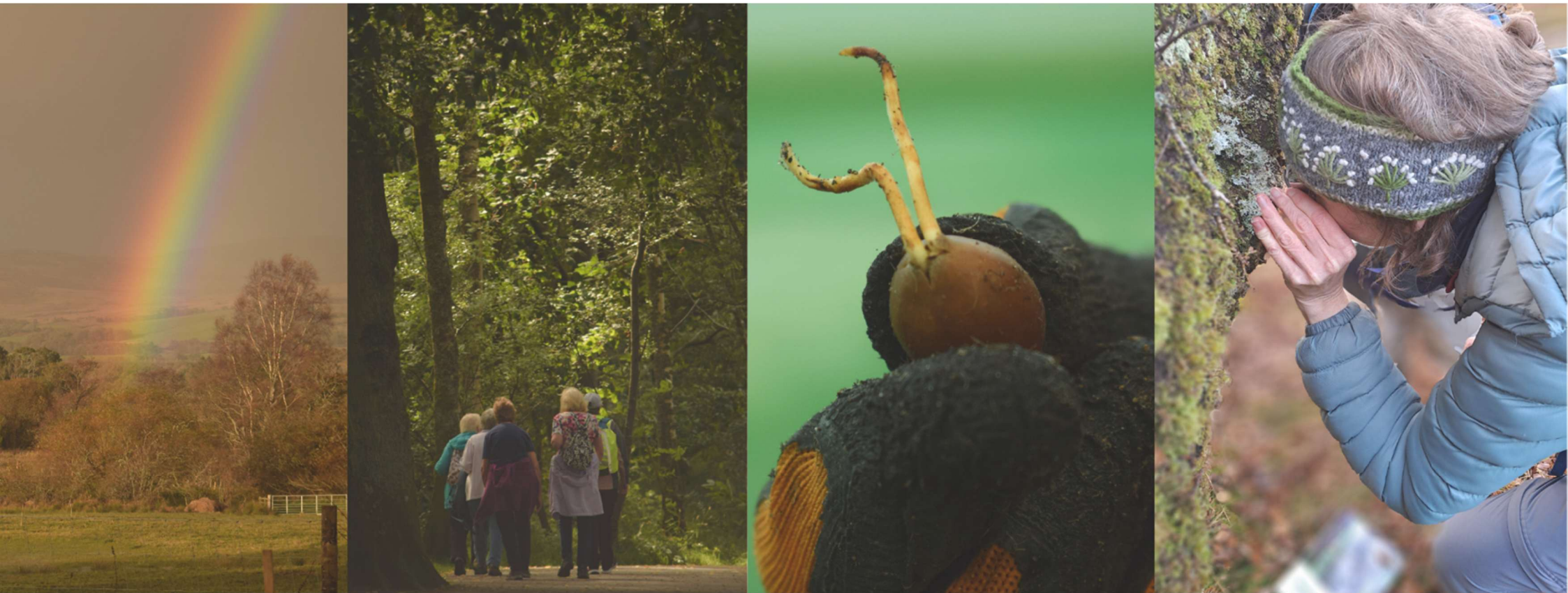




Creating connections in nature, with nature and with each other.

Annual Report
2025-2026

Contents

Annual Report 2025-2026

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Chair's report

As Chair, I am delighted to introduce this year's End of Year Report - a reflection of a twelve-month period defined not only by progress and resilience, but also a shared passion and commitment of everyone connected to our Trust.

This report celebrates our volunteers, partners, dedicated team and Board of Trustees, whose commitment has delivered meaningful impact across our two core areas of focus: **Nature Connections** and **Connected Lives**.

We have continued to witness the transformative power of connecting nature and people. Our *Nature Connections* work strengthens and restores nature at a landscape scale, working with land managers, NGOs and communities to enhance biodiversity and habitat connectivity. Alongside this, our *Connected Lives* work support healthier, happier communities by creating opportunities for people to be physically active, connect with nature, build social connections and feel part of their local area.

These achievements would not be possible without our extraordinary volunteers. I extend a heartfelt thanks to the professionalism of our staff team who with our Board of Trustees, form a strong partnership. We also recognise our partners and funders, whose collaboration and support enable us to extend our reach and deliver meaningful outcomes.

This year has also marked a period of transition within the Trust. As part of changes across our Nature Restoration team, we said farewell to Ophelie Lasne, our Ecology and Monitoring Officer, and Gareth Kett our Partnership Support Officer thanking them for their valued contributions. We also said a fond farewell to Sue Morris, whose steady leadership over three years as Trust Director has helped to stabilise the charity. At the same time, we warmly welcome Alistair Whyte as our new Chief Executive, bringing valuable experience to guide our future direction.

As you read this report, I hope you see the impact we are making together. Thank you to everyone who contributes to our work – your commitment continues to inspire us, and we look ahead with confidence, ambition, and a shared sense of purpose together.



"... At Loch Lomond and the Trossachs Countryside Trust, we're passionate about bringing people and nature together through hands-on projects that care for our landscapes, support thriving communities, and inspire healthier, more sustainable ways of living"

Dr Dave Beaumont

Chair of the Board of Trustees

Loch Lomond and

The Trossachs Countryside Trust

Discover more/sign up to our newsletters at **trustinthepark.org**



The year at a glance



Time donated by volunteers across all of our projects



1 new specialist plant nursery established



Practical restoration interventions completed across 7 landholdings



Participants who benefitted from our weekly **all ability health walk programme** and **Strength and Balance sessions**



Organisations who have donated support across all of our projects



Native trees planted across Wild Strathfillan projects

A special thanks to the Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park Authority volunteers and rangers for making this work happen, alongside local volunteers and other groups.



Images: Right (Top to bottom): Volunteers planting acorns at the new Loch Lomond specialist plant nursery, 'Walk in the Park' All Group Walk held in Balloch, Volunteers from Forth Valley College tree planting with support from Scottish Rural College (SRUC) as part of Wild Strathfillan. Credit: Trustinthepark.



Images: (Left to Right) Wild Strathfillan landscape (credit: Ron Allner), Callander Primary School eco club freshwater invertebrates (credit: Hannah Findlay) River Dochart, Annual Event. Credit: Trustinthepark

Wild Strathfillan | A thriving landscape for People and Nature

Covering 50,000 hectares in the north of Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park, Wild Strathfillan is a landscape-scale initiative restoring nature while supporting resilient rural communities.

Coordinated by Loch Lomond and The Trossachs Countryside Trust, in partnership with the National Park Authority, the initiative brings together land managers, communities, statutory bodies, education partners and local businesses. Through this collaborative approach, Wild Strathfillan is delivering practical habitat restoration, strengthening ecological connectivity, and creating opportunities for people to engage with and benefit from their natural environment.

The long-term vision is a **connected and dynamic landscape where nature thrives, biodiversity is restored, and communities are supported through sustainable land use and access to nature.**

Key impact for 2025-26:

- Delivered habitat restoration at scale, enhancing wetlands, woodlands and montane habitats across the landscape
- Engaged communities and young people, reaching 143 pupils and delivering learning and volunteering opportunities
- Invested in long-term capacity, expanding plant nursery infrastructure to support future restoration efforts

- Supported the network of partners, aligning land managers, communities and organisations to drive coordinated nature recovery
- Strengthened the evidence base for restoration, through ecological monitoring, research and student placements

“One of the things that we're now seeing is the connections between individual projects that maybe started as individual projects which the Wild Strathfillan team would see the big vision behind but [...] individually [...] the different landowners, managers, community groups maybe didn't see those connections right away. But we're now getting to a place where the connections are starting to come through”

- Wild Strathfillan partner





Images: Top (Left to right): Contractor at work along the River Dochart, Felling at Tyndrum Community Woodland (before and after), Felling at Coille Fillan.

Wild Strathfillan | From Lochside to Mountain-top

In its last year of support from the Nature Restoration Fund, Wild Strathfillan has achieved much more than a programme of practical restoration work. Alongside significant and wide-ranging activity on the ground, the initiative has strengthened skills, knowledge and relationships that will help shape the future of restoration across this important landscape. This progress has been made possible by a committed, skilled and collaborative delivery team, bringing together Countryside Trust staff and partners from a diverse range of organisations and landholdings.



90 species of **moths** recorded through surveys



Native tree seeds planted by **volunteers** across 2 plant nurseries



22 sites managed for **invasive non-native** species



Images: (Above, clockwise): Wader scrapes created at Glenfalloch, Contractor planting at Crom Allt Gorge, Happy planters at Auchreoch, Installing cactus guards at Ben Lui Specialist Site of Scientific Interest (SSSI).
Credit: Trustinthepark.

Restoration activity spanned habitats from wetland and woodland through to high-altitude montane environments, with a focus on improving key habitats, increasing biodiversity and enabling the long-term recovery of nature. Along the **River Dochart**, eroded riverbanks were carefully stabilised, while new ponds and wader scrapes were created along the **River Falloch**. Invasive non-native species, including Rhododendron and Himalayan balsam, were actively managed at several sites, thanks to the dedicated efforts of volunteers and National Park rangers. At **Tyndrum Community Woodland** and **Coille Fillan**, non-native conifer plantations were removed in preparation for replanting with a diverse mix of native tree species. At **Crom Allt Gorge**, deer fencing was installed to encourage natural regeneration and protect newly planted montane willows. Higher up the landscape, on **Ben Lui SSSI**, additional montane willows were planted, alongside a second year of carefully managed conservation grazing.



Monitoring & Learning

Alongside practical delivery, Wild Strathfillan continued to build knowledge through targeted surveys and research. A second full year of ecological monitoring was completed across nine sites, recording rich datasets on vegetation, birds, moths and black grouse, amongst others. Together, these surveys provide a much-needed baseline against which future change across the landscape can be measured. In parallel, research explored beaver impacts and herbivore monitoring, helping to identify practical opportunities for site-based trials and training. Student placements and research projects added further value, increasing capacity while reinforcing Wild Strathfillan's role as a living landscape for learning.

Lomond Nursery Legacy

An important legacy for future restoration projects has been the investment in increasing capacity, experience and infrastructure for growing. Glenfalloch Nursery continued to expand, with an aim to produce up to 100,000 trees annually. In addition, construction was completed on Lomond Nursery, operated by the Countryside Trust, where early growing efforts now include a range of native trees and rare montane willows, all carefully propagated from seed and plant material collected within Wild Strathfillan.

Together, this mix of strong partnership working, practical restoration, targeted research and monitoring, and forward-thinking propagation efforts ensures that Wild Strathfillan is well placed for the next stage of its ambitious, landscape-scale restoration journey.

2023-2030 Strategy

This work helps us deliver against our strategic outcomes of **Nature Connections** and **Connected Lives**.

Partners

The project is supported by a wide range of organisations and landholdings.

Funders

With thanks to **NatureScot** managed through their Nature Restoration Fund (NRF), **Acrux Gold**, **Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park Authority** and a generous private donor who supported the set-up of Lomond Nursery.

Images: (Above, top to bottom): Camera trapping, Polytunnels at Lomond Nursery, Planting acorns at Lomond nursery. Credit: Trustinthepark.





The number of **school pupils** engaged with from Killin & Crianlarich Primary Schools and McLaren High



The number of **University students** supported through placements and research projects



The number of **community learning** opportunities

Wild Strathfillan | People and Nature

Alongside our key partners at Strathfillan Community Development Trust (SCDT) and Killin and Ardeonaig Trust (KAT), Wild Strathfillan has delivered projects this year to support community connections in and with nature, and between each other.

We've continued to develop a range of **life-long learning** and **skills development** opportunities. We've engaged 143 school pupils from Killin and Crianlarich Primary Schools and McLaren High School, including supporting the two local primary schools to work towards their Bumblebee Friendly School Awards. Partnering with further and higher education providers, Wild Strathfillan has been a site of learning for 8 University students through placements and research projects and has been used as a case study for SRUC (Scotland's Rural College) students.

Alongside formal education, we've also continued to bring informal learning opportunities to residents and volunteers. Wild Strathfillan offered 11 community learning opportunities this year, from **Invasive Non-Native Species identification** training to a talk on **pinewoods** from Trees for Life, and **waterways bat survey** training to an 'introduction to owls' evening.

"This experience was transformative with regards to my development as a budding environmental scientist."

- University of Stirling student

"Very good and generated some interesting discussion."

- pinewoods talk attendee

Images: (Top, left to right) Primary School science lesson on classification and ID keys, Primary School Saplings session, Owl workshop, student research (peat coring), Bat walk and talk workshop. Credit @Trustinthepark.

Wild Strathfillan has continued to facilitate opportunities for people to **celebrate and connect** with each other, with the initiative, and with the cultural and social heritage of the area. This includes offering Wild Strathfillan's support to established projects in the area including **Walk in the Park, Strength & Balance** and **The Old Mill**, Killin. We appointed a contractor, Paul Saunders, in the summer to work with SCDT and KAT on '**Stories of the Land**', a project exploring the past, present and future of Strathfillan and Killin communities relationships with the landscapes around them. With nearly 20 oral histories recorded, we've heard stories about railways, farming, forestry, community life and more from a diverse range of voices including multi-generation farming families, former railway workers, business owners, artists, estate managers and long-term residents.

Our projects that aim to **enable engagement with nature** have also developed this year. We installed 2 interpretation panels at Loch Lubhair SSSI to encourage responsible access to this special place. SCDT secured planning consent to construct a covered **outdoor classroom** on a short boardwalk to help local people and pupils to engage with and learn about nature in the wooded wetland adjacent to their existing community garden. We worked with a young garden designer to produce the plans for a new **Sensory and Community Garden** in the heart of Killin.

Throughout the year, our Education and Engagement Officer and others from the Wild Strathfillan team have enjoyed getting out to engage with community members and stakeholders about the initiative. In November, 24 people joined us for updates and an annual celebration of the initiative's progress.

2023-2030 Strategy This work helps us deliver against our strategic outcomes of **Nature Connections** and **Connected Lives**.

Partners We are also grateful for the continued support from our partners including the **Killin & Ardeonaig Development Trust (KAT)** and **Strathfillan Community Development Trust (SCDT)**.

Funders The People and Nature of Strathfillan is primarily funded with thanks to players of the **National Lottery Heritage Fund** and **Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park Authority**.





The Great Trossachs Forest National Nature Reserve

This year, delivery across The Great Trossachs Forest (TGTF) National Nature Reserve (NNR) focused on strengthening momentum for long-term, landscape-scale nature restoration – bringing partners, communities and decision-makers together, improving the evidence base and putting clear plans in place for the next phase of work.



A key highlight was delivering a stakeholder event that celebrated progress to date and created space for constructive discussion about future opportunities. Importantly, follow-up from this event has already moved into action, with a consultancy contract now in place to develop a 10-year TGTF Delivery plan.

We have supported student research, developing links with Swiss, German and Scottish universities and facilitating a Stirling honours field project, while building stronger partnerships with key organisations and specialist societies such as Plantlife, British & Irish Bryophyte Society, Butterfly Conservation, British Trust for Ornithology and local community groups.

Partners input to The Great Trossachs Forest:

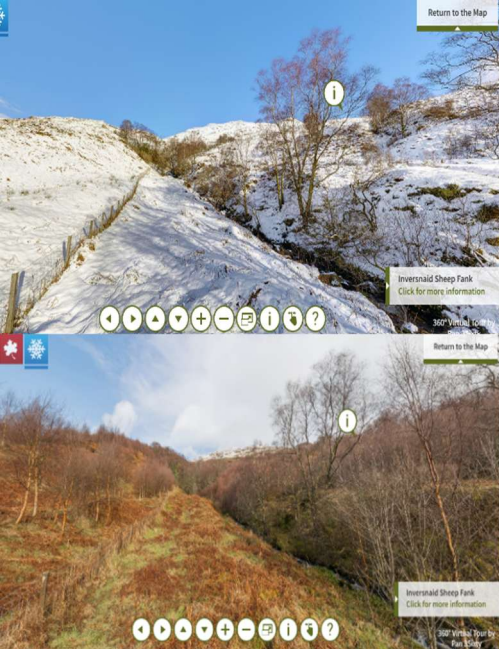
Invasives: Ongoing removal of *Rhododendron ponticum* and Sitka spruce across TGTF and, locally, lesser knotweed.

Woodland Creation: Planting to link existing woodland (Woodland Trust (WT)), planting of 7x7 seed enclosures and larger enclosures on Forest and Land Scotland (FLS).

Deer / Herbivore management: Ongoing control of deer across TGTF through contractors and through the Wildlife Manager at Glen Finglas. Partnership representation on Balquhider Deer Management Group (including Woodland Trust as chair).

Conservation Grazing: Cattle deployed to manage woodland pasture, black grouse leks and other habitats.

Other Habitat Creation/management: Restoration of ancient hedge bank, pond creation, improvements to wood pasture and pearl-bordered fritillary habitat, and removal of redundant fences. Continuation of Trossachs Water Vole Project and installation of nest boxes for owls and kestrel and nesting rafts for divers. Peatland restoration on WT Glen Finglas and by Scottish Water on Forest Land Scotland (FLS) Loch Katrine. RSPB agreed contract with Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks (SEN) for the award of biodiversity credits for nature restoration. RSPB black grouse heat drone survey trial completed.



We also grew the foundations for long-term monitoring and learning. Three practical workshops – two focused on **rainforest lichens** and **bryophytes** and one on the pearl-bordered fritillary butterfly – supported local volunteers to take an active role in biological recording, helping build a citizen science platform that will contribute to TGTF’s long-term monitoring aims. Alongside this, we completed repeat capture of 360-degree images at six locations, showcasing the changes in the woodland mosaic since 2013/14 with images available for interactive access via the TGTF website. TGTF played host to the British Bryological Society Spring 2026 Field Meeting with around 50 bryologists taking part in a week of site visits and intensive data gathering.

The Great Trossachs Path

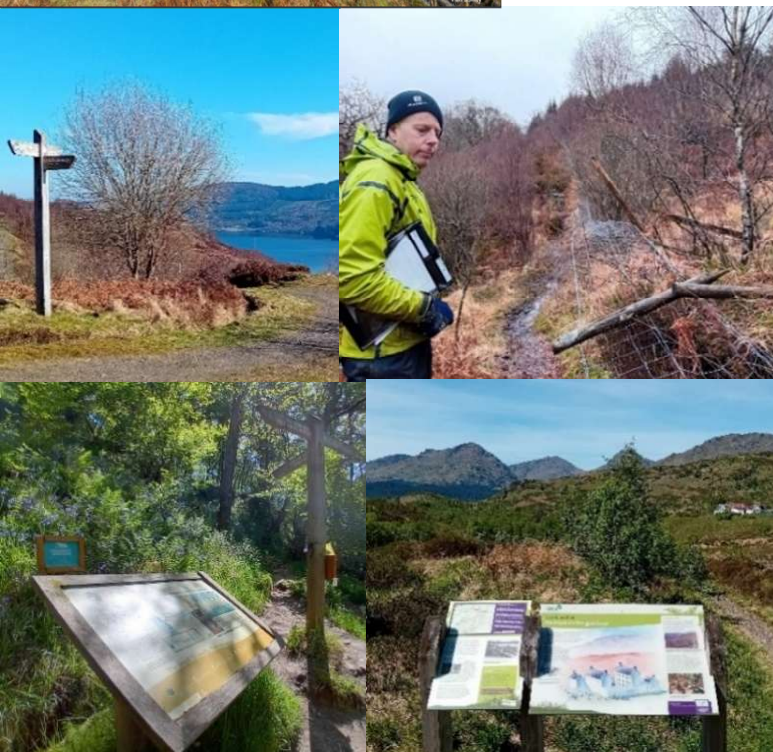
Work also progressed behind the scenes to improve access and understanding of the reserve, including completion of a broadscale condition survey for The Great Trossachs Path (TGTP), targeted survey work at Inversnaid, and establishment of a TGTF Interpretation Group to guide implementation of a newly produced interpretation strategy.

We are also contributing to the Future Nature Loch Lomond & The Trossachs “Landscape Connections” project as it moves into the Development Phase.

2023-2030 Strategy This work helps us deliver against our strategic outcomes of **Nature Connections** and **Connected Lives**.

Partners Coordinated by the **Countryside Trust**, The Great Trossachs Forest is a 200-year collaborative cross-boundary nature restoration project, supported by **Scottish Water** and being delivered by a partnership comprising of the **Woodland Trust**, **Forestry and Land Scotland**, **RSPB**, and **Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park Authority**.

Funders The Great Trossachs Forest Project Coordinator post is funded primarily by **Scottish Water**, **RSPB**, **Woodland Trust**, **Forest and Land Scotland**, with additional support from **NatureScot’s Nature Restoration Fund (NRF)** for partner projects.



Images: (Top to Bottom) TGTF 360 image comparison 2014, TGTF 360 image comparison 2026, TGTF path survey, TGTF path survey, TGTF interpretation. Credit: Trustinthepark.

Discover more at
thegreattrossachsforest.co.uk





Images: Top (Left to right) All group walk (Balloch), Walk Leader training (Drymen), Glenarn Gardens (Arrochar), Anniversary Walk (Drymen), River Walk (Callander)

Walk in the Park

‘Walk in the Park’ utilises the beautiful and nurturing surroundings of Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park to deliver inclusive and accessible activities for everyone. We focus on supporting adults living with long-term mental or physical health conditions, including people living with dementia and their carer’s as well as those who may be feeling isolated or lonely. At the heart of what we do is helping people to reconnect - with nature, with one another and with the more remote communities they call home. We aim to nurture social, physical and mental wellbeing, gently encouraging people to be more physically active and where possible, to get involved in our volunteering opportunities.

Led by our amazing team of trained volunteer walk leaders, we’ve continued to deliver weekly walks in six locations along with a summer evening programme in two areas. Over the year we’ve welcomed more than 310 participants. Alongside our regular activities we’ve also delivered a range of successful events including **A Big Fit Walk** in Arrochar where participants had the opportunity to learn about the area’s rich local heritage. Our **Annual Group Community Walk** event was another standout moment – giving participants the chance to explore somewhere new within the National Park. It was a record-breaking year, with 93 walkers of all abilities coming together to enjoy and explore Balloch Castle Country Park. Our health walks continue to deepen our participants connection with nature, whether through exploring beautiful gardens or taking part in engaging bird identification sessions (page 13).

321
Health & Wellbeing
walks delivered

76%
Benefitted
mentally



310
Walkers
supported

90%
Improved
Social wellbeing &
community
connection

80%
Improved
Physical wellbeing

67%
Improved
connection to
the natural
world

2025/26 survey results.



Images: Top (Left to right) Meeting in Ancaster Square (Callander), Buchanan Home Farm route (Drymen), Enroute to The Lodge Visitor Centre (Aberfoyle), McNab Burial Ground Walk (Killin)

“I was delighted to be able to walk 4 miles, who would have believed that a year or two ago.
Balloch Park was just beautiful in the sun.

I really enjoyed the entire day, including resting my tired legs later in the day.”

- Annual Group Community Walk participant.

“The sense of community belonging and living
shared experiences make me feel
content, fulfilled and calm.”

- Walk in the Park participant.

Walk in the Park continues to create meaningful, positive change across communities in Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park strengthening social wellbeing and helps people feel more connected to those around them. This impact is reflected in the feedback we receive, with every participant saying they would recommend our walks to others – highlighting the lasting value and sense of belonging our programme brings to the community.

“I no longer feel like a ‘stranger’. I feel part of
the community. It helped me to make
new connections and learn about the history
and landscape of the area.”

- Walk in the Park participant.

2023-2030 Strategy This work primarily helps us deliver against our strategic outcomes of
Connected Lives.

Funders With thanks to funding from **Awards for All, Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park Authority, the National Lottery Heritage Fund, People’s Postcode Lottery/Trust, Scottish Forestry** and **Walking Scotland**.

“...a lifeline since moving to the village and I
commend you for all the work that
goes into the activities.”

- Walk in the Park participant.



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Strength and Balance

Our Strength and Balance classes provide safe, accessible, and locally delivered sessions for older adults, including those with reduced mobility, low confidence, or long-term conditions, helping them build strength and stability in a supportive and social environment.

Our volunteer-led sessions are now delivered across seven communities within the National Park, helping to fill a vital gap in services for people - particularly older adults - living in rural and remote areas. These Strength and Balance classes are making a meaningful difference, with our recent participation survey highlighting a range of positive impacts experienced by those who attend.

*“The class is not useful or helpful, it is essential.
It makes a huge difference to all who attend.”*

- Strength & Balance participant

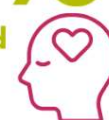
There is a strong social element to the classes, with time for tea and a blether playing an important role. Many participants report feeling more connected to their community and experiencing improved social wellbeing. As one participant shared, *“These classes are so well organised and led. It is no exaggeration to say they have been a life changer for me and my wife.”*

71%

Improved
Social wellbeing & community connection.

61%

Benefitted mentally



55%

More confident moving around after sessions



100%

Recommend our S&B sessions



91%

Improved
Physical wellbeing.

60%

More physically active after attending sessions



2025/26 survey results.

Images: (Left to Right) Strength and Balance sessions in: Buchlyvie, Crianlarich, Drymen, Arrochar, Killin and Primary School with Scots poetry and movement. Credit: Trustinthepark.



Alongside our sessions, we have also been fortunate to offer supported walking visits to local places of beauty and interest, helping participants connect with others and their local area.

“These sessions are perfectly balanced to the needs of the elderly or less able and I know that the time given by the volunteers is very much appreciated. The sessions are a brilliant addition to community activity. Than you all - everything is just great.”

- *Strength and Balance participant.*

“A big thank you. I personally suffer from Ankylosing Spondilites and struggled to find a class that would help in a gentle way and not add to the pain. So very grateful.”

- *Strength and Balance participant.*

We’ve also really enjoyed chances to connect with others this year, linking up with local nurseries, schools and retirement homes. Together we’ve taken part in Body Boosting Bingo, tried out Makaton in a Burns-inspired movement session, and even gone on short walks. One participant shared, *“I have not walked here in so long - it brings back lovely memories. Thanks for the support and encouragement.”*

2023-2030 Strategy This work helps us deliver against our strategic outcomes of **Connected Lives**.

Partners We are also grateful for the continued support from our partners.

Funders With thanks to funding from **Awards for All, Co-op, Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park Authority, the National Lottery Heritage Fund, People’s Postcode Lottery/Trust, Scottish Forestry, Stirlingshire Voluntary Enterprise and Walking Scotland.**



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Images: (Top and Bottom) Callander Strength and Balance visit Doune Ponds. Credit: Trustinthepark.



Celebrating our Volunteers

Integral to our health and wellbeing activities are our eighty-two amazing volunteers who this year **donated an amazing 3,941 hours** of their time across **Walk in the Park** and **Strength and Balance**.



Our volunteer programme is designed to improve the skills, knowledge and confidence of our volunteers who lead our activities, ensuring they can support and promote activity and the wellbeing benefits of our participants, particularly those with additional needs.

Over the past year, we've delivered a range of training courses, including **Walk Leader**, **Dementia Friendly Walk Leader**, **Strength and Balance**, and **Outdoor Safety**. We've also placed a strong focus on evaluation, with particular emphasis on supporting and developing our growing team of Strength and Balance demonstrators through ongoing training sessions and collaboration with partners who have generously shared their expertise. Volunteers also shared how rewarding the training experience has been, with one reflecting: *"I found the course very informative – it gave me confidence to help and support others in the group. It was a great thing to do. Totally recommend it."*

We continue to celebrate the incredible work of our volunteers. This year, we were proud to nominate two outstanding individuals for an **Age Scotland Award** - Sanji from the Arrochar Walking Group and Julie from Drymen Strength and Balance. While they didn't win Volunteer of the Year, both received a heartfelt thank you and a certificate of nomination, recognising the meaningful difference they're making in their communities.

We're also proud to recognise volunteer walk leader Fiona Boath as a **Nature Hero**. Fiona inspires others to discover the healing power of nature, showing that there's a real difference between simply walking through it and truly connecting with it.

Here is what some of our participants had to say about our amazing volunteers:

"The group leaders are incredible for the support they give. I am not just talking about physical support of an arm as you walk side by side. They LISTEN and they smile. They are the salt of the earth."

"Very lucky to have walk in the park. It is a great group for bringing people together. Walk leaders are very considerate to everyone's needs."

Images: (Top to Bottom) Volunteer Walk Leader training, Strength and Balance Volunteer Day muscle naming activity, 'Big Fit Walk' Volunteer Walk Leaders (Arrochar), exercise progression demonstrations. Credit: Trustinthepark.



Images: Above (left to right) Nature throughout the year: Cinnabar moth caterpillars (July), Fungus (June), Killin 'Bird Identification Walk' Loch Tay, Slow Worm in the Garden (July) Credit: Judith, Rosebay Willowherb (September) Credit: Judith.

In Step with Nature

We have continued our In Step with Nature (ISWN) initiative where participants are invited to learn more about a focus topic each month and take part in a small challenge that encourages nature connectedness.

Through ongoing conversations with our walkers, we're constantly inspired by their curiosity about nature, local plants and wildlife. These shared moments - often pausing to take a closer look at something spotted along the way - not only deepen everyone's connection to the landscape but also help shape our **In Step With Nature** themes and challenges. Discussions often link to existing articles that we share, and just as often spark ideas for future ones, ensuring our work continues to grow directly from the interests and experiences of those taking part. Topics this year have included:

- An **invitation** to practice winter tree ID with a simple guide.
- A **focus** on bluebells and on seeds with an invitation to go on a seed scavenger hunt. This topic coincided with our autumn seed inspired textiles workshop.
- A **foray** into the old wives' tales, myths and alleged magical properties of wildflowers.

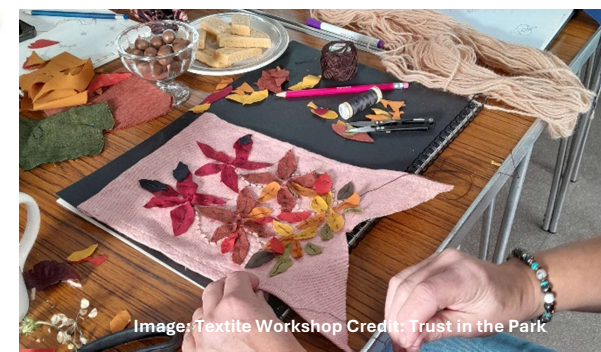


Image: Textile Workshop Credit: Trust in the Park

"I'm more aware of nature around me and look out for plants/trees that have been mentioned."

- In Step with Nature participant

"Helps me add some interest into the group walk."

- In Step with Nature participant



Through Wild Strathfillan, we have also had an opportunity to introduce more nature connectedness activities, including a successful bird ID walk at the head of Loch Tay, where an expert joined the Killin group to explore local birdlife. Throughout the year, there was a continued emphasis on the health benefits of being in nature, with highlights such as February’s “*Gratitude for Nature*” focus and a March article exploring forest bathing. This was complemented by invitations to take part in slow, quiet walks and sit spots, encouraging deeper personal connection with nature. Forest bathing also featured across our social media and monthly e-news bulletin, reflecting wider trends, while the dedicated WhatsApp group continued to grow, helping to strengthen engagement and build a supportive nature-focused community within Trust in the Park.

“....certainly walking slowly through the Natural World gets life into perspective.
I can sort my priorities, smile and relax. Can't do without it ”

- In Step with Nature participant

All of these wonderful images above were taken by our group members during events and their own walks and are shared in the WhatsApp group for others to enjoy.

2023-2030 Strategy This work helps us deliver against our strategic outcomes of **Nature Connections** and **Connected Lives**.

Funders We are grateful for the continued support of our funders, donors and supporters: **Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park Authority, People’s Postcode Trust, National Lottery Heritage Fund, Scottish Forestry**.



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Images: Left (top to bottom) Contributions from our various participants in the WhatsApp group: Spring is on its way (February) credit: Judith, Scarlet wax cap (November) credit Diane, Candle snuff fungus (October) credit: Judith



Active in the Park

2025 saw the wrap up of our 'Active in the Park' programme, the culmination of over 6 years of work supporting communities to achieve their cycling, walking and wheeling active travel ambitions.

Since 2019, the Countryside Trust has delivered a series of active and sustainable travel projects across the National Park, with a particular focus on cycling, e-bikes and behaviour change, addressing the unique barriers of a rural area with limited infrastructure and high visitor numbers. We have delivered e-bike loan trials, cycling activities and training opportunities, community action planning, business engagement and behaviour-change campaigns. Through these activities, the Trust supported residents, visitors and businesses to realise the many co-benefits such as health, environmental, economic, and social that increased levels of cycling, walking and wheeling bring.

Our work, collaborating with communities across the National Park, has led to more cycle-friendly communities, active travel actions embedded in local place plans/community actions plans, established social cycle groups, improved awareness of active travel options in key gateway communities.



Having wrapped up our 24/25 funded projects, we spent the summer this year reflecting and reviewing our work and achievements to date and in August, said goodbye to our long-standing Active Travel Officer. While challenges remain, particularly around infrastructure and sustainable transport integration, 'Active in the Park' has demonstrated that long-term, collaborative, place-based and community-led approaches can support meaningful change. We continue to support and promote walking and wheeling in the National Park including through **Movement Together** and engaging with the National Park's Mobility Partnership on active travel.

2023-2030 Strategy This work helps us deliver against our strategic outcomes of **Connected Lives**.

Images: Left (Top to bottom) E-bike loan trial, Callander Cycling Meander, Countryside Trust E-bike for hire in Killin, Callander Cycling Meander. Credit: Trustinthepark. Inserts: (Top) All abilities cycle event; (Middle) Cycle in the Park 'Welcome Scheme' business toolkit. Credit: Trustinthepark.



Alistair Whyte
Chief Executive
Loch Lomond and The
Trossachs Countryside Trust

Looking ahead

I was delighted to join the Countryside Trust in January 2026, at a time when the organisation is going from strength to strength. From groundbreaking nature restoration work, to deeply impactful community engagement, I've seen how the work of the Trust is bringing about so many changes for the better across the national park.

I'm looking forward to exciting times ahead, as we continue to evolve and develop the organisation to meet the complex challenges of the world we live in. Our ambitions for nature restoration are growing, and we're getting involved in, and leading, increasingly large-scale habitat and species recovery initiatives. And we're investing time and energy into really understanding what that means for the communities who live and work in the national park, putting communities at the heart of everything we do.

We wouldn't be able to do any of this without our dedicated staff team, our funders, supporters, and volunteers. As a small charity with big ambitions, we are grateful for all the support we receive from such a wide range of people and organisations.

I'd like to extend a special thank you to our volunteers, who support us week in, week out, whatever the weather. From leading our weekly walks, and helping people engage with the nature of the national park, through to leading the charity at board level, providing strategic oversight and governance, volunteers are the beating heart of the Countryside Trust.

In a rapidly changing world, the work of charities like ours has never been more vital. The Trust is in excellent health, and, thanks to your ongoing support, we look forward to continuing to deliver for people and nature.





Loch Lomond & The Trossachs Countryside Trust
Carrochan Road
Balloch G83 8EG

Scottish Charity Number SC043266
Company number SC422457

trustinthepark.org