Scottish Dragon Finder
EVALUATION REPORT
Victoria Larcombe, James Stead, Kathy Wormald, Laurence Jarvis
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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
This report is a summary and evaluation of Froglife’s Scottish Dragon Finder project, which was funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund for 4.5 years from January 2014 to June 2018. The overarching aim of the project was to bolster conservation efforts for reptiles and amphibians across Scotland through both practical, on-the-ground activities and public engagement and educational activities. These activities included:

- **Dragons in your garden**: An educational and practical activity aimed predominantly at users of therapeutic gardens, teaching them how to garden in a wildlife-friendly way with a particular focus on reptiles and amphibians.

- **Dragons on the move**: A travelling roadshow of public engagement events aimed at both large and small audiences, intended to raise awareness and empathy for amphibian and reptile conservation issues.

- **Dragons on the hills**: Educational workshops aimed at outdoor enthusiasts, intended to enable and encourage them to submit records of amphibians and reptiles they see whilst engaging in outdoor pursuits.

- **Dragon tails**: Educational workshops for primary school children and youth groups aiming to increase awareness and empathy for amphibians and reptiles in fun and engaging ways.

- **Practical habitat projects**: Creation, restoration and management of amphibian and reptile habitats at various locations across Scotland. This activity included a volunteer engagement and training programme to enable and encourage local stakeholders to take an active role in maintaining the sites in the future.

- **Trainee programme**: Two 18-month paid traineeships were offered to give trainees the opportunity to gain first-hand experience and skills in the conservation sector. The aim was to increase their chances of gaining paid employment in their chosen career following completion of the traineeship.

- **Audio-visual living atlas**: A website and species identification and recording app developed for Froglife’s London Dragon Finder project and expanded to incorporate Scottish Dragon Finder activities.

Over the course of the project we engaged directly with 33,096 people and delivered activities in all but one (The Shetland Isles) of Scotland’s 32 council areas. Table 1.1 summarises the targets and achievements for each of our activities and Figure 1.1 shows a map of the activities we delivered. We met or exceeded all of our project targets with the exception of: the number of young people we engaged with through our Dragon tails activity; and the number of new records that we received through our Dragon Finder smartphone app. This was due to logistical issues with the way the Dragon tails drama workshops were originally planned, meaning we were unable to engage with as many separate youth groups as we initially intended. We also had technical issues with the first version of our Dragon Finder app, which meant that it had to be redeveloped, causing the app to be out of use for approximately 1.5 years of the project.
1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Table 1.1: Summary statistics for each activity delivered by Froglife’s Scottish Dragon Finder project.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dragons in your garden</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>38 (29 sessions plus 9 train the trainer workshops)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>560</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dragons on the move</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>1590</td>
<td>29,038</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dragon tails – School Workshops</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1628</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dragon tails – Drama Workshops</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1050</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dragon tails – TOTAL</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3700</td>
<td>2678</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dragons on the hills</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>202</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteer and Training Session</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>611</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall Participation</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>28,000</td>
<td>33,096</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>App</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>30,000 new records</td>
<td>2,535 new records</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Habitat Work</td>
<td>63 publicly owned sites</td>
<td>70 publicly owned sites</td>
<td>12 Ha of new habitat</td>
<td>13.8804 Ha of new habitat</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This report explains the reasons why Scottish Dragon Finder was conceived and what we hoped to achieve. It then goes on to summarise and evaluate each activity, predominantly focussing on the education and public engagement elements of the project. An evaluation of our practical habitat work is covered by a separate report: Scottish Dragon Finder Habitat Work Evaluation.
Figure 1.1: Map showing the location of all the activities we delivered through Scottish Dragon Finder.
2. INTRODUCTION

The background to Scottish Dragon Finder

Froglife is a national wildlife conservation charity that specialises in the protection of amphibians, reptiles, and the habitats on which they depend. We strongly believe that the long-term success of conservation efforts can be maximised through the inclusion of people from wide-ranging backgrounds, and one of Froglife’s defining features is our commitment to involving people in every aspect of our work. As such, Scottish Dragon Finder was designed to make nature accessible to everyone, and we included activities that would enable as many people as possible to take an active role in engaging with their local environment.

Froglife’s first Dragon Finder project, London Dragon Finder, was developed as a flagship project for Froglife and was our largest venture, in terms of both budget and scope, to date. It ran for 4.5 years between 2011 and 2017 and was designed to bring together all of Froglife’s key strengths to deliver a holistic approach to amphibian and reptile conservation across a large geographic area. Our Dragon Finder projects are intended to couple practical conservation projects with education, providing a range of activities suitable for all whatever their previous experience, ability, age or background. Our vision was to take people on a wildlife journey, giving them the opportunity to progress to the stage they desired, from total beginners to experienced volunteers. After the initiation of the London Dragon Finder, Froglife developed a Dragon Finder project that would be tailored to Scotland: and Scottish Dragon Finder was born. Since then, we have also started River Nene Dragon Finder.
Froglife have been active in Scotland since 2009, starting with our Glasgow and North Lanarkshire Living Water projects. Through these projects we created and restored pond habitats, and engaged local communities in amphibian and reptile conservation, offering them training and volunteering opportunities. Although great for practical amphibian and reptile conservation, the Living Water projects were limited in terms of geographic area and in the range of activities that we were able to offer, which directly limited the number and diversity of people that we were able to engage with. The Scottish Dragon Finder project was conceived to address these issues.

In the past, Froglife and other organisations have found that there is a gap in biodiversity data for amphibians and reptiles in Scotland, which strongly impacts the management of both species and greenspaces. The reasons for the paucity of amphibian and reptile records was thought to be due to: low public profile of the species as well as their relatively discreet existence; a shortage of experienced individuals with the knowledge and skills required to identify and record the species; a lack of amphibian and reptile focussed activities available within Scotland; and the inaccessibility of Scotland’s wild places to recorders coupled with a lack of knowledge of amphibian and reptiles recording within groups that access remote areas of Scotland (e.g. hill walkers and mountaineers). The Scottish Dragon Finder development team designed the project to bridge this gap through training and public engagement events throughout Scotland. The aim was to offer a range of activities that would provide individuals from wide ranging backgrounds with the expertise to monitor species and manage habitats across Scotland.

**Project aims**

Froglife’s overarching aim is to conserve reptiles and amphibians. Protection of habitats is at the forefront of our work and we strongly believe that our mission can only be achieved...
through a combination of practical habitat restoration and creation in conjunction with support from the public. Education and communication are therefore core components of all of our projects. As such, the aims of the Scottish Dragon Finder were as follows:

Conservation

• Create, restore and enhance habitats for reptiles and amphibians across Scotland.
• Link up amphibian and reptile habitats to facilitate movement of animals between populations. This will reduce the risk of inbreeding and further local extinctions.
• Increase the dataset for amphibian and reptile populations in Scotland. This information will be used to inform land managers/owners/developers and effectively target future conservation efforts in Scotland.

Learning

• Raise public awareness of amphibian and reptile conservation, surveying and land management techniques.
• Empower groups of volunteers to maintain and restore amphibian and reptile habitats.
• Increase public empathy for amphibians, reptiles and their habitats.

Participation

• Enable people to take part in practical wildlife conservation.
• Reach audiences that would not normally engage in wildlife conservation activities.

Project activities and audiences

Audiences involved in wildlife conservation activities in the UK typically consist of middle class people from a white demographic, many of whom are already involved in nature
conservation at some level. One of the objectives of Scottish Dragon Finder was to reach audiences that are not often given the opportunity or help they need to engage in wildlife conservation. Our intention through the Scottish Dragon Finder project was to develop our audience through all of our activities and provide opportunities from entry-level to higher levels throughout.

The activities included in Scottish Dragon Finder were designed to enable us to achieve our project aims and to reach our target audiences as outlined above. We chose to include some tried and tested activities along with some new activities that were developed specifically for Scottish Dragon Finder. All activities were tailored to ensure their suitability for a Scotland-wide project by the Scottish Dragon Finder development team, with help from other experienced Froglife staff members and partner organisations. The activities included in Scottish Dragon Finder were as follows:

- **Dragons in your garden**: An educational and practical activity aimed predominantly at users of therapeutic gardens, teaching them how to garden in a wildlife-friendly way with a particular focus on reptiles and amphibians.

- **Dragons on the move**: A travelling roadshow of public engagement events aimed at both large and small audiences, intended to raise awareness and empathy for amphibian and reptile conservation issues.

- **Dragons on the hills**: Educational workshops aimed at outdoor enthusiasts, intended to enable and encourage them to submit records of amphibians and reptiles they see whilst engaging in outdoor pursuits.

- **Dragon tails**: Educational workshops for primary school children and youth groups aiming to increase awareness and empathy for amphibians and reptiles in fun and engaging ways.

- **Practical habitat projects**: Creation, restoration and management of amphibian and reptile habitat at various locations across Scotland. This activity included a volunteer engagement and training programme to enable and encourage local stakeholders to take an active role in maintaining the sites in the future.

- **Trainee programme**: Two 18-month paid traineeships were offered to give trainees the opportunity to gain first-hand experience and skills in the conservation sector. The aim was to increase their chances of gaining paid employment in their chosen career following completion of the traineeship.

- **Audio-visual living atlas**: A website and species identification and recording app developed for Froglife’s London Dragon Finder project and expanded to incorporate Scottish Dragon Finder activities.

Each activity is described in the next section of the report, with details of the audiences they were designed to engage, the differences we wanted to make and the importance of making those differences. In this report we have focussed predominantly on the education and public engagement activities included in Scottish Dragon Finder. An evaluation of our practical habitat work programme is covered by a separate report: Scottish Dragon Finder Habitat Work Evaluation.
Evaluation of Scottish Dragon Finder

A mixed methodology was used to evaluate Scottish Dragon Finder and details of the evaluation methods used are described in greater detail under each activity in the following section of this report. In general, we evaluated our activities based on the number of sessions delivered, the level of participation and the geographic spread. We used feedback forms for most of our activities throughout the course of the project to enable us to evaluate each activity as it was delivered, allowing us to make adjustments as and when required. Froglife staff also evaluated activities based on their observations of participants and verbal feedback. In addition, we held yearly evaluation meetings with the Scottish Dragon Finder team members, Froglife senior management team members, Froglife’s trustees, our HLF grants officer and project partners. The aims of these evaluation meetings were to: assess our progress with each activity; analyse our spending to ensure we were not over or under spending against any category; and discuss any significant modifications to the project.
Staffing

Scottish Dragon Finder was delivered by a Project Manager and Project Officer, both of which were full-time positions. The Project Officer remained in post for the duration of the project and the Project Manager was in post for the majority of the project, with a year out for maternity leave (duties were undertaken by a maternity cover Project Manager). On return from maternity leave the Project Manager’s position was split into a job share and the full time post was covered by two part-time Project Managers. The team was joined by two trainees, each consecutively in post for 18 months from October 2014 onwards. Support was also given by other Froglife staff members and senior management team, particularly in the areas of finance, administration, communications and planning. Finally, volunteers were instrumental in enabling the team to deliver project activities, particularly during busy times of the year. Volunteer activities included: assisting with school sessions, public engagement at Dragons on the move events, practical habitat management tasks, planning and promoting activities. Staffing levels were generally sufficient over the course of the project.

One issue with staffing that has been raised is the risk that project staff will leave within the last six months of the project. Without a guarantee of subsequent employment within the same organisation following completion of the project, staff are likely to start looking for jobs within the last six months of the project to ensure they are not faced with a period of unemployment once the project is complete. Although Froglife always tries to offer future employment to project staff upon completion of a project, it is not always possible to guarantee that funds will be available to do this.

Another staffing issue is that project development officers are often lost as most organisations do not have funding available to bridge the gap between the development and delivery phases of a project. Development officers are often very valuable as they have in-depth knowledge of the project, have already established a strong network of contacts and a good working knowledge of the organisation they are working for. They can therefore ‘hit the ground running’ at the start of the delivery phase of the project with less need for intensive induction and training. There are two possible solutions to this: the first would be to make the period between development and delivery shorter so that organisations are more likely to be able to employ the development officer for that period; the second would be to offer bridging grants to employ development officers during this period.
Budget and co-funding

We had no issues with underspend or overspend in our overall budget, however we did need to make occasional transfers between categories to ensure we had sufficient funds to cover our costs. For example, our travel expenses and capital costs for habitat work were higher than originally anticipated, however we saved money in other categories and were therefore able to transfer funds from these.

We successfully raised a total of £186,624 in co-funding from a range of funders (see table 3.1 for details). Froglife originally underwrote £76,521 of our co-funding budget, however we were able to raise sufficient funds from other sources and so no funds from Froglife were required.

Table 3.1: Details of all cofounding raised for Scottish Dragon Finder.

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<th>Funder</th>
<th>Site/Activity</th>
<th>Grant/Donation Amount</th>
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<td>East Ayrshire Council</td>
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<td>Evanton Wood Community Company</td>
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<td>Findhorn Hinterland Group</td>
<td>Findhorn Hinterland</td>
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<td>Central Scotland Green Network</td>
<td>Kilearn Glen</td>
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<tr>
<td>Central Scotland Green Network</td>
<td>Habitat work in Central Scotland</td>
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<td>Auchnacroig Forest Park</td>
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<td>Avonglen Quarry</td>
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<td>Falkirk Environmental Trust</td>
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<td>Aberdeenshire Council</td>
<td>Arnhall Moss, Aberdeenshire</td>
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<td>Crombie Country Park</td>
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<td>Ernest Kleinwort</td>
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<td>SSE Griffin</td>
<td>Dunkeld-Dragons on the move</td>
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<td>Hugh Fraser-Turcan Conell</td>
<td>General Project Costs</td>
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### 3. The Project

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organisation</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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<td>Alyth Community Woodland-pond</td>
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<td>SSE Toddleburn Stow</td>
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<td>William Dean Trust</td>
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<td>Mackintosh Trust</td>
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<td>Hamamelis / Pennington Machines</td>
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<td>Blodwen Lloyd Binns Bequest 2014</td>
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<td>JTH Charitable Trust</td>
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<td>£500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GC Gibson</td>
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<td>Aberbrothock Skea Charitable Trust</td>
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<td>Action Earth</td>
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<td>Action Earth</td>
<td>Balquhidderock</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Action Earth</td>
<td>Findhorn Hinterland</td>
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<tr>
<td>Action Earth</td>
<td>Letham Glen</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aberdeen Council</td>
<td>Arnhall Moss, Aberdeenshire</td>
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<td>Training income</td>
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<td>£21,266</td>
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3. THE PROJECT

Timetable
The timetable of events was split evenly over the first four years of the project, leaving the remaining six months for evaluation and as contingency for any outstanding events or habitat work. We tried to group events and activities according to location to reduce our overall travel time. For example, when we travelled to Orkney to deliver a Dragon tails drama workshop we also scheduled in a Dragons on the move event in Thurso and a site visit to Dunnet Wood so that we weren’t making the trip to the far north of Scotland on three separate occasions. We also tried to schedule in events that were located further afield earlier in the project as these took a disproportionately long time to deliver due to higher travel times and overnight stays. This gave us more breathing space towards the end of the project and allowed us to deliver additional events in the knowledge that we had already delivered our target events. The timetable worked very well and gave us a good amount of time for project evaluation in the last six months.
Activities

Dragons in your garden

Habitat loss and fragmentation caused by development, intensive agriculture and commercial forestry has resulted in gardens and allotments becoming increasingly important wildlife refuges. Unfortunately, however, relatively few people fully understand how to garden in a way that will maximally benefit wildlife, and similarly, the benefits to humans of encouraging wildlife to gardens are poorly understood. Our Dragons in your garden activity was designed to address these issues by providing workshops to garden users showing them how to garden in a wildlife friendly way, as well as describing the benefits.

We chose to work predominantly within therapeutic gardens as this would allow us to engage with audiences with a range of complex needs, many of whom are often excluded from wildlife conservation. Therapeutic gardening is the process of using plants and gardens to improve physical and mental health through increased physical activity, greater social interaction, learning new skills, a greater sense of self-worth and connecting with nature. Therapeutic gardens are used by a broad range of people with a variety of complex needs such as physical disabilities, issues with poor mental health, learning disabilities, poor health, substance misuse, addiction, social exclusion and behavioural problems. There are over 300 therapeutic gardens registered across Scotland, many of which are supported by Trellis Scotland, which helps gardeners by providing training, information sharing and connection with a network of gardens. Trellis was a key partner for much of the Scottish Dragon Finder project, helping us to connect with a range of gardens from across Scotland.
Our aim for the Dragons in your garden activity was to provide training to clients and staff of therapeutic gardens and allotments in how to garden in a way that would encourage wildlife to their gardens, as well as educating them about the benefits. We also wanted to carry out a practical task within each garden, such as creating hibernacula, installing mini ponds and restoring/improving existing ponds, in order to take a first step towards enhancing each garden. It was hoped that garden users and staff would gain a greater understanding of the benefits of wildlife gardening, and would continue to apply the principles demonstrated in the workshops within their own gardens thus securing them as wildlife havens for the future.

The session content was developed through Froglife’s London Dragon Finder project and was known to work successfully with a wide range of audiences. We therefore found no need to alter the general format of the sessions over the course of the Scottish Dragon Finder project. We did, however, make minor adjustments to the content and delivery of both the theoretical and practical elements of the workshops to tailor them to the individual needs of each group. For example, groups comprised mainly of people with learning disabilities required a simplified version of the theoretical element compared to groups comprised mainly of adults with mental health issues. The general format of the workshops is detailed below:

**Theoretical element**

The aim of this part of the workshop was to explain the general principles of wildlife gardening, covering topics such as: the benefits of encouraging wildlife to your garden; features that will attract amphibians and reptiles to gardens (ponds, hibernacula, basking spots, compost heaps etc.); increasing the permeability of gardens for wildlife (e.g. wildlife corridors, access to and from the garden, areas for shelter); avoiding the use of pesticides;
and planting for wildlife. We used a wildlife gardening table top ‘game’ to enable people to easily visualise the principles being discussed and create their own ideal wildlife gardens without limitations on resources.

The group was split into smaller groups and each was given a blank board on which to design their garden. We provided them with materials to enable them to create features within their gardens, such as ponds, areas of long grass, compost heaps, planting, hibernacula etc. The format was adjusted depending on the abilities of the people in each group. With more able groups we explained the principles and then gave each group a different scenario and time to design and create their own gardens in a way that was suitable for their given scenario. Scenarios included a garden that was also being used as an educational resource for visiting school children, one that was built on a slope with a large fixed compost area at the top of the slope, and one that was to be developed into an amphibian and reptile haven on a very limited budget. Groups were given questions to answer as prompts to get them thinking about the issues they might face under each scenario. With less able groups we asked participants to design a garden suitable for wildlife, providing them with a more structured format with more support and guidance through each part of the garden design.

Practical element

The aim of the practical element of the workshop was to put some aspects of the theoretical training into practice in the hope that it would build some momentum to inspire garden users and staff to implement more changes once they had completed the workshop. Again, the content was modified depending on the capabilities of the group and generally included activities such as creating mini ponds, building hibernacula, creating bug hotels and carrying out maintenance or restorative work to existing ponds.
3. THE PROJECT - Dragons in your garden

Train-the-trainer workshops

The aim of the train-the-trainer workshops was to educate therapeutic garden staff and volunteers and amateur gardeners about the principles of wildlife gardening to enable them to disseminate this information to their own gardens. The content of the train-the-trainer workshops was similar to that of the garden workshops, but with a greater emphasis on the benefits and importance of wildlife gardening, and encouraging garden representatives to take action to implement practices in their gardens along with clients. A summary of the train-the-trainer sessions we delivered is given below:

Trellis train-the-trainer events: Trellis organise regular networking events for staff and volunteers of therapeutic gardens from across Scotland to share knowledge and skills among gardens. Froglife attended networking events at Jupiter Urban Wildlife Centre (Grangemouth), Low Moss Prison (Glasgow) and the Hidden Gardens (Glasgow) to provide training to representatives from a number of therapeutic gardens.
Trellis organise a conference in Perth each year to bring together representatives from therapeutic gardens across Scotland in order to share information, provide training and inspire people. Froglife attended the conference three times and delivered train-the-trainer workshops at two of them.

Gardening Scotland: This annual event, held at the Royal Highland Showground, attracts over 33,500 visitors and 400 exhibitors each year. Froglife attended the event three times as part of the Living Garden, which is a collection of wildlife-focussed organisations who host stands around a life-sized model wildlife garden. Froglife delivered workshops to visitors of the Living Garden to educate people about how to attract amphibians and reptiles to their gardens, and were also part of an expert panel for a gardeners’ question time style question and answer session.

**Trellis partnership**

Trellis Scotland is a charity that provides advice and support to a network of over 300 therapeutic gardens across Scotland. A partnership between Froglife and Trellis was established during the development phase of Scottish Dragon Finder and we included funds within our budget (£966 per year) to continue this partnership throughout the course of the project. Trellis’ role was to help us establish initial contact with gardens, attend workshops and provide support and guidance for challenging groups, help with sessions and resource content and design, provide advice on evaluation for specific groups, and help coordinate a number of train-the-trainer events. We found this partnership beneficial in the early stages of the project, however we decided to cut short the formal partnership just before the end of year three. This was because we felt we were not getting value for money by that point as Trellis had little time available to put towards the project. In addition, Froglife staff had developed a range of skills and expertise from working with challenging groups in the early stages of the project and support from Trellis was no longer required. Following cessation of the formal partnership, we continued to work with them on a range of activities such as train-the-trainer sessions and training courses.

**Targets as set out in approved purposes**

To deliver a programme of ‘Dragons in your garden’ wildlife gardening workshops to teach allotment holders, therapeutic gardeners and garden managers how to improve their gardens for the benefit of reptiles and amphibians and monitor them for relevant species. As part of these workshops, 28 gardens and allotment sites will be enhanced through practical projects.
3. THE PROJECT - Dragons in your garden

Outputs

Over the course of the project we delivered Dragons in your garden sessions in 29 allotments and therapeutic gardens, engaging directly with 332 people. In addition we delivered 9 train-the-trainer workshops, engaging directly with 235 people. In total we engaged directly with 567 people through 38 Dragons in your garden activities delivered across 19 council areas. A map of the sites where we delivered Dragons in your garden activities is shown in Figure 3.1.

Figure 3.1: Map of the sites where we delivered Dragons in your garden activities.
Evaluation

We collected feedback via evaluation forms from 14 project partners, typically staff and volunteers from the gardens who work closely with garden clients on a regular basis. We asked participants to fill in evaluation forms wherever appropriate, however our standard evaluation form was unsuitable for many of the participants due to learning disabilities. We tried using different variations of feedback form to suit people with different abilities, however this resulted in our data being relatively patchy. We have therefore chosen to display the data from project partners below along with a selection of comments from workshop participants.

Outcomes

We asked project partners to provide general feedback on our Dragons in your garden workshops and the results are shown in Figure 3.2 (data from standard workshops and train the trainer workshops is included). Generally, feedback was very positive in terms of the overall success of the project, content, delivery and outcomes.

Figure 3.2: Graph showing partner responses to general feedback questions about Dragons in your garden.
3. THE PROJECT - Dragons in your garden
We also asked our project partners to provide more specific feedback by asking the following questions:

**What aspect of the event / workshop do you think worked particularly well?**

Most partners particularly liked the interactive and practical elements of the workshop such as creating ponds, hibernacula and toad abodes.

Ruth’s informative presentation gave me an abundance of facts and information about amphibians and reptiles. Although I am a gardener, my knowledge of this is fairly limited. I feel more confident after this workshop in delivering knowledge to volunteers and visitors to the garden. I also thought the practical session of building a hibernaculum was brilliant! Both Ruth and her team were really approachable and their style of delivery made the workshop really accessible to all, regardless of existing skills and knowledge. Lots of practical advice given and very responsive to all questions asked. The workshop was a fantastic introduction to various aspects in relation to amphibian and wildlife.

Making the pond – very straightforward, fun, interactive and an instant result.

Real concrete examples to help service users understand – key to autistic learning.

**Which part of the event / workshop, if any, do you think worked least well?**

I couldn’t really be negative about any aspect of it, if it’s not broke don’t fix it!

Presentation was very information dense – lots of good relevant interesting information, but it would be useful to tease out basic UK frog/toad/reptile lifecycle facts and make them clearer e.g. where they live, what they like to eat, when they breed, hibernate etc. so that gardeners can understand and accommodate in their gardening. These aspects were touched on but hidden by trying to get so much information across.

Maybe the creating of imaginary gardens was a bit long but that was our fault for possibly the group size to staff available to help service users stay engaged.

Discussing the amphibians wasn’t interactive enough and I noticed the children lost concentration near the end.

**Please let us know how you think we might be able to improve such events in future, including attendance numbers if appropriate.**

Many of the comments from project partners were related to increasing the number of events delivered at each venue. Unfortunately our timescales only allowed us to deliver one workshop with each venue and it was therefore not possible for us to accommodate this.
More workshops would be great, perhaps pitched at different levels/abilities to increase skills and knowledge on a progressive, ongoing basis. ID sessions, recording and surveying techniques, more habitat workshops too. Maybe longer sessions to get more in-depth knowledge about specific topics would be good. Maybe sessions being delivered at key sites (gardens, nature reserves) to give good examples of what is possible, varying scales of how you can make a difference.

Think you have a winning formula.

Please let us know if you have any other feedback on the event / workshop execution or planning stage.

The workshop in my opinion was really informative, staff incredibly knowledgeable and the session was delivered in a fun, accessible way. Each aspect of the workshop complimented well with each other. It was really great that Ruth took the time to visit the garden before the workshop. This helped to reassure me, in relation to the gardens being used as part of the session to build 2 hibernacula. I am delighted to have the 2 new hibernacula in the garden, this will strengthen our commitment to our ongoing biodiversity plan for the gardens and will also help to evidence this in a funding application bid to SNH.

Well thought out and executed on the day. Good to have a planning meeting on site to discuss the event.

Really great event thank you! Clear and helpful planning/correspondence and everyone enjoyed your session, especially model garden and pond.
3. THE PROJECT - Dragons in your garden

building. We look forward to frogs visiting.

Everyone enjoyed the day, all aspects were suitable for the audience.
Building the bug hotel was very much enjoyed by all.

The ladies were very knowledgeable, friendly and helpful. Thank you for coming.

All fab! Thank you.

Excellent workshop with great participation.

The workshop was very good; all our group enjoyed it very much. Thank you.

Overall the children thoroughly enjoyed the workshop and learned lots of new information about amphibians and caring for them in the wild.

We tried different variations of our feedback form to try and accommodate differences in participants' abilities, which explains why there are different numbers of respondents to different questions. Responses to some of the more general questions we asked are summarised below:

Have you learnt any new skills today: Of the 44 people who answered this question, 42 said that they had learnt new skills, 1 said they hadn’t and 1 said they weren’t sure.

Please explain any new skills learnt and how you may use them in the future (A selection of responses is given below)

I liked the garden planning part and will use this in the future.

We learnt how to create a habitat for amphibians in our garden at home.

Helpful to think about the different needs of amphibians and reptiles - different habitats required.

Learnt about how to make natural habitats for wildlife and plan to use these skills to patients in the hospital I work in.

Going to plan a pond for my garden.

Learnt about pond creation - hopefully will be able to use this in future.

Gained knowledge about frogs, toads, slow worms and snakes. The garden designing exercise was excellent - fun, creative and thought provoking.

Tell us about one thing you may do in the future: (a selection of responses is given below)

Clear my pond of too much greenery! Help to keep the new bog garden maintained.

Be more aware of amphibians in general - be on the look for them whilst walking.

Create a wildlife area to include amphibians.

Develop a bug hotel. Look at ways to encourage amphibians and reptiles.
Explore creating an area within our project for amphibians and reptiles.
Provide some habitat in my small semi-communal garden to attract frogs.
Tell others! Great session to share :)
Try and build a pond for the local community.

Do you have any additional comments?: (a selection of responses is given below)

Certainly inspired to do more in my own garden for amphibians and reptiles.
Good insight into amphibians and the benefits they bring.
Very good and informative where often it is a subject / topic which is overlooked or undervalued.
My colleague Mary and I really enjoyed the workshop – both of us have very little knowledge re any kind of gardening. We have been allocated a large area within our assessment and treatment centre to devote to a therapeutic garden and the workshop today was really inspirational and gave us lots of ideas on how to develop ‘outside the box’ i.e. not just an ornamental garden. We’re really enthusiastic to get stuck in and develop a wildlife garden area as part of the overall project! Every bit of knowledge and skill we have was taken from the Froglife workshop so the proof of the pudding will be in the next 12 – 24 months to see how it works out! Fingers crossed!!!!
Interesting and really worthwhile project.
The fact that the attendees came from all different backgrounds in the community.
What difference did we make?

Based on the feedback we received during and following delivery of Dragons in your garden workshops we believe that we have made a positive long-term impact on the majority of the gardens that we engaged with, both directly and indirectly through our train-the-trainer events. We have encouraged garden staff and users to think about amphibians, reptiles and other wildlife when conducting their garden activities. Furthermore, we have provided a physical reminder of the workshop through our practical activities, which should help prompt gardeners to make further positive changes for wildlife in their own gardens. Finally, we have disseminated a range of information booklets to a large number of gardens across Scotland to give people the information they need to make changes in their own gardens.
Dragons on the move

It is widely accepted that nature is less accessible to children today than it was fifty years ago. The National Trust’s 2012 National Childhood enquiry found that barriers preventing children from experiencing and enjoying nature and the outdoors fell into six main areas: an unreasonable health and safety culture; traffic dangers; the rise of indoor entertainment; time and space for nature in schools and learning; receding access to quality green spaces; and socio-economic and cultural factors. Our Dragons on the move activity was developed in response to the National Childhood Enquiry and sought to offer simple and free experiences of nature and the outdoors to support families to access nature, to work with and support local community groups, and to allow people access to green spaces and nature locally.

We worked with a very wide range of partner organisations to deliver a roadshow of free Dragons on the move events all across Scotland. This included events within Scotland’s highly populated cities, which attracted hundreds, if not thousands, of people, and events in very remote parts of Scotland, which attracted small numbers of people who we were able to engage with in a very in-depth way. It was important to us to include smaller-scale events within rural areas as these communities are very often excluded from nature-focused events such as these. It was equally important to include larger-scale events in our roadshow to ensure that we were reaching out to as many people as possible in a resource efficient manner. We partnered up wherever possible with other organisations, such as NGOs, community groups and local councils to take advantage of local knowledge to ensure that we targeted appropriate audiences and selected suitable sites and activities.

All of our events and activities were free and open to all. We included a variety of activities within each event to ensure they would appeal to a wide range of people and each event was tailored to suit the location. We included activities such as pond dipping, our Dragon Trail, information stand, crafts, wildlife walks and talks/workshops/question and answer sessions. We also included a small number of Swimming with dragons events whereby we converted community swimming pools into large-scale pond replicas to educate children and families about the diversity of life found in British ponds.

Our aim for the Dragons on the move activity was to engage with as many people from as many different backgrounds as possible at locations all over Scotland. We used the events to spread the message about amphibian and reptile declines, and to educate people about why these species are important and what they could do to help conserve them. We also wanted to improve the public perception of amphibians and reptiles as they are often feared and/or disliked, and thus receive relatively little public empathy compared to more ‘charismatic’ species. We used the events to distribute Froglife’s information materials, such as Just Add Water, Urban Tails and Wildlife Gardening booklets, and encouraged people to take action for wildlife with activities such as installing a pond, gardening for wildlife and/or raising awareness. Finally, we used the events to showcase Froglife’s Dragon Finder species identification and recording app, and encouraged people to use it to report sightings of reptiles and amphibians.
THE PROJECT - Dragons on the move
Our Dragons on the move activity was the most versatile of all our activities, allowing us to engage with a wide range of audiences across the country in both rural and urban areas. We were able to tailor the events to suit the audience and location, offering a wide range of activities and taking full advantage of any opportunities found on site. For example, in areas where there was a good chance of seeing amphibians and/or reptiles we ran wildlife walks, reptile rummages and pond dipping sessions to give visitors the chance to see the animals first hand. In areas that did not have a pond or where there was little chance of seeing animals in the wild (generally indoor events, very urban sites and very busy events), and for winter events when animals were inactive, we ran activities such as Froglife’s Dragon Trail, crafts and talks. We have described a handful of events below to illustrate how we adapted each session to suit each individual event.

**Gardening Scotland – an example of a very large-scale event in an urban area attended by thousands of people**

Gardening Scotland is a three days event that runs at Edinburgh’s Royal Highland Showground each year and attracts around 35,000 visitors, making it one of the largest events that the Scottish Dragon Finder Team attended. The event is attended by people from all over the world but predominantly attracts adults from Scotland. We hosted a stall at Gardening Scotland in 2014, 2015 and 2017 along with a wide range of other wildlife and nature-related organisations, such as Plantlife, Buglife, The Bat Conservation Trust, Keep Scotland Beautiful and many others, who were all there as part of the Living Garden exhibition.

Each year a centrepiece garden is created to showcase wildlife-friendly gardening techniques and each organisation hosts an information stall around the garden. In addition, a small number of organisations ran workshops for visitors throughout the day showing them, for example, techniques for attracting particular species to their gardens, plants that are most attractive to wildlife, and things to avoid, such as pesticide use. Froglife ran workshops at Gardening Scotland in 2014 and 2017, teaching people about amphibian and reptile-friendly gardening and encouraging them to download and use the Froglife app to identify species and submit records of their sightings. In 2017 we also took...
part in a Gardener’s Question Time style question and answer session, where experts from a range of organisations answered questions from the public.

At our stall we ran craft activities (aimed at younger visitors), offered a range of information publications for people to take away, and answered questions from visitors about amphibians, reptiles and ponds. At events such as this, we are sometimes asked by members of the public why we don’t have real animals in tanks on display. It is against Froglife policy to keep live animals in tanks due to the stress this may cause them, unless they have been collected by ourselves that day and are kept in a tank for a short period of time. For example, newts or tadpoles that are caught during pond dipping sessions may be kept in a tank for a short period of time to allow people to see them close up and to prevent them from being caught straight away by the next person pond dipping. Alternatively, a frog found on a wildlife walk may be placed in a tank so that the whole group can see it to avoid long handling times. At events where there is little chance of finding animals on the day, such as Gardening Scotland, our best solution has been to display preserved dead animals in jars that have been donated or collected by ourselves (all animals were dead prior to being collected). This allows people to see the size, colour and pattern of the animals close up, and for many people this provides their first opportunity to see the animals in real life.


Pollok Country Park – an example of a large-scale event in a semi-urban area, attended by several hundred people

Glasgow’s Countryside Rangers organise a number of events within Glasgow’s parks each year to encourage local residents to explore and use the city’s greenspaces. These events are aimed predominantly at children and the rangers work with a variety of different organisations to offer a variety of fun and interactive activities for a range of audiences. The Scottish Dragon Finder team attended Wild in the City events in 2014, 2016 and 2017. We hosted an information stall and ran craft activities and pond dipping sessions. It was usually not possible to run wildlife walks or reptile rummages as the chances of finding the animals was very low due to the disturbance caused by the large numbers of people attending the events. We therefore used Froglife’s Dragon Trail to show people the techniques that can be used to look for amphibians and reptiles.

The Dragon Trail is an amphibian and reptile treasure hunt, which can be set up indoors or outdoors over a small or large area. Participants are given a question sheet and are directed to visit the Dragon Trail stations, which are indicated with numbered flags. At each station they use information cards and surveying techniques to answer the questions on their sheet. For example, question one says “Using powerful torches at night is a great way to find newts. Imagine you are looking into a pond at night - what can you see in the box?” The participants must shine a torch through a small hole in a cardboard box whilst looking through another small hole to view the illustrated pond scene inside. Inside there are pictures of three different newt species and they must use identification guides to find out which species are present. Other techniques they use include: looking at laminated pictures of different types of spawn in a dipping tray; trying to find a model newt egg and identify a newt species in a net; looking under survey mats to identify reptile species; and looking under stones and log piles for frogs and toads.
Hopetoun Road Wildlife Site – an example of a medium-scale event organised by Froglife in a semi-urban area, attended by fewer than 100 people.

One of our habitat creation projects included the creation of new ponds within Hopetoun Road Wildlife Site. Here, we secured additional funding from the Tesco Bags of Help scheme and worked with Edinburgh City Council to create a series of new ponds, and install a dipping platform and interpretation board. The area in which we installed the ponds is relatively hidden and not well used by people from the local community. We decided to organise a celebration event once the work had been completed to show local schools and groups the new educational resource that is now on their doorstep.

We invited a number of other wildlife organisations along to the event and on the day stalls were hosted by Trellis Scotland, RSPB Scotland, British Divers Marine Life Rescue and Scottish Badgers, all of whom brought their own mini-activities for visitors to carry out on the day. In addition, we were very pleased to be joined by Nicholas Meny from HLF and local Councillor Norman Work.

We advertised the event widely with posters and through social media within the local area and also invited local primary schools and nurseries to join the event. A large number of pupils from South Queensferry Primary School were keen to attend the event so we organised a range of activities specifically for them. We split them into groups and circulated the groups around each activity, which included creating an amphibian and reptile garden using our model garden game, woodland crafts with an Edinburgh Council Ranger, plant and invertebrate identification by the ponds, and visiting the stalls of the other organisations and taking part in their mini-activities. As the event was held during a weekday we did not expect to see large numbers of people dropping in to visit, however levels of participation were higher than expected.

Corry Meadows, Fishnish, Isle of Mull – an example of a small-scale event organised by Froglife in a rural area, attended by an invited group.

Corry Meadows is a luxury cottage accommodation site in Fishnish on the Isle of Mull. The location was recommended by our contact at the local ranger service as the owners were very enthusiastic about
wildlife and had a pond with dipping platform and a nature lab equipped with microscopes and craft area. Given the remote location of the event it was unlikely that many people would be able to attend an open event or that there would be many passers-by at that location. With this in mind we contacted two local primary schools and invited them to join us at Corry Meadows for a Dragons on the move activity day.

Salen Primary School joined us for the morning session and Lochdon Primary School came in the afternoon. Froglife staff began each session with a talk about Froglife and Scottish amphibians and reptiles, along with discussion and questions. We then carried out a pond dipping session, with children using keys to identify species, followed by a ‘reptile rummage’ around a trail of refugia that had previously been placed in the area.
Baloch Wood, Dumfries and Galloway – an example of a small-scale event organised by Froglife in a very rural area.

Baloch Community Woodland is situated in a rural area of Dumfries and Galloway, near the village of Creetown. The woodland is several kilometres long and is home to a variety of wildlife and sites of archaeological and cultural interest. A series of wildlife ponds have been created near to the Baloch Bridge parking area, which is approximately two kilometres from Creetown. The Scottish Dragon Finder team organised a Dragons on the move event to try and encourage more local people to visit the ponds and to educate the local community about the amphibian and reptile species found in the area. As the ponds are located a fair distance from the village we provided transport to bring people from the village to the ponds, allowing visitors who weren’t able to walk there or use their own transport to visit us on the day. We set up an information stall and pond dipping activity next to the ponds, which were a short walk from some gabion baskets that were being used as basking sites for common lizards.

Due to the remote location of the site and poor weather in the morning we had relatively low visitor numbers, however we were able to spend a long time with the people that did visit. For example, visitors spoke to us for a long time at the information stall and younger participants did the craft activity. We then took them to the pond dipping site and were able to talk in depth about the ponds and the species they were finding in the nets, and finally we took them along to see the common lizards. This was the first time that many of the visitors had seen common lizards, despite being local to the area.

Events such as this felt extremely valuable as they allowed us a great deal of time to speak properly to local people about the amphibians and reptiles they have living on their own doorstep. Enthusing local communities about the wildlife around them is a vital step towards conserving them, and is particularly important in areas that are strongholds for less common species and habitats.

*Targets as set out in approved purposes*

To deliver a travelling ‘Dragons on the move’ road show to 50 venues across the country.
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Outputs

We delivered 72 Dragons on the move events at 54 different venues (we returned to some venues on a number of occasions to deliver larger-scale events) across 22 council areas of Scotland. Through these events we engaged directly with a total of 29,038 people.

Figure 3.3: Map showing the location of Dragons on the move activities delivered through Scottish Dragon Finder.
**Evaluation**

The nature of the Dragons on the move events meant that it was very difficult to evaluate peoples’ experiences and/or learning in the medium and long term as we had no way of contacting people after the event. We did ask participants to fill in a feedback form to tell us about their experience on the day, however this was generally only appropriate at smaller-scale events where we were able to spend a greater amount of time with each participant. In total we collected feedback forms from 41 participants. We also asked our project partners to complete evaluation forms based on their perceptions of the events and we had responses from 24 project partners.

**Outcomes**

Figure 3.4 shows the responses of Dragons on the move participants to general questions about the quality of the event. All respondents felt that all aspects of the events were either good, very good or excellent. We asked respondents to tell us whether they had learnt any new skills on the day and 39 said they had, one said no and another left the question blank. When asked whether they would attend another Froglife event and whether they would recommend the events to friends and family, all respondents (except 1 person who left the question blank) said that they would.

![Figure 3.4: Graph showing the responses of participants to general questions about the event.](image)

Q1: Overall impression of this event  
Q2: Event information  
Q3: Time and length of event  
Q4: Resources and equipment  
Q5: Teaching/event leader

*Figure 3.4: Graph showing the responses of participants to general questions about the event.*
We asked participants to tell us about the new skills they had learnt that day and how they might use them in the future. Below are some of the responses that we received:

I’ve learnt to identify all the pond creatures from our pond which we couldn’t identify before!

Will use the dragon finder app and make bug box etc.

Pond structure and plant and environment knowledge. We don’t have a garden but if we do move house and can build/make one we would follow these tips.

Will put toad abode in wildlife garden. Will hope to make own pond using info and ideas.

Identification of frogs/toads and amphibians. Great, friendly and helpful staff.

Will definitely be better at identifying pond life.

Learned more about pond dipping. Good to know about putting the sheets of metal out to attract the wildlife.

Lots of info that can be used at home regarding ponds and gardens.

We also asked people to leave any additional comments they had about the event and examples of the responses are given below:

I loved it! I learned how to catch things with a net and that flowers can heal you.
Thank you for a fantastic morning. We will download Dragon Finder when we get home.

Really lovely, informative and fun event - thank you :)

Kids loved the craft bit at the end and the pond dipping.

Figure 3.5 shows the responses of our partners to general questions about the event.

Figure 3.5: Graph showing the responses of our partners to general questions about the event.

Q1: You feel Froglife’s Dragons on the Move session(s) with your visitors were successful
Q2: You feel the sessions were pitched correctly for your visitors
Q3: Froglife staff were knowledgeable, approachable and enthusiastic
Q4: You feel that you received enough correspondence and support from Froglife staff before the event
Q5: The visitors in your group enjoyed the sessions
Q6: The visitors experienced things during the sessions they wouldn’t normally have
Q7: The visitors like amphibians and reptiles more as a result of the sessions
Q8: The event was well attended for your site

We also asked our partners to give us more specific feedback on the event with the following questions. Examples of feedback we received are given below:

What aspect of the event do you think worked particularly well for your visitors and/or site?

The morning and afternoon sessions gave visitors the options to fit the event into their day. Each session consisted of three different parts – the walk, the pond dipping, and the craft, which were perfect for keeping people interested and occupied and allowed all participants, adults and children, to be involved. I felt the activities on site were a great mix of general wildlife and more specific pond and amphibian life.
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The fact that you had two trails for different age groups was good. We usually only run one version of a trail and I think this would have improved peoples experience of the event and pulled in more customers.

Our members really enjoyed the talk. They found it interesting because they were learning new things and the speakers engaged them well.

In the Under 8’s session the involvement of the parent who seemed to be having as much fun. Kids loved the relays and the lily pad floats. The groups were kept occupied for the entire session.

Everything was great, the kids loved all of the props.

Having Froglife’s stall close to the pond dipping area allowed good interaction with the public by being able to show them all the different pond creatures. The craft was also a great success.

Getting the children into ‘nature’ and experiencing pond dipping.

Enjoyed all aspects of the workshop. Game and pond dipping pitched at perfect level, held children’s’ interest for the whole session.

I think the mix of craft, information stall and pond dipping activities.
Staff played a huge part in making the event a success.

The pond dip gave attendees the chance to see invertebrates that live in the reservoir at Gartmorn. This meant that even regular visitors had the opportunity to see something they would not normally encounter during a visit to the site.

The preserved adder was also popular with younger visitors.

Involving the students from Kyle PS, Plockton PS and those that are home educated. Good introduction, clear and concise instructions, excellent activities suitable for the age group. Good partnership working between National Trust for Scotland staff and Froglife staff.

Enthusiastic delivery by organisers.

It took place on the same day as a quadrathlon so it attracted people that wouldn’t have come and they all were interested and enjoying it.

Relaxed welcoming feel of event.

The “hands-on” aspect appealed to everyone, especially the children.

The pond dipping was well received and the paint a frog in a box was an excellent craft. The staff talked to the kids about amphibians as they painted which was nice.
3. THE PROJECT - Dragons on the move

The choice of the Froglife Dragon Trail and the woodland trail set by Tom was a nice mixture that worked well. Some time spent explaining it to the folks, and then letting them explore the woodland was ideal.

It was great that there was a gazebo and more on offer than just pond dipping. The trail was imaginative and the craft activity (pebble frogs and tadpoles) was simple but very effective.

The event organisers were 1st rate at delivering information to the children and adults about their ‘finds’ from the ponds.

It was a great opportunity for our visitors to see the variety of creatures found in the pond! Almost all of our visitors took part in the pond dipping activity, or stopped by the stall to see the creatures found.

Which part of the event, if any, do you think worked least well for your visitors and/or site?

Most project partners had no comment to make here, however the valuable feedback is shown below:

I wish we had a pond dipping platform on site, so that we could have done that part outside ‘at source’. But having said that, at this time of year, the way we did it with the indoor container with ‘pre-dipped’ water, probably produced more for the visitors than if they had been dipping themselves.

It was a shame that the children couldn’t dip and I appreciate this was due to the verges on the lake. Maybe next time staff could dip in the water with wellies while participants watch.

I had recommended that people look at the Froglife website before attending the event so that they could get further details about the event and the organization. However, people came back to me to say that they had difficulty finding the event details on the Froglife website and that they found it difficult to navigate the website.
The partly remote venue meant the logistics of people getting to the pond was difficult.

If Froglife social media (facebook and twitter) had linked to ours and cross promoted the event that would have been good. If the people who ran the event had taken photographs on the day and again used them on social media it would increase awareness of the cause and main aims of Froglife and their events.

Our slight concerns were around how we would be able to get children and adults from the centre of the village up to the ponds but they were unfounded as we were able to arrange transport to and from the ponds.

Please let us know how you think we might be able to improve such events in future, including attendance numbers:

I would love to host another of these events, perhaps in the spring or summer when there might be more pond life to see. I have always found our own events in this location to be very 'hit and miss' with attendance and there doesn't seem to be a reason for this. I think we did everything we could to advertise the event, (posters, social media and local press) and I'm pleased that we had attendees for both sessions.
I’m not sure how you guys had advertised the event but from our side it could have been better advertised so that more people were aware of the event before the day.

Both our sessions were full and we even had enough on the reserve list to put on another session should be have had enough pool time available. Positive feedback was received both from parents and children.

Possibly more equipment making the pond experience more immersive. Maybe even a soundtrack with frog sounds, crickets etc. Possibly a clearer poster - difficult to read Swimming with Dragons.

More advertising to increase attendance numbers. Ensure that no other events were happening in the same area on the same day.

Flyers/brochures sent to schools as well as emails.

I think a bit more publicity would help. Although we had a slow start to the pond dipping activity it was fully booked in the afternoon.

It was quite an isolated site and I think Froglife did well getting the numbers they did.

I think improved liaison particularly oral liaison would ensure that each part of the partnership were aware of their role within the event.

Some live reptiles and/or amphibia would have been a useful addition, provided of course that this could have been done ethically. Maybe a quiz on amphibians & reptiles?

If details were easier to find on the Froglife website then that would improve advertising and perhaps increase attendance. However,
attendance at the Gartmorn event was good and people I spoke to enjoyed the event.

Tricky to improve this type of event or increase the numbers attending. In the northwest Highlands the population spread is such that an open event is always difficult to predict. You could put a lot of time and energy into planning an event and then only a few persons turn up. Best to stick with a similar format.

Please let us know if you have any other feedback on the event execution or planning stage

Keep up the good work, well done.

It was very well planned and executed with enthusiasm and professionalism. The children had a great time and will hopefully get out more as a result.

Staff and pupils really enjoyed the workshop and would attend other, similar events.

Although communications got off to a slow start (my fault) I thought the event was a success. Improvements can always be made but in general the outcomes set for the event were met. Working in partnership with organisations like Froglife bring a great deal of added value to our events and is something I look forward to repeating in the future.

Event greatly welcomed by public (especially those with young children) and by Museum trustees and volunteers.

Everything ran smoothly. Very happy with the day.

An excellent event which was really enjoyed by the children attending. One even commented that it was the best swim session he had ever been at! We would be delighted to host again in the future.

All went well despite the rain.

I’ve had feedback from participants via my facebook page. All very positive and enjoyed the day. I was a bit concerned that Froglife do not have time to do their own site visits of the event area, but luckily the event area picked by Forestry Commission worked well for what Froglife wanted.
James and Alasdair did a great job of engaging with the attendees. Their stall and exhibits was professional and did a great job of focusing on the various natural life both above and under the ponds surface.

Speaking to the parents and children, during and after the event, they all voiced the opinion that it was fantastic and please can we do it again …. praise indeed. Shame about the weather.

What difference did we make?

Overall, our feedback from both event participants and our project partners was very positive. We were able to engage with a huge number of people through our Dragons on the move roadshow and delivered events in both rural and urban communities across the whole country. Our level of interaction with each person varied significantly, however each person we engaged with was at least made aware of Froglife and that amphibians and reptiles in Scotland are in need of conservation effort. We hope that this will plant a seed of thought in each person’s mind and encourage them to think about amphibians and reptiles in their day to day activities.
Dragons on the hills

Amphibians and reptiles in Scotland are found from sea level up to over a thousand metres at the top of Munros. Unfortunately we have very little information on the distribution and abundance of amphibians and reptiles in Scotland, particularly in remote areas, such as at high altitude, despite these areas providing important habitat for those species. This level of under-recording is likely to be due to logistical difficulties associated with recorders accessing remote areas. Nevertheless, thousands of people do access and visit Scotland’s wild areas on a regular basis for outdoor pursuits such as hillwalking, mountaineering and rambling, particularly during the spring through to autumn months when amphibians and reptiles are active. We developed Dragons on the hills to enable us to engage with these outdoor enthusiasts and give them the knowledge, tools and initiative to record and submit sightings of reptiles and amphibians when visiting Scotland’s countryside.

The initial format of our workshops consisted of a formal indoor training course lasting approximately one hour, followed by a practical outdoor survey to look for reptiles and amphibians. The sites had been visited previously by a Froglife staff member so that they could look for areas that amphibians and reptiles might be found and also lay down survey mats to increase the chance of finding animals on the day. We had great feedback from these workshops, and they were attended by people who had a keen interest in species surveys, including ecologists, students and amateur naturalists. Nevertheless, our original aim had been to engage with audiences whose primary interest was outdoor pursuits rather than species surveying, however we found it difficult to attract these groups to our workshops despite devoting serious effort to advertising through as many avenues as possible. The reasons for these difficulties are unclear, however we believed it may have been because people were reluctant to sign up to an event outside of their normal group and/or activity. Furthermore, the indoor element of the workshop may have been less appealing to outdoor enthusiasts, who may prefer a more practical session.

We therefore sought permission from HLF to change the format of the workshops so that the indoor element was removed and the theory was incorporated in an entirely practical workshop. We also proposed that it would be more effective to contact outdoor groups directly and ask to accompany them on an excursion that they had organised themselves. We accompanied groups, such as rambling groups, on their organised excursions. Before the walk started a Froglife staff member did a short presentation to the group as a whole to introduce themselves and any other staff members, introduce Froglife and the Scottish Dragon Finder project, and explain what we were hoping to achieve by joining their walk. We focussed on the importance of recording sightings of amphibians and reptiles and told them about the app. During the walk staff members spoke to the walkers in greater detail about the project and species recording, and tried to encourage them to download the app so that they could report sightings. When the group stopped for lunch Froglife staff again addressed the group as a whole (or split them into two groups if required) and used large laminated photos of the species to teach the group about amphibian and reptile identification. We also spoke about species ecology and behaviour, the best times to see the animals, where to look for them and how to look for them.
3. THE PROJECT - Dragons on the hills

Both formats had advantages and disadvantages. The more formal workshops were more likely to attract people who will commit to reporting sightings of amphibians and reptiles, however these people may not visit the areas where species recording is required i.e. Scotland’s wild areas. By switching to the less formal format with targeted groups of outdoor enthusiasts we were able to engage with people who regularly visit Scotland’s wild areas, however the proportion of these participants that would download the app and continue to report sightings is likely to be lower.

Targets as set out in approved purposes

To deliver a series of ‘Dragons on the hills’ workshops to enable 200 walkers and outdoor enthusiasts to develop the skills required to identify and record amphibians and reptiles whilst they are out in remote and under-recorded areas of Scotland.

Outputs

We delivered 10 Dragons on the hills workshops during the course of the Scottish Dragon Finder project. Through these workshops we engaged directly with 202 outdoor enthusiasts and worked within seven council areas of Scotland, including; Aberdeenshire, Angus, Highland, North Ayrshire, Perth and Kinross, Scottish Borders and Stirling.

We engaged with a wide range of groups, all of whom had a prior interest in outdoor pursuits and/or wildlife recording. Details of the groups we worked with are given below:

1. Two workshops delivered with the University of Glasgow Mountaineering Club. These included a species talk and quiz on day one and a guided walk on day two.

2. We delivered a workshop at the Fort William Mountain Festival, followed by a stall hosted at the evening exhibition event.

3. Accompained walk with the Rannoch Walkers

4. Accompanied walk with both the Glasgow and Aberdeen Ramblers
5. Accompanied walk with the Brechin Ramblers
6. Accompanied walk with the Dalgety Bay Ramblers
7. Training course followed by practical survey at Dounans Scottish Outdoor Education Centre, Aberfoyle
8. Training course followed by practical survey at Lochranza, Aberfoyle
9. Training course followed by practical survey at Broomlee Scottish Outdoor Education Centre, Edinburgh
Evaluation

Feedback was collected from workshop participants directly following completion of the event using an anonymous feedback form. We had a total of 40 respondents. It became much more difficult to collect feedback from participants once we changed the format from more structured training courses to accompanying walkers on organised excursions. This was because participants were keen to return home as soon as possible once they had completed their walk, particularly if the weather was bad, and catching people before they left and asking them to fill in forms was difficult.

Outcomes

Results of the feedback collected from participants are as follows:

We asked participants to list two words to describe the training:

![Figure 3.7: Word cloud showing the words Dragons on the hills participants used to describe the event.](image)

![Table 3.2: General feedback from Dragons on the hills participants.](table)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Have you attended a Froglife event before?</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>The types of events attended previously included: other amphibian/reptile training courses and volunteer days.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you learnt any new skills today?</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would you attend another of Froglife’s events?</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would you recommend this event to friends/family?</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rate the following aspects</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Very Good</th>
<th>Fair</th>
<th>Poor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teaching/event leader</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall impression of the event</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Please explain any new skills learnt and how you may use them in the future

How to survey for reptiles and amphibians.
How to tell newts apart.
Best survey conditions for reptiles.
I can actually identify the common amphibians and will start looking for them and at them with more interest.
I never walked through the bog slowly mostly just passing it as fast as possible to reach the munros, its impressive how much life you can find in the ponds.
Identification skills for reptiles and amphibians.
Will use app to report sightings.
I’ve come across slow-worms and adders. Will report them now.
Knowledge of the variety of species and where to look.
What difference did we make?

Dragons on the Hills was a completely new activity for Froglife and we therefore included just a small number of sessions in the project to test whether it could be a useful activity for Froglife to pursue. It is difficult to say whether taking part in the sessions resulted in people downloading the app and reporting their sightings as we were unable to contact participants after the events. Looking at maps of records submitted via our app we have a good spread of records across Scotland in both rural and urban areas. The majority of sightings are still being submitted by people in more urban areas, however that is to be expected due to the larger number of people living there. This suggests that the workshops may have had the desired effect of increasing the number of outdoor enthusiasts submitting records. We cannot say for sure, however, as we do not know if the records were submitted by people who attended a Dragons on the Hill workshop, another Scottish Dragon Finder event, or by someone who has downloaded the app without any direct engagement through the project. It should also be noted that the app was out of use for the first 1.5 years of the project (discussed later) and data is therefore only available for 2016 and 2017. Longer term monitoring of our app data will help us determine whether or not we will see a significant increase in the number of records being submitted in Scotland’s rural areas. Generally, the Dragons on the Hills activity was very well-received by participants and we would be keen to further develop this activity in the future.
3. THE PROJECT - Dragon tails

Dragon tails

Froglife have been working successfully with young people since our inception and we were keen to include activities aimed specifically at young people within Scottish Dragon Finder as we believe engagement with this audience to be vital to the success of long-term conservation efforts. The young people of today will form the next generation of policy makers, decision makers and consumers. Educating people about the importance of biodiversity at a young age will enable them to make informed choices about how they live when they are older. Furthermore, offering opportunities to young people who have previously been denied them will help build support for conservation work.

Our aim through Scottish Dragon Finder activities was to introduce young people to amphibians and reptiles in a positive light, rather than the negative associations that are often portrayed in children’s literature (“ugly”, “slimy”, “scary”) or the overlooking of amphibians and reptiles in preference of more ‘charismatic’ species. We also wanted to inspire young people to take action for amphibians and reptiles in any way that they could, through activities such as creating a pond in their garden, raising awareness of amphibian and reptile declines, or raising funds for conservation. Dragon tails was split into three activities:

• Dragon tails school workshops: educational workshops for primary school pupils consisting of presentations, games, quizzes, crafts and outdoor activities.

• Dragon tails drama workshops: workshops with youth groups (brownies, scouts, rainbows etc.) where the group performed an amphibian and reptile-themed play. The workshops were split across two sessions approximately five weeks apart. The first session was used to introduce the group to the species, allocate parts and run through the play. The group performed the play during the second session to an audience made up of friends and family, which was followed by other activities, some of which were organised by Froglife (crafts, information stalls etc.) and some organised by the group themselves (fundraising events, award ceremonies etc.).

• Script writing competition: this competition was organised by our first trainee, Emily, for her public engagement project during the first year of Scottish Dragon Finder. Groups of young people were invited to come up with a storyline and write a script for an amphibian/reptile-themed play. There was a prize for the winning script and it was then edited and used in our drama workshops.

The aim of our dragon tails activities was to increase young peoples’ understanding of, and empathy for, amphibians and reptiles by delivering the following learning objectives:

• Increased knowledge of amphibian and reptile species native to Scotland.

• Increased understanding of the threats that amphibians and reptiles face.

• Finding out what action people can take to help protect amphibians and reptiles locally and globally.

• Increased general interest in the species from learning about ‘weird and wonderful’ amphibian and reptile facts.

• Increased understanding of why amphibians are important in terms of ecosystem functioning and more applied uses (e.g. research and medicine)
Dragon tails – school workshops

School workshops generally lasted 1.5 – 2 hours and were aimed mainly at older primary school children (P4-7), however we also delivered the sessions with younger primary and pre-school children if the schools were particularly keen for us to do so (i.e. if they were covering a particular topic). We tailored sessions as and when required for particular classes, for example for younger children, composite classes and larger groups.

The format of the school sessions evolved over the course of the project as a direct result of feedback that we received from teachers and pupils. At the beginning of the project workshops consisted of a PowerPoint presentation followed by a craft activity. Whilst the pupils were encouraged to ask and answer question during the presentation, the feedback we received indicated that teachers and pupils would prefer the sessions to be more interactive. Furthermore, we found that this style of teaching generally suited pupils that were confident enough to speak in front of the class but neglected pupils with less confidence. We therefore adapted the workshops to make them more interactive and incorporated different active learning techniques to cater for pupils with different learning types e.g. visual, auditory, reading/writing, and kinaesthetic (tactile learning). A new session plan was created to accommodate different learning styles, which incorporated a range of activities, some of which are described in more detail below:

• Introduction: all sessions started with an introduction to Froglife, the species and the aims of the workshop. This was followed by asking pupils to gauge their existing knowledge of amphibians and reptiles by placing a pre-made pebble frog on one of a series of lily pads numbered one to five: number one being for pupils who felt they had no existing knowledge of the species up to number five for pupils who felt they had expert knowledge.

• Key species presentations: Pupils were split into table groups and each was given a key species with a fact card, laminated colour photo and preserved specimen. Groups were given ten minutes to prepare a presentation about their species, which was then delivered to the rest of the class.
• ‘Think, pair, share’ activity: this activity was more suited to less confident pupils as it gave them the opportunity to think a question through by themselves without the immediate pressure of speaking in front of the whole class. Pupils were asked to think of three reasons why they thought amphibians and reptiles might be in danger. They then discussed this with the person sitting next to them and were then given an opportunity to share their thoughts with the class.

• Sorting and classifying activity: this activity was suited to visual and kinaesthetic learners and the aim was to generate an identification key for amphibians and reptiles. Groups were given a set of amphibian and reptile species sorting cards and were asked to sort them into two groups, one containing amphibians and one for reptiles. They were then asked to further sort each group depending on key identification features e.g. separate groups for newts, snakes, lizards etc. This was then reviewed on the whiteboard by the workshop leader.

• Snowballing activity: pupils were asked to discuss a controversial statement in pairs, then in groups of 4, snowballing up to a class discussion. The statement was ‘You could argue that we shouldn’t waste efforts on protecting such a small number of species in this country’, which encouraged the pupils to think about and discuss the inherent value of amphibians and reptiles.

• Habitat destruction game: the aim here was to show the impact of habitat loss on a particular species. A tarpaulin was placed on the floor to symbolise a pond and pupils were asked to ‘swim’ around as tadpoles within it. When the workshop leader shouted ‘freeze’ the pupils had to stop and come up with a threat that their pond may face (e.g. pollution, invasive species, drought). The ‘pond’ was then made smaller and pupils had to go and sit down if they stepped off the tarpaulin.

• Clap and fact: Children were asked to walk around and share knowledge about what they learned with whoever they faced when the session leader clapped their hands.

• How much do they know now?: Each session ended with the pupils adjusting their position on the lily pad sequence to show whether or not they felt they had increased their knowledge.
We found that this format was well suited to slightly older pupils (primary 6-7), however younger classes required a little more direction. We therefore adapted the sessions slightly for younger pupils and included the following activities:

- Groups of pupils were asked to identify images and preserved specimens of a particular species using FSC identification guides. Somebody from each group then stood up and told the rest of the class which species they had and pointed out what features they used to identify it.

- Pupils were given challenges such as “Think about the threats that amphibians and reptiles face” and “think about why people would collect amphibians & reptiles from the wild”. They were then given post-it notes to write their suggestions on and the session leader went through each of these, explaining the key factors in more detail.

- Pupils were asked to suggest reasons why they thought amphibians and reptiles are important. They were then asked to demonstrate an example of a food chain containing amphibians and reptiles using props.

- We included a ‘weird and wonderful’ section in the presentation showing examples of strange and interesting amphibian and reptile species to capture their attention. Examples included the female Surinam toad, which incubates its offspring in skin pockets on her back, male gastric brooding frogs (now extinct), which incubate their offspring in their stomachs, and the critically endangered Chinese giant salamander, which is the largest amphibian on the planet.

**Targets as set out in approved purposes**

To deliver a programme of educational ‘Dragon tails’ workshops to 50 primary schools and 70 youth groups, engaging 3,700 young people across Scotland.
3. THE PROJECT - DT School Workshops

Outputs

We delivered Dragon tails workshops within 51 schools across 19 council areas, engaging with a total of 1,628 young people.

Figure 3.8: Map showing the locations of schools where we delivered Dragon tails school workshops.

Evaluation

The school workshops were evaluated using a feedback form, which was filled in by teachers who went through the questions with their class. We received feedback from 34 of the 51 schools that we worked with. Evaluation forms were completed once the
workshop leader had left the school so that there was no pressure on the teacher to give falsely positive feedback. Teachers were given a stamped, addressed envelope to return the forms, which helped to maximise the number of completed evaluations received.

Outcomes

We asked teachers and pupils general questions about how they felt about the success of the Dragon tails workshops and the data that we received is shown in Figure 3.9.

![Graph showing the responses of teachers and pupils to general questions about the success of school workshops.](image)

Q1: You feel Froglife’s Dragon Tails session with your class was successful
Q2: You feel the session was pitched correctly for your class
Q3: Did the session meet the aims of the Curriculum for Excellence
Q4: The pupils in your class enjoyed the session
Q5: The pupils learnt things during the session they wouldn’t normally learn in school
Q6: The pupils like amphibians and reptiles more as a result of the session

Figure 3.9: Graph showing the responses of teachers and pupils to general questions about the success of school workshops.

We also asked teachers and pupils for more specific feedback on the sessions with the following questions:

What new things did the children learn from the session?

The majority of participants’ responses related to the following: An increased breadth of knowledge about Scottish amphibians and reptiles, such as the range of species found and how to identify them, differences between amphibians and reptiles, and their ecology. They also said they knew more about conservation issues, including the fact many species are in decline, threats that species face and what they can do to help protect them. Finally, many referred to interesting facts they had learnt about amphibians and reptiles. Examples of responses are given below:

The class were amazed at the number of different frogs and newts. They were also surprised that their numbers were declining because they see so many around where they live.
A clearer grasp of what a reptile is and the same with amphibians. A stronger idea of life cycles. More information on how to care for animals. One small change in a lifecycle can make a massive difference. An animal feeds its babies with its skin. Spongey skin allows amphibians to breathe but also can allow pollution into their bodies. Frogs, newts and caecilians can be amphibians. Common lizards can lose their tails and grow them back in 1-2 years. Some frogs pretend to be poisonous to ward off predators. Frogs can use their colours to frighten predators (flip over). And lots more!

Is there anything the pupils would do now to help amphibians and reptiles?

Several of the schools suggested that they would be interested in creating ponds either in school grounds or in their own gardens. They also said they were generally more aware of amphibians and reptiles and would avoid touching or hurting them. Other responses included: avoiding moving animals from their natural environment; clearing litter and preventing pollution in ponds; reporting species sightings; getting involved in toad patrols; and further learning about amphibians and reptiles. Examples of responses are given below:

Avoid touching / contact with them. Setup a ‘frogs paradise’ to observe frogs and visitors. Help them if they’re in trouble. Make a small habitat for them. Clear litter from ponds and areas. Register sightings of unusual amphibians and reptiles. Would now leave them alone rather than hurt them.

John Muir Conservation - keen to make pond life a focus in the future.

Put notices at ponds about leaving frogspawn.
If one is spotted in a dangerous situation, carefully remove to safety. Consider their own gardens and how to create safe environments for amphibians and reptiles. Also useful for our school pond - still under development.

Don’t let anyone pick them up. Don’t pick up lizards because their tails can fall off. If you make a pond make a ramp. Leave adders alone. Be careful with your dogs in long grass.

Inform families of workshop today.

If we don’t look after them they could become extinct.

Yes, some have now taken a keen interest in conservation.

Is there anything you or the class would have changed about the session?

As mentioned previously, some of the feedback from teachers and pupils following workshops delivered earlier in the project stated that they would have preferred more activities and less discussion. For example, one class said they would prefer “More active/hands on learning. Integrating facts in to the activities rather than the presentation then an activity at the end.” This feedback was taken on board and we redeveloped the sessions as described above. Several of the schools said they would like to have seen real specimens of amphibians and reptiles. Unfortunately this is against Froglife policy due to ethical issues around the stress this may cause to living animals. We were subsequently able to bring in preserved specimens as an alternative, which the pupils responded very positively to. Many of the respondents said there was nothing they would do to change the session. Examples of responses are given below:

It was very well led, really enjoyed the visit! The children have said it’s been their favourite activity this term.

Have more activities (I explained they asked too many questions).

Workshop/quiz - but it was still good. A good way to learn.
The class really enjoyed the fact there were different types of activities - from quizzes to craft work. It really suited the face we range in age from 5 - 12 years.

Go outside for longer. Maybe do some craftwork. Bring in some live animals. Have the lesson more interactive.

No! Another sessions would be great!

Not really, maybe just a few more examples to be passed around.

Do you or the class have any advice/suggestions for future activities as part of our sessions?

Again, many of the suggestions from schools that took part earlier on in the project were about bringing in live specimens of amphibians and reptiles. Some classes said they would have liked to have done activities outdoors, which is something we were keen to accommodate. All schools that had a pond in their grounds were given a pond dipping session, but unfortunately most schools did not have easy access to a suitable pond. Some of the other suggestions are listed below:

More hands on learning outdoors with real species.

Habitat construction. Paper/card/clay model of amphibian or reptile. Models of animals at different stages of life cycle.

Sing movement songs or say active rhymes about tadpoles/frogs. Order and use some of plastic tadpoles and frogs from the ‘insectlore’ catalogue.

Spot the differences between amphibians.

A game (like Top Trumps).

We would love to have more sessions in the future! The children loved using the ‘key’ booklets and specimen bottles and thoroughly enjoyed the practical elements.
3. THE PROJECT - DT School Workshops

Quotes

A selection of quotes from the teachers and pupils is given below:

Class have been more aware of newts, frogs and tadpoles. As a class we are going to do a mini topic and survey.

I’ve been more aware of frogs and look out for them in the garden and put any I find up to the forest. I’ve been identifying toads and frogs in my garden. I’ve been looking for toads and frogs under a wooden platform in my garden.

I was looking for lizards this weekend. I keep looking for tadpoles and frogs in my Grandma’s garden. I watched the tadpoles in our pond at home as they developed – they’ve got back legs now.

I’ve raised tadpoles to frogs. He was really nice and told us interesting things. It was amazing.
Vicky told the story really well and spoke so gently and calmly to the boys and girls. Thank you Vicky, you were super.

Everything was awesome!

Please come again!!

Didn’t like toads before but now I do.

They were so excited that Ally found a baby newt in our pond.

I learned how to spot the difference between a frog and toad. I liked learning about reptiles. I learned there was a lizard called a Slow Worm with no legs. I loved making the garden. I started as a beginner and ended up an expert! I thought it might not be good but Vicky was super interesting.

It is a good idea that they are helping amphibians across Scotland. It was 'amphabulous!'

Awesome. Can they come back? The jars were cool!

What difference did we make?

Based on the feedback we received from teachers and pupils it appears that we have made a significantly positive impact on their perception and awareness of amphibians and reptiles in the 51 schools that we visited. Several of the comments we received referred to positive action that teachers/pupils would like to take for amphibians and reptiles in their local area, such as creating ponds and helping to protect the animals.
3. THE PROJECT - DT Drama workshops

Dragon tails – Drama Workshops

Dragon tails drama workshops were comprised of two sessions. The initial session was designed to inform the group about amphibians and reptiles, discuss conservation issues and introduce them to the play. The second session was performance night, when the families and friends of the group were invited along to watch the play and then take part in other activities afterwards.

Our original plan had been to invite along three of four youth groups to the second session so that they could watch the play and take part in the additional activities but unfortunately this was not logistically possible. Meeting nights vary between groups, meaning some groups would have to arrange additional sessions, or change their regular session in order to participate in the performance event. Additionally, transport of young people to another venue was problematic as most youth groups don’t have their own multi-person vehicles and would therefore have to hire vehicles or rely on parents/guardians for transport. This would have been particularly difficult in remote areas, where groups would have had to travel substantial distances to get to an alternative venue. Finally, some of the venues in which the groups met were relatively small, which would have made it difficult to accommodate additional visitors. We therefore came to the decision that we would only involve people who were directly associated with the group that we had been working with in the performance event. Unfortunately, this meant that we were unable to engage with as many separate youth groups and the overall number of young people that we worked directly with fell short of our original target.

The script and cast list for the play was originally written by the Scottish Dragon Finder Project Manager and told the story of a group of frogs hatching from their eggs and going through metamorphosis. Following the pollution of the pond our hero, Frankie, goes in search of a new
pond and on his/her journey is helped across a road by a Toad Patroller. He/ she meets other amphibians along the way and in the end finds a healthy new pond to live in. The story was told by a number of narrators (depending on the size of the group) and there were a range of speaking and non-speaking parts to accommodate people with different confidence levels. Groups were also encouraged to add in their own characters and/or lines, change the ending of the play, add in scenes and essentially modify the play in any way they wanted under the premise it remained biologically accurate and amphibian/reptile-themed. We generally found that most groups stuck fairly closely to the script, although some groups added in their own songs and/or dances. We also provided the groups with a cast list, which included colour photos of the species along with information and questions to prompt them to think about how to portray each character and enable them to design their own costumes. Finally, we included images of other pond creatures in the cast list so that they could add in their own characters and/or props.

Following completion of the script writing competition, we re-wrote the script and cast list from an edited version of the winning script. We used this as an opportunity to make positive changes based on the feedback we had received from groups using the original script, along with observations we had made ourselves on what worked and what didn’t with the original script. We found that the original script had too many long sentences and the lines for some of the characters were much too long. We also found that we needed more speaking parts as almost all of the participants were keen to have a speaking part, even if it was just one line. The storyline of the modified script was very similar to the original, however the characters and their lines were all changed. We also made changes to the format of the script, such as increasing the font size and allocating a different colour to each character, to make it easier for the participants to follow.

We found that the revised script was much easier for the participants to
follow and they were generally more engaged as each person was involved at some stage
during the performance. We did find that participants tended to get a bit distracted when
they weren’t on the stage so if we were to re-write the script again we would try to include
more of the participants at all stages of the performance. We also found that reading ability
varied hugely within and among groups, therefore cutting down on the text even further
would have helped with this and may also have enabled the participants to learn their lines
rather than reading them from the script.

It may also have been beneficial to include a greater variety of activities within the
play, rather than a purely spoken performance. For example, dances, songs, musical
performance, poetry readings, interaction with the audience and a greater emphasis
on prop/set/costume design may have widened the appeal to different members of the
group. All of these additions would have required a greater degree of interaction with each
group, which would not have been possible with just two sessions. Indeed, some group
leaders suggested that an additional visit before the performance event would have been
beneficial. This is certainly something to consider for future projects, however travel time
and cost, as well as the availability of the groups (most of whom have a busy programme
of activities) would need to be considered.

Targets as set out in approved purposes

To deliver a programme of educational ‘Dragon tails’ workshops to 50 primary school
pupils and 70 youth groups, engaging with 3,700 young people across Scotland.
Outputs

Over the course of the project we worked with twenty different youth groups from 13 council areas and engaged directly with 1050 people through our Dragon tails drama workshop activities. Youth groups that we worked with fell under the following categories: Brownies (x9), Guides (x2), Rainbows (1), Scouts (x1), Summer holiday club (x1), Wildlife Watch Group (x1), Woodcraft Folk Group (x1), Youth and Community Centre Group (x3) and Youth Drama Group (x1).

Figure 3.10: Map showing the locations where we delivered Dragon tails drama workshops.
Evaluation

We used feedback forms to formally evaluate this activity, but unfortunately the response rate was poor with only five out of twenty groups sending us their feedback. The feedback from the five questionnaires is summarised below and is separated into feedback received before and after the script was changed.

Q1: You feel Froglife's Dragon Tails session with your group was successful
Q2: You feel the session was pitched correctly for your group
Q3: The children in your group enjoyed the sessions
Q4: The group like amphibians and reptiles more as a result of the sessions
Q5: The children learnt / achieved things during the sessions they wouldn't normally have

Figure 3.11: Graph showing the responses of group leaders and young people to general questions about the success of the drama workshops.
### Outcomes

Table 3.3: General feedback from Dragon tails drama workshop partners.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Feedback from workshops using the original script and modified script</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Is there anything you or the group would have changed about the sessions? | Long parts needs to be looked at. Overly complicated scenes. Needs to be redirected for a younger age group.  
One very long part, which we split up. The scene concepts are a little bit too complicated for our age group.  
It worked really well. |
| Do you or the group have any advice / suggestions for future activities as part of our sessions? | More support with practising the play. Need a script for adults with more directions and advice.  
Our age group would benefit from longer times to practice and maybe a visit in the middle to help iron things out.  
Have longer between first meeting and actual play. |
| Quotes/Please let us know if you have any other feedback on the event execution or planning stage. | Many positive feedback from the girls. “Loved the line ‘crikey what a metamorphosis!’”  
Positive feedback from the whole group.  
We enjoyed the whole process, it was great.  
We loved it!  
If working with Brownie groups the time required to practice needs to take account of girls’ desire to the blend the Froglife activity with other activities in a unit meet. If so suggest minimum 8 weeks start to finish/show. |
| What new things / skills did the children learn from the sessions? | Public speaking in front of family and friends, information about amphibians, acting skills  
Metamorphosis, acting skills, public speaking. |
| What aspect of the event do you think worked particularly well for your visitors and/or site? | The script for the play was great, the Brownies really enjoyed practicing and performing it.  
The girls loved the frogs they got to paint.  
The interactive crafts worked very well for our age group and the siblings who attended with their families. |
What difference did we make?

Overall the feedback that we received from the participants and youth group leaders was very positive. Drama workshops were a new activity for Froglife and adaptations to the session format, particularly the script and cast list, were therefore required. Once we had made these changes the success of the sessions increased significantly and Froglife have chosen to incorporate this activity into future projects. The amphibian and reptile conservation content of the workshops is a topic that wouldn’t normally be covered by the majority of the youth groups we worked with, and all of our feedback from respondents said that they had learnt things they wouldn’t normally. They also said that they liked amphibians and reptiles more as a result of taking part in the workshops, which shows that drama activities are a good tool for increasing empathy for groups of species that are often forgotten and/or disliked.
3. THE PROJECT - DT Drama workshops
Dragon tails – script writing competition

The aim of the script writing competition was to encourage young people to think about the natural environment in a creative and memorable way by writing a script centred on Scottish reptiles and amphibians. In order to work with a wide range of individuals the competition was open to all young people across Scotland, many of whom may never have engaged with the natural world to any great extent in the past.

Scripts had to be based on a reptile and/or amphibian theme, be generally biologically accurate and ideally have a conservation message. Entrants could submit individually or as part of a youth group or school class. We offered prizes for the winning script including an Android tablet, personalised trophy and Froglife goodie bag, which included a pond dipping kit. Finally, we used an edited version of the winning script for our youth group drama workshops (see above).

The competition was originally intended to be delivered in partnership with the Scottish Community Drama Association (SCDA) Script Writing Committee. The SCDA have a wealth of experience carrying out similar competitions and were to act as a support throughout all stages of the competition. Unfortunately, the SCDA felt they were no longer able to provide as much support to the competition as initially agreed due to capacity constraints, however they did assist with promotion of the competition once it had been launched.

The competition was taken on by Froglife’s first Scottish Dragon Finder trainee, Emily, as her public engagement personal project. Emily was responsible for background research, production of competition pack and posters, promotion, replying to competition queries, administration of entries, presentation of prizes and attendance at performances.

Emily worked on the project for a six-month period. Background research began in December 2014 with the production of competition packs completed by mid-January 2015. The competition was launched on the 28th of January and ran until the 25th of April. The original closing date of the 12th of April was extended to increase the numbers of entrants over the Easter break, and the prize giving for the overall winner took place in mid-June.

A competition pack was produced for entrants and included:

• Introduction for the entrant
• Introduction for the group leader, teacher or parent
• Information about Scottish amphibians and reptiles including their threats
• Guidelines for script writing – planning, writing style and timing/props
• An example script
• Checklist
• Full competition rules
• A3 poster to hang in school/meeting place
• Registration form

Promotion of the competition was extensive. The competition pack was sent out to 60
schools and 46 youth groups, many of which had, or were scheduled to take part in our Dragon Tails school and drama workshops. The pack was also available to download from the Froglife website and the competition was publicised through Froglife’s social media channels. Finally, the pack was distributed at all Scottish Dragon Finder events, through Froglife’s Glasgow Green Pathways project and distributed at a Keep Scotland Beautiful Eco-schools event for teachers. Emails were sent out with full details and a poster to all Scottish libraries via the Scottish Library and Information Council, as well as the wider Girl guiding community via a Dragon tails partner. The Scottish Storytelling Centre were emailed the competition details and a link to the online competition pack was sent to them via Twitter, as were the Teacher’s Education Resource Group for Scotland and the Scottish Book Trust. The SCDA promoted the competition in their HQ monthly newsletter for March and April and they also posted the details on their Facebook page.

Outputs

Overall the competition was a success with 207 children directly engaging with the competition and many more indirectly through receiving and reading the competition pack but not submitting an entry.

Evaluation

Evaluation of the script writing competition was carried out by Emily as part of her personal project. Evaluation was based on her experience, feedback from project partners and participants, and level of participation in the activity.

Outcomes

The competition entries were judged by Froglife staff, who chose an overall winner and...
two runners-up. The overall winner was a primary 4 class (aged 8 and 9) from Sciennes Primary School in Edinburgh. The script entitled “Frog Run” tells the story of Fred the Frog and his struggle to find a new place to live after humans destroy his home. It was chosen because of its strong conservation message, which ties into Froglife’s key messages. Scottish Dragon Finder had previously visited Sciennes Primary School in year 1 for a Dragon tails school workshop with a primary 7 class. The class also took part in a mini story writing competition with us and the winning pupils came along to our project launch to read out their stories at the Scottish Parliament. Their engagement with the script writing competition may be attributed to the positive impression left in the school after the team’s initial visit.

The two runner-up winners came from a group of friends from Glasgow aged 8-10 (some of whom were part of the Scotstoun Woodcraft Group) and the Arran Youth Foundations aged 13-17. We delivered drama workshops with both of these groups following completion of the script writing competition. The Edinburgh Reporter came along to the overall winner’s prize giving in June and wrote an article on the competition.

*Highlights of the competition*

Those involved appeared to be very engaged and enthused by the competition, with positive feedback from two of the entrants (see below). The three winners all had previous direct correspondence with Froglife, with the overall winner, Sciennes Primary School, having the most involvement (see above). As this was the winning script it shows that our
workshop may have motivated the children and their teachers/leaders/parents, and piqued their interest in amphibians and reptiles.

The prize giving was a great success with all parties really enjoying the afternoon. The children gained further knowledge about reptiles and amphibians, and the media involvement was good publicity for the competition and Scottish Dragon Finder as a whole.

The trainee, Emily, considered the experience highly positive: “Taking on the competition as my public engagement project allowed me to use and expand my organisational and I.T. skills. I learned how best to compose emails and letters to various groups as well as how to correspond on the telephone with our project partners, something I hadn’t had much experience with before. It gave me a good introduction to delivering a competition including how to produce a competition pack aimed at different ages of children. In particular, I found learning how to design the pack and what language to use very useful for future design and media work, an area that can often be overlooked”.

Issues with the competition

Contacting Dragon tails partners proved much more difficult than anticipated due to the length of time that had passed between initial contact made during the project development phase (2013) and delivery of the competition in 2015. By the time the competition was launched many of our original contacts, from both schools and youth groups, had moved on.

Overall, participation in the competition was lower than we had initially hoped for, despite intensive promotion via multiple avenues. Most of our involvement was with teachers and youth group leaders, both of whom preferred to submit entries as a group rather than from individual pupils. We therefore received no entries from individuals. All entries were from groups that we had either already engaged with or had been liaising with as part of a planned Scottish Dragon Finder event or workshop.

The competition was aimed at a large audience (4-18 year olds) and the rules were extensive and perhaps overcomplicated, which may have put people off entering. For example, the age range was very broad so the competition pack had to be easy enough for the younger children to understand but this may have put off older entrants. Based on feedback (see below) it would seem that the closing date wasn’t ideal for the youth groups as it was in the Easter holiday and they break for these holidays too.

Feedback

The following feedback was received from partners regarding why they would not be entering.

The closing date was in the middle of the Easter holidays and we won’t be starting back until after the new deadline.
Christine Buchanan (Leader of 112th New Leith Brownies)

At the start of each school term we discuss with the Brownies what they would like to do and we then work out a programme to include as much as we can and to make fun activities based around their ideas. Animals are popular suggestions, and wildlife is always a theme. At that point we
are looking out for anything to include. We only meet for an hour a week and are volunteers - so the easier and more fun the project the more likely we are to adopt it.

The deadline for your competition didn’t fit easily with our plans. It seemed it would involve homework - which we don’t set - or would need to be spread over a couple of weeks. The girls had chosen badges to complete and there were no spaces in the schedule. I am sure it would have captured their attention otherwise, and we actually found frogs in our garden last spring at the back of our church hall. Very exciting for the Brownies…Also [I] can’t easily find the competition on the website or the rules on the Facebook page.

Ceridwen Heaney (Leader of 310th Glasgow Brownies)

The following feedback was received from two entrants of the competition:

*My class have very much enjoyed this script writing task.*
Miss Daryl Gladstone (Teacher of P4C at Sciennes Primary School)

*Thanks for organising this fantastic competition, they’ve had a lot of fun sharing ideas and creating this story.*
Liz Barclay (Mother of an entrant)

This shows that there wasn’t lack of enthusiasm for the competition or for the amphibian and reptile theme, it more that timings weren’t ideal and the competition may have been too large a task for groups with limited time available.
Looking forward

The results suggest that in order to launch a successful writing competition it would be better to target the competition at a smaller audience, rather than a wide age range and eligibility (our competition was open to all young people in Scotland). Targeting a competition to the general public rather than schools would be more difficult and, in order to increase the participation, would likely require even great publicity and strong incentives (e.g. celebrity endorsement and/or highly sought after prize).

The script writing competition was a relatively large task for teachers and youth group leaders to take on in addition to their scheduled lessons, and most simply do not have the time for extra activities. Tying the competition into a compulsory school project and providing clearer links with the curriculum may have helped encourage more teachers to enter with their class. Similarly, highlighting more clearly the badges that may be gained by entering the competition may have resulted in a greater number of youth groups entering the competition.

Timing is also key as teachers and youth group leaders fill up their diaries at the start of each term, so approaching them earlier in the school year may increase the likelihood of them getting involved. In hindsight, we should have liaised more closely with project partners during the competition preparation to ensure our timescales and plans were appropriate for our chosen audience.
Practical habitat projects

Availability of suitable habitats for amphibians and reptiles is becoming increasingly scarce due to development, intensive agriculture and climate change. One of the main aims of Scottish Dragon Finder was to create, restore and/or enhance habitats for amphibians and reptiles in locations across Scotland through creation or restoration of ponds and management of terrestrial habitats.

Froglife were keen to work with representatives from the local community wherever possible through all stages of this process. To benefit from local knowledge, sites were selected by contacting council biodiversity officers and the Community Woodland Association who were asked to submit sites that could benefit from work. Once the site list had been finalised Froglife worked with local representatives from councils and community woodland groups to make contact with people from the local community so that we could engage with them during planning, delivery and follow up work.

Delivery of capital work was undertaken by specialist contractors and/or groups of volunteers, with close supervision by Froglife staff. Following completion of the main capital work, Froglife, in partnership with local representatives, organised volunteer days for sites that required additional practical work (planting, path work, creation of hibernacula etc.) as well as training courses for members of the local community. Training courses were free and open to everybody, and were designed to show people how to identify
amphibians and reptiles, record sightings and manage the newly created habitat, thus ensuring the ponds and terrestrial habitats that remain are maintained into the future.

A detailed evaluation of our practical habitat projects is detailed in a separate document: Scottish Dragon Finder Habitat Work Evaluation. The information below is a summary of the work that we completed.

**Targets as set out in approved purposes**

To undertake habitat improvement projects at 63 publicly owned sites, providing a minimum of 12 hectares of habitat across 14 of Scotland’s local authority areas. These will be undertaken in association with local volunteer and community groups, who will help ensure their long-term maintenance.

**Outputs**

Through the Scottish Dragon Finder project we have undertaken habitat improvements at 70 publicly owned sites in 26 locations, including: the creation of 52 new ponds, restoration of 17 ponds and management work and production of a habitat management plan for a large-scale terrestrial site. This has provided 13.8804 hectares of habitat for amphibians and reptiles across 14 council areas of Scotland. We have also provided training to 321 people through 27 training courses and engaged a further 290 people through 27 volunteer days. We engaged directly with a total of 611 people through our habitat work projects.

We conducted at least one volunteer session and one training course at each location, with the following exceptions: Echline Primary School was an additional site and did not receive an official training course; Crombie Country Park, Hopetoun Road Wildlife site, Mausoleum Fields, Langlands Moss and Chatelherault Country Park ran their own volunteer days; the location of the training course for Arnhall Moss was moved to another site due to issues with water quality (outwith Froglife’s control) at Arnhall Moss itself.
3. THE PROJECT - Practical Habitat Projects
### Table 3.4: Details of the locations we worked in and the work carried out.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Council Area</th>
<th>Work Completed</th>
<th>Hectares</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Findhorn Hinterland</td>
<td>Moray</td>
<td>3 Ponds created</td>
<td>0.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kiffinan Community Forest</td>
<td>Argyll And Bute</td>
<td>3 Ponds created</td>
<td>0.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strathnairn Community Woodlands</td>
<td>Highland</td>
<td>4 Ponds created</td>
<td>0.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culag Community Woodlands</td>
<td>Highland</td>
<td>6 Ponds created</td>
<td>0.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assynt Estate</td>
<td>Highland</td>
<td>1 Terrestrial habitat managed</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alyth Community Woodland</td>
<td>Perth and Kinross</td>
<td>1 Pond created</td>
<td>0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loon Braes Pond</td>
<td>Perth and Kinross</td>
<td>1 Pond restored</td>
<td>0.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crombie Country Park</td>
<td>Angus</td>
<td>1 Pond restored</td>
<td>0.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dean Castle Country Park</td>
<td>East Ayrshire</td>
<td>3 Ponds created</td>
<td>0.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evanton Wood</td>
<td>Highland</td>
<td>4 Ponds created</td>
<td>0.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muiravonside Country Park</td>
<td>Falkirk</td>
<td>1 Pond created and 1 Pond restored</td>
<td>0.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avonglen Quarry</td>
<td>Falkirk</td>
<td>1 Pond created and 4 Ponds restored</td>
<td>5.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balquhidderock Wood</td>
<td>Stirling</td>
<td>10 Ponds created</td>
<td>0.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hopetoun Road Wildlife Site</td>
<td>City of Edinburgh</td>
<td>2 Ponds created</td>
<td>0.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overtoun House</td>
<td>West Dunbartonshire</td>
<td>1 Pond restored</td>
<td>0.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auchnacraig Forest Park</td>
<td>West Dunbartonshire</td>
<td>1 Pond restored</td>
<td>0.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arnhall Moss</td>
<td>Aberdeenshire</td>
<td>3 Ponds restored</td>
<td>0.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dunnet Forest</td>
<td>Highland</td>
<td>1 Pond restored</td>
<td>0.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Riverside Nature Park</td>
<td>Dundee City</td>
<td>2 Ponds created</td>
<td>0.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robertson Street Community Garden</td>
<td>Dundee City</td>
<td>1 Ponds created</td>
<td>0.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Riverside Park</td>
<td>Fife</td>
<td>3 Ponds created</td>
<td>0.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letham Glen</td>
<td>Fife</td>
<td>1 Pond restored</td>
<td>0.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mausoleum Fields</td>
<td>South Lanarkshire</td>
<td>2 Ponds created</td>
<td>0.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Langlands Moss</td>
<td>South Lanarkshire</td>
<td>3 Ponds created</td>
<td>0.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chatelherault Country Park</td>
<td>South Lanarkshire</td>
<td>2 Ponds restored</td>
<td>2.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Echline Primary School</td>
<td>City of Edinburgh</td>
<td>1 Pond restored</td>
<td>0.0004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTALS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>52 Ponds created 16 Ponds restored 1 Terrestrial habitat managed</td>
<td><strong>13.45Ha</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Evaluation**

A detailed evaluation of habitat projects is carried out in Scottish Dragon Finder Habitat Work Evaluation. Evaluation of volunteer days and training courses was carried out using feedback forms, which were filled in by participants immediately following completion of events/courses. We received feedback forms from 219 participants on our training courses and 49 participants of volunteer days.
Outcomes

Training courses

Participants were asked a series of general questions about the training courses and the vast majority of responses were very positive. The results are displayed in Figure 3.13 and Table 3.5.

![Graph showing responses of training course participants to general questions about the training.](image)

Q1: Joining instructions  
Q2: Course content  
Q3: Venue  
Q4: Site visits/surveys  
Q5: Teaching/event leader

Table 3.5: Responses of training course participants to general questions about the training.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Blank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Have you learnt any new skills today?</td>
<td>211</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would you attend another of Froglife’s training events</td>
<td>214</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would you recommend it to friends/family?</td>
<td>214</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We asked participants from our training courses to write down two words that they would use to describe the course. The results are displayed as a word cloud in Figure 3.14.

We also asked training course participants to tell us about any new skills learnt and how they might use them in the future. Many of the respondents referred to the new amphibian identification and surveying skills they had learnt and said they would use them for conducting further surveys, university fieldwork, jobs, volunteering and for their and their family’s own general interest. Several respondents referred to the skills they had gained in engaging children in outdoor learning through activities such as pond dipping, using keys...
Figure 3.14: Word cloud showing the most common responses of training course participants when asked to list two words to describe the training.

to identify species, and generally thinking about wildlife in a different way. Finally, several respondents referred to the habitat creation and management skills they had learnt. A selection of responses are shown below:

Re enforced amphibian survey and ID techniques, very informative and enjoyable. Will definitely be useful for future

I’ve learnt to try new things and not to be afraid of misconceptions

I know I can introduce the children to outdoor learning by familiar things such as the app, and encourage them to go on with these activities with their parents.

How to take children outdoors to explore nature in a way that is fun and exciting while including classroom work.

That pond water isn’t just water!

I think this event has opened my eyes to potential opportunities for outdoor learning with children. Taken away some of the fear about teaching children this kind of context. Very useful.
Life-long gardener but you are never too (old) to learn something new.

Info on maintaining ponds and creating hibernacula to attract/keep wildlife arriving.

Better coverage of identification characteristics than given on NARRS - has been very useful.

How to identify frogs and reptiles so we can use the app and inform Froglife.

How to ID newt species and things to consider regarding creating and managing habitats for newts.

Netting - one surveying I'd not done yet, was great! Got to see great crested newt up close!

Amphibian ID, habitat creation, survey techniques. Plan to create wildlife ponds and survey for reptiles and amphibians.

Finding newt eggs, torching, netting, identifying newts. Will teach my kids about this stuff!

All aspects of surveying and ID-ing covered tonight. I love the great outdoors and exploring the environment and this will add another facet of interest.

Finally, we asked respondents to give us any additional comments, such as areas in the course they would like us to cover in more detail. The vast majority of the comments made by respondents were very positive. A handful of people suggested they would have liked the course to have been longer and a couple of people suggested including more information on pond management and conservation. A selection of responses are given below:

Surprising how enjoyable pond dipping can be and how interesting it can be in a local habitat.

Would definitely recommend the training session to anyone looking to learn more about...
amphibian surveying. Great set-up and great session with just enough time to get a good introduction into what to do when undertaking the various surveys.

Great and informative. Fantastic to see amphibians and insects up close. Thank you.

James and Clare were really enthusiastic, knowledgeable and more than happy to answer questions, great, thank you.

Excellent - thank you very much, campfire and cuppa were a lovely welcome!

Excellent, didn’t want to go home!

Wanted longer session - thanks very much. Brilliant!!!

Would have been nice to have found more frogs / newts. Great to have handout.

Teacher was lovely and clear - easy to follow and to the point!

Great. Fun evening. Kids loved it.

This was a good experience as it’s something I never thought to do.

Very good for something different to do. Sparks an interest. Thanks, great night

Went very quickly! I was clearly enjoying myself :)}
Volunteer days

Participants were asked a series of general questions about the volunteer days, and again the vast majority of responses were very positive. The results are displayed in Figure 3.15 and Table 3.6.

Table 3.6: Responses of volunteer day participants to general questions about the activity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Have you learnt any new skills today?</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would you attend another of Froglife’s events</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would you recommend a Froglife event to a friend/family member?</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 3.15: Graph showing responses of volunteer day participants to general questions about the activity.

We also asked volunteers to tell us about any new skills they had learnt and how they may use them in the future. The answers we received included building a hibernacula, pond clearance and de-silting, fence construction, identifying species (plants, amphibians, invertebrates), which plant species to introduce to ponds, pond creation and working with tools.

Photo: David Palmar
Finally, we asked respondents to give us any additional comments. A selection of comments is given below:

Excellent and informative, James should get a pay rise.
Great day - nice area and new volunteers to work with.
I feel I have gained a lot of satisfaction and enjoyed learning more about wildlife and nature.
It was fun, purposeful and good exercise.
Project officer helped me with enquiries and offered email for future advice.
Thanks for a fun and inspiring day. Good to know I’ve helped the newts.

What difference did we make?

The impact that we made through our habitat project in terms of benefits for biodiversity are reviewed in Scottish Dragon Finder Habitat Work Evaluation. The feedback that we received from our training course participants and volunteers indicates that Scottish Dragon Finder has had a significantly positive effect on peoples’ skills and knowledge, experience of their local greenspaces and has given them an incentive to take action for wildlife in their local area.
Trainee programme

Froglife works with people from a wide range of different backgrounds, many of whom are interested in pursuing a career in wildlife conservation. Unfortunately, many people find it very difficult to secure paid employment within the wildlife sector as competition for jobs is extremely high. This can make it difficult for people to make the transition from volunteer to employee, despite the fact that volunteers very often have superb dedication and a wide range of skills and experience.

Froglife were keen to offer a trainee programme in Scotland as it was felt we had the experience, capacity and opportunities to offer trainees a varied and useful training programme that would allow them to gain marketable skills that would aid them in gaining meaningful employment in the future. It was felt that Scottish Dragon Finder would lend itself very well to such a training programme as trainees would gain skills in both practical, on the ground conservation as well as public engagement and educational activities, giving trainees a broad suite of skills and experience. Each trainee was mentored by a TCV (The Conservation Volunteers) staff member, which further broadened their experience and the range of training opportunities available to them.

The aim of the trainee programme was to help people who showed a high level of enthusiasm and commitment, but had not been given the opportunity to develop skills working in conservation, to gain meaningful employment following training with Froglife. It was important that traineeships were paid as the majority of people would have been unable to commit their time for free over an extended period due to financial constraints. It was also important the traineeships ran during working hours, were full time and ran for an extended period of time to enable trainees to accumulate enough skills and experience to the level required to secure paid employment upon completion of the traineeship.

We offered two sequential traineeships, both 18 month in duration. Each was split into three six month modules as follows:

Module 1: Induction, core training and role shadowing

Aim: To introduce the trainee to Froglife, our staff, how we work and our vision; to facilitate core skills development in a wide-range of fields relevant to the work of Froglife; and to inform and engage trainees with the work being carried out as part of Scottish Dragon Finder.
Module 2: habitat and species personal project

Aim: To develop trainee confidence and capacity in habitat and species conservation by organising and running their own habitat and species project as part of Scottish Dragon Finder.

Module 3: public engagement personal project

Aim: To develop trainee confidence and capacity in public engagement by planning, organising and running their own public engagement project as part of Scottish Dragon Finder.

Targets as set out in approved purposes

To provide two paid 18-month placements offering certificated training courses and practical work experience in areas such as habitat management, species identification and recording, community engagement, conservation education, health and safety and child protection. Trainees will not possess relevant qualifications but will have a keen interest in pursuing a career in the field. They will be supported through mentoring and CV and job application advice.

Outputs

We provided a paid 18-month traineeship to Emily Waddell from October 2014 to April 2016. Following completion of her traineeship Emily secured a fully-funded PhD position at the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology studying plant invasion of tropical forest fragments. We then provided a paid traineeship to Alasdair Lemon from April 2016 to July 2017. Alasdair’s traineeship was cut short by 3 months as we was offered full time employment with Buglife and they were keen for him to start as soon as possible.

Emily and Alasdair both carried out a public engagement personal project and a habitat work personal project:

Emily

Public engagement project: management, delivery and evaluation of the script writing competition (as described above).

Habitat work project: management of a pond restoration project at Overtoun House in West Dumbartonshire
**Alasdair**

Public engagement project: Design and delivery of a toad-themed obstacle course for schools with obstacles designed to represent hazards that toads face throughout the year.

Habitat work project: An assessment of the Toads on Roads scheme in Scotland, combined with production of a media strategy to increase the number of active patrols and patrollers in Scotland.

**Evaluation**

Evaluation of our traineeship programme was conducted as follows:

- During the traineeships themselves through regular one-to-one meetings with the trainee to discuss their progress, any problems they were experiencing and any areas of interest that they were keen to expand on. We asked trainees to fill in a questionnaire at the start of their traineeships and again at six month intervals throughout so that we could track their progress and discuss ways of increasing their knowledge and experience (see Table 3.7).

- We asked Emily Waddell to critically evaluate her experiences during her traineeship and suggest improvements so that we could apply these improvements during the second traineeship with Alasdair Lemon. Emily presented her feedback to the Scottish Dragon Finder Team, Froglife’s Vice Chair trustee and members of Froglife’s senior management team at our annual evaluation meeting in 2016. Following her
presentation we discussed her suggestions for improvements and made decisions about changes that would be implemented during the second traineeship.

• The primary aim of the traineeships was to improve the career prospects of trainees as they sought employment in a related field. The main method of evaluating the success of the traineeships was therefore based on whether trainees successfully secured paid employment in a relevant field following completion of their traineeships. We also asked their employers for feedback on how the skills and experience that Emily and Alasdair gained during their traineeships influenced their employability.

**Outcomes**

We had originally planned to recruit trainees who had shown a keen interest in conservation through volunteering but did not possess official qualifications in a related field, however the majority of applicants were educated to degree level and several of these also had extensive experience in voluntary conservation activities. We had very few applicants who had shown dedication to conservation through volunteer work alone. We therefore chose to interview candidates based on their range of skills and experience and included candidates that possessed formal qualifications in our selection process. Both of our trainees were educated to MSc level and had shown extensive dedication to conservation through their voluntary work and extra-curricular activities.

We asked our trainees to fill in a questionnaire at regular intervals throughout their traineeship to track their confidence and capacity in relation to running projects, engaging the public and active conservation throughout their traineeship so that we could identify areas for personal development. Trainees scored each skill from 1 to 5 with 1 being not confident at all and 5 being very confident. The responses from each trainee are shown in Table 3.7 and each shows a steady progression across most areas, with both leaving their traineeship feeling either confident or very confident in a wide range of skills.

**Table 3.7: Questionnaire and responses filled in by trainees at regular intervals throughout their traineeship to track their confidence and capacity in relation to running projects.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Emily’s responses</th>
<th>Alasdair’s responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your knowledge of reptiles</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| and amphibians and the habitats they depend on
|                              | 1  | 4  | 4.5| 5  | 1  | 4  | 4  | 4  |
| Engaging the public          | 2  | 4  | 5  | 5  | 2  | 3  | 4  | 4  |
| with wildlife conservation   | 2  | 4  | 4.5| 5  | 2  | 3  | 4  | 4  |
| Your ability to lead a       | 2  | 3  | 4  | 4.5| 2  | 3  | 3  | 3  |
| public engagement activity    |     |    |    |    |     |    |    |    |
| on your own/with a volunteer |     |    |    |    |     |    |    |    |
| Volunteer recruitment and    | 2  | 3  | 4  | 4.5| 2  | 3  | 3  | 3  |
| management skills            |     |    |    |    |     |    |    |    |
### Knowledge and Experience

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge and experience of delivering curriculum linked workshops in schools</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to devise or produce education materials and activities</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Your knowledge and experience of health and safety at work inc. risk assessments</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Knowledge and experience of safeguarding children and vulnerable adults</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge and experience of pond creation and management</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge and experience of reptile surveying and monitoring</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge and experience of amphibian surveying and monitoring</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.5</td>
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<td>2.5</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Knowledge and experience of gardening for wildlife</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.5</td>
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<td>Knowledge and experience of working with people with special educational needs</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4.5</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Knowledge and experience of partnership working</td>
<td></td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.5</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge and experience of leadership skills</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Knowledge and experience of public speaking and giving presentations</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.5</td>
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<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge and experience of project management</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge and experience of publicising events including writing press releases and using social media</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge and experience of the environmental sector in Scotland</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding of the wider wildlife conservation/environmental job market</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CV writing and interview skills</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge and experience of working on grant funded projects</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge and experience of budget and finance</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge and experience of political engagement</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge and experience of policy</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As previously mentioned, both trainees secured full time employment in a conservation-related field following completion of their traineeships. We asked for feedback from members of Emily and Alasdair’s interview panels on how the skills and experiences they had gained during their traineeships had influenced interviewers’ decision to offer them the
positions. The feedback we received was as follows:

Feedback from Emily’s PhD supervisors:

Supervisor 1:

“From my perspective, your experience at Froglife was valuable in shortlisting you for the interview. A couple of things spring to mind…

1. Experience holding down a job is valued for students at a research institute, possibly more so than for students in a uni lab.

2. You showed excellent communication skills in our pre-interview, which I guess you have partly developed through your role at Froglife.

3. You clearly explained how you were introduced to the issue of invasive species while at Froglife, which is obviously the main topic of the PhD.”

Supervisor 2:

“From a panel member’s perspective I would second what Dan has said below and just add the comment that it helped to further your case as an experienced, strong candidate with a broad skill set. All these things add up in minimising risk in the mind of the panel.”

Supervisor 3:

“In agreement with the other comments, and I would also add the following aspects:
3. THE PROJECT - Practical Habitat Projects

- Understanding of applied research/outreach
- Successfully applying for funding
- Both of the above also relate to communicating science ideas to a range of audiences
- General motivation and enthusiasm for ecology and conservation (demonstrated beyond academic research through seeking employment in the field)
- Experience of planning and leading fieldwork”

Feedback from Alasdair’s line manager at Buglife:

“Alasdair’s cv has been significantly enhanced during his traineeship, hence why he was invited to interview. It was obvious that Alasdair was keen to learn, had a wide interest and would fit in well with Buglife and he was successful in getting a role as Conservation Officer. At Buglife the skills developed during his traineeship, including project management, risk assessment, budget managing, people engagement and knowledge of freshwater habitats has been really useful. This has provided him with vital knowledge of how to run and operate a project and also work well with others in a team.”

We asked Emily to critically evaluate her experiences during her traineeship and suggest improvements so that we could apply these improvements during the second traineeship with Alasdair Lemon. A summary of Emily’s feedback is given below:

- Emily would have liked time set aside for personal study in order to gain more specialist knowledge on amphibians and reptiles. She also suggested that it would have been useful to shadow researchers and specialists from other organisations working in a related field to gain a wider range of skills and experiences.
- Role shadowing of Froglife staff working on other projects in different parts of the country would have been very useful.
• Emily felt she could have been given a greater level of responsibility earlier on in her traineeship. For example, she would have liked more opportunities to deliver and manage sessions, such as school sessions and Dragons on the move events, by herself with support from team members earlier on in her traineeship. She would also have liked more opportunities to develop her creativity through production and evaluation of session content and materials.

• She suggested that it would be better to start personal projects earlier in the traineeship with the option of running the habitat and public engagement projects concurrently so that they each ran for a year rather than a distinct 6-month period for each.

• Emily came up with the idea of writing a ‘Day in the life...’ blog on the Dragon Finder website to record the trainee’s activities on a monthly basis throughout the year.

• She put together a trainee induction pack, containing all of the documents that subsequent trainees might find useful.

• Emily suggested that 18 months may have been too long for the traineeship and felt that much of the skills and experience that she gained could have been condensed into a 12 month period.

What difference did we make?

The fact that both trainees secured paid employment in a related field so close to the scheduled completion date of their traineeships, coupled with the feedback we received from the trainees themselves and their current employers, suggests that both traineeships were very successful. We took on board the majority of the suggestions that Emily made in her critical evaluation of her traineeship and applied these in time for Alasdair starting. Froglife are continuing to offer paid traineeships as part of other projects.
The Dragon Finder app and Audio-visual living atlas

The Dragon Finder Audio-visual living atlas comprises a website and species identification and recording smartphone app, and was developed for Froglife’s London Dragon Finder project in 2013. Project pages for Scottish Dragon Finder were added to the Dragon Finder website to allow us to add information specific to this project. The website has a page dedicated to each activity and includes a description of what each activity entails and a brief record and photos of a selection of the work we have been delivering. There are also links for downloading the Dragon Finder app, information about the species and a list of upcoming events. The aims of the website were to: inform people about the project and tell them about how they could get involved; provide information on amphibian and reptile conservation in general; and gather data on amphibian and reptile populations across Scotland.

The aim of the Dragon Finder app was to enable people to quickly and easily submit records of amphibians and reptiles using their phones on the spot. The app also holds information about the species ecology, behaviour and distribution, and keys to help people identify animals in egg, larval and adult stages, and from amphibian call sounds. It was thought that the use of new technologies would encourage young people, very few of whom are engaged in species recording, to take part, thus maintaining a population of recorders throughout the generations. At the time, most existing recording forms were only available online, making them unsuitable for use in remote areas. By using mobile technology it was hoped that people would be more likely to submit their records as it could be done immediately using the phone’s GPS technology. Although location can also be inputted manually via the app, the GPS location is preferable as it provides standardised location data. Finally, accurate identification of the animal is much easier when it can be done on the spot whilst the animal is in sight, as opposed to waiting to return home to look up a book or website.

The first version of the app was developed in 2013 for the London Dragon Finder project, but unfortunately the app development company went into liquidation and we had to employ a new developer. This was a major setback as it limited the time available during the Scottish Dragon Finder project for the app to be used to collect sightings. We were also reluctant to heavily promote the app while it was being redeveloped as it was not currently available for download or use. The app redevelopment was completed in 2015 and was available for use again in 2016.

Targets as set out in approved purposes

To provide a species identification and recording app and website to educate people about species ecology and behaviour and enable them to submit species records online. It is estimated that nearly 30,000 new records will be collected through project activities. These will be submitted to local records centres and interpreted through the Audio-visual living atlas website.

Outputs

The first version of the Dragon Finder app was available from July 2013 until October 2015. The second version of the app was available from January 2016 and since the

relaunch it has been downloaded by 1106 people on Android and 1264 people on iPhone. We have received 2,535 new records, all of which have been verified. Data collected via the app is submitted annually to the National Biodiversity Network Atlas and is freely available on their website.

Evaluation

Evaluation of the Living Atlas was based on the following data: user reviews of the app on iTunes and Google Play, number of app downloads, number of records submitted via the app, number of visits to the Dragon Finder website and pages visited within the Scottish Dragon Finder section of the website.

Figure 3.16: Map showing locations of records submitted via the Dragon Finder app in Scotland.
Outcomes

The redeveloped version of the app has been rated by 15 people on Google Play (Android version) and has an overall rating of four out of five stars. Comments left by app users are shown below:

🌟🌟🌟🌟🌟 I went on holiday to Dorset and saw a lizards, I looked and found it was actually the rare sand lizard!
🌟🌟🌟🌟🌟 It is surprising how many people can’t tell a frof from a toad! This app will help people to identify a wide range of frogs, toads, newts, lizards and turtles. I enjoyed listening to the animal’s calls.
🌟🌟🌟🌟🌟 Helps you work out what you’ve found.
🌟🌟🌟🌟🌟 Is it possible to enter locations as OS grid references rather than postcodes?
🌟🌟🌟🌟🌟 I, like the others can’t seem to get the photo uploader to work (is there an unspoken size limit?)
🌟🌟🌟🌟🌟 Tried uploading record with photo but it just keeps saying ‘waiting for wi-fi’ even though the phone is right next to the router. Requiring a postcode was tricky. Fortunately the location had a national trust postcode. Shame the app can’t use the gps location data in the photo.
🌟🌟🌟🌟🌟 Only works with a postcode. Need to put in grid reference and photos AFTER a walk is finished.
🌟🌟🌟🌟🌟 Read the Terms and Conditions. The app seems ok could be better though it is free i suppose. I am slightly concerned over the terms and conditions relating to the data I provide and photographs which Froglife claim publishing rights to. Probably best to use other online recording systems which do not do this.
🌟🌟🌟🌟🌟 Uploads don’t work. Nice app in principle but uploading photos doesn’t seem to work.

The iOS (iPhone) version of the app has only been reviewed by two people, meaning it hasn’t received a sufficient number of reviews to give an average rating. The two reviews
that it has received are both five out of five stars and the comments are shown below:

🌟🌟🌟🌟🌟 Lots of information: It is surprising how many people can’t tell a frog from a toad! This app will help them learn about many amphibians and reptiles. I enjoyed listening to the animal’s calls!

🌟🌟🌟🌟🌟 Frogtastic! Great app, simple to use, very informative.

What difference did we make?

Overall, the app has been well received and we have had positive verbal feedback from users, who have said it is easy to navigate and has a lot of very good features. The app is updated as and when required to fix bugs that become apparent and to address issues that are raised by users and via reviews on the Google Play and App stores.

Unfortunately, we have not achieved the target of 30,000 new records that we originally hoped to, which can mainly be attributed to the problems that we experienced with the original version and the subsequent need to redevelop it. Nevertheless, the app will continue to be heavily promoted through all Froglife’s projects and activities and we will continue to use the app to build up our dataset of records.
Summary of Lessons Learnt

In February 2017 the Scottish Dragon Finder team met with members of Froglife’s senior management team and Vice Chair to discuss ideas for a new Scottish project that would operate upon completion of Scottish Dragon Finder. We used this as an opportunity to discuss the aspects of Scottish Dragon Finder that worked particularly well and those that needed improvement. Our main findings informed the development of a new project called Come Forth for Wildlife and are outlined below:

Area covered

One of the main advantages of Scottish Dragon Finder was it being a Scotland-wide project, which allowed us to engage with a huge number of people from enormously varied audiences. It also meant that nobody within Scotland was excluded from the project, as is often the case, particularly for people living in remote areas. However, this was also a disadvantage in some ways as much of our time and budget was spent travelling to distant and remote parts of Scotland. We grouped events geographically wherever possible to maximise efficiency, however there were occasions when we were travelling long distances to deliver relatively short sessions. It also meant that many of our activities were one-off sessions without the option to make second or repeated visits. Again, the main advantage of this was it allowed us to engage with a larger audience, however it also limited the amount of in-depth work we were able to do with many of our groups. This was suitable for some activities, such as Dragons on the Move and our school workshops, however repeated visits would have been beneficial for activities such as Dragons in your Garden and habitat projects.

Feedback from Dragons in your Garden partners and participants suggested that repeated visits would have been beneficial for many of the groups to allow us to reinforce our learning objectives, assist with further practical habitat projects, provide advice on specific wildlife gardening queries and run workshops aimed at different groups using the same garden. “More workshops would be great, perhaps pitched at different levels/abilities to increase skills and knowledge on a progressive, ongoing basis. ID sessions, recording and surveying techniques, more habitat workshops too. Maybe longer sessions to get more in-depth knowledge about specific topics would be good. Maybe sessions being delivered at key sites (gardens, nature reserves) to give good examples of what is possible, varying scales of how you can make a difference.” Repeated visits would have been more beneficial to some groups more than others, and therefore a combination of single-visit workshops and more of an in-depth partnership with some gardens may have been advantageous.

A more in-depth partnership with groups associated with our habitat project sites would also have been beneficial, however the distance of some of our sites prevented multiple visits due to time and budget constraints. We believe that repeated sessions with the same groups will put volunteers in a better position to manage the habitat with a long-term commitment. We have taken these ideas into consideration for Froglife’s future projects in Scotland and have chosen to focus on a smaller geographic area in Come Forth for
Wildlife, giving us the opportunity to carry out more in-depth work with some of our project partners.

**Traineeships**

Overall, our traineeships were a great success, however both of our trainees suggested that twelve months would have been preferable to eighteen months. Both felt that their rate of learning tailed off after the first year and they had felt ready to look for employment earlier on. We have included twelve month traineeships in Come Forth for Wildlife.

Froglife run a number of traineeships as part of projects in different areas of the UK. Froglife area currently working to standardise these traineeships for a more coherent programme of activities across the country. This will include guidance for people managing trainees, meetings for trainees to share their ideas and experiences and utilisation of the trainee induction pack.

**Habitat work**

Much of the habitat work carried out through Scottish Dragon Finder was on a relatively small scale, focussing on discreet parts of a landscape, such as a pond and the habitat surrounding it. Froglife are looking to change this way of working, focussing more on landscape-scale habitat work, whereby complexes of habitats are created to ensure maximum impact for a wide variety of species. We are also planning to reduce the number of pond restoration project that we carry out in favour of more pond creation projects. This will not always be possible due to space and suitability constraints, however habitat creation will be our preferred option. This is because creating new habitats has a greater impact on biodiversity and pond restoration project can often end up being problematic, making them expensive and time consuming.

**Dragons in your garden**

Most of our wildlife workshops were carried out in therapeutic gardens, allowing us to work with a wide range of audiences that are often excluded from wildlife conservation activities. This worked well for Scottish Dragon Finder as introductory sessions, however for future project, such as Come Forth for Wildlife, we are interested in carrying out more in-depth work with repeated visits with the same group and/or garden. We will continue to work with therapeutic gardens but will expand our audience to include community gardens and allotment to ensure we have a good network of gardens using wildlife-friendly techniques. For groups with special needs we would be keen to offer a series of shorter sessions, which will allow us to build up a rapport with garden users and develop our own delivery skills tailored to specific groups and individuals.