

# EDUCATION UPDATE



FIFE COAST &  
COUNTRYSIDE TRUST

## WELCOME NOTE

We're now nine months into delivering our Leven Programme, River Park projects, so we're taking the opportunity to reflect, share what we've been learning, and review how that learning is shaping the way we move forward.

Rather than just counting outcomes, we've embraced a Human Learning Systems approach: working in real time, listening deeply, and adapting as insights emerge. Leading with Learning means asking, 'What's working? What's changing? What matters most to the people we serve?' This way of working keeps our programmes responsive, rooted in community voices, and focused on creating lasting impact together.

## GREEN HEALTH

Green Health continues to expand across Levenmouth supporting referrals into nature-based activities that improve wellbeing. Recent progress includes strengthened partnerships with health providers, increased participant engagement, and development of learning cycles to analyse referral data. Next steps focus on scaling opportunities, refining reporting, and enhancing community impact through co-creation.

## EXPLORE OUTDOORS

Explore Outdoors has developed significantly through delivery at Parkhill Primary and subsequent work at Coaltown of Wemyss Primary, inspiring teachers and pupils, demonstrating creative curriculum-linked activities using natural materials. This approach opened doors to new possibilities, strengthened teacher confidence, and set the stage for expansion into East Wemyss.



## BRANCHING OUT & WINTER WELLNESS

The first two River Park Branching Out programme delivered horse therapy, outdoor cooking, pottery, and nature art, improving wellbeing scores and earning exceptional feedback. All completers progressed to positive destinations, and referrals are building for the next programme as Green Health Partnership pathways strengthen. Rich has begun winter wellness sessions - mini Branching Out programmes run over 4 weeks with local groups.





## HIGHLIGHTS

The Green Health Partnership has continued to grow its reach and impact over this period. We now have 25 local providers actively engaged in our network, representing a diverse range of opportunities including growing-focused projects, walking groups, community sheds, bowling clubs, and other outdoor activity providers. Our first network meeting brought together 27 attendees, including providers, steering group members, and local services with an interest in green health. This event marked a significant step toward building a collaborative approach to green health delivery across the region.

## GREEN HEALTH PARTNERSHIP

Key progress includes the development of a collective calendar of opportunities, a partnership action plan, and a programme of events for the coming year. Work is underway to create a digital directory of all available activities, enabling participants to filter options based on transport, accessibility, and personal interests. We have also initiated learning cycles around our five core GHP outcomes, collected baseline data, and begun working toward first tests for each cycle. These outcomes focus on increasing everyday use of outdoor spaces, expanding referrals and opportunities, improving understanding of green health within healthcare, and strengthening knowledge of green spaces in the Levenmouth community.

## LEARNING

Consultations have provided valuable insights to shape future delivery. At the provider network meeting, discussions focused on six key areas: gaps in audiences, asks and offers within the network, terminology definitions, event and toolkit planning, codesigning our monitoring and evaluation approach, and identifying geographic gaps. GP consultations explored the value of green health within healthcare, current integration points, and what is needed to embed green health into routine practice.

These conversations will inform both strategic planning and operational improvements. In addition, we have identified a need for a shift in purpose within the Steering Group. Rather than focusing solely on steering the overall direction of the project, the group will transition to an Advisory Group model, supported by sub-groups tasked with implementing specific elements of the workplan. This change will enable more focused action, improve accountability, and ensure that strategic guidance is complemented by practical delivery support.

## NEXT STEPS

Looking ahead, we will finalise the activity directory and launch the collective calendar to improve accessibility and coordination. The partnership will continue to refine its action plan and deliver a series of events throughout the year. Learning cycles will progress to first tests, providing actionable insights to strengthen delivery against our five outcomes. We will also maintain engagement with healthcare professionals and providers to ensure green health becomes a recognised and integrated part of local wellbeing strategies.



# EXPLORE OUTDOORS



## HIGHLIGHTS

The FCCT Education team has been actively delivering sessions at Parkhill Primary in Leven, ensuring that every class received at least two outdoor learning experiences this term. These sessions demonstrated creative ways to use natural materials and linked activities directly to curriculum outcomes, helping teachers see how outdoor learning can enrich classroom practice. A key focus has been on providing professional development opportunities for teachers, supporting them to build confidence and improve the regularity of taking learning outside. Feedback from staff has been positive, with many reporting increased confidence and practical ideas for integrating outdoor learning into their teaching.

## PROGRESS

Delivering an intensive series of sessions at Parkhill Primary has opened doors and sparked imaginations about what is possible with outdoor learning. By providing multiple, high-quality experiences for every class, the project has demonstrated that outdoor learning can be practical, creative, and curriculum-linked even in challenging environments. This approach has not only engaged pupils, but also inspired teachers to see outdoor learning as an achievable and valuable part of their practice. The success of these sessions has created momentum for deeper collaboration with schools and highlighted the potential for scaling this model across the region.

## LEARNING

Delivery in urban school environments has highlighted the importance of flexibility and creativity when green space is limited. Using portable natural materials and focusing on sensory experiences has proven effective in maintaining pupil engagement. Teacher feedback emphasized the value of activities that combine physical movement with creative expression, reinforcing the need for a holistic approach to outdoor learning. Additionally, there is a growing recognition that Explore Outdoors can play a role in supporting wider school community engagement, not just class learning. This insight will inform future development, including opportunities to involve families and local groups and delivery partners in outdoor activities.

## NEXT STEPS

In January, the Explore Outdoors project will move into East Wemyss, building on the learning and successes from Parkhill and Coaltown of Wemyss to strengthen delivery and teacher engagement. This next phase will focus on applying proven strategies, such as linking activities to curriculum outcomes and using natural materials creatively. All this while continuing to support teachers in developing confidence and regularity in taking learning outside and to embed outdoor learning as a core element of local education practice. Plans include co-creating new sessions with staff, introducing a resource toolkit to extend learning beyond workshops, and exploring opportunities for family and community involvement.



# EDUCATION TEAM ACTIVITY



## BRANCHING OUT

The first two River Park Branching Out programme have now been successfully completed, delivering a rich mix of nature-based activities designed to support wellbeing and confidence. Participants enjoyed experiences such as horse therapy, outdoor cooking, pottery, and creative art using natural materials, all within an outdoor setting. Wellbeing scores showed significant improvement across the group, and feedback was exceptional, highlighting the value of the programme in fostering resilience and connection to nature. Importantly, every participant who completed the course has moved on to a positive destination, including further learning, or continued engagement in wellbeing activities—demonstrating the lasting impact of Branching Out.

Referrals are already building for the next programme as Green Health Partnership referral pathways become more embedded, ensuring continued access to high-quality nature-based interventions.

## WINTER WELLNESS

Rich has delivered his series of Winter Wellness programmes, delivering inclusive outdoor activities designed to boost physical and mental wellbeing during the colder months. Sessions are underpinned by the 5 ways to wellbeing (outdoors) and includes outdoor cooking, nature connection exercises, and practical skills for staying active outdoors in winter. The programme emphasises accessibility and community engagement, attracting diverse participants and fostering social connections. Feedback has been highly positive, with attendees reporting improved mood, confidence, and motivation to maintain outdoor activity throughout the season. Plans are underway to expand delivery next year.

## DEVELOPMENT

This period has seen significant investment in team development and strategic alignment. Attending the inaugural Association for Outdoor Therapy Conference provided valuable insights that have influenced refinements in programme delivery, particularly around therapeutic approaches and embedding wellbeing outcomes into outdoor experiences. The Leading with Learning training has strengthened our ability to improve services within inherently complex societal systems, introducing iterative learning cycles that now drive activity across identified focus areas within the Green Health Partnership. These cycles are shaping evidence-based improvements and fostering a culture of continuous learning. Collaboration with the School Quality Improvement Team has opened opportunities for Explore Outdoors to integrate with the Fife Outdoor Learning Skills Framework, ensuring outdoor learning becomes a sustainable and embedded element of local education practice. Alongside this, a flurry of opportunities has emerged to build delivery capacity within the wider Conservation and Engagement team, creating space for innovation and growth across multiple strands of work.

## WHAT'S NEXT

We will continue embedding learning cycles to strengthen impact, expand advisory capacity within GHP, and progress partnerships that enable scalable delivery. Explore Outdoors will move into East Wemyss Primary, applying learning from Parkhill to deepen teacher engagement. The team will also focus on developing resources, securing funding for future programmes, and positioning outdoor learning and green health as integral components of community wellbeing strategies.

