

## **Fife's young people step up and create what is rightfully theirs: a healthy planet, a thriving economy and a brighter future**

**Three months on from the Paris climate change agreement, the Big Lottery Fund is investing £33 million in more than 30 organisations to inspire and develop the next generation of environmental leaders. The Fife Rural Skills Partnership based in Fife is receiving £1 million.**

**Our Bright Future** aims to tackle three big challenges facing society today - a lack of social cohesion, a lack of opportunities for young people and vulnerability to climate change. Thirty one youth-led projects across the UK are each receiving around £1m of funding to give young people the skills and knowledge to improve their local environments – from reducing marine pollution to minimising food waste. In doing so, young people will develop the confidence and resilience to become environmental leaders and influence decisions at local and national levels. This young, ambitious and capable movement is ensuring this generation's voice is heard in the current debates around environmental improvements and a resource-efficient economy.

The next generation of Fife's environmental champions and workforce is a five-year programme that has two core aims:

1. To enable young people (aged 15-24) in Fife to gain new skills relevant to finding jobs, training or starting entrepreneurial projects that contribute to the green economy.
2. To make a positive impact on the local environment across Fife through the training and work experience activities the young people undertake.

The Fife Rural Skills Partnership aims to offer young people a variety of development opportunities from work experience and introductory academies to modern apprenticeships and social enterprise support. These activities will be designed to help prepare young people for the working world and provide practical support to them as they begin their careers in the rural sector where there is an identified generational gap.

But **Our Bright Future** goes a lot further than the impressive impacts seen by these individual projects. The programme is gathering strong evidence about how we can support the development of the environment and young people using a resource efficient and sustainable 'green' economy. More than a hundred organisations are contributing to the wider Our Bright Future movement by sharing evidence, learning and knowledge which will soon start to inform the choices made at local, regional, and national levels in the UK.

**Our Bright Future** is funded by the Big Lottery Fund and run by a consortium of eight organisations which is led by The Wildlife Trusts. The partnership has more than 40 years of combined experience in managing social and environmental grant programmes totalling nearly £300 million, and has a proven track record of working with and empowering young people in communities of all social circumstances.

**Dr Peter Burman, MBE, Chair of Falkland Stewardship Trust (lead partner within the Fife Rural Skills Partnership) said:**

*“ We are delighted that Fife has been selected as one of the projects for Our Bright Future. This funding will help strengthen the Fife Rural Skills Partnership's commitment to increase the number of skilled young people who are able to care, manage and make sustainable use of Fife's rural landscape.*

**Stephanie Hilborne OBE, Chief Executive of The Wildlife Trusts said:**

*“**Our Bright Future** is an innovative movement for change. It is brilliant that the Big Lottery Fund has recognised that societal and environmental challenges are two sides of the same coin. The programme supports young people to develop the skills needed to thrive in the workplace and it does so through the environment. We want to see a generation of courageous and wise leaders empowered to change our world for the better.”*

**Peter Ainsworth, Chair of the Big Lottery Fund said:**

*“The environment is where we live. **Our Bright Future** is designed to unleash the ambition of young people across the UK to make a personal and collective contribution to making our environment brighter, happier and more resilient to threats like climate change and the waste of natural resources.*

*“This initiative over the next seven years aims to join up the social, economic and environmental benefits that will come from enabling young people to shape their own future and others that follow them.”*

[www.OurBrightFuture.co.uk](http://www.OurBrightFuture.co.uk)

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**Notes to editors**

1. **Our Bright Future** is run by a consortium of eight organisations which is led by The Wildlife Trusts: Centre for Sustainable Energy, The Conservation Volunteers, Field Studies Council, Plunkett Foundation, vInspired, Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust and UpRising. Collectively they have more than 40 years of combined experience in managing social and environmental grant programmes totalling nearly £300 million, and proven successes working with and empowering young people within communities of all social circumstances.
2. **The Wildlife Trusts** incorporates 47 individual Wildlife Trusts covering the whole of the UK. All are working for an environment rich in wildlife for everyone. We have more than 800,000 members including 150,000 members of our junior branch [Wildlife Watch](#). Our vision is to create [A Living Landscape](#) and secure [Living Seas](#). We manage around 2,300 nature reserves and every year we advise thousands of landowners and organisations on how to manage their land for wildlife. We also run marine conservation projects around the UK, collecting vital data on the state of our seas and celebrating our amazing marine wildlife. Every year we work with thousands of schools and our nature reserves and visitor centres receive millions of visitors. Each Wildlife Trust is working within

its local communities to inspire people about the future of their area: their own Living Landscapes and Living Seas.

3. **The Big Lottery Fund** supports the aspirations of people who want to make life better for their communities across the UK. It is responsible for giving out 40% of the money raised by the National Lottery and invests over £650 million a year in projects big and small in health, education, environment and charitable purposes.
4. Since June 2004 the Big Lottery Fund has awarded over £8 billion to projects that change the lives of millions of people. Every year it funds 13,000 small local projects tackling big social problems like poor mental health and homelessness.
5. Since the National Lottery began in 1994, £34 billion has been raised and more than 450,000 grants awarded.