

Creating Natural Connections in Cumbernauld



Natural heritage will be better managed and in better condition



Cumbernauld's woodland network constitutes a major element of its natural heritage. The potential of this network to provide ecological connections was shown in 2013 when camera traps captured the presence of a pine marten; the first recorded sighting much further south of its previously known range. The network of woodlands across the town has meant that pine marten have been able to recover in this densely urban area. However this woodland network and other natural heritage in the town is at risk.

Our Heritage



The many woodlands, parks and open spaces across the town play a crucial role in providing a range of habitats for wildlife as well as opportunities for local people.



The mosaic of habitats creates stepping stones in the network for UK BAP priority species like the small pearl-bordered fritillary.



© Katrina Martin/2020Vision

Areas of ancient semi-natural woodland, such as Cumbernauld Glen, are home to native oak and bluebells and they provide excellent opportunities to see wildlife.



Local greenspaces like Ravenswood Local Nature Reserve create ideal habitats for invertebrates and amphibians.

... is at risk



Dense, inappropriate woodland planting threatens native woodland biodiversity and creates a negative perception of community safety.



Invasive non-native plant species such as rhododendron ponticum (growing here on LHS of road) threaten Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (located on RHS).



Fire damage and other anti-social behaviour is threatening natural heritage and people's enjoyment of Cumbernauld's greenspaces.



Important sites such as Luggiebank Wood wildlife reserve are isolated in a landscape of industrial and residential development.

Creating a community network that connects more people to nature



“Creating Natural Connections” will broaden the reach and scope of successful activities with local young people and volunteers. It will reach out to new target audiences, such as those living in deprived areas, the unemployed, the disabled and people at risk of mental health issues. Working with local partners, we will encourage diverse groups from across the community to become involved in developing and delivering Neighbourhood Action Plans to improve local natural heritage. Activities delivered by local people will be complemented by larger-scale works to enhance biodiversity and access on urban greenspaces.

Build capacity



Local groups and organisations will come together to help create the Neighbourhood Action Plans for their greenspaces.



The activities carried out by young people will inspire others in the community to get involved and take action.



The Nature Ninjas volunteers will be expanded to offer a more diverse range of people the opportunity to get involved and support the work of local groups.



Training will increase community capacity and Continuing Professional Development sessions with teachers and health/social care providers will help to build a legacy.

...with new audiences



Creating new opportunities will develop skills for young people at risk of disengaging from school and employment.



Taking natural heritage to new places will help us reach more people as shown by the previous Living Windows project.



Working with local partners such as Police Scotland Volunteers at fun events like Hallow"scream" in the Glen connects us to a wider audience.



Wild Ways Well sessions will bring together the benefits of natural places and proven Five Ways to Wellbeing methodology to improve mental health.

Getting the word out

CUMBERNAULD LIVING LANDSCAPE

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A PLACE FOR PEOPLE AND WILDLIFE TO THRIVE

A rare pine marten sighting was recorded in Forest Wood recently. By restoring our green space, wildlife will continue its comeback in Cumbernauld.

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YouTube **cumbernauld living landscape**

0:13 / 2:20

Making the Living Windows

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Cumbernauld Living Landscape
Published by Tracy Lambert (?) · May 24 at 12:00pm

I was sent this image of a painting by local artist Bobby Rennie, Bobby attended the Cumbernauld glen Bluebell walk at the end of April and was inspired to create this beautiful scene.

Thank you for sharing with us Bobby 😊

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2,291 people reached

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7th September 2016

Read on to find out more about our new vacancy for a Volunteer Community Engagement & Education Intern

CUMBERNAULD LIVING LANDSCAPE
NATURE NINJA
LOTTERY FUNDED

Taking a walk on the wild side is reaping fitness benefits for conservation volunteers.

FIONA RUSSELL

Helpers on wildlife projects are burning off calories, walking miles and having fun as well as transforming their local environment

Getting fit is second nature to the Ninja volunteers

Maurice's Pond, Ravenswood Local Nature Reserve and Cumbernauld Glen Wildlife Trust.

Volunteer work has included clearing non-native invasive species, maintaining paths to improve access and planting wildflowers and trees.

Tracy Lambert, the project's community engagement officer, said: "It's easy to forget about the physical and health benefits of volunteering but the evidence shows people who spend more time in nature are healthier, happier and more engaged with the environment.

"People are always surprised when they find out just how active they get when they come to help us improve their local nature reserves. And it's so much cheaper than a gym membership."

Paul Barclay is a natural networks officer with community volunteering charity TCV Scotland. He said: "The Cumbernauld Living Landscape project is win-win for all.

"The hard work of the volunteers makes an incredible contribution to nature and Cumbernauld, plus the Nature Ninjas reap the benefits for their own good health."

Cumbernauld Living Landscape is a partnership project with nature conservation charity SWT, North Lanarkshire Council and Forestry Commission Scotland.

SWT receive financial support from a range of groups, including Scottish Natural Heritage and players of People's Postcode Lottery.

An SWT spokesman said: "The aim of the project and others like it is to reinforce and expand existing green networks and reconnect people to the natural environment."

For more info, see cumbernauldlivinglandscape.org.uk, log on to scotishwildlifetrust.org.uk/how-you-can-help/volunteer or visit www.tcv.org.uk/scotland

Join me on my adventures in Scotland's great outdoors by checking out my award-winning website at www.fionaoutdoors.co.uk - you'll find lots of great information about walking, cycling, running and other outdoor activities, as well as kit reviews.

Advice and ideas