



MESSAGE FROM BOARD CHAIR KATE SANKEY

Reflecting on our achievement each year reminds me of just what a range of activity Forth Environment Link is involved in and this year is no exception. As an organisation we are continuing to evolve in both scope and capacity. The link between all our project activity is strong and new connections are being made all the time. Cycling promotion remains high on our agenda with Stirling Cycle Hub's fantastic ongoing and growing work to raise the profile of cycling and to improve access and confidence for all, to cycling in the area. We also continue to support Cycle Stirling as part of the wider cycle community. Exciting proposals to develop a cycle hire scheme in Stirling have been agreed with Transport Scotland and we look forward to working with Nextbike to implement the scheme in the year ahead.

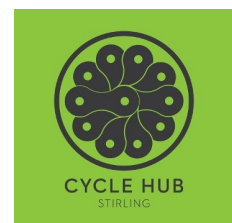
Investment in capacity, skills and education around Scottish orchards has continued with our Forth Valley Orchards programme. We have also seen local businesses capitalising on the value of orchards through our support which will ensure sustainability. Local food and its value to our environment, economy and health has also been emphasised through our continuing investment in our Grow Forth Network. Food has also played an important part of our Zero Waste Scotland work through our Love Food, Hate Waste workshops and we have developed a volunteer programme including work with targeted communities to improve waste and recycling targets across Forth Valley.

Providing direct support to individual communities is something we are passionate about at FEL, and this has continued within the communities of Breahead and Culthenove where we have applied our experience to community planning and engagement through our consultancy work.

We do this work with a small but committed team of staff and volunteers whose enthusiasm and knowledge drive forward our work and the partnerships which make our continuing success possible. This year we said goodbye to Iona Shepherd and Trustee Helen Morrison both of whom will be missed from the team and whose contribution will leave a lasting legacy. FEL will continue to strive to work on projects and within communities where our aim of linking people with the environment can be realised and rewarded. This report celebrates the work of our team and the photographs tell the stories! You will read about some of the highlights of the year, none of which can be achieved without the support from our many community partners and funders. I feel a real sense of excitement about what FEL has achieved this year and how this foundation provides an excellent launch pad for the year ahead. Thank you to everyone who has made it possible and I look forward to the next stage of our journey together.



Kate Sankey



PEOPLE



The FEL Team—Past and Present

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Kate Sankey (Chair)
- Roderick Lawson (Treasurer)
- John Lamond
- Peter Stott
- Paul Smith
- Sheila Winstone
- Helen Morrison (out-going Feb 2014)

STAFF from 1st April 2013 to Present

- Jane Cullingworth—Executive Director out-going May 2014
- Clara Walker—Executive Director in-coming May 2014
- Amparo Echenique—FEL Administration Officer and Support Officer, Forth Valley Orchards out-going April 2014; and Support Officer, Stirling Cycle Hub as of April 2014
- Vicky Vincent—FEL Administration Officer and Support Officer, Zero Waste Communities Initiative in-coming June 2014
- Kelly Rice—Project Co-ordinator, Zero Waste Communities Initiative
- Donna Rodgers—Volunteer Co-ordinator, Zero Waste Communities Initiative out-going April 2014
- Diane Alderdice—Project Co-ordinator, Forth Valley Orchards Initiative
- Margaret Miller—Schools Officer, Forth Valley Orchards Initiative
- Sadie Flanagan—Support Officer, Forth Valley Orchards Initiative in-coming May 2014
- Emily Harvey— Project Co-ordinator, Grow Forth Food Network
- Graham McQueen—Project Co-ordinator, Stirling Cycle Hub
- Ray Burr—Support Officer, Stirling Cycle Hub
- Iona Sheppard—Support Officer, Stirling Cycle Hub out-going March 2014

Volunteers

We would like to acknowledge and thank our fabulous team of volunteers who support all aspects of FEL's work. Volunteers contribute significantly to our work and enable us to reach more broadly and deeply into many communities across the Forth Valley.

PROGRAMMES AND ACTIVITIES 2013—2014

ZERO WASTE VOLUNTEER SCHEME



ZERO WASTE COMMUNITIES INITIATIVE



FORTH VALLEY ORCHARDS INITIATIVE



GROW FORTH



CONSULTATION SERVICES



CULTENHOVE



CYCLE STIRLING



STIRLING CYCLE HUB



“Linking people and the environment for a greener, healthier future”



ZERO WASTE VOLUNTEER SCHEME



The Zero Waste Volunteer Scheme aimed to recruit and train volunteers on waste prevention campaigns including: Love Food Hate Waste; Home Composting and Recycle for Scotland.

Volunteers 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. *The project ran from April 2012 to June 2013.*

Project Co-ordinators were Kelly Rice and Donna Rodgers.



Facts and Figures:

- 126 events were attended
- 3159 people were engaged
- 65 training events for volunteers were held
- 45 volunteers were registered with the project, with an average of 16-31 being active every month
- 2550 hours of volunteer time contributed

ZERO WASTE COMMUNITIES INITIATIVE



The Zero Waste Communities Initiative is a new project funded by Zero Waste Scotland, which builds on the successes of the previous Volunteer Scheme. The Project enables us to work closely within targeted communities across the Forth Valley area, and focuses on encouraging and supporting communities to reduce waste through various activities and events.

Project Coordinators are Kelly Rice and Donna Rodgers.



Facts and Figures:

- 35 events attended
- 639 people have been engaged with
- 151 household waste surveys completed
- 128 Event surveys completed
- 20 volunteers are registered with the project
- 16 community advocates are registered with the project
- Data collection covering 12,090 households was completed in October 2013



FORTH VALLEY ORCHARDS INITIATIVE



FORTH VALLEY ORCHARDS

The Forth Valley Orchards' team continued its successful programme of community and landowner involvement, to inspire and engage people in the planting, care and use of orchards across Forth Valley and Central Scotland Green Network areas, through a broad program of works including the CSGN Orchard Grant Scheme and CSGN Orchard Futures Fund.

The initiative was funded by the Central Scotland Green Network Development Fund 2013.

Facts and figures:

- £10,000 of CSGN Orchard Grant Scheme 2013 was awarded to 33 projects
- A tailored package of support was given to 5 schools funded through the CSGN Orchard Grant Scheme 2013 (Riverside PS, St Modan's HS, Larbert HS, Bantaskin PS and Comely Park PS)
- A schools networking day was held at Callendar House, Falkirk for 51 pupils and 7 adults
- Research undertaken by SKS Scotland CIC and Adrian Kitchen on 'The Future of Forth Valley Orchards' and 'FEL Orchard Support Service Business Plan'
- £14,600 awarded to 2 businesses under the CSGN Orchard Futures Fund 2013
- An estimated 1.45 hectares of new orchards were established with a total of 435 trees of 10 species and 119 varieties (plus 20 unknown varieties)
- 130 bookings were made for 15 orchard training workshops
- 5 individuals graduated from the ILM Level 2 Certificate in Enterprise with Elmwood College
- Forth Valley Orchards Roadshow visited 13 venues and engaged with 893 children and adults (including over 200 at the FVO Week 2013 at Callendar House)
- FVO Schools' Project Officer, Margaret Miller appeared on the BBC's CBeebies 'Mr Bloom' programme at Callendar House Walled Garden
- Forth Valley Orchards' Group met 4 times, including networking visits to other orchard groups and individuals
- 100 copies of the 2014 FV Orchards Calendar produced



"I am very glad you enjoyed your afternoons with us, as I know the children thoroughly did. Your sessions were very interactive and informative and were a fantastic addition to our Eco Week. Thank you very much for your help, especially at such short notice. It was a pleasure to have you in School".

Cornton Primary School, Stirling

GROW FORTH



Grow Forth is the local food network for the Forth Valley area. We help connect and support communities to grow their own food, to help source local food and to encourage more people to eat local food. The project received funding from the Community Food Fund in January 2014 to create the Stirling Local Food Map and to run promotional and support events, throughout 2014. This project was a direct response to the previous two Grow Forth Summits, as it clearly defined a need from communities and individuals as to where to source local food from. A total of 54 local food businesses made it to the map and a total of 12,000 were distributed in the spring 2014.



Grow Forth continued to support communities who were in the process of developing or mid way through community growing projects. Grow Forth attended community events promoting food and running workshops such as square foot gardening taster sessions. We also ran our first Festive and Spring Feast Together events in partnership with Transition Stirling, bringing people within our networks together, for a bring and share food event. These events have contributed to further project ideas and have become a regular seasonal activity.



Grow Forth in partnership with Scottish Allotments Group's Alison Swanson also hosted a tour for overseas students on Erasmus study. The tour incorporated allotments and community growing projects in the Stirling area.



A few thanks...

Thanks to our Grow Forth Advisory group for your ongoing support who helped to shape the project activities and future strategy. We are always looking for Grow Forth Advisory group members, we operate a relaxed format for this group, meaning you do not need to attend all meetings; we are currently looking for advisors who have a particular interest/experience in Health.

Thanks to Stirling Open Gardens for their kind donation in 2013 to Forth Environment Link.

We also would like to thank Fiona at Dobbies Garden Centre for ongoing support to communities in our area with growing project donations.



CONSULTATION SERVICES

FEL undertook a range of contracts to support local communities with consultations, business planning, network development and funding proposals. FEL has worked with Stirling Council, Falkirk Council, Braehead Community Council and Cultenhove Opportunities.



Cultenhove & Bruce View Community Park

Forth Environment Link has been working with Cultenhove Opportunities, since 2012 on Green Space projects. Initially with funding from Scottish Natural Heritage and in 2013 Cultenhove Opportunities received funding from Big Lottery for the creation and support of Bruce View Community Park. *Emily Harvey is the Project Officer leading this work.*

Forth Environment Link's role has been to support Cultenhove Opportunities to engage the community, provide workshops, events and support to volunteers to get the most from their park and green spaces. The park opened in August 2013, from then until March 2014 we have:-

- Delivered 14 workshops and learning events – ranging from all sorts of things like foraging, baking, planting, pancake making, apple juicing, food and the environment school sessions, outdoor art creations, giant recycled castle making.
- Delivered in partnership a grand opening party and Halloween celebration, 115 adults attended and 50-60 children.
- Delivered a spring seasonal event called Art in the Park and a Poop in the Park Awareness Day.
- A total of 268 adults and 449 children have attended events and workshops in the last year.



Youth Club Garden

Forth Environment Link also supported a very special project at the Youth Centre outdoor space in Cultenhove, this project is a great example of a grass roots project. The Youth Centre outdoor space was basically rubble and dirt, completely derelict and a collection point for litter. We managed to turn this land into a growing space, a space to chill and a space to learn.

In 2013 many people from the community including youth groups, nurseries, schools, family groups, women's group, some very kind neighbours and with help from The Prudential we transformed the space from an unloved derelict space into a mini oasis of garden joy.



CONSULTATION SERVICES

Braehead Community Garden

Forth Environment Link has been working with Braehead Community Council since 2012, to support the development of a large community growing space in Braehead. We helped support the surveying, community consultation and application process. Braehead was successful in receiving funds from Big Lottery to create their community garden, work begins in summer 2014. Forth Environment Link will continue as consultants to help support Braehead with their Community Garden Project in 2014/15 including community engagement, support workshops and events.

Emily Harvey is the Project Officer leading on this work.



CYCLE STIRLING



Cycle Stirling is a network of cyclists, businesses and agencies who promote safe cycling for all ages and abilities to everyday destinations, reducing car journeys, and creating a healthier population and a more sustainable environment. The work of Cycle Stirling is co-ordinated through Forth Environment Link, in partnership with Recyke-A-Bike and Stirlingshire Voluntary Enterprise.

Cycle Stirling Network members have been involved in the following activities:

- Drafting a Cycling Action Plan
- Making submissions to the ScotRail franchise, and the Beauldy-Denny Mitigation scheme
- Community links consultations - e.g. Dunblane
- The Carse of Stirling Partnership
- The Clackmannanshire Cycling Project
- Cycle route mapping –both online and hard copies
- Cycling conferences
- LEADER grant themes development
- Priority Budget consultation
- Local Lobbying for UK and Scottish Projects; such as Space for Cycling, Strict Liability, Cross party group
- Cycle training and training the trainers
- Linking knowledge and projects



STIRLING CYCLE HUB



Opening in May 2013 the Stirling Cycle Hub has got off to a fantastic start developing cycling in Stirling and encouraging people into the saddle. We do this through:

- Running and maintaining the Hub at the Stirling Train station
- Providing advice, guidance and route planning services through the Hub
- Conceiving, planning and running a series of events designed to encourage people into the saddle and to highlight the fantastic cycling routes and options in and around Stirling
- Creating opportunity for people to cycle and making cycling an easier choice

"Brilliant and friendly group of people! Can't wait for next ride out! :D" – Jeani McGreagor

Facts and Figures from 31st May 2013 – 31st March 2014:

- 3673 visitors
- 1272 General Interest Enquiries
- 786 Route Planning Enquiries
- 514 Hub Events Enquiries
- 752 followers on Facebook
- Ran over 70 events & led rides



Stirling Cycle Hub was also proud that its efforts in encouraging people to cycle in Stirling were recognised in the 3 Awards we won throughout the year:

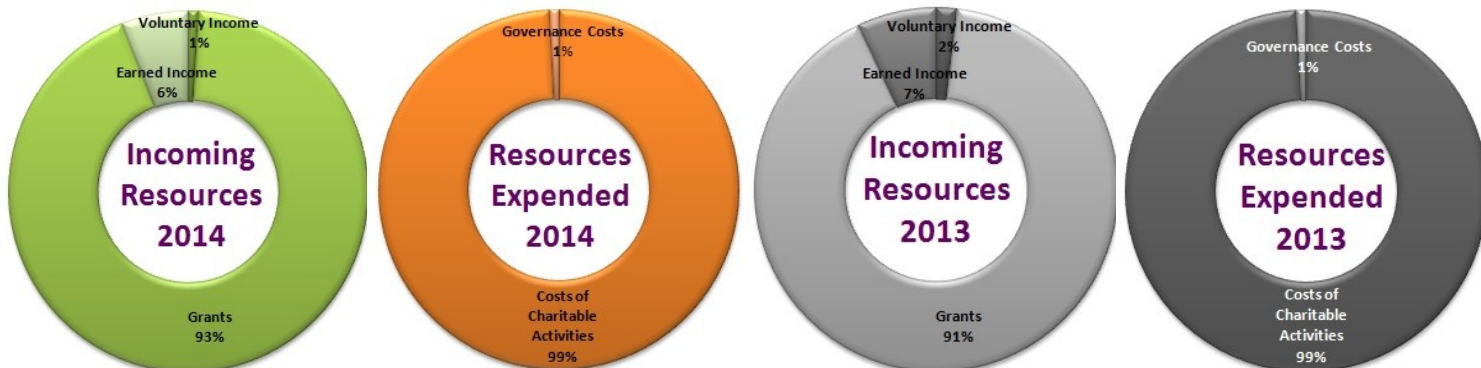
- The National Rail Network – Door to Door Travel Award
- The Natural Scotland – Greener Together Award
- The Fintry Development Trust – Fresh 2014 Active Travel Award

"Glad I've found the Hub. I will be a regular as the staff, advice, help and ride outs are great." – Allison Cowie



FUNDING AND FINANCES

Forth Environment Link would like to thank and acknowledge the support of a wide range of funders. In addition to grant funding FEL raises money through our consulting work. The breakdown of funding, for this year and last, is as follows:



INCOMING RESOURCES	
Voluntary Income	£2,598
Grants	£268,000
Earned Income	£17,275
Total Incoming Resources	£287,873

INCOMING RESOURCES	
Voluntary Income	£4,581
Grants	£226,328
Earned Income	£17,559
Total Incoming Resources	£248,468

RESOURCES EXPENDED	
Costs of Charitable Activities	£283,102
Governance Costs	£2,272
Total Resources Expended	£285,374

RESOURCES EXPENDED	
Costs of Charitable Activities	£210,734
Governance Costs	£1,868
Total Resources Expended	£212,602

NET INCOMING RESOURCES	£2,449
* £24,629 restricted	
Total Funds Brought Forward	£70,257
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD	£72,756

NET INCOMING RESOURCES*	£35,866
* £23,870 restricted	
Total Funds Brought Forward	£34,391
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD	£70,257

FORTH ENVIRONMENT LINK IS SUPPORTED BY:



FORTH ENVIRONMENT LINK—WHO WE ARE



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

Forth Environment Link (FEL) 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 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 FEL, bringing an additional focus on sustainable local food production and consumption. In 2012 FEL took over the hosting of Cycle Stirling bringing a new cycling focus to our work. In 2013, Stirling Cycle Hub started operating from Stirling Train Station enhancing FEL's cycling provision.

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