

# ANNUAL REPORT 2021



### Scotland's Gardens Scheme opens gardens, mostly private, around Scotland, raising funds for charity through garden gate tickets, plant sales and teas.

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### TRUSTEES' REPORT

The Trustees of the charity present their report and the accounts of Scotland's Gardens Scheme for the year January to 31 December 2021. This has been a milestone year for the charity, not only marking its 90th birthday, albeit under the shadow of the pandemic, but also successfully completing the transition to become a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation. As referred to in last year's Report, the Scottish Charities Regulator "OSCR" registered the SCIO on 16 January 2020. However, issues brought about by the pandemic, meant that final approval to transfer the existing unincorporated charity to the SCIO was not received from OSCR until 29 January 2021.

### **Our Mission**

Scotland's Gardens Scheme's mission is to raise funds for charity by encouraging, promoting and supporting garden openings, whilst making the experience inspiring, rewarding and enjoyable for all.

### Objectives

Ensure we have a strong District Volunteer structure with a solid base of gardens of all types and sizes. We will achieve this by:

- Providing support to our District Volunteers through guidance, training and appreciation.
- Equipping and supporting Garden Openers to manage their visitor experience and achieve a successful and enjoyable day for all.
- Raising awareness of Scotland's Gardens Scheme, our garden open days and our beneficial impact with a strong marketing presence and good visibility.
- Developing existing and new partnerships with organisations which are aligned with, and can support, our vision, including our beneficiaries, charities, partner organisations and our community.
- Ensuring good governance and financial sustainability with an active and effective governing body.
- Increasing understanding of our impact and reach:
  - Improve our understanding of the impact of our charitable donations.
  - Improve our understanding of our key audiences and their motivations to visit and support our gardens.



# **OPERATIONAL OVERVIEV**

### **Charitable Purposes**

The Charitable Purposes of the SCIO are, through the opening of gardens throughout Scotland to the public and other projects:

- To advance health and well-being.
- To advance heritage and culture.
- To advance community development through the promotion of volunteering.
- To advance education.
- To support community projects and provide funding to charities, clubs and organisations in order to enable them to implement, or assist in the implementation of, their own projects, the purposes of which promote any charitable purpose as set out in section 7(2) of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005.

#### **Operational Overview**

Scotland's Gardens Scheme was established in 1931 to raise funds for the Queens' Nursing Institute of Scotland (QNIS), supporting pensions and training opportunities for district nurses prior to the formation of the NHS. Today, we support three core beneficiary charities, QNIS, Perennial and Maggie's. Our core beneficiaries are chosen to align with our core values, supporting wellbeing and horticulture.



Since 2018, 60% of garden gate takings have been designated for a charity nominated by the Garden Owner and are distributed directly by the local district branch of the Scheme, with the remaining 40% returning to Head Office to support core costs of the charity and our main beneficiary charities.

The charity has a small team of two full-time and two part-time members of staff, including a temporary post fully funded by the Kickstart Scheme. The team works to support our 23 Districts and some 200 regular volunteers to develop, promote and support our annual programme of garden openings. Each year, our programme includes approximately 500 listings and we distribute funds to around 250 charities.

Picture: Maggie's charity stand at the Garden of Cosmic Speculation, October 2021.

### 2021 ACTIVITY

### **Operating During Covid-19**

We were delighted to have received an excellent response to our call for Annual Registration for the 2021 programme, with as many garden openings registered as in pre-pandemic levels. However, with the early 2021 lockdown in place in Scotland from January until early April, then significant restrictions in place, our early season was unable to proceed, with garden openings only resuming towards the end of April, with restrictions in place until June.

Over 90 open days were cancelled through the year and restrictions meant that some gardens opened at a reduced scale and many owners opted not to provide refreshments. However, plant sales were very popular due to the increased interest in gardening generated by lockdown. In addition, garden owners were pleased to welcome new faces, who had heard about Scotland's Gardens Scheme through our online channels as well as our more traditional forms of publicity. We also explored online booking of gardens and cashless payments and learned a great deal which will also help us continue to evolve the charity in the future.

Despite all the challenges of the year, our garden owners and volunteers worked together to raise over £304,000 across Scotland, a magnificent sum and only £55,000 less than 2019, our last 'normal' year.





Through our garden open days, together our volunteers and garden owners achieved the following:

- Over 750 volunteers gave an estimated 12,500 hours and their time, energy and enthusiasm
- Over 500 garden open days around Scotland
- We welcomed around 55,000 visitors to garden open days
- Over £304,000 was raised by garden owners through their open days (despite Covid cancellations).
- We were able to donate £11,000 each to our core beneficiaries, Maggie's, Perennial and the QNIS based on 2021 income.
- Garden owners were able to give 60% of funds raised at garden openings to their charity of choice, supporting 254 causes.

Most supported causes by garden owners:

- Healthcare and support services 34%
- Local communities, community centres, church halls 19%
- Wellbeing charities and community care 15%





Scotland's Gardens Scheme has been supporting the Queen's Nursing Institute Scotland since 1931 and we were delighted to donate £11,000 to the charity this year.

#### Who are the Queen's Nurses?

Queen's Nurses work as district nurses, in prisons, as community mental health nurses, with homeless people and those with addictions. They are school nurses supporting young people's mental health and work with people with learning disabilities. They are advanced nurse practitioners working on remote islands where there is no doctor and health visitors working with our most disadvantaged families.

The Queen's Nursing Institute Scotland (QNIS) works to support, develop and inspire community nurses and midwives across the country. From the inner cities to the most remote islands, QNIS enables nurses to be the best they can be at a time of unprecedented pressure on the health and care systems.

### How do Garden Open Days Help?

Scotland's Gardens Scheme part-funds a development programme for Queen's Nurses, which consists of a five-day residential workshop with masterclasses, small group learning and inspirational conversations with leaders from all over Scotland. Candidates are provided with monthly coaching sessions and additional workshops. Each Queen's Nurse has a development programme to work on which clearly benefits the community and, along with their professional development, is the focus of their coaching. Through 2020 and 2021, this programme continued online and not only has supported professional development, has also, critically, supported the need for self-care and peer support during the challenging times of the pandemic.

### Quotes from Participating Queen's Nurses Demonstrating the Impact of the Programme:

"One area which I feel has changed the most is how I speak. I feel more confident and articulate when I share information, raise concerns and gain support for families. This is a real change, where previously I would have felt I had to challenge, I now can clearly impart my information and views."

"Overall, this process has increased my understanding of the need for self-compassion. I have felt cherished during this journey. Having a tribe of fantastic people has encouraged me, built me up and inspired me to make changes."

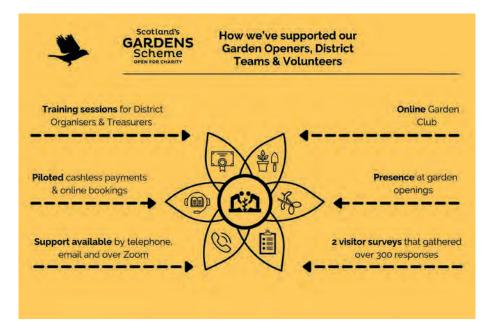


# **VOLUNTEER SUPPORT**

Throughout 2021, we continued to support our District Teams around Scotland, using video conferencing to deliver training, meetings and online events, to bring our community of users together when it was difficult to come together in person. We delivered:

- · Zoom meetings to network with our District team and to help with forward planning.
- Online training opportunities, such as Treasurer and database training to support financial reporting and the registration of gardens.
- A series of 'Garden Club' workshops through winter to provide opportunities for networking and learning, covering topics such as Rose Growing, Growing Cut Flowers and Re-wilding. Talks were recorded and made available via our YouTube channel.

Our District teams rallied together once again in the autumn to pull together a wonderful collection of gardens to open in 2022.



### PROMOTING OUR GARDEN OPEN DAYS

As staff were working remotely for much of the time during 2021, providing a normal level of printed materials was challenging and we were unable to provide any of our usual regional leaflets and the provision of posters was somewhat curtailed.

Attention turned, therefore, to making the most of our digital communications and we worked very hard to develop and grow our online channels. We increased the distribution of our monthly public e-newsletter to twice a month, to share garden opening news to potential visitors and saw a significant increase in subscribers. We also increased posts on our social media accounts, encouraging new and engaged followers.



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### VISITOR FEEDBACK

We have also been working to learn more about our visitors through an online survey open through the season and will build on this in the future.

### Visitor Highlights:

- 70% of visitors said their experience of visiting an open garden exceeded their expectations.
- We learned that most people found out about garden openings from our website, followed by our Guidebook.
- The main motivation for visitors is to spend time in a beautiful place, closely followed by seeking inspiration for their own gardens.
- 35% of visitors responding said they would travel up to 30 miles to visit a garden; 18% up to 50 miles and 20% of visitors said they would travel over 50 miles.

### Visitor Feedback:

"I attended the Brechin Open Gardens weekend (24/25th July 2021) and was absolutely blown away by the standard of gardens and the diversity, between and within the gardens on show. From stunning private gardens at differing stages of their evolution, to local allotments and a school garden project with enthusiastic, committed volunteers. The sun shone and there was a really positive, welcoming, friendly atmosphere."

"It is a valued part of our lives and we look forward to visiting familiar and new gardens annually. We learn so much and enjoy donating so efficiently and effectively to so many good causes including SGS charities. Our own garden has developed from the ideas gathered and plants purchased from these visits. The company of like-minded people is also a delight and people are so pleased to share tips and recommendations. Visited Shepherd House yesterday, I could not count the number of visits and every year I visit at different times and every visit feels fresh and new. Thank you to all involved."

#### Comments from our 2021 Visitor Survey

### FINANCIAL REVIEW

#### Performance

The effects of the pandemic were clearly seen in our 2020 results. However, with the timely easing of restrictions – too late for the snowdrop openings - combined with the efforts of our amazing network of volunteers and garden openers co-ordinated and encouraged by some heroic work by our staff, 2021 produced excellent results.

Garden gate income amounted to £304,215 (2020 £48,947) which compared favourably with the pre-pandemic level of £366,792 - remembering that in 2019, Portrack's takings were £40,751 while in 2021, due to an October opening, were £6,415. Our other income arising from sponsorship from Investec, to whom we are extremely grateful, our guidebook sales and advertising, donations and investment income totalled £43,260 (2020 £46,515). Government support in the form of "furlough" payments and our participation in the Kickstart programme produced a further £13,154 (2020 £31,227). Our investment portfolio, on which we relied heavily in 2020, produced gains of £64,452 (2020 £6,896).

Although many of our costs are fixed, we maintained strict budgeting control on expenditure, and the financial statements set out in detail the costs for each of our expenditure headings. Donations to garden owners' charities amounted to £170,472 (2020 £21,193), while our core charities shared £33,000 (2020 £6,000). Another of our charitable objectives is to advance community development through the promotion of volunteering. You will see from the financial statements that through the work of our Volunteer Manager together with other staff, that costs of £37,408 (2020 £32,301) were allocated to this endeavour.



#### Legacy Funds and Investment Policy

In previous years, the charity has been fortunate to have received a number of generous bequests from our supporters – most notably from Gordon Bowes and the Cattenach Bequest. These have been consolidated into one designated Legacy Fund and have been invested in a mixture of quoted investments and cash deposits with all income being treated as distributable.

The prudence in previous years to retain a cushion of long-term capital against severe financial jolts, such as served up by the pandemic, was vital in supporting the charity through 2020. The aim of the legacy fund is to future-proof the charity and its nationwide network and our hope is that we can encourage others to enhance the fund in the future.

The invested funds are managed by Adam & Company Investment Management Limited on a discretionary basis as set out in the agreed Statement of investment Principles with the objective of maximising income growth and capital gain within a medium risk profile. The Trustees receive quarterly reports and have an annual meeting with the management team within Adam & Co. The Trustees are pleased to report that the portfolio produced a total positive return of 15.00% in 2021, compared to a total return of 13.9% by the neutral benchmark.

#### **Reserves Policy**

As noted above, 2020 demonstrated the worth of the charity's prudent reserves policy and we are now in a strong position moving forward. The Trustees consider that the financial position of the charity at 31 December 2021 is such that it will have sufficient assets to meet its forthcoming obligations.



#### **Policy Review**

In line with best practice, Trustees continued work on Policy Review with additional work to develop Equal Opportunities and Sustainability policies, with Hybrid Working and Fundraising policies in progress for 2022.

#### **Recruitment & Appointment of Trustees**

As we completed the move to becoming a SCIO, we carried out a process of recruitment to strengthen our Board of Trustees, and bringing a range of complementary skills, including marketing, horticulture, fundraising and charity management.

Furthermore, as our Chairman is reaching the end of his tenure in April 2022, we undertook to recruit a new Chairman to lead the charity post-pandemic. Dougal Philip succeeds David Mitchell, who retires after 17 years with the charity and will be greatly missed.

#### Looking to the Future

As we cautiously emerge from the pandemic, we continue to focus on our core activity to support and promote garden open days to raise funds for charity, while developing our new strategy and action plan for 2022 – 2025 during the course of the year.

2021 STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITY

#### Statement of Financial Activities for the Year Ended 31 December 2021

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	31.12.21 Total funds £	31.12.20 Total funds £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM	Tiones	-		<u>.</u>	~
Donations and legacies	3	311,269	+	311,269	60,424
Other trading activities	4	24,609	1.1	24,609	25,706
Investment income	5	11,597	-	11,597	9,332
Other income		13,154	-	13,154	31,227
Total		360,629	(4)	360,629	126,689
EXPENDITURE ON					
Raising funds	6	20,456		20,456	19,486
Charitable activities					
Garden openings		39,561		39,561	41,124
Distributions to Charities		203,472	-	203,472	27,193
Volunteer Support		37,408	+	37,408	32,301
Marketing and Publicity		41,662	4.11	41,662	52,905
Management and admin		37,986		37,986	42,136
Ing.			·		
Total		380,545	~	380,545	215,145
Net gains on investments		64,452	-	64,452	6,896
NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)		44,536	1	44,536	(81,560)
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS					
Total funds brought forward		605,683	5,205	610,888	692,448
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD		650,219	5,205	655,424	610,888

CONTINUING OPERATIONS

All income and expenditure has arisen from continuing activities.



#### Balance Sheet 31 December 2021

FIXED ASSETS	Notes	31.12.21 £	31.12.20 £
Tangible assets Investments	11 12	307 528,285	2,435 502,023
		528,592	504,458
CURRENT ASSETS Debtors Cash at bank	13	8,516 161,975	5,217 113,821
		170,491	119,038
CREDITORS Amounts falling due within one year	14	(43,659)	(12,608)
NET CURRENT ASSETS		126,832	106,430
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES		655,424	610,888
NET ASSETS		655,424	610,888
FUNDS Unrestricted funds: General fund	16	108,185	108,222
Designated: The Legacy Fund		542,034	497,461
		650,219	605,683
Restricted funds: Archive Review Kirsty Maxwell Stuart Legacy		2,269 2,936	2,269 2,936
		5,205	5,205
TOTAL FUNDS		655,424	610,888

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Trustees and authorised for issue on ...... and were signed on its behalf by:

and R H

D R Mitchell - Trustee

The full 2021 accounts may be <u>downloaded here</u>.

# ABOUT OUR CHARITY

President	HRH The Duchess of Rothesay				
Trustees	David Mitchell Dougal Philip Sarah Landale Peter Yellowlees David Buchanan-Cook Jonathan Cobb Colin Crosbie Charlotte Halliday Steven McCallum Helen McMeekin Emily Stair	Chairman (Chairman Designate, Trustee from November 2021 Deputy Chairman Honorary Treasurer Board Secretary (from July 2021) (from July 2021) (from July 2021)			
Staff	Liz Stewart Daria Piskorz-Pronobis Julie Golding Hazel Reid Steven Ritchie	National Organiser Marketing Manager Volunteer Manager (to July 2021) Office Manager Communications Assistant (from September 2021)			
Head Office Phone Email Website	23 Castle Street, Edinburgh, EH2 3DN 0131 226 3714 info@scotlandsgardens.org scotlandsgardens.org				
<b>Registered Charity No</b>	SC049866				
Independent Examiner	Douglas Home & Co Ltd Chartered Accountants 47-49 The Square, Kelso, TD5 7HW				
Bankers Solicitors Investment Managers	Adam & Company J & H Mitchell WS, 51 Atholl Road, Pitlochry, PH16 5BU Adam & Company Investment Management Ltd 25 St Andrew Square, Edinburgh, EH2 1AF				

### Scotland's GARDENS Scheme OPEN FOR CHARITY

# Thank you to everyone who supported us through 2021

#### Scotland's Gardens Scheme SCIO

23 Castle Street Edinburgh EH2 3DN Scottish Charity No: SCO49866 info@scotlandsgardens.org 0131 226 3714 scotlandsgardens.org



Picture: Kilbryde Castle opened by arrangement in 2021.