

Ownership history

Prior to 1974, the land at Acorn Dell was part of the Ochertyre Estate.

In 1974: On 4th February 1974, Sir William Patrick Keith Murray sold a parcel of land from the Ochertyre Estate (of which the land along the northwest side of the Turret was part) to Sennar Investments Limited, a company registered in Jersey. Most of this land was subsequently developed for new housing at Oakbank.

In 1978: On 9th February 1978, ownership of the smaller portion of land along the Turret was transferred to C&S Investments (Stirling) Limited. Ten months later, on 8th December 1978, the land was sold to Gilbert McCall.

In 1991: On 28th February 1991, Mrs Elspeth McCall, Gilbert McCall's widow, of Brechin, Angus, sold the land for £20,000 to Nantha Kumaran and Chong See Hoo, both residing in Malaysia.

In the 1991 title deed, the land is described as: 'subjects known as Oakbank, Turret Bridge'. At this point, the land was given the name 'Acorn Dell' (to distinguish it from other surrounding lands at Oakbank) as the (then) owners sought to apply for planning consent to develop it. Thus, 'Acorn Dell' has been its 'official' name **for last 25 years**.

In 2012: On 16 May 2012, Acorn Dell was purchased by local charity, Crieff Community Initiative, for £10,000. This sum was raised by a group of local residents through donations. In the title deed, the land is described as 'subjects being the area of ground at Turret Bridge, Crieff'.

In 2016: On 14 June 2016, the title deed for the land was transferred to Crieff Community Trust when the trustees of Crieff Community Initiative retired and the charity was wound up.

Historic maps

In 1863: The oldest Ordnance Survey (OS) maps for Crieff clearly show that the land on the west side of the Turret Burn at Turret Bridge was outside the town boundary and part of the Parish of Monzievaird and Strowan.

At this stage, the Crieff to Comrie railway had not yet been built. Oakbank, Eppie Callum's Tree, Bridge of Turret and Turret Lodge were all shown as local landmarks, but the land now known as Acorn Dell was not separately named. There was a woollen mill, bark mill and oil mill on the east side of the Turret at Dallerie and a corn mill, barley mill and saw mill at Milnab. A narrow path is shown along the west side of the Turret, but it is unnamed.

In 1899: The OS map of 1899 shows Lady Mary's Walk labelled clearly as a wide path along the River Earn. This map also shows the Crieff to Comrie railway which opened in 1893. By this stage, the Dallerie Woollen Mill and Dallerie Laundry had been established on the east side of the Turret Burn. The house at Turret Bridge was named as the West Church Manse. The narrow footpath on the west side of the Turret Burn is unnamed on the map.

In 1930: By this stage, a sports ground and pavilion had been established at Dallerie. Curling ponds and a recreation ground had been created at what is now Munghall Park; and Macrosty Park and its bandstand had been built. Lady Mary's Walk is still shown as referring to the path along the River Earn, but the path along the Turret is unnamed.

The Acorn Dell path

A lot of people in Crieff think of the path along the west side of the Turret Burn as part of Lady Mary's Walk. However, historically, this was not the case. Lady Mary's Walk was the wide formal tree-lined avenue along the Earn which was created in 1815 by Sir Patrick Murray of Ochertyre. This land is now owned by Perth & Kinross Council.

Until 2012, the path on the west side of the Turret was always in private ownership, first by the Murrays of Ochertyre, then later by developers.

Nevertheless, it is clear that the path along the Turret has been a long established public right of way, and so, over time, local people began to refer to it as part of

Lady Mary's Walk – perhaps simply because it had no other name.

Interestingly, the title deeds for Acorn Dell from 1978 onwards give the name of the path along the Turret Burn as 'Lady Mary's Walk', which suggests that the Ordnance Survey adopted the (then) local name for the path when the land was separated off (in 1978) from the larger parcel of land sold by the Ochertyre Estate in 1974.

This path and the main section of Lady Mary's Walk along the Earn are now part of the designated core path network for Crieff and will eventually form part of the proposed Three Saints Way pilgrim route and a national Pilgrim Trail from St Andrew's to Iona.