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networkbulletin

SPRING 2024 FOR TCV SCOTLAND'S COMMUNITY NETWORK



In this issue: Community tree planting, saving our reds, Citizen Science...

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Cover photos:

Tree planting in Milngavie. CLARE JOHNSTONE

Red squirrel. BOB HALL/FLICKR

Wildlife ID session. GRAHAM BURNS

Welcome to the Spring Network Bulletin from The Conservation Volunteers in Scotland. In this issue we highlight some of the efforts being made to combat the twin challenges of climate change and biodiversity loss.

Our Flooding Resilience Officer Clare Johnstone outlines her work with communities to increase their resilience to flooding, increasingly the result of changing weather patterns.

Trees can play a vital role in combatting climate change by locking in carbon. TCV has recently organised a programme of school and community tree planting, including in partnership with East Renfrewshire Council. A few miles away at Cathkin Braes, pupils from The High School of Glasgow have left a lasting legacy for their 900th anniversary by planting thousands of native hedge trees.

To increase climate action at the local level, a network of climate action hubs supported by the Scottish Government is being set up across the country. TCV has joined in the launch of the Ayrshire Climate Hub, and in March our Senior Project Officer Alex Patterson ran a series of Introductory Citizen Science workshops with local groups and organisations.

Enhancing Scotland's biodiversity includes efforts to conserve Scotland's iconic red squirrels. Helping to save these charismatic characters are TCV Community Network members Glenkens Red Squirrel Group and Eastern Lowlands Red Squirrel Group. And Ruth Holmes in Stirlingshire is passionate about helping her local population of reds. Another individual making a difference is Libby Johnson who is enjoying her time as a Volunteer Officer with Enabling Projects in Clackmannanshire (EPIC). And TCV has recently welcomed Rebecca Kennelly as our new Chief Executive Officer, who shares a few words about her new role.

We also feature the recently launched Urban Nature Network, Forth Valley OWL training, and coming up – Blossom Day!

Across the UK, our **Community Network** continues to grow with over 2,100 member groups, including a healthy 300+ in Scotland. We hope soon to announce improvements to the Network to further support grassroots environmental action – look out for details on our website and social media. Network membership continues to be **free** thanks to support from players of People's Postcode Lottery. If your group or organisation isn't a member yet, why not join now?

Building community resilience



Flooding in Paisley, 1994, when scenes like this were very rare. Since then, flooding has become increasingly common. Is this the new normal?

As we've all witnessed in recent years, one of the major effects of climate change is the increased frequency of extreme weather events, including severe 'named' storms (Arwen, Babet, Ciaran etc) which can lead to extensive flooding, from countryside fields to the heart of urban communities, with sometimes tragic consequences. **Clare Johnstone**, TCV Flood Resilience Officer, helps communities in

Scotland prepare for this increased flood risk. Here, Clare explains her role:

I aim to be a bridge between national agencies and statutory bodies, and the individuals and groups on the ground who are susceptible to flooding, or who are concerned about climate change and what actions they can take to help combat it. My work covers three areas:

- Work in partnership to raise awareness of flood risk
- Involve communities to record useful information about local watercourses
- Support communities in building resilience

Community groups interested in flood resilience may be referred to me by organisations such as the **Scottish Flood**



Alyth Burn.



Clare Johnstone with Milngavie tree planters. ADELE PASHLEY

[Forum](#), or I may be contacted directly by groups themselves. I've recently worked with several communities in different parts of the country:

Milngavie

In Milngavie, East Dunbartonshire, Gavin's Mill, a local historical mill on the banks of the Allander Water, was affected by fluvial flooding. Gavin's Mill Community Project members and other local residents are concerned that the Mill and possibly their homes are liable to flood in the future. One measure to mitigate this risk is to plant trees with the group members at a suitable site upstream from the Mill. Although these will take some years to have any effect, local residents are keen to take as much action as they can now, so have liaised with East Dunbartonshire Council to plant trees in a nearby small park. Not only will it hopefully help limit flooding in the future, but also improve biodiversity and build community relationships. To this aim a tree planting session was held in late March of this year. The event helped raise awareness of flood risk and build resilience within the community over time as local people work together to support each other as our climate changes.

Alyth

In Alyth, Perth & Kinross, [Bioregioning Tayside](#) and local residents support the Den of Alyth in conjunction with the local Council Greenspace Rangers. This wooded glen is a designated Site of Special Scientific Interest as it is still being naturally seeded and the trees come directly from the original deciduous woods that covered a wide area of Scotland.

As such the Den of Alyth is a popular walking spot where a path follows the Alyth Burn along the banks for some distance. However, recently this area has become more eroded due to heavy rainfall and flooding in sections. Not only does this cause a hazard to those accessing the path, but recent extreme storms have led to a number of native trees falling over. This has blocked the footpath as well as causing the potential to block bridges if large branches were to break off and float downstream. One key reason to check river courses regularly is to ensure no blockages occur either in the river or at a bridge where debris could build up and cause a flood after heavy rain. As a result, local residents report issues that affect this area to me and if of significance, I follow up with the council. This is useful as the



Volunteer Flood Resilience Officers can help monitor watercourses.



School children in Clackmannanshire engaged in a river-based Citizen Science lesson.

If you would like further information about how communities can adapt to climate change, a very useful resource is the [Community Climate Adaptation Routemap](#)

Greenspace Rangers have to cover a wide area themselves and can't get to all sites quickly after a storm.

As well as specific records, volunteers also take photos which enables a record of how riverbanks change overtime. With our changing weather, this will be a useful reference for how different landscapes respond to different weather.

Flood Resilience Officers

Many communities now have Flood Resilience Officers - volunteers who regularly monitor the levels of their local watercourses and who can spot potential flood risk eg any debris such as fallen trees. This information can be passed on to the relevant local authority to deal with any issues before these items cause problems in their own towns and villages.

Next generation

I believe it's important that the next generation are aware of climate change and how this may affect them. To communicate this message, I ran sessions with teachers and pupils at Menstrie and Alva Primary Schools in Clackmannanshire. These sessions explained how rivers 'work', what the risks are to the local community, and what people should do if flooding does occur.

Citizen Science

Flood risk awareness can also lead to other Citizen Science activities for young people to better understand the environment around them. There are many Citizen Science resources on our [website](#) for all ages, abilities and interests. Rivers are ecologically key to a local environment for many fish, insects like water boatmen, lace wings, dragonflies and damselflies, as well as frogs, toads, newts and mammals such as otters and increasingly beavers! As our climate changes these creatures are also affected. It is important people realise how much they can help their local wildlife as well as themselves around building resilience and I hope to run kick-sampling and pond dipping sessions for the primary schools in the summer term.

My post is supported by the Scottish Government on a part-time basis. Looking ahead, I hope to work with more communities across Scotland to build their own resilience and understanding as we all adapt to our changing climate. It's also a great opportunity to help people appreciate just how complex and important our river and coastal systems are to all of nature, and assist communities to help look after their local patch. If you think I may be of help in your locality, please [contact me](#).



Tree planting in East Ren

By **Laura Salvage**, Senior Project Officer.

Trees can play a vital role in combatting climate change as they absorb atmospheric carbon and lock it in for centuries. And trees help prevent flooding, lower city temperatures, and reduce pollution, not to mention the multiple benefits trees provide for wildlife. TCV encourages tree planting through our hugely successful [I Dig Trees](#) campaign, plus other planting programmes, including one recently in partnership with East Renfrewshire Council. Between December 2023 and March 2024, we organised 20 planting sessions and planted some 10,000 trees at 14 sites across the council area, including Rouken Glen Park, Mearns Road, Huntly Park and Robslee Road. Species included native broadleaves such as oak, hazel, alder, birch, willow and rowan.

This was very much a community-based project and involved local residents and school children from Braidbar, Carlibar and Neilston Primary Schools, plus Woodfarm High School, and an enthusiastic group from the Mother Earth Hindu Temple. Almost 400 people of all ages participated



Local residents lend a hand. LAURA SALVAGE

in the project. It's been hard work but very enjoyable and it would be nice if the youngsters involved can watch 'their' trees grow and develop, as they themselves grow up. And we hope this project will lead to further opportunities for TCV in East Renfrewshire.

‘What we’re doing today’ talk from Laura with pupils from Braidbar Primary, Giffnock. BRAIDBAR PRIMARY SCHOOL



TCV’s Laura Salvage with helpers from Carlibar Primary, Barrhead.



Carlibar Primary pupils in tree planting mode. LAURA SALVAGE



Sam Ibbott, Climate Change Officer at East Renfrewshire Council, said:

“Over the past few years East Renfrewshire Council has planted 10,000 trees as a legacy project to mark the COP26 climate talks coming to Glasgow in 2021. In addition to the environmental, biodiversity and climate benefits, the project saw high levels of community engagement with the participation of approximately 500 school children. To build on this momentum the council agreed to plant a further 10,000 trees during the recent 2023/24 planting season in association with TCV.

It has been a great way of positively engaging local politicians, school children, community groups and residents in nature and their local environment. We were also very pleased to involve 60 Afghan and Ukrainian refugee guests to create a lasting bond with the council.

TCV have been excellent in helping organise the programme, engage stakeholders, and delivering the plantings on the day - it has been a very successful partnership.”

Happy 900th birthday!



PHOTOS: © MARTIN SHIELDS WWW.MARTINSHIELDS.COM

To mark The High School of Glasgow's 900th anniversary, 200 of its pupils swapped their regular lessons and iPads for gloves and spades as they headed over to Cathkin Braes in the south of the city. Here they planted 3,600 trees over two days to create a lasting legacy and benefit the City of Glasgow. Staff from Glasgow City Council and TCV were on

hand to guide the youngsters as they planted hedgerows of holly, blackthorn and hawthorn which will enhance the area's biodiversity and attract many species of birds, mammals and insects. And the hedgerows have been planted in such a way that they will discourage dogs from disrupting wildlife nesting sites.

About blossom time!

By **Diane Alderdice**, Volunteer Director, Orchard Revival – Scotland’s charity for traditional orchards.



This year, **Orchard Revival** is helping to promote UK Orchard Blossom Day, celebrating one of nature’s wonders – fruit tree blossom, and the beauty, bounty and biodiversity it brings!

Blossom Day is scheduled to take place on 29th April, though ‘Blossom Time’ might better describe the event, as blossom comes out at different times depending on where you live.

We want to encourage as many Scottish

groups and organisations as possible to join in the celebration this year by holding an event or activity.

Our friends at **PTES** and the **Orchard Network** have produced some wonderful resources to help people think of some ideas for running events, whether they have fruit trees in their gardens, church grounds, community growing spaces, or commercial orchards. There are ideas for everyone, from holding a guided tour or open day, having a blossom picnic,

spotting pollinators, getting creative with art, crafts, poems and song inspired by the blossom, to tastings of the orchard produce made by producers... and lots more!

Groups or individuals can **register their project** and have it added to the **UK map**.

We will share any project ideas or photos on the **Orchard Revival website** and on **X/Twitter** to help inspire and inform!

New Ayrshire Climate Hub



Alex Paterson running a Citizen Science session with Radio City Association, Kilwinning. PHOTOS: SARAH JONES

TCV has joined a partnership of 10 organisations*, led by the Energy Agency, in launching the Ayrshire Climate Hub to promote community climate action in the three local authority areas across Ayrshire and Arran. TCV’s initial involvement in the Hub has been to organise a series of seven Citizen Science workshops with local community groups. Citizen Science encourages people of all ages, interests and abilities to gather information vital to protecting and improving our environment.

The Ayrshire workshops were run by **Alex Paterson**, TCV Senior Project Officer, who promotes Citizen Science to as wide an audience as possible. Alex’s Ayrshire sessions provided an introduction to Citizen Science for participants to learn how to effectively record and identify wildlife, understand why local wildlife recording is so important and take away the skills and confidence to take part in, or arrange, Citizen Science activities of their own using apps like iNaturalist.

We hope to run more Citizen Science sessions with Ayrshire Climate Hub in the coming year. Details of the Hub, including

an Events Calendar, are available [here](#)

*Including TCV Community Network members [Radio City Association](#) and [Organic Growers of Fairlie](#).

“Even at a place I thought I knew well there is so much more to observe!”

“Thoroughly enjoyable and informative.”



PATRICE GRAHAM





There are plenty of Citizen Science activities you can get involved in, such as learning to use field guides to identify and record invertebrates.



A guided walk to identify the birds and trees at Rozelle Park, Ayr. PATRICE GRAHAM

More hubs

Ayrshire Climate Hub is one of a network of community climate hubs across the country, backed by the Scottish Government. Find out if there's a hub near you [here](#)

Citizen Science – Do it yourself!

If you would like to find out more about Citizen Science, a wealth of information is available on our [website](#) which highlights the amazing number and variety of Citizen Science activities – there's something for everyone! Discover for yourself at [Citizen Science resources](#)



green spaces. The Network provides libraries of resources, case studies, advertise events, a forum to ask for advice and much more. You can request to join [here](#)

The [Nature Recording Hub](#) aims to be a 'one stop shop' for people who want to monitor wildlife in their urban green spaces, and then use this information to help take action for nature. It contains:

- a wildlife survey calendar for beginners
- a range of catalogues setting out wildlife survey methods and useful identification resources for a range of species groups
- information on how to make a biological record, where to put your records and look at other existing records (and why this can be useful)

More content will be added soon which on how to use your findings to take action for wildlife in your urban green space.

PHOTOS: UNP CAMLEY STREET ©THE TRUSTEES OF THE NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM, LONDON, 2024. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.



Urban Nature Network

The Urban Nature Network is a new online community hosted by the Natural History Museum as part of the [Urban Nature Project](#). It aims to bring together community groups, individuals, volunteers, researchers, conservation organisations and many others across the UK, all with an interest in monitoring and improving biodiversity in their urban



New CEO for TCV

The Conservation Volunteers recently announced the appointment of **Rebecca Kennelly**, MBE, as our new Chief Executive Officer. Rebecca joins us from The Duke of Edinburgh's Award, where she served as the Executive Director of UK Operations since July 2021. Prior to that, she was the Director of Volunteering for the Royal Voluntary Service. Rebecca was awarded an MBE for her service during the COVID-19 response as she was responsible for delivery of the NHS Volunteer Responders scheme that mobilised over 600,000 volunteers to support vulnerable people and the NHS.

Commenting on her new role Rebecca said: *"I have a deep-seated love for volunteering, nature, and community, to which I have dedicated much of my professional life. I am personally passionate about the work which TCV does engaging people in conservation and volunteering, having spent many years championing these activities and striving to support those disproportionately affected by inequalities to achieve their potential. In every role I have undertaken, I have been amazed by the passion, kindness, and determination of volunteers to change their communities for the better. I am truly excited and honoured to continue this work with The Conservation Volunteers."*

Saving tufty

The native red squirrel is one of our most loved animals, with Scotland being home to about 120,000 reds, approximately 75% of the UK population. In recent decades red squirrel numbers have seriously declined, largely through the encroachment of the larger, non-native grey squirrel which out-competes the red for food and living space, and greys introduced the deadly squirrelpox virus. However, there have been encouraging signs of a comeback by red squirrels, helped by the activities of local Red Squirrel Groups, several being members of TCV's Community Network, including **Glenkens Red Squirrel Group** and **Eastern Lowlands Red Squirrel Group**.



A Glenkens red squirrel captured by trail camera.

Glenkens Red Squirrel Group

By **Bob Peace**, Treasurer.



The Glenkens is a rural area within Galloway, South-West Scotland, and is the home of the iconic and native red squirrel. Over the years grey squirrels started to move into the area and threaten the existence of their red cousins. In an effort to conserve the red squirrel, the Glenkens Red Squirrel Group was formed in 2015 with a nucleus of active members monitoring sites with wildlife cameras and feeder boxes. Supplemented by physical sightings reported by the general public, a more general picture was built regarding the locations of both species. Most of the data we gather is logged onto the Saving Scotland's Red Squirrels website.

Humane traps were set to capture the grey squirrels thereby protecting the reds from the possibility of contracting squirrel pox, a disease which can be carried by grey squirrels and when transmitted to reds is almost invariably fatal. Through

these endeavours the red squirrel is now surviving in greater numbers and the frequency of grey squirrel sightings is very much reduced.

As more people, young and old, start to see the return of red squirrels to their local woodlands and gardens, this has a knock-on effect. As soon as a grey squirrel is sighted it is immediately reported and efforts can be made to capture it. The efforts of all the volunteers within the group, whatever their role are recognised, and all get equal satisfaction from the successes achieved.

[Please email us for further details](#)



Tufty getting the message across at the local Stewartry Show. BOB PEACE



It's there! HOLLIE SUTHERLAND

Eastern Lowlands Red Squirrel Group

By **Val Gall**, Group Operations Officer.



Our Eastern Lowland red squirrels are doing well but are still threatened by grey squirrel presence, the possibility of squirrelpox transmission and habitat loss. Our members (around 40) are involved in surveys and monitoring of both red and

grey squirrels, transect surveys and some are also involved in grey squirrel control.

Not only do our volunteers enjoy being active outdoors, but we are also able to map locations of squirrel activity to compare with in the future. We are also using trail cameras to monitor squirrel activity, and also the biodiversity of each location.

We have also been working in partnership with landowners, local councils, golf courses and homeowners in our area. There are a number of ways volunteers can get involved with the group. For further details, [please send an email](#) or find us on [Facebook](#)



SRUC students setting up feeder box monitoring in Clackmannanshire. HOLLIE SUTHERLAND

Get involved

You can find out more about red squirrels and how you can help through [Saving Scotland's Red Squirrels](#) - the partnership project dedicated solely to their conservation. Even if you don't belong to a red squirrel group you can still help in building a picture of how they are faring across the country by reporting your squirrel sightings, red or grey, dead or alive [here](#)



Ruth is able to identify individual squirrels who she has named, including 'Elsa'.

RUTH HOLMES

Championing Buchlyvie's red squirrels

One woman has developed a passion for helping her local red squirrel population thrive. Here, **Ruth Holmes**, tells her story.

I monitor the red squirrels in the Buchlyvie area in Stirlingshire. In 2023 I received a Coronation Champions Award for my work with the red squirrels, and in January this year I was chosen as a Royal Voluntary Service Community Champion.

I've loved red squirrels since I was five years old. I used to have family holidays in Nethy Bridge in the Highlands when I was growing up. The house we stayed in was surrounded by forest and there were lots of red squirrels running around next to the house as well as in the garden. Fast forward to one day in August 2017 when I was going for a run when an adult red squirrel ran across a farm road in the Buchlyvie area about ten yards in front of me. I literally stopped running, I couldn't believe I had just seen a red squirrel this far south of the Highlands, the region I most associated them with.

There were occasional sightings after that, but it wasn't until winter 2018/17 that

numbers started to increase and sightings were more frequent. I started monitoring the red squirrels on Culbowie Road which leads to Culbowie Farm. There are four private gardens on this road, one having a small woodland. The red squirrels were being seen almost every day in two of the gardens and I started working with the garden owners in April 2019. Signs alerting drivers about the presence of red squirrels were installed on Culbowie Road in spring 2019.

One of the local posties knew that I was monitoring the red squirrels here and told me about the reds he was seeing at Gartinstarry and the Auchentroig area. He also told me that they were running across the road and that a couple had been run over.

In October 2019, I started monitoring the red squirrels in the Auchentroig area. I also spoke with local homeowners and landowners. I then installed signs to

slow drivers down and to be aware of red squirrels in stretches along the B835 where most sightings of red squirrels were. Some of the homeowners were keen to get involved and they also designed and installed signs along the road. Then the pandemic hit, and I used my daily allowed exercise to monitor the red squirrels, and I've been monitoring the red squirrels in the Auchentroig area ever since.

During late 2019 and through 2020, I would see the occasional red squirrel. From mid-November 2021 to June 2022 there was a population explosion in the area with over 50 red squirrels moving into the area during this time. The population is continuing to grow and there have been large numbers of kits born in the Auchentroig area, which now has a thriving red squirrel population. I've gone from occasionally seeing a red squirrel to seeing them all the time. Over the past winter the average number I would see was eight in a day, and not always the same eight. The most I've seen in one day is 15. Red squirrels can range from the classic Scottish red squirrel colour of russet to foxy-red, to conker coloured. Also, their tails can be a different colour, as well as their size. This is how I can tell each red squirrel apart.

My activities involve looking for mating chases where the female is chased by two or three males through woodland, as well as up and down trees with the fastest male getting the chance to mate with her. I also note any new arrivals, look for signs that kits have been born, monitor the development of kits, note the relationship between red squirrels and predators as well as other wildlife in the area, and the effects of climate change on the behaviour of red squirrels.

In terms of raising awareness, when I first started monitoring the red squirrels in the Auchentroig area, people would stop their vehicles to ask what I was doing. I basically told anyone that would listen about the local red squirrels. A strategy that seems to have worked! Now, most of the traffic drives past Auchentroig Wood between 20-30mph. Since December 2023, I've been giving talks to primary and high schools, and community groups in Stirlingshire. I used to write a regular column called Squirrel Tails in Buchlyvie's newspaper, the *Buchlyvie Bulletin*. I'm taking a break from doing this to allow myself the chance to write for other publications and organisations such as The Conservation Volunteers.

I've had a lot of support from homeowners, farmers and landowners along the B835 as well as from Buchlyvie and Gartmore residents. It was a resident in the Buchlyvie area who nominated me for the Coronation Champions Award. Local people have told their delivery drivers and any trades people working on their property about the red squirrels. So it's not just cars that are driving slowly past Auchentroig Wood - it's delivery drivers and lorries too. This has been key in making the Auchentroig area a place where red squirrels can thrive.

Red squirrels are iconic, charismatic, and they are an important part of our native wildlife. We must do everything we can to protect them.

Libby's EPIC journey

Things have definitely been looking up for **Libby Johnson** since joining TCV and Enabling Projects in Clackmannanshire (EPIC). The EPIC project involves local volunteers in projects to enhance the countryside, paths and community sites in Clackmannanshire, Central Scotland. As well as enhancing the local environment, volunteers are learning new skills, whilst improving their health and wellbeing.

Where did it begin for Libby?

I began my journey with EPIC as a volunteer in January 2023 after being unable to work due to mental health issues. I have always had a love for the outdoors and wanted to take part in something that would allow me to engage with nature and meet like-minded people. Somewhere that would also have a positive impact on my mental wellbeing.

What has the experience involved?

So far during my time with TCV I have planted trees across Clackmannanshire, learnt about wildflower meadows and maintained pathways in the Ochils Hills. I have also had the opportunity to work with local community groups, Clackmannanshire Council Countryside Rangers and The Future Forest Company, all of which has allowed me to expand my knowledge of the biodiversity in the area. And I have made many connections within

the community and know that I am helping to improve greenspaces for local people.

Some of my favourite sessions have been with a biodiversity project in Alva Glen, where there is a rare butterfly species called the Northern Brown Argus. Alongside local volunteers, including members of the Alva Glen Heritage Trust, we have planted various wildflowers such as the Common Rock-rose which is the main food plant for the butterfly's larvae.



Northern Brown Argus.

©TONY MAINWOOD

Libby preparing ground at Alva Glen for planting wildflowers such as the Common Rock-rose.



Clearing rubbish from the pond at Redwell Primary School, Alloa.



Scything wildflower meadow area at Blairlogie, near Stirling.

PHOTOS: CLARE JOHNSTONE, NICK MCKINLAY, PAUL ARCHIBALD

I very quickly knew that I wanted to learn as much as I could about the local wildlife and how I could help have a positive impact on biodiversity and how I can make greenspaces more accessible to the local community. I also discovered that I preferred working outdoors and that my volunteering could help me to develop skills for a future career. This led to me becoming a Volunteer Officer (VO) for the EPIC project.

Being a VO

Since becoming a VO I have helped support TCV Senior Project Officers on both EPIC Volunteer and EPIC Green Gym sessions. Many training and development opportunities have been made accessible to me. This allows me to see behind the scenes of how volunteering sessions are run and to see how a new project develops and flourishes. I have thoroughly enjoyed all of the training courses I have been able to take part in, including Phase 1 Habitat Surveying, Coppicing and Brush Cutting. These courses have enabled me to learn about species identification, plus traditional conservation techniques

and manual skills which I can use in TCV sessions, and which also help in my development for a career in the environmental sector.

Through having the additional responsibility of being a VO I have recognised that I get a lot of joy by helping to make nature accessible to people with many different needs, and by having the opportunity to help out in other groups as well, such as the Stirling Pre-employability Group working to set up a Forest School and Citizen Science projects across the Central Belt. It is a very wholesome and fulfilling going home at the end of a session knowing that I have made a difference in someone's life.

Looking ahead

I believe that my time with TCV and EPIC has been incredibly beneficial for my mental health and wellbeing. Continuing in my role as a Volunteer Officer will allow me to gain yet more experience and hopefully into a nature-based job in the future. I'd love that!



There are a number of OWL groups operating across the country. Find out if there's one near you at [OWL Scotland](#)

Campfire Food and Safety Course

Callendar Wood, Falkirk. Saturday 25 May, 9am - 4:30pm

Our friends at Forth Valley OWL are running several events this year to promote outdoor learning in woodland environments. Their Campfire Food and Safety Course includes a mix of hands-on campfire preparation and cooking, discussion and observations, and a 30 minute multiple choice test covering the course content.

Thanks to grant support from Outdoor & Woodland Learning Scotland and Scottish Forestry, there are 15 spaces on offer for £60, for a course that would usually cost £114 to attend. The course will be delivered in partnership with Forth Valley OWL, The Royal Environmental Health Institute of Scotland, North East Scotland Outdoor Learning Group and BR Safety.

To book your space please send an [email](#) or call 077 1771 4760.

And coming up later in the year:

Summer Networking event

Wednesday 12 June, 4.30-6pm
Plean Country Park, FK7 8BB.

Junior Forester Award

Saturday 16 November
Venue to be confirmed.

The course covers:

- Introduction to food hygiene
- bacteria and their characteristics
- the incidence of food poisoning and its prevention
- safe purchase, storage and preparation of food
- personal hygiene and working habits of the food handler
- the working environment, cleaning and disinfecting practices
- common food pests and their control
- risk assessment including HACCP - **Hazard Analysis & Critical Control Point.**



make space for nature



2. Keep it natural in your space

Whether you have a garden or not, try adding potted plants and window boxes. Leave some areas wild, and if you have a lawn hold off cutting grass until late spring. Help alleviate flooding by avoiding artificial grass, paving or decking, and encourage others to do the same. Reduce hosepipe use – capture and store rainwater in water butts to ensure a sufficient water supply.

NatureScot has ten top tips for springtime to help reverse nature loss and fight climate change, ensuring a healthier and greener Scotland.

Discover more ways to **Make Space For Nature** this spring.

Funding Update

For community environmental groups and projects, sometimes a few hundred pounds can be the difference between something happening or not. Our latest **Funding Update** lists various funding sources, large and small, including our own **Chestnut Fund** that may make that difference.



Free membership

With support from players of People's Postcode Lottery, TCV's Community Network offers free membership to community organisations, large and small, who help care for their local greenspaces. The Community Network has 2,100+ member groups spread throughout the UK, with over 300 in Scotland.

Find out more and join the Network here



The Network Bulletin is produced quarterly by The Conservation Volunteers in Scotland and features groups belonging to the Community Network, plus news of TCV's own projects and volunteers.



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Editor Graham Burns **E** g.burns@tcv.org.uk

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