

AIRLIE ESTATES ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

Airlie Estates is a modern agricultural, forestry, residential and sporting Estate, with a rich history spanning 700 years.

The Estate is one of the most significant properties in the Angus Glens and is managed to take account of and adapt to changing environmental and ecological challenges of the countryside whilst providing space for people to enjoy and live.

The Estates extends to approximately 15,000 acres of carefully managed farmland, amenity and commercial forestry together with a portfolio of rented properties and holiday accommodation, sporting lets and traditional farm tenancies.

Wider public access is encouraged on the popular path network, and the Estate hosts the Cortachy Highland Games and Flower Show.

Sustainability and good stewardship of the assets under our management is the key to our approach, and we work with a range of stakeholders to support and facilitate activities that protect and enhance the natural environment and limit our environmental impact.

Access - The Estate continues to promote public access to enhance community use and understanding of the natural environment. We encourage public access by walkers, runners, mountain bikers and horse riders on the Cortachy and Dykehead path network.

Agriculture – Our extensive in-hand upland sheep farm covers a significant area of the Estate at approximately 2280 ha (5800 acres). This enterprise has very low inputs, with sheep grazing the hill ground to enhance habitat for upland wading birds through heather and rush pasture management without the use of herbicides and pesticides.

There are a number of tenanted farms on the Estate that have been at the core of the Estates business for generations. Our tenant farmers invested in the long-term sustainability of their environment and encouraged to farm accordingly.

Forestry - Airlie Estates commercial and policy woodlands extend to approximately 1260 ha (3113 acres) and are managed in accordance with Scottish Forestry's best practice and a 20- year long term forest plan.

To maximise carbon sequestration and biomass production, commercial spruce is planted where it makes economic and environmental sense. River management and the amenity of the lower glens is enhanced by the planting of native broad-leaved species.

The Crossbog SSSI on Airlie Estates is a 63 ha (155 acre) site designated for its ancient Scots' pine trees. We are working with local partners on a seed collection project to provide local nurseries with seeds of local provenance to be planted in the Angus area. We are also trying to promote the natural regeneration of these ancient trees in situ through removing non-native invasive species such as rhododendron, maintaining the fence in a deer proof condition and trialing some scarification and heather clearance.

We are also involved in a Nature Restoration Grant application for hedgerow creation and restoration and to enhance the riparian environment through tree planting.

Red Squirrels and Wildlife - The estate is proactive in encouraging the conservation and enhancement of the red squirrel and wildcat population. We work with Saving Scotland's Red Squirrels to control the invasive grey squirrel population whilst promoting the habitat for red squirrels and wildcats.

Angling - Airlie Estates includes fishing on both the South Esk and the River Isla. Both rivers are Special Areas of Conservation for their populations of Atlantic Salmon, with the South Esk also designated for freshwater pearl mussels.

The local angling club lease fishing from the estate on both rivers and encourage new and younger anglers to the sport. All anglers follow a catch and release code.

Sporting - Deer stalking and grouse shooting are an integral part of the land use on the Airlie Estates, which is carried out by several different sporting tenants. On the moorland areas, walked up shoots are carried out and the sporting tenants promote best practice moorland management to benefit upland wading birds, passerines, and red and black grouse, with a recent survey observing 86 lekking male black grouse. We also encourage ground nesting raptors on the moorland. Muirburn is carried out on some areas of rank heather to promote young growth and reduce fire risk. Sporting tenants are encouraged to play a full part in the local Deer Management Group and the Angus Glens Moorland Group.

Deer are managed across the estate to limit the damage to young trees and agricultural crops, as well as controlling the population to prevent welfare issues.

Residential Buildings – Airlie Estates takes a long-term and sustainable approach to managing our assets to meet the needs of occupiers and users for generations to come. There are 26 residential properties which are let out to local people, and we use local small businesses to carry out maintenance work on these. The preservation and repair of vernacular buildings is a priority for the estate and traditional repair methods and materials are used wherever possible, with oversight from Historic Environment Scotland <https://www.historicenvironment.scot>