

NATIONAL TRUST FOR SCOTLAND MEDIA RELEASE

Press release

Pitmedden Garden hosts Scotland's first drive-thru apple harvest

With thousands of apples and pears ready for picking, the National Trust for Scotland's Pitmedden Garden near Ellon adapted its annual fruit picking event to offer Scotland's first ever drive-thru harvest.

While it wasn't able to offer its usual entertainment due to current Covid-19 restrictions, the team at Pitmedden Garden sold approximately 400kg of local produce yesterday afternoon (Sunday 27 September).

Welcoming 112 cars to the lawn in front of Pitmedden House, which is owned by the conservation charity, bags of homegrown were laid out for buyers to pick up and enjoy at home.

Dedicated gardeners tend to the apple and pear trees all year round to offer the best quality produce and with over 10 varieties of apple, two types of pear and home baking on offer, drivers were spoilt for choice.

In line with Covid-19 safety measures, staff wore appropriate PPE and each purchase was contact-free. Attendees were asked to not leave their car or approach the produce stall by foot.

Remaining produce is available to buy at Pitmedden Garden, which will be open every Saturday and Sunday from 10.30am - 4.30pm until 1 November.

Monique Lanz, Visitor Services Supervisor at Pitmedden Garden, said: "Our apple day is the most popular event in our calendar at Pitmedden Garden and we usually welcome thousands of excited apple enthusiasts at this time of year. With the produce ready bagged, we were glad to offer a Covid-safe way for the public to enjoy our wonderfully fresh produce.

"Our dedicated gardeners, who have been tending to the apple trees all year round, were glad to see so many cars turn up. They work extremely hard to make sure that Pitmedden Garden's apple crop is successful and of high quality and that people can enjoy it for years to come. We rely on donations and the support of our visitors to be able to run events like this and the support we received at yesterday's apple event really shows the strength of people supporting their community at an uncertain time."

Brilliant design and meticulous maintenance give Pitmedden Garden its unique charm. With almost 6 miles of clipped box hedging, the parterres at the heart of the garden are a masterpiece of intricate patterns and sparkling colours.

The Great Garden dates back to 1675 when it was originally laid out by Sir Alexander Seton. In the 1950s the Trust re-created the garden based on 17th-century plans of the gardens at the Palace of Holyroodhouse in Edinburgh.

The walls at Pitmedden Garden are displaying espalier trained apple trees and with an orchard planted in 2014, Pitmedden Garden is now packed with more than 200 fruit trees. With honeysuckle and jasmine also casting their scent in the garden, Pitmedden really is a delight for the senses.

For more information, visit <https://www.nts.org.uk/visit/places/pitmedden-garden>

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Editor's Notes:

The National Trust for Scotland can also be referred to as *the Trust* or *NTS*

The National Trust for Scotland is the charity that celebrates and protects Scotland's heritage. It relies on the support of its members and donors to carry out its important work of caring for the natural and built heritage of Scotland for everyone to enjoy.

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