to be a Private Access. We have now decided to revise the application drawings to show an adoptable road serving the new houses, with a Private Access continuing down to meet the shore road. On this basis it is anticipated the Planning Permission will be granted in the near future. We will then be able to offer five house plots for sale in addition to the ten houses to be built for rent.

Clachan

Planning Permission in Principle (the new equivalent of Outline Permission) is expected to be issued soon. Deeds of Servitude have been agreed with Scottish & Southern Electricity formalizing access and servicing arrangements. The next stage will be Detailed Planning Applications for some of the commercial units which will be available for rent.

Clachan Flats Windfarm

The first electricity was sold from the windfarm on 1 July.

The Community Trust has made its first grant awards to Strachur Primary School, Cairndow Carpet Bowls club and the Cairndow Community Childcare

Trees down

On Friday 13 November a cherry tree came down near the house narrowly missing the dovecot. Later in the month a tree came down in the main drive. As soon as this cleared away the top came down off another tree. Both blocked the drive and damaged the fence.

Rural Leadership Course

In 2009 Jean Maskell from the Estate Office was one of 60 people who completed the Rural Leadership Programme (RLP) which is run by Scottish Enterprise in partnership with Highlands and Islands Enterprise. The objectives are to enable rural leaders to lead more effectively and to act as ambassadors for rural Scotland. With improved communication skills those completing the programme not only enhance agricultural and rural representation but participate in the creation of better public policy for agriculture and rural Scotland. The course ran part time over three months. As well as "classroom" sessions and talks by various leaders of business there were trips to Edinburgh, Westminster and Brussels to view the various parliaments in action and to give participants the chance to question members.

Argyll & Bute Local Plan

Work is starting on a new Local Development Plan for Argyll & Bute. If you wish to be involved you can download the questionnaires from the Argyll & Bute Council website.

Sustainable Estates for the 21st Century

Many of you will have met Annie McKee who has been staying in the area for two weeks. She is a PhD student from the Centre for Mountain Studies UHI – Perth College working on a study called Sustainable Estates for the 21st Century. The research is being carried out by Annie and another three students one of whom also came to Ardkinglas for a day. During the two weeks Annie got to know local people and businesses by working in the Stagecoach Inn, Loch Fyne Oysters, The Tree Shop, Lighthouse Caledonia and on the Estate. She also put out a survey to each household.

Alistair outside the Estate Office



Alistair MacCallum's Award

Alistair MacCallum's milestone of working on Ardkinglas Estate for 50 years was reported in The Dunoon Observer and The Oban Times. There was a presentation at The Dalmally Show when Alistair received his long service medal. The extremely wet weather did not dampen a very special occasion.

Wedding group at Ardkinglas



An increasing number of couples are choosing Ardkinglas for their wedding ceremony and/or marquee receptions

SRDP Funding

Under this grant scheme there are options for eradication of invasive species. We hope to be part of a review of the scheme by the Forestry Commission in respect of Rhododendron control. Members of the Conservancy visited and saw our problems. We should hear about the review in the near future.

Kinglas Ladder



Fish ladder

The June drought provided a chance for Cairndow Builders to complete major repairs to the stonework of the Kinglas dam. The project was financed jointly by Strone Estate, Ardkinglas, Lakeland Smolts and The Loch Fyne District River Improvement Association.

Tree Shop

- New season plants now in stock. A huge selection of Bare Rooted Fruit Trees including Apples, Cherries, Damsons, Gages, Pears and Plums. Soft fruits ready for planting, including Blackcurrants, Blueberries, Gooseberries and Raspberries. It's also hedging time. We have a vast selection of Bare Rooted Hedging Plants including Hawthorn, Blackthorn, Beech and Hazel along with our very own Argyll hedge Mix.
- In the shop there is everything you need for the perfect gift - whether a new winter coat, a unique piece of jewellery, children's toys and games or a beautiful houseplant.
- A brand new range of Wild Bird Food with Special offers on packs of nuts, seeds and fat.
- The café offers delicious homemade soups along with scrumptious home baking, filled rolls and Fair Trade Teas and Coffees.
- Winter Opening hours will be 9am-5pm with the café closing at 4:30pm.



Concerts

The Ardkinglas House series of concerts for 2010 has just been announced. If you would like to join the mailing list please contact the Estate Office

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The Steinway Piano

The Steinway piano at Ardkinglas was used by David McGuinness to record some Debussy pieces for the soundtrack of a recent episode of Skins on Channel 4

Photoshoots



The house has appeared in the "Toast" brochure and in the "Homes & Interiors Scotland" magazine. A full page article in the Sunday Post of 6 December gave prominence to the Butler's Quarters holiday flat. A rather secretive photoshoot took place in August, Susan Boyle came to have her pictures taken for her CD cover. On her website someone asked the question, "Where is Ardkinglas?". The answer was "A hotel near Heathrow".

In November a photographer spent two days working at the house in preparation for a major feature in the architecture section of Country Life magazine, to be published next Autumn.

