

Forth Environment Link

Linking people and the environment for a
greener, healthier future



ANNUAL REPORT
April 2011 to March 2012

FORTH ENVIRONMENT LINK – WHO WE ARE



*Biodiversity Workshop
Forth Valley Orchards' Training Programme 2011/2012*

Forth Environment Link began as the Kippen Nature Club in 1989 with the aim of teaching children about biodiversity and nature. In response to community need and interest, the organisation grew in both mandate and geography, expanding to include adult education and demonstration projects. In 2005 the organisation was reconstituted as Forth Environment Link - a company limited by guarantee with charitable status, serving three local authority areas – Stirling, Clackmannanshire and Falkirk. In 2008 Forth Valley Food Links merged with Forth Environment Link, bringing an additional focus on sustainable local food production and consumption.

OUR VISION

Linking people and the environment for a greener, healthier future

OUR AIMS

We work with others on environmental and food issues to:

- Encourage and support involvement, learning and practical action
- Educate and raise awareness
- Create and develop new ideas



PEOPLE



Forth Environment Link Board

Board of Directors

- Kate Sankey (Chair)
- Roderick Lawson (Treasurer)
- Janey Brown
- John Lamond
- Helen Morrison
- Gary Walker
- Sheila Winstone

Staff as at 31st March 2012

- Diane Alderdice - Project Co-ordinator, Forth Valley Orchards' Initiative
- Jane Cullingworth - Executive Director
- Amparo Echenique - Project Assistant, Forth Valley Orchards' Initiative
- Alison Hyslop - Administrator
- Judi Legg - Outdoor Learning and Play Adviser
- Kelly Rice - Communication Co-ordinator, Zero Waste Volunteer Scheme
- Donna Rodgers - Volunteer Co-ordinator, Zero Waste Volunteer Scheme



Staff outside FEL offices



Volunteers at the William Wallace Monument, Stirling

Volunteers

Volunteers play a key role in the life of Forth Environment Link. We are most grateful to this exceptional group of people for their very significant contribution to all aspects of our work. Volunteers are at the front-line of what we do with communities as well as supporting us behind the scenes. We would not be able to accomplish all that we do without our volunteers. THANK YOU!



MESSAGE FROM BOARD CHAIR - KATE SANKEY

LOOKING BACK

The past year has been a productive and exciting one for Forth Environment Link. We have engaged with many communities across the Forth Valley on a diversity of projects.



Our work in supporting and expanding Forth Valley's Orchards has flourished, and this year resulted in over twenty community members taking a Certificate Course in Orchard Care & Management, as well as the undertaking of a feasibility study into the economic potential of orchards.



The goal of a Zero Waste Scotland and practical strategies for getting there was promoted by our dynamic group of community volunteers in a range of venues from food festivals to community libraries.



Local food was celebrated through the Grow Forth local food summit, and created an opportunity for community groups to learn from, and network with one another. Out of this event the seeds were sown for a Grow Forth local food network across the Forth Valley. We also worked with local communities in Broomridge and Raploch to promote skills in local food production.



We worked closely with Stirling's schools and nurseries, providing tools and techniques for outdoor learning and play. We developed an exciting new partnership with the Little Stars Nursery at Craigforth which is now hosting our Library and Museum of Natural Artefacts.



Grow Forth Local Summit



MESSAGE FROM BOARD CHAIR - Continued

It was a busy year for organisational change. FEL moved offices in August to Earls Gate House. We also undertook a strategic planning process which resulted in a new vision and set of aims that better reflects the diversity of our work. A rebranding exercise grew out of this work and is reflected in our new logo. Our website moved from a traditional static site to a social networking site.

On behalf of the Board I would like to offer many thanks. Firstly, to our staff whose commitment and passion reflects that working at FEL is much more than a job – it is a way of life! This year we welcomed Amparo Echenique and Judi Legg (back) to our team, and bade a fond farewell to Toni Clark and Caroline Kemp. I offer our sincere gratitude to our passionate team of volunteers who play such a vital role in our work, particularly at the grass-roots level. Finally, we greatly appreciate the partnership and support of our many funders and community partners. Together we link people and the environment for a greener, healthier future.



Apple display at the FVO Weekend

LOOKING FORWARD

2012-2013 promises to be a full and exciting year. Our work developing the Forth Valley Orchards' Initiative will be ongoing with an expanded reach into schools, and our waste reduction awareness will continue through the Zero Waste Volunteer Scheme. Our development work will focus on creating a Grow Forth local food network across the Forth Valley, as well as taking on the hosting of the Cycle Stirling initiative. Through our consulting arm, we will work closely with the Braehead and Culterhove communities on initiatives to create resident-managed community spaces. If you are interested in joining us to help link people and the environment, please get in touch on 01786 449215.

Kate Sankey



PROGRAMMES AND ACTIVITIES 2011-2012

The Forth Valley Orchards' Initiative



The third year of the initiative was the most successful yet in creating new orchards through the Central Scotland Green Network Orchard Grant Scheme, involving communities and building orchard care & management expertise, and networking the Forth Valley 'orchard family'. We were honoured to be selected as one of the Central Scotland Green Network's Case Studies for the year, and to present at the first CSGN Forum for 2011/2012.

The initiative was funded by the Central Scotland Green Network Development Fund 2011.

Facts and figures

- £17,095 of CSGN Orchard Grant Scheme funding awarded to 61 projects
- An estimated 11+ hectares of new orchards were established with a total of 907 trees of 9 species (124 trees of unknown species) and 123 varieties, planted through the CSGN Orchard Grant Scheme 2011/2012
- 71 individuals made 116 bookings for 9 orchard training workshops
- 23 individuals completed the pilot Certificate in Orchard Care & Management delivered in conjunction with Elmwood College
- 2 orchard celebration events (Forth Valley Orchards' Day and Grow Forth) were held with a footfall of over 2,600 people
- New 'Forth Valley Scrumpers' Network' established
- Forth Valley Orchards Group in its third year supporting the initiative's development

"The Forth Valley Orchards' Initiative has enabled a number of community groups in the Stirling Council area to plant their own community orchard. It is exciting to see communities being empowered in this way and the training and support provided by Forth Environment Link is exemplary."

Councillor Ian Brown, Stirling Council.



The Orchard Care & Management Certificate Awardees



Forth Valley Zero Waste Volunteer Scheme



The Zero Waste Volunteer Scheme is a volunteer-run project. The project aims to recruit and train volunteers on waste prevention campaigns including: Love Food Hate Waste; Home Composting; and Recycle for Scotland. These volunteers then use this training and knowledge to promote waste prevention in their communities and throughout the whole of the Forth Valley.

The project was funded by the Scottish Government's Zero Waste Scotland Programme.

Facts and Figures

- 45 were active volunteers throughout the year
- Volunteers contributed 1,788 hours and attended 650 hours of training
- Volunteers attended 116 community events, 73 training events, and spoke to 3,142 people

"Volunteering with the Zero Waste Volunteer Scheme has been an excellent experience. Not only have I learned many new ways to cut down on my own waste, but I have been able to spread the word throughout my local community, including friends and family. I feel that I am truly making a difference."

Jonathan Rice, Zero Waste Volunteer

"As a volunteer, I really feel that I'm part of a lovely family at Forth Environment Link."

Zero Waste Volunteer



Zero Waste volunteers at the Grow Forth event



Cornton Fun day





The aim of our outdoor learning work is to transform schools and other educational grounds into stimulating learning spaces to support all areas of the formal and informal curriculum. Forth Environment Link offered customised support and advice to Stirling Council schools and offered Continuing Professional Development (CPD) training and twilight sessions. Education was provided primarily to teachers but also directly to children.

Our approach to learning has a biodiversity focus, and supports the Curriculum for Excellence and outdoor learning. We entered into a partnership with Little Stars Nursery who now house our Learning Library. Also in the year the library became part of the LiCS scheme (Libraries in Central Scotland). Forth Environment Link is a registered provider of Continuing Professional Development with Education Scotland.

This service was funded through a Service Level Agreement with Stirling Council.

Facts and figures

- *Customised support was provided to 24 of Stirling's schools and nurseries*
- *Seven CPD sessions were attended by 70 teachers*
- *Partnership working with the Woodland Trust, Grounds for Learning, Forest Education Initiative, and Little Stars Nursery*
- *FEL participated in the Global Citizenship Event*

*"Please continue your excellent courses. This year in particular the courses have been superb."
"I am excited to try the ideas back at school."*

Teachers at CPD training



Materials to be used for Outdoor Learning Activities



Hibernation Home or Bug's Hotel



Grow Forth Local Food Summit



FEL was contracted by Low Carbon Stirling to organise a summit to celebrate local food. The event, held in February 2012, was attended by over 200 people. The event was an opportunity for food enthusiasts to talk to a wide range of individuals and groups about local food – eating it, growing it, sourcing it, cooking it and composting it. The event created much interest and became the basis for a project to create a local food network across the Forth Valley.

The Food Summit was funded by Low Carbon Stirling, a partnership between Stirling Council and Going Carbon Neutral Stirling.

Facts and figures

- 100% of individuals attending the Grow Forth event said it gave them the opportunity to meet and talk to people they did not already know
- 93% were positive about the creation of a Grow Forth Network

“Very good to see so much going on in this area.”

“Engaging the next generation is so important. Keep up the momentum.”

“We had a great day! Wonderful to see so many people in Stirling who care and are inspired.”

Participants at the Local Food Summit



The Grow Forth Advisory Group at the Local Food Summit event 2012





FEL undertook several consulting contracts in the local community to provide advice, workshops and training on food growing and programme development. Work was undertaken for Keep Scotland Beautiful, Low Carbon Raploch, Edible Broomridge, Falkirk Community Trust, and Falkirk Council.

- In the Raploch community we provided training to local residents in food growing and gardening skills
- In the Broomridge community we provided Square Foot Gardening and food miles workshops as part of the Edible Broomridge food event
- In the Callendar House Walled Garden we provided workshops to local children and families to promote the heritage of the garden

“The food miles workshop was a huge success. People were still talking about it months later. It really made people think about where food came from, etc., and definitely changed their shopping habits for the better. We are well indebted to FEL for the many workshops they held and the message they got across - very effective.”

Ann Rogerson, Chair Broomridge Community Council

“The expertise that FEL brought to the development of school workshops and associated kits was invaluable. It has been a pleasure to work with an organisation that understands what it is that we are aiming to achieve.”

Nikki Stevens, Falkirk Community Trust



*Training event at Callendar House
Walled Garden*



*Planting a garden with
Primary 4 children from
Raploch Primary School*



FUNDING AND FINANCES

Forth Environment Link depends on grant funding to finance our projects. We are extremely grateful to all of our funding partners for their ongoing support. We continue to work on developing new revenue streams in order to build our capacity to serve our communities. The breakdown of funding for this year is as follows:

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

For the Year Ended 31 March, 2012

	2012 £	2011 £
INCOMING RESOURCES		
Voluntary income	632	1,450
Grants	155,959	144,583
Earned income	11,029	7,373
Total Incoming Resources	167,620	153,406
RESOURCES EXPENDED		
Costs of charitable activities	155,594	179,536
Governance costs	1,704	2,330
Total Resources Expended	157,298	181,866
NET INCOMING/OUTGOING RESOURCES	10,322	(28,460)
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS		
Total Funds Brought Forward	24,069	52,529
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD	34,391	24,069





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Forth Environment Link is a registered charity and company limited by guarantee

Charity No: SCO 019276

Company No: SC 286723

FORTH ENVIRONMENT LINK IS SUPPORTED BY:

Bringing change to life



Central Scotland Green Network



Scottish Natural Heritage
Dualchas Nàdair na h-Alba

All of nature for all of Scotland
Nàdar air fad airson Alba air fad

The Caram Charitable Trust



Forestry Commission Scotland
Coimisean na Coilltearachd Alba



Material change for
a better environment