



Prince of Wales Garden Planted

The gardens and quadrangles of the new Centre have been planned with the same careful attention to detail accorded to the buildings themselves and the academic and social facilities they house. The largest and most prominent of the gardens is named after the Centre's Patron, HRH The Prince of Wales. As the centrepiece of the whole, its design and implementation have received the most careful attention. The Centre is honoured that His Royal Highness consented not only to have the garden named in his honour, but also chose to contribute to its design.

The Centre is also fortunate that the gardens are adjacent to Addison's Walk, part of the Fellow's Garden of Magdalen College, the mature trees of which will provide a striking backdrop to the new plantings, especially in autumn. Over the summer of 2015, the mounds of rubble and the towers of portacabins were cleared to make way for the construction of stoneworks, and the creation of a sunken space to accommodate the lawn and wildflower meadow. Stone pathways were enhanced by fountains and other water features, and the first planting was completed during the autumn.

The garden incorporates decorative stone walkways, as well as lawns and beds for planting, with both fountains and channels of water, a traditional feature of Islamic garden design. There is also a raised platform,



The Principal Private Secretary to HRH The Prince of Wales (centre) and Mrs Alderton with the Director



View from the waterfall at the raised end of the Garden

which provides additional views and further variety of planting. While the hard landscaping reflects the Islamic tradition, the planting has, naturally, a more Western feel to it, as appropriate for the local weather. Apart from the lawns and meadow, the traditional features include box hedges and roses, and the maples that line the garden on two sides. The result is a unique space which, like the building, blends the forms and traditions of East and West.

When the sun shines it is easy to picture generations of scholars and students enjoying the restful spaces and fine vistas that the design has ingeniously enabled. From the gardens there are fine views of the building, and many social spaces, including the Oman Hall and both senior and junior common rooms, look out onto the gardens. When the doors of the Hall are fully opened, the gardens will serve as an extended space



Professor Andrew Hamilton, Vice Chancellor of Oxford University, planting a tree

for a range of social events. The Centre has conducted a number of ceremonial tree plantings, including, to mark the Patron's special role in its creation, a tree planted by the Principal Private Secretary to The Prince of Wales, Mr Clive Alderton.

The planting of trees is, of course, a well established tradition and the Trustees resolved that this opportunity should not be missed, but used positively to mark the Centre's appreciation of some of the individuals and institutions that have played such an important part in



The fountain in the Sunken Garden

the Centre's development since its foundation some thirty years ago. They also resolved to be participants in the process and the Centre was delighted that the Trustees chose to plant their own tree, on behalf of the Board and of all its members, past and present, who have devoted so much of their time and energy to guiding its academic development.

Since the Centre's foundation, following a positive endorsement of the project by the Council of the University of Oxford, its relationship with the University has always been strong and multi-faceted. The planting of a tree by the then Vice Chancellor, Professor Andrew Hamilton, provides a new and growing symbol of that important relationship. The collegiate nature of the

University was also recognised by the planting of a tree by the Chairman of the Conference of Colleges, Professor Paul Madden, Provost of Queen's College.

This was also an opportunity to pay tribute to those Colleges which have played such an important role in the Centre's development, including St Cross College, which provided the framework for the Centre's foundation, and Magdalen College, which generously made the land, on which the new building stands, available for purchase by the Centre, and with which the Centre is also linked through the Director's appointment as The Prince of Wales Fellow. These links were commemorated by the planting of trees by



The main fountain in The Prince of Wales Garden

the President of Magdalen College, Professor David Clary, and by the Master of St Cross College, Sir Mark Jones, who were accompanied by other college Fellows.

Former Vice-Chancellor of Oxford University, Sir John Hood, who was in office at an important time of the Centre's development also took part in the tree planting, as did the members of the Centre's



The Dean of Diplomatic Corps, along with other Ambassadors and High Commissioners, at the tree planting ceremony



The President & Fellows of Magdalen College



The Bishop of Oxford with the Director



The former Archbishop of Canterbury (second from left) with members of the Centre



Sir John Hood, former Vice-Chancellor of Oxford University



The Master & Fellows of St Cross College

International Academic Advisory Committee, in the margins of their annual meeting at Oxford.

Leading personalities beyond the University, symbolising the Centre's

role and friendships across the wider life of the City, were also, naturally, prominent among those leading the planting ceremonies. These included the Lord Lieutenant, Tim Stevenson OBE, on behalf of the County of Oxfordshire, the Lord Mayor Rae Humberstone, on behalf of the City, and Oxford MP, the Rt Hon Andrew Smith MP, in whose constituency the Centre lies.

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Over the years the Centre has also benefited from the support of many Ambassadors to the Court of St James, who have taken an interest in the Centre's work, participated in its academic activities, and enabled the building of strong links with academic institutions in their home countries. This remains an important link for the Centre and was symbolised by a most welcome visit by the Dean of the Diplomatic Corps and Ambassador of the State of Kuwait, HE Mr Khaled Al-Duwaisan, accompanied by a large



HE Dr Abdullah Gül, former President of Turkey



Mr Tim Stevenson, Lord Lt of Oxfordshire



The Lord Mayor of Oxford



Mr Andrew Smith MP



Members of the Centre's International Academic Advisory Committee



The Chairman of Conference of Colleges (right) and Mrs Madden with the Director
group of his fellow Ambassadors. They toured the building, attended a lunch hosted in their honour by the Director and by a number of Fellows and other senior staff of the Centre.

The Centre has also placed emphasis on interfaith dialogue and has always sought to include those from other faiths in its numerous activities, amongst its advisers and as participants. In recognition of this, the Centre was delighted that the Bishop of Oxford, Rt Revd Colin Fletcher consented to plant a tree, as did the former Archbishop of Canterbury, Rt Hon Lord Williams of



The view of the Prince of Wales Garden from the south-west wing



The Board of Trustees at the tree planting ceremony

Oystermouth, who also serves on the Centre's Strategy Advisory Committee.

It is hoped that these many and varied ceremonies will provide a living symbol of the Centre's many relationships and friendships, both in Oxford, and at national and international levels.