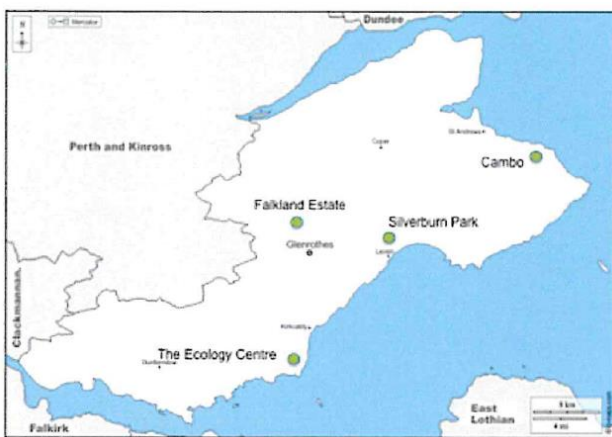


Fife's Our Bright Future

The Next Generation of Fife's Environmental Champions and Workforce was a five year programme designed to:

1. Enable young people in Fife to gain new skills relevant to finding job, training, volunteer opportunities or starting entrepreneurial projects that contribute to the green economy and,
2. Achieve a net gain in the built and natural environment across the rural and urban settings of Fife.

This programme was about scaling up successful pilots through a partnership delivery approach to help young people (13-24) across Fife into sustainable jobs, businesses and other positive destinations.



The project was delivered through six core partners across four locations: Falkland Stewardship Trust (lead partner) based from Falkland Estate, The Ecology Centre in Kinghorn, Fife Employment Access Trust based at Silverburn Park Leven, Cambo Heritage Trust at Cambo near Kingsbarns, Kingdon Housing Association, Rural Skills Scotland and supported by advisors from Scottish Forestry, Fife Council and Fife Voluntary action.

Desired Outcomes:

- 160 young people primarily from disadvantaged social and economic situations participate in a level 1 programme designed to engage and build skills and confidence
- 60 young people participate in Academy placements as part of the level 1 programme
- 30 young people complete apprenticeships at level 2 of the programme
- 20 young people participate in an entrepreneurial programme to help them deliver business ideas within the green economy

The programme delivered all of its intended outcomes in addition to making significant and positive impact for individuals and collectively for the local environment. The young people involved have delivered improvements in woodland management, removal of invasive species, creation of bug hotels, tree planting and developed wildflower meadows to name but a few! The programme provides a proven, positive model for engagement of the next generation into the rural sector. Perhaps more than at any other time, there is a need to invest in both the next generation and the environment through improving the skills required to support the transition to a low carbon economy and in doing so reinforce the nature's foundation on which much of our wealth, health and wellbeing depend.

Level 1 Desired Outcome and Impact

Target: 160 young people primarily from disadvantaged social and economic situations participate in a level 1 programme designed to engage and build skills and confidence

Achieved: 300+ young people primarily from disadvantaged social and economic situations have participated

Impact:

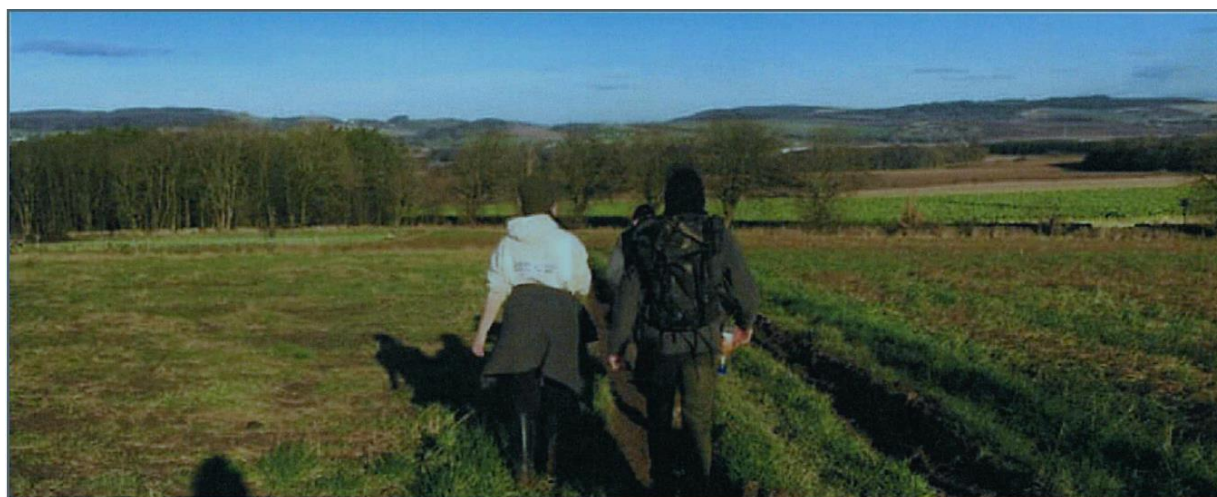
"I've learned how to handle fires, plant trees, do gardening and dig veggies – all this made me feel good about myself and what I could do". Cole

"I love coming here – I've learned loads, to plant trees, tie my laces, make myself hot chocolate and ride a bike". Damian

"I feel like I'm cared for here". Tiegan

"Being here has made me feel a lot more confident". James

"I want to keep coming because it's fun!". Josh



Myself and my husband would just like to say a huge thank you to you and your team for all the help and support you have given xxx. At the point in his life he started with yourself he had completely given up. School wasn't working out due to his conditions (severe anxiety, adhd and autism) not being understood and the fact that he couldn't cope in such a big school with all the classes and teacher changes, he was just starting his recovery from being critically ill with anorexia and at that point his future was very uncertain. After his first block with you he was completely transformed he had meaning and self-belief again and found something he loved doing. After his second block he had enough confidence to attend school on a Monday afternoon and I'm delighted to say he passed his Maths, English and PE nats, which we could never have thought possible. He has now started college on Monday doing Rural Skills that he learned so much from you guys and loved so much. Although it has been an anxious start for him he's gone off every day to start the next stage in his life which again we never thought possible.

Again, we can't thank you enough because without a shadow of a doubt he would not be where he is today without you. Forever grateful for what you have done for our boy.



Since commencing the work placement, X has excelled. He has not missed any days and his attitude to work has been exemplary. It should be borne in mind that he is eligible to leave school and has been keen to do so but views the placement with such importance that he chooses to stay and maximise his opportunity.

X is particularly focused upon developing his employability skills and has a genuine desire to carve a niche in some aspect of horticultural or land based employment.

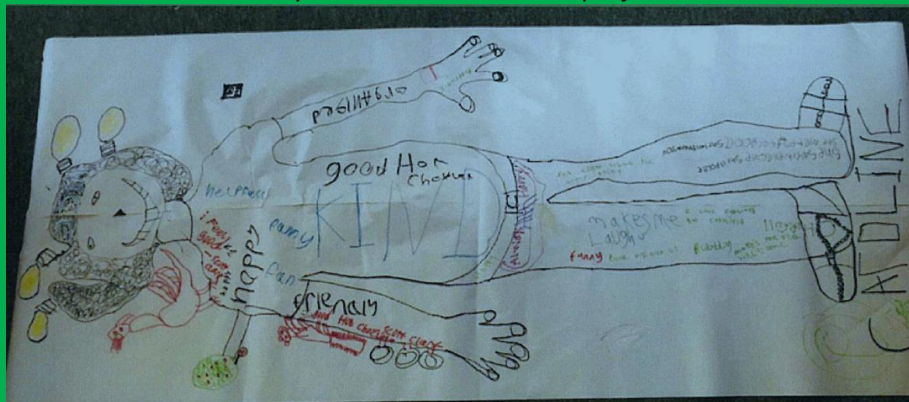
"This activity affords X the chance to build some of his confidence and resilience that has very much been a great part of the difficulty in progressing things in the past." Key worker

"Through the Our Bright Future programme, X has found a settled, supportive environment that allows him to concentrate solely on the work without worrying about external pressures. I feel sure that, whatever the outcome of his placement, it will be used to springboard to either further education or training or, indeed, to find sustainable employment." Key worker



What are the team like who work with you?

A diverse group of young people with special health care needs were always keen to attend their sessions. They developed a positive connection with the project and those who led it. To help everyone contribute and share their thoughts their feedback came in the form of a life sized picture that they created by drawing round the project lead and then filling the space with words and pictures about how they felt about her and the project.



"When I come here I can breathe!" Aaron

Level 1 Academy Desired Outcome and Impact

Target: 60 young people participate in Academy placements

Achieved: 60 young people participated in Academy placements

Impact:



"Great awesome people to work with. Would recommend to anyone. Loved the experience I am so keen to try and put my rural skills to use. Some hard work but easy to work in a team in a safe way. Great to know how to chop trees, use a strimmer / bushcutter and first aid. Also very enjoyable at Cambo and the Ecology Centre."

Participant



Rural Skills Scotland's Fife Forestry Shared Apprenticeship Scheme

"I have gained a lot of skills, confidence, qualifications and knowledge about things I never wouldn't known unless given the chance."

Participant

Level 2 Desired Outcome and Impact

Target: 30 young people complete apprenticeships

Achieved: 30 young people completed an apprenticeship in Trees and Timber or Rural Skills, Estate Maintenance from one of three employers across Fife.

Impact: So far we have seen significant numbers (93%) of our young people who completed their apprenticeship move onto positive destination. For many that meant moving on to secure a job with another employer within the sector, some went on to further study, one set up their own business and others were retained by the delivery partner.

Case Study 1 – Kyle Baker Modern Apprentice Trees and Timber – Falkland Estate

Kyle left school a little unsure of what to do next. He had some experience of helping out at his Dad's garden maintenance business and thought that perhaps working in forestry might be for him but was not really aware of the different jobs available or how to get the relevant skills and experience needed to do them.

He heard about the Our Bright Future Modern Apprenticeship programme running in Fife and applied to join the introductory academy programme. Through the academy he found out more about apprenticeships and small-scale forestry.

He was successful in securing a place on the apprenticeship programme and threw himself into learning new skills such as gaining his NTPC chainsaw maintenance, crosscutting and felling (up to 380mm) certificate.

A little scared of heights Kyle was unsure if the climbing element of forestry would be for him but after a deep breath he took to the ropes and found a love for aerial work.

"I'm not great with heights but being in the harness I feel really secure. I remember my supervisor asking if I'd like to climb on the academy. I said yes but deep down I wasn't sure. But I've tried it and I love it."

Kyle has since completed his aerial rescue and use of chainsaw up a tree training and assessment and his modern apprenticeship going on to secure a permanent position as Lead Operative Special Arborist with Fife Council.

"The programme has been great I've definitely grown as a person and am more confident in my abilities as well as gaining industry recognised certificates that have helped me secure my new job."

Kyle's hard work and determination have been recognised through Lantra Scotland's Land-based and Aquaculture Learner of the Year Awards. Kyle won the Trees and Modern Timber Apprenticeship of the year category and now joins a team of Industry Champions who have the opportunity to share their journeys and experiences to inspire the next generation of young people in the rural sector.

You can hear from Kyle about his experience as a Modern Apprentice in Trees & Timber on Falkland Estate on this [Youtube link](#).



Case Study 2 – Lucia Hacki Modern Horticulture – Cambo Gardens

Lucia started her journey volunteering at the beautiful Cambo Gardens on Cambo Estate near Kingsbarns. At this point she didn't really consider 'gardening' as a career option but was really passionate about plants and enjoyed being outdoors!



Having done some studying at college beforehand Lucia wanted to get hands on experience and discovered that she could start to develop her career practically through a modern apprenticeship route. Through her commitment to volunteering at Cambo Gardens, Lucia got involved in the Fife Our Bright Future programme.

The modern apprenticeship in horticulture allowed Lucia to study whilst spending most of her time gaining practical work experience with the added bonus of being paid and securing industry recognised training and qualifications. Lucia now holds Lantra brushcutter/trimmer, NPTC PA1 and PA6 safe application of pesticides using pedestrian handheld equipment and her NPTC chainsaw maintenance, crosscutting and felling up to 380mm qualifications alongside health and safety and first aid.

It's not just about the qualifications though *"My plant knowledge and identification has improved lots along with my confidence and my ability to work independently. I've also learnt how to push my boundaries and try new things and put myself in new situations."*

Whilst on programme Lucia took the opportunity to get involved in the Our Bright Future Youth Forum which has taken her to London as an active member of the parliamentary reception where she had the opportunity to talk to MPs including those from Scotland that she invited along. The key aim of the event was to introduce MPs to the Our Bright Future programme, which is happening through 31 projects across the UK, and to share some of the ideas and 'Asks' that young people involved would like to see taken forward.

"Our main 'Ask' is to introduce one hour of being outdoors every day at school, which I thought was a brilliant 'Ask' considering how much time kids nowadays spend in front of screens. It was lovely to meet so many like-minded people and to see how open and interested the MPs were about our suggestion. It was also a great opportunity to meet and connect with people and to be part of the start of change happening."

The 15 month programme has given Lucia a great breadth of experience and practical skills. She has decided to further her training and specialise, having been accepted onto a HND in Horticulture with Plantsmanship delivered jointly by SRUC and the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh.

Take a look at this short video about Lucia's experience as a Modern Apprentice in Horticulture at Cambo: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hGaUeV5InOU>

Case Study 3 – Billy Curry Modern Apprentice Rural Skills, Estate Maintenance – The Ecology Centre

Billy joined the Our Bright Future Level 1 programme through school giving a hundred percent each time he came along and really enjoying working in the outdoors. He tried out different activities including path maintenance, invasive species removal and learning about tree ID. He also enjoyed working with and increasingly supporting the regular volunteers and meeting new people that visited Falkland Estate.



His interest in a possible career in the sector developed and having started volunteering regularly Billy decided to go for one of the Level 2 apprenticeships in Rural Skills, Estate Maintenance.

The Rural Skills Modern Apprenticeship fitted well as he wanted to learn about a wide range of activities and to do this he was based at one of the partner's sites at The Ecology Centre by Kinghorn Loch.

"Each day we'd make sure the site was ready for visitors and safe for them and the local wildlife. We would do litter picks to remove anything dangerous to the ducks and swans along the loch side as well as path checks and checking for trees that may have come down in the wind."

Over the course of the apprenticeship Billy completed the level 2 element whilst also developing his IT skills as he typed up the various tasks sheets needed to show what he'd done. He also gained accredited training certificates including First Aid, IOSH, Lantra brushcutter and trimmer, NPTC chainsaw maintenance, cross cutting and felling (up to 380mm) and drystone walling that he could then put into use on site.

Strimming, grass cutting, planting out a wildflower meadow, building a greenhouse and pumping in a mud kitchen were just some of the other jobs that Billy turned his hand to. He also took the opportunity to work closely with a group of supported volunteers who'd joined the apprentices on site each week. Helping them with the jobs they had chosen to do that day.

"Working with the volunteers was really good fun, and as I learnt more I could help them more. Meeting them and new people on site has helped develop my confidence too. Overall I've really enjoyed the apprenticeship it's been good working outdoors and learning at the same time."

Go to this link to access a short video of Billy's experience and a Modern Apprentice in Estate Maintenance, Rural Skills at The Ecology Centre:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZVqWvUGP_Hg

Case Study 4 – Jack Burton Modern Apprentice Trees and Timber – Falkland Estate

Jack has a natural enthusiasm and positive outlook on life but had struggled to engage in the structure of the education system and to find a way to develop and learn that would allow him to achieve his dream of being a forester.



"School wasn't for me, I found it hard to learn in the classroom and just wanted to be outside doing practical things, so I left but not really knowing what to do next."

That's where the Fife based Our Bright Future programme was able to help. The programme delivered a range of Modern Apprenticeships in Rural Skills, Horticulture and Trees and Timber from its Partner sites across Fife. The programme enabled young

people to gain industry-recognised certificates and access to a formal qualification alongside real practical work experience, all whilst they are earning a wage.

"I applied and was accepted onto the programme which I've really enjoyed, especially working with the chainsaws. I now have my NTPC chainsaw maintenance, crosscutting and felling (up to 380mm) ticket as well as aerial rescue and use of chainsaw up a tree, which lets me chainsaw on the ground and at height. My favourite bit is when you make a really nice cut and you hear the crack as the tree falls without snagging on anything on the way down! I've also surprised myself in that the paperwork side of the apprenticeship has been OK, they are definitely the way forward."

Jack has done so well that he was nominated as a finalist in Lantra Scotland's Land-based and Aquaculture Learner of the Year Awards in the Trees and Timber category, narrowly missing out as runner-up. The training and experience he has received has allowed him to enter into the rural sector as a skilled professional in his chosen field.

"I've just secured my first permanent job as a Lead Operative Special Arborist!" This is critical at a time where we have an aging population and not enough young people entering into the rural sector to take over from them in maintaining and developing our local landscapes.

You can view a short video from Jack of his experience as a Modern Apprentice in Trees and Timber at Falkland Estate: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1SUaIWx3-As>

Level 3 Desired Outcome and Impact

Target: 20 young people participate in an entrepreneurial programme to help them develop business ideas within the green economy

Achieved: 23 young people were recruited onto the programme with a view to them developing potential business ideas and some went on to create their own micro business

Achieved: 27 young people including soon to be newly qualified apprentices (from the wider programme) benefited from bespoke training to support them practically moving into the world of work.

Impact:

"The project has had such a positive impact on those youngsters involved and if in the long run it has served to inspire, educate and provide direction for them to follow then it has all been very worthwhile." Lee Norris, furniture maker and mentor.

"It has given me a much more diverse range of practical skills whilst also opening my eyes to the realities of working in this industry." Mickey, participant



From the group of 23, five young people really went on to develop their businesses working closely with the programme coordinator, spending time in the hub utilising the equipment and machinery and working with mentors, Hamish Odinson (historical leather worker), Leo Norris (furniture maker), Jay Frazer (ceramic artist), Keith Gorman (woodworker and engraver) and Jennifer Roy (leather worker) in particular. We have captured a flavour of their experience over these four videos

- Leo Norris and Lola Morgan <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KdzqH7OvIn0>
- Laura Jaap https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l1B_MxE8RWs
- Hamish Odinson and Lyndon Carson <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vAbbHIAVUaU>
- Mickey Fenton https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n_u8y53f8Hs

Hamish Odinson (Mentor) and Lyndon Carson (participant)



Leo Norris (Mentor) and Lola Morgan (participant)



Laura Jaap (participant)



Mickey Fenton (participant)



Kyle Hoggan (participant)

"I have learned so much about marketing myself and gained much confidence" Felicity, participant

"I learned how to start a business and loads of information about running a business." Kyle, participant

Given the nature of employment in the land based sector where over 90% are employed either as self employed, micro business or working in informal cooperatives, then self employment is likely to be a consideration for all involved at some point. The programme provided support in this area tailored for those entering into the rural sector. Rural Skills Scotland Ltd. Designed a programme of activity that covered a two-year timespan. This programme delivered a **Half-Day Introductory Workshop** giving participants a flavour of the various aspects involved in setting up their own business in the rural sector followed by a **Two and a Half Day Workshop** for those who had shown a more definite interest in starting their own business in the rural sector or who wanted to know more. For those wishing to take their ambitions for self-employment one step further follow up **1-1 support** was offered to participants. This support tended to be around specific areas of business planning, finance, marketing etc or a combination of all of them.



Participants during one of the sessions

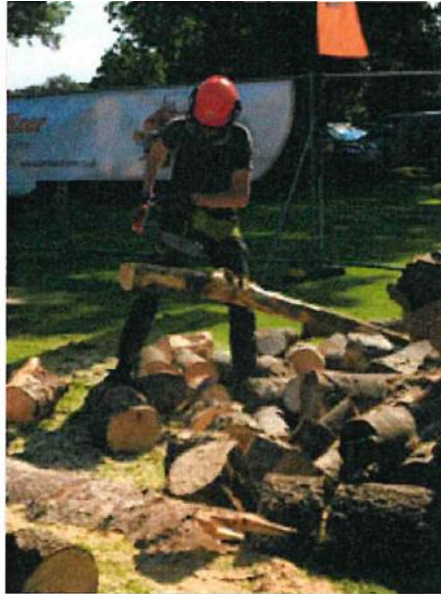
"This course has given me the confidence to really see myself as self employed."

"Thank you for your time and helping myself, along with others, understand the pro's and con's of self employment, it was greatly appreciated and helped a lot!"

"I found the course very useful and it would help others."

"The course settled my mind. Becoming self employed is daunting but not frightening."

Additional Outcomes



Opportunity to represent the programme and FRSP at events such as the Dundee Food and Flower Festival, The Royal Highland Show via the Lantra Scotland Stand, Opportunities Fife networking events and Paths for All opening event, Kinghorn.

Opportunity to be recognised at industry level through the annual Lantra Scotland ALBAS (Award for Land-based and Aquaculture Skills).



More Additional Outcomes!



Learning visits to other Our Bright Future sites such as Hill Holt Wood and Yorkshire Wildlife Trust that were reciprocated. For some this was the first time they had left their local area and it provided a great opportunity to learn from others.

Participating in the Our Bright Future Youth Forum supporting and leading in events such as the parliamentary reception in London and sharing learning and experience with members of the Scottish Youth Parliament and other Our Bright Future funded programmes.

