



Fife Coast and Countryside Trust

Annual Report for year ending 31st March 2026



**FIFE COAST &
COUNTRYSIDE TRUST**



The Fife Coast and Countryside Trust leads in the care of Fife's outdoors. Working together with you, we create a healthier environment that supports wellbeing and sustains the balance between people and the natural world.

Spread across more than 70 sites, FCCT maintains the Fife Coastal Path, Fife Pilgrim Way, the Lomond Hills Regional Park, local nature reserves, and award-winning beaches. The organisation has its headquarters at Harbourmaster's House in Dysart.

Mission Statement

Connecting Environment and People

Contents

Contents	1
Chair's Welcome	2
CEO's Vision	3
Governance	4 - 6
Financial Review	7
Independent Auditor's Report to the Trustees and Members	8 - 10
Statement of Financial Activities (Incorporating the Income and Expenditure Account)	11
Statement of Financial Position	12
FCCT Who We Are and What We Do	13
FCCT Highlights	14 - 17
Health and Wellbeing	18 - 19
A Resilient Coastline	20 - 21
Landscape Scale Restoration	22 - 25
Sustainable Access	26 - 29
Community Engagement	30 - 37
Volunteering	38 - 39
Future Focus	40 - 41

A Message from Jill Miller, Chair of the Board

It is a great privilege to have been elected as Chair of the FCCT Board at the start of this year and follow in the sizeable footsteps of Stephen Carter who performed the role so ably before me. I spent time this year getting to know my fellow Board Members better and listening to their aspirations both for their contribution to FCCT and the strategic direction of the organisation overall.

I was immensely encouraged by this process. Having served on the Board for several years, I knew the group to be diligent and capable, but it was inspiring to hear their various ambitions and learn of the great potential that lies in the extensive and varied experience of this group that give so generously of their time in the service of FCCT.

It has also been good to spend more time with the Chief Executive Officer, Jeremy Harris, and build on the strong professional relationship we had when I was Vice-Chair. Together we have enjoyed leading FCCT through this year – a year that has been marked globally by great instability and uncertainty.



Given this global context, our drive has continued to be to diversify our revenue streams to ensure a stable financial foundation for the whole of the organisation. FCCT relies heavily on financial support from Fife Council and gains a great deal beyond the financial from the close partnership we have with the Local Authority. Even so, we feel a deep sense of responsibility to make as much from this support as possible for the good of Fife.

Previously, FCCT has reported closely on the Service Level Agreement (SLA) with Fife Council, with all other activity captured in terms of how it relates to this SLA. Moving forward we are shaping our financial accounting around the different types of funding that come into FCCT. This will deliver a clearer picture of the wide breadth of work that FCCT carries out, and the many different areas captured in our Strategic Plan. It also makes clear the challenge the Board have set for FCCT's team to diversify the organisation's funding and has provided clear targets to build on. We are particularly eager to see the team source unrestricted funding that will amplify Fife Council's existing support for our core expenses and other work not covered by projects and the SLA.

This report shows some of the progress we have made this year in generating revenues appropriately from some of our activities. It also highlights the success FCCT has in attracting funding for projects and shows how capable the team are in delivering complex projects on time and within budget.

We live in a time of great instability in the wider world, but FCCT is blessed with stable leadership and a clear mission and vision. What we provide in connecting environment and people has never been more essential to the health and wellbeing of those making use of the outdoors in Fife and we remain committed to doing all that we can in the service of Fife's communities and visitors.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "J. Jill Miller". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jill Miller, OBE
Chairperson
26th August 2026

A Message from the CEO



Welcome to Fife Coast and Countryside Trust's 2025/26 Annual Report. I am grateful that you have taken the time to pick up this document and hope you will find what it contains as interesting as I do.

FCCT is remarkable in the breadth of work we carry out. From waste management to green health, car and motorhome parking to coastal erosion, we are a diverse and wonderful organisation. These pages are filled with just some of the activities carried out by our brilliant team this past year.

It is not lost on me that none of what we have done would have been possible without the support of our key partner Fife Council, the collective wisdom of our excellent Board of Directors, and the many other individuals and organisations who have supported our work this year. I am extremely grateful to each one of you.

As Jill has already written, we have not been immune to the instability in the world this past year. As an organisation that cares deeply about the environment and the

communities in Fife that rely on it, we have been keenly aware of the changing political landscape. We are braced for a softening of both policy and funding for things like climate change and biodiversity loss in the face of the rhetoric used by various individuals in significant positions of power. Even so, FCCT remains absolutely convinced that our climate is changing rapidly and our natural systems are under severe strain.

Because we work across so many disciplines, we are uniquely positioned to consider the various factors that influence Fife's landscapes. This year we have spent time intentionally considering the wider systems at play. We recognise that Fife is shaped by agriculture and its industrial past. We understand that in Fife at least, our natural environment has been, and will continue to be, moulded around human activity. This does not lessen the significance of the natural world here but rather directs us to consider the wider picture as we go about our care for it.

Our work on river restoration has provided further insight. River catchments are obvious large-scale contiguous systems drawing together a wide variety of land uses. Rivers pass through farmland, parks, settlements, and woodlands before returning to the sea. Less obvious than the river, our landscapes are connected by networks in soil, of canopy, of paths, and the passage of all kinds of animals. Even less apparent, but no less important, our individual and collective connection to these places, and how they can connect us with each other, has a deep impact on our wellbeing as humans and reminds us that we are part of all around us.

This year stands out to me as the year when FCCT really embraced our responsibility to support human wellbeing by sustaining the balance between people and the natural world. With Artificial Intelligence providing ready and rapid access to all published material, we have noticed the strain of information overload on each other and in the communities we serve. We are even more convinced of the wisdom of connecting in real life. We know first-hand the value of time in our outdoors and encourage you, if you are not already, to join us in both our care for, and enjoyment of Fife's rich landscapes.

Jeremy Harris
CEO

Governance

Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Directors' Report) year ending 31st March 2026

Organisational Structure

Fife Coast and Countryside Trust balances the delivery of high-quality countryside services and outdoor recreation with preserving the natural environment and beautiful landscapes found in Fife. Despite a scarcity of funding, FCCT delivers multiple services, maintains many sites, and manages projects across all of Fife. Diversifying our revenue streams continues to underpin our strategy and approach despite our fundamental belief that the countryside should be free for everyone to access. We have dual accountability to Companies House and the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR) and are governed by a Board of Directors. This accountability necessitates and underlines the need for strong governance throughout FCCT.

For the year ending 31st March 2026, The Board of Directors was made up of the following members:

Ms J Miller OBE (Chair, Chair of HR & Remuneration Committee)
Ms S Roberts (Vice Chair, Chair of Communications & Fundraising Committee)
Ms R McInroy
Mr P Teale (Retired 30th October 2025)
Ms C Warburton
Cllr J Leslie (Fife Council Member)
Cllr F Corps (Fife Council Member)
Cllr C Davidson (Fife Council Member)
Cllr B Goodall (Fife Council Member)
Ms Sheila Boardman (Treasurer, Chair Audit and Finance Committee)
Ms Sarah Lonie
Mr Neil McCormick

The day-to-day management of FCCT is delegated to the Chief Executive Officer Mr Jeremy Harris, who is not a Director or Trustee of the charity and who is supported by a Senior Management Team. Three Committees are established by the Board to support both the work and governance of FCCT. In accordance with the Articles of Association, all Committees comprise a minimum of two Board members and are supported as required by external retained financial, legal, and HR services.

Each Committee meets quarterly as does the full Board. The Chief Executive Officer, Chair, and Vice Chair are in regular contact between Board and Committee meetings. The Board of Directors is the governing authority of FCCT and takes ultimate responsibility for the Trust's adherence to sound and ethical practices and standards. The Board oversees a simple and transparent corporate Vision and Mission that underpins a Strategy ensuring that all business decisions and judgements are made with reasonable care, skill and diligence and are solely driven by business needs. The Board of Directors receive no remuneration from FCCT for their involvement and give of their time and effort voluntarily.

The Audit & Finance Committee is responsible for reviewing and providing guidance on FCCT's financial matters. Specifically, the Committee oversees internal controls, independent audit, and financial analysis for the organisation including:

- To monitor the integrity of the financial statements;
- To review FCCT's internal controls, internal audit, compliance, and risk management systems;
- To receive and discuss the external auditor's report including any issues and recommendations; and
- To review and monitor the external auditor's independence and objectivity and the effectiveness of the audit process, while taking into consideration all relevant professional and regulatory requirements.

The HR & Remuneration Committee provides oversight and support while monitoring the implementation of FCCT's Human Resources framework reporting to the Board any matters it considers where action or improvement is needed. This Committee has the following specific tasks and responsibilities:

- To assist the Board in fulfilling its responsibilities regarding the oversight of human resources and remunerations issues;
- To ensure that the HR & Remuneration arrangements support the strategic aims of the FCCT; and
- To enable the recruitment, motivation and retention of staff while complying with the requirements of legislative and governing bodies.

The Communication and Fundraising Committee provides strategic guidance in support of the visibility of the Trust and considers matters related to funding and fundraising. In particular, the Committee:

- Supports external communications including website, social media, newsletters, publications, press and traditional media;
- Identifies and supports areas of strategic focus (whether geographic or demographic) for FCCT's community engagement activities;
- Provides any necessary oversight of internal communications including technologies and methods of internal communication and associated FCCT policies (including telephone and IT), reporting and record keeping, and matters relating to confidentiality and data protection;
- Provides oversight of risk management particularly as this pertains to reputational risk;
- Supports and provides input to fundraising activities including the identification and review of opportunities, the setting of targets, and tracking of progress against such targets;
- And considers the development of revenue generating activities and projects as is appropriate.

Board Members

Induction, support, and learning underpin the work of our Board and Committees. These ensure that members have all the information they need to fulfil their roles. This also creates a more level playing field for all members, ensuring that they can carry out their duties effectively. FCCT has a regularly reviewed handbook that contains key information useful for new and existing Directors. Specific training is made available to all Board Directors and further training and mentoring is made available to Directors as and when required. FCCT ensures that all Directors have a subscription to Governance & Leadership Magazine to support their awareness of available training, current practices, and any legislative changes.

Fife Council is the sole member of the Limited Company and as such retains the final authority on the appointment of Directors to the Board of FCCT. Recommendations for new appointments are submitted to Fife Council by a Nominations Committee comprising the Chair of the Board, the Treasurer, and the Chief Executive Officer.

Objectives and Activities

The objectives of FCCT are wholly charitable. They are defined in the Articles of Association and are:

- To provide recreational facilities, and organise recreational activities, primarily within the local authority area of Fife Council (the Operating Area), with such facilities/activities being made available to members of the public at large with the object of improving their conditions of life, including (without prejudice to that generality) promoting and improving access to the countryside within the Operating Area, and through providing, developing, and improving the facilities which support access to the countryside and the wildlife within the Operating Area;
- To advance education, primarily within the Operating Area, including through encouraging public access to the countryside, and its wildlife, which shall include the provision of interpretative centres, signage, and other methods of conveying information;
- To advance environmental protection and/or improvement through the conservation, preservation and general improvement of the countryside and the landscape within the Operating Area and through securing the sustainable use, management and enjoyment of the countryside and the landscape within the Operating Area;
- To advance heritage and/or culture within the Operating Area;
- To advance citizenship and/or community development, within the Operating Area;
- To promote, establish, operate, and/or support other similar schemes and projects which further charitable purposes. Under the Articles of Association, FCCT has the power to invest any funds which are not immediately required for the Trust's activities in such investments as may be considered appropriate.

Risk Statement

FCCT takes a dynamic approach to managing risks associated with our operations and activities and risk assessment is carried out at all levels of the organisation. High-level risks are reported to, or identified by, the Board and Senior Management Team and captured in a Master Risk Matrix. The matrix supports the identification of appropriate mitigations, categorisation and weighting of risks enabling reporting at the appropriate level and specialism i.e., to the relevant Committee, or to the full Board. Regular snapshots are taken, facilitating risk and trend tracking on an individual and themed basis enabling this tool to be used as an aid to strategic decision making as well as prevention of actuation of identified risks. The Master Risk Matrix is reviewed regularly and the methodology behind it is reviewed in alignment with our policy review schedule to ensure the identification of improvement where possible.

Financial Review

Trustees' Responsibilities Statement

The Trustees, who are also Directors for the purposes of company law, are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice). Company law requires the charity trustees to prepare financial statements for each year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, for that period.

In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- Observe the methods and principles in the applicable Charities SORP;
- Make judgements and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent; and
- State whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements.
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in business.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the charity's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006.

They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Auditor Statement as to disclose to our auditors

Each of the persons who is a Director at the date of approval of this report confirms that:

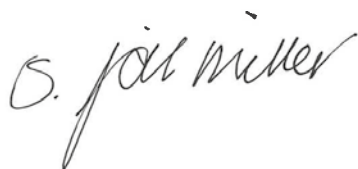
- So far as they are aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the company's auditor is unaware;

They have taken all steps that they ought to have taken as a director to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the company's auditor is aware of that information; and

The auditor is deemed to have been re-appointed in accordance with section 487 of the Companies Act 2006.

Small Company Provisions

This report has been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies entitled to the small companies' exemption. The Trustees' annual report (incorporating the Directors' report) was approved on the 25th August 2026 and signed on behalf of the Board of Trustees by:



Jill Miller, OBE
Chair

Independent Auditor's Report

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Fife Coast and Countryside Trust (the 'charity') for the year ended 31 March 2026 which comprise the statement of financial activities (including income and expenditure account), statement of financial position, statement of cash flows and the related notes, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including FRS 102 The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion the financial statements:

- Give a true and fair view of the state of the charity's affairs as at 31 March 2026 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- Have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice;
- Have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006, the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and regulation 8 of the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended).

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charity in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions Relating to Going Concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate. Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charity's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the annual report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact. We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- The information given in the trustees' report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- The trustees' report has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charity and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the trustees' report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 and the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended) requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- Adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- The financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- Certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- We have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit; or
- The trustees were not entitled to take advantage of the small companies' exemptions in preparing the directors' report and from the requirement to prepare a strategic report.

Responsibilities of Trustees

As explained more fully in the trustees' responsibilities statement, the trustees (who are also the directors for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charity's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charity or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements

We have been appointed as auditor under section 44(1)(c) of the Charities and Trustee Investment(Scotland) Act 2005 and under the Companies Act 2006 and report in accordance with the Acts and relevant regulations made or having effect thereunder.

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below:

Based on our understanding of the charity and industry, we identified that the principal risks of non-compliance with laws and regulations related to breaches of UK regulations and prohibited business practices, and we considered that the extent to which non-compliance might have a material effect on the financial statements. We also considered those laws and regulations that have a direct impact on the preparation of the financial statements such as the Companies Act 2006. We evaluated management's incentives and opportunities for fraudulent manipulation of the financial statements (including the risk of override controls), and determined that the principal risks were related to the potential posting of inappropriate journal entries to manipulate financial results and management bias in accounting estimates.

Audit procedures performed by the engagement team included:

- Enquiry of management and those charged with governance around actual and potential litigation and claims.
- Reviewing minutes of meetings of those charged with governance including the Board.

- Evaluation and testing of the operating effectiveness of management's controls designed to prevent and detect irregularities.
- Identifying and testing journal entries based on risk criteria.
- Designing audit procedures to incorporate unpredictability around the nature, timing or extent of our testing.
- Testing transactions entered into outside of normal course of business.
- Investigated the rationale behind significant or unusual transactions.
- Reviewed accounting estimates for evidence of bias.
- Performed analytical review and sample testing of income.
- Agreed financial statement disclosures to supporting documentation.

There are inherent limitations in the audit procedures described above. We are less likely to become aware of instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations that are not closely related to events and transactions reflected in the financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with ISAs (UK), we exercise professional judgment and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the trustees.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the charity's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the charity to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

A further description of our responsibilities is available on the Financial Reporting Council's website at www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our auditor's report.



Craig Wallace B.Acc. (Hons) F.C.C.A. (Senior Statutory Auditor)

For and on behalf of PB Audit Limited
Chartered Accountants & Statutory Auditor
18 North Street, Glenrothes, Fife, KY7 5NA

PB Audit Limited is eligible to act as auditor in terms of section 1212 of the Companies Act 2006.

Statement of Financial Activities
(including income and expenditure account)
Year Ended 31 March 2026

		2026			2025
		Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total funds	Total funds
	Note	£	£	£	£
Income and endowments					
Donations and legacies	5	26,777	600	27,377	19,869
Charitable activities	6	69,536	3,272,895	3,342,431	3,243,464
Other trading activities	7	61,935	—	61,935	75,032
Investment income	8	165,959	—	165,959	98,539
Other Income	9	—	21,735	21,735	6,021
Total Income		<u>324,207</u>	<u>3,295,230</u>	<u>3,619,437</u>	<u>3,442,925</u>
Expenditure					
Expenditure on raising funds:					
Cost of raising donations and legacies	10	407	33,552	33,959	28,945
Cost of other trading activities	11	2,815	—	2,815	2,808
Investment management costs	12	4,195	—	4,195	4,948
Expenditure on charitable activities	13,14	(9,829)	3,485,460	3,475,631	3,541,290
Other expenditure	16	—	—	—	953
Total expenditure		<u>(2,412)</u>	<u>3,519,012</u>	<u>3,516,600</u>	<u>3,578,944</u>
Net Income/(expenditure)		<u>326,619</u>	<u>(223,782)</u>	<u>102,837</u>	<u>(136,019)</u>
Transfers between funds		(191,338)	191,338	—	—
Other recognised gains and losses					
Actuarial losses on defined benefit pension schemes		(222,000)	—	(222,000)	(61,000)
Gains/(loss) on investment assets		38,290	—	38,290	(13,542)
Net movement in funds		<u>(48,429)</u>	<u>(32,444)</u>	<u>(80,873)</u>	<u>(210,561)</u>
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward		832,182	411,003	1,243,185	1,453,746
Total funds carried forward		<u>783,753</u>	<u>378,559</u>	<u>1,162,312</u>	<u>1,243,185</u>

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year. All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

Statement of Financial Position

31 March 2026

			2026	2025
	Note	£	£	£
Fixed Assets				
Tangible fixed assets	21		107,434	150,377
Investments	22		594,041	547,722
			<u>701,475</u>	<u>698,099</u>
Current Assets				
Stocks	23	8,378		7,569
Debtors	24	428,505		713,723
Cash at bank and in hand		576,466		459,837
		<u>1,013,349</u>		<u>1,181,129</u>
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	25	<u>552,512</u>		<u>636,043</u>
Net Current Assets			<u>460,837</u>	<u>545,086</u>
Total Assets Less Current Liabilities			<u>1,162,312</u>	<u>1,243,185</u>
Net Assets			<u><u>1,162,312</u></u>	<u><u>1,243,185</u></u>
Funds of the Charity				
Restricted funds			378,559	411,003
Unrestricted funds:				
Other unrestricted income funds		<u>783,753</u>		<u>832,182</u>
Total unrestricted funds		<u>783,753</u>		<u>832,182</u>
Total charity funds	27		<u><u>1,162,312</u></u>	<u><u>1,243,185</u></u>

Fife Coast and Countryside Trust

Who we are and what we do...

FCCT is an organisation of around 70 dedicated people, all working towards our shared mission of connecting environment and people. Our work is delivered through four closely linked departments, each contributing essential skills and expertise.

Our Operations Team manages the practical, day-to-day stewardship of the sites, and visitor facilities in our care. Their work ensures that Fife's coast and countryside remain safe, accessible, and enjoyable for residents and visitors alike.

Our Conservation and Community Engagement Department leads our conservation, maintenance, outdoor education, access, green health and engagement activity. This includes habitat conservation, tree planting, species monitoring, volunteer coordination, and education and health and wellbeing programmes designed to inspire people to explore, learn about, and care for themselves and their local environment.

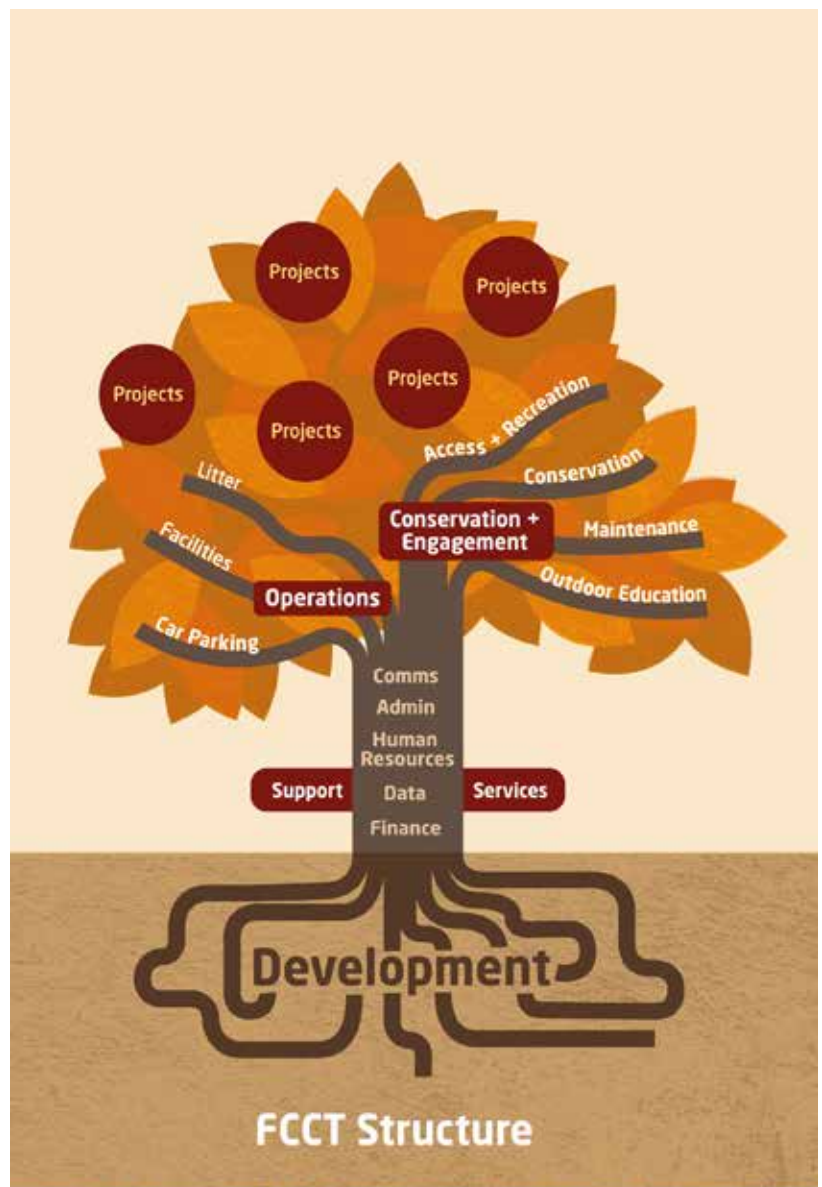
Our Support Services Department underpins all aspects of FCCT's work. From finance, HR, governance and administration to digital systems, communications and organisational development, this team provides the essential infrastructure that enables every part of the Trust to operate effectively.

Our Development Department focuses on innovation, partnership building, and securing the resources needed to deliver new and ambitious projects. This includes sourcing external funding, cultivating collaborations, and managing initiatives that sit beyond the remit of other departments. Through this work, the team also helps embed sustainability and forward-thinking approaches across the organisation.

Together with local communities, and partners organisations, we strive to create healthier environments that support wellbeing, enhance biodiversity and sustain the balance between people and nature. Through the combined work of our four departments, we protect, enhance and celebrate Fife's natural heritage for current and future generations.

The organisation is well represented by the illustration of a tree above. The image captures how FCCT operates with distinct parts each serving to benefit the whole. It also demonstrates how the structure holds together, with the roots and trunk supporting the wide spreading canopy and the projects delivered there represented as fruit. Missing from the picture but of crucial importance, FCCT's strategic direction is guided by an attentive Board of Directors that diligently considers the founding articles, legislative context, and wider environment (including risk) to ensure that all the right ingredients exist for our tree to grow in healthy and sustainable directions.

Each of FCCT's Departments operates to their own purpose derived from the approach they take to achieving FCCT's Mission and Vision.



The Sakura Cherry Tree party

Rosyth Public Park turned Japanese in December in a celebration of the iconic Sakura cherry tree. These beautiful blossom trees are considered a symbol of friendship, renewal, and hope in Japanese culture.

Last autumn the Japanese Embassy gifted trees for planting through its Sakura Cherry Tree Project. Fife Climate Forest and Climate Action Fife led planting in four parks: Rosyth, Dunnikier, Balbirnie and Craigtoun Country Park. The trees will help expand Fife's urban tree canopy, creating greener, healthier places for us all.

To give local communities a voice in the project, adults and children were invited to create haiku poetry at each site, inspired by the trees and the landscapes around them.

Haiku is a traditional Japanese form that captures the beauty of fleeting moments in just a few words. The idea was that writing haiku together would give people a chance to pause, notice nature, and share their feelings about these new trees.

These words were then recited at the Sakura Cherry Tree Party. We were delighted to be joined by special guests, Consul Masataka Abe from the Consulate General of Japan in Edinburgh, and the Lord-Lieutenant of Fife, Robert Balfour, who planted the final tree. The event also included Japanese crafts, dance, music and a stunning celebration cake from EATS Living Room Café!

We are grateful to Fife Council for all their support with planting in Fife's Parks and Greenspaces.



OUR HIGHLIGHTS



Holidaymakers donate to protect Fife Coastal Path's future

Guests staying at some of Fife's best known holiday destinations have once again helped support the upkeep of the Fife Coastal Path through voluntary donations. During the 2025 season, Abbeyford Leisure guests donated £867 to Fife Coast and Countryside Trust, bringing the total contributed through this long running partnership to over £5,200 across nearly 10 years.

Abbeyford Leisure's holiday parks in St Andrews, Elie and St Monans, along with cottages in Lower Largo, are all linked by the Fife Coastal Path, which is a key part of many visitors' holiday experience. Guests value the quality and beauty of the coastline and welcome the opportunity to give back to the places they enjoy.

As a founding member of the Big Green Footprint Scheme, Abbeyford Leisure invites guests to add a voluntary donation when booking their stay. These small contributions collectively make a significant impact, directly supporting path maintenance and improvements carried out by FCCT.

Fish in the classroom

In early 2026 FCCT delivered a Fish in the Classroom programme, where children learn about rivers and their wildlife. Five primary schools in the catchment areas of our river restoration projects took part: in Anstruther, Ladybank and in three schools in Rosyth.

Classes received a tank of trout or salmon eggs to care for and monitor through the hatching process. Children received lessons on the life cycle of migratory fish from our project officers, and FCCT provided workbooks for recording observations and creatively capturing the development of their young fish.

Each class visited their local river to release the fish once they had hatched, learning about what a healthy river environment should look like and how they could help to keep their rivers healthy. This programme was delivered with support from the Tay Rivers Trust and the Forth Rivers Trust who provided the salmon and trout eggs from their hatcheries, and, in the case of Anstruther, in partnership with Anstruther Improvements Association.

Fife Pilgrim Way passport launched

In July 2025, Fife Coast and Countryside Trust launched the Fife Pilgrim Way Passport and completion certificate, developed in partnership with Welcome to Fife and funded by the UK Government's Shared Prosperity Fund. Inspired by the Camino de Santiago, the passport was created to enhance walkers' experience while supporting local businesses and communities along the route.

More than 30 organisations initially joined the scheme, each was provided with a bespoke stamp for walkers to collect at locations including churches, historic sites, libraries, cafés, museums, and cycle shops. The passport serves as a keepsake for walkers and helps increase footfall for participating venues.

The initiative has been warmly received by both walkers and businesses, generating significant online interest since launch. Additional organisations joined over the winter, bringing the total to 36 stamps available to collect.



FCCT vehicle fleet updated

We have begun replacing our ageing fleet to ensure our hard-working teams are equipped with reliable vehicles. Thanks to Fife Council's capital replacement programme, a range of Vauxhall Combo vans and Isuzu Utility pick-ups are out and about on the Kingdom's roads in the charity's blue, green and yellow livery.

These versatile vehicles enable us to effectively carry out our responsibilities across Fife, which include building and maintaining paths and footbridges, caring for local nature reserves, managing litter and cleaning public toilets and beaches.

A new Renault Kangoo electric vehicle, supplied through the Enterprise Car Club, complements our fleet and allows us to explore the feasibility of using EVs more widely.

Last year the Enterprise Foundation donated generously to FCCT to help maintain the Fife Coastal Path and we're pleased to see our valued partnership continue.

Fife tourism firm's donation helps care for the Kingdom's outdoors

One of Britain's longest established destination management companies collaborated with us to help fund the conservation and maintenance of some of the Kingdom's best outdoor places.

Best of Scotland Holidays, which is headquartered in Kirkcaldy, donated £1,650 from its 2025 season bookings to FCCT. The company delivers tailor-made leisure and golfing packages throughout the UK and Ireland to tour operators, agents and independent travellers.

A 150m section of path at Seafield Beach, Kirkcaldy, was resurfaced in February by our Maintenance Team, with the donation contributing towards the cost of the project.

Best of Scotland Holidays' Sales and Marketing Director, Kirsten Laing, said: "Our contribution to projects means that we are helping support our natural environment for visitors to enjoy, but importantly, through tourism, we can give back to local communities that also use these resources."



Trust celebrates volunteer anniversary

FCCT recognise the significant contribution made by our volunteers. In 2025 we celebrated the dedication of two of them, who have been FCCT volunteers for over 10 years.

Susan Drummond and George Bowman signed up in 2014 and over the years they have been involved in many activities including pond clearing, tree planting, mowing wild meadows to encourage new growth, tidying up woodlands and creating new wildlife habitats, scrub clearing, and building protective fencing around sand dunes.

Meg Moore our Volunteer Coordinator presented them with an FCCT goody bag to celebrate this landmark event. We look forward to another 10 years!





A love letter to trees

What began as a series of interactions with children at festivals and schools about the power of trees has resulted in the 128-page book 'Letter to the Tree'. Climate Action Fife partnered with the Atopon Collective, a group of local artists, to bring Letter to the Tree to life in Fife.

Children – and then people of all ages – were asked to express their feelings about their favourite trees by writing a sentence, verse or a letter. Some letters were typed onto dry leaves using traditional typewriters. These images illustrate the book designed by Lera Grant. The book will be distributed to community groups and schools and at events.

We Love You

Remember tree,
you were one of the biggest things that
made important things in society, and
we love you with all our hearts.

by Ross Chisholm, age 13.



HEALTH and WELLBEING

Explore Outdoors — Embedding outdoor learning across Levenmouth

This year has marked a major step forward for Explore Outdoors as we moved from consultation into full delivery by working closely with Levenmouth primary schools to embed outdoor learning as a whole-school approach. What began as a shared vision is now becoming a lived reality: children, teachers and families are experiencing learning that is active, joyful and rooted in the places they know best.

We supported each school to design its own, tailored and sustainable outdoor learning journey that genuinely belongs to each school community. The result is a growing culture of outdoor learning that feels authentic, empowering and future-focused.

At workshops, staff, pupils and families imagined what thriving outdoor learning could look like in their setting. The curriculum was brought to life by exploring climate change through hands-on investigation, discovering biodiversity in school grounds, and using local spaces to inspire literacy and storytelling.

Teachers have access to curriculum-linked outdoor activity banks – transformative for those who cited confidence and planning as key barriers. Critically, the project has placed the learner's voice at its heart. Pupils have shaped priorities, influenced activities and contributed ideas for their grounds and local areas.

Schools report increased engagement, improved wellbeing and stronger collaboration among pupils outdoors. Teachers are feeling more capable and more inspired. And the connection between schools, communities and local green spaces is strengthening.

By embedding outdoor learning into everyday practice, Explore Outdoors is helping children in Levenmouth build confidence, connection and understanding of their local environment. The programme supports Learning for Sustainability by equipping young people with the attitudes, skills and sense of responsibility needed to become active citizens. There is clear potential for lasting, positive change across the community.



Celebrating a year of connection, collaboration and community-led green health in Levenmouth

Levenmouth Green Health Partnership's past year has been defined by momentum, collaboration and a growing collective identity across our community partners. At the heart of this progress are the incredible Third Sector and voluntary organisations who deliver Green Health every day. Many of these smaller groups are often under-represented in strategic spaces, so from the very beginning we set out to build something different: a partnership shaped with local organisations, not for them.

That commitment has truly come to life through our quarterly Green Health Network meetings, which have rapidly become the partnership's anchor. Early conversations revealed what many already knew — brilliant work was happening across Levenmouth, but too often in isolation. The Network was created to change this, offering a welcoming space where organisations could meet, share, and begin building a shared understanding of what Green Health looks like locally.

In just three meetings, over 40 organisations have taken part. The energy in the room has been remarkable. Together, partners have mapped gaps, shaped joint action plans, highlighted inspiring grassroots activity, and – crucially – begun forging new relationships. It has been a joy to see small community groups sitting alongside public services and Fife-wide organisations, all contributing equally to a common vision.

These gatherings now form the backbone of our quarterly learning cycles and action planning. The impact is already tangible. New collaborations have emerged, including a bespoke heritage programme for young people, the creation of a community orchard on NHS land, and a host of new taster sessions designed with and for local residents.

A green health practitioner in Fife

Being a Green Health practitioner in Fife means standing at the intersection of healthcare, community, and the natural environment and therefore helping people reconnect with the outdoors for improved wellbeing.

The evidence is clear: time spent outside reduces stress, boosts cardiovascular health, and strengthens resilience. The proof is in the people – in the faces that light up around a campfire, the laughter shared over new skills, and the quiet moments when someone says, 'I never want to leave.'

Our Winter Wellness Sessions for 2025-26 have just wrapped up and preparations for the next three Branching Out programmes of 2026 are already in full swing. Winter Wellness was originally born from Branching Out's success and designed as a 'mini' version designed to support people at the time of year when wellbeing often dips. Across four woodland-based sessions, participants came together to connect, slow down, and rediscover the joy of being outdoors.

Now in its second year, Winter Wellness has grown rapidly. This winter, teenage girls from Waid Academy, young adults from Lower Largo Friendship Group, families supported by the Army Welfare Service, and participants at Craigtoun Country Park all took part. Each session blends practical outdoor skills with the NHS 5 Ways to Wellbeing framework – encouraging participants to notice, learn, connect, be active and give.

Whether learning to safely light fires, operate digital cameras, or build bird boxes, people grow in confidence. More importantly, they get the chance to be fully present. For many, these three hours become a rare moment of calm away from responsibility, trauma or daily pressures.

One of the most exciting elements is partnerships. Through Branching Out's 12-week funded structure, we have collaborated with equine therapists at The Big Hoof, a local potter, a wood whittling specialist, and East Neuk Seaweed for a coastal foraging experience.

Hearing someone say, 'This is the highlight of my week' or 'This course has helped me make real changes' is what drives everything. With three Branching Out programmes confirmed each year until 2028 and Winter Wellness expanding, the future for Green Health in Fife is full of optimism.



A RESILIENT COASTLINE

Kingsbarns

Working to manage Fife's coastline

The shape of Fife's coastline is rapidly changing due to factors like climate change, storm events and human activity. Inevitably this affects the Fife Coastal Path and the beaches that we manage along the 'Fringe of Gold.'

During severe storms we have seen substantial amounts of seaweed, pebbles and rubbish like ghost fishing gear washed up onto beaches, and infrastructure like steps, paths and signage broken. This was certainly the case at Pathhead Sands, Kirkcaldy, where many tonnes of sand were also displaced. It takes a big clean-up effort to restore storm-damaged beaches, and we are grateful to our partners and volunteers who work alongside us on this.

As its custodians, the Fife Coastal Path's resilience is forefront in our minds. But it is not possible to protect every single stretch of the current route, so permanent changes to the path, and its overall length, are inevitable.

Measures that can help mitigate some of the access challenges associated with coastal erosion are:

- Hold the Line (civil engineering): Flood defence schemes that influence the shape of the coastline by preventing the natural processes of coastal erosion and accretion. For example, sea walls and rock armour.
- Hold the Line (soft engineering): Schemes that mimic natural occurrences to manage flood risk. For example, trying to replicate the natural coastline by replacing material that has been lost by the sea or wind.
- Revision of Routes: The Fife Coastal Path owes its unique character to natural processes and would not look so beautiful and dramatic if it wasn't for dune and beach erosion. The downside is that natural and accelerated erosion (climate change) occasionally result in path closures, temporary diversions and re-routing.
- Tidal Sensitive Routes: Tides are considered when planning infrastructure and promoting access routes.
- Do Nothing: In coastal path management this is also known as "no active intervention." It means allowing the natural processes of erosion and retreat to continue without any intervention or investment in coastal path defences. This approach is typically implemented in areas where there are no significant human developments, or where the potential risks are deemed manageable without active intervention.

The Fife Coastal Path is made possible thanks to collaboration with landowners and land managers, and we continue to value working closely with them.

Ardross Farm

A prime example of coastal erosion occurred on the Fife Coastal Path between Elie and St Monans during the storms and high tides of 2024. The coastal defences at Ardross were badly affected and part of the path was washed away, so we had to reroute the Fife Coastal Path on pavement along the A917 road.

It is an extremely popular stretch of path and in 2025 contractors repaired this section of the sea wall. The coastal path is once again aligned with the foreshore, a recommended low tide route. There are two sets of steps from the path onto the beach that walkers should use to protect the dunes and enable them to recover.

Maintenance Team delivering for Fife

The Maintenance Team is made up of 8 full-time members of staff, whose remit sees them delivering a wide range of projects across the more than 70 sites managed by FCCT.

The Team have a wide skill set including chainsaw certification and excavator tickets, which allow them to undertake path works, drainage, vegetation control, bridge construction, spraying invasive species and strimming. Over the course of the year, they have delivered a number of projects in partnership with other organisations that have a positive impact on local communities.

Inverkeithing community project

Working in partnership with Inverkeithing Community Council, FCCT staff repaired a section of the core path network near Prestonhill Quarry, which had fallen into disrepair. The Community Council provided funding, which enabled new steps and a handrail to be installed, allowing this popular path to be used by locals and visitors once again.



Pittenweem path works

As climate change impacts on the Fife Coastal Path, we are monitoring sections of the path, which are of particular concern. A section near Pittenweem was identified as needing urgent action, and it has now been permanently rerouted to avoid a dangerously narrow section. Appropriate permissions to build a new path were gained and discussions took place with the landowner Anstruther Golf Club, before a new 60 metre section of path was constructed. The steps and a railing have significantly improved this section of the Fife Coastal Path.

Taking steps to improve accessibility

When storm damage left the eastern access to Seafeld Beach restricted, our Maintenance Team stepped in. The beach is well used by walkers and swimmers who were having to negotiate a slippery, rocky slope. After a meeting between FCCT, Seafeld Sinkers wild swimmers, the local councillor and MSP, a solution was found by creating new steps leading down to the sands.

Rubbish job at Ravenscraig Cave

Beach and Fife Coastal Path users were concerned the cave was becoming unsightly and unsafe. We removed the broken gate, took it to an expert for refurbishing, cleared out many bags of rubbish, and had the gate back in position later that day. You can see the cave underneath Ravenscraig Castle when you walk the Fife Coastal Path between Kirkcaldy and Dysart.

The Back Burn

In summer 2025, a 700-metre section of the Back Burn was restored at Coul Den Reservoir, Glenrothes, boosting biodiversity and nature, and bringing benefits to local communities.

Also known locally as the Coul and Conland Burn, many man-made changes have affected the Back Burn over time. When the reservoir was built for Haig's Whisky Distillery, the burn's original course was diverted. This meant most of the flow was channelled under a sluice gate and through a bywash channel around the edge of the reservoir and hillside.

During the works, much of the old artificial infrastructure was removed, like wire baskets filled with stones (gabions) and culverts. Over 200 metres of nature-like rock ramp channel, with step pools, were created over old weir structures that could not be removed.

These rock ramps support fish movement up and down the watercourse. The burn's banks quickly began to green up and trees have been planted: 15 mature willow, alder, birch and aspen trees, plus 200 more saplings across the wider site.

Improving accessibility was an important aim for this much-loved site. To achieve this, sections of the footpath – which in places forms a circular route – were elevated and set back. A new bridge and boardwalk were installed so the burn can flow naturally, while walkers can still enjoy and feel connected to the burn.

The Back Burn River restoration project was commissioned by Fife Council and the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) and forms part of the wider Leven Programme. It will see a total of 5.8km of watercourses restored to their more natural condition.

FCCT are managing the project, supported initially with funding from SEPA's Water Environment Fund.

The FCCT Operations Team worked with SEPA to deliver planned works on reach 1 and 2 of the Back Burn River Restoration Project (between East Lomond and Formont Hills). They cleared redundant fencing, removing bank protection walls and reused the boulders to create river features as part of the restoration process, under the instruction of SEPA.

LANDSCAPE SCALE RESTORATION

Our River Restoration projects have progressed at pace. The Back Burn has been restored at Coul Den, Glenrothes, and the Rosyth Rivers restoration project has secured funding for its next three phases. Both offer enormous potential for their communities and local ecology.



Rosyth Rivers

Two degraded watercourses, the Whinny and Brankholm Burns, will be restored to support wildlife, climate resilience and community wellbeing.

Last year a feasibility study identified significant opportunities for restoring the burns' freshwater habitats in several areas of the town, including in Rosyth Public Park.

SEPA's Water Environment Fund has committed £270,000 and Fife Council has allocated £50,000, from the Nature Restoration Fund to the project. This total £320,000 funding will support the project through its entire design phase, including concept, and developing technical designs.

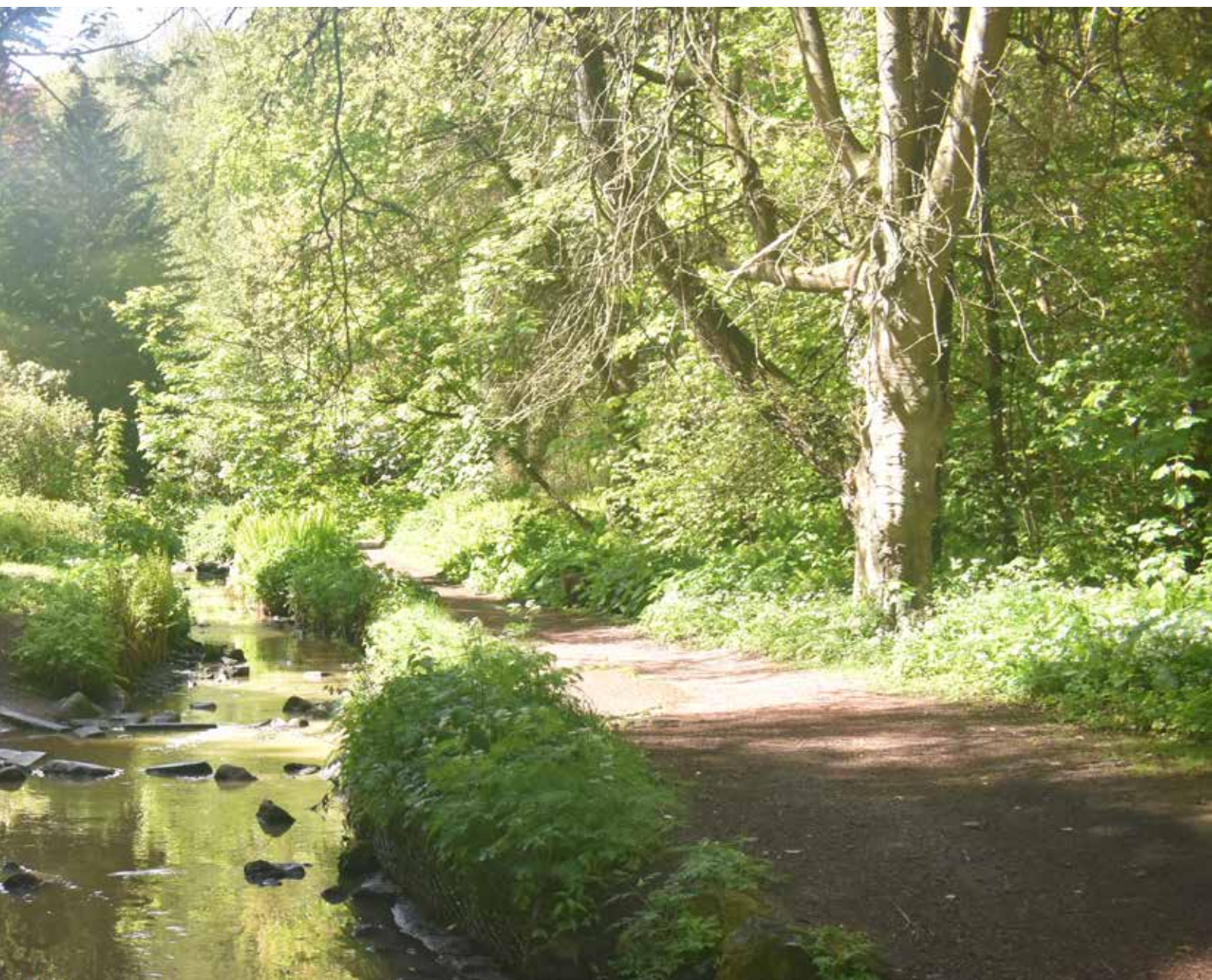
A design consultant will be appointed this summer, and the full three phases of design work are expected to take two to three years.

Prior to human settlement, Rosyth was a floodplain with slow flowing burns and wetland habitat. Over time, humans converted the area for agriculture.

Eventually the dockyard and township were built, resulting in the watercourses being artificially straightened, constrained, culverted and modified.

As a result, the rivers and wetland habitats' capacity to hold water and support wildlife has been reduced. Today, the Whinny and Brankholm Burns' ecological potential is significantly degraded. But the community are keen to do something about it and have been exploring and discussing ideas with our project manager Maddie Deacon.

Some of the restoration options at the Whinny and Brankholm Burns include re-meandering artificially straightened sections, grading the steep banksides, improving riparian habitat, creating seasonal ponds and wetland areas, and improving the path network and accessibility so that people can better enjoy the rivers as part of their greenspace.



River Eden Sustainability Partnership update

The River Eden Sustainability Partnership (RESP) was established in 2022 by FCCT, Sustainable Cupar, the University of St Andrews and Eden Angling Association. This was in response to growing concerns about the River Eden's health. Since then, the partnership has developed into a catchment wide, source to sea initiative, bringing together landowners, communities and organisations, connected by the river, through engagement events and collaborative meetings.

RESP has delivered a range of on the ground improvements, including a flood mitigation project, funded through Crown Estate Scotland's Sustainable Communities Fund, enabling the installation of leaky barriers to help reduce flooding impacts. FCCT staff were directly involved in tree planting and leaky dam construction along Moor Road between Cupar and Ceres.

Alongside this, RESP partners have supported delivery of the Riverwoods project and the continued control of Invasive Non-Native Species (INNS), including Giant Hogweed, Fewflowered Leek, Japanese Knotweed and Himalayan Balsam.

INNS control in the upper Eden has been led by FCCT since 2015, supported by multiple funding sources. Building on this longterm work, RESP helped secure Nature Restoration Fund support to extend the Scottish Invasive Species Initiative (SISI) into the Eden catchment, with funding awarded in February 2026. SISI's extensive experience will strengthen efforts to tackle invasive species and improve river health across Fife.

As part of this funding, an Eden Catchment Project Officer has been appointed, who will work closely with FCCT. The role will help extend the benefits of more than a decade of collaborative work further downstream. Delivery will focus on upskilling FCCT staff and volunteers, with support from specialist contractors where needed, to ensure strong local involvement, longterm stewardship, and a collaborative working relationship between FCCT and SISI.



Nature Finance Fife

FCCT and the Dreel Burn Investment Readiness partnership (DBIR) is now into year 3 of our funded work to realise the Nature Finance Fife vision, a regional programme that draws on a blend of public, private, and philanthropic finance to support a cohesive and collaborative programme of nature-based projects across the region for the benefit of climate, nature, people, and the green economy.

With support from the Facility for Investment Ready Nature in Scotland (FIRNS) programme, the Shared Prosperity Fund, Nature Restoration Fund, and partner contributions, we have moved from scoping and exploration of private finance mechanisms to the development and promotion of investment ready, landscape scale nature restoration projects.

Focussing on the Dreel Catchment, entering the sea at Anstruther, we have convened a collaborative network of farmers, community, regulators, government, council departments, 3rd sector eNGO's, financial specialists, agricultural advisors, academics, private business, funders, buyers, and institutional investors to help solve the puzzle of attracting a blend of finance to restore nature at scale across Fife landscapes.

This is new ground with minimal legislative levers to pull and a great deal of uncertainty surrounding voluntary natural capital markets. Weak demand and cautious supply mean that our anticipated 'first trade' of natural capital remains elusive.

We have successfully built investment ready projects, we continue live discussions with engaged buyers and investors, and remain cautiously optimistic that, in the short-term, sales of carbon and biodiversity credits/units have a role to play in 'the blend'. Longer-term, we envisage a shift towards larger scale investment in 'nature as business-critical infrastructure' where those with economic assets support nature-based solutions to protect their financial interests. This is particularly true in the face of a changing climate, degrading ecosystems and the adaptation required to address increasing pressures such as flooding, drought, erosion, nutrient and biodiversity loss.

Beyond the Dreel, Nature Finance Fife will integrate with and support a cohesive programme of initiatives and projects such as; the Fife Climate Forest, Fife's Nature Network, Fife's River Restoration programme, River Eden Sustainability Partnership, Linking Landowners Connecting Habitats, Project Orion (oyster restoration), Transforming Fife's Greenspaces (NT&C), as well as informing mechanisms and local policy around benefits for biodiversity under NPF4, supporting development of new investment ready landscape partnerships, strategic energy infrastructure projects, innovative blue/green businesses, coastal protection and flooding.

Thanks to the efforts of all our partners, funders and supporters, FCCT and the DBIR partnership are amongst the UK leaders in this rapidly evolving field. We look forward to the next evolutions of this project in helping to shape a strategic approach to nature restoration in Fife and beyond.

Beach safety in our sights

We work in partnership with the RNLI to ensure that six Fife beaches have lifeguard cover during the busy summer months. As costs for beach supervision increase, we want to ensure we get value for money. Therefore, we invited an independent expert to carry out a safety audit of all the beaches we manage, and we will consider their report in late spring 2026.

In summer 2025, we collaborated with the RNLI, Fife Council, Police Scotland and the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) to produce safety signage at Burntisland beach. The sign incorporates a code of conduct for jet skis and has advice for swimmers and watercraft users.

Burntisland Bay - Code of Conduct for Jet Ski Use

In an emergency call 999 or 112 and ask for the Coastguard

Scan the QR Code to view the Water Safety Code

Location Details: Burntisland Life Guard Station
Postcode: KY3 9BS
What3words: ///regal.spending.online
Grid Reference: NT24838621

Wildlife Welfare
Burntisland Bay is a fantastic place to enjoy wildlife but always give it space.
Let wildlife choose how close it wants to get, don't approach closely or chase them you must pass by, go slowly.
Reports to Police Scotland on wildlife welfare should be made by calling 185.

Responsible Access Checklist ✓

All Water Users

- Always check the weather and tide times.
- Let someone ashore know your plans and expected return time.
- Be aware of the cold, enter the water slowly and wear a well-fitting wetsuit.
- Always carry a means of calling for help.

All Craft

- Be visible (e.g. wear bright clothing, hi-vis swim cap, stay in groups).
- DO NOT endanger other water users or wildlife.
- DO NOT approach vessels navigating the shipping channel.
- Always wear a lifejacket and carry the correct safety equipment.
- Get the right level of training for your craft.
- All water users should maintain a means to call for help. (For example VHF Radio, mobile phone)

Be Responsible

- Keep noise and wake to a minimum so as not to impact on people and wildlife.
- Access points and slipways should be clear at all times.
- Prevent litter, bin it responsibly or take it home.

For further information Tel. 01592 650880 Email: ask.us@fifecountryside.co.uk Website: www.fifecountryside.co.uk

Sustainable Access

Access Team promoting responsible access

Following the Access and Recreation Team formally taking responsibility for a range of Local Authority Outdoor Access functions from Fife Council, FCCT has strengthened how Outdoor Access information is communicated.

Improvements have included a rewrite of the Outdoor Access content on the FCCT website. This refreshed content provides clear guidance on responsible access across a range of outdoor environments and activities commonly found throughout Fife, along with information on how to report access-related concerns. Additionally, FCCT has supported Fife Council in enhancing the content available on their Outdoor Access web page, including information on the Fife Access Forum and the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003.

The Access and Recreation Team was successful in securing NatureScot funding to develop new educational resources to support our new remit. This funding has enabled the creation of two Outdoor Access information banners, the printing of newly developed leaflets, and the production of business-card-sized information notes focusing on wild camping and responsible use of fire.

Looking ahead to 2026–2027, the team is excited to begin new public engagement sessions. Using the newly developed materials, the Access and Recreation Team will establish a visible presence at popular recreational locations across Fife, providing opportunities for the public to ask questions and discuss their access rights and responsibilities. These materials will also be used at public events such as the Fife Show, helping to create an engaging and visible presence for FCCT.



Examples of resources created for our Access Team utilising funding from NatureScot

Silver Sands investment benefits locals and visitors

Aberdour Silver Sands is one of Fife's – if not Scotland's – most popular beach destinations. Improvements and investment have been long overdue to benefit locals, visitors and the environment.

Over the past year we have worked closely with Fife Council, businesses and the local community to attract funding and to design improvements that will make the area safer, better managed, more accessible and sustainable into the future.

We already manage the two lower car parks and the overnight parking area and in Spring 2026 we will take over management of the main (upper) car park. The car parks were resurfaced and painted by Fife Council at the turn of the year, and FCCT will introduce a Smart Car Park Management Scheme.

Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) will operate alongside solar-powered payment machines. Drivers will insert their vehicle registration number into the machine and pay by coin, card or RingGo. They will get two hours' free parking.

FCCT have also recruited a seasonal parking attendant purely for Silver Sands who will be on duty Fridays to Sundays (April to September) to manage capacity and help drivers understand the new system.

The main toilet block is being refurbished and will include a Changing Places toilet. This is a specially equipped, accessible toilet for use by disabled people and their carers. Wider pavements, ramps and beach wheelchairs all go towards making Silver Sands much more accessible and enjoyable.





NHS Fife partnership working

Our partnership with NHS Fife has been working effectively over the past year and has resulted in a number of environmental improvements. For example, the suppression of weeds by natural means, e.g., mulching, resulting in a significant reduction in pesticide application. We provide grounds maintenance at 38 sites, using a coordinated management plan covering grass-cutting, strimming, litter picking, hedgerow care and winter activities such as gritting and snow clearance.

Thanks to Scottish Government funding, recycling bins have been placed at the entrance to Victoria Hospital, Kirkcaldy, making a busy concourse much more pleasant for staff, patients and visitors. Cigarette waste is being far more carefully disposed of now, and we even designed a poster to stick to the bins with advice about quitting smoking.

Following this successful trial, we are replacing all the bins across the Victoria Hospital estate, numbering 28 in total. It is anticipated that a fifth of litter collected in our bins will go for recycling, rather than into landfill.

The partnership's primary objective is to encourage a cleaner and greener environment that is well-managed and enhances health and well-being for everyone, whether patients, staff or visitors.

Recycling bins cut landfill waste

Last year we reported that 200 regular bins across the sites we manage had been replaced with recycling bins, to cut down the amount of waste going into landfill. Now 95% of our 68 sites have recycling bins – a great result.

At St Andrews West Sands alone, 347 bags of recycling rubbish were collected from August 2025 to March 2026. That is 27,760 litres of cans and plastic bottles that were sent for recycling, with the result that at least a quarter of landfill waste has been diverted from landfill.

Minto Path, Cardenden

Minto Path had long suffered from drainage problems, resulting in disruption for local path users especially after the prolonged wet period in early 2026. Working in partnership with Fife Council and local community groups, drainage works have been carried out, which will ensure the path surface is less challenging going forward.



Loo of the Year awards

FCCT manage 17 public toilets on behalf of Fife Council which consistently impress judges at the annual Loo of the Year awards. These UK-wide prizes recognise standards in 'away from home' washrooms.

Our toilets were declared the top local authority toilets in Scotland, our in-house cleaning team were named Scotland's best, and the Craigmead toilets took the award for the leading eco-friendly toilets.

Overall, we retained our spot in the awards' Champions League – among big names like Network Rail, Mitie and McDonald's – which recognises organisations who are maintaining a consistently high standard of management.

In other categories, recognition also went to the public toilets at Aberdour Silver Sands, Harbourmaster's House in Dysart, and to the new block at Riverside Park, Glenrothes.



Expansion plans for managed parking

Expanding and improving our managed car park portfolio remains a priority. In 2025 Glenrothes Riverside Park was officially opened with five overnight bays and a new public toilet block. This year sees us pilot Automatic Number Plate Recognition schemes at Aberdour Silver Sands and Elie Ruby Bay. We now have a total of 71 overnight bays across Fife, and our ambition remains to grow this to 100 by 2027 and 150 by 2028.





Tide Line by Julie Brook

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Colourful finale to Beach of Dreams

St Andrews West Sands beach was a blast of colour and ceilidh music at the finale of the coastal festival Beach of Dreams. Two hundred locals and visitors danced to the Kilrymont Ceilidh Band against the backdrop of hundreds of silk pennants fluttering in the breeze.

Fife was the Scottish location for this UK-wide festival that celebrated our coast's heritage and culture and shone a spotlight on climate challenges. We see these challenges close-up, where storms and high tides batter beaches, seawalls and paths. Like at Ardrross on the Fife Coastal Path where the seawall and part of the path was washed away two years ago. And at Pathhead Sands, Kirkcaldy, where huge swathes of seaweed washed up, tons of sand were displaced and steps and fences were broken.

FCCT's contribution to Beach of Dreams was a 12-day journey of free hikes and bikes along the 117 miles of the Fife Coastal Path in May 2025, culminating in the beach ceilidh. Our events were well attended and received extremely positive feedback.

The silk pennants – created by coastal communities across the UK – came to the Kingdom as a travelling art installation and made a breathtaking sight on the sands.

Beach of Dreams inspired many of the Kingdom's coastal communities to get involved through artistic and cultural events. The festival's commissioned artist, Julie Brook, lead workshops with schools and groups in a partnership with ArtMovesFife. And she created a legacy with her sculpture Tide Line - a path of locally sourced materials that meanders across the tide line near Cellardyke.

Connecting with private landowners

Our Fife Climate Forest team has been strengthened with the appointment of Claire Williams as Fife Climate Forest Manager and Connectivity Lead, funded by Scottish Forestry and Nature Restoration Funding. Claire's role is to promote connectivity and lead on engagement with private landowners through a new campaign 'Fife Climate Forest's Working Land: Working Trees.' In agricultural settings, trees can mitigate flooding, prevent soil erosion and provide shade for animals.

The campaign kicked off in early Spring 2026 with an offer of fully funded trees supported by the Nature Restoration Fund and working in partnership with Woodland Trust Scotland. A total of 4,835 metres of hedging (24,175 native stems) and 6,607 woodland trees were provided to 17 private landowners across Fife.

As part of the project, two tree giveaway events took place at Strathmiglo and Balmullo where 12 landowners collected trees – provided by Woodland Trust Scotland - to plant on their land. Thanks are due to FCCT's Operations Team who rose to the logistical challenge of delivering all 3,000 trees, guards and stakes to the locations in good time.

Lucky Ewe is a charity near Cupar that provides supported work placements for young people, giving them opportunities to engage in farming, animal husbandry, land management and food cultivation. Activities and goals are tailored to the individual's ability.

The charity was successful in both MOREWoods and MOREHedges applications to Woodland Trust Scotland, which covered 75% of the costs of trees, guards and stakes. Nature Restoration Funding, covered the remaining 25%. FCCT staff were made available over seven days to help deliver tree planting alongside Lucky Ewe volunteers.

Lucky Ewe continued to lead the volunteer effort, involving more than 100 people in additional planting days over the winter and spring. This ensured that all 5,570 trees were successfully planted.

In addition, the FCCT team has supported tree planting with private landowners and on sites that we manage:

Hedge Planting Statistics

1020 trees

5000 whips



Shared ambition to connect people with nature

Fife Climate Forest is a partnership project led by Fife Council, Climate Action Fife and FCCT with a shared ambition to grow the number of trees, woods and forests in Fife which will deliver real benefits for people, nature and climate.

Community Engagement Manager (Fife Climate Forest), Rebecca Logsdon was on the panel at the Central Climate Forest Forum at the University of Stirling in January 2026.

The Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs, Land Reform and Islands, Mairi Gougeon, also attended the event where she praised ambitious plans to plant 35 million trees across the central belt.

In March, the Cabinet Secretary gave a further announcement that the Climate Forests, including Fife Climate Forest, have been included as an exemplar of Landscape Scale projects for the Scottish Biodiversity Delivery Plan. The purpose of the exemplar projects is to demonstrate new ways to accelerate and scale up nature restoration on the ground. We look forward to working with communities, partners and agencies to realise our Fife Climate Forest ambitions.



Fife Climate Forest team dig deep

We are grateful for Fife Council's support, which enables tree planting on public land for the benefit of local communities. Trees have a positive impact on mental and physical wellbeing, help make neighbourhoods more attractive places to live, and provide practical benefits such as shade and cooling. They also play a vital role in managing flooding and improving air quality.

Our tree planting team was supported by FCCT's Access and Recreation team and strengthened by the appointment of Tom Corke and Erika O'Reilly as seasonal staff for the 2025–26 tree planting season. Together with Rebecca Logsdon, funded through the Climate Action Fife project, the team worked with a wide range of community groups across Fife, moving trees and saplings of all sizes, digging, and training enthusiastic volunteers in tree planting.

In Cowdenbeath Public Park, more than 600 native broadleaf saplings were planted in just one day at Bervie's Brae with pupils from Lumphinnans Primary School and Beath High School. The young people also helped to install over 1,000 wildflower plugs, creating a vibrant and diverse habitat that will flourish in summer.

Fife Tree Wardens in focus

Fife Tree Wardens were actively involved in tree care throughout last year, supporting a wide range of activities. This included weeding the FCCT tree nursery, as well as helping at community events and tree planting days. Working independently within their own communities, they continue to build strong local support and partnerships. In the autumn, they also played a key role in local seed collection and tree growing as part of the national seed-gathering programme.

We also hosted the Scotland Regional Tree Warden event in Dunfermline, which was attended by 15 Fife Tree Wardens. It proved to be a fantastic day of learning, sharing and exploration, featuring inspiring talks and workshops alongside a tree walk at Pittencrieff Park. Contributions from The Tree Council and Harry Watkins, Director of St Andrews Botanic Garden, added valuable insight. The Fife Tree Warden team valued the opportunity to showcase our network and to learn from others, and the energy and commitment shown by tree wardens across the country was truly inspiring.



Climate Action Fife community tree planting project stats:

**46 training, community
engagement and tree
planting events**

985 people engaged with

**7,585 trees planted with
communities**

**2,429 of these planted by
the FCCT team**



A path, a play and a pilgrimage

The Fife Pilgrim Way took centre stage at Culross Abbey when local playwright Rebecca Sharp brought her powerful retelling of St Enoch's story to life.

St Enoch was the mother of St Mungo who, according to tradition, was born in Culross after the young woman (named Thaney) landed there having been exiled by her family. There she was taken in by St Serf, founder of an early church on the site that would later become Culross Abbey. Thaney gave birth to her son Kentigern, also known as Mungo, who would go on to found the city of Glasgow.

In *Maiden, Mother, Mage*, Rebecca Sharp's reimagined Thaney's story as three poetic monologues in a site-specific production that later travelled to Glasgow Cathedral.

Ahead of the Culross performance, our Access and Recreation Officer, Iwan Thomas, led an atmospheric guided walk along the Fife Pilgrim Way for ten theatregoers. The walk included a visit to the ruins of St Mungo's Chapel, closely associated with the birthplace of Kentigern/Mungo, deepening the audience's connection to the place, the story and the route itself.

A round-up of the local nature reserves

Coul Den

Coul Den has enjoyed a landmark year of restoration, conservation, and community involvement, marking another positive step in delivering its 2025–2030 Management Plan. Once a working reservoir, the site continues to thrive as a much-loved Local Nature Reserve, providing a rich mosaic of wetland, grassland and woodland habitats for wildlife, alongside valuable opportunities for people to enjoy and connect with nature.

A highlight was the successful delivery of Phase 1 of the Restoring the Back Burn Project, a transformative programme designed to return 5.8 km of watercourse to a more natural state. Works at Coul, completed between July and October 2025, included realigning sections of the burn, removing artificial barriers, constructing rock ramps, and installing a new boardwalk—actions that will significantly improve habitat quality, biodiversity, and long-term resilience of the site.

Conservation work across the reserve remained strong, with volunteers and staff delivering the following activities:

- Grassland management
- Woodland maintenance
- Pond work
- Planting over 250 native trees
- Installing new duck nesting tubes after a year of poor breeding success

Wildlife monitoring continued to provide valuable ecological insights. Regular surveys were carried out for birds, butterflies, vegetation and riverfly species, with all data shared with the Fife Nature Records Centre to inform wider conservation efforts.

Three successful community events were delivered despite the works taking place on site, including a bat walk for a local Cub pack, a community walkover of the Back Burn works, and a tree planting day.

Challenges such as unauthorised fishing and motorbike access persisted, but these were addressed through monitoring, engagement, and adaptive site management.

Dalbeath Marsh

This year at Dalbeath Marsh Local Nature Reserve focused on habitat improvement, community involvement, and education, helping transform a site shaped by its industrial past into a thriving and much-loved wetland.

Staff, volunteers, and pupils from Beath High School played a key role in practical conservation, clearing gorse and broom to develop a new wildflower meadow, which will support pollinators. Annual meadow cutting and continued Japanese knotweed control further improved habitats, with knotweed now reduced to a few small patches. The reserve's ponds remained in excellent condition, supporting diverse aquatic invertebrates and large numbers of froglets.

Community engagement was a highlight, with events such as litter picks and family activities encouraging people to explore the reserve, learn about its wildlife and build a stronger sense of local stewardship. School visits provided hands-on learning opportunities and increased understanding of the site's importance as an SSSI.

Access and site management were supported through path side vegetation cutting, while challenges linked to problem behaviours were addressed through increased patrols, partnership working and targeted engagement with residents, schools and services. Overall, the year strengthened both Dalbeath Marsh's ecological health and the community's connection to it.

Eden Estuary

In October, the Eden Estuary Centre was closed following a significant incident of vandalism. The Centre reopened to the public in April 2025, made possible in part by the formation of a new volunteer group made up of local residents and regular visitors. These volunteers generously give their time to support the care and management of the building. The Centre is a well-loved resource for the local community and attracts wildlife enthusiasts from further afield.

During the closure we had the opportunity to deliver a programme of refurbishments. We received help from Fife Council's Community Payback team who painted the interior walls and ceiling, our Maintenance Team repainted the floor, and new chairs were purchased for visitors to use.

In addition to the regular monthly Wetland Bird Surveys and spring Breeding Bird Surveys, additional Low Tide Counts and Winter Bird Surveys were conducted at the Eden Estuary during winter 2025/26.

The Winter Bird Surveys followed the same routes as the breeding surveys, assessing seasonal bird presence alongside habitat quality and food availability. Monthly Low Tide Counts took place from November to February, involving the counting of all birds across the reserve at low tide. These surveys were supported by volunteers and organised across 12 defined survey areas. Requested by the British Trust for Ornithology, these occasional additional surveys provide valuable data on changes in bird populations and their distribution.

Birding Highlights

Over the last year some unusual and exciting species have visited the estuary including

A pair of Avocets (April)

Little Stint (July to October)

Common Crane (February)



Lomond Hills Regional Park

Over the past year, Lomond Hills Regional Park has benefited from strong partnership working to support wildlife, habitats, visitors and local communities. Conservation, access teams, volunteers and partners delivered a wide range of projects that enhanced the park's natural environment while promoting responsible access.

Volunteers played a vital role in habitat improvement, with around 800 trees and more than 5,000 hedge plants established at sites including Lumphinnans Farm and Little Ballo. Ongoing maintenance by volunteers helps ensure the success of new woodland planting.

Visitor management remained a priority, with the Access and Recreation Team conducting 468 patrols to address litter, parking issues and illegal off-road motorbike use. Dog-related incidents declined during the year, supported by clearer signage and communication, particularly during lambing season. Joint patrols with Police Scotland, the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service and Fife Council Safer Communities strengthened safety and compliance.

Wildlife monitoring continued to build understanding of the park's ecological health, including Wetland Bird Surveys, a renewed Moorland Bird Survey of key upland species, and trial butterfly surveys. All records were shared with the Fife Nature Records Centre to support wider conservation efforts.

Public engagement included a popular guided walk to West Lomond and regular landowner meetings, helping align priorities around access, habitat creation and survey findings. Overall, the year reflects a shared commitment to caring for Lomond Hills Regional Park as an important upland landscape for Fife.

Moorland Bird Survey

Volunteers led by Conservation Officer Craig Leitch conducted a Moorland Bird Survey on East Lomond in May and July of 2025, to record activity levels across common upland bird species. The survey was reinstated after monitoring had first been conducted from 1998–2007, it covers the same five survey areas using the Brown & Shepherd (1993) method.

Initial results

- Waders: overall decline, matching national trends
- Raptors and owls: generally stable; notable given national declines
- Gamebirds and passerines: mixed trends, in keeping with wider Scotland (e.g., skylark, stonechat, whinchat).

Potential conservation measures for some species could be included in Agri Environment Climate Scheme and Nature Restoration Fund bids going forward.



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Birnie and Gaddon

Recent improvements at Birnie and Gaddon Lochs have enhanced the visitor experience while also strengthening wildlife habitats. Upgrade works have been conducted at both hides to improve comfort and shelter, making wildlife viewing more enjoyable, particularly during periods of poor weather.

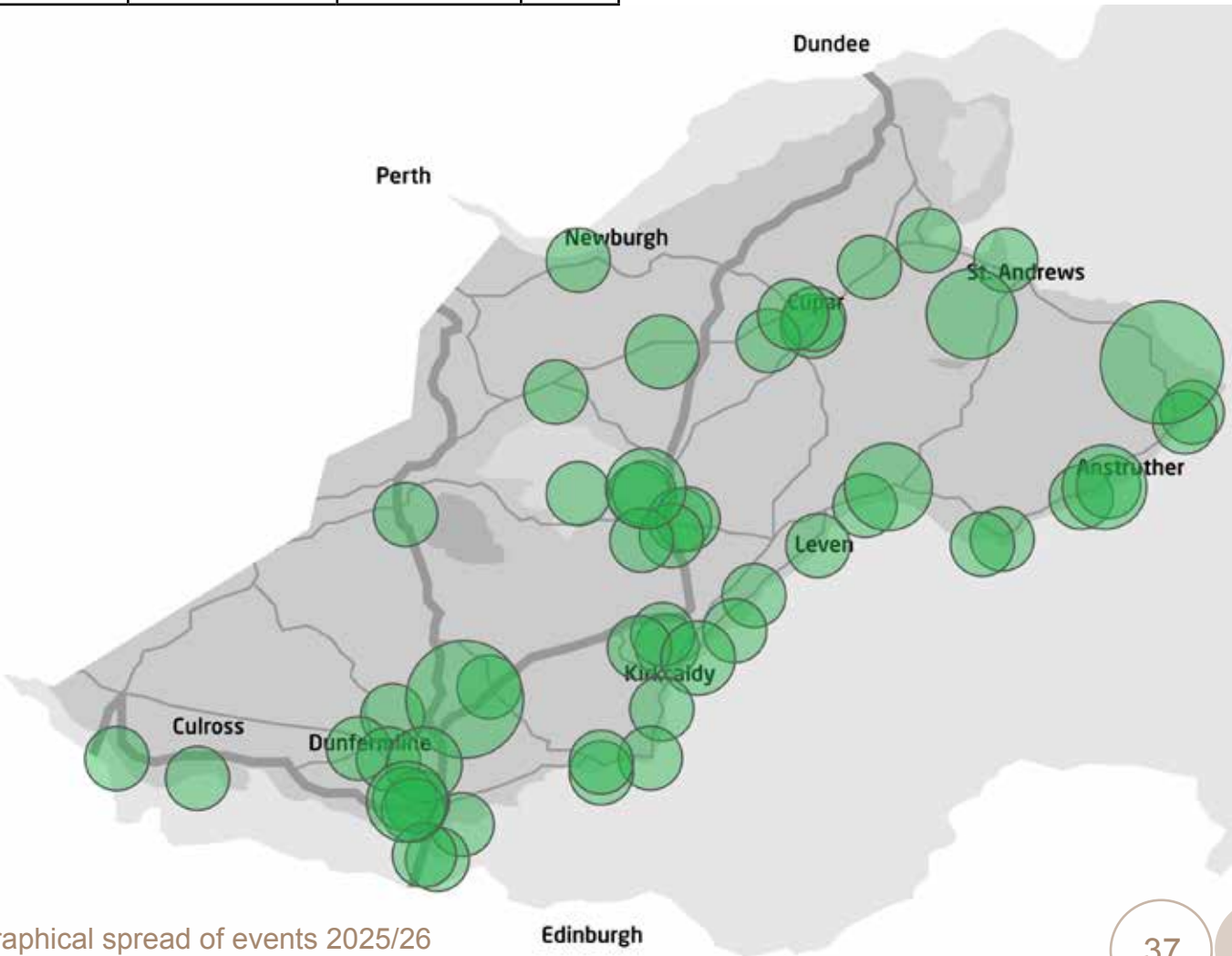
The site continues to be well used by visitors taking exercise and enjoying time outdoors. To increase opportunities to see wildlife, a new artificial otter holt has been installed, replacing an older structure that previously showed signs of use. Constructed using natural timber felled by our resident beavers, the holt reflects the wider positive influence these natural engineers are having on the woodland and loch ecosystems, benefiting a wide range of species.

Gaddon Loch, along with Dalbeath and Coul, supports some of the most important grasslands in Fife. Ongoing management has maintained these habitats in excellent condition, evident in the abundance of bees, insects, butterflies and colourful wildflowers throughout the summer. The grasslands also support amphibians and voles and culminate in an impressive autumn display of Waxcap fungi, highlighting the health and diversity of this ecosystem.

Community Engagement Events

Each year our Conservation and Engagement Teams deliver a wide range of engagement activities, including education sessions, illustrated talks, conservation activities, tree planting sessions and access awareness events. They also attend large scale events like the Fife Show. A total of 95 events were held/attended with 1789 attendees. Comparison to last year shown below.

2024-25	2025 -26	Increase/ Decrease	%
93 events	95 events	2	2.15
1557 attendees	1789 attendees	232	14.90



Geographical spread of events 2025/26

VOLUNTEERING

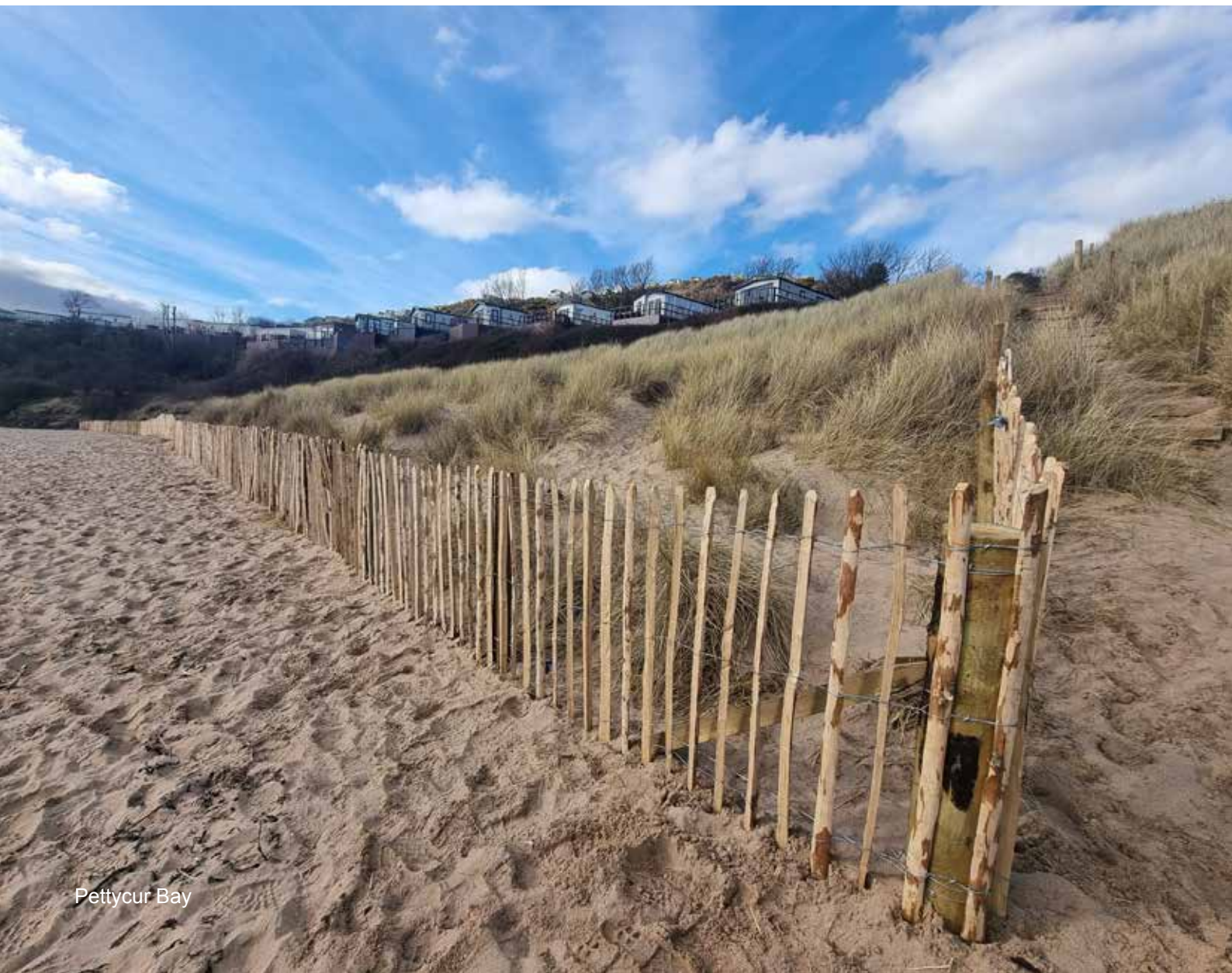
Each year we take the opportunity to celebrate the invaluable contribution our volunteers make towards the success of many projects delivered by FCCT. We currently have 150 registered volunteers along with our community and corporate partners, who have contributed a staggering 3294 volunteer hours this year.

Conservation Volunteers

Our Conservation Volunteers have worked on a diverse range of activities this year, helping us to deliver projects across much of Fife, including at Coul Den, Pettycur Bay and Lumphinnans. They relish the opportunity to get involved in practical conservation tasks at our Local Nature Reserves including planting trees, meadow management and repairing fencing at the sand dunes at Pettycur Bay Beach.

Working in partnership with a local farmer, volunteers planted 40 metres of hedging and a number of trees, helping to improve biodiversity across Fife. These new hedgerows will form valuable wildlife corridors and enhance habitats for insects and small animals.

Some volunteers got involved with a project at NHS Fife. At Victoria Hospital, Kirkcaldy, they used their skills to create a garden for staff to enjoy on their breaks. Two of our volunteers have gone on to volunteer with NHS Fife and look after these gardens.



Pettycur Bay

Corporate Groups

Working with corporate sector groups is important both for FCCT and the businesses themselves regarding their corporate social responsibility. Year on year we welcome back groups who choose to support the work we do making a positive contribution to Fife's biodiversity.

- Babcock helped remove and replace tree guards and stakes to ensure the continued growth of trees within the Lomond Hills Regional Park.
- Enterprise Mobility staff joined our Conservation Team to help with scrub clearing which made an enormous difference at the SSSI site.
- A large team from Scottish Gas worked at remote sites along the coastline near Crail where they removed lots of debris and ghost fishing gear from our shores and beaches.

Community Groups

The Scottish Motorsport Marshals Club, a volunteer run charity, supported FCCT through both funding and hands-on volunteering, demonstrating a strong commitment to mitigate the environmental impact of motorsport. The group donated materials and worked alongside staff to build and install new duck nesting tubes at sites including Coul Den and Gaddon Loch. FCCT have installed duck nesting tubes at Motray Water, and Birnie and Gaddon Lochs in the past.

Our Conservation Officers had identified that, despite having up to 30 Mallard Ducks living at Coul Reservoir, no ducklings had successfully fledged last year.

The tubes are positioned above open water to help reduce predation from mink, rats, foxes and avian predators such as crows and magpies. They can achieve hatching success rates of 60–80% once established. Conservation Officers will monitor the sites over the coming breeding season.

Alongside this work, community groups continue to play a vital role in caring for local environments. Groups such as Friends of Largo Bay and Seafield Environmental Group have led regular litter picks and beach cleans, helping to keep Fife's coastline clean, welcoming and valued by both wildlife and local communities.



FCCT Volunteer Hours April 2025 - March 2026	
FCCT Volunteers	1239
Community Groups	991
Corporate Groups	773
Education Groups	110
Board Volunteers	181
Total	3294

Future Focus

Developing the Nature Nurture Programme

Over the coming year, FCCT will develop Nature Nurture, a new Fife-wide wellbeing programme commissioned by Fife Council's Education Department through Our Minds Matter. The programme is a response to the growing demand for early, relationship-based support for children in Primary 1–4 and their families, using nature as a key setting for wellbeing and connection.

Two new roles—a Project Coordinator and a Delivery Specialist—will be recruited to lead the programme's development, partnerships and delivery.

Together, they will design and deliver high-quality, nature-based group work that strengthens emotional literacy, supports positive parent–child relationships, and builds resilience among families experiencing pressure, but who do not meet the thresholds for support from formal services.

Nature Nurture will take place in local, walkable green and blue spaces across Fife, with sessions running at weekends and during school holidays to reduce barriers linked to cost, transport and caring responsibilities. Schools will be the sole referral route, ensuring alignment with classroom support and wider wellbeing planning, while co-design with teachers, families and children will help tailor delivery to local needs.

Strong partnerships will underpin the programme, including links with community mental health teams, occupational therapists, social prescribers and creative practitioners.

As the programme grows, it will also build local capacity through sessional roles, volunteering opportunities and practitioner development.

Overall, Nature Nurture aims to foster connection, confidence and joy within families, contributing to healthier relationships, stronger communities and a more resilient future for Fife's children.

Back Burn – Balbirnie

The next phase of the Back Burn restoration project centres on around 1km of the burn through Balbirnie Park, Markinch.

Ecologists have identified the weirs as a barrier to trout migration, therefore limiting the amount of food available to them and access to gravel beds for spawning. Removing these barriers and restoring the burn will allow more fish to access a greater area of habitat, supporting their populations and increasing their resilience to future climate impacts.

Contractors will be on site from spring and the work includes:

- Construction of 'nature-like' rock ramps at barriers that cannot be fully removed (i.e. weirs and steep artificial channels) to mimic natural channel conditions and enable fish to move up and downstream more easily.
- Where bank protection is no longer necessary, removal of sections of stone and gabion (wire baskets with stones) bank protection to restore riverbanks and allow the river to function more naturally where possible.
- Where bank protection is still needed, replacement of stone and gabion baskets with more sustainable bank protection solutions that provide long-term erosion protection while minimising impacts to biodiversity.
- Installation of 'large wood' structures (large pieces of natural wood like tree trunks) in the channel to mimic the natural presence of wood in rivers, improving the habitat within the burn.
- Local engagement events informed the community and allowed discussion around the placement and design of features such as benches, footbridges and artworks.



Fife Coastal Path signage

With funding from the Shared Prosperity Fund and the Nature Restoration Fund, via Fife Council, a new suite of Corten steel waymarkers, fingerposts and orientation panels is being installed along the Fife Coastal Path. Corten steel offers greater durability and a lower maintenance burden than traditional materials, keeping ongoing costs low and ensuring a longer lifespan in the exposed coastal environment. The improved signage will be rolled out during 2026.

Over time, the Corten steel will develop a natural patina, allowing the signage to blend sensitively with its surroundings. The works are scheduled to be completed in time to mark the Fife Coastal Path's 25th anniversary, enhancing the visitor experience, and encouraging more people to use the path and connect with our coastal environment while supporting long-term route management.

Planting new roots for citizen science

The Fife Climate Forest team is developing a new citizen science project, in partnership with Fife Council, to survey Fife's urban tree canopy.

By collecting valuable data on urban tree species, size, age and health, the project will help build a clearer picture of Fife's existing urban canopy and identify priority areas for future planting.

The project will initially be trialled with Fife Tree Wardens, before being rolled out to wider community volunteers, supported by appropriate training.

Fife Coastal Path 25th Anniversary

In 2028, the Fife Coastal Path will celebrate the 25th anniversary of its official opening. One of Scotland's Great Trails, the 117mile route is enjoyed by local walkers and visitors from further afield alike.

To mark this milestone, FCCT staff and partner organisations will start planning activities in the coming months, with a programme of activities and events to take place along the route throughout 2028. Celebrations will be supported by a new anniversary logo, to be used by FCCT and partner organisations.

A key legacy project will see the installation of new waymarking and interpretive panels along the route, funded by the Shared Prosperity Fund and the Nature Restoration Fund, via Fife Council.





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