



Solstice Nurseries

'Growing People and Plants'

Annual Report

April 2018 – October 2019

Victoria McCann 1958 – 2019

It was a sad time for us all at Solstice in July when we suddenly lost a very dear friend, colleague and board member, Victoria McCann.

Victoria came to us during the early days of Solstice and had been with us ever since, never wanting to leave the calm surroundings that abound here.

Victoria was previously a lecturer at Aberdeen University using her English Lit degree while teaching a Breakthrough Course and Women's Studies.

In 2015 Victoria progressed further at Solstice and became CPD Manager, taking on the roll of participant development and working with the appropriate support providers for each individual.

As well as being a fantastic wife and mother to Stephen and Miranda, she was also a loving pet owner, taking great pride in her Collies and latterly her six Chihuahuas as well as her cats.

A memorial celebration of Victoria was held at Solstice on the 20th of July, with over sixty people in attendance.

Victoria is greatly missed by all at Solstice and we will remember her fondly.



Growing people and plants

Solstice Year 2018/2019

Participant Training

We currently have 18 participants and continue to receive enquires for placements.

During February and March of 2019 three training courses took place for participants at Solstice with the help of North East Scotland College. The first of these was emergency first aid, followed by REHIS elementary food hygiene, and finally health and safety with manual handling.

Board Activities

Solstice continues to thank our volunteer board of directors for all their hard work. Their efforts and contributions are important to the running of Solstice and they are valued members of the team.

We would like to thank Susan for all her hard work as our Board Chair and wish her all the very best with her fruit growing.

We take this opportunity to welcome our former 'tea boy' Alan Gall as our new Chair, he now even gets a uniform!



Events at Solstice

The annual Solstice Burns Lunch was once again held in January 2019. It was enjoyed by all and was a successful social event for participants and staff.

Four successful open days and a Christmas fair have taken place since April 2018. All have been well attended and our thanks go, once again, to the ladies of the Maryculter Trinity Church Guild who come along and sell tea/coffee and fine pieces. Brenda from BB's Cakes joins us to sell her wonderful creations of beautifully decorated cakes.

Devenick Designs, another local company, come to showcase and sell their unique garden sculptures. Beannachar have also joined us at these Open Days and our relationship with them continues to develop.



Scene of a busy open day at Solstice

This last year has seen Solstice attended various events as listed below:

Maryculter Trinity Church

Drum Castle

The Scottish Rock Garden Club at Duthie Park

Chapleton Farmers Market

Cults Church

Lairhillock School Summer BBQ

Crathes Castle Plant Fair

2 days at NHS

These events are a great way to meet and chat to new people and make them aware of all that we do here at Solstice.

During this last period our office building has been completely re-clad and we have had new steps with handrail fitted to the back of the building. All external doors and windows have been repainted. We are delighted that the building is now somewhat warmer during the winter months!



Solstice Year 2018/2019

Nursery

This year has seen the nursery again grow from strength to strength supplying existing and a number of new customers. We have been involved in a couple of notable projects with Papillion Design namely the CLAN Sensory Garden in Westburn Road and the Cults Primary School refurbishment.

We supplied plants to local artists Jacqui and Martin based in Aboyne who subsequently hosted an open day and kindly donated their proceeds of £40 to Solstice.



We were involved with both Heather Dale and David Henderson to supply plants for a wedding at Deeside Country House Hotel (formally Inveray House Hotel). The long border was redesigned and planted especially for the wedding and we were so very lucky that mostly everything flowered on the day looking beautiful and to the absolute delight of the happy couple.

A brand new luxury B&B in the grounds of the Castle of Mey opened in May 2019. We were delighted to be involved in the supply of plants for The Granary Lodge Bed and Breakfast located on the grounds of the Castle. We are also delighted to be involved in the regeneration of the existing grounds and gardens and we are also in discussion with them regarding the regeneration of the woodland.

The Beechgrove Garden 40th Anniversary

This year saw The Beechgrove Nursery celebrate its 40th year. We are fortunate that we have established a strong working relationship with them. Over the last few years we have supplied plants for refurbishing the pond, stream, waterfall and bog garden areas of the Ornamental Gardens. This years 40th Anniversary celebrations included a revamp of the Himalayan Glade with Rhododendrons and acid loving companion plants with input from Carole Baxter, George Anderson and Chris Beardshaw. Chris has also revamped the White Garden with plants supplied by Solstice and we have also supplied trees for a feature Small Trees for Gardens with George.

Solstice Year 2018/2019

Beannachar 40th Anniversary

Beannachar wanted to celebrate their 40th Anniversary by revitalising the beds around the old house. A colourful palette of showy flowers with a range of textures, preferring red or ruby options for many varieties to signify the 40 years were chosen in conjunction with Oakleaf Gardening Services and Jackie from Solstice Nurseries. It was a pleasure to be associated with this project.



The Tin Coo

Over the festive period 2018 solstice partnered with the Tin Coo at Devenick Dairies to sell living Christmas trees, Christmas wreaths and decorations. Following the success during the festive period the decision was made to continue this partnership and Solstice Nurseries products can now be found in the Tin Coo farm shop all year round, with extra special flowers, plants and gifts available for occasions such as Easter, Mother's day, Father's day and Valentines day.

This year we have also started to supply beautiful hand tied bouquets, made by our wonderfully creative Jackie Bibby.



Growing people and plants



Our display area at The Tin Co

Christmas

With the festive season almost upon us again, we will be returning with our range of living Christmas trees, wreaths and decorations, order forms are available through Facebook, the Website, telephone or email.

The Solstice Christmas Fair will be held on Saturday 14th December from 10.30am to 2pm. We look forward to welcoming everyone again to what has become one of our favourite events.

The Solstice Christmas meal is another highlight of the year with Staff, participants, board members and friends joining us for a meal provided by John at Yatai Izakya.

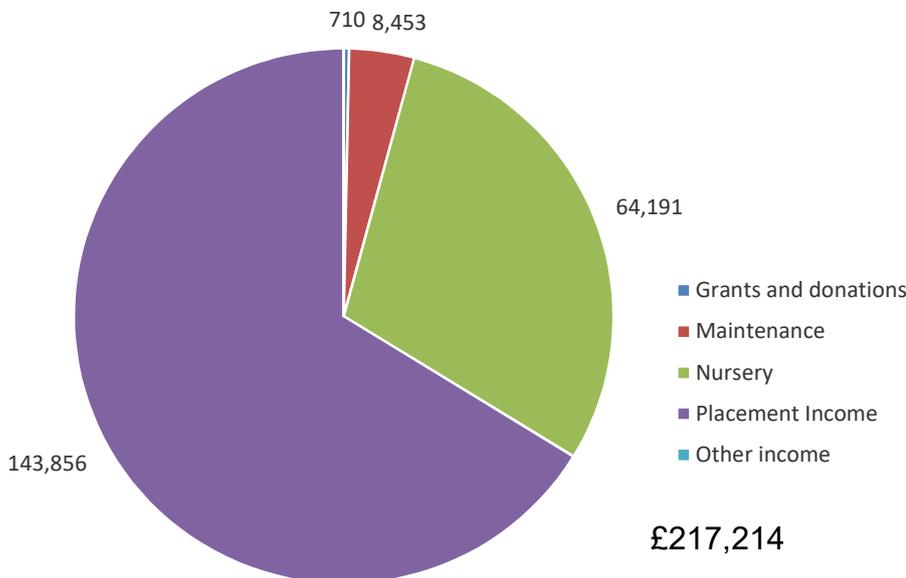


Maintenance

Due to a variety of circumstances including an increase in nursery demand and a change in suitable participants, the decision was made to disband the Solstice garden maintenance services. We were able to pass on the work to some of the landscapers we deal with.

The year 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019

Where the money came from:



Who is who at Solstice Nurseries:

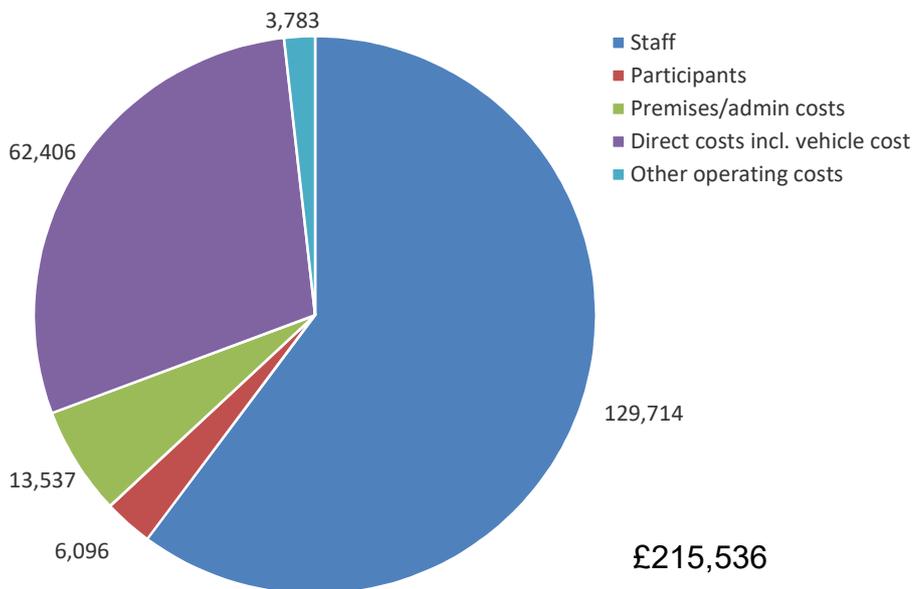
The Board Directors

Chair: Alan Gall
 Susan Kirkwood
 George Parkinson
 Jackie Berry
 Janice Nicol
 Serena Arif
 Richard Ward
 Jackie Reynard

The Staff Team:

Business Manager:
 George Parkinson
 Nursery Manager
 & Head of Nursery:
 Jackie Bibby
 Administration
 Coordinator:
 Joanne Brown
 Bookkeeper:
 Dianne Brown

Where the money was spent:



Members of:

- Andrew Lees
 Horticultural
 Scotland
 Directory
- The Federation of Small
 Businesses
- Social Firms Scotland
- The Hardy Plant Society

Surplus: £1,678

Participant Awards

Essential Work Skills – Working Safely & Manual Handling (CDU)

Graeme C
Kieran G
John J
Paul S

Laura E
James H-S
Ruarri J
Daryl S

REHIS Elementary Food Hygiene Certificate

Laura E
Gavin H
Ruarri J
Daryl S

Ashley G
John J
Paul S

Essential Emergency First Aid Skills

Kieran G
James H-S
Ruarri J
Jim W

Robert G
John J
James T



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