

Kinneil House Orchard project

Orchard planting methodology

Introduction

The purpose of this project is to re-create the orchard at Kinneil House. This project was identified in the Kinneil Estate masterplan, and has been an ambition for Falkirk Community Trust and the Friends of Kinneil for many years.

Research has been undertaken into the history of the orchard at Kinneil, which dates from around the 1660s. The hope is to create an orchard timeline, with varieties from Duchess Anne's time right up until the early 1940s when the orchard was grubbed up for potato growing.

The orchard site is just under 0.25 ha in size and lies between the main house and the stable block (see map 1 – 2). There is a proposed layout of the new orchard, incorporating the existing cherry trees and taking into account the results of the geophysics survey which indicates some drains, ditches and other potential previous features of the orchard.

Planting methodology

The planting of the orchard will be done involving the local community closely. Twenty seven trees will be planted via a community event, and with the local schools during educational sessions.

Each tree pit will be dug by hand, in the locations shown on the layout plan (map 3). The pits will be marked out in advance of the planting, and will be no more than 30cm deep, and approximately 60cm square. The maximum size will be 1m square.

Trees will be planted at least 2m away from upstanding walls, and a 3m exclusion zone around the damaged wall will be in place until its repair. The trees marked in yellow on map 3 will be planted following this repair.

All trees will be of M9 or M26 rootstock where possible (dwarfing or semi-dwarf). Some varieties may only be available as MM106 (semi vigorous), and will be the largest rootstock used.

Archaeological monitoring

Historic Environment Scotland will be given two weeks' notice of the beginning of tree pit excavation.

As an extra precaution following the geophysics survey report, a professional archaeologist will be in attendance during all tree pit excavations. The archaeologist will inspect any artefacts that are recovered during the excavation and will advise on the retention of any artefacts of significance.

Should any artefacts be recovered, the archaeologist will draft a catalogue and brief statement of the location/circumstances of discovery. The artefacts will be reported to the Treasure Trove Unit within three months of the completion of excavation. One copy of the catalogue and statement will be submitted to the local Historic Environment Record and two copies will be submitted to Historic Environment Scotland within three months of the completion of excavation.

In addition, should stratified deposits of significance be encountered during the digging process, excavation will cease and Historic Environment Scotland will be informed immediately. The archaeologist will record the remains and the planting scheme may be revised in consultation with Historic Environment Scotland. The archaeologist will prepare a data structure report describing the findings. One copy of the report will be submitted to the local Historic Environment Record and two copies will be submitted to Historic Environment Scotland within three months of the completion of excavation.