

Forest College – Green Infrastructure Community Engagement Fund Project

At the end of the project, in numbers:

- 52 partnerships developed for Forest College overall.
- 17 Woodland Volunteers assisted on 10 practical sessions.
- 2 Event Volunteers.
- 3 Riverfly Volunteers.
- Woodland Learning Programme - 6 schools, 239 students.
- 1188.5 volunteer hours donated to the project including woodland, event and riverfly volunteers, as well as rural skills students.
- 2 litter picks with Community Payback Team.
- 12 young people achieved Saltire Awards through partnership 'Upskilling Project'.
- 10 young people from Woodburn attended 'Working with Willow' workshop ran with Art Club.
- 2 free summer holiday clubs run in partnership with Art Club.
- 982 people have engaged in 29 public events.
- 11 external organisations have used Lord Ancrum's Wood.
- 5 CPD sessions with Edinburgh College HNC Childcare Group in outdoor education.
- 1 work experience student for a week.
- 80 delegates attended the Forest College Conference in September 2019.

Community Engagement

- 52 partnerships developed with various local and national organisations eg. Art Club in Woodburn, Forestry & Land Scotland, Paths for All, Midlothian Council, NESLOG, SEPA, ONE Dalkeith, MAEDT.
- 17 Woodland Volunteers have taken part in 10 practical habitat management sessions, with monthly sessions continuing over the summer and into autumn. Tasks have included invasive species removal, hazel coppicing, litter picks, path maintenance and ditch clearance.
- 2 Event Volunteers have assisted with the delivery of the WLP as well as public events and sessions for community groups.
- Delivery of Woodland Learning Programme (WLP) – 6 schools with 239 students engaged. Activities involved den building, campfire cooking, bioblitzes and scavenger hunts, colourful caterpillars, woodland crafts and Literally@Newbattle.
- 1188.5 volunteer hours donated to the project, including woodland volunteers assisting with practical tasks in Lord Ancrum's Wood, SRUC & Rural Skills students/tutors, Community Payback Team, Midlothian Path Access Volunteers, event volunteers assisting with public events and school sessions and the riverfly volunteers surveying the River Esk for water quality.
- 2 litter picks with Community Payback Team to tackle impact of anti-social behaviour. Developing partnership with Midlothian Council and Community Beat Officer.
- 12 young people achieved Saltire Awards through partnership 'Upskilling Project' between Forestry & Land Scotland, Youthbuild, Edinburgh & Lothians Greenspace Trust and Forest College. One of these young people is now on the Rural Skills in academic year 2019/20.
- 10 young people from Woodburn area attended 'Working with Willow' workshop held in partnership with Art Club.
- 2 free summer holiday clubs were run in partnership with Art Club – Junior Rangers and Woodland Craft.
- 982 people have engaged in 29 public events – community consultations, guided walks, art sessions, geocaching, riverfly training.
- 11 external organisations have used Lord Ancrum's Wood for independent forest school, conservation, training and recreational activities. This includes: The Green Team, Midlothian Forest School, Forest Families, Woodland

- Learning Adventures, Forestry & Land Scotland, NESOLG, Newtongrange Primary School, Edinburgh Council Forest Kindergarten and University of Edinburgh, Lasswade High School and Queen Margaret's University.
- 5 CPD sessions with Edinburgh College HNC Childcare Group in outdoor education. Activities included: risk assessment, den building, campfire cooking.
 - A high school student from Lasswade High joined us for a week of work experience, shadowing the woodland ranger. Tasks included snowberry removal, assisting Forest Kindergarten, tree surveys, ditch clearance and leaf blowing.
 - Approximately 80 delegates attended the Forest College Conference in September 2019.

Woodland Management

- Ditch and culvert clearance with new side channels dug to aid drainage.
- Hazel coppicing to encourage straighter growth and create mosaic of habitats for wildlife within wood.
- Tree thinning – removing squirrel-damaged and non-native trees eg. Norway Maple and Sycamore.
- Litter picks.
- Regular tree safety surveys and footpath checks.
- Willow structure created in Gatehouse back garden.
- Woven willow fence repaired on boundary with Basically Tool Hire.
- New Forest School sites identified and clearance begun.
- Invasive species removed including snowberry, Himalayan balsam, wild privet.
- Areas of anti-social behaviour cleared and tidied.
- Leaf blowing throughout autumn / winter months.
- Footpaths strimmed and cleared in spring / summer months.
- Tree tube maintenance.
- Tree planting – native species such as oak, hazel and birch.