



North Lanarkshire Community Climate Action Project: **Community-Led Greening and Nature Conservation Guide**

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Introduction to our Climate Action Guides

Most people are now aware of our climate and nature emergencies (see below for more information). The scale and causes of our climate and linked nature challenges can seem overwhelming and their causes distant from us. We might feel unsure about what we can do as individuals or with others in our families, communities or workplaces.

Fortunately, there are many things we can do to help reduce our individual and collective negative impact on the climate and nature and contribute to solutions that will also improve our physical and mental health, social, economic and environmental fairness and inclusion.

This guide is complemented by Climate Action guides on the following topics which are intended to help people in Lanarkshire take action to be part of the solution to our climate and nature challenges.



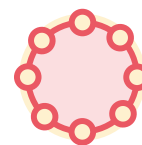
Active Travel and Community Transport



Community Food Growing



Community-owned Renewable Energy



Community Sharing and Upcycling



Green Home Energy

All these guides are available online in a format that can also be readily printed as needed. You can access the guides from the [North Lanarkshire Action on Climate Together website](#).

The Guides are part of a **North Lanarkshire Community Climate Action Project**, co-ordinated by **Voluntary Action North Lanarkshire** as part of our contribution the Action on Climate Together North Lanarkshire and the Lanarkshire Green Health Partnership. These guides are also supported by Community Climate Action Champions who can support community workshops and conversations and a Climate Action Pledge which supports community and voluntary sector organisations.

What are the Climate and Nature Emergencies?

The world is facing a climate emergency due to human's use of fossil fuels such as oil and gas to provide energy. Human activity is also destroying and polluting the natural world - water, air, plants and animals - on which human and all other life depends.

As a result everywhere in the world is now experiencing adverse climate changes, such as rising temperatures and

increased flooding and harm to our natural world such as deforestation; air and water pollution; loss of plants and animals. These challenges are adversely affecting all of us. Fortunately, awareness of these problems and action to solve them is increasing. These guides are intended to help people in Lanarkshire take action to be part of the solution to our climate and nature challenges.

Introduction to Community-led Greening and Conservation

Unfortunately, because of human activities, we have lost a huge amount of our “green” and “blue” (water) natural environment and associated plants and animals, which together, form our natural world on which we all depend. What remains is usually polluted and is at risk. However, international, national and local efforts to reverse this trend is growing.

Trees, plants and fungi – our green spaces - are vital for the health of our planet and ourselves as they:

- ➔ Absorb carbon and produce oxygen
- ➔ Support animal life
- ➔ Provide us with food and materials
- ➔ Keep us cool
- ➔ Help to absorb pollution

Clean rivers and other waterways – our blue environment – are also vital to plant and animal life and human health.

Animals of all types – insects, amphibians and mammals - rely on our green and blue spaces and contribute to the health of both by pollinating plants, providing food and cleaning waste.

When we protect our green and blue environments, they create a Healthy, balanced community of inter-dependent plants and animals – an “ecosystem” which support all life including our own.

Community-led action to restore and conserve green and blue spaces and associated plants and animals, helps to provide all the benefits outlined above and also:

- ➔ Supports good mental and physical health by increasing access to nature and green spaces and associated activities such as exercise, relaxation and socialising
- ➔ Can help to reduce health and social inequalities by improving access to green spaces and nature for people living in more deprived communities.

Inspiring Examples of Community Greening and Nature Conservation

There are many examples of inspiring community-led or supported greening and nature conservation initiatives in North Lanarkshire and beyond and plenty of resources and support to increase these as illustrated below.

North Lanarkshire

Community Gardens in North Lanarkshire: there are several community-run gardens in North Lanarkshire in areas such as Cumbernauld, Glenboig, and Plains. There is potential for many more!

Northern Corridor Volunteers is a thriving community group in the north-west area of North Lanarkshire supporting a wide range of activities with volunteers, including development of greenspace and biodiversity through community gardens, orchards and woodlands.

Parks, Woodlands and Nature Reserves

Most **parks and woodlands** and many **nature reserves** in North Lanarkshire are owned and managed by North Lanarkshire Council for the benefit of residents and the natural environment.

Scotland and UK

Climate Clyde Forest: The Clyde Climate Forest aims to plant 18 million trees over the next decade in urban and rural parts of the Glasgow City Region – of which North Lanarkshire is part - and provides opportunities for community groups to become involved.

Community Woodlands Association: Native Woods Project has been working alongside four diverse Scottish community woodland groups to identify and highlight the economic and social benefits of native woodlands.

GreenSpace Scotland: supports people to protect and conserve green spaces in their local area providing information and guidance.

Grow Wild: are a UK based organisation that offers community grants, wildflower seed kits and free online training for growing fungi and creating pollinator gardens with native UK plants in schools, unused spaces, and residential gardens.

The Scottish Wildlife Trust also manages several nature reserves in North Lanarkshire as part of their wider commitment to protect Scottish wildlife in natural habitats: Garrion Gill near Wishaw and four in and around Cumbernauld including Cumbernauld Glen, Forest Wood, Luggie Bank and Seafar.

These parks, woodlands and nature reserves provide much-valued green space and natural habitats for local people to enjoy as well as opportunities for conservation volunteering.

Orchard Project: supports the creation and restoration of orchards into the heart of urban communities. They aim for every household in the UK's towns and cities to be within walking distance of a productive, well-cared-for, community-run orchard.

Scottish Wildlife Trust: in addition to managing nature reserves, the Scottish Wildlife Trust also provides **guidance to citizens and community groups to champion wildlife conservation in their community.**

Woodland Trust: is a UK charity that provides a wide range of support to help preserve our woodlands and support community access and benefits. Community groups can:

- ➔ Find local woodlands through their **find a wood** search function
- ➔ Order free trees to support community tree-planting **through the Trust's free-tree initiative**
- ➔ Find **guidance on how to protect trees and woods**

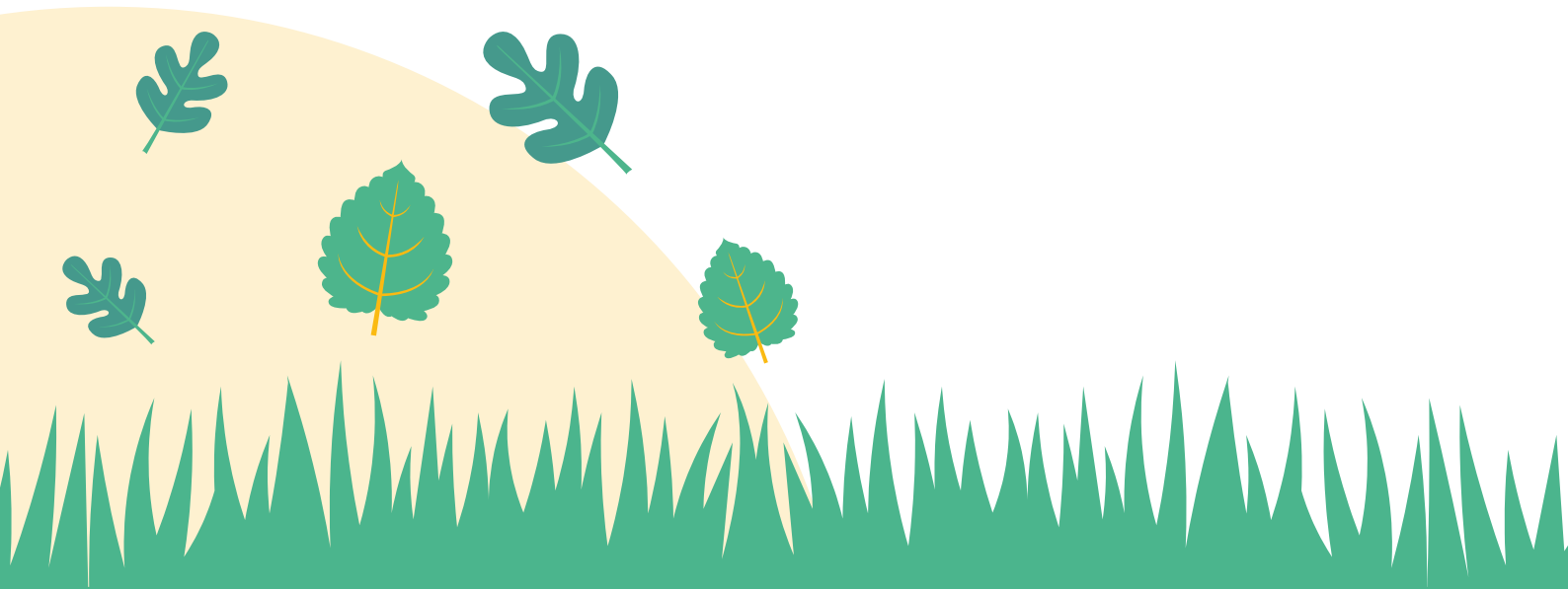
Approaches and Resources to Support Community-led Greening and Nature Conservation

Supporting local people and organisations to green their own spaces

Many people have their own gardens and some rent allotments. Some community organisations also own land that is or could become a community garden or allotment. Balconies and rooftops on buildings and paved and grassed areas around buildings can also be used to grow plants and support wildlife too.

Many of these spaces will already be contributing to community greening and conservation but with community support, much more could be done. For example:

- ➔ A volunteer scheme to help residents improve plant and animal conservation in their gardens and allotments including installing bird boxes and feeding stations and bat boxes
- ➔ Community tree-planting initiatives, focussing on native tree-species to support improved local biodiversity



Sources of Further Information:

[Create homes for wildlife in your garden](#)

[Climate change impacts for species, habitats and landscapes in Scotland](#)

[Honeybee friendly gardening](#)

[How to plant seeds](#)

[Nature on Your Doorstep](#)

[Volunteering in North Lanarkshire](#)

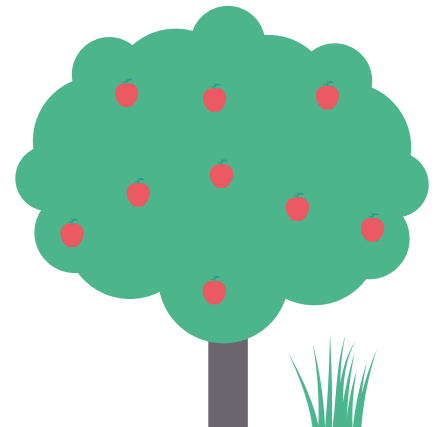
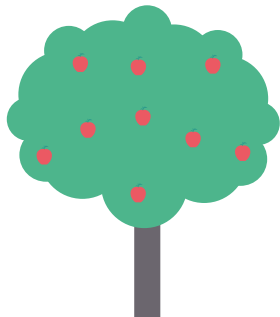
Community-run Green Spaces and Conservation Action

If there are green spaces and initiatives in your local community such as community gardens, community orchards and woodlands - why not volunteer to help these!

If you want to create more community-run green spaces, you could consider forming a coalition of local community groups or even a Land Trust to:

Identify and pursue opportunities for more community greening and conservation spaces - this might include community purchase of land.

Influence local farmers and landowners to improve conservation on their land (see below.)



Sources of Information and Support

Community Land Scotland and Development Trust Association Scotland (DTAS) Community Ownership Support Service (COSS) provide advice on community purchasing of land and assets

Create and maintain wetlands

Creating a wildflower meadow

Community orchard advice

Create a community woodland

Lanarkshire Climate Hub

Multifunctional green spaces

Peatland Restoration Reducing emissions in a warming world

Tree planting advice

Trees for schools and communities

Urban Green Spaces: A Brief for Action

Voluntary Action North Lanarkshire

For support in setting up or running a community organisation, charity or social enterprise

For volunteering support

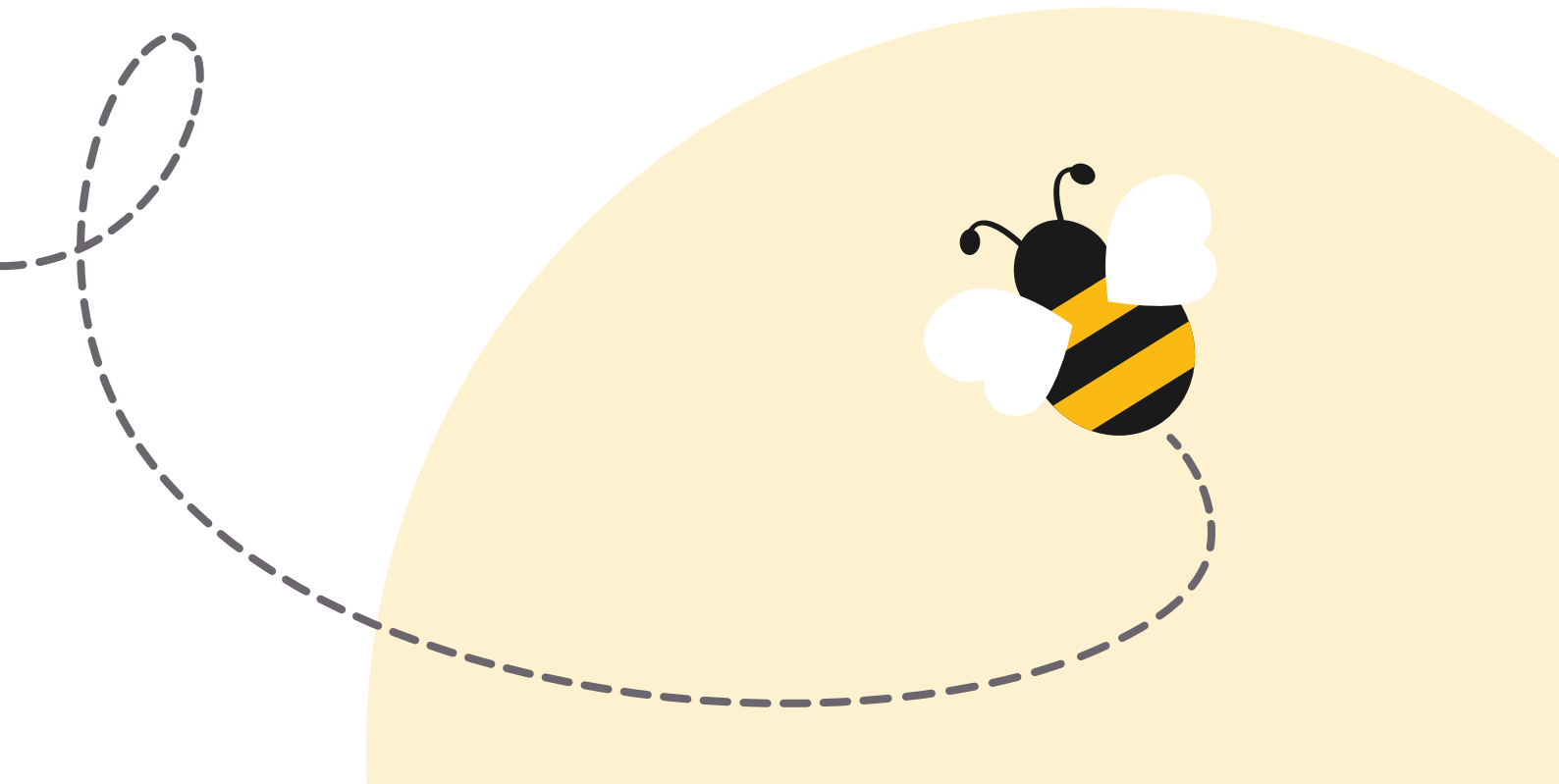
Wiki-How to green spaces, grow gardens, sprout seeds, build up green spaces and more

Working with Landowners

Community groups can also work with landowners such as their council, businesses and farmers to influence how they manage their land, so it supports greater local greening and conservation. For example:

- Conserving heathland and marshes
- Conserving wildlife
- Creating wildflower meadows
- Greening derelict and “brownfield” sites
- Protecting and maintaining existing forests, woodlands and hedgerows
- Planting more native trees
- Taking better care of the soil

Community groups can also volunteer to support landowners with these improvements.



Sources of Information and Support

Registers of Scotland and the Who Owns Scotland project provide information on who owns land

Environmental Rights Centre for Scotland provides guidance on environmental and related planning law

NFUS and Farming for a Better Climate provide support on how to engage with local farmers on climate change and conservation issues

Running a Community Workshop on Community-Led Greening and Nature Conservation

Purpose:

to bring local community groups and residents together to explore community-led greening and conservation issues.

Organised and facilitated by:

by one or more local community group/s

- If you would like help from one of our North Lanarkshire "Climate Action Champions" – please contact info@vanl.co.uk
- You might also want to involve someone with appropriate technical knowledge and skills – see information and resources section above

Suggested materials and resources:

- Flip-chart paper and stand; pens, markers; blue tack etc.
- A large scale, printed map of the local area you are exploring
- A copy of your local authority's "green space map"
- List of existing greening and conservation initiatives
- List illustrating key native plants and animals
- A computer with internet connection



Time: Approx. 2 - 3 hours. Including a 15 min. break with refreshments.



Participants: Anyone who wants to participate but best to try to keep numbers to a manageable size, with no more than 25 people.



Format: Ideally an in-person event in a community venue but could be done online if this is necessary.



Note-taking/flip-charting of key points and ideas: By facilitator or others

Running a Community Workshop on Community-Led Greening and Nature Conservation

Welcome, Introductions and Envisioning



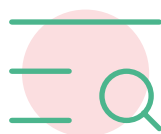
 Approx. 30 mins

Facilitator to introduce themselves and welcome all to the workshop inviting them to introduce themselves and:

- To share what brings them here
- What vision they have for greening and conservation in their community
- What experience, skills or resources they can bring

Facilitator to reflect back to the group any common visions/ideas that seem to have emerged and seek feedback from the group.

Reviewing and Mapping



 Approx. 45 mins

The facilitator will support the group to undertake the following activities.

Review Local Area and Green Spaces

Referring to large scale map and North Lanarkshire Council's green space list, discuss:

- Current green space and opportunities for community support.
- Opportunities for improved green space on brownfield and vacant sites; roadside areas, rooftops and more.

Exploring Options to strengthen Community-led greening and conservation

The following list of options are provided to aid discussion but others can of course be considered.

- Form a new community group, charity or social enterprise to support community-led greening and conservation activities in your area or strengthen the activities of an existing group
- Develop a new community-led greening and conservation initiative, like a community garden
- Influence landowners to encourage them to improve their greening and conservation activities

Running a Community Workshop on Community-Led Greening and Nature Conservation

Mapping Allies

Identify potential allies in the community and who will approach them to build support, including:

- Existing community groups – of all types, e.g. youth groups; regeneration projects; allotment groups
- Experienced gardeners, conservationists, ecologists etc.
- School headteachers
- Local councillors, MSPs, MPs

Mapping Participants' Resources

Clarify the resources that participants have or have access to, including:

- Any land like private gardens, allotments or green spaces
- Gardening tools
- Materials like soil, seeds, fencing; storage etc

Don't forget to have a 15 min break either at this point or a bit earlier.

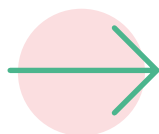
Action Planning



 Approx. 30 mins

Now that the participants have explored their vision, options and resources, the facilitator will help them agree what they want to do in their community to strengthen greening and conservation.

Next Steps and Closing



 Approx. 15 mins

- Facilitator to help the group decide how their agreed actions will be taken forward - e.g. another meeting; when; who will organise this
- Facilitator to ask the group to reflect on how the workshop went and ask each participant to share one thing they will be taking away from the session
- Thanks, and close