

COMMUNITY NEWS

SUMMER 2023



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



As detailed in the Trust's community engagement plan, we've been holding monthly opportunities for members of the public to talk to us on any subject of interest. So far we've had three events – two in Rothesay at the Bank of Ideas, and one at Mount Stuart. We've discussed a wide range of subjects and new projects are arising from these conversations.

The next event is at Mount Stuart on the morning of Wednesday 2nd August – if you're interested in making an appointment please email fiona@mountstuart.com.

During the summer we'll also be at the Bute Agricultural Show on 9th August,

the Rothesay Horticultural Show on 26th August at Trinity Church, and at the monthly markets at Bute Yard from 6th August where we'll be selling fresh homegrown produce and memberships.

Please come along, say hello and meet the team!

AWARDS

LOCHEND AWARD FOR SUSTAINABLE DESIGN

Recently we were delighted to win one of Argyll & Bute Council's Design Awards in the Sustainable Design category for the housing development at Lochend, Loch Ascog.

Pictured below is Chris Pescod, Mount Stuart's Buildings & Facilities Manager, with Colin Potter and Chris Johnston of Architeco, the Dunoon-based architect practice who worked with Mount Stuart to create the development of 10 affordable housing units, built to Passivhaus standards, providing a high level of occupant comfort with very little energy for heating and cooling.



FUTURE NEWS

If you have any feedback on the newsletter or anything you would like to see included, please reach out to us at contactus@mountstuart.com

NEWS

THE PUMPKIN PATCH

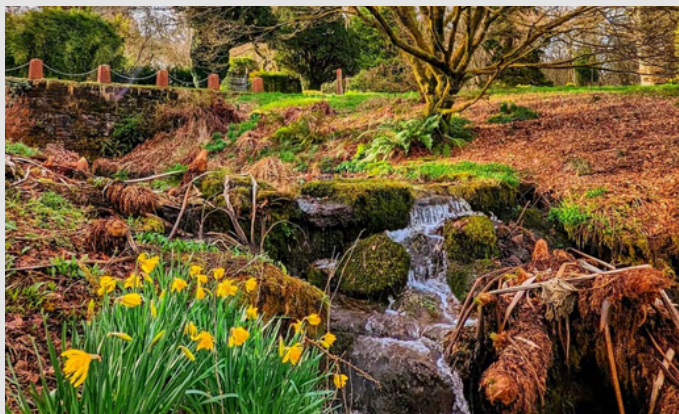
An area within the Kitchen Garden has been cleared to become our Pumpkin Patch! Children from the Apple Tree Nursery have been on-site to plant pumpkin seeds for our greenhouses and to plant them out. In the autumn, we'll see how the pumpkins have grown, and our mini gardeners will return to harvest their very own pumpkins before Halloween.



HISTORIC HOUSES - GARDEN OF THE YEAR

Mount Stuart was delighted at the end of March to be shortlisted for the Historic Houses Association's Garden of the Year 2023 along with five other gardens across the UK.

The newly renovated Calvary Walk was particularly noted by the judges for its ponds and chain of cascading waterfalls creating a fantastic new visitor attraction with areas for pond dipping, picnic tables and relaxing.



Voting for the winner is by the public and is open until 31 August 2023; the award winner will be announced at the Historic Houses AGM on Tuesday 14 November 2023 at the Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre in London

Please help our Gardens by voting at:

<https://www.historichouses.org/vote-for-garden-of-the-year-2023/>

Thank you!



A REAL LIVING WAGE EMPLOYER

At the start of 2023 Mount Stuart chose to join the 3000 employers in Scotland who are Real Living Wage employers.

The Real Living Wage is an independently calculated pay rate based on the cost of living and is paid voluntarily by employers. The Resolution Foundation calculates the rate annually based on analysis of the wage employees need to earn to afford goods and services required for a decent standard of living.

Roles at Mount Stuart which benefitted from this increase included junior gardeners, sawmill staff, catering assistants, housekeepers, visitor welcome assistants and tour guides.

Recently the Trust has become an accredited Real Living Wage employer, making the commitment to continue to provide staff with a fair pay rate.

Lynn Anderson, Living Wage Scotland Manager, said “We are delighted that Mount Stuart Trust Ltd has become an accredited Living Wage employer. They join a growing network of employers in Scotland who want to ensure workers have what they need, and we hope their commitment encourages others to join.”



I'M SPARTACUS

Many of our visitors meet one of our most friendly ambassadors at the Trust – Spartacus the cat. There's nothing he loves more than a lounge around or a tummy tickle but please don't try to pick him up, he definitely doesn't like that!

He lives in a property within the Policies and probably has the best garden to stroll around of any cat. He certainly knows how to work a crowd and is very camera friendly judging by how often he appears on social media.

TRAIL CAMERAS

Our Countryside Ranger, Mark Low, has installed some trail cameras within the Skeoch Woods as a trial for a project to protect the environment.

Trail cameras are robust and waterproof, designed to be left outdoors to record stills and video clips of wildlife with minimal disruption to their natural activities. They operate both in daylight and darkness and, being motion sensitive, only start recording when wildlife moves in front of the sensor.

Mark's project will focus on wildlife diversity and it'll be interesting what the cameras may capture in the woods at night.



FIRE BEATERS



The fire beaters made by our Countryside Ranger and his work placement student Ewan McMillan have been deployed around the island, primarily on pathways close to forestry plantations.

They're vital tools in stopping wildfires during this season's warm and dry weather conditions. If you see a fire whilst out walking around the island, please promptly contact Scottish Fire & Rescue. The fire beaters are only to be used if the fire is of a size which can safely be extinguished.



ENJOYING THE COUNTRYSIDE RESPONSIBLY

The recent hot and sunny weather has seen more people enjoying the great outdoors – our Countryside Ranger is encouraging everyone to do this safely. The Scottish Outdoor Access Code outlines how we can all enjoy the great outdoors responsibly, and we would encourage all residents and visitors to visit their website.

www.outdooraccess-scotland.scot/



SHORE PATHWAY

In the Spring edition of our newsletter, we advised we were hopeful that after The Scottish Government's Department of Science & Advice for Scottish Agriculture (SASA)'s reinspection of Phytophthora ramorum in areas of the Mount Stuart Gardens we would be in a position to reopen the much-enjoyed Shore Path from Kerrycroy to meet up with the opened area from Shore Chapel.

The inspector reported our Gardens team had contained the Phytophthora, controlling and managing the incidences and – with appropriate precautions in place – can reopen the Shore Path. The team have been working hard on path clearing to allow it to open again in mid-July.

If walking the path, please observe the signage and use the disinfectant mats to make certain the area can remain open.

Recruitment

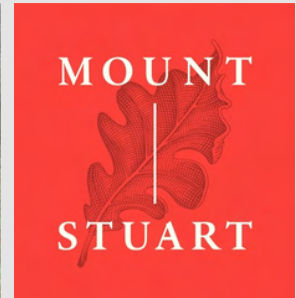
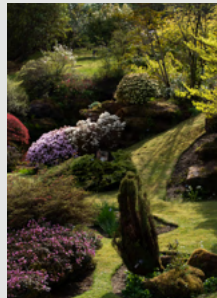
OPEN CALL FOR TRUSTEES

New Board Member sought for Mount Stuart Trust (a charitable trust).

- Must be Bute based.
- Have a previous record of key public-facing service.
- Have an interest in Community and Community Engagement.
- Board experience preferred.

Board duties include being fully aware of the Trust's Articles of Association, mission, and strategies; preparing for meetings by reviewing the agenda and supporting papers; regularly attending board meetings (three days per annum) and participating actively; keeping up with issues that affect the organisation; have a broad understanding of trust finances and analysis.

Expressions of interest to be registered, with accompanying CV, by November 30, 2023 to Charlotte Rogers charlotte@mountstuart.com



THE MOUNT STUART TRUST

At the heart of Mount Stuart Trust is a commitment to the Island of Bute and all those who live and work on it. Through employment, education, access to nature, housing and much more, Mount Stuart Trust is a proud member of the community and a key economic driver for the Island.

We understand that many of the decisions we make as a charity impact the broader Island community. We aspire to be a good neighbour and are committed to ensuring that all those who live and work on the Island can engage with the Trust in a constructive, open and honest manner.

The Mount Stuart Trust is a charity managing and maintaining a series of assets across the Island, including Mount Stuart House and gardens, 36 farms, 100 residential properties, 1447 hectares acres of woodland and approximately 21 commercial properties, including golf courses, bowling greens, fishing and gaming leases.

All funds generated through its operations are reinvested into the Trust to ensure a long-term sustainable future that continues to create economic value for the Island of Bute through employment, tourism revenue, housing and much more.