



From the GM's Desk

As autumn begins to settle over Garlington, the estate slowly shifts into one of its most beautiful seasons. Cooler mornings arrive, the trees begin their gradual change, and that unmistakable Midlands calm returns to our daily rhythm.

It is wonderful to see the estate back in full swing again after the festive break. The team and I have hit the ground running, and with the start of our new financial year there is much happening behind the scenes. We have several exciting plans for the months ahead, and I look forward to sharing more with you as the year unfolds.

A warm welcome as well to our two new Board members. We are grateful to have them join the Garlington Board and you can read more about them in this edition, and get to know them better.

As Easter approaches, we wish you and your families a blessed and restful time. If you are travelling during the holidays, please do so safely and enjoy the opportunity to recharge.

Here's to a wonderful year ahead.



Welcoming Our New Board Members

We are delighted to share that Pierre de Villiers Berrange and Angus Findlay have joined the Garlington Board of Directors. Both bring a depth of experience and a genuine commitment to thoughtful community living.



Pierre de Villiers Berrange

Pierre comes to the Board with a lifetime of experience in law, business and property development. Over the years, he has worked across a variety of sectors and has often stepped into leadership roles where calm judgement and steady guidance were needed most.

His background in governance and long-standing involvement on various boards give him a thoughtful perspective on how communities can be guided with both care and foresight.

With a strong understanding of estate living, including his current involvement in developing a large lifestyle community, Pierre appreciates the importance of long-term planning, financial prudence and preserving the unique character of a place. As he and his wife Ali settle at Garlington, he looks forward to playing an active role in shaping the Estate's future and contributing to its continued stability and charm.



Angus Findlay

Many residents will already know Angus, both as a neighbour and through his previous involvement with the Estate. As an experienced attorney specialising in commercial matters, he brings a practical and considered approach to governance, ensuring that decisions are balanced and well informed.

Angus has walked alongside Garlington through different stages of its journey and understands the history that has shaped the Estate into what it is today. That continuity offers valuable insight as we look ahead. His focus remains on maintaining the careful management and attention to detail that uphold the lifestyle we all treasure.

We warmly welcome Pierre and Angus to the Board and thank them for their willingness to serve. Strong communities are built on the contribution of those who step forward, and we are grateful for their time, wisdom and commitment.

Estate Life



WELLNESS WEEKEND

At the end of February, the gym hosted its first Health and Wellness Weekend. Those who attended thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity to spend the morning learning more about their health and wellbeing.

A group of generous medical professionals shared their knowledge through engaging talks on women's health, skin cancer awareness, mental wellbeing and practical approaches to long-term health. Health checks and fitness classes also formed part of the weekend, offering residents a chance to move, learn and focus on their wellbeing.

We are so grateful to the doctors, instructors and residents who joined us and helped make the event a meaningful one. We look forward to seeing more residents take part in future wellness gatherings.



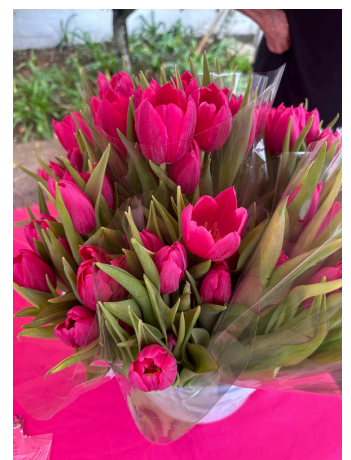
HARVEST & HOME

On the afternoon of 6 March, we hosted the very first Harvest & Home Market around the Bistro, a small but meaningful beginning to what we hope will become a gentle monthly rhythm within our community.

Harvest & Home was created with a simple idea in mind: to offer a space where residents who grow, bake, make or create can share their offerings with fellow residents. From fresh produce and homegrown goods to baked treats, pantry items, flowers and handcrafted pieces, the market provides a relaxed setting where neighbours can support one another's small businesses, enjoy the atmosphere around the Bistro, and take pleasure in the simple rhythms of country living.

While the rain certainly made its presence known, the spirit of the afternoon remained warm. Our resident stallholders braved the weather and set up beautiful stalls, offering a glimpse of the care, creativity and quiet talent within our community.

We are grateful to the residents who hosted stalls and helped bring this first gathering to life. As the months unfold, we hope more residents will feel inspired to take part, whether by hosting a stall or simply coming along to enjoy and support the offerings of their neighbours.



Upcoming Gatherings

Movies Under the Stars – 21 March 2026
The Final 26 for Jo Keppler – 26 March 2026
Blood Drive – 11 April 2026
Family Day – 17 May 2026

A WARM WELCOME

A very warm welcome to the Jenkins, Burgoyne, Nkambule, Buchmann, Moodley, Dormehl, Moss, Ntseare, Mgele and Richmond families.

We are delighted that you have chosen to make Garlington your home. We hope you are settling in well and already enjoying the open spaces, the changing seasons, and the friendly faces along the way.

Community Story

The Signs We Leave – Alex Van Den Heever

Some people choose their life's work. Others grow into it so gradually that it feels as though the path was always beneath their feet.

For Alex, tracking was never simply a profession, it was something he absorbed, step by step, from the earth itself. Arriving in the bush young and curious, he found himself walking alongside master trackers, following leopards through dust and grass, learning to see what others overlooked. Over time, tracking shifted from a practical skill to a way of thinking.

Today, he explains, tracking is less about footprints and more about patterns and relationships. It is about understanding context. What happened here? What will happen next? It requires patience, humility, and the willingness to question what you think you know.

Working alongside master tracker Renias Mhlongo has been one of the great privileges of his life. Renias carries knowledge never written down, yet deeply precise. Seeing that ancient wisdom recognised and translated into meaningful, modern conservation work gives Alex profound purpose.





The Work of Tracker Academy

At the heart of Alex's professional life is the Tracker Academy – an organisation founded to recognise, protect and professionalise the traditional skill of animal tracking.

It is estimated that Southern Africa may have lost up to 90% of its traditional tracking knowledge over the past 60 years. The Academy seeks to reverse that loss by training young rural men and women to a formally accredited, world-class standard.

But beyond conservation, it is about dignity and opportunity.

Over the past 15 years, nearly 400 jobs have been created in the wildlife economy. Approximately 96% of graduates are gainfully employed, many supporting an average of four dependants each in regions where unemployment can reach 70%.

Students spend long, demanding days in training. Rising early, walking vast distances, learning to read spoor, studying animal behaviour, working in teams, and completing classroom theory. Each student logs roughly 1,500 hours in the bush and experiences around 150 encounters with big game on foot.



In 2024, the Academy received the prestigious Kudu Award for Best Environmental Training School. More recently, a Technical Supply Agreement was signed with SANParks to retrain 450 field rangers in advanced man-tracking skills within Kruger National Park — strengthening anti-poaching efforts where they matter most.

For Alex, tracking is more than conservation science. It is a vehicle for social good.

The greatest transformation he sees in students is confidence. Many arrive uncertain of their place in the world. Over time, they realise they carry valuable knowledge. They stand taller. They return home as providers and role models to their communities.



A Leopard Who Became a Teacher

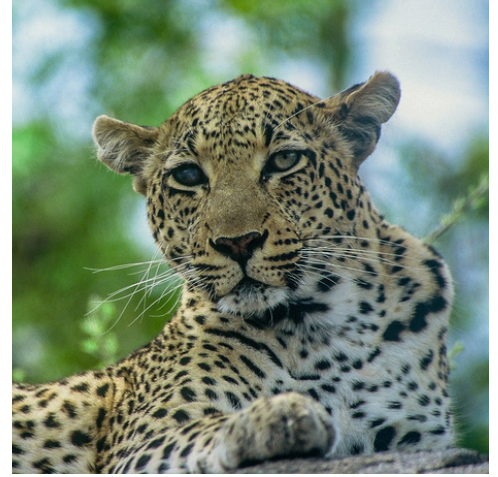
Over three decades in the bush, Alex and Renias have shared countless extraordinary encounters. Yet one stands apart.

At Londolozi, they followed a leopard known as the Mhangene female for nearly eight years. Slowly, she allowed them closer. One unforgettable day, they found themselves walking behind her as she hunted, crouched quietly just metres away as she stalked a duiker. For a moment, they were part of her world.

Later, she began greeting them with a soft chuffing sound, behaviour no one they consulted had witnessed before.

When she eventually died after being spat in the eye by a Mozambique spitting cobra, it marked the end of a profound chapter. "She invited us into her private life," Alex reflects. "It was an incredible privilege."

From her, he learned the importance of questioning assumptions, of stopping to reassess, and of remaining open...lessons that extend far beyond the bush.



A Home at Garlington

After decades spent in wild, remote places, Alex and his family found themselves drawn to Garlington for its space and stillness. He loves the early morning sounds, jackals calling, reedbuck sounding their alarms. The open landscape before their home. The extraordinary sunrises.

Bella and Sophie have found freedom here too, disappearing for hours on their bicycles with friends. The family walks often, enjoys the running routes, and shares their view generously with visitors.

Having spent most of his adult life in bush camps, Alex wasn't sure what estate life would hold. What he discovered was warmth and generosity, a community both grounded and kind. A gentle place to return to after long months in the field. Garlington, he says, offers something rare: the quiet of open land paired with the comfort of belonging.



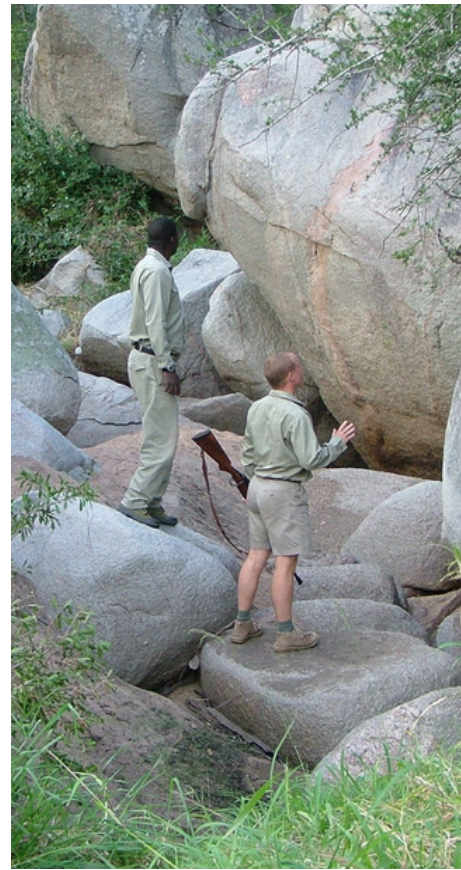
Looking Ahead

Alex's hope for the future is clear: to help move the needle on rhino poaching by strengthening tracking skills inside Kruger National Park.

More broadly, he hopes people come to understand something simple yet profound: that we are not separate from wilderness. We are part of it.

For residents who would like to learn more, visit www.trackeracademy.co.za or explore his books *Changing a Leopard's Spots* (the story of his 30-year partnership with Renias Mhlongo) and *Tracker Manual*, a practical field guide. For the more adventurous, seasonal tented camps are also hosted in Kruger through *World Trackers*.

In many ways, Alex's story mirrors the spirit of Garlington itself – attentive to the land, rooted in legacy, and mindful of the signs we leave behind for those who follow.



AUTUMN IN THE GARDEN



A Vegetable Garden for Estate Life

For many years the hallmarks of a beautiful garden were manicured lawns, perfect hedges and carefully chosen ornamental plants. But quietly, another trend has begun to emerge in some of the most thoughtfully designed spaces: **vegetables**.

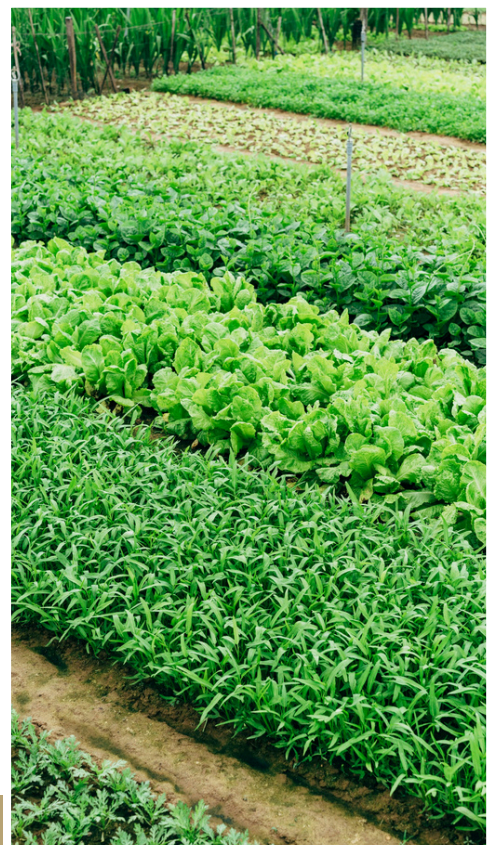
Growing your own food is becoming one of the most rewarding and surprisingly elegant additions to a garden. A few neatly planted raised beds, several terracotta pots catching the sun on a patio, or a small kitchen garden tucked beside the braai area can bring both beauty and purpose to an outdoor space.

Autumn is the perfect time to begin. As the weather cools, vegetables grow steadily and with far fewer pest problems than in summer. One of the secrets to success is simply planting the right vegetables at the right time. Plant too early or too late and even the most enthusiastic gardener will struggle. This is where seasonal planting guides can make all the difference.

Blackwood's has created a set of 38 downloadable vegetable planting charts designed specifically for KwaZulu-Natal growing conditions. They make it easy to see exactly when each vegetable should be planted, helping gardeners plan with confidence.

So as the leaves begin to turn and the evenings grow cooler, consider this an invitation to start your own small vegetable garden. By winter, you may find the most satisfying harvest is not just the vegetables themselves, but the quiet pleasure of growing them.

Link to 38 Vegetable Planting Charts:
[BLACKWOODS PLANTING CHARTS](#)



GARDENS OF GARLINGTON

A growing Tradition

Following the wonderful response to last year's inaugural event, we are delighted to announce that the Gardens of Garlington Competition will return for its second year this spring.

What began as a simple celebration of the beauty and creativity within our community quickly became something far more meaningful. Residents embraced the opportunity to share their gardens, from carefully tended courtyards to expansive landscaped spaces, and in doing so reminded us how deeply gardens shape the character and charm of our estate.

This year's competition once again invites all residents to take part. Whether your garden is large or small, newly planted or long established, the joy lies in sharing the spaces we nurture and enjoy each day.

Entries will be welcomed across four categories:

- **Large Gardens**
- **Medium Gardens**
- **Small Gardens**
- **Special Feature Gardens**, including Indigenous Gardens

Gardens will be judged by a panel over the weekend of **26 and 27 September**, with consideration given to design and layout, creative use of space, seasonal colour, plant health, sustainability and the personal touches that make each garden unique.

We are grateful to Blackwood's Hilton for once again sponsoring the competition. As part of their support, all entrants will receive **10% CashBack Rewards on purchases made at any Blackwood's store** from the date of registration until **30 September 2026** as a helpful incentive for those planning a few seasonal additions.

Most importantly, the Gardens of Garlington is simply meant to be fun, a gentle way to celebrate gardening, share inspiration and enjoy the beauty that surrounds us. Residents are warmly encouraged to enter and be part of this growing tradition within our estate.

To submit your entry, simply complete the online form here: [APPLICATION FORM](#)

After all, every garden tells a story and together, these stories quietly shape the beauty of Garlington.

Discovering the Midlands



Indigo Fields

There are places one visits, and then there are places that gently restore you. Set among the gentle folds of the Midlands countryside, Indigo Fields is one of those retreats that feels quietly indulgent yet entirely unpretentious. This award-winning, family-owned haven sits just outside the charming village of Nottingham Road in the heart of the KwaZulu-Natal Midlands. A scenic drive from Garlington delivers you into a slower pace, one marked by open skies, softened horizons and the kind of stillness that settles deeply.

Accommodation centres around a beautifully appointed farmhouse and a collection of individually decorated suites and cottages designed for both comfort and privacy. From secluded garden hideaways to deluxe rooms with views over the rolling Midlands hills, each space carries its own character. Two luxury cottages, set slightly apart from the main farmhouse, offer an intimate option for couples, friends or book club gatherings wanting time together.



Inside, contemporary décor meets luxurious fabrics, fine textures and carefully selected artwork, creating an atmosphere of understated elegance. Fireplaces glow in winter, generous windows invite the countryside in, and every detail feels thoughtfully layered, allowing you to truly unwind.

The spa experience is seamlessly woven into the stay. At the Indigo Fields African Bush Spa, treatments unfold in tranquil settings designed to calm the senses. Some spaces open to expansive countryside views, while others are tucked into bomas hidden among indigenous bush, where the gentle sound of nearby streams becomes part of the experience.

Here, skilled therapists focus on slow, intentional restoration rather than hurried indulgence, whether through a deeply relaxing massage, a nourishing facial or a full spa ritual. Time seems to stretch gently between treatments, lingering lunches and unhurried afternoons, creating a rhythm that feels both restorative and grounding.



And then there is the food — a highlight in its own right.

True Indigo Fields hospitality extends to the dining table, where every dish is prepared with evident pride using fresh, locally sourced and ethically farmed produce. Mornings begin with the comforting aroma of freshly baked muffins and warm scones served straight from the oven, alongside generous breakfast offerings.

Lunch is a celebration of freshness: homemade soups, crisp seasonal salads and their legendary olive and rosemary loaves, baked daily and served warm. Dinner becomes a true spoil, with menus thoughtfully curated to offer something for everyone, each dish beautifully presented and prepared with care.

What truly distinguishes Indigo Fields is the way every guest experience is curated. Whether visiting as a couple seeking quiet connection or as a group of friends gathering for shared time away, the team ensures each party feels separate, considered and entirely special. Guests are gently spaced and personally attended to, creating the sense that you are in your own private world.

There is an ease to Indigo Fields that feels beautifully aligned with the Garlington way of life, refined yet unpretentious, connected to nature, and deeply restorative. It invites you to step away from the demands of the everyday, to unwind, savour and simply be.

For residents seeking a gentle change of scenery without travelling far from our own countryside community, this Midlands retreat offers a beautifully considered escape, one that nourishes both body and spirit.

For Garlington residents considering an autumn escape, Indigo Fields has also extended a thoughtful seasonal offering to our community. From **1 April to 30 June 2026**, residents can enjoy **20% off their two-night stay package**, making it the perfect opportunity to experience their warmth, hospitality and quiet charm during one of the most beautiful times of the year.

Email: bookings@indigofields.co.za
Call Molly on 082 335 0570





FROM THE KITCHEN

Bistro Chef Alex Poltera shares a seasonal salad that celebrates autumn flavours and locally sourced ingredients.

Roast Sweet Potato, Charred Pear, Chevin & Macadamia Salad with Burnt Honey Dressing. – Serves 4

INGREDIENTS:

For the salad:

800 g orange sweet potatoes, cut into wedges
2 tbsp olive oil
1 tsp coriander seeds, lightly crushed
Salt and black pepper
2–3 pears segmented
100 g Chevin goat's cheese
Handful of toasted macadamia nuts, roughly crushed
50 g baby spinach or wild rocket

Burnt honey dressing:

3 tbsp local honey
2 tbsp apple cider vinegar
3 tbsp olive oil
1 tbsp Dijon mustard
Lemon juice to taste
Pinch of salt

Method:

Roast the sweet potatoes
Heat oven to 200 °C. Toss sweet potato wedges with olive oil, crushed coriander seeds, salt and pepper. Roast for 30–40 minutes until caramelised and tender, tossing halfway through.
Char the pear wedges in a dry pan or directly over the gas burner using tongs.

Make the burnt honey dressing:

Heat the honey in a small pan until it darkens slightly and smells caramelised (about 2–4 minutes). Remove from heat and whisk in vinegar, mustard, olive oil and salt.

Assemble the salad:

Arrange warm roasted sweet potatoes on a platter with spinach, charred pear wedges and chunks of chevin cheese.
Drizzle with dressing and scatter over toasted macadamias.