

Welcome to the Moray Feu,

Looking out of your window and it's more than likely that you see greenery. There are long views over Bank Garden out to the Kingdom of Fife, or looking through the trees in the gardens fronting Randolph, Ainslie and Moray, elegant Georgian architecture is framed by vistas of seasonal beauty.

Living in the feu lets you enjoy all of this. The photo on page five shows the countryside atmosphere of the Bank Garden, with its tree-lined walkways, woodland planting and beehives. But the Bank Garden has something quite unique. Running along the back of the houses is a footpath, halfway along modest stone arches start to support the path, these soon give way to grand arches as you near Dean Bridge and the walker finds themselves elevated into the canopy of the trees reaching up from below. This might just entice you to add the Bank Garden to your membership.

Social media and websites are one of the chief assets for accessing information and staying informed, whether you're on the go or relaxing at home. Page three offers links to all our outlets.

Remember school days, when endless rules governed daily life? You can relax, for our management committee made up of fellow Feuars have kept these to a comfortable level to help all users enjoy the gardens safely and securely, flip to page six for full details.

Our top tip is to keep this handbook nearby, at your fingertips. It's full of helpful information. For example, page four explains what to do if you need an extra garden key. Planning a garden party? Visit page three. There we also have a list of annual LMF social events held, along with the somewhat more sober AGM. Keep an eye on our Facebook group for details about other events.

From climbing frames, table tennis, and garden chairs, to the protocol when walking dogs, all the information you need to enjoy our four gardens is here in the handbook. Oh, and we explain how fees are calculated, too.

We're sure that time spent in the gardens, perhaps reading the history of the Moray Feu (page 10), is the perfect tonic for the stress of modern life.

Yours
Moray Feu Committee.
2019

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CONTACTS

LMF Secretary & Treasurer (Mr Kevin Cattanach)
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Telephone 0131 226 5822

Email info@morayfeu.com

DIGITAL

Website
www.morayfeu.com

Facebook Closed Group

For all paid garden members, you are invited to join our Closed Group Facebook page. This enables easy and regular communication, conversations and news updates (in addition to the twice-yearly printed newsletters), whilst remaining private from anyone outside the Feu.

www.facebook.com/groups/282104212712221/?ref=share

Instagram

Follow our Instagram page for regular photos of the Feu's gardens and architecture as we build a photographic library. From seasonal change to developments in the gardens or simply to remind yourself of parts of the Feu perhaps you haven't been to for a long time.

www.instagram.com/moray-feu-gardens/

AGM

Whitelaw Wells holds the minutes of the annual general meeting (availed on request), which is generally held in June each year. At this time committee members are elected. You will receive notification of this together with the agenda, the committee's report, and accounts for the preceding year.

EVENTS

Social events are held throughout the year. You will receive notification of these from time to time by Facebook, email or print. Three annual events are:

February, Burn's Night June, AGM & Summer Drinks December, Christmas Drinks

Newsletters are issued twice a year to all feuars. The latest editions can be viewed on the website.

PRIVATE EVENTS AND ACCESS

Holding a Private event in the gardens? Simply complete the online form and email it back, or download and print it, and post it to Sandra Thomson at Whitelaw Wells. There is a separate form for granting access to tradesmen. Again, complete it online and submit, or download, print, and post to Sandra Thomson at Whitelaw Wells.

KEYS

Keys are for the use of paid members only and should not be handed out to other parties. The same key also fits the box in the central roundel containing the croquet set, and the small shed storing tables and chairs. For a small deposit, additional keys may be obtained from the Secretaries' office.

RECREATIONAL EQUIPMENT

Moray Gardens has a fixed claiming frame and swings on a soft bark surface. There is also a built-in barbeque, table tennis and croquet set.

ASSESSMENTS

Assessments for gardens' maintenance are sent out after the annual meeting and cover the year to the following 31st March. They are based on the rateable value of each property as of 31st March 1989. The annual pence-per-pound rate (inclusive of VAT at 20%) is approved each year by the feuars at the AGM, and the assessments are collected 30 days from the issue date by direct debit. Randolph Crescent residents pay an additional assessment fee of £30.00. Feuars are invited to make a voluntary additional contribution of £1.00

ALTERATIONS & EDINBURGH CITY COUNCIL

The feu is also part of a UNESCO World Heritage Site, so permission is required from the Council for alterations to buildings and for some tree work. Please check with ECC before commencing works.

RECORDS

Maintaining up-to-date records of current proprietors is difficult but important. When you sell your property, please remind your solicitor to advise the secretaries of the name of the new owner, and to apportion the assessment.

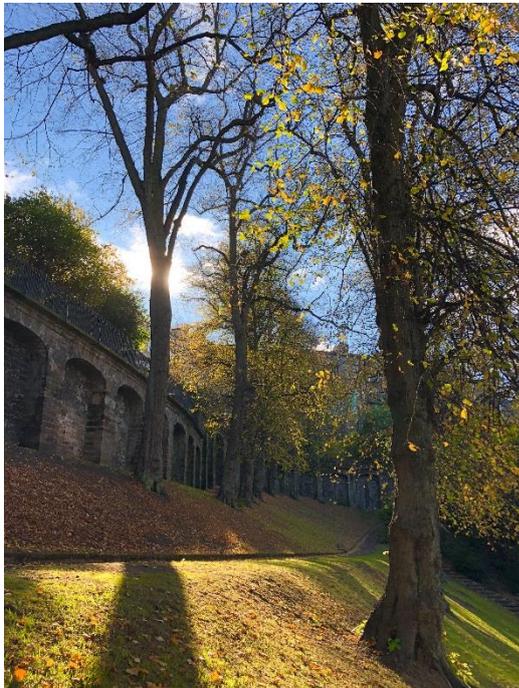
Lord Moray's Feu

Private Gardens of Edinburgh

GARDENS

The four gardens of Randolph Crescent, Ainslie Place, Moray Place, and the Bank are unique islands of tranquillity in Edinburgh's otherwise traffic-busy West End. They are maintained with care and devotion for the enjoyment of feuars, their families, guests, and tenants.

From the woodland feel of the Bank Gardens, alive with the sound of the Water-of-Leith, to the striped lawns and flower beds of Moray, the Georgian, elegant openness of Ainslie, or the elevated lawns of Randolph, where you can watch the world pass by, each of our four gardens boasts unique charms.



Garden Rules

Keys should not be handed out to third parties. The gardens are for the use of key-holders and their guests only. In order that the gardens can be enjoyed by all key-holders, the following rules have been agreed upon by the committee as general guidance for their use.

Ball games

Except for croquet, only ball games played by children are allowed, and only on condition that a soft ball (not rugby or football) is used so that no damage is caused, and that enjoyment of the gardens by others is not disturbed.

Bicycles

Small bicycles are allowed, but only on the paths. No cycling on full-sized bicycles is permitted.

Code of Conduct for dogs

Dogs are only allowed in the gardens in the charge of the key-holder or their appointee. Only dogs registered with the Secretaries and wearing their specially issued tags are allowed in the gardens.

Dogs are to be kept under effective control, in line with the Control of Dogs (Scotland) Act 2010. This means that dogs should either be:

- kept on a lead, or
- kept in sight at all times, with the key-holder or appointee aware of what it's doing and confident it will return promptly on command.

Any dog, regardless of its breed, can cause apprehensiveness, alarm, or even injury if its behaviour is 'out of control'. This does not necessarily involve aggressive behaviour, but could involve running up to, barking at, or jumping at other people or other dogs. What may seem like playful, friendly behaviour to one person, can be alarming to another. Key holders and appointees have a responsibility to ensure that their dog does not impede the enjoyment of the gardens for others.

Faeces of dogs in their charge must be picked up immediately by the key-holder or appointee, in line with the Dog Fouling (Scotland) Act 2003. Bags and bins are provided for this purpose. When taking dogs into the gardens after dark, key-holders or appointees must carry a torch.

Dogs allowed in the gardens should be regularly wormed.

Dogs are not allowed in the shrubberies or the flowerbeds and should not cause damage to the lawns.

Key-holders will make anyone they appoint to walk their dog in the gardens aware of the relevant parts of this code.

The Committee reserves the right to restrict use of the gardens by specific dogs if this code is not followed.

Care of Gardens

All users of the gardens, including dogs, must take care not to injure the plants, or go into the flower beds or shrubberies.

BBQ

No disposable barbecues should be put directly on the grass, as this kills the grass and leaves an unsightly brown patch. All litter, particularly food, should be carefully gathered up and removed.

Fireworks

No fireworks may be set off in any of the gardens.

Gates

Please close the gates behind you as leaving them open will allow small children or dogs to run out onto the road.

Private Functions

Anyone wishing to hold a private function involving more than 20 people in the gardens must apply to the Secretaries for an application form at least one month prior to the event, which will be considered by the committee. Such functions may not be held without prior permission from the committee.

Awning Use

You may hire the awning for the charge of £30. The gardeners will erect and dismantle it. Please contact John Hughes the Head Gardener, telephone number 07979763711, during working hours, to discuss the three possible locations. Payment should be made on booking approval. Please make cheques payable to: Lord Moray's Feuars.

Nurseries

Nurseries may allow their children to be in the gardens only between the following times:

- 10.00 am – 12.00 noon
- 2.15 pm – 3.15 pm

Access by Contractors to the Gardens

Permission should be obtained from the committee for access by third parties, such as builders and scaffolders. Contact details of the owner and the contractor will be displayed on the noticeboard in the Bank Gardens so that any complaints can be dealt with directly. This is required for security reasons, as garden flats are particularly vulnerable to break-ins. The feuar should provide them with their own keys. No access is allowed for plant and machinery without the committee's express permission in writing. A form for feuars to complete is attached.

Key-holders are responsible for ensuring compliance with these rules by those accompanying them, by their tenants and by their own children and dogs, and shall be bound to make good any damage done.

(Rules updated: May 2018)

Management Committee and Rules Governing the Committee

At the 1997 AGM the committee agreed and approved that a member could serve for a maximum of three sessions of three years, and that there should be a maximum of 11 members, including the chairman.

In addition to the 11 members, the Management Committee could co-opt feuars onto the committee if particular expertise was required. Although not required by the rules, co-opted members have always stood for election at the following AGM if they wished to continue on the committee.

The rules also required that the Management Committee submit proposals for major extraordinary expenditure to a general meeting.

Sub-committees

These are set up as and when the committee considers it appropriate from time to time. Sub-committees currently in existence are Traffic, and Gardens. Not all members of a subcommittee need be members of the main committee. Feuars may be invited by the main committee to join a sub-committee for their particular expertise.

Management Committee functions

The Management Committee was formed in the 1820s, and until 1958, when it became involved in the Randolph Crescent Roundabout Enquiry, confined itself to matters relating to the gardens. In 1998 the question arose again regarding whether the Management Committee should also act as representatives of the feuars in objecting to the proposed road closures. It was again felt that such activity was in the best interest of the feuars.

The dual role of the Management Committee has been revisited from time to time as new members join. The feeling has generally been that unless an issue clearly relates to the feu as a whole, the Management Committee should not take sides by lodging objections, but simply make information available to all feuars so each was able to make his own decision. This has been the practice ever since and has applied to planning, licensing, and particularly, traffic matters.

Major works to the Bank Garden arches

In 1989, a sub-committee organised a scheme of major works to the Bank Garden arches, the top terrace, the steps and the outer railings. The 250m of arches to the west had been built after the major landslip in 1825, and those to the east as a result of the 1837 landslip. Work on the arches was urgently required as there were signs of structural failure and the danger of collapse (there had recently been a spectacular collapse of a feuwar's garden wall at the east end of the arches). The cost was around £63,000. A 60% grant was obtained from the Edinburgh New Town Conservation Committee for a major part of the work.

Gardeners

Two full-time gardeners, John Hughes and Melvyn Clench, are employed by the Management Committee on behalf of the feuars. They are instructed by the gardens convenor. Outside contractors, such as a tree surgeon, are used when required.

Lord Moray's Feu

Private Gardens of Edinburgh

Committee Members

Fiona Young, Chair

chair@morayfeu.com

Fran van Dijk, Vice Chair/amenities

Fiona Jarvie, Gardens Convenor

gardens@morayfeu.com

Paul Broda, Member, Gardens Subcommittee

gardens2@morayfeu.com

Enid Holman-Arthur, Social Convenor

events@morayfeu.com

Simon Baig, Dogs Convenor

dogs@morayfeu.com

Mike Baynham, Recreational equipment

playfixtures@morayfeu.com

Gregor Henderson, Fixtures
(arches, paths, benches, railings)

fixtures@morayfeu.com

Blair Finlay, Website and social media

digital@morayfeu.com

Ashley Lloyd, Traffic Convenor

Secretaries and Treasurers

Whitelaw Wells, 9 Ainslie Place,
Edinburgh EH3 6AT

Sandra Thomson, WW, General enquiries

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Kevin Cattanach, WW, Secretary

secretary@morayfeu.com

History

The four elegant gardens that grace Edinburgh's West End—and attract the attention of many admiring visitors, despite being private—began life as delightful accessories to the Earl of Moray's Estate of Drumsheugh. This originally included a mansion house, policies and parks bounded by Randolph Cliff, Randolph Lane, Glenfinlas Street, Saint Colme Street, Gloucester Lane, Doune Terrace, and a mill lade along the south side of the Water of Leith.

By 1822, when the estate was being defined on three sides by new buildings, Lord Moray decided to complete the picture by demolishing Drumsheugh House itself, on the south-east of what is now Randolph Crescent, and opening the whole area for homes. His architect, James Gillespie Graham, produced a grand layout plan for proposed houses, streets (named after the Moray family), private gardens and communal gardens.

Today these classical shapes remain almost exactly as they were built, though some older facilities have passed with time. Stables, for instance, came along with the 152 stances for homes being sold for an annual feu duty. Each street carried a fixed rate, from 16 to 21 shillings a foot (and 5 shillings a foot for stables). So, the average annual feu duty payable to Lord Moray was about £30. The cost of building one such house was between £2000 and £3000. These days they fetch something closer to one million pounds!

Until the Dean Bridge was completed in 1832, the stone to build the handsome Georgian houses had to be carted over the Water of Leith at the Dean Village, and heaved up Bell's Brae.

A dozen stances were bought at a "roup" (auction) in August 1822, and by 1827 over half had sold. Though sales then slowed, and there were gaps until about 1858, the New Town's spirit of aesthetic development eventually took strong root here, not least in the presentation of the gardens—Moray Place, Ainslie Place, Randolph Crescent and the Bank—with feuars being happily obliged "to lay them down in shrubbery and walks, as shown by the plan."

At first, the only tree was a single existing willow, and the new planting consisted solely of shrubs. Growth was the name of the game.

While Graham's plan for Moray Place Garden (3.48 acres) might have impressed many, some feuars remained unconvinced. One was the New Town architect W H Playfair, who in 1832 offered "suggestions" for its improvement along with regrets "that more attention had not been bestowed in laying out the pleasure ground ...it is conceived that it may be very considerably improved, not only in appearance, but also in utility."

The gist of their scheme was to plant trees "here and there," and to level the whole garden, "the advantages of which will doubtless be supported by all the younger inhabitants, and by such of the elder as have not forgot the pleasures of level play-ground."

Points noted, and today its many trees, shrubs and level grass areas complement each other beautifully, while being woven through with interconnecting paths.

Lord Moray's Feu

Private Gardens of Edinburgh

The existing connecting paths within and around the interior perimeter of Ainslie Place Garden represent a pleasing adjustment of the original plan, which showed a circular path in the centre and an oblong path near the outside. Randolph Crescent Garden, a stone's throw away to the west, is unique among the group, standing high above the traffic that streams around it, while maintaining the others' high standards.

Was the garden designed and built as a mound, or was the mound there first, possibly as a result of soil being dumped when the houses' foundations were dug out? That was the intriguing question asked in 1958, at a public enquiry into an Edinburgh Corporation proposal to convert the garden into a roundabout. The scheme was dropped in the face of the feuars' unanimous resistance, but the question was never answered. Nevertheless, that garden has had a colourful history, notably when a large air raid shelter was built in its centre—further raising its profile, as it were—and all the gardens' railings were removed by the Ministry of Supply for the war effort.

Even Moray Place Garden, the most admired jewel in this necklace of gardens, was not exempt from playing its part in the war effort, though the present holly hedge was planted round its perimeter to make up for the railings' absence. After the war, new railings were designed and erected. Until they were completed, wardens were employed to patrol the gardens.

Today, the garden is respectfully patrolled again—at least on the outside—by international tour coaches, whose passengers see it as the heart of a grand circle of Georgian architecture that takes the breath away in many languages.

The Bank Garden (4.1 acres) with its rugged 45-degree angles and well-wooded areas tumbling down to the Water of Leith, is nearer to nature than the others, revelling in the absence of close-cut manicuring. Though it got off to a shaky start—and was closed for much of its first 15 years after a landslide behind Ainslie Place in June 1825—its ground was stabilised by a picturesque row of 27 arches, with a walkway created above. More recently, in 1991, its walkways and paths were repaired and improved to enhance this stimulating little walk on the wild side.

Although all four gardens are managed by one management committee, and looked after by the same skilled gardeners, each has its own special qualities. These add immeasurably to Edinburgh's unique offering of city-centre tranquillity.