



Comrie in Colour War Memorial Garden

CASE
STUDY

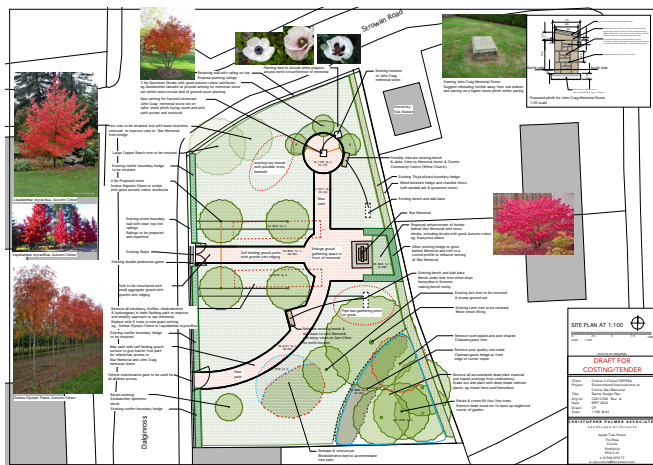
Background

Comrie War Memorial is situated in a peaceful garden jointly maintained by Comrie in Colour and Perth & Kinross Council. Last enhanced in 2004, the garden was in need of rejuvenation, including improving accessibility and making it lower maintenance.

Working with landscape architect Chris Palmer Associates, the group developed plans which included planting of pollinator friendly species, the removal of heavy evergreen shrub beds, and the introduction of an avenue of trees with autumn colour to have good impact on Armistice Day.

Other proposals included creating step-free access, improving existing and laying new paths, relocating benches to allow visitors to enjoy the spectacular borrowed landscape offered by the surrounding vistas, and installing an information board.

The group were also keen to give a greater sense of place to the memorial stone laid in 2017 dedicated to Second Lieutenant John Manson Craig, son of Comrie, and Victoria Cross recipient.



Preparatory Work

Prior to beginning work on the project a public consultation was held at Cultybraggan Camp to provide members of the local community with further details about the proposed changes, assess public opinion, and gather feedback.

A lengthy investigation to establish site ownership was also conducted, requiring archive research, and engagement with the Parish Church and Perth & Kinross Council.

Planning permission and advertising consent were secured, with further enquiries made to establish any other requirements that had to be adhered to due to the garden falling within Comrie's conservation area.

Written support for the project was received from Comrie Community Council, Comrie Development Trust, the family of Second Lieutenant John Manson Craig, the minister of Comrie Parish Church and local PKC ward councillors.



The garden before



The garden before

Project Timeline



Project Activity

Groundworks were completed in a single phase during Spring and Summer 2024.

Tree Works

As part of the project, several tree surgery tasks were undertaken. These included removing the scrappy edge in front of the yew trees in the southeast corner of the garden and lifting their crowns, along with similar work on the yew and copper beech at the corner of Strowan Road. In addition to preserving the trees' health, these efforts improved light penetration and enhanced visibility both into and out of the garden.

Removal of Shrubs

The dense evergreen shrub beds that once flanked the garden's entrance were replaced with four Sorbus 'Majestic Flame' trees, known for their vibrant autumn colours. This transformation created a brighter, more welcoming approach for visitors.

Path Works

Sections of turf were removed to create a new path from the step-free access gate, leading to the central area in front of the War Memorial, and continuing around the John Manson Craig VC memorial stone. The existing pathways were stripped, levelled, and resurfaced with CEDEC limestone dry-pave bound gravel, providing a smooth and durable finish. The paths were finished with granite sett edging, giving them a neat and tidy appearance. This also makes mowing easier, as the border provides a defined edge for the grass to grow against.

Memorial Stone

The John Manson Craig VC memorial stone was carefully dismantled and safely set aside while the foundation for a new stone plinth was excavated. A beautiful sandstone plinth was then constructed, and the memorial stone was mounted on it. This new base gives the monument a greater sense of presence and enhances its visibility for visitors entering the garden, making it a more fitting tribute.

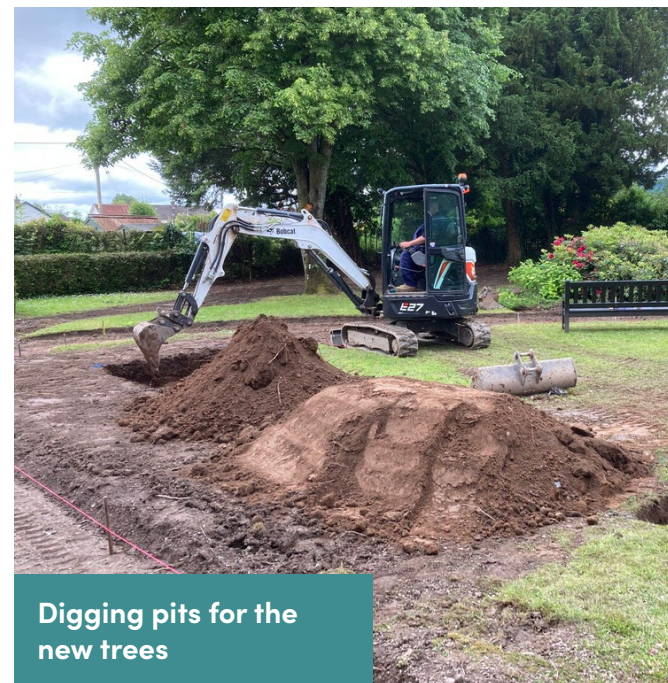
Planting

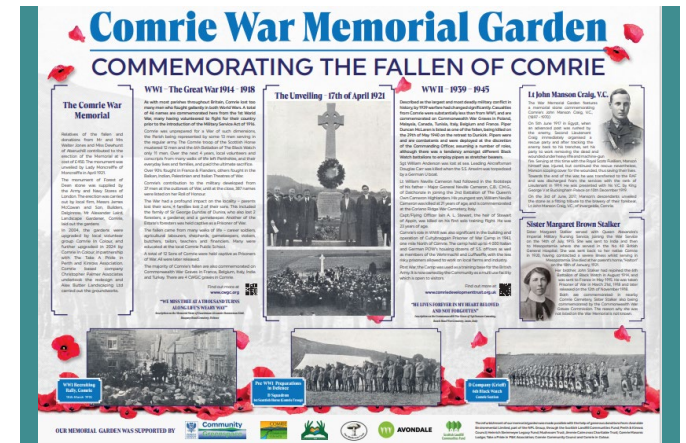
Amelanchier lamarckii shrubs, valued for their vibrant autumn colours, were planted in the newly created semi-circular bed of ground cover and white poppies surrounding the John Manson Craig VC memorial stone. To enhance the border behind the War Memorial, additional shrubs were added, chosen for their striking seasonal foliage. The existing hedge was also trimmed into a curved profile to further complement the War Memorial's setting.

Site Furniture

The two existing benches were relocated, one positioned to face the War Memorial with views extending to Carn Chois on the northern horizon, and the other offering a view of the John Manson Craig VC memorial stone and the Comrie Community Centre (White Church).

The railings surrounding the garden were repainted, and an information board containing details of the history of the garden and the memorial, including those who lost their lives in the two world wars, was installed.





Lessons Learned

A project of this size would not have been possible without Take A Pride In Perth & Kinross Association providing project management and fundraising support throughout the life of the project. This allowed us to continue our village responsibilities while working with the project team.

It was very much a team effort, which included meetings, arranging public consultations, reviewing tenders, agreeing design, and much more. The process started in August 2021, with completion in October 2024, so patience and the ability to be flexible was required.

Completion of the information board added a valuable addition to the Memorial and provided previously unknown and interesting facts about the Fallen of Comrie.

The completed project has been very well received by local villagers and visitors. It has ensured accessibility for all for many years to come.

Project Benefits

The rejuvenation of Comrie War Memorial Garden enhanced accessibility, reduced maintenance, and improved aesthetics. Step-free paths, vibrant autumn trees, and pollinator-friendly plants created a welcoming, low-maintenance space. Relocated benches and improved visibility offered better views for reflection, while a new plinth for the John Manson Craig VC memorial stone gave it greater prominence. The project honoured the site's history while making it more accessible and enjoyable for future visitors.



This project has enhanced the beauty and accessibility of the space while creating a fitting tribute to those we honour. Thanks to Marie Donnelly, past Chair of Comrie in Colour, whose leadership initiated this project, the garden incorporates vibrant plantings and thoughtful design, ensuring it remains a place of reflection and pride for our community.

Julia McVey
Chair of Comrie in Colour

Funders and Stakeholders

The Comrie War Memorial Garden project could not have been realised without the generous support of the following funders:

- Scottish Landfill Communities Fund
- Perth & Kinross Council Community Environment Challenge Fund
- Heinrich Steinmeyer Legacy Fund
- Mushroom Trust
- Jimmie Cairncross Trust
- Comrie in Colour
- Comrie and District Community Council
- Take A Pride in Perth & Kinross Association
- Comrie Masonic Lodge

Comrie in Colour would also like to thank the Perth & Kinross Council Community Greenspace Team who provided exceptional technical support and expertise throughout the project, including detailed historical research to develop the information board.

Total Project Cost

£41,580

For further information about the **Comrie War Memorial Garden project** or the **Take a Pride in Perth and Kinross Association** please email info@prideinperthshire.co.uk