



# COME FORTH FOR WILDLIFE PROJECT FINAL REPORT

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<a href="#"><u>Project Overview</u></a>	4
<a href="#"><u>Project Summary</u></a>	4
<a href="#"><u>Project Targets</u></a>	6
<a href="#"><u>Covid-19 Impacts</u></a>	8
 <a href="#"><u>Habitat Works</u></a>	11
<a href="#"><u>Balloch Castle Country Park</u></a>	11
<a href="#"><u>Bannockburn High School</u></a>	13
<a href="#"><u>Bonnyfield Local Nature Reserve</u></a>	14
<a href="#"><u>Callander Meadows</u></a>	16
<a href="#"><u>Callendar Park</u></a>	17
<a href="#"><u>Crownest Park</u></a>	19
<a href="#"><u>Doune Ponds</u></a>	20
<a href="#"><u>Drumbowie Community Park</u></a>	22
<a href="#"><u>Finlay Russell Park</u></a>	24
<a href="#"><u>Flanders Moss National Nature Reserve</u></a>	26
<a href="#"><u>Gartmorn Dam Country Park</u></a>	28
<a href="#"><u>Grangemouth Golf Course</u></a>	30
<a href="#"><u>Hallglen Policy Bing</u></a>	32
<a href="#"><u>Kildean Wetlands</u></a>	33
<a href="#"><u>Kinneil Estate</u></a>	35
<a href="#"><u>Kinneil Local Nature Reserve</u></a>	36
<a href="#"><u>Menstrie Community Woodlands</u></a>	37
<a href="#"><u>Muiravonside Country Park</u></a>	39
<a href="#"><u>Raploch SUDS Ponds</u></a>	41
<a href="#"><u>Royal Society for the Protection of Birds Loch Lomond</u></a>	42
<a href="#"><u>Royal Society for the Protection of Birds Skinflats</u></a>	43

<a href="#"><u>The Helix</u></a>	45
<a href="#"><u>The Lade</u></a>	47
<a href="#"><u>Valley Park</u></a>	48
<a href="#"><u>Zetland Park</u></a>	49
<a href="#"><u>Volunteer Sessions</u></a>	50
<a href="#"><u>Site Monitoring</u></a>	51
 <a href="#"><u>Come Forth for Wildlife Activities</u></a>	 53
<a href="#"><u>Mapestry / Mapestry Tour</u></a>	53
<a href="#"><u>Neighbourhood Wildlife Corridors</u></a>	65
<a href="#"><u>Pond Doctor</u></a>	74
<a href="#"><u>Pop-up Wildlife Gardening Workshops</u></a>	78
<a href="#"><u>Traineeships</u></a>	80
<a href="#"><u>Training Courses</u></a>	82
<a href="#"><u>Virtual Reality Exhibitions</u></a>	85
<a href="#"><u>Wildlife Gardening Workshops</u></a>	87
<a href="#"><u>Additional Activities</u></a>	90
 <a href="#"><u>National Lottery Heritage Fund Outcomes</u></a>	 91
<a href="#"><u>Staff Recruitment</u></a>	96
<a href="#"><u>Evaluation and Funder Acknowledgement</u></a>	97
<a href="#"><u>Lessons Learned</u></a>	99
<a href="#"><u>Other Successes</u></a>	102
<a href="#"><u>Media Impact</u></a>	103
<a href="#"><u>Partnership Working</u></a>	105

## PROJECT OVERVIEW

### Project Summary

The Come Forth for Wildlife project was a four-year project funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund and a range of co-funders operating within the Forth Valley region of Scotland. The project was a catalyst encouraging a wide range of land-managers to make improvements for reptiles, amphibians and other wildlife in their garden, plot or grounds. Public engagement activities ran extensively across the council areas of Falkirk, Stirling and Clackmannanshire equipping participants with the knowledge, skills and inspiration to improve sites for wildlife and engaging those not commonly involved in nature conservation through exciting, novel activities.

The Come Forth for Wildlife project had numerous aims within its four-year project duration. The lack of awareness of amphibians and reptiles was addressed as these animals are often overlooked, rarely being named as typical wildlife species in Scotland. Raising awareness of the threats to native amphibians and reptiles was key to the projects aims as habitat loss / fragmentation, spread of disease and persecution contribute to the many factors causing declines in species of wildlife once thought to be common. This decline is apparent in the Common Toad *Bufo bufo* **through Froglife's own research showing a 68% decline in the species over a 30-year period (Petrovan & Schmidt, 2016) and a loss of key habitats for amphibians with an estimated 500,000 ponds lost in the last 100 years and one in five remaining ponds thought to be in 'poor' condition (The Wildlife Trusts, 2023).**

Come Forth for Wildlife aimed to empower local people, groups and communities with the skills, knowledge and inspiration to help reverse these declines and give people the means to improve habitats locally in their own gardens and green spaces. Activities shared skills to achieve the above whilst teaching participants how to survey, identify and submit species sightings of amphibians and reptiles through citizen science **and Froglife's Dragon Finder App.**

The novel and unique activities of the Come Forth for Wildlife project would appeal to a wide range of audiences including those communities that are hard to reach or fall within Areas of Multiple Deprivation.

All these elements and more would form the lasting legacy of Come Forth for Wildlife – with amphibian and reptile species knowledge improved through local communities, inter-connected habitats created and skill-sharing with a wide variety of audiences achieved relating to habitat creation and restoration with a freshwater habitat focus.

# Project Targets

In total the Come Forth for Wildlife project engaged with 206,209 people throughout the various public engagement activities below which is approximately 67.38% of the population of the Forth Valley region. Despite the fact some activities below will have engaged the same people within the Forth Valley area this is still a substantial section of the Falkirk, Stirling and Clackmannanshire council areas participating with the project.

Come Forth for Wildlife Project Targets – Public Engagement				
Activity	Number of Events		Audience Reach	
	Target	Actual	Target	Actual
Mapestry	24	25	624	813
Mapestry Tour	17	19	54,000*	156,471
Neighbourhood Wildlife Corridors	N/A	N/A	22,280	29,008
Pond Doctor (inc. Pond Doctor Host)	44	44	2,880	5,401
Pop-up Wildlife Gardening Workshops	12	12	900	1,635
Training Courses	20	22	240	294
Virtual Reality Exhibitions	10	23	8,800	8,822
Volunteer Sessions	150	160	1,800	2,246
Wildlife Gardening Workshops	60	60	480	825
Miscellaneous	N/A	31	N/A	694
<b>OVERALL PROJECT TOTALS</b>	<b>337</b>	<b>396</b>	<b>92,004</b>	<b>206,209</b>

\* - Approved Change on 20/7/2020 from 60,000 to 54,000

### Come Forth for Wildlife Project Targets – Habitat Works

*Habitat Works & Volunteer Sessions practical outputs combined*

	Target	Actual
Number of Sites	31	31
Ponds Created	49	74
Ponds Restored	15	18
Terrestrial Habitats Created	23	138

## Covid-19 Impacts

All of Come Forth for Wildlife's project targets were achieved and in many cases exceeded, but Covid-19 certainly played a huge factor in the **project's delivery** particularly in 2020 and 2021 (Years 2 & 3 of the project). Restrictions and lockdowns over this time caused a need to adapt and delivery of certain project activities and staff were in furlough for periods of 2020 and 2021.

Forty-six activities were either postponed or cancelled directly due to Covid-19 over the course of the project. The total target for people engaged on the Mapestry Tour was changed with approval in July 2020 from 60,000 to 54,000 – as the Mapestry Tour duration was reduced with Mapestry sessions and the Mapestry panels in turn, taking longer to complete than originally timetabled.



With approval several activities were temporarily undertaken online, with staff creating adapted formats for online use. Activities delivered online included Training Courses, Pond Doctor events, Mapestry sessions and Wildlife Gardening Workshops. Videos of practical elements for survey methods for amphibians and reptiles and habitat management techniques were created to include in Training Courses to give



participants as much knowledge and information as possible for these to be delivered online via Zoom. As restrictions continued but were eased it was possible to deliver the theory of Training Courses online and deliver practical elements of the course in-person outdoors. Pond Doctor events were run inviting participants to ask their pond questions live to staff online in a virtual event space. Wildlife Gardening Workshops were delivered online with an identical presentation and wildlife-friendly gardening techniques and activity sheets were sent to groups online to make use of in their own time. Some Mapestry sessions were undertaken online – the group at Bannockburn House were engaged virtually with a video to explain the Mapestry and local heritage and a live question and answer session at a later date on Zoom – whilst art supplies were delivered to their homes via the **group's** food delivery network. St. Andrews Primary School were also engaged online, with art supplies delivered to the school in advance of the sessions.

Groups in contact with the project during periods of lockdowns and restrictions were directed towards online resources created by Froglife in the form of activity sheets for wildlife-friendly gardening elements and craft activities relating to amphibians and reptiles.

Personal protective equipment was offered at activities run during periods of relaxed restrictions so participants could safely be involved, such as disposable gloves and hand sanitiser. During these periods the vast majority of activities were held outdoors.

Virtual Reality Exhibitions were initially delayed due to Covid-19 restrictions then adjusted during a time of 2020-21 where physical headsets being shared between participants was deemed inappropriate during a pandemic. During a number of earlier Virtual Reality Exhibitions on the project the virtual reality experience was played for attendees on tablets at the Froglife stall. This was coupled with Bluetooth speakers to give the best possible experience to attendees without the virtual reality headsets. These headsets were fully re-introduced from June 2022 to the project end.

To adapt to the huge change in behaviour and introduction of lockdowns in 2020/21 the timetable for Come Forth for Wildlife activities was adjusted. Habitat site works, which were not as affected by Covid-19 restrictions (involving a limited number of contractors working outdoors and at distance from each other) were brought forward while a large number of public engagement activities were timetabled towards 2022/23, with the hope that Covid-19 restrictions would largely be removed

by these years, which was the case. This re-timetabling of activities greatly helped in delivering all activities to target and within the original project duration.

## HABITAT WORKS

### Balloch Castle Country Park

Year of works – 2020 - 2023

Number of sites – 2

Council Area – West Dunbartonshire

*Approved Purpose – Restoring and re-profiling pond. Creation of 1 pond. Removal of pond shading trees. Creation of log piles for sheltering amphibians.*

Overview of outputs – One pond creation. One pond restoration. Fifteen hibernacula created. Interpretation board. Tree removal at pond creation location.

Added Value – One pond restoration. Pond clearance. Sowing pond edge seed mix. Toad sculpture.

Balloch Castle Country Park is situated on the banks of Loch Lomond and is the only registered historic designed landscape within the Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park. The site is 200 acres in size and is made up of semi-natural and ornamental woodland, open parkland, formal gardens, meadows and shoreline. An existing pond near the park's entrance was in need of restorative works as it had become overgrown and also featured a steep slope less suitable for people and wildlife looking to access the pond. An area of the park also naturally held water and was deemed suitable for pond creation.

***Pond Creation*** – One unlined pond measuring 12x6m with a maximum depth of 0.75m was created towards the north of the country park. Spoil from the pond creation was used to bund up the side nearest to the footpath and avoid water overflowing onto the footpath. The ponds lowest side empties any overflow of water into a nearby stream.

West Dunbartonshire Council undertook tree removal works at the location to allow sunlight to reach the pond and less leaf litter / shade to be present.

***Pond Restoration*** – A large existing pond on site was restored. Excess vegetation and small establishing trees were removed to create a pond that offers open freshwater habitat for wildlife. Works at the ponds outflow were undertaken to reinforce this outflow with Type 1 material, Ethylene Propylene Diene Monomer (EPDM) liner and earth / stone. This created a higher water table for the pond (approximately 500mm), which in turn changed the steep slope of one of the pond's sides into a gently sloping edge ideal for a variety of wildlife species accessing and

exiting the pond safely. An interpretation board was installed close to the pond restoration which informs local visitors of the work undertaken, species in the pond **they may be able to see, how to submit species sightings using Froglife's Dragon Finder App** and the funders of the works including the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF).



***Hibernacula creation*** – Fifteen hibernacula were created across several areas of the country park during contractor works and Volunteer Sessions using dead wood and stone / rock on site.

***Added Value*** – A bespoke carved toad sculpture was added next to the restored pond and interpretation panel to further highlight the works undertaken. This unique feature will add a further lasting legacy to the pond works on site and the Come Forth for Wildlife project.

# Bannockburn High School

Year of works – 2020 & 2022

Number of sites – 2

Council Area – Stirling

***Approved Purpose*** – Restoration of 1 pond. Creation of 1 pond. Creation of basking banks and hibernacula.

Overview of outputs – One pond created with dipping platform and interpretation board. One pond restored. Creation of 1 basking bank and 1 hibernaculum.

Added Value – Footpath creation.

Bannockburn High School is an eco-school encouraging whole-school action on sustainable development education issues. The Green Flag school was taking on new initiatives to be an even more sustainable school with a focus on Health & Wellbeing and Biodiversity. An existing wet area and former pond was in need of restoration with space available for the creation of a new pond.

***Pond Creation*** – One 15x10m unlined pond was created to the south of the high school with a maximum depth of 1.5m. The area of open land chosen meant there was no need for tree works. A 2x2m pond dipping platform, featuring non-slip strips and a wheel stop, was also installed at this pond given the opportunity for educational sessions at the school for teachers and pupils alike. A footpath was created leading from the pond dipping platform towards the road and school using whindust measuring 35m long and 1.5m wide. An overflow pipe was installed at this pond, allowing excess water to enter the pond restoration detailed below. An interpretation board was installed which informs local visitors of the work undertaken, species in the pond they may be able to see, how to submit species sightings using Froglife's Dragon Finder App and the funders of the works including NLHF.

***Pond Restoration*** – A small overgrown pond was restored to the south of the high school. This resulted in a pond of 15x10m being restored of overgrown vegetation to offer open freshwater to a maximum depth of 1.5m. The restored pond is close to the pond creation above and can receive any overflowing water safely, as the pond restoration is located at the lower end of the slope of the area.

# Bonnyfield Local Nature Reserve

Year of works – 2019 - 2022

Number of sites – 1

Council Area – Falkirk

***Approved Purpose – Restoration of 1 pond. Creation of basking banks and hibernacula.***

Overview of outputs – One pond restored. Creation of 9 hibernacula. Creation of 1 basking bank.

Added Value – Creation of one pond. Tree planting. Sowing pond edge seed mix. Litter picking.

Bonnyfield Local Nature Reserve is situated on a former sand and gravel quarry. A 2.5km loop path leads around the site and features a colourful community mural created by Bonnybridge school children. Original plans were to only restore a large existing pond on site – however on-site visits in 2019 it was deemed better value to leave this pond in-situ and focus funding on creating a new lined pond and restore a smaller pond on site.

*“I meant to tell you that I went down to Bonnyfield LNR last week at night with torches and the new pond is amazing! Toads, newts and lots of spawn from both species. Photographs are on the Bonnyfield LNR Facebook page. We are hopefully going back down in a week or so again at night for another look and try and I.D the newts. There are Great crested newts in Banknock so we are always hopeful that they will move into Bonnyfield.*

*It's the best pond in the reserve... Great fun and we were all very impressed by the difference in the new pond in a year.*

*Best wishes*

*Fiona Wishart – Falkirk Council*

***Pond Restoration*** – An existing pond on the local nature reserve was restored with volunteers over multiple sessions by removing scrub and tress around the pond. This created areas for sunlight to reach the pond and give better conditions for wildlife and plants, particularly larvae looking to develop faster in warmer waters.

***Hibernacula and basking bank*** – Nine hibernacula for overwintering amphibians and reptiles were created between 2019 and 2022 during Volunteer Sessions nearby to the pond restoration and pond creation detailed below. One basking bank was created using spoil from the pond creation detailed below offering an excellent area for basking reptiles to use.

***Added Value – Pond Creation*** – One 10x8m EPDM lined pond (maximum depth of 1m) was created at the local nature reserve in an area of long grassland away from footpaths and disturbance. This was deemed the best way to benefit the site for local wildlife and plants as the reserve already had a large existing pond that would be very costly to restore and several smaller ponds that were unlined and did not hold water regularly into the summer months.

Common Toad, Common Frog and Palmate Newt have been recorded on site following the pond works.



# Callander Meadows

Year of works – 2020 & 2021

Number of sites – 2

Council Area – Stirling

**Approved Purpose** – Restoration of 2 ponds. Creation of 4 ponds. Creation of basking banks.

Overview of outputs – Four ponds created. Two ponds restored. Dipping platform and interpretation board installed. Four basking banks created.

Added Value – Native wildflower seed sown on site. Litter picking undertaken.

Callander Meadows is a 5.5 hectares site on the outskirts of the bustling tourist town. The site features a very popular walking route, featuring wet woodland and wet grassland habitats. Two existing ponds on site were overgrown and in need of works whilst space existed for further pond creation works.

**Pond Creation** – Four unlined ponds were created at Callander Meadows. A 9x8m pond (maximum depth 1.1m) was created closest to the footpath which also features a pond dipping platform (with non-slip strips and wheel stop) and an interpretation board. This informs local visitors of the work undertaken, species in the pond they **may be able to see, how to submit species sightings using Froglife's Dragon Finder App** and the funders of the works including NLHF. A 15x12m pond (maximum depth 1.2m), a 6x5m pond (maximum depth 0.75m) and a 5x4m pond (maximum depth 0.6m) were all created at Callander Meadows – offering a pond network at the site of different shapes, sizes and depths of ponds available for local flora and fauna.

**Pond Restoration** – Two existing ponds on site were heavily overgrown with dominant vegetation. These were restored using a mechanical excavator. A 14x10m pond was restored with vegetation and silt removed from the outer section of the pond to a maximum depth of 0.8m, leaving the ponds inner island untouched. A 25x8m pond was restored, clearing areas of dominant vegetation to a maximum depth of 0.8m. Overhanging branches at this pond were also removed to reduce shading.

Common Frog, Common Toad and Palmate Newt were observed using the newly created and restored ponds at Callander Meadows.



# Callendar Park

Year of works – 2020 & 2023

Number of sites – 2

Council Area – Falkirk

***Approved Purpose*** – Creation of 2 ponds near lake. Creation of 1 pond in golf course. Installing coir rolls along lake edge. Native planting to better connect aquatic habitats. Removing patches of rhododendron. Adding native species and wildflower area.

Overview of outputs – Creation of 3 ponds. Restoration of 1 pond. Native wildflower seed sowing.

Added Value – Litter picking. Pond management. Fence installed at one pond.

Callendar Park forms the grounds of Callendar House and covers 170 acres of amenity grassland, a lake, ornamental gardens and extensive woodland. The site is historically important featuring a section of the Roman Antonine Wall – a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The park previously featured a golf course and still features a tearoom **and children's play area**. The large lake was identified as having poor access for small wildlife and was the only freshwater on site – meaning new freshwater pond creation would greatly benefit the area.

***Pond Creation*** – An EPDM lined 8x4m pond (maximum depth 0.75m) was created near the golf course practice area along with an EPDM lined 7x3m pond (maximum depth 0.75m). A 10x8m EPDM lined pond (maximum depth 1.5m) was created within the golf course. Native pond edge mix was utilised around the pond edges to increase species richness. Native wildflower mix was also sown near areas of pond creations with help from the nearby St. Andrews Primary School pupils.

***Pond Restoration*** – Fifty metres of native planting was installed to the south side of the existing pond. Established plants were used to create this vegetated embankment to cope with the wildfowl using the pond which could forage on the plants. This embankment established what was once a bare, steep edge – creating better access for wildlife, sheltering opportunities and aesthetic value for visitors. Coir rolls were not used for this outcome but the embankment was created using timber and wire mesh to hold and protect the established plants. The outcome is the same at the pond as originally intended but the use of coir rolls with high wildfowl presence may have seen them eaten before establishment of the plants could take place. Removal of Rhododendron was undertaken by Falkirk Community Trust staff

between development of the Come Forth for Wildlife project and the project delivery stage.



***Added Value*** – A fence with self-closing gate was installed in July 2023 at the pond previously created on the old golf course. This pond was created on a functional golf course at the time which soon became publicly accessible during Covid-19. As such the pond location became an informal path for high numbers of dog walkers, with dogs accessing the pond regularly. This led to a cloudy pond from stirred up silt, bare edges with trampled vegetation and the continuous access from dogs with tick / flea treatment in their coats will affect the aquatic invertebrates in the pond negatively. With the fence now in place the pond should establish naturally and be in better condition long term for people and wildlife.

Following the pond works above, Common Frog have been observed using the newly created ponds.

# Crownest Park

Year of works – 2020 & 2021

Number of sites – 1

Council Area – Falkirk

***Approved Purpose*** – One pond restoration consisting of the following elements - native marginal species planting, planting native hedgerows and creation of wildflower area.

Overview of outputs – Creation of wildflower area and hedgerow.

Added Value – Litter picking. Enhancing wildflower area.

Crownest Park is a busy park in Larbert situated near the local library and a retail park. The site is 2.68 hectares in size and features amenity grassland, a large pond and scattered trees. A site visit with Falkirk Council, who own and manage the area, discovered that the pond is under a management contract – thus managing the terrestrial elements of the site would be of the most benefit to people and wildlife.

***Wildflower Area*** – A 20x2m area of native Mavisbank wildflower meadow was created at the south-east area of the pond consisting of 23 native species.

***Hedgerow*** – A 10x2m area of hedgerow was planted with tree guards in the area between the pond and the created wildflower area.

***Added Value*** – The wildflower area was enhanced with additional sowing of seed and management on two occasions with Volunteer Sessions where litter picking also took place.

# Doune Ponds

Year of works – 2020 - 2022

Number of sites – 1

Council Area – Stirling

***Approved Purpose*** – Restoration of 1 pond. Provision of hibernacula.

Overview of outputs – Restoration of 1 pond. Restoration of ponds boardwalk section. Tree management.

Added Value – Pond management. Creation of hibernacula. Litter picking. Wildflower seed sowing.

Doune Ponds is a former sand and gravel extraction quarry, managed for wildlife **since the 1970's**. It is owned by Moray Estates and managed by the Doune Community Woodland Group. The site is regularly used by the local community, school and groups. One of the existing ponds was fish-free (ideal for amphibians) but unable to hold sufficient water into summer and also was overgrown – making it an ideal pond for restoration works.

***Pond Restoration*** – This pond restoration required an in-depth methodology to achieve the desired result at a large pond. The height of the pond was raised by 70cm to create a final maximum depth of 1.5m, thus creating open freshwater at the pond which was overgrown with dominant vegetation before project activities began. As the pond was very large, only part of it was fully restored with the other section left as a seasonally wet area – a bund was created to separate the two pond areas. This fully restored area however was lined with an EPDM liner to ensure water would hold throughout the year. This restored pond area measured 20x15m. A sump well was created under the pond and liner to allow a pump to remove water under this area, which was replaced on top of the liner initially and neutralise any chance of the liner floating up. This sump well had a manhole cover fitted in order that the option of pumping water from under the liner could be repeated if any complications with groundwater occurred.

Trees around the pond were managed to reduce shading.

The existing, broken-down, boardwalk was partially replaced to offer educational value for local groups and visitors. This also allowed the boardwalk to extend over the now lined area of the pond.





# Drumbowie Community Park

Year of works – 2021 - 2022

Number of sites – 0.5

Council Area – Falkirk

*Approved Purpose* – Not applicable.

*Agreed Change* – Site included after complications at Flanders Moss National Nature Reserve (please see **further within this report 'Flanders Moss National Nature Reserve'**). One pond not created at Flanders Moss National Nature Reserve were agreed to be created at Drumbowie Community Park instead.

Overview of outputs – Creation of 1 pond. Restoration of 1 pond. Installation of interpretation board. Native bulb planting. Scrub clearance. Hibernacula creation. Creation of 3 basking banks.

Added value – Installation of toad sculpture.

Drumbowie Community Park is owned and managed by Drumbowie Environment Action Group. The 72-acre park consists of footpaths, a car park, a large pond, several burns, a pavilion and woodland / grassland. Great Crested Newt are historically recorded at the site and known to be in the area. The large pond on site was heavily overgrown with dominant vegetation, lacking in open water and causing the dipping platform to be of little use.

***Pond Creation*** – One unlined pond was created during three Volunteer Sessions to the north-east of the site measuring 5x4m (maximum depth 0.66m). Three basking banks were created near the pond creation using excavated spoil at this time.

***Pond Restoration*** – The existing large pond (measuring approximately 83x25m) on site was in need of vegetation removal, being heavily overgrown. A mechanical excavator was used to remove overgrown vegetation at several points along the large pond, including the area directly in front of the existing dipping platform. Silt was also excavated along with vegetation to create deeper areas of open water that would not be encroached by vegetation immediately. As the pond is on-line with a stream, a Controlled Activities Regulations (CAR) licence from the Scottish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA) was obtained as well as a Great Crested Newt Works Licence from NatureScot – as the pond has historical records of Great Crested Newt. An interpretation board was installed to inform local visitors of the work undertaken, species in the pond they may be able to see, how to submit species

sightings using Froglife's Dragon Finder App and the funders of the works including NLHF.

*Other Elements* – Native bulb planting near the restored pond was undertaken at Volunteer Sessions. Scrub clearance took place to clear a path for contractors restoring the pond so spoil could be placed away from the pond and footpath. A hibernaculum was created near the restored pond using dead wood from the scrub clearance.

Added Value – A bespoke carved toad sculpture was installed at the restored pond and next to an interpretation board to enhance the visitor experience at the pond, highlight the works carried out and create a further lasting legacy to the works and the Come Forth for Wildlife project.

During a Training Course later conducted at the site, Smooth Newt were observed using the restored pond, a species less found in rural areas in Scotland. Common Frog and Palmate Newt were also observed using the restored pond.



# Finlay Russell Park

Year of works – 2019 - 2022

Number of sites – 1

Council Area – Falkirk

***Approved Purpose*** – Creation of a series of ponds and scrapes. Enhancement of grassland to provide better connectivity – creation of wildflower area. Planting native hedgerow.

Overview of outputs – Creation of 7 ponds. Creation of a wildflower strip linking together Finlay Russell Park and another habitat site. Area of scrub planting.

Added Value – Enhancing wildflower meadow. Litter picking. Creating gravel drain from pond. Pond management.

The 7.68-hectare site features a burn, areas of woodland / scrub and some existing wetland. The park is next to residential areas, features a playpark and is adjacent to The Lade. Whilst wet boggy areas existed on site no ponds had been created; thus pond creation could benefit local flora and fauna alongside adding educational value for the nearby community.

***Pond Creation*** – Two EPDM lined ponds were created at Finlay Russell Park both measuring 10x8m (maximum depth 1.25m). One pond was created close to a residential area to be used by local visitors and wildlife while one was created in an area away from public disturbance. Five 2x2m (maximum depth 35cm) unlined ponds were created during Volunteer Sessions away from footpaths in undisturbed areas of the park.

***Wildflower Area Creation*** – A strip of native wildflower meadow was created measuring 190 x 3m using Mavisbank meadow mix consisting of 23 native species. This linked a long area of Finlay Russell Park, with a short break in the wildflower meadow where a hard standing footpath exists. The eastern end of the wildflower meadow ends as another habitat site on the Come Forth for Wildlife project begins – The Lade. Works at The Lade are detailed further in this report. This wildflower meadow area was enhanced and extra seeding undertaken during two Volunteer Sessions.





***Scrub Planting*** – Scrub planting was undertaken instead of hedgerow creation after meetings with Falkirk Council at an area between the pond locations during Volunteer Sessions. Hawthorn, Blackthorn, Guelder Rose and Elder were planted in this area to improve connectivity and increase species richness on site.

***Other Elements*** – The pond created closest to the residential area did unfortunately overflow onto the footpath at times of heavy rain, so a gravel drain was constructed during two Volunteer Sessions to ensure the excess water drained into the grass before reaching the footpath. Vegetation at both of the larger ponds was also managed during a Volunteer Session after dominant vegetation began to establish following pond creation.

Common Frog have been observed using the new ponds since their creation.

# Flanders Moss National Nature Reserve

Year of works – 2020 & 2021

Number of sites – 1.5

Council Area – Stirling

**Approved Purpose** – Creation of 3 ponds. Scrub clearance. Hibernacula and basking bank creation.

**Agreed Change** – Due to complications outlined below approved changes were granted. One of the three ponds to be created would be created at Drumbowie Community Park instead along with the creation of hibernacula and basking banks (outlined previously in this report).

Overview of outputs – Creation of 2 ponds. Extensive area of regenerating scrub cleared and treated.

Flanders Moss National Nature Reserve (NNR) covers 860 hectares. It is one of the largest raised bogs in Britain with large scale works taking place to restore the bog habitat and increase its range. The reserve features a car park and looping footpath in one section around a viewing tower. The site is home to Common Lizard, Slow-worm, Adder, Palmate Newt, Common Frog and Common Toad. Whilst the reserve is a wet habitat, there was little in way of ponds or open water for amphibian breeding activity. Plantation woodland nearby to the reserves edges cause problems with seeding the bog habitat with tree species - with the potential to change the habitat type, drying the wet habitat and reducing basking areas for reptiles in particular.

**Pond Creation** – One 5x5m pond and one 7x7m pond, both unlined, were created towards the centre of the National Nature Reserve. Despite using a low ground pressure mechanical excavator and multiple visits with the contractor before the works were undertaken, unfortunately the excavator became stuck in the soft, wet vegetation at Flanders Moss NNR. This was later recovered but further pond creation works were not possible given the circumstances, with the Approved Changes outlined above.

**Scrub Clearance** – Clearance of scrub occurred mostly through the removal of Sitka Spruce, a non-native coniferous species that is regenerating across the bog habitat of Flanders Moss NNR. This is causing the bog habitat to become drier at an accelerated rate and changing the rare habitat type, in turn becoming a less suitable habitat for species of amphibians and other wildlife. The shading that would occur

through established conifers on site would make the habitat less suitable for reptile species with a reduction in basking potential on site. Contractor works were undertaken on site to remove young Sitka Spruce. Trees would be cut as low as possible then painted with Glyphosate to stop any regeneration. Cut saplings would be placed over stumps to shade these out from sunlight and further reduce likelihood of regeneration. Contractor works to remove Sitka Spruce took place over two weeks in an area in the west of the National Nature Reserve over an area of approximately 7 hectares.

Common Frog was observed on Flanders Moss NNR using the newly created pond on site.

# Gartmorn Dam Country Park

Year of works – 2020 - 2022

Number of sites – 1

Council Area – Clackmannanshire

***Approved Purpose*** – Restoration of 1 pond. Creation of hibernacula.

Overview of outputs – One pond restored. Dipping platform created. Interpretation board installed. Creation of 11 hibernacula. Tree management.

Added value - Litter picking. Footpath management.

Gartmorn Dam Country Park is a 370-acre park **and home to Scotland's oldest** reservoir. The park is owned by Clackmannanshire Council and Scottish Water. It is home to Common Frog, Common Toad and Smooth Newt. An existing pond next to the local school was identified as being in need of restoration through several methods to be of most benefit to Common Frog and Smooth Newt in particular.

***Pond Restoration*** – Vegetation removal was carried out with volunteers to remove dominant reeds and rushes to offer open freshwater in the pond for wildlife. Approximately 40% of vegetation in the pond was removed. Vegetation was moved to the edge of the pond to allow wildlife to re-enter the water, before vegetation was moved further away.

De-silting was undertaken with volunteers. Due to the fact the pond has an inflow, silt will run into this pond continuously, eventually leading to an accumulation in matter. The top layer of silt was kept aside and subsequently replaced to minimise disturbance to aquatic invertebrate eggs in the pond.

The ponds vertical outflow caused a potential problem, at times of fluctuating water levels, to trap wildlife and amphibians in particular in it. Enkamat was installed around the inner sides of the outflow to allow amphibians and other wildlife to escape should these circumstances arise in the future. Stone was also added to give **wildlife access out of the outflow back into the pond, while the stone wouldn't impede** the overflow of water from the pond at times of high-water levels.

Several areas of small scrub were removed from around the pond before these trees could establish further and add additional shading to the pond.

Silt traps were created from the removed dominant vegetation to slow the flow of silt back into the pond via its inflow.

Volunteers created numerous hibernacula near to the pond using dead wood and cut scrub material.

A contractor was utilised to create a small 2x1.5m dipping platform with non-slip strips and a wheel-stop to increase the educational value of the pond – which is situated next to Deerpark Primary School.

An interpretation board was installed, with the aid of volunteers, next to the dipping platform. This informs local visitors of the work undertaken, species in the pond **they may be able to see, how to submit species sightings using Froglife's Dragon Finder App** and the funders of the works including NLHF.

Water Violet was discovered during the works, which is a rare sighting for the region, being usually found in the east, south-east or midlands of England. The species is on the Red Data List for England due to its decline. Following discovery the species sighting was recorded and local ranger staff were informed of the presence.

# Grangemouth Golf Course

Year of works – 2020 & 2021

Number of sites – 1

Council Area – Falkirk

**Approved Purpose** – Creation of 2 ponds. Provision of log piles and hibernacula.

**Agreed Change** – This site replaced the original – Cobblebrae Community Woodland – approved 24/2/20. Cobblebrae was visited and works planned, however the woodland suffered several flooding events, with sewage also flooding the site and any habitat works deemed impossible until this wider situation was resolved.

Overview of outputs – Two ponds created. Two hibernacula created.

Added value - Five additional ponds created. Raised path created. Wet meadow seed sowing.

The golf course has natural and naturalised areas with a woodland edge habitat and broad areas of rank grass and tall vegetation between fairways and greens. Ponds off site but nearby have records of Great Crested Newt. The site did have streams and seasonally wet areas but no ponds so pond creation would benefit the area and reduce flooding in undesirable locations.

**Pond Creation** – Two EPDM lined ponds were created measuring 10x8m with a maximum depth of 1.25m. Three EPDM lined ponds were created measuring 3x2m with a maximum depth of 0.5m. Two unlined ponds were created measuring 3x2m with a maximum depth of 0.5m.





*Added Value* - Spoil from the pond creations was used to create a raised path between the ponds. Native wet meadow mix was sowed between the pond areas to increase species richness with 28 native species included in the mix.

## Hallglen Policy Bing

Year of works – 2020 - 2023

Number of sites – 1

Council Area – Falkirk

**Approved Purpose** – Creation of 2 ponds. Creation of log piles for sheltering amphibians.

**Agreed Change** – Original habitat work site - Balquhiddelock Wood – changed with approval on 27/3/20 to Hallglen Policy Bing due to Balquhiddelock Woods site ownership being brought into question by Stirling Council. With the potential for site ownership to change hands from Stirling Council it was no longer deemed sensible to continue habitat work plans here.

Overview of outputs – Three ponds created. Two hibernacula created.

Added value - Wildflower seed sowing.

The site covers 11 hectares with a varied topography dominated by woodland, scrub, grassland and a flat plateau of red blaes. The site is used recreationally and features a playpark area. A pond to the south of the site exists though is rapidly becoming a wet boggy area featuring no open water in the summer months. The Central Scotland Green Network had tried to restore this pond but operations were limited by the sewer pipes located under the area. Thus new ponds created elsewhere on site would not be limited in this way and result in open freshwater provision year-round for wildlife.

**Pond Creation** – Three EPDM lined ponds measuring 10x8m with a maximum depth of 1m were created across the site creating a new pond network. Volunteer Sessions saw the creation of two hibernacula using existing dead wood on site. These hibernacula were created in the south of the site near an old pond so they would receive less disturbance from the public.

**Added Value** - Volunteer Sessions also included seeding the areas around the ponds with Mavisbank native seed mix.



## **Kildean Wetlands**

Year of works – 2021 - 2022

Number of sites – 1

Council Area – Stirling

***Approved Purpose*** – Creation of 6 ponds. Wildflower planting.

Overview of outputs – Six ponds created. One dipping platform installed. Wildflower seed sowing.

Added value - Footpath creation. One hibernaculum created. Pond planting.

Kildean Wetlands consists of 30 hectares largely unused until 2020. Plans came into place to make the area into a carseland (a riverside area of flat fertile sand, mud, silt or gravel) nature reserve with a diverse range of mosaic habitats – wetlands, meadows and woodlands with paths running throughout. The River Teith situated nearby is a Special Area of Conservation and the area is home to several bird species including Skylark and Reed Bunting. Plans to create a pond network here were some of the first to be put into place for this redeveloping area.

***Pond Creation*** – Six lined ponds were created at Kildean Wetlands all lined with an EPDM liner. The six pond measurements were as follows; 20x15m (maximum depth 1.5m), 15x12m (maximum depth 1.2m), 15x10m (maximum depth 1m deep), 12x10m (maximum depth 1m deep), 8x6m (maximum depth 0.75m deep) and 4x3m (maximum depth).

A 3x2m dipping platform with non-slip strips and a wheel-stop was created at the largest pond to be used by local visitors and groups for educational sessions.

Wildflower seeding around the pond network area was delivered through Volunteer Sessions.



***Added Value*** – A 5m long footpath was created leading from the existing footpath to the dipping platform to aid accessibility. This was made from a Type 1 aggregate and a timber border. One hibernaculum was created using dead wood on site to compliment the new network of ponds.

Native marginal pond plants were added with volunteers to several of the ponds. Hessian sacks with aquatic compost, gravel and native plants were placed along edges of ponds to offer cover to wildlife exiting the ponds.

Common Toad and Common Frog were identified using numerous ponds on site, observed on a Training Course.

## **Kinneil Estate**

Year of works – 2021 - 2022

Number of sites – 1

Council Area – Falkirk

***Approved Purpose*** – Creation of two ponds. Creation of wildflower meadow strip to form wildlife corridor through site.

Overview of outputs – Two ponds created. Large area of wildflower meadow created.

Added Value – Two fences installed around ponds with additional signage explaining the damage dogs can cause to ponds and pond wildlife.

Kinneil Estate is home to Kinneil House and parklands covering 200 acres. The estate forms part of the Frontier of the Roman Empire UNESCO World Heritage Site including remnants of the Antonine Wall. The site also features parkland, coniferous woodland and two large bodies of water. These waterbodies are too large and deep to be of preference to most amphibian species and other aquatic wildlife so new smaller ponds would be of benefit alongside wildflower meadow to connect together the site as many areas of short grassland were present.

***Pond Creation*** – Two EPDM lined ponds were created at Kinneil Estate measuring 7x5m and 8x4m, both with a maximum depth of 0.75m.

***Wildflower Meadow Creation*** – A wildflower meadow was created in the middle of Kinneil Estate to improve connectivity for wildlife across the site. A 250m<sup>2</sup> area was created using Mavisbank wildflower meadow mix consisting of 23 native species.

Common Frog and Common Toad have been observed using the created ponds.

# Kinneil Local Nature Reserve

Year of works – 2020

Number of sites – 2

Council Area – Falkirk

***Approved Purpose*** – Creation of 1 pond. Restoration of 1 pond. Creation of hibernacula and basking banks. Clearing scrub to clear basking banks for reptiles.

Overview of outputs – One pond created. One pond restored. One basking bank created.

Added value – Litter picking. Creation of one additional pond. Native pond planting.

Kinneil Local Nature Reserve is a former colliery. The mudflats and island offshore are designated as a Special Area of Conservation. The reserve itself features grassland, wildflower meadows, woodland and a network of footpaths. Original plans to restore the one existing pond on site were deemed too risky with an unknown base to the pond which could be damaged if deepened. Instead plans were made to create a new lined pond and take lighter works to restore the existing pond and keep this in the best order possible without taking risks to damage the pond by mistake and affect the ponds water level.

***Pond Creation*** – One EPDM lined pond was created measuring 10x8m. A basking bank was created to the south of the new pond utilising the spoil from excavation. Five hibernacula were created nearby using dead wood on Volunteer Sessions.

***Pond Restoration*** – One existing pond was restored on site through the removal of scrub causing excessive shading of the pond and soaking up water in the unlined pond. Native pond edge mix was sown here with volunteers to increase species richness and add marginal vegetation to the pond.

***Added Value*** – An additional lined pond was created with volunteers and as part of one of the Come Forth for Wildlife project Trainees public engagement modules. Both ponds were later planted with a range of native marginal and submerged plants.

Common Frog and Common Toad were observed using the new pond during a Volunteer Session to plant up the pond with native species.

# Menstrie Community Woodlands

Year of works – 2019 - 2023

Number of sites – 1

Council Area – Clackmannanshire

***Approved Purpose*** – Creation of 3 ponds. Creation of log piles for sheltering amphibians.

Overview of outputs – Three ponds created. One dipping platform created with interpretation board. One hibernaculum created.

Added value – Creation of wildflower area. Creation of dead hedge. Pond management. Toad bench installed.

Menstrie Community Woodland measures 11.1 hectares in total at the foot of the Ochils. Wildflower species, deer and a variety of birds use the woodland but no ponds were present, after two ponds were lost in the past due to drainage operations. Plans to create new ponds for wildlife and the local community who own, manage and visit the woodland frequently, were put into place. One of the ponds would be more suited to the local community, closer to the footpath and featuring a dipping platform.

***Pond Creation*** – Two unlined ponds were created measuring 8x5m and 7x5m. One EPDM lined pond was created measuring 10x8m (maximum depth 1.5m) with a 2x2m dipping platform including non-slip strips, a wheel-stop and a short boardwalk to access the dipping platform. Extremely wet conditions during the creation of the lined pond led to complications which were overcome. The pond liner used slipped during installation with the wet conditions resulting in a new piece of liner being **bonded to the original liner which couldn't be recovered** without adversely affecting the construction process. Water also had to be pumped from underneath the liner away from the pond, the excessive rains in this hill foot area accumulated beyond what was expected. A hibernaculum was created during a Volunteer Session.



*Added Value* – Areas near the ponds were seeded with a native wildflower seed mix. A dead hedge was created over the course of multiple Volunteer Sessions to restrict access to the back side of the pond, which had a softer bank not suitable for heavy footfall. All ponds were managed for overgrown, dominant vegetation that invaded the ponds in the years following creation and logs were removed that had been thrown in.

A bespoke carved toad bench was installed on the opposite side of the footpath facing the dipping platform, interpretation board and created lined pond. This is situated in an ideal spot for visitors to relax and view the pond next to a unique feature which highlights the works undertaken and acts as lasting legacy to the Come Forth for Wildlife project.

Palmate Newt were observed using the created ponds at Menstrie Community Woodlands.



# Muiravonside Country Park

Year of works – 2019 - 2023

Number of sites – 1

Council Area – Falkirk

***Approved Purpose*** – Creation of 2 ponds. Provision of hibernacula.

Overview of outputs – Two ponds created. One dipping platform installed with interpretation board. Two hibernacula created.

Added value – Three ponds restored. Pond planting. Wildflower / pond edge seeding. Basking bank created. Pond fencing. Bench installation.

**Muiravonside Country Park is Falkirk's only country park measuring 170 acres in total.** A number of visitor facilities exist **including a tearoom, children's play area,** remnants of the old estate house, a demonstration farm and a sculpture trail. Froglife carried out pond creation and restoration in 2015 as part of the Scottish Dragon Finder project, funded by Heritage Lottery Fund at the time. Plans were made to enhance the pond network with new, larger ponds – including one pond to be available for local visitors with a dipping platform, which the site did not have up to this point. The site is known for its population of Great Crested Newt hence a robust pond network at this location is of utmost importance.

***Pond Creation*** – Two EPDM lined ponds were created measuring 10x8m and 10x7m (both maximum depth of 1.25m). A 2x2m dipping platform was installed at the largest pond with non-slip strips and a wheel-stop. Works required a Great Crested Newt disturbance licence granted by NatureScot. An interpretation board was installed close to the dipping platform which informs local visitors of the work undertaken, species in the pond they may be able to see, how to submit species sightings using **Froglife's Dragon Finder App** and the funders of the works including NLHF. Two hibernacula were created near to the dipping platform pond using dead wood.

***Added Value*** – Three ponds were restored on Volunteer Sessions. These ponds were created by Froglife on a previous NLHF funded project in 2015 and had become overgrown with dominant vegetation – which was removed by hand. Native planting of marginal and submerged species was also undertaken in both of the new ponds. Native wildflower seeding was undertaken and pond edge mix was used during Volunteer Sessions on and near to pond margins. Spoil from the dipping platform pond was used to create a long basking bank to the north of this pond.

Pond fencing was installed by contractors in February 2023 following the dipping platform's pond poor establishment with heavy dog disturbance from local visitors.

This was deemed the best strategy to allow the pond to establish marginal vegetation and stop the water being stirred up with silt on a daily basis. The fence has a natural look and features a gate so any visitors can still visit the pond edge.

A bespoke carved toad bench was installed on the slope upwards of the dipping platform pond. This unique feature is in an excellent spot for visitors to view and relax in front of the pond and surrounding landscape. The bench further highlights the ponds and adds to the lasting legacy of the works and Come Forth for Wildlife project.

Following pond creation Palmate Newt and Common Frog were seen using the ponds, encountered during events and Volunteer Sessions.



## **Raploch SUDS ponds**

Year of works – 2020 - 2023

Number of sites – 2

Council Area – Stirling

***Approved Purpose*** – Restoration of 3 ponds. Enhancement of grassland to better connect ponds and provision of hibernacula.

Overview of outputs – Three ponds restored. Wildflower seeding. Creation of 1 hibernaculum.

Raploch Sustainable Urban Drainage System (SUDS) Ponds were required in the area as part of building works in Raploch. These SUDS are accessible to the public so can be an attraction with careful management. The site is split into two, with one pond in the west next to a park and ride and two ponds in the east.

***Pond Restoration*** – The western pond, situated close to a Park & Ride, was restored by removing reeds and other dominant vegetation to provide areas of open water. Vegetation removal was only possible at edges of the pond for safety reasons for the excavator. Two ponds were restored to the east, opposite the grounds of Stirling Castle. Vegetation removal was again undertaken only at the pond edges for safety reasons. Areas of open water were created at both ponds to benefit flora and fauna but particularly amphibians.

Volunteer Sessions saw the creation of wildflower areas near the ponds through native wildflower seed sowing and the creation of one hibernaculum near to the western-most pond.

# **Royal Society for the Protection of Birds Loch Lomond**

Year of works – 2021

Number of sites – 1

Council Area – West Dunbartonshire

***Approved Purpose*** – Creation of 4 ponds.

Overview of outputs – Four ponds created.

The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) Loch Lomond site lies next to a Special Protection Area and a Special Site of Scientific Interest. A series of ponds was planned to benefit local amphibian and bird species.

***Pond Creation*** – A series of meetings with the RSPB were held to determine the best pond designs for amphibians and birds within the designated area for pond creation. The RSPB carried out hydrological surveys prior to pond design and timings of pond creation were undertaken to best minimise disturbance to the Greenland White-fronted Goose (a vulnerable sub-species of goose that is a winter visitor to the area) and amphibians.

Four ponds were created in conjunction with the RSPB linked together by a ditch. The ditch linking ponds together was 4m wide and 1.2m maximum depth. Ponds measured as follows; 40x30m (maximum depth 1.2m), 37x35m (maximum depth 1.2m), 30x25m (maximum depth 0.5m) and 40x15m (maximum depth 0.5m).

# Royal Society for the Protection of Birds Skinflats

Year of works – 2020 & 2022

Number of sites – 1

Council Area – Falkirk

*Approved Purpose* – Creation of 4 ponds. Provision of hibernacula.

*Agreed Change* – Original habitat works site – The Helix – was changed to RSPB Skinflats with approval on 17/12/19 after additional planning permission at The Helix was proving difficult to obtain. The Helix was eventually completed as outlined further in this report.

Overview of outputs – Four ponds created. One hibernaculum created.

Added value – Pond edge seeding.

RSPB Skinflats is a reserve of intertidal mudflats and saltmarsh. Pink-footed Goose, Shelduck and other wading / wildfowl species frequent the site. Freshwater habitat however did not exist on site so a network of ponds would benefit species requiring freshwater ponds such as amphibians.

*Pond Creation* – Four EPDM lined ponds were created measuring 9x6m, 8x7m (maximum depths 1m) and two ponds at 2.5x2.5m each (maximum depths 0.75m). One hibernaculum was created during a Volunteer Session on site using nearby dead wood.



*Added Value* – Pond edge mix seeding was undertaken to a total area of 18m<sup>2</sup>.

Common Toad has been observed using the created ponds after their creation.

# The Helix

Year of works – 2020 - 2023

Number of sites – 1

Council Area – Falkirk

***Approved Purpose*** – Restoration of 3 ponds. Enhancing connectivity between ponds.

***Agreed Change*** - Original habitat works site – Burghmuir Ponds – was changed to The Helix with approval on 27/10/20. The Helix was an original habitat works site for the project, later changed to RSPB Skinflats after planning permission for The Helix was delayed. When this planning permission was later granted, the change was made to bring The Helix back into the Come Forth for Wildlife project as it provided a larger benefit to biodiversity and the opportunity to create more ponds in keeping with best practice on freshwater management.

Overview of outputs – Four ponds created. Three hibernacula created. Native wildflower seeding.

Added value – Litter picking. Pond management.

The Helix includes a number of larger waterbodies on site home to many avian species. However limited opportunity for breeding amphibians in smaller ponds was present. The Helix park is home to The Kelpies in Grangemouth, a grand sculpture of the mythical beasts visited by high numbers of tourists and the local community every year. The park features a canal, boardwalks over larger ponds, footpaths, car parks, cafés and a visitor centre.

***Pond Creation*** – Two 8x6m ponds (maximum depth 1m) and two 3x3m ponds (maximum depth 0.75m) were created, all lined with EPDM, at the busy public park. Extra care was taken and pre-works meetings arranged with INEOS at this site as pond creations were in the proximity of a pipeline – which was marked and avoided throughout the works.

Three hibernacula were created in total, adding connectivity between the four pond locations. One of these hibernacula was created during the practical element of a Pond Doctor Host event with the remaining two created on a Volunteer Session. Native wildflower seed was sown near the ponds to establish and add habitat connectivity between the ponds.

Palmate Newt and Smooth Newt have been observed using the ponds in activities and visits since their creation.





## **The Lade**

Year of works – 2019

Number of sites – 1

Council Area – Falkirk

***Approved Purpose*** – Creation of 4 ponds. Enhance diversity of marginal plants and grassland along The Lade.

Overview of outputs – Six ponds created. Tree works.

Added value – Litter picking. Pond management. Hibernaculum creation.

The Lade is an old mill lade approximately 1.9km in length which was previously connected to the River Carron. Water here is fed into a nearby Site of Special Scientific Interest. The habitat is also made up of grassland, patchy scrub and trees. The Lade is heavily vegetated offering little open water for breeding amphibians.

***Pond Creation*** – Six unlined 3x3m ponds were created within The Lade. Excavation within this area of dense vegetation will allow a more diverse range of native plant species to establish within the aquatic setting. Tree works were carried out by project staff to open up a densely shaded area near to where ponds were created allowing the establishment of diverse ground flora in the area.

***Added Value*** - One hibernaculum was created using wood from the tree works to offer sheltering and overwintering habitat for amphibians and reptiles. Ponds were managed for dominant encroaching vegetation after creation.

Common Frog have been observed at the newly created ponds at The Lade.

# Valley Park

Year of works – 2020

Number of sites – 1

Council Area – Falkirk

***Approved Purpose*** – Creation of 2 ponds. Creation of terrestrial habitat corridors through the park.

Overview of outputs – Five ponds created. One wildflower meadow created. One area of native tree planting.

Added value – Litter picking. Three hibernacula created.

Valley Park is a medium sized park in the valley of a burn. The park features footpaths and a **children's** play area. The park acts as an important habitat corridor over a disused railway. A nearby SUDS pond off-site exists and pond network creation here could connect up new ponds to this existing habitat.

***Pond Creation*** – Five unlined ponds were created measuring 2.5x2.5m each and a maximum depth of 0.5m each.

***Terrestrial Habitat Corridors*** – A 60m<sup>2</sup> area of native wildflower meadow was created to the south of site attempting to link together previous efforts to create wildflower meadow by a local group. The wildflower meadow was created using Mavisbank meadow mix featuring 23 species of native plants.

Trees were planted to the north of the site to enhance connectivity for wildlife local to the park. Four native species of tree were planted – Hawthorn, Blackthorn, Guelder Rose and Elder – to a total of 50m<sup>2</sup>. Hibernacula were created using dead wood on site through Volunteer Sessions to further enhance connectivity and offer overwintering habitat for amphibians, reptiles and other wildlife.

## **Zetland Park**

Year of works – 2020

Number of sites – 1

Council Area – Falkirk

***Approved Purpose*** – Creation of wildflower meadow area.

Overview of outputs – One wildflower meadow area created.

Zetland Park covers 40 acres with a burn flowing alongside the park. The park features a playpark, skatepark, cycle-paths, amenity grassland, footpaths, ornamental trees, hedgerows and a café. Plans were already in place to restore the existing boating pond under another NLHF project through Falkirk Council so plans under the Come Forth for Wildlife project sought to connect together the **park's** habitat features through terrestrial habitat creation.

***Wildflower Meadow Creation*** – One strip of native wildflower meadow measuring 80x4.5m was created in the centre of the park. Mavisbank meadow mix was used featuring 23 native species in order to increase species richness and diversity on site. These areas totalled 360m<sup>2</sup> overall.

In subsequent years the wildflower meadow was managed through a Volunteer Session at Zetland Park to enhance the area and sow more native wildflower seed.

## Volunteer Sessions

As part of the Approved Purpose to ‘deliver habitat work at 31 sites in the Forth Valley’ **a target of 150 Volunteer Sessions with 1,800 volunteers** was stated.

- 160 Volunteer Sessions (target – 150) delivered with 2,246 volunteers (target – 1,800)

In addition to the habitat works undertaken at all project sites above, Volunteer Sessions created 7 new ponds, restored 5 ponds and created 112 terrestrial habitats. Terrestrial habitats included creation of native wildflower areas, hibernacula creation, basking banks, native tree planting or creation of rockeries.

Volunteers attending the sessions learnt hands-on skills in habitat management across the Come Forth for Wildlife project sites. They were also introduced to the native reptiles and amphibians of the Forth Valley area at the start of each session. These skills learnt will leave a lasting legacy to the Come Forth for Wildlife project in the region and surrounding area, as habitat management techniques can be utilised **in the Forth Valley’s green spaces and shared to others. Bringing together members** of the local community with similar interests, getting volunteers active outdoors and introducing volunteers to some lesser-known nature sites will all have a lasting benefit to the project for years to come.

Highlights of Volunteer Sessions included activities at Callendar Park in September 2020 with 29 pupils and teachers from St. Andrews Primary School visiting the site and creating 2 native wildflower areas. In September 2021 the 27<sup>th</sup> Bonnybridge Scout Group removed encroaching scrub around a pond at Bonnyfield Local Nature Reserve with 27 members attending. Finally 32 volunteers came out to Balloch Castle Country Park in June 2022 – the large group of volunteers restored one pond at the park, created 3 hibernacula and 4 new areas of native wildflowers.

*“I really enjoyed thank you :) Brilliant morning, good fun and well delivered :)”* – Victoria C., Volunteer

*“The training has been very varied, interesting and informative which has increased my knowledge in a field I only had basic knowledge.”* – Mags W., Volunteer

*“Thanks for helping to improve Kinneil. Hope the ponds will flourish and continue to be maintained in the future.”* – Ian S., Volunteer

*“Lovely friendly leader, very helpful & inclusive of all volunteers ”* – Anna W., Volunteer

## SITE MONITORING

*Approved Purpose: Established agreements from landowners to commit to maintain habitats for a ten-year period and to provide follow up advice one, three, five and ten years post-completion.*

Landowner agreements were sourced in the development phase of the project for all sites, except those replaced mid-project. Those replacement sites had new landowner agreements signed before works took place.

Following completion of all habitat site works long-term management will be required to maintain the habitats in optimal condition. Site monitoring at each site will be taking place in years 1, 3, 5 and 10 following completion of works – to monitor and assess the ponds and / or terrestrial habitats created or restored during the project.

After monitoring is completed, land-managers can be advised of any further management recommendations by Froglife. Where greater interventions are required Froglife will assist land-managers who are in need of aid to keep these habitat features in the best condition.

The above has already been undertaken at sites that have received monitoring and management recommendations have been identified to pass on to land-managers or for Froglife to assist with any remedial works.

Below is a table of habitat work sites and site monitoring dates with those **in bold** completed to the date of this final report.

	Monitoring Year			
Site Name	Year 1	Year 3	Year 5	Year 10
Balloch Castle Country Park	<b>March 2022</b>	March 2024	March 2026	March 2031
Bannockburn High School	<b>May 2022</b>	May 2024	May 2026	May 2031
Bonnyfield Local Nature Reserve	<b>October 2020</b>	<b>March 2023</b>	March 2025	March 2023
Callander Meadows	<b>May 2022</b>	May 2024	May 2026	May 2031
Callendar Park	<b>May 2021</b>	<b>May 2023</b>	May 2025	May 2030
Crownest Park	<b>March 2021</b>	<b>March 2023</b>	March 2025	March 2030
Doune Ponds	<b>May 2021</b>	<b>May 2023</b>	May 2025	May 2030
Drumbowie Community Park	<b>April 2023</b>	April 2025	April 2027	April 2032

Finlay Russell Park	<b>December 2020</b>	<b>March 2023</b>	March 2025	March 2030
Flanders Moss National Nature Reserve	<b>May 2022</b>	May 2024	May 2026	May 2031
Gartmorn Dam Country Park	<b>April 2023</b>	April 2025	April 2027	April 2032
Grangemouth Golf Course	<b>May 2021</b>	<b>May 2023</b>	May 2025	May 2030
Hallglen Policy Bing	<b>May 2022</b>	May 2024	May 2026	May 2031
Kildean Wetlands	<b>March 2022</b>	March 2024	March 2026	March 2031
Kinneil Estate	<b>January 2021</b>	<b>April 2023</b>	April 2025	April 2030
Kinneil Local Nature Reserve	<b>January 2021</b>	<b>April 2023</b>	April 2025	April 2030
Menstrie Community Woodlands	<b>November 2020</b>	<b>May 2023</b>	May 2025	May 2030
Muiravonside Country Park	<b>November 2020</b>	<b>April 2023</b>	April 2025	April 2030
Raploch SUDS Ponds	<b>March 2022</b>	March 2024	March 2026	March 2031
RSPB Loch Lomond	<b>March 2022</b>	March 2024	March 2026	March 2031
RSPB Skinflats	<b>May 2021</b>	<b>May 2023</b>	May 2025	May 2030
The Helix	<b>May 2022</b>	May 2024	May 2026	May 2031
The Lade	<b>March 2021</b>	<b>March 2023</b>	March 2025	March 2030
Valley Park	<b>April 2021</b>	<b>April 2023</b>	April 2025	April 2030
Zetland Park	<b>April 2021</b>	<b>April 2023</b>	April 2025	April 2030

As a lasting legacy of the Come Forth for Wildlife project, discussion has been had with The Conservation Volunteers (TCV), a national community volunteering charity, who are keen to help manage habitat sites of the project into the future. Management recommendations have been shared with TCV and links made with keen site-owners so that this long-term management of ponds and terrestrial habitats can continue beyond the life span of the project.



# COME FORTH FOR WILDLIFE ACTIVITIES

## Mapestry / Mapestry Tour

*Approved Purpose: Create a Mapestry working with artists and local community groups to reflect the natural and cultural heritage of the Forth Valley.*

- Twenty-five Mapestry sessions undertaken (target – 24) with 813 participants (target – 624)
- Nineteen Mapestry Tour venues (target – 17) with 156,471 visitors (target – 54,000)

*Agreed Change – Mapestry Tour visitor target reduced from 60,000 to 54,000 following a reduction in Mapestry Tour duration following impacts of Covid-19 restrictions. Approved Change dated from email on 20/7/2020.*

Twelve Mapestry panels were created on the Come Forth for Wildlife project depicting the local and natural heritage of the Forth Valley region through community art sessions. Participants were given either an introductory talk on the Mapestry plus local and natural heritage (specific to each region) for in-door sessions or this was discussed with individuals at outdoor sessions informally.

Each session venue is outlined briefly below and shows the range of audiences – from local communities to the region, friends of groups, schools, art-lovers, festival attendees and families. All sessions included the opportunity for people of all ages and abilities to undertake drawing, sewing, painting, stitching, gluing, tracing and other art methods depending on their preference with help from a professional textile artist and Froglife staff.

In addition to discussion, inspiration on local and natural heritage was displayed per session in the form of local buildings, landscapes and attractions per region and species of wildlife found locally, including amphibians and reptiles.



A vast majority of the textiles and fabrics used by participants were recycled and reused materials, **sourced from a social enterprise 'All Together Edinburgh'** which funds training for those with learning disabilities.

Participants learnt about the natural and local heritage around them throughout the sessions, engaged in thought-provoking discussion about the important features of their local region and gained artistic skills in the process.

#### Mapestry Sessions:

- Forth Environment Link Textile Studio – Two sessions  
25<sup>th</sup> January 2020

Two Mapestry sessions were held at the Forth Environment Link Textile Studio on Falkirk High Street with 9 participants. This was held in the back room of the venue which often hosts other textile and upcycling workshops. Participants depicted the local heritage of Falkirk town centre including the local Falkirk Steeple located just outside the venue for the sessions.

***"Thank you - good range of options for contributing to the Mapestry for all ages, kids encouraged to contribute and be creative! :)"*** - Lynsey H.

- Speirs Centre – Two sessions

19<sup>th</sup> February 2020

Two Mapestry sessions were held at the Speirs Centre in Alloa, a busy hub that houses several core community elements including the library and several local council services. Introductory session talks were held upstairs at the venue in their I.T. suite with 74 participants from the local community.

A reporter from the Alloa Advertiser (**Clackmannanshire's local newspaper**) was present on the day to take photographs during the sessions, listen to the presentation and view the artwork being created. This led to a two-page spread within the newspaper later in February highlighting the Mapestry.

The busy sessions saw families create artwork of snakes, newts, toads, frogspawn and much more for inclusion on the Mapestry panel.

*"We had a lovely time making beasties and learning new things. Thank you :)"*  
– Ishbel S.

- Art on the Exchange – Two sessions

14<sup>th</sup> December 2020

Two Mapestry sessions were held in winter at Art on the Exchange, an outdoor art market. The long delay between February to December 2020 was due to Covid-19 restrictions and lockdowns, which made hands-on art sessions extremely difficult at this time.

Forty-five people visiting the market came to view or get involved with the creation of local and natural heritage artwork to include on the Mapestry despite the cold weather.

Personal protective equipment in the form of disposable gloves were available, alongside hand sanitiser, to all participants at these sessions and all remaining Mapestry sessions from this date.

- Bannockburn House – Two sessions

1<sup>st</sup> February 2021

With continuing Covid-19 restrictions the next two Mapestry sessions were held throughout the month of February virtually with the friends and volunteers of Bannockburn House. The Mapestry was introduced via a YouTube video created and shared with the group and this was followed later in February with a live Zoom '**coffee and chat**' session to answer any queries participants may have had and provide further inspiration.

Art materials and equipment packs were distributed **via Bannockburn House's** staff and volunteers – who at this time were already delivering food parcels to their network. Thus delivering art materials could be done at the same time. This was picked up during delivery runs at the end of the month and collected from a central source at Bannockburn House by project staff.

The artwork created by Bannockburn House was both varied and of fantastic quality. This was a great success given the virtual setting of the sessions and provided a vital cultural activity for those in Stirling unable to meet others in person socially and engage in their normal day to day activities.

*“...It's based on the pond in the woods in Cambusbarron, where we collect frogspawn and watch them turn (into) frogs. We enjoyed it and would love to do another later in the year....”* – Audrey M.

- Comely Park Primary School – Two sessions  
29<sup>th</sup> March 2021

With a relaxation in Covid-19 restrictions project staff visited Comely Park Primary School undertaking two sessions with 50 students and teachers in total.

Sessions took place in the **school's** large assembly hall, beginning with a talk and species quiz from project staff before undertaking art techniques of their choosing. Frogs, newts, snakes, lizards were created along with local attractions including renditions of the Kelpies.

***“Thank you so much for yesterday. The Primary 7 teachers said the kids had a ball and really enjoyed it! Thank you for giving them something nice to do amidst this hard time! We can't wait to see the finished result! Thanks again!”***  
– Gemma Moore, Teacher, Comely Park Primary School

- Carronrange High School – Three sessions  
6<sup>th</sup> February 2020 & 29<sup>th</sup> April 2021

One introductory session was held at Carronrange High School, a school for those with learning disabilities and support needs, in February 2020 at the request of teachers at the school. Teachers felt a short introductory session would benefit the children here before undertaking the Mapestry artwork. Unfortunately it was over one year before Froglife could return and undertake the Mapestry sessions at the school due to Covid-19 restrictions. We were

pleased to see the children remembered ourselves and the Mapestry activity from February 2020 however.

Two sessions were held in April 2021 with 57 students and teachers with a presentation from Froglife followed by the creation of the **students'** visions of natural heritage. Students greatly enjoyed creating great crested newts, snakes, birds and other local attractions to their area including the Falkirk Steeple and skyline landscapes around Carrongrange using paint, pens and other artistic techniques.

***"The pupils really enjoyed the session. Was great to see them trying new things and learning."*** – Debbie C. – teacher at Carrongrange High School

- St. Andrews Primary School – Two sessions

10<sup>th</sup> May 2021

Two sessions were held with St. Andrews Primary School in Falkirk. This school was not accepting outside visitors at this time due to Covid-19 restrictions. With this in mind project staff dropped off art equipment and materials prior to the sessions taking place and picked up created artwork after the sessions were concluded. A presentation from Froglife was conducted via Microsoft Teams to the classes, our professional textile artist was available virtually during the sessions for any questions on art techniques and videos of the artist creating various pieces of artwork were displayed via Microsoft Teams during the sessions too in order to help along participants and inspire them to create their natural and local heritage ideas.

Sixty pupils and teachers were involved in May 2021 contributing artwork to a Mapestry panel.

*"Dear James, Maija and Froglife. Thank you for giving me an opportunity to draw a landmark and an amphibian for Mapestry. Thank you also for teaching me all the amphibians in Scotland. Thank you for taking our creations for the Mapestry and then on a tour in Falkirk. It was exciting."*

*"Dear James, Maija and Froglife. I am writing to you to thank you for letting us have the opportunity to do the mapestry and learning about amphibians. It was really fun. I hope you had a really good day with us too. Good luck with the tour!"*

*"Dear James, Maija and Froglife. Thank you for the chance to put our art on tour. It really made us happy and I hope I see our art on display. It was amazing how great art can be. On the day I really enjoyed learning about amphibians."*

*"Dear James, Maija and Froglife. I'm writing to thank you for teaching us about amphibians and ones in Scotland and taking our Mapestry on tour around Scotland and for letting us do the art it was definitely fun and exciting. My favourite part of the whole thing was the art because we got to do sewing and stitching and also watching the powerpoint and hearing about our work going on tour. Good luck taking the Mapestry on tour I hope it goes well."*

*"Dear James, Maija and Froglife. Thank you for teaching us about wildlife in Falkirk and letting us take part in your mapestry session. I'm really excited that they will be on tour all throughout the Falkirk area. I especially enjoyed learning about the frogs and adders. I hope you like all the drawings and collages. It was really fun making them. I hope the tour goes really well. Thanks again for the wildlife session."* – Feedback from various pupils at St. Andrews Primary School

- Muiravonside Country Park – Two sessions  
4<sup>th</sup> July 2021

With the arrival of the summer weather the Mapestry sessions were taken outdoors in a drop-in format, as Covid-19 restrictions still persisted limiting the availability of many local groups.

Sixty-nine people came along to the two drop-in sessions to discuss what local heritage meant to them with project staff and create their Mapestry artwork from a large stall setup near to the children's playpark and the park's café.





- Great Place, Falkirk Wheel – Two sessions  
14<sup>th</sup> August 2021

Two Mapestry sessions were held outdoors as part of a National Lottery Heritage Fund series of events – the Great Place Falkirk project – which celebrated the places, people, traditions and industry of Falkirk. This was an ideal project to link to for the Mapestry sessions for this month as the Great Place Falkirk project held a weekend of events at the Falkirk Wheel.

The Falkirk Wheel itself is of great significance as an element of local heritage being the only rotating boat lift of its kind in the world.

One hundred and three participants visited the Mapestry drop-in stall during the two sessions on the day to create Mapestry artwork including foxes, rabbits, lizards, frogs, owls, trees, flowers, bats and much more.

- Vibration Festival – Two sessions  
4<sup>th</sup> September 2021

Two Mapestry sessions took place at the Vibration Festival, outside Callendar House in Falkirk as drop-in sessions. Vibration Festival is an award-winning annual music festival and the project had a Mapestry stall set between two of **the festival's stages**.

One hundred and twenty-five people took time away from the music to learn about local and natural heritage before creating their contributions to the Mapestry panel which included dolphins, lizards, trees and coastal landscapes.

- The Helix – Two sessions  
19<sup>th</sup> September 2021

Sixty-eight participants visited the drop-in Mapestry sessions stall at the Helix in Grangemouth, Falkirk, with the stall setup near to a pond and one of the **park's car parks**.

The Helix is a busy venue for the local community and visitors with trails around ponds, lakes and amenity features. The park also houses the famous Kelpies exhibit, which features prominently on several of the Mapestry panels.

Those attending painted, drew, stitched and sewed together a range of natural heritage visions including horses, turtles, butterflies and frogs.

*“Harry loved the arts and crafts!”* – Fiona H.

- Kinneil Primary School – Two sessions

6<sup>th</sup> October 2021

The final Mapestry sessions took place with sixty-three students and teachers **at Kinneil Primary School in Bo’ness, Falkirk**. Two classes at the school created artwork following a presentation from project staff – with curlews, toadstools, robins and caterpillars some of the highlights to be included on the Mapestry panel.

#### Mapestry Tour:

Once Mapestry sessions were complete all of the artwork was provided to the professional textile artist, Maija Nygren. Maija compiled all of the artwork onto 12 Mapestry panels, one for each month of the year and added backgrounds to each panel. Each panel is roughly 1.5m tall and 0.6m wide being made out of hemp – chosen as a sustainable material.

An approved change was made to the Mapestry Tour to decrease the target for the number of visitors. This was requested due to the impacts of Covid-19 meaning Mapestry sessions took much longer to deliver and less time was available on the project for the Mapestry Tour. The original number of venues would be visited, but for a shorter duration of roughly 4 weeks instead of 6 weeks as originally envisaged.

The full list of Mapestry Tour venues is outlined below:

Date	Tour venue
December 2021	Carrongrange High School
January 2022	Transition Stirling
February 2022	St. Andrews Primary School
March 2022	Speirs Centre
April 2022	Stirling Central Library
May 2022	Larbert Library
June 2022	Bannockburn House
July 2022	Dumyat Centre
August 2022	Stirling Reuse Hub
September 2022	Hawkhill Community Centre
October 2022	The Helix
November 2022	Sterling Mills Shopping Outlet
December 2022	Thistles Shopping Centre
January 2023	<b>Bo'ness Recreation Centre</b>
February 2023	The Tolbooth
March 2023	University of Stirling
April 2023	St. Mungos Parish Church
May 2023	Church of the Holy Rude
June 2023	<b>Bo'ness Library</b>
January 2022 – August 2023	Interactive Mapestry Tour Online



Setups were organised with each venue in advance of the tour month. Most venues were able to accommodate aluminium display frames to exhibit the Mapestry panels **with ease. Some venues that didn't have the space for these required a more** complicated setup. For example Carrongrange High School required installation of hooks for hanging the panels at various points within the school. The Tolbooth

required the installation for hooks for hanging into a hard brick wall. Installation of Stirling Central Library was undertaken using ropes to hang panels over the top of the very long windows the venue has. All installations were planned and undertaken by project staff.

Every setup at a venue included displaying the Mapestry alongside a Mapestry Tour pull-up banner. The banner told visitors what the Mapestry is, who was involved in creating it and displayed a few elements to find within the Mapestry to encourage younger audiences to search for heritage artwork. A comments book was also left nearby for visitors to leave their feedback at each venue.

In total 156,471 people visited the Mapestry whilst on its tour. This was a great result for showcasing the natural and local heritage of the Forth Valley with high numbers obtained by attending several high-profile venues. Venues with the highest numbers included the Helix Visitor Centre (a popular centre / café offering views of the Kelpies), Sterling Mills Shopping Outlet (**Clackmannanshire's biggest shopping outlet with shops, cafes, a market and a children's play area**) and the Thistles Shopping Centre (**Stirling's** central shopping centre with a variety of over 90 shops). Smaller venues were also visited, particularly those involved in creating the Mapestry, where those involved in creating the artwork would be able to view the finished piece from their local venue. These included venues such as the Speirs Centre, Carrongrange High School and Bannockburn House.

Below is a small selection of comments and feedback from the over 300 comments left;

***"Lovely tapestries, a lot of hard work. Have brightened up the church :)"*** – Ann A.

***"Beautiful! Great way to get people thinking about wildlife locally."*** – Natalie, Jim & Reuben

***"Tollbooth- lovely pieces of work and so cheery. Great to see community so engaged with nature"*** – Christabel W.

***"I love you Froglife, excited to see you back in Stirling. Thank you for raising awareness for our beloved amphibians and other wildlife- the mapestries are great!!"***  
– Lily & Indi

***"Inspirational! Must've been a joy to work on this- well done!"*** – Juliet

***"Super project - bringing things together in the community"*** – Trevor H.

***"Had a lovely time finding toads and robins on the tapestry. Kept the kids entertained for ages!"*** – Kara M.

***"We were so proud to see all our work displayed in such a beautiful collection! It was absolutely amazing to see how they all worked together to make an amazing piece of art. Thank you for allowing us to take part!"*** – Siobhan B.

***"The Mapestry Tour has been well admired and we have a few comments in your book 😊. We have enjoyed having this display in (the) Central Library and we are more than happy to be part of any future promotions / displays that you do. Thank you for asking us to be part of this wonderful tour 😊."*** – Lindsey McMillan, Stirling Central Library

On the 26<sup>th</sup> October 2022 a Mapestry Celebration event was held at the Helix Visitor Centre whilst the Mapestry was on tour at this venue. Local Provosts, local Councillors, Members of Scottish Parliament, funders to the Come Forth for Wildlife project, groups involved in the Mapestry creation and project partners were invited along to view the Mapestry on this evening. The night was opened by the Provost of Falkirk Council, Robert Bissett followed by presentations on the Mapestry by the Come Forth for Wildlife Project Manager and a talk on art in community settings by local artist and graphic designer David Galletly. The event also featured a craft **feedback activity run by the project's Project Assistant and Trainee** – attendees provided three words that came to mind when viewing the Mapestry, added these to an amphibian or reptile template, decorated this and attached this to a heritage background depicting a famous attraction of each of the three council areas the project focussed on.

*"I thoroughly enjoyed the event.... You have my full support (for the project)."* – Falkirk Council Provost Robert Bissett

***"Both my son and I thoroughly enjoyed the evening and learnt a lot as well. Many thanks for the invitation."*** – Councillor Jim Flynn

With the Come Forth for Wildlife project Mapestry Tour finished the Mapestry now will now be split up, with panels finding permanent homes across the Forth Valley at venues already visited and some new ones. Blackness Castle, Stirling Castle and the Dunblane Centre are the some of the new venues that will house the Mapestry in the long-term.



## Neighbourhood Wildlife Corridors

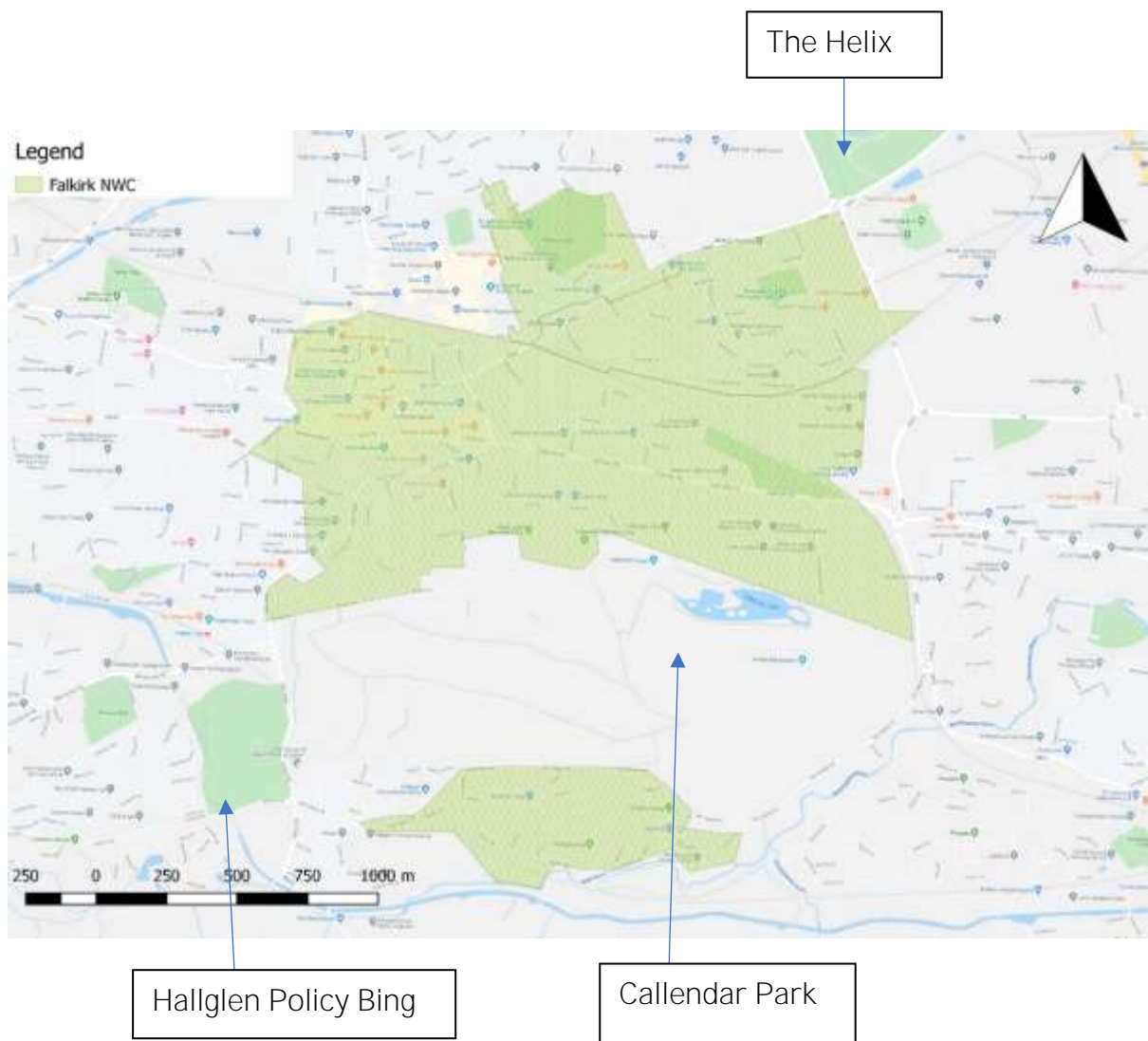
*Approved Purpose – Create 8 Neighbourhood Wildlife Corridors in the Forth Valley.*

- Eight Neighbourhood Wildlife Corridors completed – 29,008 engaged (Target – 22,280)

Eight Neighbourhood Wildlife Corridors (NWCs) were chosen; 4 in Falkirk, 3 in Stirling and 1 in Clackmannanshire.

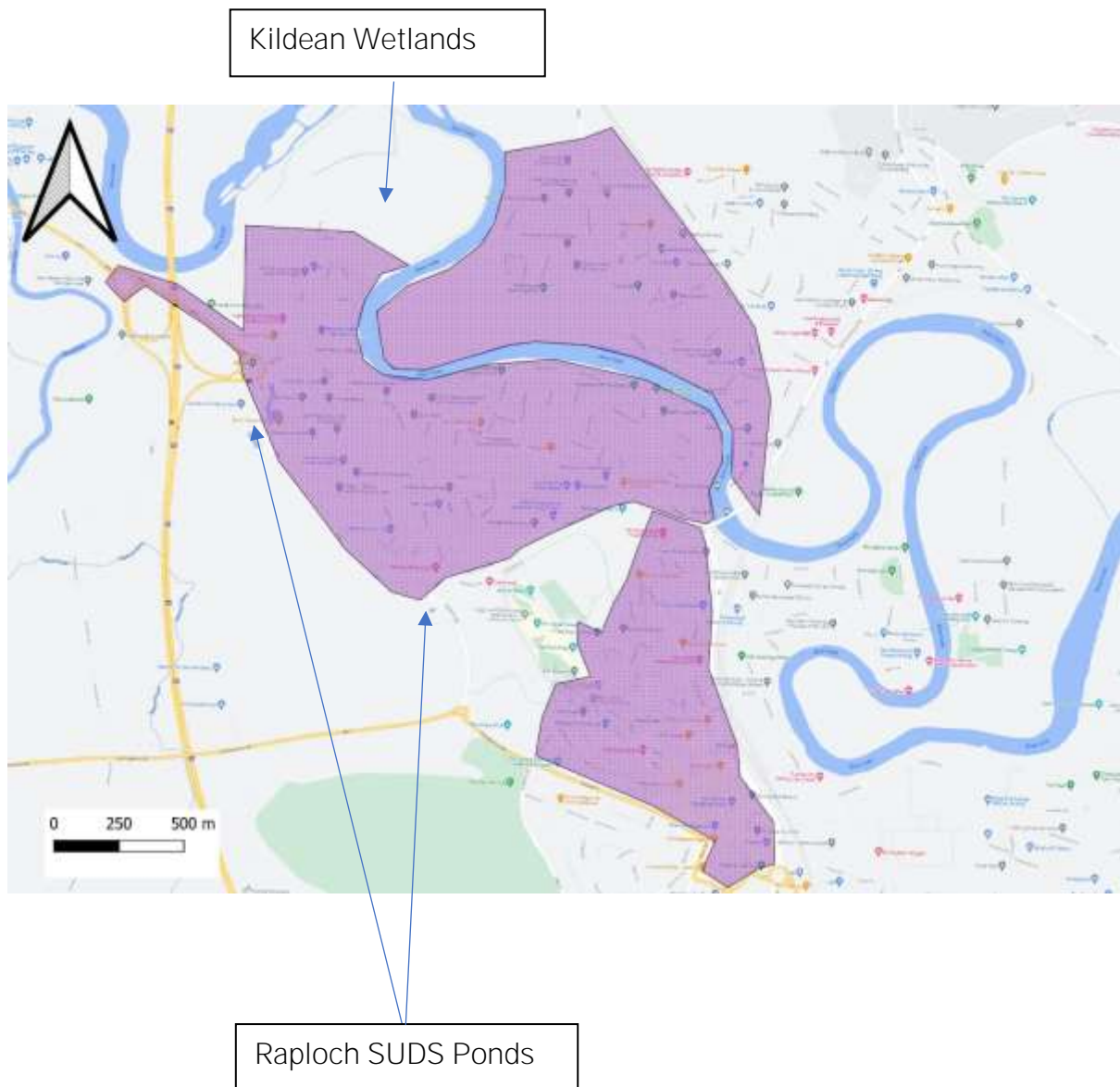
Falkirk Neighbourhood Wildlife Corridors:

The 4 areas were chosen were Falkirk Town Centre and Calendar Park, Hallglen and Glen Village, Middlefield and Grahamston. Areas were chosen with the aid of the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation. All 4 areas feature sections categorised to be in the bottom 10% and 20% of multiple deprivation. In addition the areas have the ability to link up to three Come Forth for Wildlife project habitat sites namely The Helix, Callendar Park and Hallglen Policy Bing (labelled below).



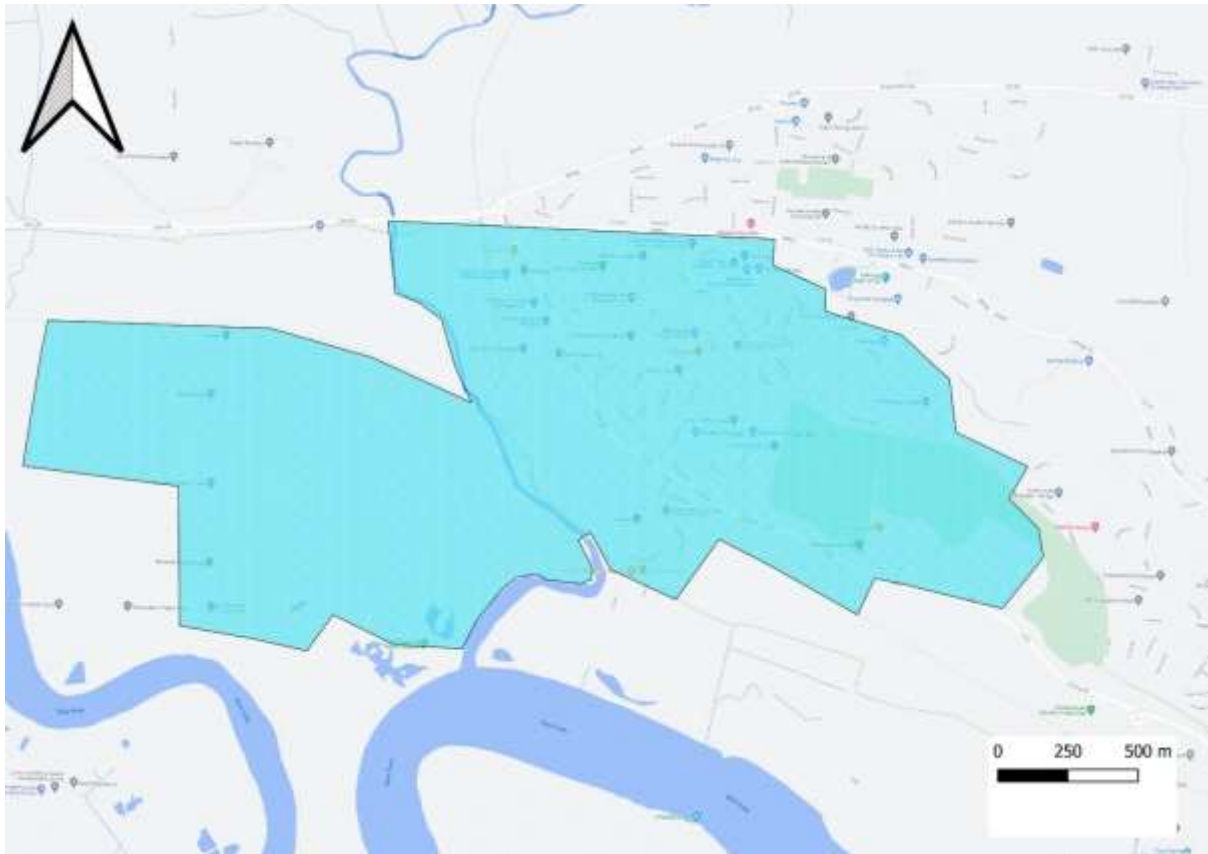
#### Stirling Neighbourhood Wildlife Corridors:

Three areas were chosen for Neighbourhood Wildlife Corridors in Stirling these being Stirling City Centre, Cornton and Raploch. All 3 feature areas either within the bottom 5%, 10% or 20% of multiple deprivation, with the majority of the area of the Raploch falling within the bottom 5% category. In addition the Raploch area had the ability to link together two project habitat sites; Kildean Wetlands and Raploch SUDS Ponds.



#### Clackmannanshire Neighbourhood Wildlife Corridor:

One neighbourhood was chosen in Clackmannanshire, Tullibody South, which features areas within the bottom 10% of multiple deprivation. The area features a community garden which hosted both a consultation in the development phase of the Come Forth for Wildlife project and a Wildlife Gardening Workshop in the delivery phase alongside a park featuring a prominent pond, Delph Pond, which hosted a Pond Doctor event.



## NEIGHBOURHOOD WILDLIFE CORRIDOR – PROMOTIONAL ENGAGEMENT

NWCs were engaged via various promotions to households throughout 2019 – 2023. **Whilst activities ran throughout the project’s duration at all 8 NWCs, promotions were focussed per council area to maximise effect. Falkirk’s NWCs were focussed upon during 2019-2020, Stirling’s NWCs during 2021-2022 and Clackmannanshire’s NWCs during 2022-2023.**

### *Wildlife Pond Visualiser and Ideazone – Augmented Reality and 3D Model Pond Apps*

An augmented reality app for Android devices was developed and released in April 2020 alongside a YouTube video created to showcase, explain and promote the app. This was released at this time during initial Covid-19 lockdowns to capitalise on the virtual nature of the app that could be downloaded at home and that the app promoted pond creation in garden settings – which the public could undertake in their own garden over spring / summer and create a great garden element for their own health and wellbeing as well as local wildlife species.

The Wildlife Pond Visualiser app inspires users to create their own garden pond. Using augmented reality the user can pick their pond design from a list and then,

using the camera on the phone or tablet device, place, move, re-size and enhance the pond on their device with their own garden space in front of them. This has helped users to decide upon a pond location within their garden, allow them to visualise how a pond would look like in their own space and what style of pond would suit best.

The Wildlife Pond Ideazone was developed alongside the above app to cater for older devices and features 3d models of the different pond styles local people could create in their gardens. The app allows for a virtual tour of pond models, with top tips on how to create and manage a pond alongside ideas of what wildlife the pond type may attract. This was all complimented by various animations of amphibians and aquatic invertebrates and music.

The YouTube launch video for the apps has over 1,200 views and there are a recorded 653 downloads of the apps. This launch video can still be seen from the following link - [www.youtube.com/watch?v=WXugNGyNI9I&t=1s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WXugNGyNI9I&t=1s).



### *Garden Guardian booklet*

A booklet was designed and written through the Come Forth for Wildlife project to be promoted within the NWCs from May 2020 to the project end. The colourful booklet describes the need for wildlife friendly gardening to help our native species and the benefits this can have. Several activities are described within to undertake in the garden including pond creation, hibernaculum & bug hotels, rockeries, neighbourhood connectivity, compost heaps, leaving wild areas for wildlife and more. The booklet also promoted the apps referenced above, explained the Come Forth for Wildlife project and featured a challenge to become a **'Garden Guardian'**. Within the booklet activities relate to certain badges which can be earnt **such as 'Water for Wildlife', 'Wildlife Foraging' and 'Wildlife Connections'**. After earning a number of these badges, participants are encouraged to send in their achievements to Froglife



in the form of photos, videos, stories or poems to then receive a plaque to display in their garden to certify they have Come Forth for Wildlife with Froglife and are a Garden Guardian.

The Garden Guardian booklet was promoted through NWCs, could be obtained at sessions, events or workshops, could be viewed in-full online or a request could be made by email to send a free copy of the booklet to the participants address.



### *Promoting through the Neighbourhood Wildlife Corridors*

Several methods of promotion were undertaken to reach the 29,008 (target – 22,280) engaged throughout the 8 NWCs, promoting either the Wildlife Pond Visualiser app or the Garden Guardian booklet.

Several radio promotions and interviews were run to promote the app and booklet. On the 24<sup>th</sup> April 2020 the Project Manager was interviewed on Central FM to promote the launch of the app during lockdown, this being one of the main radio stations in the Forth Valley. On the 25<sup>th</sup> April 2020 Froglife staff were interviewed on BBC Radio Scotland and BBC Radio promoting the app launch on International Save the Frogs Day. As these radio promotions **couldn't attribute listener numbers** within the neighbourhood wildlife corridors, no numbers engaged for these



contribute to the total of 29,008 but will have been key in initially spreading the word on the launch of the app at a time when people were restricted to activities they could undertake at home.

Promotions designed by project staff were displayed in several newspapers to make local communities within the NWCs aware of the Wildlife Pond Visualiser and Garden Guardian Booklet. A quarter page advertisement was run on the 25<sup>th</sup> June 2020 in the Falkirk Herald newspaper reaching 6,950 people within the four NWCs in Falkirk. On the 5<sup>th</sup> April 2022 a print and digital advertisement campaign was run within the **Alloa Advertiser, Clackmannanshire's newspaper which covers the NWC of Tullibody South**, reaching 2,856 people within this NWC.

Several advertisements were undertaken in magazines which are distributed for free to households within the NWCs in Stirling and Clackmannanshire. Love Local Stirling reached a total of 8,351 people in the three NWCs in Stirling (Stirling City Centre, Raploch and Cornton) and was distributed on the 13<sup>th</sup> April 2021. This edition included an advert designed by project staff promoting the Garden Guardian booklet. On 1<sup>st</sup> June 2022 a similar advert was displayed in Love Local Clackmannanshire, a similar free magazine delivered to households but within the Tullibody South NWC. This promotion reached 4,328 people in the NWC on an A4 sized feature which also described the works of Froglife in a wider context.

A YouTube video campaign was developed and produced by project staff before a targeted release for 1 month during April 2022 to the 8 NWCs engaging with 4,600 people in these areas. The short video demonstrated the Wildlife Pond Visualiser app and Wildlife Pond Ideazone app as well as sharing information on obtaining a Garden Guardian booklet.

A series of directed Facebook boosted posts were developed and delivered to those within the 8 NWCs, with a total of 35 posts between 9<sup>th</sup> May 2022 – 27<sup>th</sup> September 2022 engaging with 1,923 people. All of these Facebook posts were unique in content, from educational posts, fun facts posts and call to action posts among others, but all directed those engaged with towards the booklet or app to download, receive or view.



*Extra added value to the project delivered via the Biodiversity Challenge Fund at Neighbourhood Wildlife Corridors*

From August 2019 – April 2021 the Come Forth for Wildlife project was supplemented by the, NatureScot funded, Biodiversity Challenge Fund project which operated in the NWCs of Falkirk.

This project worked at various private and public venues installing wildlife-friendly features with venues including colleges, schools and private residencies.

Two ponds were created at two venues in addition to an area of native wildflowers and a hedgehog box within the NWC of Hallglen and Glen Village.

Two ponds were created at two venues, one pond restored at one venue in addition to two hedgehog boxes, bat and bird boxes being installed in the NWC of Grahamston.

Six ponds were created at four venues in addition to planting a native wildflower area in the NWC of Middlefield.

Two ponds were created and two ponds restored at four venues in addition to the creation of a native wildflower area and terrestrial wildlife garden in the NWC of Falkirk Town Centre and Callendar Park.

## **NEIGHBOURHOOD WILDLIFE CORRIDOR – ACTIVITIES**

The Approved Purposes of the Come Forth for Wildlife project occurred within the NWCs referenced above to focus efforts within these areas and encourage wildlife-friendly gardening and efforts towards the conservation of amphibians and reptiles wherever possible. A full list of activities per NWC can be found in the appendices to this report – ‘Come Forth for Wildlife – **Record of Activities\_Events**’.

## Pond Doctor

*Approved Purpose: Deliver 40 Pond Doctor events as part of external events and 4 as the host organisation.*

- 40 Pond Doctor events and 4 Pond Doctor Host events delivered with 5,401 attendees (target - 2,880)

The Pond Doctor events were delivered at a variety of locations listed within an appendix to this report (Come Forth for Wildlife – Record of Activities\_Events) with the key aim to give local people free expert advice on pond creation, restoration and management. This would aid people looking to create a new wildlife pond and inspire **those who hadn't thought of a wildlife pond to have one in their garden. Those with** ponds in need of restoration could ask expert Froglife staff their best advice on what to do in order that their pond be suitable for wildlife again. Those with a pond in the garden in adequate condition could get some excellent management tips for the future to ensure the pond stays in good condition for local species.

In addition Pond Doctor stalls would feature information on amphibians and reptiles, including life-like species models to aid identification. Stalls also featured models of good and bad ponds for wildlife developed by a local artist which highlighted visually for the general public features they could include for their pond and those they should avoid. Attendees to Pond Doctor events were also asked to leave their details and tick elements they would undertake in the garden on a postcard, that would be later sent back to them to remind them of what they pledged to do for wildlife. Garden elements to undertake included pond creation, creating log piles or submitting **species sightings of amphibians and reptiles through Froglife's Dragon** Finder app.



Notable Pond Doctor events included the Middle of Scotland Science Festival held in August 2019 with 1,100 attendees. This large, busy event held before Covid-19 restrictions was held at Mugdock Country Park and the project had two stalls operating with staff and volunteers, one within the walled garden and the other down by the **park's** main pond. The STORM Tour held in Alloa in August 2021 was located on the **town's** main street and featured the STORM 10-metre-tall model parading along the event **in collaboration with Scotland's Year of Coasts and Waters**, as 239 attendees visited the Pond Doctor stall. The Menstrie Duck Race in Menstrie, Clackmannanshire was another notable event with 183 attendees held in April 2022. The Duck Race had been cancelled in 2020 and 2021 due to Covid-19 so was extremely busy for the small village on its return, attracting many from the local community.





*"I understand more of the environmental conditions needed to improve habitat and ponds for amphibians, and some of the good and poor plant life needed for ponds. I liked the positive, knowledgeable and friendly presenter and the assistant. The session was seamless, and gave each participant ample opportunity to ask and follow up on questions. Good links were given for those wanting extra info. I will be able to now plan out what steps to take to create a pond in my back garden." – Nicola R., Pond Doctor attendee, July 2020*

***"I found the Q&A session very interesting and very pleasant. I've also had a look at the Just Add Water booklet and see why you are not so keen on fish ponds. The Q&A session and the leaflet have inspired me to also have smaller pond areas in addition to our fish pond as we would like to attract amphibians and insects. So thank you for bringing that to my attention."*** – Barbara S., Pond Doctor attendee, June 2021

Pond Doctor Host events were held with Froglife having a larger role. These events included the same activities for the Pond Doctor events listed above but also included additional elements to teach new skills in wildlife-friendly gardening and inspire action following the event. Additional elements included practical conservation / surveying tasks at the event, stalls to promote and demonstrate the Wildlife Pond Visualiser augmented reality app or wildlife arts and crafts for younger audiences.

The most notable Pond Doctor Host event came in August 2022 at Balloch Castle Country Park engaging with 131 people. Staff held a Pond Doctor stall, ran pond dipping and helped younger audiences create and decorate a range of insect hotel, bird feeders / houses and butterfly feeders for the garden.





## Pop-up Wildlife Gardening Workshops

*Approved Purpose: Deliver 12 Pop-up Wildlife Gardening Workshops.*

- Twelve Pop-up Wildlife Gardening Workshops delivered with 1,635 participants (target – 900)

Pop-up Wildlife Gardening Workshops engaged with those not involved with allotments or community gardens, promoting wildlife friendly gardening techniques for their garden or local green space. Reaching a wide audience at busy venues the workshops used one of two formats dependent on the suitability of the venue. Format one for the Pop-up Wildlife Gardening Workshops took place as drop-in events where the public could pick up simple activity sheets on wildlife friendly gardening elements such as mini-pond creation, bog gardens or creating seed bombs. A model of a wildlife friendly garden for people and native species was on display for attendees to see and re-model. The second format of this activity type took the form of a series of short, 90-minute workshops, starting with a presentation on wildlife friendly gardening before moving on to the creation of model wildlife gardens in small groups and a short activity to aid amphibian and reptile identification in the garden.

Notable Pop-up Wildlife Gardening Workshops included Blair Drummond Safari Park in Stirling in November 2020 with 246 attendees. Families and local visitors to the safari park learnt lots of wildlife friendly gardening skills for their own green space whilst seeing the animals hosted at the park. Also in November 2020 the project visited the Sterling Mills Shopping Outlet, Clackmannanshire's biggest retail park, engaging with 239 shoppers at the weekend and relaying lots of advice on wildlife friendly gardening methods. A Pop-up Wildlife Gardening Workshop was held at the Howgate Shopping Centre, the main shopping centre in Falkirk, engaging with 229 shoppers and promoting activities in the garden such as toad abodes, insect hotels and hibernacula.

*“Great site. Very informative, knowledgeable and friendly staff”* – Alan P., Pop-up Wildlife Gardening Workshop attendee, June 2021

*“Great info. Enthusiastic and knowledgeable staff. Apt setting. Like the wildlife model garden”* – Nicola R., Pop-up Wildlife Gardening Workshop attendee, June 2021



# Traineeships

*Approved Purpose: Deliver two, one-year traineeship placements.*

- Two, one-year traineeship placements completed.

Both traineeships were completed by the appointed trainees; Mirran Trimble completing her traineeship from November 2020 to November 2021 and Laura Hindle completing her traineeship from November 2021 to November 2022.

Both trainees completed an induction to the Come Forth for Wildlife project and Froglife before shadowing project staff and learning about the different activities, how they were organised, planned and delivered.

Each trainee then completed three modules. Module 1 consisted of various training courses including First Aid Training, Safeguarding, Conservation Education, Habitat Management and Survey Skills for Amphibians and Reptiles, among others. During this module trainees attended as many project activities as they could and built confidence in their career skills, gradually being given responsibilities in activities under the supervision of project staff.

Module 2 was the trainees **'Habitat & Species' module**. **Mirran Trimble's module 2** consisted of assisting the Project Manager with the delivery of large-scale habitat site works at RSPB Loch Lomond. Mirran was present at all meetings with stakeholders, undertook site visits, aided design plans to ensure the ponds were suited for amphibians and helped supervise the works on the ground. **Laura Hindle's module 2** consisted of assisting the Project Manager with large-scale pond restoration works at Drumbowie Community Park – helping to supervise the habitat site works. She then moved on to helping to create the small new pond at this site with the Project Manager and Project Assistant, organising volunteers to dig this new pond.

Module 3 **was the 'Public Engagement' module**. **Mirran Trimble's module 3** was a high-profile stall at the 2021 United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP26) in Glasgow. After a competitive **application process, Mirran's stall was chosen to** represent Froglife at COP26 – with an interactive stall teaching delegates and attendees to the Green Zone aspects to include in a wildlife-friendly pond with the **activity made of sustainable materials**. **Laura Hindle's module 3** saw a community focus in the Bo'ness area, organising the local community and groups to create a new pond at Kinneil Local Nature Reserve and produce community newsletters to celebrate the efforts and create a lasting legacy to her module. In addition Laura trained one of our Froglife volunteers into a Volunteer Leader, developing the **volunteer's skills over multiple sessions and creating a plan** to enhance the employability of this volunteer.



Both Mirran and Laura produced reports from their traineeships and gave presentations to Froglife staff and trustees. Mirran Trimble went on to be further employed on the Come Forth for Wildlife project as a Project Assistant before gaining employment with the Edinburgh and Lothians Greenspace Trust. Laura Hindle gained immediate employment in the environment sector with The Conservation Volunteers.



## Training Courses

*Approved Purpose: Deliver 20 Training Courses focusing on amphibian and reptile habitat management, survey methods and identification.*

- Twenty-two Training Courses delivered with 294 participants (target – 240)

Two formats of Training Courses were delivered to cover the Approved Purpose above.

The first was a Training Course on Amphibian and Reptile Ecology and Survey Methods. Delivered over the course of two days, the first day began with amphibians of the Forth Valley – discussing their ecology, distribution and identification with native and non-native species to the region covered. The background to the following survey methods, netting, torching, egg-searching and bottle trapping were covered in the theory section. Day one then progressed with an evening amphibian survey taking place around sunset. The survey methods would be undertaken by participants after demonstration from project staff and any amphibians found would be identified in the field. Course participants were made aware of the difference **they can make for the species by submitting sightings to Froglife's Dragon Finder** app. Bottle traps were left overnight, as per best practice at the end of day one.

Day two began by the group rejoining on site and collecting bottle traps where any species caught were identified before subsequent release. The course participants then undertook a reptile survey using pre-laid reptile mats, deployed by project staff roughly a month before the Training Course – with any reptiles found identified in the field. The group then completed theory on day 2 covering reptile ecology, distribution and identification. Species picture quizzes were also conducted throughout the theory on days one and two.

This format was adjusted throughout Covid-19 restrictions in the following ways. Training Courses for Ecology and Survey Methods between April 2020 – August 2020 were conducted entirely online. Only theory was covered, however video footage was used to demonstrate survey methods and new footage was filmed by project staff so this could be shown to the participants. From September 2020 theory was conducted online and the practical element was run as above with the maximum number of participants allowed at the time as indicated by Covid-19 restrictions.

By the end of this Training Course participants had learnt how to identify amphibians and reptiles in the area, undertake surveys for these species, submit sightings to benefit species conservation and understand their basic ecology.



The second format covered Amphibian and Reptile Habitat Management. Theory covered pond creation, restoration and management for amphibians then covered habitat connectivity and terrestrial habitats for amphibians and reptiles alike. A site visit was conducted in the afternoon of the Training Course to a Come Forth for Wildlife project site. The participants could see a site, ask questions to project staff and also be quizzed on what they had learned in the field.

Covid-19 also had an effect on these Training Courses. Three Training Courses were run before Covid-19 restrictions were introduced, with theory taking place at venues near Kinneil Estate, Valley Park and Kinneil Local Nature Reserve. Those run from June – September 2020 took place online only, with videos of previous practical habitat works shown to participants to demonstrate examples. Members of the project staff also created ponds in their gardens and created time-lapse videos to be used in the Training Course and show how to create ponds, step by step, in a garden setting. After September 2020, hybrid Training Courses took place with theory delivered online and habitat site visits taking place in person.

By the end of this Training Course participants had learnt how to create, restore and manage ponds both within nature reserves and large green spaces but also within gardens and allotment settings. They had learnt the importance of habitat connectivity for amphibians and reptiles as well as how to create terrestrial habitats for reptiles.

Some Training Course highlights include the high number of attendees during Covid-19 restrictions when Training Courses were held solely online. Out of a possible 220 places on the eleven Training Courses held online, 176 participants attended, which is a great result in an uncertain time. An Amphibian and Reptile Ecology and Survey Methods Training Course at Drumbowie Community Park discovered Smooth Newt in the recently restored pond which was an exciting find for the group. The same course at Kildean Wetlands discovered large numbers of Common Toad again to the excitement of the participants.

Thirty Local Council / Statutory Authority staff attended the Training Courses plus at least an additional 50 professionals, which will make a substantial improvement in the knowledge and awareness of reptiles, amphibians and their habitats for land managers in the Forth Valley.

*"Thanks so much to you and the Froglife team for the Amphibian and Reptile Habitat Management Training course, it was so interesting and packed with info!"* – Bethan J., Training Course Attendee, June 2020

*"Many thanks, James. (I) want to thank you and everyone involved for putting it on. The most important outcome for me has been to reconnect with my interest in amphibians and **reptiles, it is difficult to maintain that interest when you can't get out to do anything.** Best wishes"* – Sandra M., Training Course Attendee, April 2020

*“Just felt compelled to email you and James a very big thank you for the organization and delivery of today's training course on habitat creation and management for amphibians and reptiles held at Polmont Golf Club. The fact that at 52 and after decades of involvement in practical conservation and environmental education I learned an awful lot on everything from ID tips for amphibians to better ways of making ponds that was totally new to me is a testimony on how excellent the course was. I had planned to treat it as a bit of a refresher, but instead learnt a lot that was new and will significantly improve my effectiveness in practical conservation and education. Please pass on my thanks and regards to James and I hope in the future to participate in as many courses and practical days with Froglife as possible!! Thanks” – Les W., Training Course Attendee, January 2020*

*“Thank you putting this online course on and I **can't** wait to get into the field and put some of this in practice with volunteer groups” – Kallum W. Training Course Attendee, September 2020*



# Virtual Reality Exhibitions

*Approved Purpose: Deliver 10 Virtual Reality Exhibitions*

- 23 Virtual Reality Exhibitions delivered with 8,822 participants (target – 8,800)

Virtual Reality Exhibitions were delivered to audiences with the message ‘When will Wildlife get the Green Light?’ and encourage those involved to think about the dangers of road mortality to wildlife – particularly amphibians and reptiles. The 360-degree virtual reality video featured the journey of a Common Toad from overwintering area to pond and had a Scottish narration throughout the experience.

Where the venue space allowed the wildlife tunnel exhibition stand was used to house the experience.

Highlights included a Virtual Reality Exhibition held at the Awaken Festival in Falkirk, **Scotland’s only music festival developed for those with disabilities**. In September 2021, 897 people were engaged at the music festival, trying out the virtual reality experience and learning more about road dangers to wildlife via a unique method.

In August 2022 one event attracted 993 people, excited to try out the novel technology and learn more about road crossings for wildlife at the busy re-opening of the Zetland Park in Grangemouth, Falkirk. This Virtual Reality Exhibition also featured in the Falkirk Herald shortly after the event.

Following this, in September 2022 project staff attended the Wander the World event in Stirling with a Virtual Reality Exhibition. Wander the World is a large Girlguiding event in the Forth Valley area where 703 girls and young women attended the Virtual Reality Exhibition taking the dangerous journey of the Common Toad back to the pond.

*“I loved doing the VR, such a cool way to be a toad!”* – Virtual Reality Exhibition Attendee, February 2023

*“I’ve never done a VR before that was amazing! The tunnels are such a simple solution to such a big problem - we need them”* – Virtual Reality Exhibition Attendee, September 2022

*“I loved it! It’s so immersive”* - Virtual Reality Exhibition Attendee, May 2022

*“I’m shocked about the toad numbers decreasing in last 30 years. Need to do more to help.”* - Virtual Reality Exhibition Attendee, March 2022



## 23. Zetland Park re-opening party

# Wildlife Gardening Workshops

## *Approved Purpose: Deliver 60 Wildlife Gardening Workshops*

- Sixty Wildlife Gardening Workshops delivered with 825 participants (target – 480)

Wildlife Gardening Workshops were delivered to allotments, community gardens and therapeutic garden groups across the Forth Valley. Allotments and community gardens can be vital homes to various species of wildlife, including amphibians and reptiles, while developments can cause many other habitats to be lost. Some simple additions and changes to management of these areas can make them more suitable for amphibians and reptiles or create ideal conditions for species to colonise the areas. Project staff promoted natural gardening methods to groups to encourage more environmentally friendly solutions in addition to the health and wellbeing benefits wildlife can have for people – in garden or allotment settings where wildlife can be viewed.

Each Wildlife Gardening Workshop featured four elements. The first was an introductory talk from project staff to the group, covering the amphibians and reptiles of the Forth Valley, what they need in a garden to thrive and many wildlife friendly elements that could be created in the garden / allotment.

The second element involved breaking the group into smaller teams to create model wildlife friendly gardens – using the ideas discussed and basing the models of a new allotment / garden to be created or using an existing plot as the basis.

The third element was agreed in advance with each venue and saw the group and project staff create or restore a wildlife friendly element on site. This could be planting a pond with native plants, creating a new pond or making a hibernaculum etc.

The final element was a short survey of the allotment / community garden – either a pond survey if the venue had one already or placing reptile mats so the group could see what amphibians and reptiles called the area their home.

Twelve Wildlife Gardening Workshops in total were held online in 2020 / 2021 due to Covid-19 restrictions with an online talk to the group, demonstration of a model wildlife garden and the elements within and then discussion on what changes / additions the group could make in their space to benefit wildlife.

Highlights included a Wildlife Gardening Workshop delivered to the Hawkhill Community Centre (a busy community centre in the heart of the Hawkhill housing estate) in September 2021 with 23 attendees which included the creation of a mini pond. Four Wildlife Gardening Workshops were delivered to the therapeutic group at Green Routes (an organisation providing skills and support for people with

additional support needs) in September and October 2021 with 51 participants creating toad abodes, bird feeders and a new pond. Four Wildlife Gardening Workshops were also delivered **to the Stirling and District Women's Aid** (providing support for women, children and young people in Stirling) with 48 participants in April to May 2022 undertaking native planting in the garden space, creating areas of wildflowers and **creating 'hapazome' leaf craft art.**

***"My daughter and I enjoyed the Froglife event today.***

*We have a raised pond and when my daughter arrived home last summer she set about improving the frog facilities, **building a 'frog ladder' to improve access as the juvenile frogs were attempting to scale the vertical walls, she also installed a low level 'basin' pond to give the younger frogs better access to water.** The veg patch certainly benefited from the healthy population and we regularly saw the larger frogs basking on the side of the pond.*

***From today's talk, we are going to improve the overwintering habitat and maybe get some more native species for the pond.*** " – Morag H., Hawkhill Community Centre

*"Good evening James. On behalf of Kilmadock Community Allotment Group, I would like to thank you for the time spent with us this morning.*

*Your presentation, answering our many questions, and the practical element, were all excellent. The whole morning was very informative, and has given our group much food for thought, hopefully pointing us in the right direction regarding the ponds and wildlife areas within our site.*

*Please do drop into the allotments if you are passing, and if time allows. You would be more than welcome."* – Nigel M., Kilmadock Community Allotment Group

*"Hi Mirran,*

*Thank you. I just wanted to say again how much I thoroughly enjoyed the workshop yesterday and I have so many ideas to upgrade my wildlife pond.*

*Thanks again,"* – Julie H., The Conservation Volunteers group

***"Really great workshop, with very knowledgeable Froglife staff. Thanks so much Laura and James."*** – Isobel G., Tullibody Community Garden





## **Additional Activities**

Several additional activities were held within the duration of the Come Forth for Wildlife project to promote the project, project habitat sites and the National Lottery Heritage Fund as the main funder.

Details of each can be found in **the appendix to this report entitled 'Come Forth for Wildlife – Record of Activities\_Events'**.

Thirteen presentations were given between November 2021 to July 2023 with 346 attendees promoting the Come Forth for Wildlife project, National Lottery Heritage Fund as the main funder of the project and the amphibians and reptiles of the Forth Valley.

A pond dipping, educational session was held with 20 of the Menstrie Brownies in May 2023 at the project site, Kildean Wetlands, introducing the group to the new pond network created by the project.

A podcast episode was recorded with the Think Wildlife Foundation Podcast in February 2023 focussing on the Come Forth for Wildlife project, its activities, focus and lasting legacy.

## NATIONAL LOTTERY HERITAGE FUND OUTCOMES

### **People will have greater wellbeing**

Activities regarding the Neighbourhood Wildlife Corridors inspired communities to create wildlife friendly habitats via the Garden Guardian booklet, Wildlife Pond Visualiser augmented reality app and numerous different public engagement activities sharing information, skills and knowledge. Empowering local communities with the skills to create better places for people and wildlife in their own green spaces is a fantastic way to increase wellbeing whilst also leaving a lasting legacy of the project as these created and improved green spaces can be in place for many years to come.

The Mapestry community art activity sharing knowledge on the local and natural heritage of the Forth Valley before, creating artistic impressions of this heritage, will have seen an increase in participants wellbeing. This was achieved via the hands-on nature of the art sessions, learning new craft / art skills and becoming more aware of the important heritage elements within each participants area in which they live.

Volunteer Sessions organised and run by the Come Forth for Wildlife project have played an important part in increasing the wellbeing of volunteers within the Forth Valley. Being outdoors in nature, learning new skills and creating / restoring nearby habitats are all important factors in greater wellbeing. With volunteers at sessions also being introduced to green spaces around them that they can re-visit in the future and meeting others locally with similar mindsets, the project has increased the sense of wellbeing for those attending these sessions, with beneficial effects that will be felt beyond the duration of the project.

### **People will have developed skills**

Skills have been developed in those attending the Training Courses of the Come Forth for Wildlife project in amphibian / reptile identification, ecology, survey methods and habitat management. These courses were delivered in depth over the course of 1 – 2 days including practical elements to reinforce learning beyond the theory elements. **These skills can be used in attendee's every day activities, hobbies** or aiding in professional development given the depth of content covered. These lasting effects will be exhibited beyond the end of the Come Forth for Wildlife project with skills shared amongst statutory authorities, local council employees, other non-

governmental organisations and amateurs to share best practice regarding the Training Course content covered.

Volunteer Sessions included a huge range of practical tasks from creating lined ponds, scrub management, building hibernacula, creating rockeries and many more. Volunteers were always instructed at these sessions as to how and why the task was being carried out to ensure skill sharing was paramount **and that volunteer's** confidence in these tasks would increase for the future.

Pond Doctor Host events also included practical conservation tasks and extra elements such as pond dipping during the events. These will have shared additional skills on identification of aquatic invertebrates and amphibians as a focus is made to identify those species encountered in the pond using identification guides.

Many skills for the **environmental sector have been gained via the project's two, 12-month long, traineeships**. This includes skills in planning and delivering public engagement modules and habitat site works in addition to skills vital for further workplace roles in workload prioritisation, taking initiative with work modules and liaison with internal staff and external organisations. Proof of these skills being developed is evident from both trainees being employed in the environment sector within days of their traineeships ending and this employment continuing for both former trainees to date of this report.

Aside from the Volunteer Sessions delivered, a large number of volunteer assisted delivery and setup at public engagement events, namely the Virtual Reality Exhibitions, Pond Doctor events and Pop-up Wildlife Gardening Workshops. This has taught volunteers skills in engaging with the public, advising the public relating to wildlife friendly gardening and setting up event stalls / displays which are clear and attractive to ensure high numbers of visitors over a day.

## **The local area will be a better place to live, work or visit**

Local areas within Falkirk, Stirling and Clackmannanshire have been improved for those visiting, working or living within them through the habitat works of the project. Works across sites make these areas better for people, with green spaces becoming more aesthetic and increased levels of accessibility for educational activities, such as pond dipping. The establishment and colonisation of wildlife and native plants over time creates a better experience for all in the area as they can discover and learn more about the species that takes up home in these new or restored environments. Numerous studies have shown the mental and physical benefits to people when being able to see or visit green spaces so the further provision of these is of great importance in the Forth Valley area.

This is particularly the case for habitat works in Neighbourhood Wildlife Corridor areas. These areas include those within the bottom 5%, 10% and 20% defined by the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation where creating better places to live is vital.

**These NWC's have also had various promotions run throughout** them to encourage wildlife-friendly gardening. Those residing **within NWC's** valued wildlife-friendly gardens and areas greatly during the consultation phase of the Come Forth for Wildlife project – with an overwhelming 98% of respondents during this time stating, **'they believe wildlife friendly gardens are important'**.

The lasting imprint these habitat works will have for the benefit of people and wildlife will not only persist at the 31 habitat sites of the Come Forth for Wildlife project but nearby sites also, as the sites act as places of inspiration and examples of what can be achieved elsewhere in the future.

## **Heritage will be in better condition**

Those attending Pond Doctor events with specific queries on how to create, manage or restore ponds in their own gardens will have the skills to make heritage better via their own ponds and in turn the native species that will establish and colonise within.

The same can be stated on a wider scale following Wildlife Gardening Workshops. These workshops taught skills on a wider scale of becoming more wildlife friendly in garden and allotment settings. In addition groups were directly guided by project staff during the final element of each workshop as a wildlife friendly element was decided upon by the group and created with the help of project staff. With the 60 Wildlife Gardening Workshops run this leaves a strong legacy for the Come Forth for Wildlife project benefitting those allotments and gardens engaged with, in addition to their partner groups to learn from in the future.

In addition to the large numbers of ponds created / restored and terrestrial habitats created via the habitat works of the Come Forth for Wildlife project there has also been significant action to improve heritage through Volunteer Sessions. Volunteers to the project came together over 4 years to create and restore additional ponds as well creating a huge number of terrestrial habitats, totalling 112, across local sites. These terrestrial habitats included wildflower meadows, hibernacula, tree planting, rockeries and bog gardens among other features benefitting natural heritage.

## **Heritage will be identified and better explained**

The creation of 12 Mapestry panels and **it's subsequent Mapestry Tour around 19** venues within the Forth Valley over 1 ½ years was a fantastic way to share local

heritage with a large audience. Identifying different heritage features of the Forth Valley region as created by local communities and highlighting the attractions, landscapes, historic buildings and natural heritage around has been showcased via the Mapestry Tour. The range of venues also chosen for this tour has engaged with a wide range of audiences from shoppers to school pupils, library users and those accessing local community centres / reuse hubs among many more. The Mapestry Tour now has a longer-term legacy beyond the 18 months of the tour as long-term homes have been found for all 12 panels throughout the Forth Valley. This means the community artwork depicting the local and natural heritage of the region will be on display for many more to experience, enjoy and learn from.

The Come Forth for Wildlife project Virtual Reality Exhibitions were a fantastic way to both identify and explain heritage better via a novel and exciting method. Participants had the opportunity to engage in a 360-degree virtual journey of the **Common Toad and it's** journey back to a pond in spring, hampered by road developments. The narration throughout the experience explains this to attendees , without any outside distractions, even at busy events as they were immersed in the Virtual Reality experience both in sight and sound.

Several YouTube videos have been created and shared throughout the Come Forth for Wildlife project explaining heritage in more detail to a wide audience via an engaging, relevant method. These have been promoted throughout the project **through social media and creating 'shorts' of these videos to** boost engagement via social media posts on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. Videos have covered and described the Mapestry Tour (focussing on local and natural heritage) and a selection of the habitat sites of the project (pond creation and restoration sites across the Forth Valley) among other elements.

## **People will have learnt about heritage, leading to change in ideas and actions**

Many activities within the Come Forth for Wildlife project have impacted people's ways of thinking and acting in the environment around them. One of the Wildlife Gardening Workshops specific aims was to educate groups in wildlife friendly gardening via a presentation, group activity and hands-on tasks. From feedback we know this has changed the ways that groups manage their plots, allotments or gardens to benefit people and wildlife in the future. The same can also be said for a wider audience engaged in busy venues via the Pop-up Wildlife Gardening Workshops, who also committed to various wildlife friendly actions by pledging these on postcards at event stalls, which were later sent back to their home address.



Pond Doctor events will have had a similar impact **on people's actions in their own** gardens and local green spaces. With the opportunity for the public to ask specific questions on how to best manage or create ponds in their locality and receive bespoke advice immediately this has empowered attendees with the knowledge to learn more about natural heritage and what they can do for native species with new ideas to help their own efforts.

The numerous presentations held regarding the Come Forth for Wildlife project with a range of different audiences has increased knowledge of local and natural heritage to further groups in and around the Forth Valley region. By describing the activities of the project and showing the far-reaching and beneficial results to people and wildlife this will have inspired groups to reproduce similar actions in their local communities whilst learning how to benefit amphibians and reptiles through practical conservation, species recording, skill sharing and much more.

## STAFF RECRUITMENT

*Approved Purpose: Appoint project delivery staff (Project Manager, Project Officer, Ecologist).*

The Come Forth for Wildlife project had the same Project Manager in post throughout the four-year duration. In addition the same Project Assistant was in post for the full three-year duration of this post. With approval dated 2/2/22 an additional Project Assistant, was recruited for approximately 9 months in 2022 to aid with delivery of activities once Covid-19 restrictions had ceased and all public engagement activities could return.

The Ecologist was consistent throughout the project.

## EVALUATION & FUNDER ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Come Forth for Wildlife project has worked with an external evaluator, Deborah McNeill, throughout the project's duration. **Meetings were held with Deborah at the start of the project to develop and confirm the various methods of feedback that would be collected per activity that would both suit the format of the activity in question but also produce relevant data that could be used to interpret our impact.** Five feedback forms were created for use on the project alongside other methods of collecting feedback dependent on the activity. These included a comments book for the Mapestry Tour that would be left out for visitors, project post cards that participants would use to pledge an action for wildlife, which would later be sent back to them as a reminder, sticker boards for younger audiences and a feedback token system for groups with additional support needs.

Deborah was consulted throughout the Come Forth for Wildlife project and submitted evaluation reports at the end of years 1, 2 and 3 of the project before **submitting a final evaluation report at the project's end. All evaluation reports were sent to NLHF within quarterly progress reports. The final evaluation report from the external evaluator can be found as an appendix to this report 'Come Forth for Wildlife Year 4 Evaluation Report'.**

Internal evaluation was also undertaken at Froglife to return to project participants who indicated they would be happy to be contacted by a member of staff in the future. This gave us the opportunity to produce an internal evaluation report which **is an appendix to this report entitled 'Come Forth for Wildlife Evaluation'.**

Feedback was collected at all activities, including those activities held online when Covid-19 restrictions were active, with online feedback forms developed for this time. This feedback was reviewed every 3 months to identify any issues and meetings held with staff to discuss, review and implement any changes as needed. For example some early comments on Volunteer Sessions identified volunteers finding the sessions too short, so session duration was extended. Returning volunteers also commented on the introductory talk and quiz to sessions being the same each time, so changes were made to make this more interactive and review their species knowledge when volunteers came back to sessions.

The National Lottery Heritage Fund logo was used on all posters, documents, press releases, banner designs and other media on display / print throughout the project. A large NLHF banner was erected at ongoing habitat sites when works occurred to ensure visitors were aware of the funder and an identical NLHF banner was used at all drop-in events including Virtual Reality Exhibitions, Pond Doctor events and Pop-up Wildlife Gardening Workshops. All publications printed to use at activities, including the Garden Guardian booklet, featured the NLHF logo. Project staff featured NLHF logos and / or badges on t-shirts, hoodies and polo shirts at all times. Where any introductory talk or presentation took place at activities, NLHF were verbally mentioned as the main funder of Come Forth for Wildlife and logos included

on PowerPoint presentations. NLHF is acknowledged as the main funder on the project website and within other sources online relating to the Come Forth for Wildlife project with relevant NLHF logos used. New NLHF logos were modified and used when their format changed during the project.

Social media posts across Instagram, Facebook and Twitter were produced and released on a weekly basis regarding upcoming or undertaken activities on the Come Forth for Wildlife project. The vast majority of these have featured NLHF in post mentions (@HeritageFundUK) and / or the NLHF logo in any post attachments where relevant. Several YouTube videos were produced during the project including videos showcasing the project, describing Mapestry sessions, highlighting the Mapestry Tour and promoting the Wildlife Pond Visualiser app which displayed the NLHF logo and promoted NLHF as the main funder of the project.

**Promotions were run during NLHF's #Thankstoyou week in 2023 at the Mapestry Tour venue of Stirling University with posters and social media posts promoting the action.**

Numerous presentations and additional sessions were held throughout the project **duration and all detailed further in the earlier section 'Additional Activities'**. These undertakings displayed and verbally acknowledged NLHF.



## LESSONS LEARNED

Over the course of the Come Forth for Wildlife project many lessons have been learnt to benefit future project delivery within the sector – with these lessons learned by experience or by necessity with a large proportion of the project affected by the global pandemic of Covid-19.

### HABITAT WORKS

From both the Come Forth for Wildlife project and other Froglife projects we have discovered that it is useful to have back-up lists of habitat sites when entering into a new project where possible. It is highly likely over the course of development periods of projects and their initial delivery stages that circumstances with habitat sites will change for a variety of reasons such as use and ownership rights, conditions of the site and permissions required among many other potential factors. It would be beneficial to have a back-up list of habitat sites for ease when delivering projects where circumstances are encountered leading to habitat sites being abandoned before works are scheduled.

### EVALUATION AND FEEDBACK

One lesson learned and implemented early on within the Come Forth for Wildlife project was ensuring that feedback was reviewed within the project delivery phase with enough time to make changes if needed. Quarterly project meetings internally were already being held so this made an ideal opportunity to review and discuss feedback and suggest changes if deemed necessary. A member of the project team would review the last 3 months of feedback and comments across all public engagement deliveries and bring anything of importance, or comments etc. appearing regularly, to the meeting. We would recommend this procedure or similar is followed by future projects so minor adjustments can be made mid-project with ease to suit audiences.

### FINANCES

We feel the Come Forth for Wildlife budget was by and large ideal – with little under spend or over spend encountered across budget categories. We feel it is worth mentioning however that the ‘Contingency’ budget category was certainly of value and could have been used further if elements of the project had encountered problems outside of our control. However thankfully this was not the case in this **instance. The one budget category with the largest underspend was ‘Travel for Staff’** however this is more than likely due to the impact of Covid-19 in 2020 and 2021

reducing the travel needs of the project team with many activities being delivered online.

## **TRAINEESHIPS**

One minor idea that was thought of in the later stages on the second traineeship was the proposal for the trainee to shadow another organisation in the environmental sector for a small number of days as part of their traineeship. This would give a trainee insight into another organisation for when they are thinking about their future career, share different skills outside of the what the Come Forth for Wildlife project entailed and may give a small element to add to, and build upon, their CV. Partner organisations would be ideal for this element if planned in advance and we would recommend this is considered in future traineeships.

## **VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT**

Several methods were explored and learned in relation to recruitment of volunteers on the Come Forth for Wildlife project particularly given limited volunteer recruitment and activity during times of Covid-19 and what, for many, lead to a change in their lifestyle and / or priorities. As such various methods were implemented to ensure high numbers of volunteers still participated. Given the more rural setting of the project, posters and direct engagement was still a favourable way to recruit volunteers with social media playing a part but not to be fully relied upon for recruitment. Making attendees of other activities aware of upcoming Volunteer Sessions was vital as many within local communities were keen to do more with Froglife after a session or event had been attended. Flyers with upcoming dates and locations helped spread the word on these.

Partnering with other local groups with volunteers was also key. This was always welcomed by other local organisations looking for new activities for their volunteers and / or new areas for them to visit, thus liaison with other groups in the area of a project is one method to carry forward.

It should be noted however the location of a project, and it being largely urban, rural or a mixture of the two, will play a part in what methods are most effective for recruiting volunteers in the area.

## **ONLINE DELIVERY**

One element the project team had to learn fast was the potential for online delivery of public engagement activities on the project once the Covid-19 pandemic appeared. Online delivery played little to no part of the proposed delivery phase of the project



as intended, but quickly became a key part of engagement from March 2020 up to late 2021.

All public engagement activities were brain-stormed to see how, and if, they could occur online with lessons learned from their planning and delivery. Points of note were the success of Training Courses delivered online which were highly attended. Whilst the practical, in-person element of Training Courses should never be omitted outside of a pandemic (or other related circumstance halting social interaction) project staff did find that theory elements of the Training Course can be delivered very well online. Benefits to this included less travel for staff and attendees, less time and money booking venues and a better ability to showcase videos and photos to attendees. Project staff did receive anecdotal feedback from a number of attendees commenting that the flexibility this offered for a section of a Training Course was key in them attending. However it was important when delivering hybrid Training Courses (with online theory and in-person practical elements) that attendees understand they are expected to attend all elements – wording within the promotion of Training Courses was key to achieving this however.

Pond Doctor events **and other 'drop-in' event styles were attempted online** with interesting results. Numbers of participants to these online events were extremely low, however the quality of engagement was very high. As these events usually rely on chance encounters, passers-by and those attending a larger host event / location which the activity is a part of, this affects numbers of participants greatly when delivered online. However those that did attend these online events were extremely keen to hear from project staff. For example many online participants took project staff on virtual tours of their garden space which meant staff could directly offer many different wildlife friendly ideas having seen the garden in question. Whilst moving these events solely online is not recommended for future projects there may be a desire to take these forward in a small scale, with increased promotion and an adjusted format, for more in-depth engagement per participant.

Wildlife Gardening Workshops also ran well online during times of Covid-19, with presentations delivered online without change. Group activities and hand-on practical tasks clearly suffered though, whilst advice could be given to groups this **can't replace** the face to face and physical interaction of the latter elements of these workshops. Videos of the creation of wildlife garden models and demonstrating practical elements that could be undertaken in a plot / allotment were good substitutions at the height of Covid-19 restrictions but were correctly not carried forward beyond this time.

## OTHER SUCCESSES

Several additional events were run by the project. A launch event for Come Forth for Wildlife was held at Muiravonside Country Park in December 2019 for funders, project partners, local councils and the local community. This event included a talk on the Come Forth for Wildlife project and what was due to come, alongside a talk on amphibians and reptiles from a Froglife trustee, a talk led by NLHF staff and a chance to utilise the Virtual Reality experience.

After a vigorous selection method, the project was selected to be one of a few chosen charities represented at the Green Zone at COP26 taking place at the Science Centre in Glasgow in November 2021. Over the course of a day staff talked to delegates and attendees from a stall which housed an interactive wildlife pond display and displayed the Virtual Reality experience on tablet with an estimated attendance of 3,000 at the Green Zone that day.

The Come Forth for Wildlife was represented at an event in the Scottish Parliament as part of a ScotLINK parliamentary reception including a speech from the Scottish Green Party leader. Project staff promoted the habitat works of Come Forth for Wildlife and attendees undertook the Virtual Reality experience and learnt more about native amphibians and reptiles of the UK through models on display. One-hundred and eighty were in attendance at the reception in May 2021.

In June 2023 project staff attended the Scottish Herpetological Conference held at the University of Glasgow. A presentation was held as part of the conference on the achievements of the Come Forth for Wildlife project. Meanwhile, 60 people were engaged at a stall setup at the conference promoting the works of the project and offering the Virtual Reality experience to attendees.

The Come Forth for Wildlife project applied to the Nature of Scotland Awards 2023 in May of 2023 under the Coasts and Waters Award category. At time of writing this report shortlisting for the awards has not taken place but we look forward to hearing more news on the awards in due course.

## MEDIA IMPACT

Over the course of the Come Forth for Wildlife project the team have worked with media outlets to share project successes and engage the wider public with the activities of the Come Forth for Wildlife project. Below is a list of the project outputs in this regard;

Date	Media Type / Source	Content
November 2019	Menstrie Matters magazine	Habitat Works at Menstrie Community Woodlands
February 2020	Press release	Wildlife Pond Visualiser
February 2020	Alloa Advertiser article	Mapestry session
April 2020	BBC Radio Scotland	Wildlife Pond Visualiser
April 2020	BBC Radio Cambridgeshire	Wildlife Pond Visualiser
April 2020	Central FM	Wildlife Pond Visualiser
August 2020	Tenant Talk newsletter	Neighbourhood Wildlife Corridors
September 2021	Falkirk Herald	Volunteer Session
December 2021	Falkirk Herald press release	Virtual Reality Exhibition
February 2022	Press release	Habitat Works at Gartmorn Dam Country Park
August 2022	Falkirk Herald	Virtual Reality Exhibition
September 2022	Falkirk Herald	Volunteer Session
February 2023	Think Wildlife Foundation podcast	Come Forth for Wildlife
March 2023	Falkirk Herald	Pop-up Wildlife Gardening Workshop
May 2023	YouTube short film	Come Forth for Wildlife

Link to Come Forth for Wildlife Project Showcase Film - [www.youtube.com/watch?v=PnKPEJgAFec](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PnKPEJgAFec)



### **Pond Creation in Menstrie Community Woodlands – Come Forth for Wildlife**



Froglife's Come Forth for Wildlife project will be creating three new ponds for wildlife and a pond-dipping platform this November in Menstrie Community Woodlands.

The Come Forth for Wildlife project, funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund, is a four year project that has just begun working across the Forth Valley. The project will create and restore habitats across the Forth Valley and raise awareness of Scotland's reptiles and amphibians through the many activities and sessions planned.

The creation of new wildlife ponds will be a fantastic addition to the woodland and aid local populations of frogs, toads and newts. In addition birds, bats, mammals and insects such as dragonflies and damselflies will all benefit from the addition of the freshwater habitats which shall also increase the value of the woodlands to local groups and visitors alike. These efforts are also supported by funding from the Clackmannanshire and Stirling Environment Trust.

You can see more about Froglife's Come Forth for Wildlife project and how you can get involved on our website - [www.froglife.org](http://www.froglife.org)

- Thanks to National Lottery players, we invest money to help people across the UK explore, enjoy and protect the heritage they care about - from the archaeology under our feet to the historic parks and buildings we love, from precious memories and collections to rare wildlife. [www.heritagefund.org.uk](http://www.heritagefund.org.uk). Follow us on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram and use #NationalLottery and #NLHFsupported.

## PARTNERSHIP WORKING

During the course of the Come Forth for Wildlife project, several partner **organisations were worked with on a consistent basis at times of the project's** delivery to the benefit of both organisations and the sites / communities the project worked with.

Following a Wildlife Gardening Workshop with the, recently setup at the time, Gargunnock Community Ponds group, this group setup their own pond network in the community garden area. Extensive works on their new site in Gargunnock were toured later in 2022 when project staff delivered a Pond Doctor event at the Gargunnock Show. One of the community leaders showed staff the various ponds created of different shapes and sizes along with the creation of hibernacula.

The Bannockburn Bioblitz was setup by Wild Bannockburn with the help of Come Forth for Wildlife staff. This event was brand new, with Wild Bannockburn also a new group in 2021 setup by local students and the community. Project staff helped extensively in the first year to advise on delivery of an annual event and methods of promotion – as well as attending the event themselves with a Pond Doctor event. This proved to have good numbers in year 1 of the Bioblitz and was followed with greater numbers in year 2, witnessed alongside a Virtual Reality Exhibition delivered by project staff. The group had reported the Bioblitz would continue in its third year in 2023 and beyond – showing a lasting legacy to the Come Forth for Wildlife project in the Bannockburn area of Stirling.

The project worked alongside The Conservation Volunteers (TCV) on many occasions at habitat sites undertaking Volunteer Sessions. TCV hold regular volunteer events across the region and partnership working with them to tackle some of the more arduous practical tasks on habitat sites benefitted both organisations and gave an expand suite of training to TCV volunteers in different habitat management techniques.

During 2019 and 2020, project staff worked alongside Buglife delivering habitat works across the Falkirk region. Buglife had their own funded project in the area at the time focussing on terrestrial works at Come Forth for Wildlife habitat sites and in near vicinity of these sites. Thus collaboration in works benefitted the habitat site works, local species of flora / fauna and the local communities.

Come Forth for Wildlife worked with the RSPB throughout the project duration, working on two RSPB sites at RSPB Skinflats and RSPB Loch Lomond. Events were also held alongside and in collaboration with the RSPB – offering their supporters knowledge on amphibians, reptiles and ponds.

