

# FORTH VALLEY ORCHARD INITIATIVE 2010 / 2011 FINAL PROJECT REPORT



FORTH ENVIRONMENT LINK

26 April 2011

GRA/APP/ST/11104

CSGN 030

## END OF PHASE 2 PROJECT REPORT

### INTRODUCTION

Forth Environment Link was awarded funding from Scottish Natural Heritage and The Forestry Commission for Scotland (via the Central Scotland Green Network) to develop a second phase of the Forth Valley Orchards Initiative in 2010 / 2011, and implement the recommendations of the consultant's report from Phase 1 of the initiative.

The aims of the project were to:

1. Support the Forth Valley Orchard Group to secure wider community and volunteer involvement in the initiative.
2. Support the group to deliver a programme of orchard-related activities between September 2010 and March 2011.
3. Engage with landowners to encourage involvement.
4. To complete the collection, collation and distribution of orchard data to interested parties, and supervise University of Stirling BSc Ecology student input.
5. Support the Forth Valley Orchard group to become self-sustaining in the longer term.
6. To contribute to achieving the goals of the Central Scotland Green Network (via the Central Scotland Green Network Orchard Grant Scheme 2010 / 2011).

### 1. Support the Forth Valley Orchards Group

The Forth Valley Orchards Group (the 'group') was established as an independent, non-constituted group of individuals interested in, and passionate about orchards, following the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> phase of the initiative in March 2010. The group has 5 or 6 'core' members, and 31 other interested individuals and family groups who receive updates via email.

The group met 12 times (10 full meetings, 1 site visit and 1 with Transition Stirling) within the time period (see Appendix 1 for dates), and has been an important source of advice for Forth Environment Link and communities across Forth Valley and the Central Scotland Green Network (CSGN) area.



#### Forth Environment Link

7 Stirling Business Centre, Wellgreen, Stirling, FK8 2DZ

Tel: 01786 449215

Web: [www.forthenvironmentlink.org](http://www.forthenvironmentlink.org)

Email: [info@forthenvironmentlink.org](mailto:info@forthenvironmentlink.org)

Company no: 286723 Scottish Charity no: SCO 019276

## END OF PHASE 2 PROJECT REPORT

*FVOG Members: Margaret Miller & visitor; Alison Swanson and Jean Armstrong*

The group's expertise was important in helping to select successful grant applicants for the Central Scotland Green Network Orchard Grant Scheme 2010 / 2011, and in determining the level of award. Amongst its members are: a retired headteacher and pomologist, who advises schools in the area with their orchard projects; a fully qualified horticulturalist, specializing in orchards who has his own fruit tree nursery; the great-great grandson of the last large-scale commercial orchard in Forth Valley, perhaps Scotland; an ex-fruit procurer for a multiple retailer; and community activists who have initiated and planted orchards with their communities.

### 2. Support the group to deliver a programme of orchard-related activities

#### a. Forth Valley Orchards Day 2010 (25 September 2010).

The first Forth Valley Orchards Day was held at Dobbie's Garden World in Stirling. It was chosen as a venue for the space offered, and the guaranteed footfall throughout the day. The Forth Valley Orchards Group assisted with choosing the venue, invitations to stallholders, attending the stalls on the day, and providing demonstrations, advice and information to visitors, of which over 300 came along on the day (see FVFL website article, *Forth Valley Orchards Initiative Update, 7 December 2010* for a report on the event).



*Forth Valley Orchards Day, Dobbie's Garden World, Stirling*

#### **Forth Environment Link**

7 Stirling Business Centre, Wellgreen, Stirling, FK8 2DZ

Tel: 01786 449215

Web: [www.forthenvironmentlink.org](http://www.forthenvironmentlink.org)

Email: [info@forthenvironmentlink.org](mailto:info@forthenvironmentlink.org)

Company no: 286723 Scottish Charity no: SCO 019276

## END OF PHASE 2 PROJECT REPORT



*Willie Duncan's Scottish Apple Display*



*Apple Expert, Willie Duncan*

A questionnaire to gauge the level of interest in orchard-related workshops was available and collected some valuable data, as well as enthusiastic support for the proposed programme.

### **b. Forth Valley Orchards Training**

Following the positive response for the proposed workshops, a programme was developed with the advice of the group, and publicized to the contacts on Forth Valley Food Links' orchards database (174 people), website at [www.fvfl.org.uk](http://www.fvfl.org.uk), and 'The Forth Valley Foodie' eBulletin (200+ people)(8 December 2010). The response throughout the period that the programme ran was very gratifying, with 56 individuals making 104 bookings for 16 workshops (see Appendix 2 for bookings per workshop, and the attached *Forth Valley Orchards Training Events Programme 2010 / 2011* flyer).

Five of the workshops were cancelled or merged, however, particularly the CPD 'Twilight' workshops for teachers and educators. Workshops that were cancelled were due to low numbers or lack of a suitable venue for hands-on training. Promotion to teachers and educators is a long-standing challenge; FEL has experienced these challenges in our environmental education work with Stirling area schools. One of the learnings from this initiative is the need to specifically target teachers (and head teachers) known to be supportive of environmental education initiatives. One of the other factors that may have had an impact on interest in our CPD sessions was that

### **Forth Environment Link**

7 Stirling Business Centre, Wellgreen, Stirling, FK8 2DZ

Tel: 01786 449215

Web: [www.forthenvironmentlink.org](http://www.forthenvironmentlink.org)

Email: [info@forthenvironmentlink.org](mailto:info@forthenvironmentlink.org)

Company no: 286723 Scottish Charity no: SCO 019276

## END OF PHASE 2 PROJECT REPORT

Scottish Orchards offered separate workshops for teachers in Falkirk.



Workshop 2: 'Harvest – Ways to Preserve and Cook with Fruit Gluts', January 2011

Experienced and enthusiastic tutors were recruited from the Forth Valley Orchards Group (Andrew Lear - Plants with Purpose/The Appletreeman) and Margaret Miller - schools), and elsewhere – Toni Clark (MNA Associates), Catherine Lloyd and Dallas Seawright (Central Core Network), and Margaret Lear (Plants with Purpose).

Post-programme, a survey of the 56 participants was run with 26 responding – almost a 50% response rate. Feedback was extremely positive (see attached *Training Programme Survey Results*) and will provide excellent evidence for any funding applications to run another programme in 2011 / 2012.



Workshop 14: 'Orchards as Wildlife Havens', February 2011

Examples of quotes received:

*"This was an excellent series of workshops. The trainers were interesting, knowledgeable and very likeable. The workshops were pitched at just the right level for me and I also gained a lot also from the others in the groups. I enjoyed going to the different venues and learning more about my locality. I found the trainers very adaptable, able to get the best out of the different venues and situations. There were always learning points to be made and I always left the workshops wanting to know more and having more questions and feeling full of enthusiasm. The knowledge and skills I have gained from the workshops will be of enormous value to me in my own garden and allotment and have given me a great insight into apple orchards and their potential."*

### Forth Environment Link

7 Stirling Business Centre, Wellgreen, Stirling, FK8 2DZ

Tel: 01786 449215

Web: [www.forthenvironmentlink.org](http://www.forthenvironmentlink.org)

Email: [info@forthenvironmentlink.org](mailto:info@forthenvironmentlink.org)

Company no: 286723 Scottish Charity no: SCO 019276

## END OF PHASE 2 PROJECT REPORT

*"Very interested in maintaining established links with FVOG and FEL. Perhaps future partner project, funding bid, training etc."*

*"... thanks once again for organising the courses, and to Appleman for his really very good and helpful bench grafting tuition day. It was excellent. Also, you are welcome to visit my small orchard to see if it is suitable for any future courses"*

*"Just an all round excellent programme. This is not a criticism but I got a sense that the participants were faces seen before at other events. It would be good to penetrate into communities more but I expect that's what will happen in time. I enjoyed it and learned stuff I didn't know and wouldn't have got from books."*

We were very grateful to the Beechey Family, Stirling Council's Land Services and Countryside Ranger Services for Pleun Country Park, and the Carron Connect Partnership (Falkirk), for the use of these orchards and for their support.

### **c. Central Scotland Green Network Orchard Grant Scheme 2010 / 2011**

Forth Environment Link had applied for £5,000 Seedcorn Grant funding to assist community groups in Forth Valley to start-up their projects, and was delighted to be awarded £10,000 to disburse throughout the Central Scotland Green network area of 19 local authorities.

The scheme was launched in July 2010, with former Forth Environment Link volunteer, Jane Veitch, taken on as a Grants Administrator, but unfortunately left before Christmas due to ill-health. This meant that the Project Officer had to carry out all of the administration as it was not feasible to train someone else given the immediate administration needs. This additional work for the Project Officer impacted on our ability to focus on other project development areas (eg landowner liaison and improved data management).

The scheme was promoted via the local media, to Forth Environment Link email contacts and networks, The Forth Valley Foodie eBulletin, and the FEL, CSGN and FVFL websites. There was an excellent response from across the CSGN area, with 36 awards being made from 49 applications. Some projects did return the money unspent, but this was re-allocated to existing projects so that the full £10,000 was disbursed.

Overall, 408 trees were planted, consisting of: apples (52 varieties); cherry (8); crab apple (3); damson (2); greengage (2); pear (10); plum (11); and quince (1). A map of the location and planting statistics for these projects is attached, plus a breakdown of species and varieties planted.

#### **Forth Environment Link**

7 Stirling Business Centre, Wellgreen, Stirling, FK8 2DZ  
Tel: 01786 449215    Web: [www.forthenvironmentlink.org](http://www.forthenvironmentlink.org)    Email: [info@forthenvironmentlink.org](mailto:info@forthenvironmentlink.org)  
Company no: 286723    Scottish Charity no: SCO 019276

## END OF PHASE 2 PROJECT REPORT



*Salvation Army Orchard, Raploch*

The projects also completed a Project Evaluation Form (see attached) and these have been collated with any available photos into a report, *CSGN Orchard Grant Scheme 2010 / 2011 Project Evaluations* (see attached). Seven projects did not return their evaluation forms or account for their expenditure.



*Muirhead Orchard, Saline, Fife*

From feedback and reports received from applicants, the grant scheme was very well-received and seemed to fill a gap in meeting many of the community groups' support needs for orchard development. Their enthusiasm in creating their orchards comes across very strongly in their evaluations, and it seems that they met many of their objectives that they had set for themselves at the outset.

### **d. Purchase of fruit processing equipment**

A fruit crusher, 20 litre press, and long-handled pruners were purchased for loan to groups in Forth Valley. The season was almost finished by the time the equipment arrived but 3 people were able to take advantage of it to make juice / cider.



*Tim Stewart and the Juicing Equipment*

### **3. Engage with landowners to encourage involvement**

The aim was to engage those (mostly private) landowners who were reluctant to get involved in the initiative – for example, those who thought that the initiative would

#### **Forth Environment Link**

7 Stirling Business Centre, Wellgreen, Stirling, FK8 2DZ

Tel: 01786 449215

Web: [www.forthenvironmentlink.org](http://www.forthenvironmentlink.org)

Email: [info@forthenvironmentlink.org](mailto:info@forthenvironmentlink.org)

Company no: 286723 Scottish Charity no: SCO 019276

## END OF PHASE 2 PROJECT REPORT

encourage the general public into their orchards within their gardens – and to help them benefit from the resources available to manage and use their orchards effectively.

The training programme and orchard grant scheme accounted for a larger amount of time than anticipated and consequently meant that there was less time for landowner liaison.

Some contact was made with private landowners at the FV Orchards Day, and at throughout the training events, and many were keen to follow the initiative's progress and to get involved at a later stage - one landowner has offered her orchard for a training venue in the future. We were grateful to the Beechey Family for the use of their orchard for training events.

Landowner engagement is still a major aim of the initiative, and resources are being sought to enable this to happen in a proposed Phase 3 of the initiative.

#### **4. Complete the collection, collation and distribution of orchard data**

Time constraints did not allow the full review and improvement of Forth Environment Link's orchard data collection and management system. While efforts were made to undertake this work, a number of challenges arose. For example, a BSc Ecology student from the University of Stirling had committed to undertake some data collection from the traditional orchards for her final year dissertation, but the scope of the dissertation changed so that this was not possible. The student did approach an orchard owner in Cambuskenneth, Stirling to carry out a biodiversity survey but the adverse weather conditions prevented this from happening.

Funding is being sought to enable a comprehensive review of data management systems in Phase 3 of the initiative. This review will enable Forth Environment Link to effectively measure and communicate the outputs and outcomes of the orchard initiative to funders and the general public.

#### **5. Support the group to become self-sustaining in the longer-term**

As can be evidenced from this report, the Forth Valley Orchards Group has provided excellent support and ideas for the delivery of the initiative in the past year, and is still very keen to continue beyond this current period of funding.

It has decided against having a constitution and office-bearers, to enable it to focus its energies on providing support and advice for groups. There is such enthusiasm and passion for orchards among the group, that there is every possibility that it will continue regardless

#### **Forth Environment Link**

7 Stirling Business Centre, Wellgreen, Stirling, FK8 2DZ  
Tel: 01786 449215    Web: [www.forthenvironmentlink.org](http://www.forthenvironmentlink.org)    Email: [info@forthenvironmentlink.org](mailto:info@forthenvironmentlink.org)  
Company no: 286723    Scottish Charity no: SCO 019276

## END OF PHASE 2 PROJECT REPORT

of the availability of funding, although the group is currently reliant on Forth Environment Link's reach into communities to enable it to provide support.

Forth Environment Link would like to take this opportunity to record its thanks to the group for all their hard work and support over the past year.

### 6. To contribute to achieving the goals of the Central Scotland Green Network

In delivering a full programme of grants, training and general support for communities, schools, landowners and orchard managers throughout the CSGN area, Forth Environment Link has made a significant contribution to achieving the goals of the CSGN.

In terms of enhancing the greenspace in and around settlements, an estimated 8 hectares of new orchards were established (0.25 ha x 35 grants) with a total of 408 trees through the CSGN Orchard Grant Scheme 2010 / 2011. In many instances, the creation of an orchard was part of a wider project of school ground, or community space improvements that included other wildlife habitat creation and enhancement.

The initiative has mobilised many volunteers across schools and the wider community, who have worked in very difficult weather conditions to create a new resource and a learning ground. The orchards have been a means by which schools have helped pupils develop the four capacities of the Curriculum for Excellence, and the Forth Valley Training Programme has helped participants learn new skills including tree planting, pruning, grafting, biodiversity, and use of fruit. Spin-off projects are developing in contacts made by participants with the tutors eg St Andrew's Church in Callander is to plant a new orchard with the assistance of Andrew Lear in 2011.

## CONCLUSION

FEL would like to thank Scottish Natural Heritage, the Forestry Commission, and the CSGN for their support – both in terms of the resources committed and the strategic guidance provided. The investment has helped us to contribute to CSGN's objectives, facilitated a change – albeit small – in our physical environment, and touched the lives of many individuals in our community. The impact of this investment will be felt for generations to come.

### Forth Environment Link

7 Stirling Business Centre, Wellgreen, Stirling, FK8 2DZ  
Tel: 01786 449215    Web: [www.forthenvironmentlink.org](http://www.forthenvironmentlink.org)    Email: [info@forthenvironmentlink.org](mailto:info@forthenvironmentlink.org)  
Company no: 286723    Scottish Charity no: SCO 019276

## END OF PHASE 2 PROJECT REPORT

### APPENDIX 1 - FVO Group Meeting Dates

#### 2010

- 10 May (Cloybank Estates, Banknock)
- 2 June (Cloybank Estates, Banknock)
- 12 July (at Riverbank Centre, Stirling)
- 27 July (brief meeting with Transition Stirling to discuss collaborative working)
- 4 August (at Riverbank Centre, Stirling)
- 13 August (site visit to Dobbies for FV Orchards Day)
- 17 August (at Riverbank Centre, Stirling)
- 8 September (at Riverbank Centre, Stirling)
- 27 October (at Riverbank Centre, Stirling)
- 8 December (at Forth Environment Link, Stirling)

#### 2011

- 16 February (at Forth Environment Link, Stirling)
- 28 March (at Forth Environment Link, Stirling)

#### Forth Environment Link

7 Stirling Business Centre, Wellgreen, Stirling, FK8 2DZ

Tel: 01786 449215

Web: [www.forthenvironmentlink.org](http://www.forthenvironmentlink.org)

Email: [info@forthenvironmentlink.org](mailto:info@forthenvironmentlink.org)

Company no: 286723 Scottish Charity no: SCO 019276

## END OF PHASE 2 PROJECT REPORT

## Appendix 2 - Bookings on FV Orchards Training Workshops

Workshop No	Title	No of Bookings
1	WINTER PRUNING OF FRUIT TREES (Falkirk)	6
2	HARVEST –WAYS TO PRESERVE & COOK WITH FRUIT GLUTS (Stirling)	8
3	WINTER PRUNING OF FRUIT TREES (Stirling)	15
4	PLANNING & PLANTING AN ORCHARD (Stirling)	10
5	USING ORCHARDS AS A LEARNING GROUND Clackmannanshire Schools' 'Twilight' Session	Cancelled due to no bookings
6	USING ORCHARDS AS A LEARNING GROUND Falkirk Schools' 'Twilight' Session	Session cancelled - amalgamated with Workshop 13.
7	USING ORCHARDS AS A LEARNING GROUND Stirling Schools' 'Twilight' Session.	Cancelled and amalgamated with Workshop 12.
8	WINTER PRUNING OF FRUIT TREES (Clackmannanshire)	16
9	PLANNING & PLANTING AN ORCHARD (Falkirk)	6
10	USING ORCHARDS AS A LEARNING GROUND (Practical) - Clackmannanshire School's 'Twilight' Session	Cancelled due to no bookings.
11	'101 USES OF ORCHARDS'	10
12	USING ORCHARDS AS A LEARNING GROUND (Practical) - Stirling Schools' 'Twilight' Session	3
13	USING ORCHARDS AS A LEARNING GROUND (Practical) - Falkirk Schools' 'Twilight' Session	5
14	ORCHARDS AS WILDLIFE HAVENS (Stirling)	7
15	ORCHARDS AS WILDLIFE HAVENS (Falkirk)	Cancelled due to lack of suitable venue.
16	BENCH GRAFTING & PROPAGATION (Stirling)	15
	TOTAL BOOKINGS	104
	TOTAL INDIVIDUALS BOOKING	56

## Forth Environment Link

7 Stirling Business Centre, Wellgreen, Stirling, FK8 2DZ

Tel: 01786 449215

Web: www.forthenvironmentlink.org

Email: info@forthenvironmentlink.org

Company no: 286723 Scottish Charity no: SCO 019276