



GET
INVOLVED
TODAY!

CREATING NATURAL CONNECTIONS WILD WAYS WELL LEADERSHIP PACK



CUMBERNAULD LIVING LANDSCAPE

Cumbernauld is an incredibly green place, with parks, nature reserves and most people living within ten minutes of one of these greenspaces.

The Cumbernauld Living Landscape team are improving these outdoor spaces for people and wildlife - and helping everyone in the community to connect with nature on their doorstep.

Cumbernauld Living Landscape is a partnership between the Scottish Wildlife Trust, North Lanarkshire Council, The Conservation Volunteers and Sanctuary Scotland, James Hutton Institute.

In January 2019, we were awarded a £1.37 million National Lottery Heritage Fund grant, along with generous support from North Lanarkshire Council and other donors, amounting to a £2.1 million investment in a four-year programme putting wildlife and people at the heart of Cumbernauld's future.

This funding allows the Cumbernauld Living Landscape team to deliver transformational improvements to Cumbernauld's environment with a long-term change in the way the town's people connect with nature. Our collaboration with the community and local schools, countryside rangers, landscape architects, and landowners is key to our success.

We have a long history of working closely with the local community. Since 2013, we've been working together to improve Cumbernauld's outdoor spaces including improving accessibility to parks, restoring peat bogs to reduce flooding, creating wildflower meadows to support insects, connecting young people to nature through outdoor education sessions, improving woodlands by planting native tree species, and supporting health and wellbeing through our Wild Ways Well programme.

We continue to work in partnership to ensure our activities remain responsive to the needs of the community and instil long-term community ownership.

PROJECT
PARTNERS



FUNDERS



THE FIVE WAYS TO WELLBEING

Spending time with nature improves wellbeing

Spending time outdoors, amongst nature, makes people feel better about their lives.

Wild Ways Well encourages people suffering from, or at risk of, poor mental health out into the greenspaces of Cumbernauld. Whilst out amongst the trees, parks and reserves participants get a chance to slow down, relax and enjoy being in the company of other people.

All sessions include a walk, a chance to safely socialise with other people over a hot drink (often round a fire) and opportunities to try a variety of environmental and conservation related activities designed to fit in with the internationally recognised Five Ways to Wellbeing mental health framework.

Wild Ways Well sessions are developed to make use of the 5 Ways to Wellbeing:

- Be Active
- To Connect
- Give
- Take Notice,
- Keep Learning

We use our local greenspaces to create opportunities which encourage social interaction, physical activity, mindfulness, learning about nature, and contributing to the community.

There is no end to the creative ways we can find to make use of the natural world to offer these benefits.

Almost everything we do will make use of more than one way to wellbeing.



BE ACTIVE – Take part in health walks and practical outdoor activities. Explore your local paths, woods and greenspaces.

CONNECT – Meet new people. Connect with the people, the wildlife and the nature that's all around us.



GIVE – Your time to be in nature. Give something back by sharing experiences and undertaking conservation tasks.

TAKE NOTICE – Note the changing cycles of life. Use your senses. Listen to birds, smell the flowers, live in the moment.



LEARN – Identify plants and wildlife, try new crafts, learn new skills. Discover things about nature and about yourself.

ACTIVITIES USING THE FIVE WAYS TO WELLBEING



Below are some examples of how we utilise the outdoors in tandem with the 5 Ways to Wellbeing...

Nature Walks (Connect and Be Active):

Walking in nature is a great and simple way to bring people to together and create space for conversation while enjoying the beauty of the outdoors. Plan walks to cater to the ability levels of your participants, keeping them active but not intimidated

Outdoor Group Discussions (Connect, Give, and Learn):

Facilitate discussions about nature, wildlife, and environmental conservation. This can be done during breaks on a walk, while having a cup of tea, or even best sitting around a campfire.

Sharing what they find (Take Notice, Connect, Give, and Learn):

Let your participants explore an area and find what catches their eye, triggers their memory, or inspires them. They can then partner with someone in the group and talk about their what they found and why they chose it.

Outdoor Games (Connect, Be Active, Take Notice):

Incorporate games that require physical activity, such as a scavenger hunt or a friendly competition to identify different types of plants or animals. Playing I-Spy in pairs can be a great way to get everyone up and paying attention.

Mindfulness Activities (Take Notice, Learn):

Encourage participants to engage in mindfulness activities, such as listening to birdsong, observing the movement of leaves in the wind, or feeling the texture of tree bark. Make these activities more engaging by having everyone try to repeat the songs they hear or trying to recognise trees or plants while closing their eyes. Giving a simple task, like counting the times a tree forks from the ground to the tip of a branch can provide focus when it is otherwise difficult.

MORE EXAMPLES.....

Nature Journaling (Take Notice, Give)

Participants can keep a journal of their observations and experiences in nature, helping them to focus and take notice of their surroundings. Photo journals can offer the same while feeling easier for some to share with others in the group.

Guest Speakers (Connect, Learn, Take Notice)

Invite experts to give talks and share their knowledge with the group about subjects like plant id, mushroom foraging, animal tracking, conserving a particular environment, or rewilding.

Conservation Projects (Give, Learn, and Be Active)

Organize projects where participants can give back to nature, such as tree planting, trail maintenance, or litter-picking.

Make the students into teachers (Give, Connect, Learn)

Encourage participants to share their knowledge and experiences with others, perhaps by leading a workshop, mentoring a new participant, or sharing their nature journal entries.

Remember, the key is to tailor these activities to the interests, abilities, and experiences of your participants.



ADAPTING THE 'FIVE WAYS' TO YOUR GROUP

You can adapt each of the 5 Ways to Wellbeing to the specific group. Consider the interests, abilities, and accessibility needs of your participants when planning sessions.

Ensure physical accessibility by choosing wheelchair-friendly paths for nature walks and modifying games to accommodate different abilities. Take mobility into account when making any plans.

Make learning accessible to all, being considerate of individuals' level of current understanding. Promote inclusivity by choosing conservation projects that everyone can participate in, regardless of physical ability. Encourage all participants to share their personal experiences and learning, valuing each person's experience without comparison.

Embrace technology to create virtual connections for those who can't physically attend. Record walks or share the photos online to reach a wider audience who may not be able to access the service.

Remember, the key is to ensure that everyone feels included and able to participate in a way that suits them best. It's also important to ask participants about their needs and preferences, as they are the experts on their own experiences and abilities.



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CREATING RISK ASSESSMENTS

Risk Assessments are a key step in keeping our groups safe. When we are planning sessions, they guide our preparations and planning.

The steps to preparing a risk assessment are simple but must be done in the early stages of planning a session, usually during or immediately after a site visit. Identify potential hazards, who might be harmed (will any vulnerable groups be present?), how harm might occur, and the measures in place to control risks and address the needs of any vulnerable group at risk.

Below is an example of a simple risk assessment done in a format that can be adapted to any activity.

- **Activity:** Toasting S'mores Around a Campfire

- **Hazards Identified:**

1. Fire: Risk of fire spreading or individuals getting too close and getting burnt.
2. Smoke Inhalation: Smoke from the fire can cause discomfort or respiratory issues.
3. Food Safety: Improper food handling can lead to foodborne illnesses.
4. Tripping/Falling: Uneven ground around the campfire area can lead to trips and falls.
5. Allergies: Participants may have allergies to ingredients in the s'mores.

- **Risk Control Measures:**

1. Fire:
 1. Ensure the fire is contained within a designated fire pit or ring.
 2. Have a responsible adult supervise the fire at all times.
 3. Keep a bucket of water nearby. A fire blanket is a good additional control
 4. Ensure participants know how to stop, drop, and roll if their clothing catches fire.
2. Smoke Inhalation:
 1. Position seating upwind of the smoke when possible.
 2. Encourage participants to move away from the smoke if it's causing discomfort.
3. Food Safety:
 1. Ensure hands are washed before handling food.
 2. Store food properly prior to cooking.
4. Tripping/Falling:
 1. Clear the area around the fire of trip hazards.
 2. Ensure the area is well-lit so participants can see where they're going.
5. Allergies:
 1. Check for food allergies among participants before the activity.
 2. Have an alternative snack available for those who can't eat s'mores.

- **Emergency Procedures:**

- Ensure a first aid kit is available and that at least one adult present is trained in first aid.
- Have emergency contact numbers readily available.
- If the site is remote, ensure you have a plan for how to get help in case of an emergency.
- Remember, this is a basic example, and you may need to add more details or take additional precautions depending on the specific circumstances of your activity. Always follow local regulations and guidelines when having a fire or planning any potentially risky activity.

SCOTTISH OUTDOOR ACCESS CODE(SOAC) AND SITE PERMISSIONS

The Scottish Right to Roam, as outlined in the Outdoor Access Code, is a legal principle that grants everyone the freedom to access most land and inland water in Scotland for recreational, educational, and certain other purposes. This right is subject to responsible behaviour, which includes respecting the privacy and livelihoods of landowners, as well as the environment and natural habitats. The right does not apply to motorized activities, hunting, or fishing without specific permission. Certain areas, such as private gardens, crop fields, and other specified lands are excluded from this right. Importantly, the right to roam does not negate the need for landowner permission for certain activities or in certain areas. It's a balance between public access and respect for private property and nature.

Despite the amazing 'Right to Roam' we benefit from here in Scotland, there are still situations where you need to get the landowner's permission. For example, if you want to conduct activities like camping in certain areas, organizing a large event, or collecting plants. Obtaining permission helps maintain good relationships for future activities. Unauthorized activities on private land can lead to conflicts with landowners and potential legal issues.

Demonstrating Demand: In addition to improving our relations with landowners, we can often help the greenspaces we visit by seeking permission. When landowners and managers, such as the Scottish Wildlife Trust or local councils, are aware of the groups using their lands these records allow them to demonstrate demand and apply for funding or allocate budget in order to better care for the space and improve access.

Enjoy Scotland's outdoors responsibly

- **take responsibility for your own actions**
- **respect the interests of other people**
- **care for the environment.**



**KNOW THE CODE
BEFORE YOU GO**
outdooraccess-scotland.scot

COLLECTING NATURAL MATERIALS AND THE WILDLIFE & COUNTRYSIDE ACT

Foraging and Landowner Permission: When foraging, it's important to remember that while the right to roam is protected by law in Scotland, it's illegal to uproot any wild plant without permission from the landowner or occupier. Furthermore, it's illegal to collect wild plants or fungi on a National Nature Reserve (NNR) or a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) without express permission. Schedule 8 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act provides a list of protected plant species that it is illegal to pick, uproot, or destroy. Most of these plants are rare and you are unlikely to find them without looking, but if you are in doubt about whether a plant is rare or endangered, leave it alone.

- Non-native invasive species are subject to strict controls. Understand the potential ecological impact of their spread and subsequent legal controls before collection.
- **Always** get permission from those who manage the land, you do not know if there are works in the area of if the plants have been sprayed.
- Give extra consideration to wildlife reserves too they are looked after primarily for the wildlife, you could be damaging or removing valuable habitat.



The 'Honourable Harvest' is a set of principles that guide the ethical collection of plants and other natural resources. It emphasises respect, gratitude, and reciprocity towards the plants and animals that we take from the earth. 'The Honourable Harvest' asks us to take only what is given, to use it well, to be grateful for the gift, and to reciprocate the kindness of the plants and animals that sustain us, in all our actions. It's a practice that fosters a deep relationship with the natural world, promoting sustainable and mindful consumption.

Whether for crafts, food, shelter, or fuel, we are considerate of our impact on the living things we share the space with taking no more than 2% to allow it continued growth. Take too much and the plant will not return. You are not alone in foraging!

See on the next page that we are also award winning!



Keep Scotland
Beautiful

Your charity for Scotland's environment

Beautiful Scotland Discretionary Award winner 2023

Cumbernauld's Bloomin' Wild

Health and Wellbeing Award

Barry Fisher, Chief Executive, Keep Scotland Beautiful

www.keeptoscotlandbeautiful.org

We support the ambitions of the
United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

**SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

Alex Cumming
SAMH, Executive Director of Operations

Supporting Scotland's
mental health for
100 YEARS



Links

Wild Ways Well

www.cumbernauldlivinglandscape.org.uk/project/wild-ways-well

The Conservation Volunteers www.tcv.org.uk/scotland

The Scottish Wildlife Trust www.scottishwildlifetrust.org.uk

The Five Ways to Wellbeing

www.gov.uk/government/publications/five-ways-to-mental-wellbeing

Our Natural Health Service

www.nature.scot/professional-advice/contributing-healthier-scotland/our-natural-health-service

NHS Mental Health

www.healthscotland.scot/health-topics/mental-health-and-wellbeing

SamH www.samh.org.uk

Indoor and outdoor activities www.cumbernauldlivinglandscape.org.uk/activities

Elament 19 ways to stay connected to nature www.elament.org.uk/media/2229/19-ways-to-stay-connected-2.pdf

The Samaritans—call them anytime on **116 123**

www.samaritans.org/samaritans-in-scotland

Breathing Space—call 0800 83 85 87

Shout—text 85258

Scottish Outdoor Access Code:

[NatureScot \(outdooraccess-scotland.scot\)](http://NatureScot (outdooraccess-scotland.scot))



Cumbernauld Living Landscape is a partnership between the Scottish Wildlife Trust, North Lanarkshire Council, Sanctuary Scotland, the James Hutton Institute and TCV – The Conservation Volunteers.

cumbernauldlivinglandscape.org.uk

5-7 Napier Way, Wardpark North,
Cumbernauld, G68 0EH

E cumbernauld@scottishwildlifetrust.org.uk

f CumbernauldLivingLandscape

t @WildCumbernauld

Partners



Funders



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