



SCOTLAND'S YOUNG PEOPLE'S FOREST TOOLKIT FOR THE YOUTH WORK SECTOR



Scotland's
Young
People's
Forest



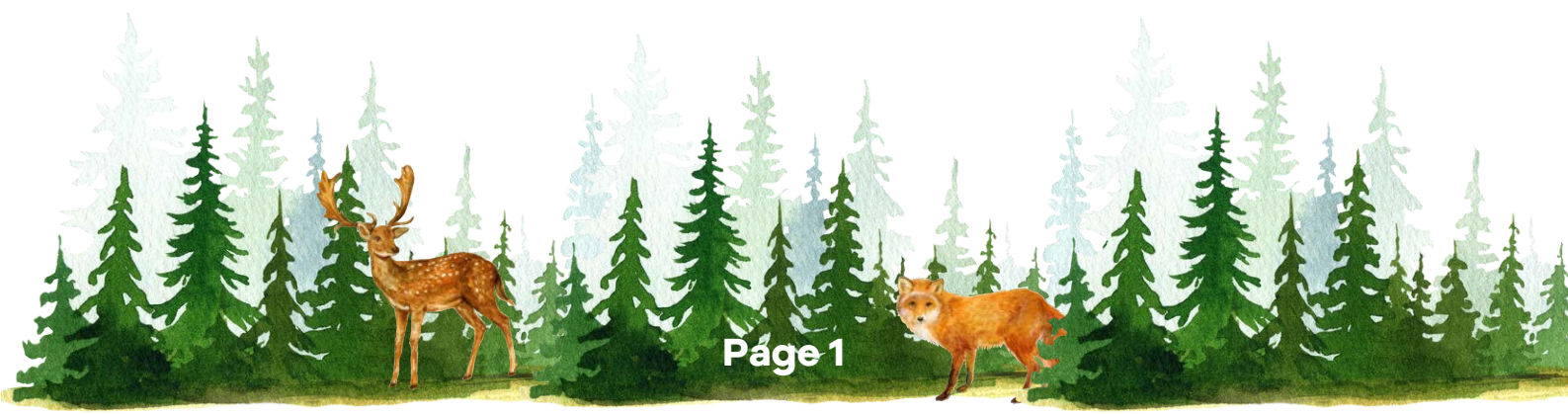
In partnership with YouthLink Scotland and Young Scot





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Welcome & Getting Started

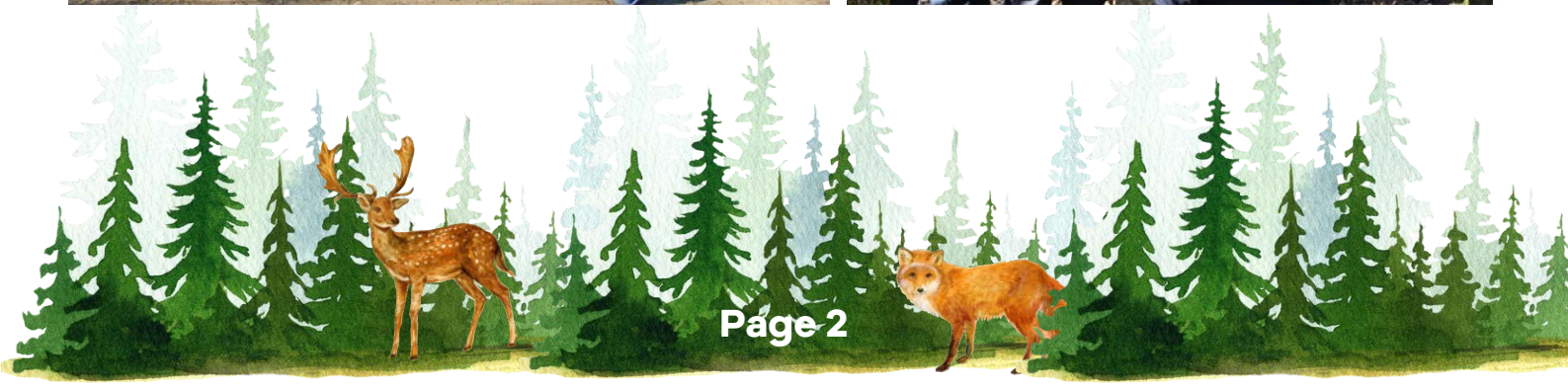


Created by [YouthLink Scotland](#) in partnership with [Young Scot](#), the Scotland's Young People's Forest Youth Leadership Panel and Expert Advisory Group, this free, downloadable toolkit builds youth workers' capacity and awareness around green skills and climate education for young people through training, resources and guidance. It provides inspiration, activities and lesson plans you can use to engage with your youth groups while empowering them to take climate action.

There are often concerns about not being an 'outdoorsy person', having access to resources and equipment or understanding the climate science, but this toolkit will help you to overcome these perceived barriers. You and your youth groups don't need any prior knowledge of the subject; this toolkit is designed to be used by anyone who works with young people. Whether you are based in the city centre, or are living in a national park, whether your youth groups are already passionate about the environment or are reluctant to get their hands dirty, there are endless exciting opportunities to engage in and with the natural world and play an active role in tackling the climate and nature emergencies.

Each activity can be used independently from the others and is adaptable for your young people, their level, and the time, space and resources you have available.

Before jumping straight into the activities, to help you understand the content and navigate your way through this toolkit, we have provided some background information about the Scotland's Young People's Forest project and an explanation to the resource headings and format.





Welcome & Getting Started

Background to Scotland's Young People's Forest

The vision of Scotland's Young People's Forest (SYPF) is to create the first forest in Scotland that is co-designed, led and governed by young people. The mission of the panel, a group of young people aged 11 – 26 from across Scotland, is to create and regenerate native Scottish forests, which are accessible to all, to help combat the current climate emergency, promoting and connecting education, wildlife, and well-being.

This project is a response to the climate emergency to demonstrate young people's passion, activism and commitment to nature, biodiversity, and the natural environment. The forest itself, once a site has been determined, will become a legacy for young people and adults to reflect the ambitions of a nation and provide a focus for education and empowerment.

The young people who are part of this project know first-hand how vital and beneficial it is to have access to opportunities that connect them to nature:

'Scotland's Young People's Forest has changed my life for the better. It gave me opportunities, and it made me more confident and more outgoing. It's a chance to make a difference.'

– Finlay, Scotland's Young People's Forest Youth Leadership Panel Member

Which is where the idea for this toolkit came from; a chance to empower and upskill others to make a positive change in their own lives, within their communities and for the environment.





Welcome & Getting Started



Scotland's Young People's Forest Outcomes and Objectives

The Youth Leadership Panel co-designed the below objectives for the project, and the objective which is most closely linked to the resource is detailed at the top of each resource.

Land Use: To manage and regenerate various areas of land as forest sanctuaries for native Scottish wildlife

Health and Wellbeing: To create outdoor spaces for people to reconnect with nature: places to enjoy for their own health and wellbeing or to share with others

Equality and Accessibility: To create welcoming forested places that are inviting and accessible for everyone

Culture and Innovation: To create inspiring natural spaces for people to explore the connectedness of natural and cultural heritage through arts and technology both ancient and modern.

Young People: To enable and empower other young people to take action on issues of climate change and environmental concern.





Welcome & Getting Started

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

Detailed at the top of each resource you will find the SDGs that the activity contributes to.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted by all United Nations Member States in 2015, provides a shared blueprint for peace and prosperity for people and the planet, now and into the future. At its heart are the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which are an urgent call for action by all countries - developed and developing - in a global partnership. They recognise that ending poverty and other deprivations must go hand-in-hand with strategies that improve health and education, reduce inequality, and spur economic growth – all while tackling climate change and working to preserve our oceans and forests.

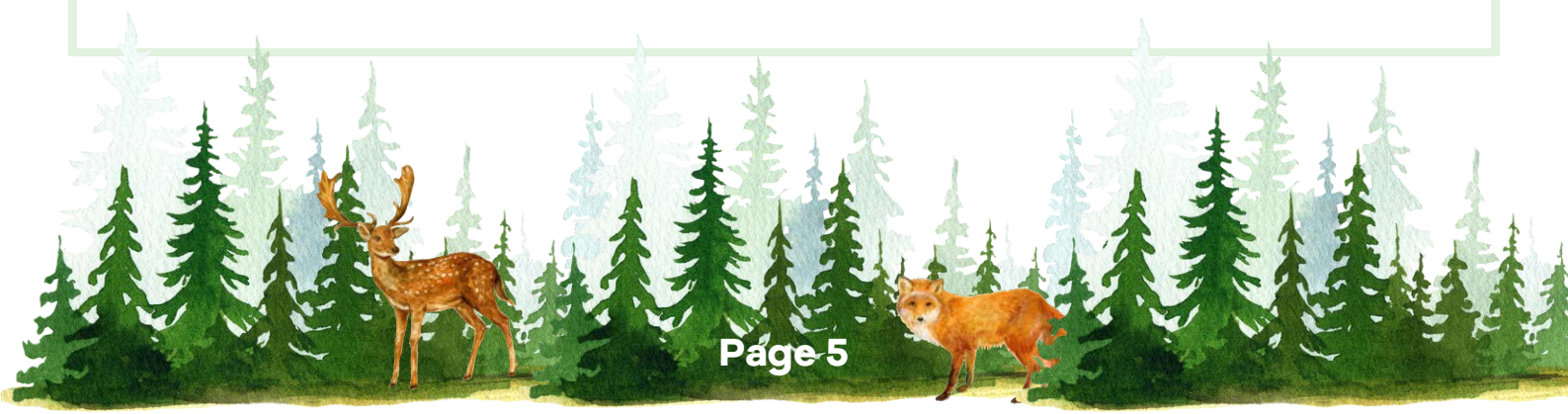
National Youth Work Outcomes and Skills Framework

At the top of each resource, you will also find a list of the associated national youth work outcomes and the skills that will be developed by the young person.

The National Youth Work Outcomes and Skills Framework is the culmination of years of collaboration with the sector to create a set of practical tools to help youth workers support and measure young people's development. The youth work outcomes and the youth work skills framework have proved to be valuable tools in planning and evaluating the work we do, and most importantly in providing a structure for reflective learning conversations with young people on their youth work journey.

- The seven youth work outcomes describe the key overarching impacts of youth work in young people's lives.
- The eleven youth work skills describe key building blocks that enable young people to make progress towards these outcomes.
- The indicators associated with the development of these skills describe observable behaviours that help us set goals and measure progress with young people.

[You can find out more about the National Youth Work Outcomes and Skills Framework here.](#)





Welcome & Getting Started

National Youth Work Outcomes and Skills Framework

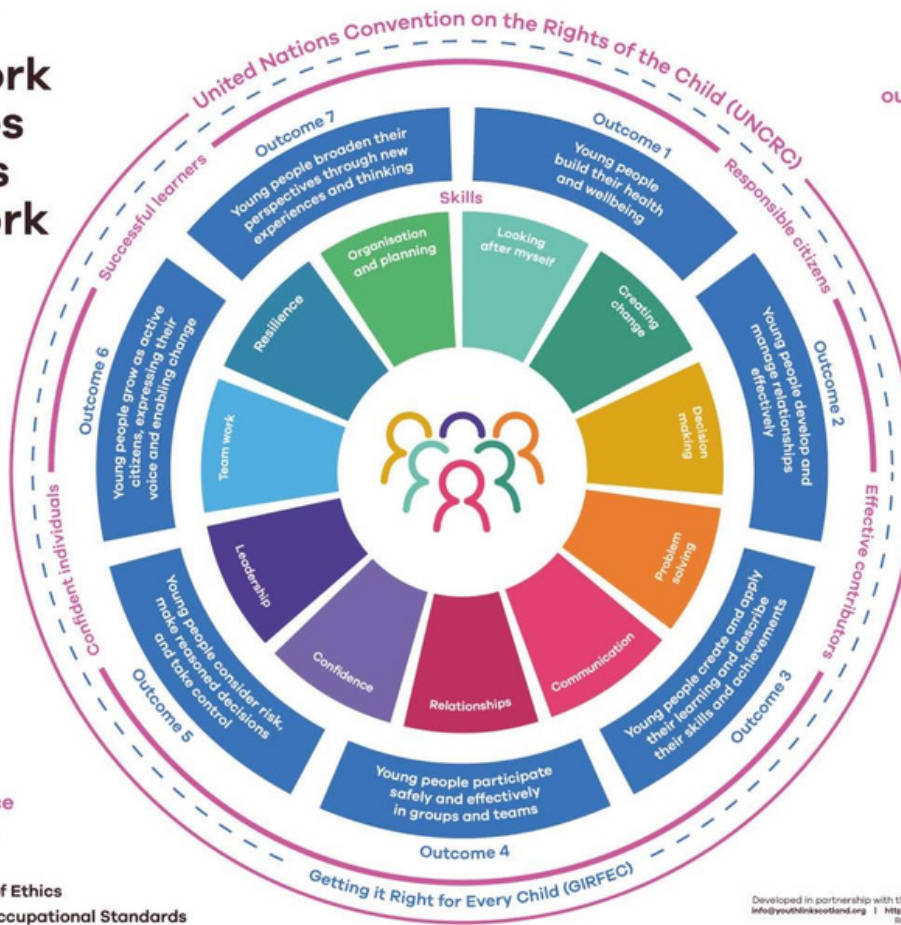
Nature and Purpose of Youth Work:

Youth work is an educational practice that contributes to young people's learning and development. It is an inclusive and empowering approach where:

- The work must build from where young people are
- Young people and youth workers are recognised as partners in a learning process
- Young people choose to participate

Youth Work practice is underpinned by:

- CLD Competences
- CLD Values and Code of Ethics
- Youth Work National Occupational Standards



Youth Work plays a key role in delivering Scotland's national outcomes, in particular:

Children and Young People
We grow up loved, safe and respected so that we realise our full potential

Education
We are well educated, skilled and able to contribute to society

Health
We are healthy and active

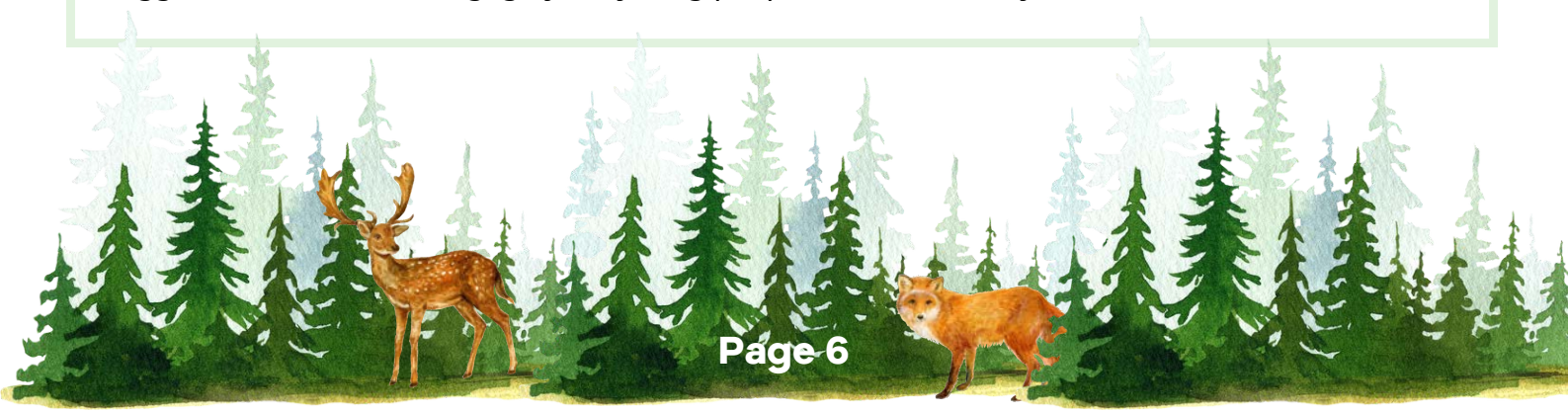
Developed in partnership with the youth work sector in Scotland December 2022
<http://www.youthlinkscotland.org> | @YouthLinkScotland
 Registered in Scotland No: 164547. Charity Ref: SC003923

Facilitators Notes

After explaining each activity, we have included some facilitator notes to give you some background and context to the topic.

Additional Resources

You will find some additional signposting to helpful resources, activities, recorded webinars, websites, guides and inspiration at the end of each resource. This is optional reading or more suggested activities to engage your young people in different ways.





Welcome & Getting Started

Equipment

Most of the activities in the toolkit don't require any fancy equipment or materials, and anything you'll need to deliver them will be listed. However, it can be helpful to look in to investing in waterproof jackets and boots for young people to borrow if you're taking them outside. These could come from second hand shops to make it cheaper, or you could approach a shop or company for sponsorship. Having a stash of biodegradable ponchos is always useful.

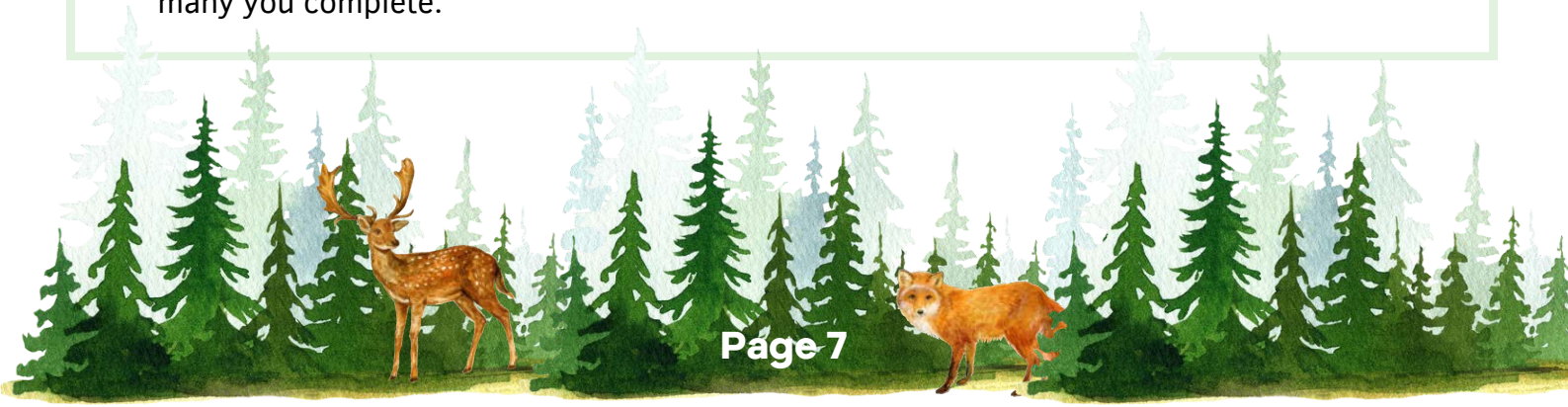
Organisations like the [BTO Equipment Donation Scheme \(EDS\)](#) supports young people across the UK by supplying them with equipment to make the most of their outdoor experiences, and enabling them to further develop the scheme.

You can also visit the [funding page of the YouthLink Scotland website](#) to stay up to date with grants and fund to support your sustainable youth work activities.

Nature Based Awards

There are a range of accessible nature-based awards that encourage awareness and responsibility for the environment as well as developing skills for green employability. Some of these include:

- [The Duke of Edinburgh \(DofE\)](#) provides young people with an opportunity to discover new interests and talents, develop essential skills for life and work, and is a recognised mark of achievement; respected by employers. Through a DofE programme young people have fun, make friends, improve their self-esteem and build confidence.
- [The John Muir Award](#) encourages people of all backgrounds to connect with, enjoy and care for wild places. It promotes real world experiences and provides valuable recognition of achievement through a nationally recognised certificate. Working towards an Award can provide opportunities to solve problems, work as part of a team and build confidence in leadership – developing the attributes that can help people move towards positive destinations. Read more about Employability and The John Muir Award.
- [RSPB Wild Challenge](#) is an awards scheme for schools, youth groups and families to encourage young people to connect with the natural world. There are a range of fun activities to choose from and bronze, silver and gold awards to achieve depending on how many you complete.





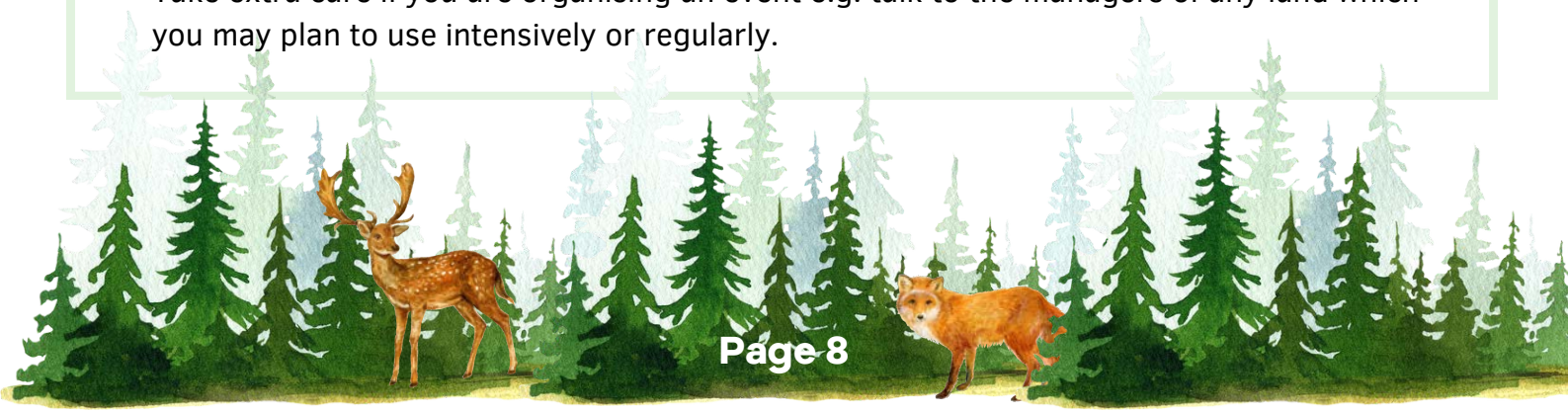
Welcome & Getting Started

- **The Junior Rangers Award** with Scottish Countryside Rangers Association is gained by taking part in a series of group activities designed to deliver a number of competencies of skills reflecting the skills and knowledge of those working in the Ranger (or associated) profession, taking the participants on a personal development journey. This outdoor learning programme is delivered by Countryside Rangers and other partners to provide opportunities for young people to develop practical environmental skills and, most importantly, in an enjoyable way, ensure they become responsible stewards of their planet. You can find out more about how to set up and run a successful programme and award here.
- **Keep Scotland Beautiful Green Flag Award** recognises our best parks and green spaces across Scotland. It is awarded to parks and green spaces who can demonstrate excellent management and environmental standards.
 - They also have an Eco-Schools Scotland programme, the largest sustainable schools programme in the world with 19.5 million children, young people and educators engaged worldwide in 74 different countries. Completing a Green Flag Application is recognised by the Green Flag Award - a visible indication of a school's commitment to Learning for Sustainability and an internationally recognised accreditation for excellence in sustainable education.

Things to bear in mind when taking youth groups outside

You might want to consider:

- Cost and duration of travel – keep it short and cheap! Look in to what is available in your local community within walking distance. You'd be surprised how many green spaces are on your doorstep.
- Take a look at the **Woodland Trust** website to find woods near you with this helpful map, **discover an RSPB nature reserve** near you, or search for green spaces through **NatureScot's greenspace map**.
- Visit your local council website to find parks and green spaces close by.
- Note any special needs (allergies/medication) as well as access requirements.
- Prepare for the weather. Lots of layers if it's cold, and hats and sunscreen if it's hot. Midge repellent is always handy when exploring in Scotland!
- Take extra care if you are organising an event e.g. talk to the managers of any land which you may plan to use intensively or regularly.





Welcome & Getting Started

- Help land managers and others to work safely and effectively e.g. avoid damaging crops and leave gates as you find them.
- Take a read of [The Scottish Outdoor Access Code](#) to find out about your rights and responsibilities when you're making the most of Scotland's great outdoors. Whether it's your local green space or beyond, it's important that you #KnowTheCode.

The main thing is for you and young people to have fun exploring and learning new things about yourselves and your green spaces!

To find out more about the Scotland's Young People's Forest project and how you can support or get more involved, [visit our website](#).





Tree Identification: Top Trumps

Activity

Forestry England have created Tree Trumps so your youth groups can get to know different species growing in our woods and discover some of their leafy secrets!

Purpose

This activity aims to get young people excited and curious about native British trees while learning some fun facts.

Equipment

Printed sets of the Tree Trumps cards (you will need a set per pair playing the game).



Scotland's Young People's Forest Outcomes and Objectives

Land Use: To manage and regenerate various areas of land as forest sanctuaries for native Scottish wildlife.

National Youth Work Outcomes

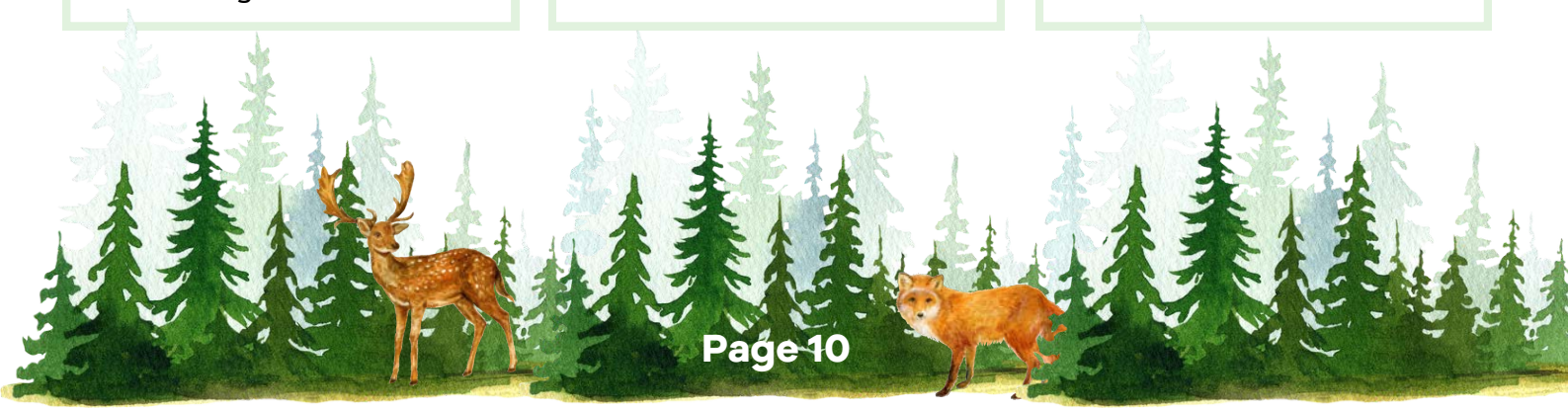
- Young people participate safely and effectively in groups and teams
- Young people broaden their perspectives through new experiences and thinking

Skills Developed by Young Person

- Building relationships
- Communication

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

- SDG13: Climate Action
- SDG15: Life on Land





Tree Identification: Top Trumps

How to play - explain the rules (5 mins)

- Give a set of cards to each pair.
- Shuffle the cards and deal them out evenly.
- Hold the cards so you can only see the top one.
- Pick a category and each pair reads their score out.
- The player with the highest score for that category wins. The winner takes the losing card, as well as their own at the bottom of their pack.
- They then choose the next category.
- The winner is the player with all or most of the cards at the end of the game.

Play the game in pairs (5 mins)

Play until only one person in each pair has won all of the cards.

Reflection (5 mins)

Ask the group some follow up questions:

- Did any of the facts surprise you?
- Which is your favourite tree?
- Have you seen any of these trees in real life?
- Would you like to share one of the interesting tree facts?



Hawthorn	Yew	Scots pine
Life span 300 years	Life span 600 years	Life span 500 years
Height 15m	Height 29m	Height 36m
No. of insects 209	No. of insects 6	No. of insects 172
Timber value 40	Timber value 59	Timber value 80
Climb-ability 2	Climb-ability 3	Climb-ability 12
Tree facts	Tree facts	Tree facts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Also known as the 'May tree' after the month in which it blooms. Branches make ideal homes for small birds. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are 10 yew trees in Britain thought to pre-date the 10th century. Medieval archers made their longbows of yew. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scots pine is the most common conifer tree in the world. • It is the only native conifer to grow tall enough to produce useable timber.





Tree Identification: Top Trumps

Facilitators Notes

Native tree species are those which arrived naturally in Scotland without direct human assistance as far as we can tell. Most of our native tree and shrub species colonised Scotland after the last Ice Age (which ended roughly 9,000 years ago), with seeds dispersed by wind, water, and animals.

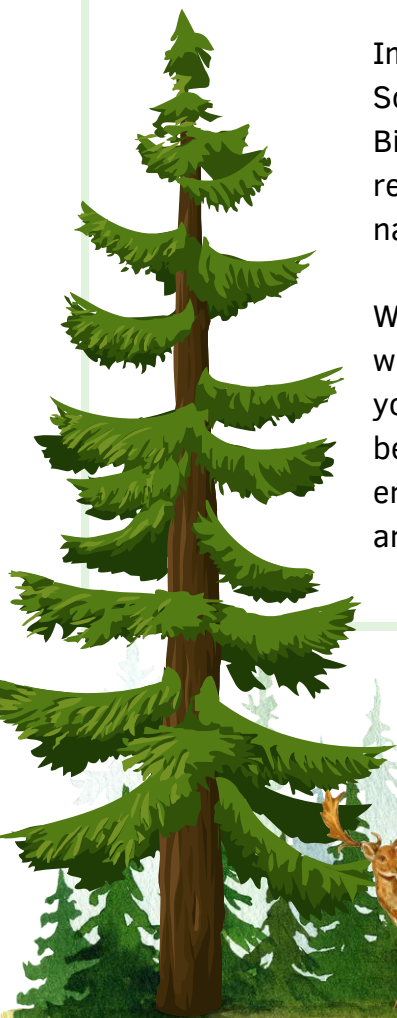
Scotland's most common native trees and shrubs include Scots pine, birch (downy and silver), alder, oak (pedunculate and sessile), ash, hazel, willow (various species), rowan, aspen, wych elm, hawthorn, holly, juniper, elder and wild cherry.

Scotland's forests already absorb some 1.86 million tonnes of carbon per year. Increasing forest cover from 17% to 25% of Scotland's land area over the next 15 years could raise this figure.

All Scotland's forests, woodlands and associated open ground habitats provide some biodiversity value. However, suitably managed native, and in particular ancient and semi-natural woodlands, including appropriately restored Plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites (PAWS), will contribute the most.

Improving woodland condition is a strategic driver in Scotland's Forestry Strategy and target in Scottish Biodiversity Strategy. Scottish Planning Policy recognises the high value of ancient woods and semi-natural woodlands for nature conservation.

Woods and trees are also good for our health and wellbeing. By learning about them from a young age, your youth groups will build an appreciation for trees, be more likely spend time in woodland and forest environments, which will improve their mental health and foster a sense of duty to protect them.





Tree Identification: Top Trumps

Additional Resources

Find out more

Take a look at the [Woodland Trust](#) website to find woods near you with this helpful map, [discover an RSPB nature reserve](#) near you, or search for green spaces through [NatureScot's greenspace map](#).

[Scotland's tree species](#): Get to know some of the trees that make up our forests, learn their stories and find out about their many practical uses. You could also download the free '[British trees](#)' app from the Woodland Trust' then you can ID on the move!

Scottish Forestry has produced a series of educational native woodlands videos. The main video, '[Scotland's Native Woodlands](#)', offers an introduction to native woods and why they are special.

Activities & Guides

[Meet a tree](#): Test your youth group to see if they can find out which tree they have met when blindfolded, trust their partners and get connected to nature.

[How to identify winter trees quiz](#) - twigs, buds and silhouettes

[Autumn leaf identification quiz](#) - can you identify these 10 trees?

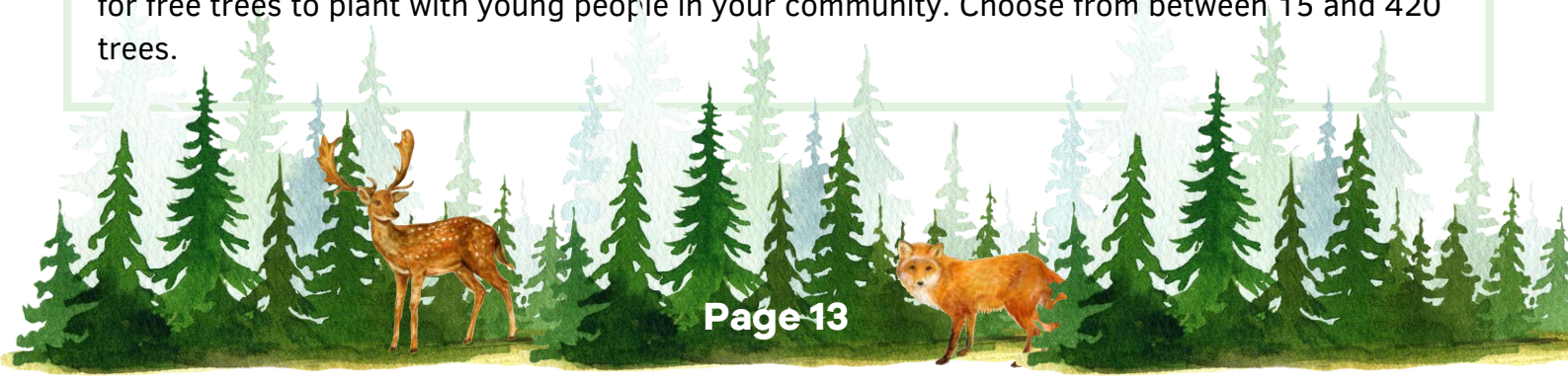
[Summer tree identification quiz](#) - can you name these 9 trees?

[More ID resources](#): There are heaps more easy to print tree ID resources for all ages available through Tree Tools for Schools.

[Outdoor & Woodland Learning \(OWL\) Scotland](#) have created a range of useful guides and learning resources about trees and forests.

[10 ways to measure a tree](#): A variety of methods to measure the height of a tree.

[Free trees](#): The Woodland Trust want to make sure everybody in the UK has the chance to plant a tree, so they're giving away hundreds of thousands of trees to schools and communities. Apply for free trees to plant with young people in your community. Choose from between 15 and 420 trees.





Tree Identification: Top Trumps

Get Inspired

Day in the life of video: Meet Josie from the Scotland's Young People's Forest Youth Leadership panel. Josie is a tree nursery assistant and this is a day in the life of her job.

A beautiful poster of Scotland's national tree 'Our Scots Pine', illustrated with a selection of the flora and fauna associated with the tree, as well as uses.

Tree stories: A story about a Scottish tree for each month with supporting information folklore, recipes and facts about each tree. Tree Stories was written by Claire Hewitt over a year and inspired by Highland Perthshire's beautiful fauna and flora. Each story was created during the month with which its tree is linked in folklore.

A Wee Forest (part of the **TinyForest** global family) is a tennis court-sized, densely planted and fast growing, native species rich woodland in urban Scotland which combines the specific Tiny Forest planting method with long term citizen science. Young people can help to tackle the ecological and climate emergency by planting and looking after their own forest in their own neighbourhood. **Find out where your local Wee Forest is.**

The Clyde Climate Forest will see 18 million trees planted in both urban and rural parts of Glasgow City Region over the next decade. Communities can get involved by helping them identify opportunities for tree planting by finding sites where trees can be planted. They're keen to involve local people in planting trees in neighbourhoods with low levels of tree cover, especially young people as they will gain most from seeing these trees grow and thrive in years to come.

Right: Members of the Scotland's Young People's Forest Youth Leadership panel getting involved in some forestry maintenance activities.





Poetry for the Planet

Activity

This activity uses creative techniques including poetry and art to connect your youth group to the natural world and their cultural heritage. This activity is also a great way to encourage young people to express themselves and practice mindfulness through their creativity.

Purpose

For young people to:

- Connect with the natural world through the cultural arts and use creative methods, including art and poetry.
- To engage with the environment and promote mindfulness.

Equipment

- A nature-based poem cut up into phrases or lines – you will need one poem per pair of young people (we suggested something like The Shivering River, but you can find other nature based poetry on the Scottish Poetry Library).
- Envelopes – one per pair of young people
- Paper – enough for each young person to draw on
- Pens and pencils



Scotland's Young People's Forest Outcomes and Objectives

Culture and Innovation: To create inspiring natural spaces for people to explore the connectedness of natural and cultural heritage through arts and technology both ancient and modern.

Health and Wellbeing: To create outdoor spaces for people to reconnect with nature: places to enjoy for their own health and wellbeing or to share with others.





Poetry for the Planet

National Youth Work Outcomes

- Young people build their health and wellbeing
- Young people participate safely and effectively in groups and teams
- Young people broaden their perspectives through new experiences and thinking

Skills Developed by Young Person

- Looking after myself
- Communication
- Organising and planning
- Teamwork

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

- SDG3: Good Health and Wellbeing
- SDG13: Climate Action
- SDG14: Life Below Water
- SDG15: Life on Land

Ice breaker (10 mins)

Ask the group to tell you what their spirit animal is and why. Why do they feel connected with this animal? What character traits do they feel they share with them? You could share images of native Scottish animals and ask the group to pick which one they feel most connected with.

Creating a poem in pairs (15 mins)

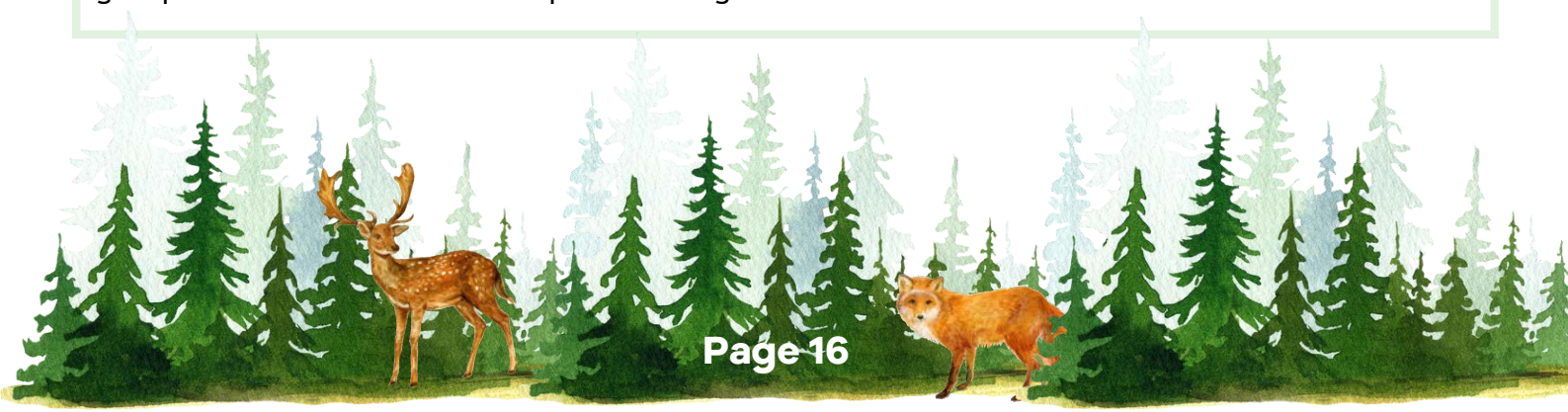
Ask the group to work in pairs. Give a cut-up nature poem of your choice in an envelope to each pair. The pairs then work together to create a poem from the sentences and phrases.

Sharing their poetry (5 mins)

The pairs can leave their new poems on their tables and walk around the room reading each other's work. They can see the variety that can be produced with the same words.

Share the original poem (10 mins)

Then share the original text (you can have it up on screen or share print outs) and allow the group time to consider and compare the original to theirs.





Poetry for the Planet

Sketching the poetry (15 mins)

Read the poem aloud to your group. Ask them to create quick sketches in response to each verse (read one verse at a time).

Encourage the group to be quick and to capture the first thing that comes to their mind, so they aren't hung up on having to be too artistic.

Discuss the drawings. Did they all draw the same thing or something different?

Facilitators Notes

When we are in awe of nature, we are inspired to be more creative. One way to capture this creativity is through poetry. Writing colourful prose allows young people to reflect on what they experience in nature so they can hold on to those moments and the feelings that come with being outside. It also encourages us to be present in our experiences, through noticing the sensations we are experiencing, while connecting us to our cultural heritage.

Research by the RSPB highlights the benefits of contact with nature, such as improved health and well-being, enhanced connection with nature and an increase in the desire to protect natural environments. The National Literacy Trust research shows similar benefits in wellbeing through writing for enjoyment. Young people have expressed that writing poetry gives them a sense of agency, allowing them to express themselves.

Throughout Scottish history, poetry has fascinated and inspired us to understand the world in a deeper way. Many nature lovers have used poetry to communicate their connection to the environment and explore the complicated connections between people and nature, often written by individuals who are concerned about our impact on the natural world. Poets today are serving as witnesses to climate change while bringing attention to important environmental issues and advocating for preservation and conservation.





Poetry for the Planet

Additional Resources

Find out more

Read the Scottish Wildlife Trusts blog on '[Poetry and Mindfulness on World Mental Health Day](#)' to find out more about how you can utilise poetry and mindfulness within the natural world.

[Rowanbank](#) is an Environmental Arts and Education social enterprise that creates magical outdoor experiences. From shows in urban woodlands and remote beaches to climate change workshops in schools.

Activities & Guides

[A National Poetry Day resource from Greenpeace](#): This resource includes nature based poems, ideas for reflection and discussion and encourages young people to write their own poems. [We Don't Have to Give Up Hope](#) is another poetry-based resource focused on the climate emergency.

[Wild Poetry](#): The RSPB and National Literacy Trust have created a Wild Poetry and Writing resource to inspire learning through nature.

[What goes around comes around](#): A resource to make young people more aware of the types of circularity in the environments around them and to reflect on and describe these through writing and poetry.

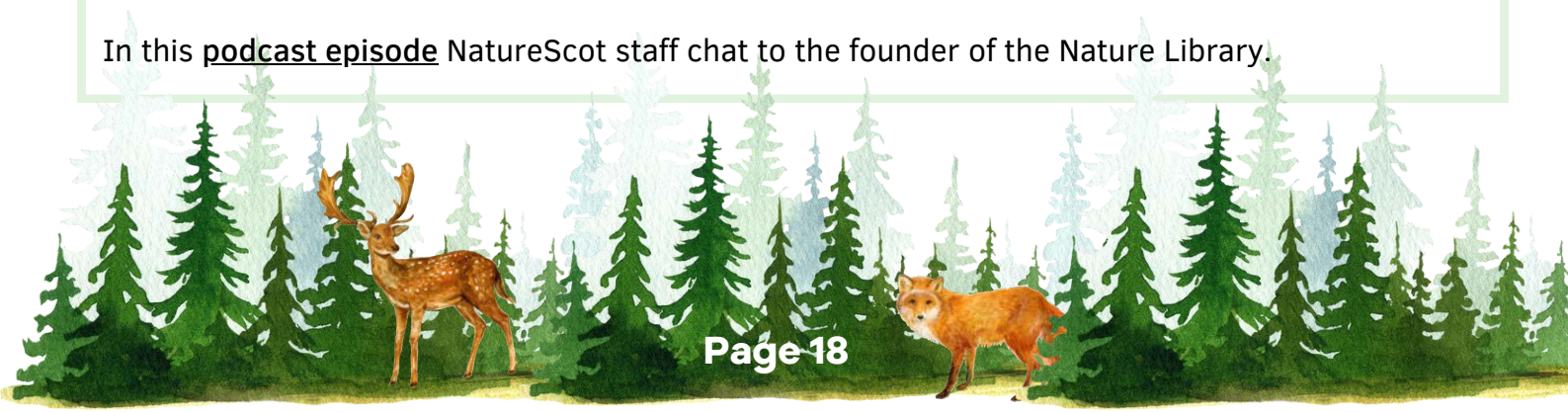
[John Muir Award Resource Guide - Literacy & Nature](#): Inspiration and actions for your own journey to discover the links between literacy and nature. It includes their take on '[The Lost Words](#)'.

Get Inspired

[Watch this film written by Woodland Trust forester & storyteller Alan Crawford](#): Produced for National Storytelling week, this inspiring tale from deep within the Caledonian Pinewood tells of 'Boddach nam Guithas' (Old man of the pinewood' in Gaelic). It shows us the importance of protecting our ancient and native woods.

[Actors read a series of poems](#) on the theme of climate change, curated by UK poet laureate Carol Ann Duffy.

In this [podcast episode](#) NatureScot staff chat to the founder of the Nature Library.





Urban Green Spaces: Mapping & Scavenger Hunt

Activity

This activity have been inspired by and adapted from this [Urban Nature Youth Worker Toolkit](#), designed and developed by the Natural History Museum in collaboration with The Prince's Trust, Voyage Youth and other regional partners.

Purpose

For young people to have:

- A better understanding and awareness of the urban green spaces in their local area.
- An increased comfort in local green space and increased knowledge of local urban nature.

Equipment

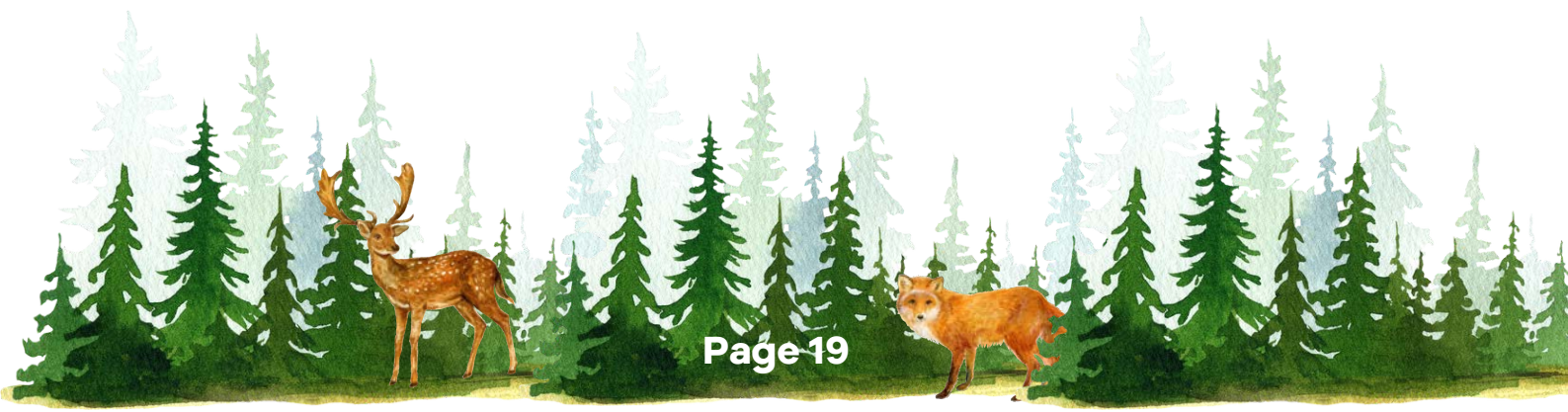
- Urban animal photos or names (one per young person)
- Clothes pegs (one per young person)
- Pens/pencils and paper
- Access to computer for google maps
- A selection of or photos of natural objects for the urban scavenger hunt



Scotland's Young People's Forest Outcomes and Objectives

Equality and Accessibility: To create welcoming forested places that are inviting and accessible for everyone.

Land Use: To manage and regenerate various areas of land as forest sanctuaries for native Scottish wildlife.





Urban Green Spaces: Mapping & Scavenger Hunt

National Youth Work Outcomes

- Young people participate safely and effectively in groups and teams
- Young people grow as active citizens, expressing their voice and enabling change
- Young people broaden their perspectives through new experiences and thinking

Skills Developed by Young Person

- Confidence
- Communication
- Organising and planning
- Decision making
- Problem solving
- Teamwork
- Leadership

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

- SDG11: Sustainable Cities and Communities
- SDG13: Climate Action
- SDG15: Life on Land

Urban Animal Scramble Ice Breaker (5 mins)

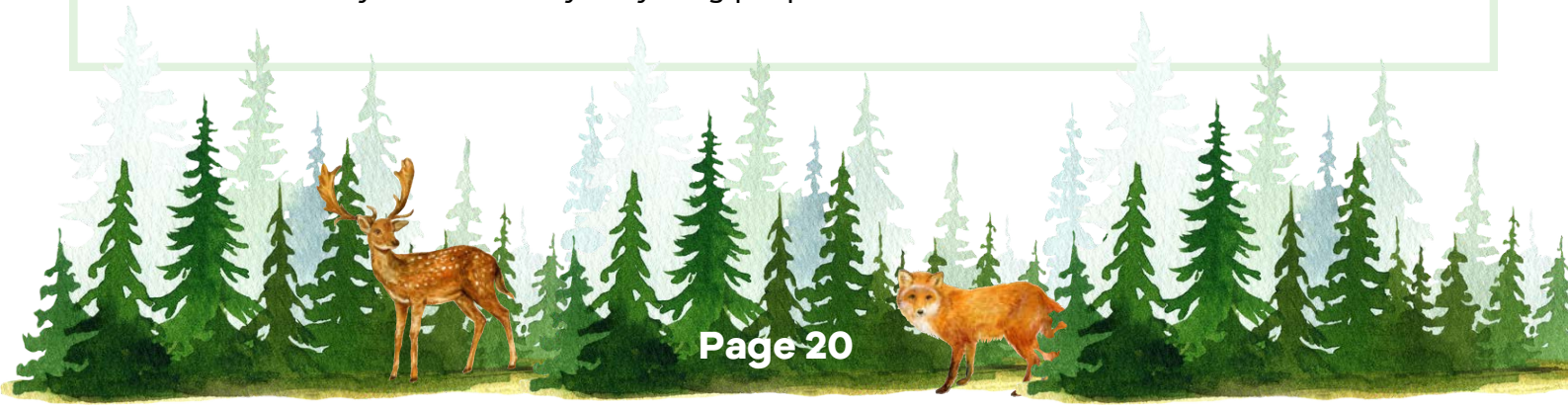
Urban animal names or pictures are attached to the back of young people's shirts with clothes pegs.

Young people ask each other questions about the animal's characteristics. Responses to the questions can only be, 'Yes', 'No' or 'Maybe'. Each young person only asks one question before moving on to ask a different young person another question.

Once the young person has correctly guessed their animal, they can peg the picture or name of their animal on the front of their shirt.

Green mapping (10 mins)

Write down all the nature opportunities, big and small, that you can think of within walking distance of where you work with your young people.





Urban Green Spaces: Mapping & Scavenger Hunt

Bring up an online map of the area. Turn on the natural features view.

- What areas of green do you recognise?
- Which stand out as new or different?

Print the map and make notes on it, or make notes digitally.

Features to look out for include parks, woodland, water, common land, churchyards and cemeteries.

Urban Scavenger Hunt (30 mins)

In advance, head to one of the green spaces from the mapping exercise and find as many different natural objects and collect one of each. These will be the same objects the young people have to find. Examples include: different shapes/species of fallen leaves, twigs, feathers, seeds, nuts, pieces of bark, a sound recording of a bird, evidence of human impact on nature, a photo or video of a squirrel. The more you have, the longer the activity will be.

Divide your young people into teams. Show them the list of things they need to go and find. Let them loose!

The first team to collect all items or take all images, wins.

Reflect on your urban space (10 mins)

Suggest to the young people that they draw a map of the park they are in or have been spending time in.

Highlight the different areas, what are they used for and by who – both nature and people.

Re-imagine it with improvements/things they would add to make it better.

- How could the community use this park differently or better?
- What features could be added that would benefit nature or be sustainable?





Urban Green Spaces: Mapping & Scavenger Hunt

Facilitators Notes

Over 83% of the UK population live in urban areas and towns and cities are where most people experience nature; in parks, gardens and patches of wasteland, rather than in the countryside or national parks.

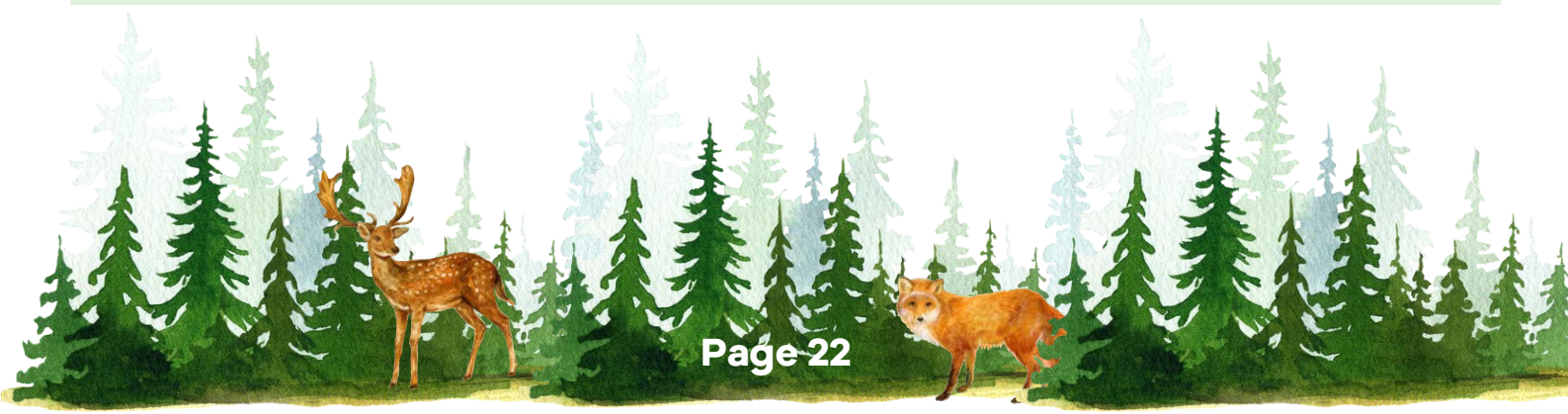
There is a great variety of life and biodiversity in towns and cities but it can often go unnoticed. You don't have to jump in a minibus to the Cairngorms to get your nature fix; the beauty of urban nature is that there are opportunities everywhere to engage with it. Our perception of what and where nature is, and how we access it, has as much to do with our own attitudes, as it has to do with the nature around us. If we choose to, we can cherish the flowers that grow in cracks in walls and in unmown patches of grass. An appreciative attitude can be fostered and cultivated to gain a sense of enchantment and connection to urban nature.

Top tips:

- Nature will find ways to survive in the most obscure locations. Make it a fun challenge to discover it!
- Lakes, canals, ponds and reservoirs are great places to look for different birds.
- Allotments, community gardens and churchyards are fantastic havens for wildlife.

Urban areas can be challenging places for wildlife - animals must battle with traffic, fragmented habitats, and air, noise and light pollution, among other things. But there are also some advantages:

- Some wild animals and plants are 'synanthropic', meaning they are associated with humans and benefit from living close to us, and others adapt.
- Towns and cities can provide a variety of habitats for wildlife. Most urban environments contain a considerable amount of green space, including private gardens, parks, allotments, cemeteries, road verges and brownfield sites. These can be managed for the benefit of nature.
- These urban green spaces are important strongholds for a wide range of species, and places for people to connect with nature, improving our mental and physical health.





Urban Green Spaces: Mapping & Scavenger Hunt

Additional Resources

Find out more

[Natural History Museum website](#): Towns and cities aren't devoid of wildlife. A whole host of animals and plants share these urban spaces with us.

[Fungi: undervalued jewels of the urban jungle](#).

[Meet the neighbours: eight surprising animals living in UK towns and cities](#).

[There's life among the dead: Wildlife in cemeteries](#).

[The Wildlife Trusts have share some ideas around where to find urban wildlife](#).

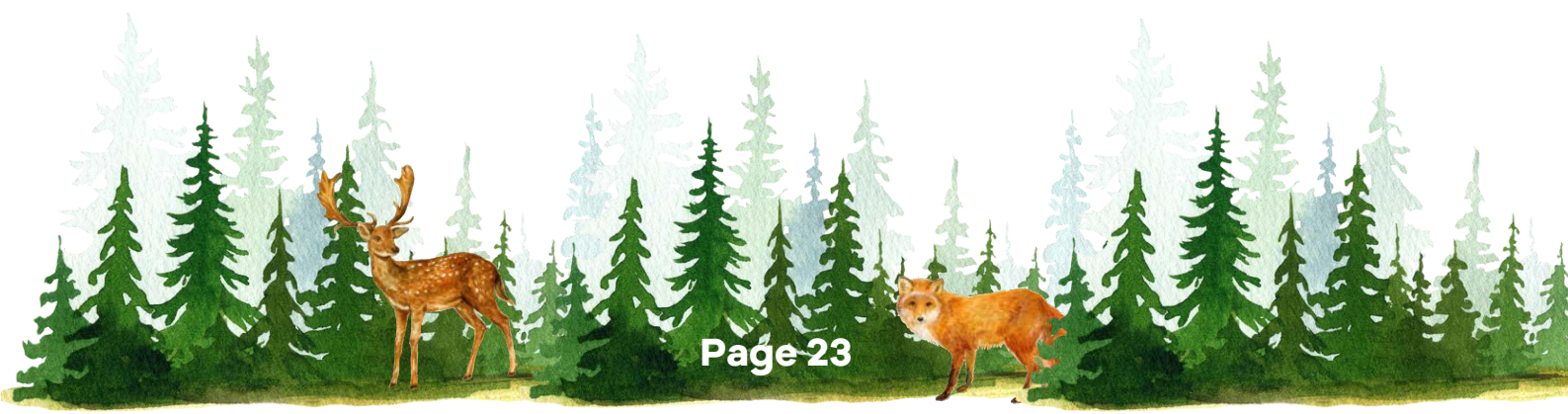
[The Scottish Outdoor Access Code](#) is all about your rights and responsibilities when you're making the most of Scotland's great outdoors. Whether it's your local green space or beyond, it's important that you #KnowTheCode.

Take a look at the [Woodland Trust website](#) to find woods near you with this helpful map, [discover an RSPB nature reserve](#) near you, or search for green spaces through [NatureScot's greenspace map](#).

Activities & Guides

[Urban Nature Youth Worker Toolkit](#): Want to engage young people with the nature on their doorsteps, but don't know how? Then this toolkit is for you. It details activities and ideas that you can use with young people to explore nature in cities. Designed so that no prior knowledge about nature is required, it has been developed By the Natural History Museum in collaboration with The Prince's Trust, Voyage Youth and other regional partners.

[The Explore: Urban Nature programme](#) is happening at a museum near you and there are lots of free opportunities for your students to participate.





Urban Green Spaces: Mapping & Scavenger Hunt

Go Find it Cards: The scavenger hunt game consists of 33 uniquely designed cards in a small drawstring bag which represent different sensations and sensory characteristics you can find outdoors in nature.

Geocaching: This is an outdoor recreational activity, in which participants use a Global Positioning System receiver or mobile device and other navigational techniques to hide and seek containers, called "geocaches" or "caches", at specific locations marked by coordinates all over the world.

Tree Tools for Schools: Here you will find lots of spotter sheets available. If you type 'scavenger' in the keyword search on their website, you'll find lots of seasonal examples too.

Get Inspired

Watch 'The Rooftop Revolution' for free via WaterBear. A new revolution is under way. It's set to transform the urban environment and tackle climate change from the top down — living green roofs. Where better to start than with a spectacular view.

Edible playgrounds: Check out some edible playground projects from Trees for Cities.

The Clyde Climate Forest: This will see 18 million trees planted in both urban and rural parts of Glasgow City Region over the next decade. Communities and young people can get involved by helping them identify opportunities for tree planting by finding sites.

Wee Forests: (part of the TinyForest global family) is a tennis court-sized, densely planted and fast growing, native species rich woodland in urban Scotland which combines the specific Tiny Forest planting method with long term citizen science. Young people can help to tackle the ecological and climate emergency by planting and looking after their own forest in their own neighbourhood. Find out where your local one is.





What is Climate Justice? Climate Privileges for Sale

Activity

This activity introduces young people to the concept of climate justice and allows them to explore and reflect on inequalities in relation to the climate emergency, while developing empathy. It has been inspired by the YouthLink Scotland [Action on Prejudice](#) training.

Purpose

- To understand the concept of climate justice.
- Investigate and consider which groups have limited access to privileges.
- Explore how climate change is affecting communities locally and globally.
- Develop empathy with communities feeling the worse effects of climate change.

Equipment

- [YouTube Video](#) of 'Climate Justice According to a Kid'
- List of privileges (one sheet per small group of young people)



Scotland's Young People's Forest Outcomes and Objectives

Equality and Accessibility: To create welcoming forested places that are inviting and accessible for everyone.

Young People: To enable and empower other young people to take action on issues of climate change and environmental concern.

National Youth Work Outcomes

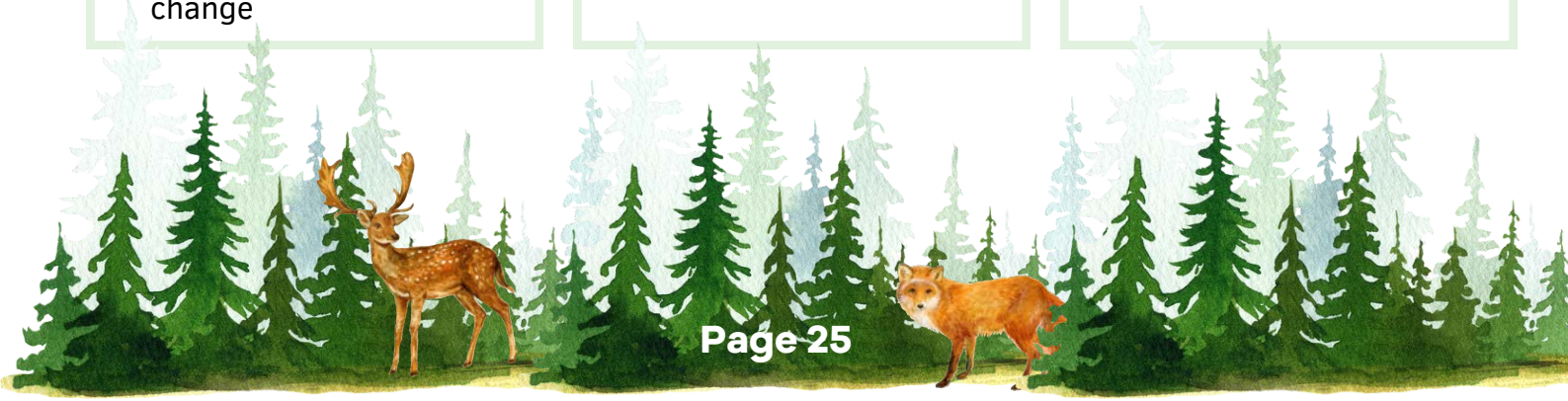
- Young people grow as active citizens, expressing their voice and enabling change

Skills Developed by Young Person

- Confidence
- Communication

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

All 17 SDGs are linked to climate justice





What is Climate Justice? Climate Privileges for Sale

- Young people broaden their perspectives through new experiences and thinking

- Decision making
- Teamwork
- Leadership
- Creating change



What does climate justice mean to you? (10 mins)

Give your group flip chart paper with 'Climate Justice' in the middle and ask them to write, draw or otherwise record their responses to what this phrase means to them.

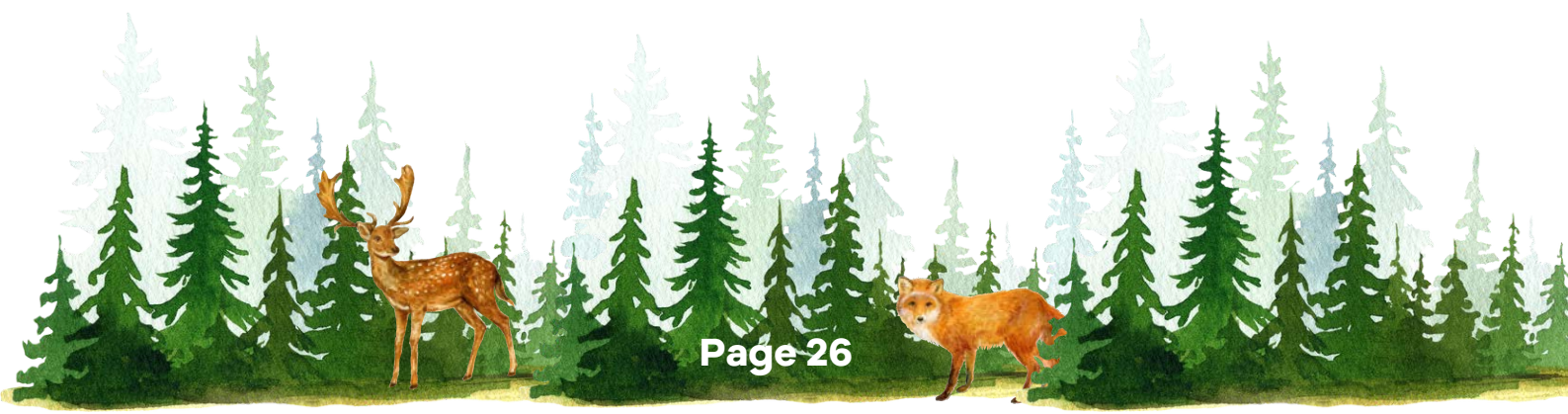
Watch (20 mins)

Play 'Climate Justice According to a Kid', where Climate Ready Schools explain through animation what climate justice is and highlight that we can't solve climate change without first understanding and tackling racial, social and intergenerational justice.

Have another discussion about what climate justice is and means to your group and use the facilitator notes to support their understanding. The group should add to the flip chart word cloud.

Prompt questions:

- Which groups of people in Scotland do you think would be most impacted the most by the effects of climate change?
- Thinking globally, which countries do you think might be more impacted by the effects of climate change?
- Who should be involved in making decisions and coming up with solutions?





What is Climate Justice? Climate Privileges for Sale

Climate Privileges for Sale (15 mins)

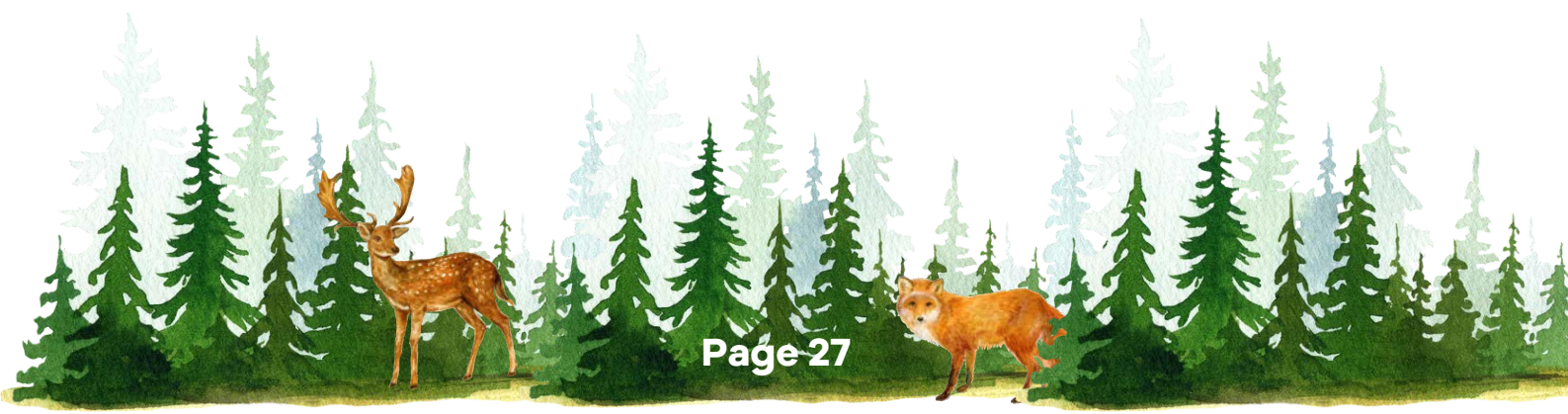
Split the group into small teams. Allocate an imaginary £30 to one group, £60 to another and £90 to the third group. Don't tell them how much money the other groups have.

Give them a handout with the following list of climate related privileges and tell them that each one is worth £10. Tell the teams, based on the amount of money they have, to go shopping and pick which privileges they would like to keep and which they will give up. The first group can only pick 3, the second group 6, and the third group can select 9.

- Clean, unpolluted air
- A home safe from rising sea levels and coastal erosion
- The ability to grow and buy any kind of food all year round
- Affordable, clean and plentiful fuel to power your lifestyle
- Access to clean running water
- A government who cares about and takes action for the climate
- Unpolluted seas and rivers
- Sustainable job opportunities
- Diverse and thriving native plants and animals
- Protected and accessible green spaces on your doorstep
- To be involved in and influence decisions about the environment that affect me
- Affordable, reliable and accessible public transport
- Climate emergency education taught at school as a subject
- Freedom to protest and publicly speak out against the climate emergency



Note: When we say 'privilege', we are talking about social privilege(s), or a special, unearned advantage or entitlement, used to one's own benefit or to the detriment of others. These groups can be advantaged based on social class, age, education level, disability, ethnic or racial category, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, and religion.





What is Climate Justice? Climate Privileges for Sale

Reflection (10 mins)

Ask the groups to tell the others which privileges they decided to 'buy' and why.

Prompt questions:

- What was the thought process of selecting your privileges?
- What themes did you notice on the list?
- Did your group find it challenging?
- Were there disagreements? What did you debate over and why?
- How did it feel to hear how much money the other groups had?
- Do you think this was a fair process? Why not?

Highlight the unfair distribution of wealth and emphasise that not all countries or groups of people have the same finances and/or opportunities and it is the countries and groups of people who contribute least to the climate emergency who will suffer the most from its effects (refer to facilitator notes).

Summarise discussions by coming back to the word cloud on your flip chart and ask the group if they would add or change anything to the definition after this activity.

Facilitators Notes

Climate change affects all of us, but not evenly. One of the most important aspects of climate justice is that those who contribute the least to the climate crisis suffer the brunt of it: communities in London living with high air pollution, coastal communities in the Western Isles of Scotland whose sea-defences are eroding faster than ever, and people living by the Niger Delta where rivers have been blackened by oil spillage from big companies. These communities are bearing the brunt of climate breakdown right now. And if we look across the world, all too often this means the poorest people and communities of colour.

There is no single definition of climate justice, but below are a handful you might want to consider with your youth groups:





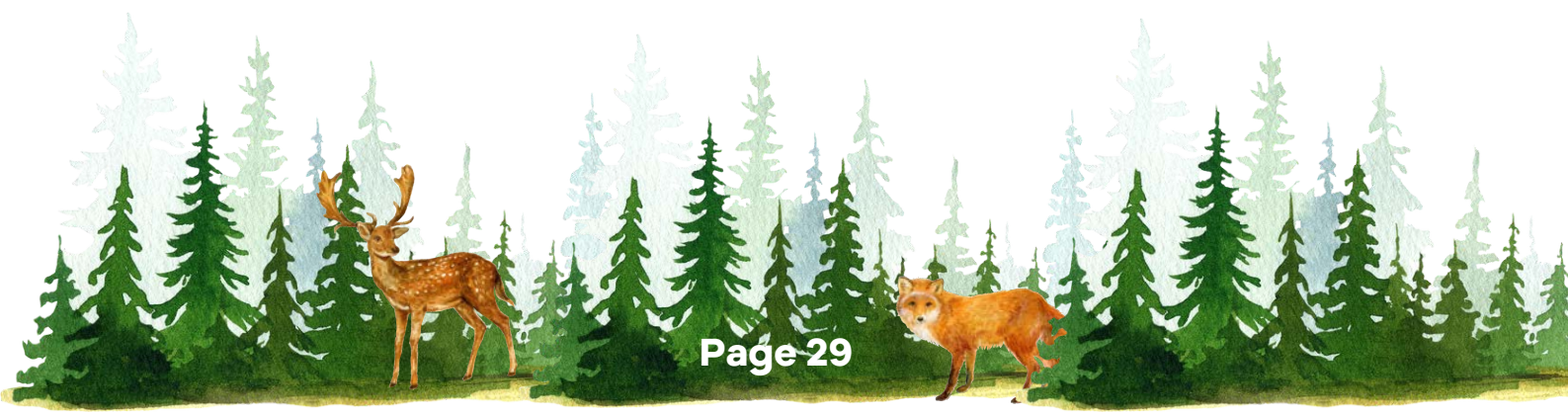
What is Climate Justice? Climate Privileges for Sale

Scottish Government: In 2012, the Scottish Government was one of the first countries in the world to set up a 'Climate Justice Fund' to tackle the effects of Climate Change. For the Scottish Government, climate justice is about recognising: 'that the poor and vulnerable at home and overseas are the first to be affected by Climate Change, and will suffer the worst, yet have done little or nothing to cause the problem. The negative impacts of Climate Change are felt the most by those who are already vulnerable because of geography, poverty, gender, age, indigenous or minority status and disability.'

Mary Robinson Foundation: 'Climate justice links human rights and development to achieve a human-centred approach, safeguarding the rights of the most vulnerable people and sharing the burdens and benefits of Climate Change and its impacts equitably and fairly. Climate justice is informed by science, responds to science and acknowledges the need for equitable stewardship of the world's resources.'

David Lammy MP: 'Those countries that have contributed least to the climate breakdown, mainly in the global south, will suffer the most from floods, droughts, and rising temperatures. This is a pattern of suffering with a long history. The exploitation of our planet's natural resources has always been tied to the exploitation of people of colour. The logic of colonisation was to extract valuable resources from our planet through force, paying no attention to its secondary effects. The climate crisis is in a way colonialism's natural conclusion...climate justice is linked to racial justice, social justice and intergenerational justice too.'

Make a strong case for groups who are most affected by the climate crisis having a voice in solutions and decision making. We need to counter the idea that the 'Global North' has all the solutions. This means steering clear of framing that suggests we intend to extract solutions from affected communities, or burden them with solving the problem. Talk about principles like 'we should all be able to participate in decisions that affect us', and that 'we have something important to learn from people with direct experience of climate change'.





What is Climate Justice? Climate Privileges for Sale

It is difficult to talk about systems because they are complex and abstract - metaphors can help us with this. Use metaphors related to design to show how the problems we face have been created by humans and to build the belief that they can be solved by humans. Join the dots between where we are now and the choices that people in power have made to get us here. This is especially important for talking about colonialism and capitalism; the idea that our economy was intentionally built on the extraction of wealth from countries in Africa, South America and Asia to benefit the few. Our economy is designed to help corporations and the wealthy few make huge profits from fuels that cause climate breakdown, pollute our air and damage our communities. Stress that it's the system that is wrong and can be changed, rather than human nature which people see as more fixed.

By joining together, we can build solutions that work for everyone. The more we stand together, the more we build resources and power and the less we allow a small few to profit from exploitation.

Some of the prominent climate justice issues in Scotland include:

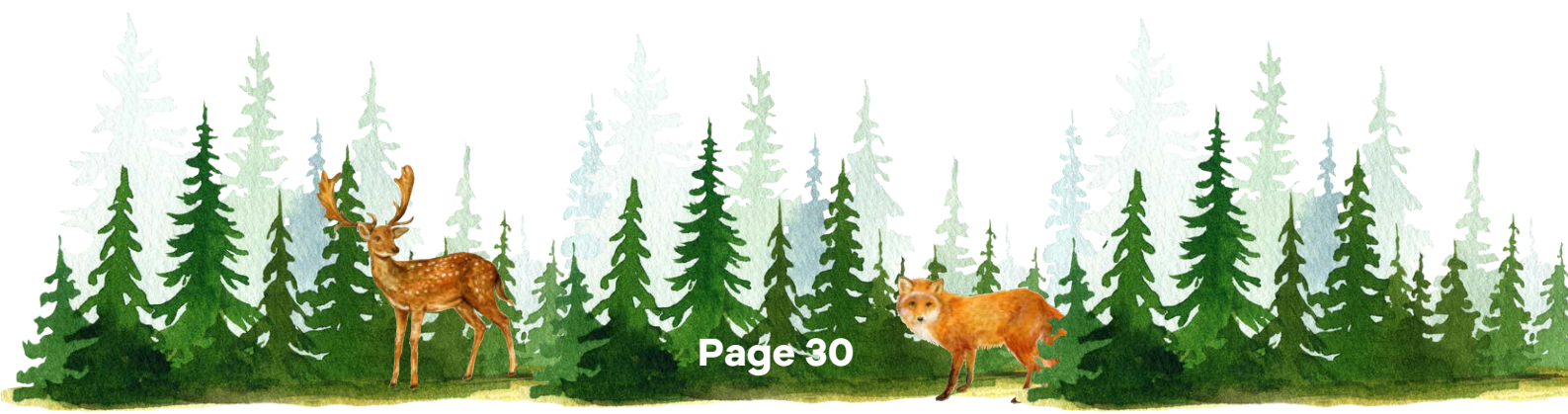
- Migration and climate refugees
- Urban-rural divides and remote or island communities
- A 'just transition' away from the North Sea oil industry

Additional Resources

Find out more

Climate in Colour: Sign up to interactive and insightful courses on different aspects of climate justice, including the colonial history of climate, and food sovereignty.

Introduction to Climate Justice and Equity: Learn how climate equity and justice can help the most vulnerable people address the effects of climate change through this four week course from the University of Glasgow.





What is Climate Justice? Climate Privileges for Sale

The Ethnic Minority Environmental Network: They provide a platform for organisations and individuals willing to engage in mainstream environmental decision-making in Scotland, representing the voice of the EM sector. **CEMVO Scotland** supports the building of the Network's capacity and leadership in order to successfully engage with discussions and developments concerning a sustainable future and promoting more inclusive policy processes.

Friends of the Earth Scotland: Learn more about Climate Justice on this website.

The Mary Robinson Foundation - Climate Justice: This is a centre for thought leadership, education and advocacy on the struggle to secure global justice for those people vulnerable to the impacts of climate change who are usually forgotten – the poor, the disempowered and the marginalised across the world.

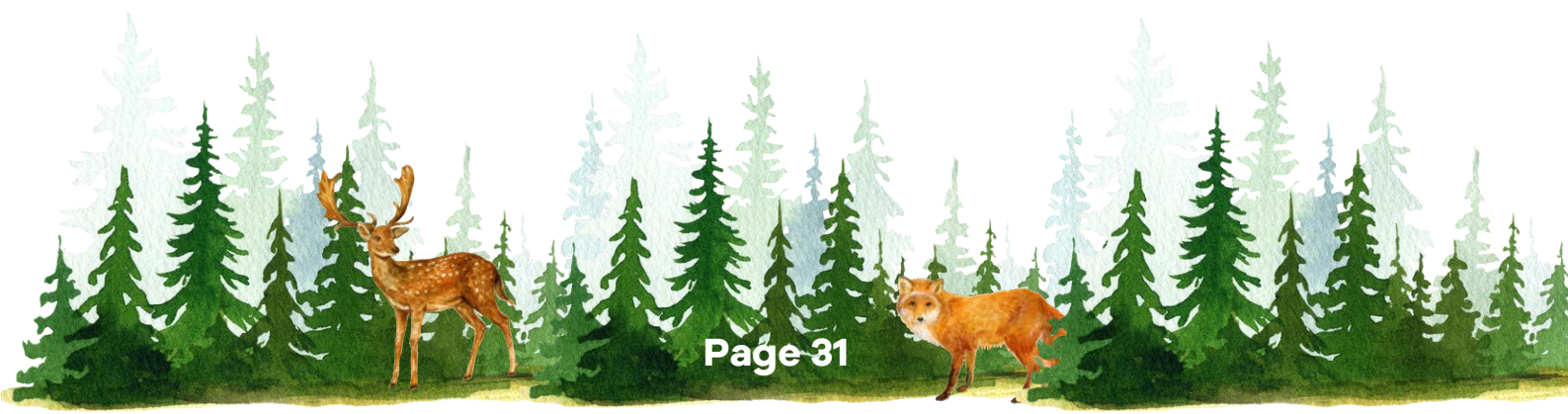
The Climate Just website: Developed by the University of Manchester, the Environment Agency and Climate UK provides excellent resources, including an interactive map tool that provides the very latest information on flood risk vulnerability. The map tool provides analysis of hotspots of future social flood risk under different climate change scenarios for the first time and includes new Scottish data and maps.

Energy Action Scotland: This is an organisation focused on addressing fuel poverty in Scotland.

The Poverty Alliance: This is a network of Scottish organisations and individuals working together to end poverty.

The Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation: This maps areas of poverty across Scotland according to a variety of parameters.

Environmental Rights Centre for Scotland: Their purpose is to increase the capacity and opportunity of individuals, community groups and organisations to promote environmental justice at neighbourhood, local authority and national levels.





What is Climate Justice? Climate Privileges for Sale

Activities & Guides

Exploring Climate Justice, a Human Rights Based Approach: This social studies resource looks at the climate emergency through a human rights lens.

Climate Change, Climate Justice: This resource aims to support youth organisations as they explore the issue of climate change from a global justice perspective. It details the impact of climate change on our planet, the inequality of its consequences on people and why this is unjust.

Toolkit for Intersectional Movement Building: This toolkit brings together intersectionality and climate justice with a series of practical tips, workshops and more.

Climate Justice, a Messaging Guide: Ideas and tips on how to talk about climate justice in an accessible way.

WECAN International: Access reports and toolkits from WECAN International, a solutions-based organisation established to engage women worldwide in policy advocacy, on-the-ground projects, trainings, and movement building for global climate justice.

Global Youth Work, Activities for Global Citizenship: This resource provides youth workers with access to activities focused on global citizenship, encouraging young people to engage in global sustainable development and social justice.

Get Inspired

SHE Changes Climate: This short documentary can be watched for free via WaterBear, which gives voice to those female leaders left absent from global climate negotiations and explores the actions necessary to drive a better future for all.

What is Climate Justice? Training Workshop for the Youth Work Sector: Hear from expert speakers and be introduced to the concept of 'climate justice'. Reflect on inequalities and human rights in relation to the climate emergency and explore how you can support young people you work with to understand and engage with this topic.





What is Climate Justice? Climate Privileges for Sale

Webinar - Interactive discussion on children's access to climate justice: The Child Rights International Network and the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child held an online interactive side event to COP26 on children's access to climate justice.

Climate Justice Webinar: Hosted as part of Climate Week Scotland 2018, this webinar focused on the hot issues of climate justice and adaptation in Scotland with a panel of knowledgeable speakers including:

- Michael Mikulewicz, Researcher, Centre for Climate Justice, Glasgow Caledonian University – will be the moderator for the webinar
- Katharine Knox, Director Katharine Knox Consulting
- Kit England, Climate Ready Clyde Project Manager at Sniffer





Forest Bathing

Activity

The Japanese practice of forest bathing is a process of relaxation; a simple method of being calm and quiet amongst the trees, observing nature around you whilst breathing deeply. This can help both adults and young people de-stress and boost health and wellbeing while connecting with nature. This activity has been adapted from the [Forestry England Forest Bathing resource](#).

Purpose

For young people to relax, be mindful, slow down and connect with a sensory forest-based experience.

Equipment

Just yourself and a calming green space.



Length of
Activity:
Flexible

Scotland's Young People's Forest Outcomes and Objectives

Health and Wellbeing: To create outdoor spaces for people to reconnect with nature: places to enjoy for their own health and wellbeing or to share with others.

National Youth Work Outcomes

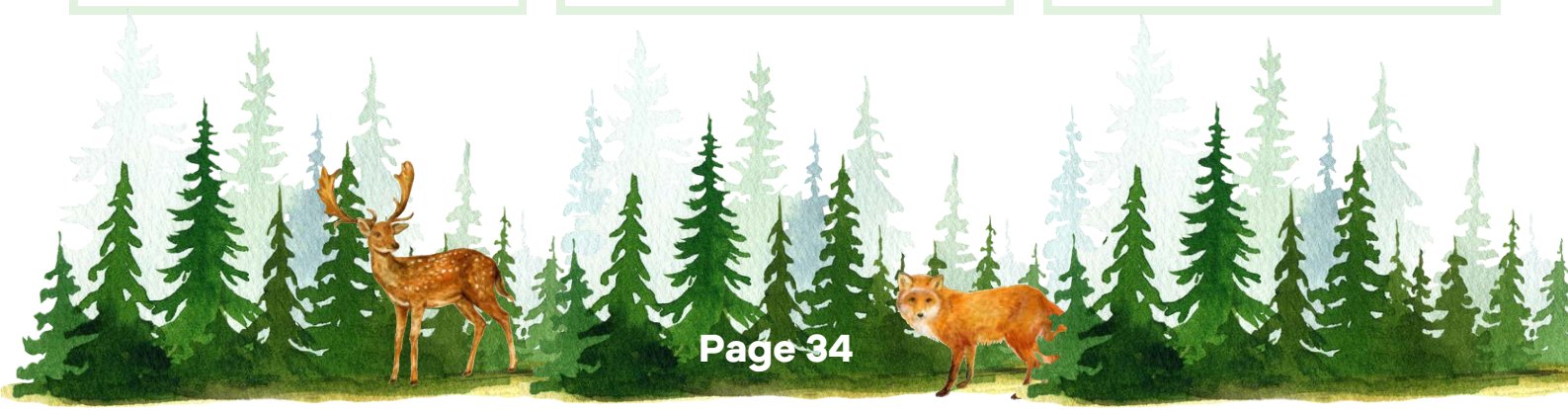
- Young people build their health and wellbeing
- Young people broaden their perspectives through new experiences and thinking

Skills Developed by Young Person

- Resilience
- Looking after myself

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

- SDG3: Good Health and Wellbeing
- SDG15: Life on Land





Forest Bathing

Tips to consider

- Encourage the group to turn off your devices to give them the best chance of relaxing, being mindful and enjoying a sensory forest-based experience.
- Slow down. Move through the forest slowly so you can see and feel more.
- Take long breaths deep into the abdomen. Extending the exhalation of air to twice the length of the inhalation sends a message to the body that it can.
- Stop, stand or sit, even lie down if you like, and engage all of your senses. Let nature enter through your ears, eyes, nose, mouth, hands and feet.
- Take in your surroundings using all of your senses. Be observant, look at nature's small details.
- Sit quietly using mindful observation; try to avoid thinking about your to-do list or issues related to daily life. You might be surprised by the number of wild forest inhabitants you see using this process.
- Keep your eyes open. The colours of nature are soothing and studies have shown that people relax best while seeing greens and blues.
- Let your body be your guide. Listen to where it wants to take you. Follow your nose. And take your time. It doesn't matter if you don't get anywhere. You are not going anywhere. You are savoring the sounds, smells and sights of nature and letting the forest in.
- Try this: Stand next to a tree and close your eyes. Take a minute to run your hands along the trunk. What do you feel? Are there any sensations that are particularly noticeable?
- Stay as long as you can, start with a comfortable time limit and build up to the recommended two hours for a complete forest bathing experience.





Forest Bathing

Questions to reflect on

- What did you smell and hear?
- How did the forest environment make you feel?
- Were there particularly noticeable sensations?



Facilitators Notes

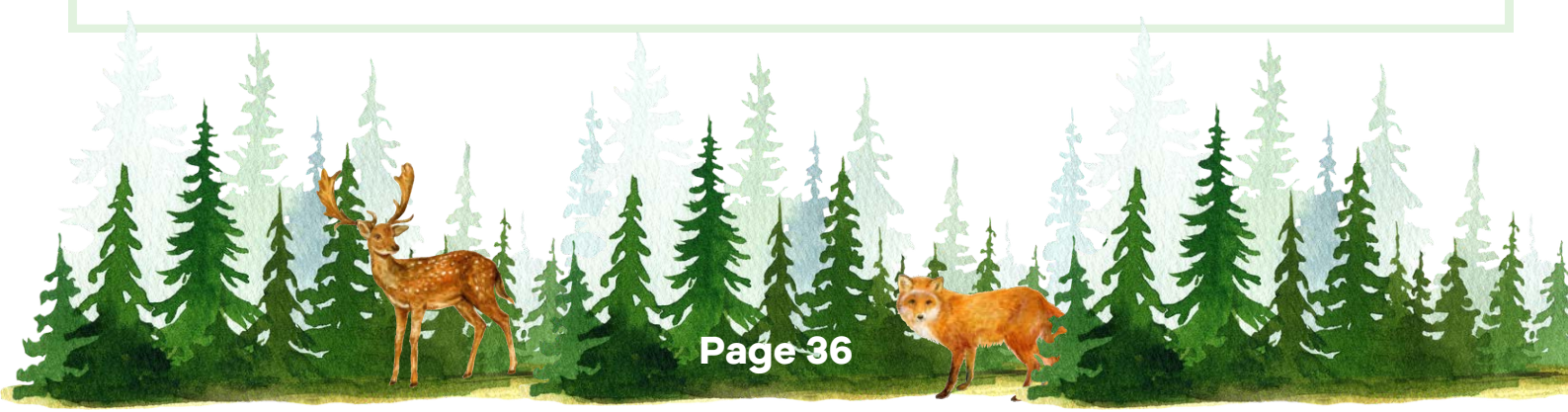
This Japanese practice is a process of relaxation, known in Japan as shinrin yoku. The simple method of being calm and quiet amongst the trees, observing nature around you whilst breathing deeply can help both adults and young people de-stress and boost health and wellbeing in a natural way. This is not exercise. It is simply being in nature, connecting with it through our senses of sight, hearing, taste, smell and touch. Shinrin-yoku is like a bridge. By opening our senses, it bridges the gap between us and the natural world.

We all know how good being in nature can make us feel. The sounds of the forest, the scent of the trees, the sunlight playing through the leaves, the fresh, clean air — these things give us a sense of comfort. They ease our stress and worry, help us to relax and to think more clearly. Being in nature can restore our mood, give us back our energy and vitality, refresh and rejuvenate us.

Forest bathing exercises can also be great fun and useful in teaching concentration and mindfulness; whilst also providing an excellent opportunity to learn from each other.

When you try mindfulness for the first time it can be helpful to pick a day when you have a bit of time to spare and aren't very busy or in a hurry. If you don't have much time then consistent short periods of mindfulness can be better than occasional long ones. It can help to commit to a regular time every day to practice.

Try to notice any emotions you are feeling or sensations in your body with curiosity and without judgement. In mindfulness this means paying attention to difficult feelings without judging yourself or trying to find a solution straight away; you are just accepting them as they are.





Forest Bathing

Accepting your difficult feelings doesn't mean putting up with bad situations – it means paying attention to your feelings and seeing if they pass or if there's something you can do to feel better.

We advise adult supervision while practicing forest bathing with children and young people. If difficult feelings do crop up then the [Mind website](#) offers a number of tips on how you can take care of yourself and your youth groups.

Additional Resources

Find out more

'Forest Bathing' Is Great for Your Health. Here's How to Do It: Read this article from Time about how to forest bathe and why it's good for your health.

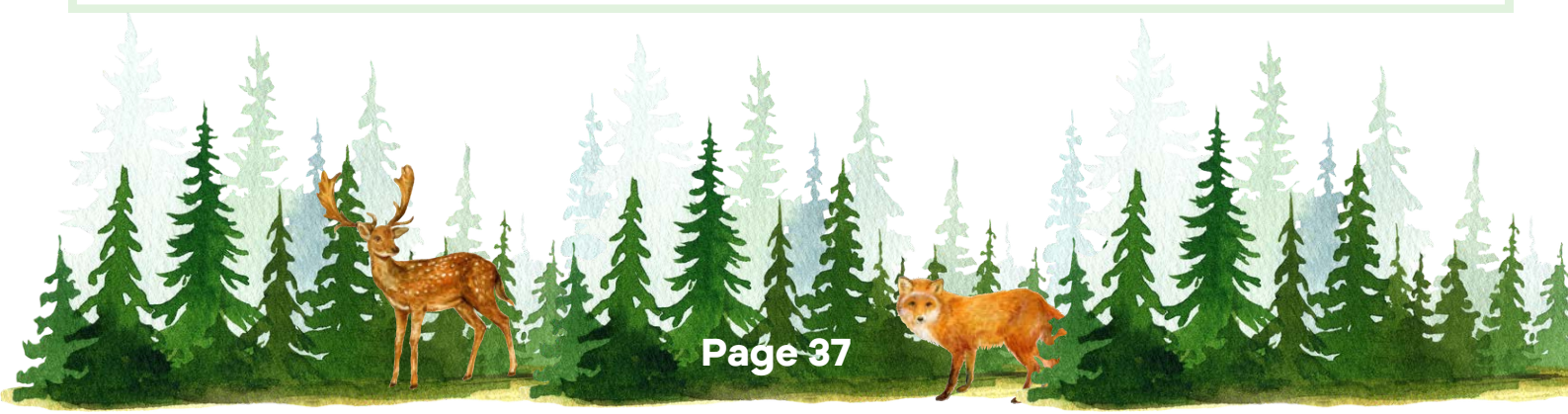
The Forest Bathing Institute (TFBI) sets out to advance the Japanese practice of Shinrin Yoku (Forest Bathing) in the UK, and started a programme of research dedicated to replicating the original physiological research carried out in Japan. You can read scientific research or access training via their website.

Take a look at the [Woodland Trust website](#) to find woods near you with this helpful map, [discover an RSPB nature reserve](#) near you, or search for green spaces through [NatureScot's greenspace map](#).

Activities & Guides

Virtual Forest Bathing: If you are unable to get out to the forest, be transported there with Forestry England's 360-degree forest bathing video playlist. Use the arrows to gently shift your gaze into the tree canopy, watch the branches sway, listen as the leaves rustle. Pause, breathe, imagine. Immerse yourself in woodland bliss.

Virtual Forest Gallery: If you're short on time, try taking five minutes out of your day to switch off, pop on some peaceful forest sounds, and enjoy the forest views from home with Forestry England's virtual gallery. When we can't get to the forest, we can still enjoy some of the health





Forest Bathing

and wellbeing benefits that forests bring. Research has shown that viewing an image of a forest scene on a screen causes changes in the body and brain that make us feel more relaxed.

Outdoor & Woodland Learning (OWL) Scotland have created a range of useful guides and learning resources about trees and forests.

10 ways to measure a tree: A range of ways to involve young people in estimating and measuring the height of trees.

Free trees: The Woodland Trust want to make sure everybody in the UK has the chance to plant a tree, so they're giving away hundreds of thousands of trees to schools and communities. It's a simple application where you can choose from between 15 and 420 trees each planting season and they deliver trees direct to the applicant.

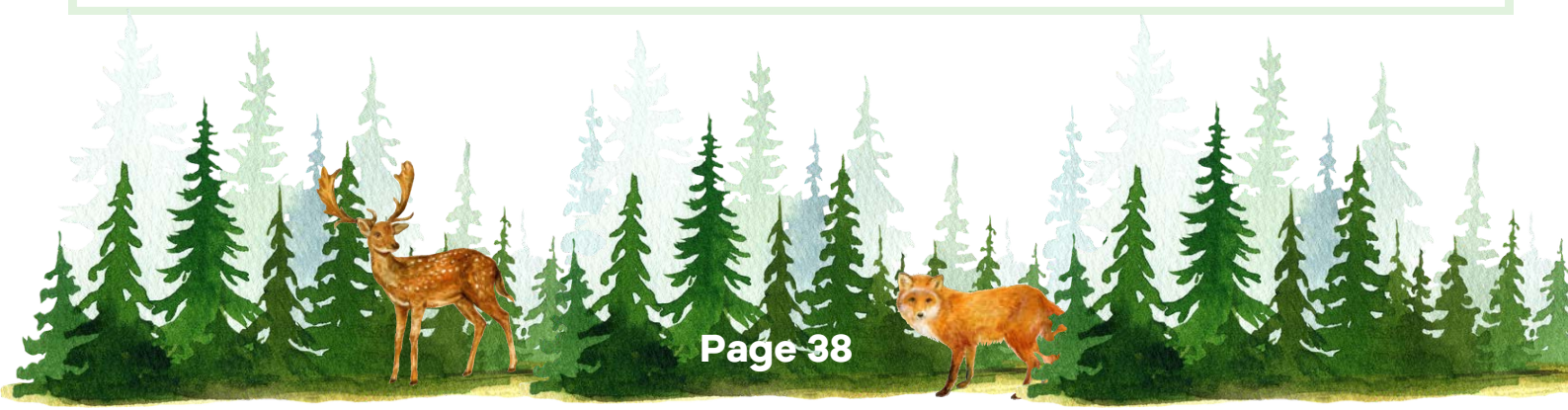
8 steps to achieving long term mindfulness with woods and trees: Forest bathing is a form of mindfulness. Here are some other woodland related ways to be mindful.

Get Inspired

Use Slow Ways to discover suggested walking routes between neighbouring cities, towns and villages.

Wee forests: A Wee Forest (part of the TinyForest global family) is a tennis court-sized, densely planted and fast growing, native species rich woodland in urban Scotland which combines the specific Tiny Forest planting method with long term citizen science. Young people can help to tackle the ecological and climate emergency by planting and looking after their own forest in their own neighbourhood. Find out where your local one is.

The Clyde Climate Forest will see 18 million trees planted in both urban and rural parts of Glasgow City Region over the next decade. Communities can get involved by helping them identify opportunities for tree planting by finding sites where trees can be planted. They're keen to involve local people in planting trees in neighbourhoods with low levels of tree cover, especially young people as they will gain most from seeing these trees grow and thrive in years to come.





Eco Distress: Self Reflective Letters

Activity

Climate Doom to Messy Hope: Climate Healing & Resilience A Practical Handbook for Climate Educators and Community is a useful handbook grounded in a commitment to fostering deeper understandings and connections to how we can support magnifying climate change impacts on individual and community mental health and wellbeing. The following activity is suggested within their resource and has been adapted for this toolkit.

Purpose

The goal of this activity is to give individuals a chance to check in with themselves to validate and acknowledge the complexity of climate and nature emergency emotions they might be experiencing at the time and what they wish, hope or desire to see in their future regarding the environment.

It can also offer a benchmark of where individuals are situated in their climate emotions at the beginning and end of a program or event. The letter can be reflected on after moving through and learning about climate-related content.



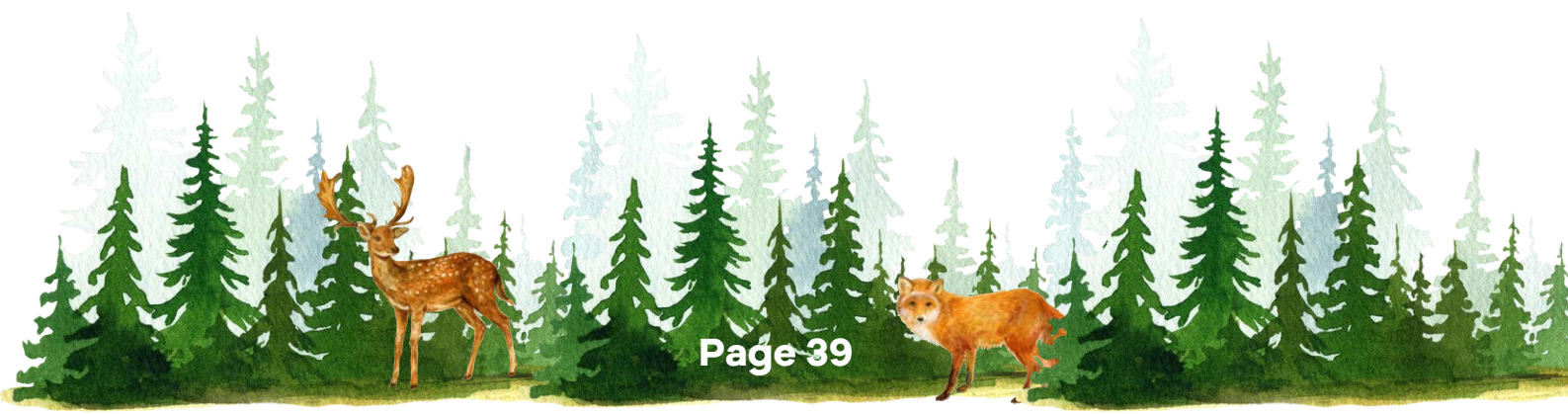
Equipment

- Paper
- Pens/pencils
- Envelopes (one per young person)

Scotland's Young People's Forest Outcomes and Objectives

Health and Wellbeing: To create outdoor spaces for people to reconnect with nature; places to enjoy for their own health and wellbeing or to share with others.

Young People: To enable and empower other young people to take action on issues of climate change and environmental concern.





Eco Distress: Self Reflective Letters

National Youth Work Outcomes

- Young people build their health and wellbeing
- Young people grow as active citizens, expressing their voice and enabling change

Skills Developed by Young Person

- Confidence
- Resilience
- Looking after myself
- Communication
- Creating change

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

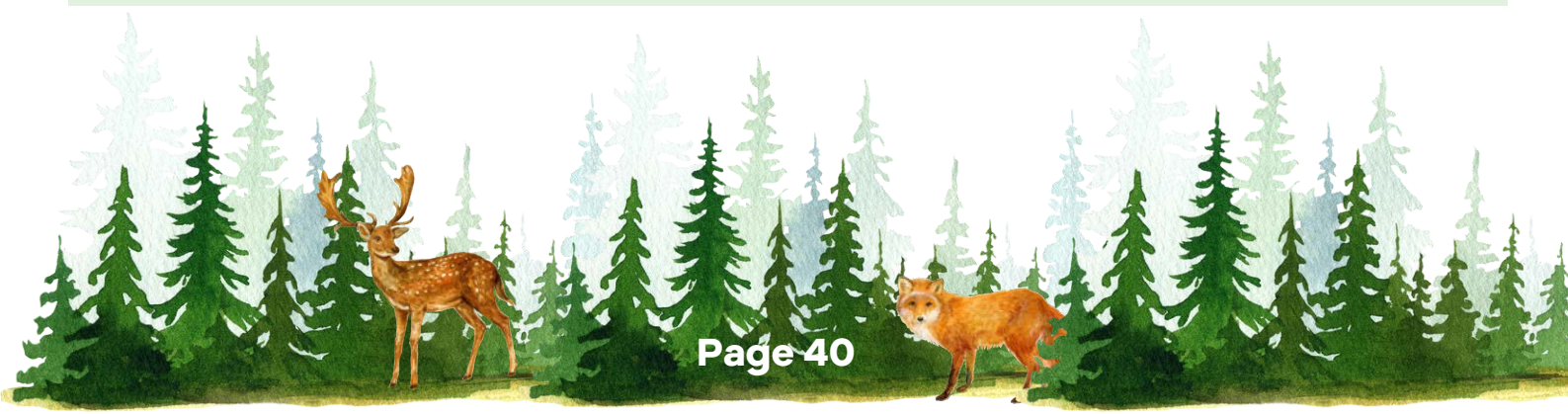
- SDG 3: Good Health and Wellbeing
- SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities
- SDG13: Climate Action
- SDG 14: Life Below Water
- SDG15: Life on Land

Options for ice breakers (10 mins)

- Ask the group to share one hopeful climate solution-focused news story they heard this week.
- Ask the group to draw on a post-it or use an emoji that best represents their current climate feeling. Do the same at the end of the session to see how/if their emotions have changed and why.
- Ask the group to share a tool they utilise to keep them feeling positive in the face of eco distress/anxiety.

Part 1 of letter writing (3 mins)

Ask the group to take 3 mins to write a candid stream of consciousness letter to themselves about how they feel about the climate emergency. There is no right or wrong for the letter. Just ask them to write about how the climate emergency makes them feel continuously for 3 mins.





Eco Distress: Self Reflective Letters

Part 2 of letter writing (3 mins)

Now ask them to take 3 mins to finish the letter by letting themselves dream of a climate future that feels joyful, nourishing, supportive and just.

- What does this future look like, feel like and function like?
- Encourage individuals to dream big and lean into radically reimagined hopeful futures.

Seal and collect letters (2 mins)

No one reads the letter except the person who wrote it.

Have individuals put letters in a sealed envelope addressed to themselves or with a number.

You will collect and keep the letters together to return at a later date to engage in reflection.

Options for follow-up immediately after letter writing (10 mins)

Follow up with round table prompts or small circle discussions. Remind the group this is a judgment-free space for listening and supportive community building.

- Was there anything you wrote that surprised you? Why or why not?
- Was there anything you wrote about that addressed solutions? If so, what was it? If not, why not?
- What was one difficult and one positive theme you identified in your letter?
 - A goal here might be to see if common themes arise across individuals.
 - Noting shared themes can reaffirm that though our lived experiences can differ in many ways due to how we all situate in relation to systems of racism, colonialism, power, gender, class, age, etc., there are some common lived experiences and feelings we can find a sense of solidarity in.





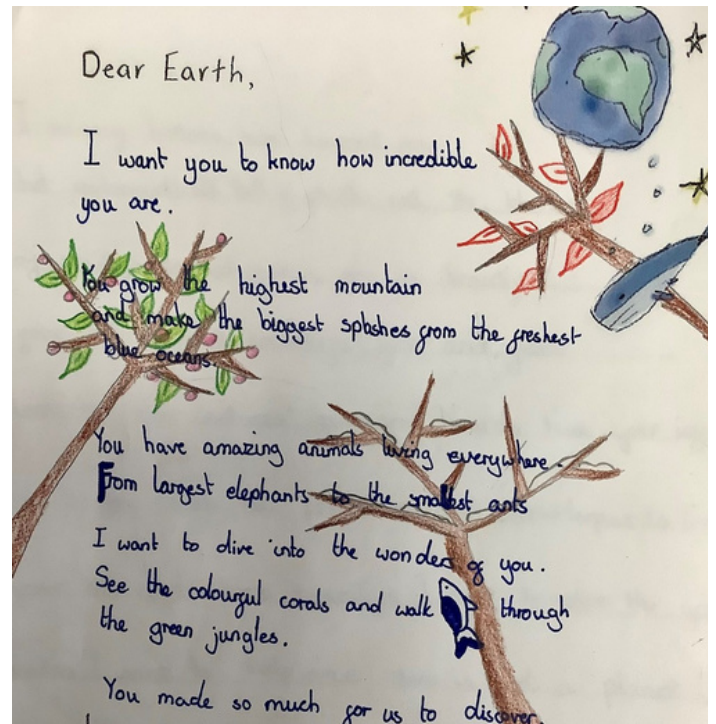
Eco Distress: Self Reflective Letters

Activity for when letter is returned (5 mins)

At the end of a wider climate related project you're working on, give young people 3-5 mins to re-read their letters. This is a good marker to measure over a longer period of time how a young person is feeling.

Offer discussion prompts to explore as one large group or smaller breakout groups.

The letter can be used to prompt reflection after learning about climate change related processes, issues or content.



Prompt questions (10 mins)

Given the letter they wrote themselves, ask them to take a moment to think about what they used to think or feel, and how they think or feel now. Has there been a shift?

Follow up questions:

- If so, what are those shifts in your thinking or feelings?
- What has contributed to a change in how you think or feel over this time?
- Would you write yourself a different letter now? What would you want to focus on if you had to write it again now?
- Is there a solution-based thinking approach you learned that helps to address one of the climate fears you identified?
- Would you add anything new to your climate future narrative? If so, what is it?





Eco Distress: Self Reflective Letters

Facilitators Notes

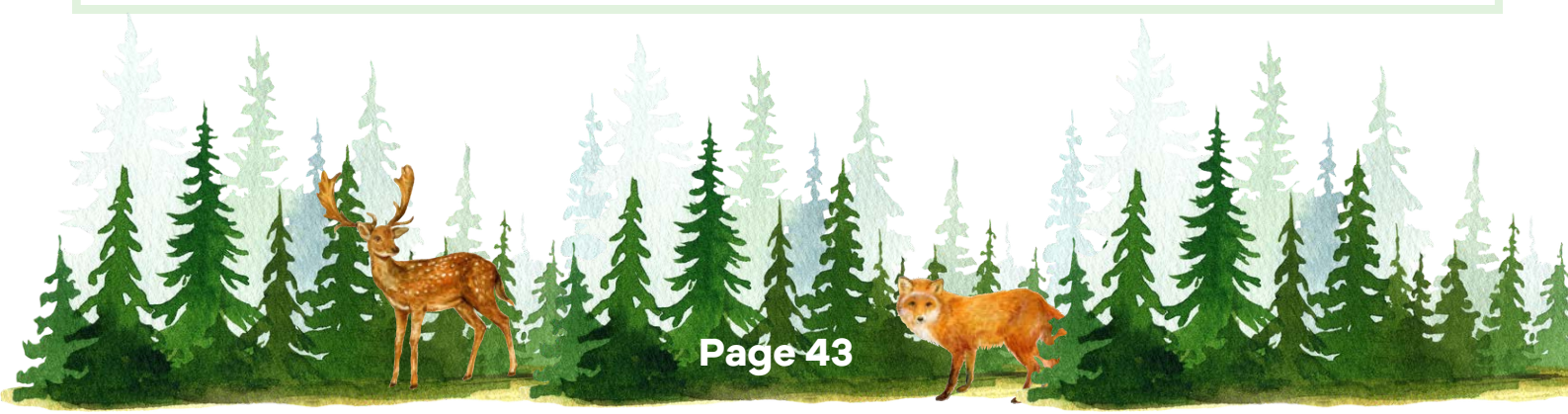
According to the Royal College of Psychiatrists, eco distress (often referred to as climate or eco anxiety) is a way of describing how young people feel when they hear bad news about our planet and the environment. This could include warmer temperatures, events like floods, fires or droughts or harm to animals and their natural habitats. With the sheer quantity of stark statistics related to the climate and nature emergencies in the news and on our social media feeds, and in the face of government inaction, it's not surprising that over two thirds of young people are reported as experiencing eco distress.

Young people might feel a range of emotions not limited to anxiety, but including fear, anger, detachment, sadness, pressure, uncertainty, guilt, or helplessness. It's important to acknowledge that these big emotions are a rational, healthy and normal response to a very real and frightening issue. However, it can feel difficult to provide reassurance about global issues such as the climate emergency, which is too big of a problem for one person to deal with on their own.

"Our emotional responses to climate change are healthy reactions to an unhealthy state of the world. It is not about pushing our emotions down but learning how to engage with them to feel empowered to take positive action and be in community rather than divided." - Dr Eshana Bragg, Director of The Joyality Project.

What youth work practitioners can do is recognise that eco distress isn't something that should be 'fixed', but something that we can learn to accept, manage and channel. The problem isn't that young people are experiencing these feelings, but the situation itself, and what to do with these feelings. Especially for young people, it's also important not to dismiss or downplay emotional responses to distressing climate related information.

There are lots of practical ways the youth work sector can support young people to navigate these complex emotions and some fantastic resources linked below to support conversations with youth groups, reflect on emotions and encourage optimism and hope. To get you started, below here are some suggestions from Young Friends of the Earth Scotland on how you can help your own youth groups.





Eco Distress: Self Reflective Letters

Common pitfalls

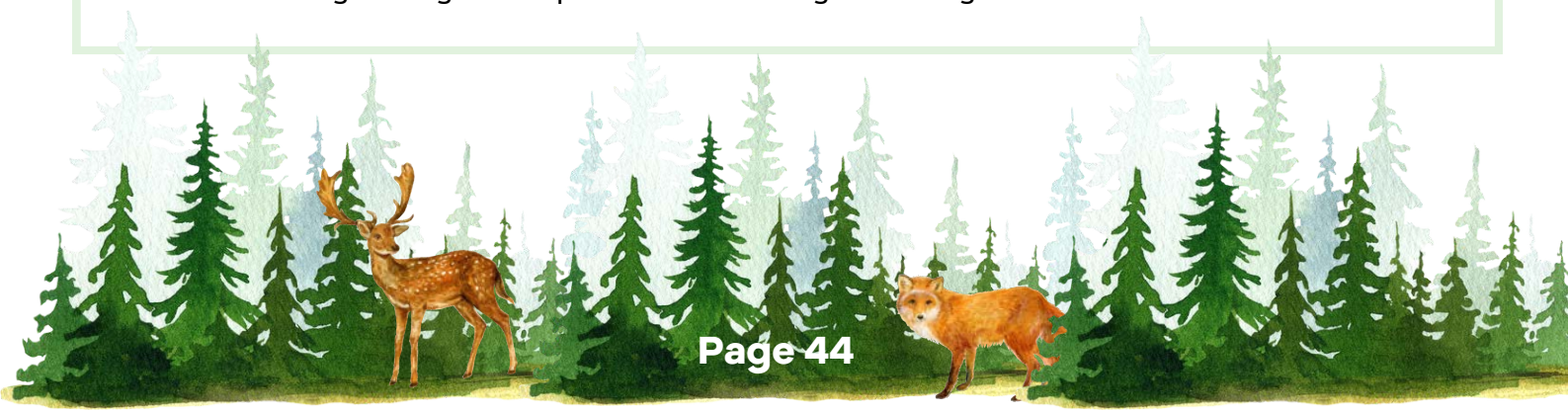
- Denial and being invalidating e.g. 'don't get so worked up', 'it's not that bad', 'what do you have to worry about, you're young, you don't know real problems'.
- Toxic positivity e.g. 'just turn your negative feelings into hope and action!'
- Individualising the problem e.g. 'the problem is just your internal feelings and how you manage them, focus entirely on emotional self-regulation'.
- 'It's up to youth to save the day' – it's not helpful to construct the narrative that young people as 'the future' are responsible for fixing or protecting the planet.

How can I help?

Connection and space to feel: This can include finding other likeminded people who feel similarly or care about the same things as you. You can support a young person to find a local group or community they can join, such as a network of Climate Action groups. Finding connection and not feeling alone can validate a young person's feelings, while providing them with the space to talk and feel. This can often happen organically, but by creating and holding these spaces requires care and thought to build safety and trust, and something that the youth work sector can help facilitate.

Learning: Supporting young people to educate themselves on the issue and to understand the problem can be very empowering. By highlighting that solving the climate emergency isn't on the shoulders of one person but is in fact a systemic issue can take the pressure off the individual and remove any feelings of guilt. Learning about the connections between the climate emergency and other social justice issues and finding out about what other individuals or groups are doing to take action can reassure young people.

Taking action: By doing something practical and making positive individual changes to their lives, finding a community or group to take action with can provide a focus and keeps things fun! It also provides a way to make a local and impactful improvement to their communities while channeling feelings of helplessness into tangible change and solutions.





Eco Distress: Self Reflective Letters

Knowing when to take a step back: It's important for young people to tune out when they need to and to understand that they can't do everything. It can often feel like nothing a young person can do is enough to tackle the enormity of the problem and they therefore channel all of their emotions into trying to do everything, joining every group and attending every meeting. This leaves no time for fun and can result in more stress, frustration and has a knock-on effect on work or school or their social lives. Giving young people permission to take a break and supporting them to do the silly and social things is just as important. Being part of a community or group who can support them in their activism can also give them that space to breathe.

Additional Resources

Find out more

The Climate Psychology Alliance are offering support to people who are affected by the ecological, biodiversity and climate crises, including psychotherapy sessions.

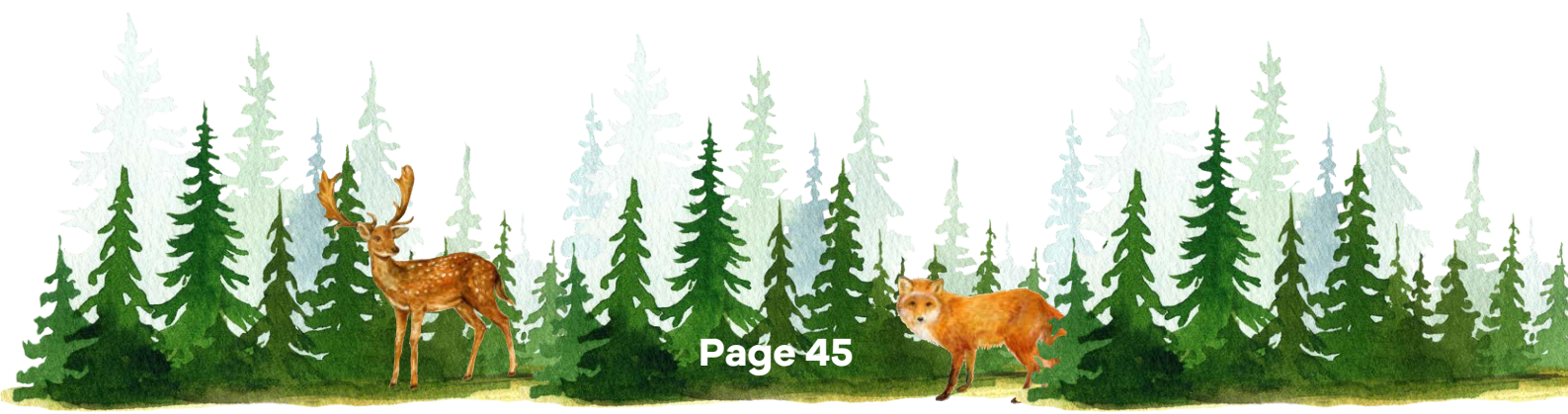
Force of Nature climate specific mental health list: This spans hotlines, non-profits, diagnostic tools and other resources devoted to addressing climate-specific mental health.

Climate Cafes: Support young people to attend or train to facilitate a Climate Cafe, a simple, hospitable, empathetic space where fears and uncertainties about our climate and ecological crisis can be safely expressed.

The Royal College of Psychiatrists: This webpage is aimed at young people to help with eco distress.

Activities & Guides

Force of Nature Discussion Guide: This supports practitioners to equip young people with the tools to take action, navigating strong feelings and foster resilience.





Eco Distress: Self Reflective Letters

Letters to the Earth want to hear visions, stories and messages for a better world. A world where our collective and planetary well-being is placed front and centre. Take a moment. Put pen to paper. And write.

Rest, recharge and resist capitalism: This Young Friend of the Earth Scotland resource is for you to return to whenever the young people you work with are feeling burnt out.

5 ways to connect to nature to help our wellbeing: WWF and the Mental Health Foundation have created a guide filled with tips and tools on how all of us can connect with nature, to help support good mental health.

21 resources to energise you into action: Greenpeace have collated some resources to motivate individuals when in the face of climate anxiety.

Get Inspired

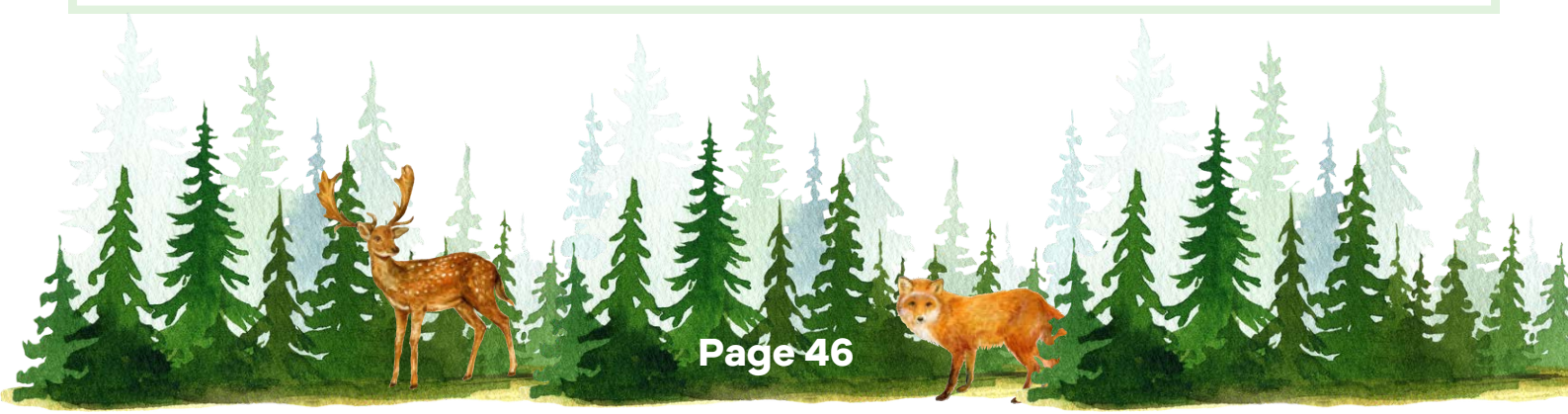
Nature Based Prescriptions: RSPB Scotland and Edinburgh and Lothians Health Foundation designed and delivered a Nature Prescriptions pilot project. Working with 5 GP practices in Edinburgh, the scheme involved the prescription of nature-connecting activities to help improve patients' health and wellbeing.

Eco Anxious Stories: Instead of getting stuck in a sense of powerlessness, support each other to transform eco-anxieties into meaningful action grounded in courage and compassion.

Climate Optimist: This website hosts inspiration to be hopeful for a net zero future, shining a light on solutions and gathering commitments of optimists from around the world.

Outrage and Optimism Podcast: This podcast explores the stories behind the headlines on climate change, talking to the change-makers turning challenges into opportunities.

Gen Dread Newsletter: Subscribe for tips on staying sane in the climate and wider ecological crisis.





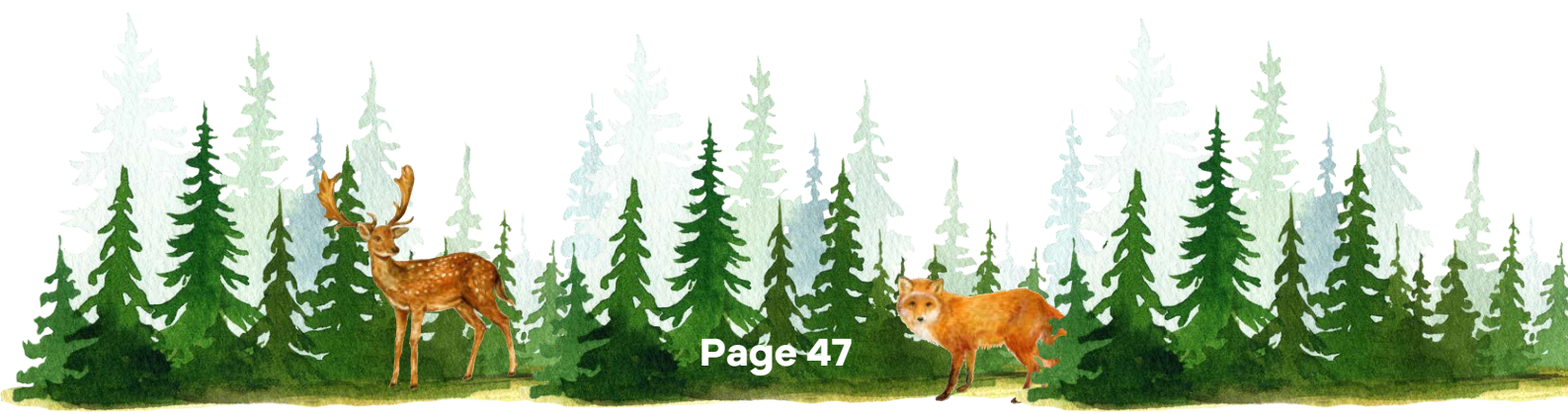
Eco Distress: Self Reflective Letters

How youth climate anxiety is linked to government inaction webinar: 75% of children and young people feel the future is frightening. Watch this panel discussion on a groundbreaking new study about climate anxiety.

Eco anxiety - supporting young people to navigate the climate crisis webinar: Hosted by YouthLink Scotland, this webinar looks at what eco anxiety is and how the youth work sector can support young people to manage the emotional toll that climate change has on their mental health. Guest speakers from the Climate Psychology Alliance, Young Friends of the Earth Scotland and U-Evolve highlight how the sector can empower young people to build resilience, and turn feelings of overwhelm into hope and positive social action.

The only way to cope with all of this is to focus on what I can do, what I'm best at, and hope like hell that enough people, doing what they do best, can overcome. I have some very dark moments, but more than ever before, I feel wrapped in a blanket of collective determination.

Hope is a necessary emotion, but more than that, it must be our fundamental strategy to keep us going. Lose it, and we are lost.





Plant & Wildlife Safari

Activity

This activity is inspired by the [RSPB's plant safari resource](#), which supports young people to identify and name flowers, fungi, insects, trees and shrubs in their local areas, as well as hone their observation skills by taking time to look more closely at the natural world and feel connected to the environment.

Purpose

For young people to:

- Identify and name flowers, fungi, insects, trees and shrubs in their local areas.
- Hone their observation skills.
- Feel connected to their environment.

Equipment

- Hula hoop (or quadrant)
- Pencil/pen
- Notebook/paper for recording
- Identification guides. You may want to use one of the following identification resources from the RSPB and Woodland Trust:
 - [Flowering Plants](#)
 - [Trees and Shrubs](#)
 - [Mini beasts 1](#)
 - [Mini beasts 2](#)
 - [Twig ID](#)
 - [Leaf ID](#)



Scotland's Young People's Forest Outcomes and Objectives

Land Use: To manage and regenerate various areas of land as forest sanctuaries for native Scottish wildlife.

National Youth Work Outcomes

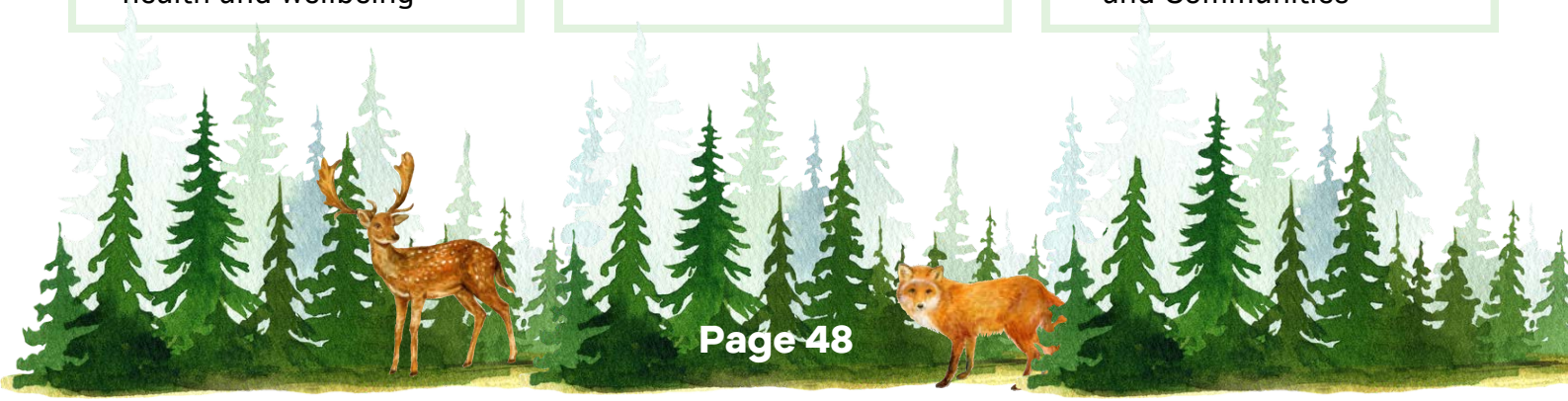
- Young people build their health and wellbeing

Skills Developed by Young Person

- Confidence

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

- SDG11: Sustainable Cities and Communities





Plant & Wildlife Safari

- Young people participate safely and effectively in groups and teams
- Young people consider risk, make reasoned decisions and take control
- Young people broaden their perspectives through new experiences and thinking

- Teamwork
- Leadership
- Creating change

- SDG13: Climate Action
- SDG14: Life Below Water
- SDG15: Life on Land



Set the scene (10 mins)

Before you start, ask the group to think about:

- What kind of species they expect to find? Why?
- What skills do you need to use to do this successfully?
- Where are the locations you think will be most and least diverse and why?

Go outside (30 mins)

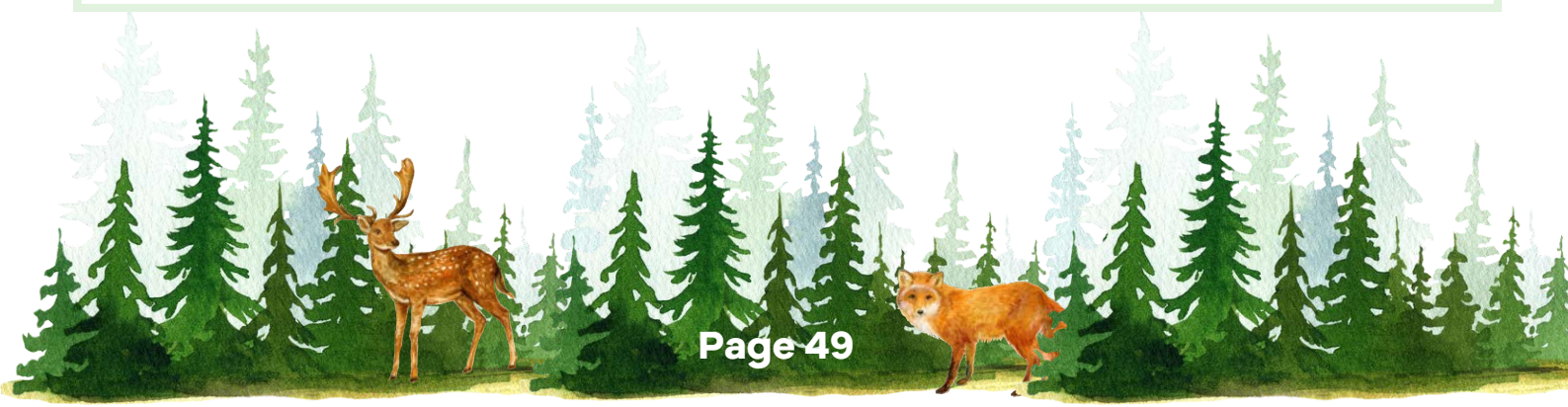
Place your quadrant or hula-hoop in the area you want to focus on, e.g. a field, hedgerow, flowerbed, under a tree, the beach, a playground.

Consider what is being recorded:

Have a look at what species are inside your quadrant, record them. Think about the habitat of the area you are looking at.

Prompt questions:

- What plants, fungi, insects, materials etc. have you found within it?





Plant & Wildlife Safari

- Can you identify them?
- Can you think of ways they might have adapted to that habitat?
- Can you think of how they might fit in a wider food-chain?
- Have you found anything that shouldn't be there?

Compare different areas (10 mins)

Move your hula-hoop or quadrant to a different area and compare the different plant species you have found, or compare with someone else who looked in a different area. Remember you need to compare areas of the same size. So, if you use a metre-square quadrant in your first area or a hula hoop, make sure you use the same measurement size for your next area.

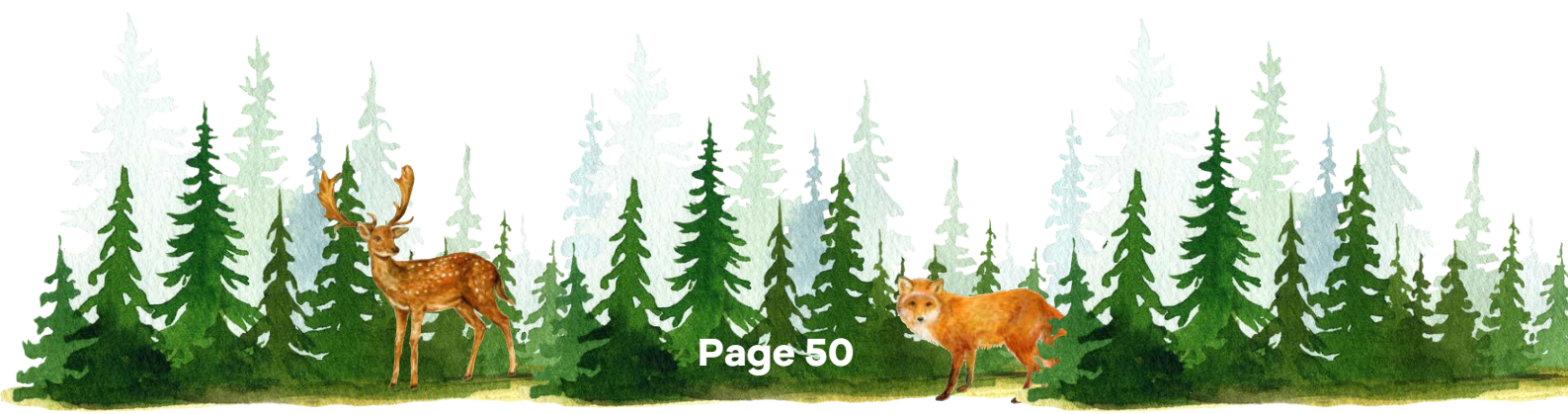
Reflection (10 mins)

Ask the group to take a photo, drawing, painting or create a piece of writing talking about their experience.

Facilitators Notes

Scotland is home to unique plants, internationally important populations of rare species, and globally significant habitats such as temperate rainforest, machair and peatlands. Evidence shows that Scotland is being negatively impacted by the twin biodiversity and climate change crises. Our plants are at risk. Only by conserving plants and sustainably managing their habitats can we protect all of biodiversity for the future.

Biological diversity – or biodiversity – is simply the variety of life. It includes all living things all around us: from eagles, to salmon, to the tiny ladybird. It is all life in our forests and mountains, our rivers and seas, our gardens and parks.





Plant & Wildlife Safari

Biodiversity supports our lives and is vital for our survival; it is our living bank balance and provides us with many of the things that sustain our lives. It is therefore essential for our health and well-being that we protect our biodiversity and the services that it provides.

By introducing young people to the idea of biodiversity on their doorstep, and recording what they find, youth work practitioners can support them to think more broadly about the wider biodiversity and climate crisis while building a connection with the environment in their local areas. Biological recording is the first part in the journey of an important piece of information. That information can give us vital understanding about different species in various locations. If we can see that a species has declined over time, we know that action needs to be considered to help conserve and protect it.

There are lots of things young people can do to help biodiversity while benefitting from getting out and enjoying our great outdoors. As well as recording plants and wildlife, your youth groups can also help to create wildlife habitats, or buy and grow biodiversity-friendly food by buying seasonally and locally or growing their own food.

Additional Resources

Find out more

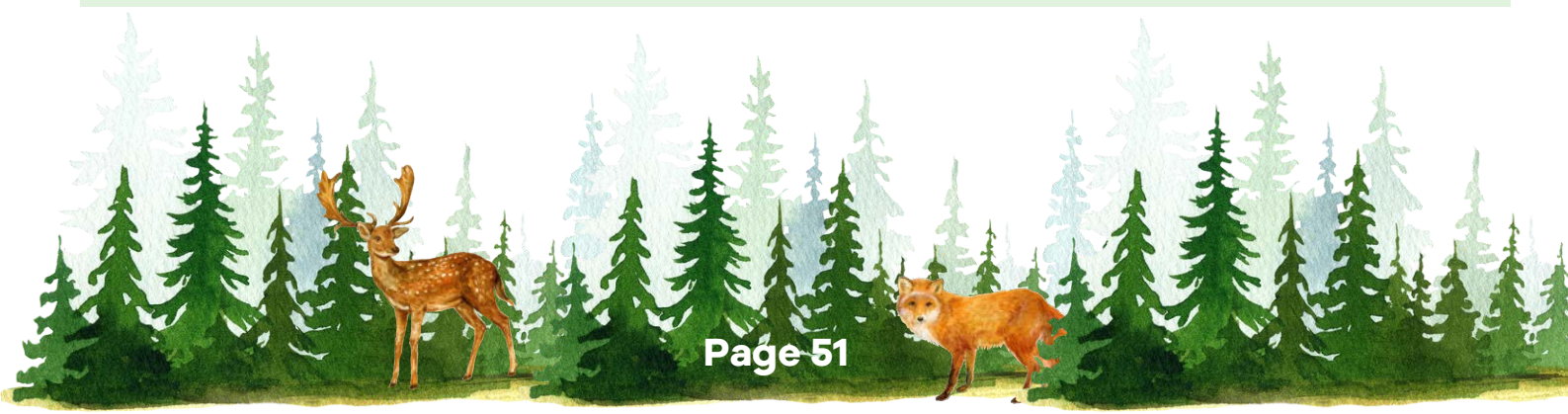
Take a look at the [Woodland Trust website](#) to find woods near you with this helpful map, [discover an RSPB nature reserve](#) near you, or search for green spaces through [NatureScot's greenspace map](#).

[Scottish Outdoor Access Code](#): Find out about your rights and responsibilities in the outdoors.

Activities & Guides

[How to identify winter trees quiz - twigs, buds and silhouettes](#)

[Autumn leaf identification quiz: can you identify these 10 trees?](#)





Green employability: what is a 'green job'?

Activity

This session plan allows young people to explore the concept of what a green job is, why they are important and how they can help to create a more sustainable society. This activity should inspire them to consider 'green' elements in their future careers and understand that there is a place for all abilities and interests within this sector.

Purpose

For young people to:

- Be able to define a green job – every job is a green job.
- Understand how green jobs can help the environment and why they are important.
- Be inspired and understand that there are a variety of green jobs for all levels of experience.

Equipment

- Sticky notes
- Pens/pencils
- Video of Emma from the Scotland's Young People's Forest Youth Leadership Panel
- Access to the My World of Work website



Scotland's Young People's Forest Outcomes and Objectives

Young People: To enable and empower other young people to take action on issues of climate change and environmental concern.

National Youth Work Outcomes

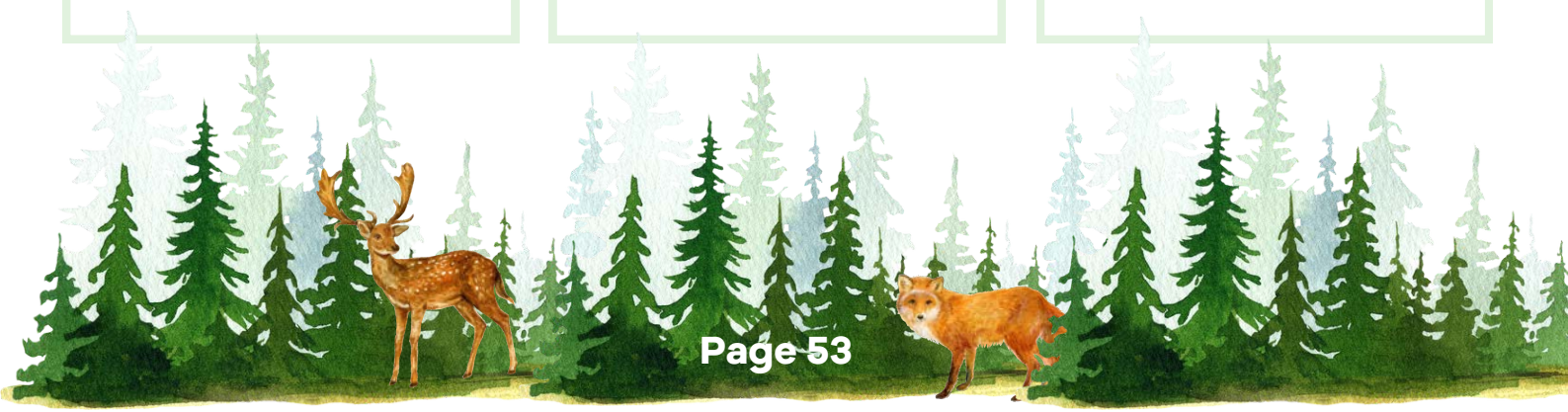
- Young people participate safely and effectively in groups and teams

Skills Developed by Young Person

- Confidence
- Communication

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

- SDG8: Decent Work and Economic Growth





Green employability: what is a 'green job'?

- Young people grow as active citizens, expressing their voice and enabling change
- Young people broaden their perspectives through new experiences and thinking

- Organising and planning
- Decision making
- Problem solving
- Teamwork
- Leadership
- Creating change

- SDG11: Sustainable Cities and Communities
- SDG12: Responsible consumption and production
- SDG13: Climate Action
- SDG15: Life on Land

Brainstorm with your group (20 mins)

Using sticky notes ask the group to brainstorm:

1. What is a green job?
2. When you hear the word 'green career' what jobs spring to mind?
3. What are some ways a 'green job' can help the environment?
4. What skills do you think are needed to enter a 'green career'?

Reflect on the answers and ensure the group have an understanding of the breadth of green employment (see facilitator notes) and give them a definition of this.

Hear from SYPF Panel Member Emma about her sustainable finance career (15 mins)

Watch this presentation from Emma who is a young person and youth leadership panel member on the Scotland's Young People's Forest (SYPF) project. She explains how she got into her role within the sustainable finance sector (not usually thought of as a stereotypically 'green' job), highlighting how every role can and should have green elements and how business can make an environmental impact.





Green employability: what is a 'green job'?

Reflect on this career profile video:

- Did anything surprise you?
- Is this the kind of role you might consider?

Discussion in pairs (15 mins)

1. What are your interests that you consider when thinking about future careers? E.g. your favourite subjects in school, or hobbies.
2. What values are important to you in any future job? E.g. making a difference, creativity, status, job security, and so on.
3. Which careers sound interesting to you and why? If your dream job isn't a green job, how can you make it greener?

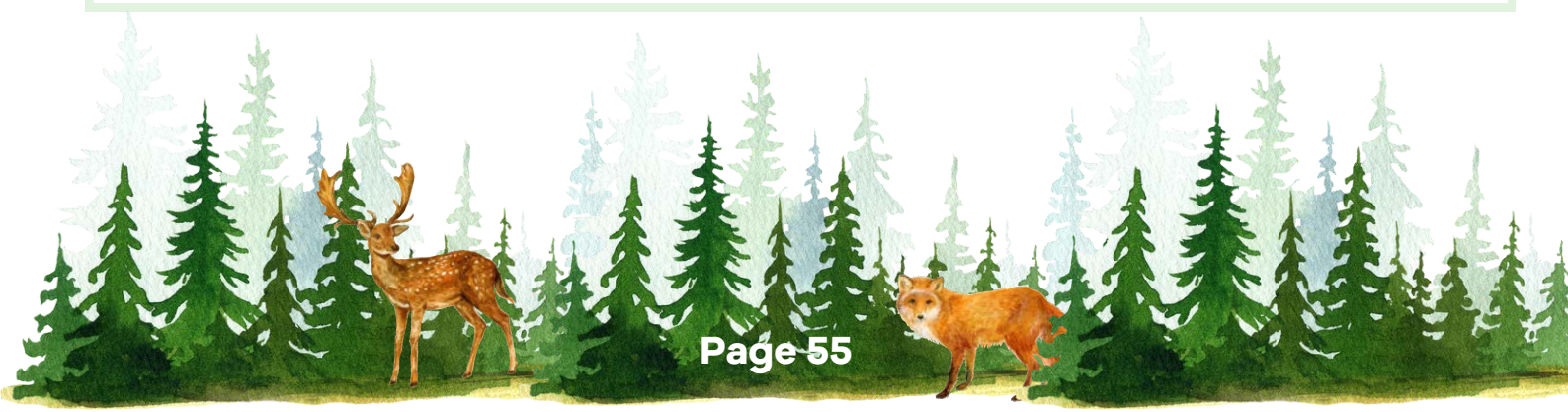
My World of Work (10 mins)

Explore the green careers section of the [My World of Work website](#) and take a look at some of the [job profiles and career options](#). Hopefully you can find a role that someone in your group is interested in and read about the qualifications needed, routes in and what the job is like.

Facilitators Notes

What do we mean by green employability?

Green jobs are defined by the International Labour Organisation as 'decent jobs that contribute to preserve or restore the environment'. This doesn't just mean jobs in conservation or renewable energy, although these are both vital; there are many other industries which contribute to environmental preservation in other ways. If we need all sectors to work towards net-zero and climate action, then it follows that all jobs can and should be green jobs. The 'Growing Green Careers' report makes the case for supporting more entry-level pathways into green jobs across sectors and embraces the idea that every job 'has to be a green job'.





Green employability: what is a 'green job'?

A just transition

A 'just transition' is the term that describes this need to move to 'a more sustainable economy in a way that's fair to everyone.' At the moment, lots of people's livelihoods are tied to polluting industries, such as oil and gas, aviation engineers, or factory workers making petrol and diesel vehicles. But if we want to tackle the effects of climate change, these polluting industries are going to have to change and shrink, impacting the lives of these communities and young people's future career choices. A just transition is about moving to a more environmentally sustainable economy without leaving these workers in polluting industries behind. Industries in transport, building and renewable energy, insulating homes and restoring nature and biodiversity are growing rapidly and with the right training and opportunities, workers in high polluting industries can play a part in them.

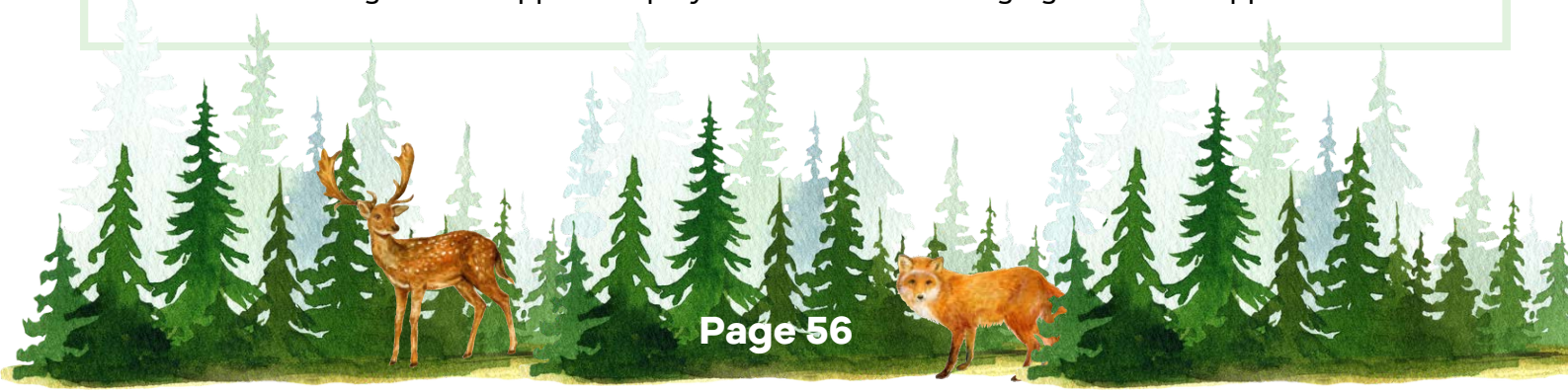
Published in December 2020, the Climate Emergency Skills Action Plan sets out the government's plan to maximise the transition to net-zero for Scotland, ensuring that Scotland's workforce has the skills required to make the transition to net-zero a just transition, fair and inclusive to all.

Youth workers can and should be a part of supporting this just transition, encouraging young people into sustainable, high-quality jobs, and supporting them to gain transferable skills.

The green economy

The COVID-19 pandemic unfolded against a backdrop of climate breakdown and has already cost tens of thousands of people their jobs in Scotland. Greater green job creation can generate thousands of good jobs across the country while setting us on the right path to meet our climate targets and deliver a just transition away from fossil fuels. Greenpeace has estimated that the UK government could help create 1.8 million jobs by investing in a green economic recovery.

Scotland's National Strategy for Economic Transformation recognises the critical importance of providing the current and future workforce with lifetime access to learning new skills, upskilling and retraining as part of plans to unlock Scotland's economic potential. The strategy sets out how public, private and third sector partnerships can work together to help make Scotland's workforce more agile and support employers to invest in emerging economic opportunities.





Green employability: what is a 'green job'?

Additional Resources

Find out more

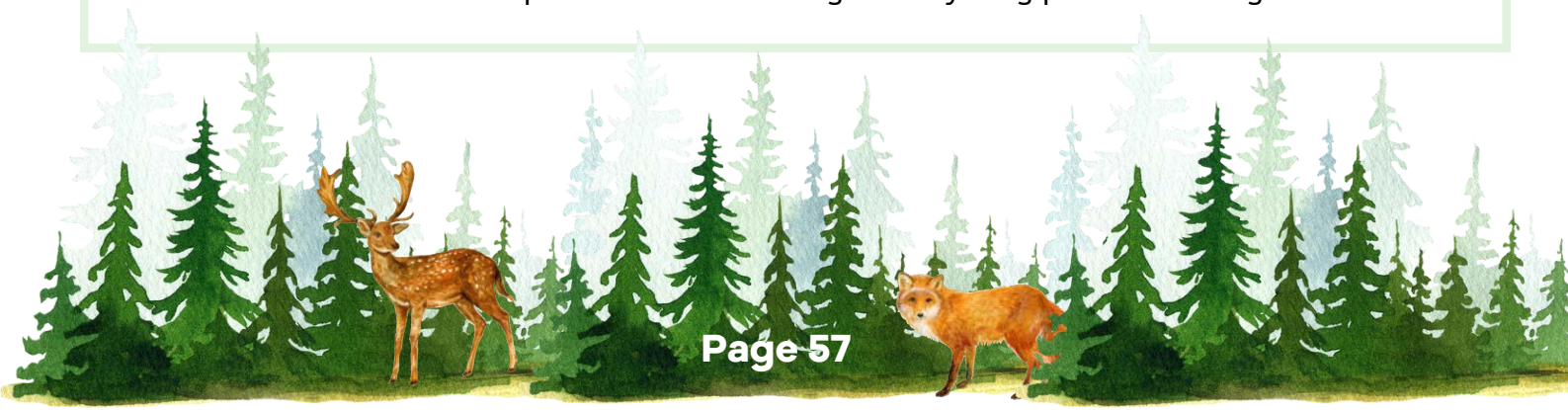
Green employability resource: This YouthLink Scotland resource looks at what a green job is, and what skills can young people develop to make them more employable in the climate sector.

Our Bright Future and YouthLink Scotland, Green Employability in the youth work sector, a Research Review: This research report is intended for audiences interested in the impact of involving young people in green employability, and how this could be improved going forward. It considers what the current green employability pathways, opportunities and barriers are for young people to access within Scotland's youth work sector. But also identifies potential areas for support and solutions that could enable and encourage more young people to access green jobs.

Developing the Young Workforce (DYW): Employers can provide inspirational opportunities for young people to help them understand and develop the skills they need to succeed. **My Climate Path** is a COP26 education legacy initiative for Scotland's young people created by Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) Glasgow, with DYW Lanarkshire and East Dunbartonshire and DYW West, supported by Glasgow Chamber of Commerce and funded by Scottish Government. Initiatives include **Climate Heroes**, where industry partners are paired with a school to showcase real-life circular and green examples, in addition to a range of community work experience, a youth climate council, activist courses and a sustainable fashion festival.

Green Jobs Workforce Academy: Delivered by Skills Development Scotland, this will help people take a greener approach to their careers, from accessing training and learning new skills, to finding a new green job. New roles are listed on the academy's website alongside information on the types of jobs emerging in sectors crucial to Scotland's transition to a net-zero economy, such as renewable energy, construction and transport. The Green Jobs Workforce Academy makes it easier for people from a broad range of backgrounds to consider how their skills and experience can be built upon to launch a green career.

Green Jobs for Nature: This campaign aims to make careers geared towards restoring and replenishing our natural environment more visible and achievable for all those thinking about their future work. Whether a potential career changer or a young person thinking about what





Green employability: what is a 'green job'?

their future job might look like, CIEEM want to make it much easier to find out about the kinds of roles that exist, what they do, and how to get them. The website will be full of information about types of roles and employers, education and training options, what employers are looking for, the good and the challenging bits about the industry, how to make your CV stand out and how issues such as equality, diversity and inclusion are being tackled.

CIEEM resources: This website hosts relevant resources to the youth work sector. Resources are aimed at those at school or university to help them to decide whether a career in ecology or environmental management is for them. It contains practical advice on the employers, the work, qualifications and qualities needed to get a job, combined with career profiles written by people already working in the sector. There is also guidance on What to Study, Apprenticeships and Work placed opportunities.

Lantra Scotland: This organisation can help young people get the training, qualifications and skills they need to succeed in the land-based, aquaculture and environmental sector. Through a network of approved training providers, they also offer Lantra certified training courses in a wide range of areas.

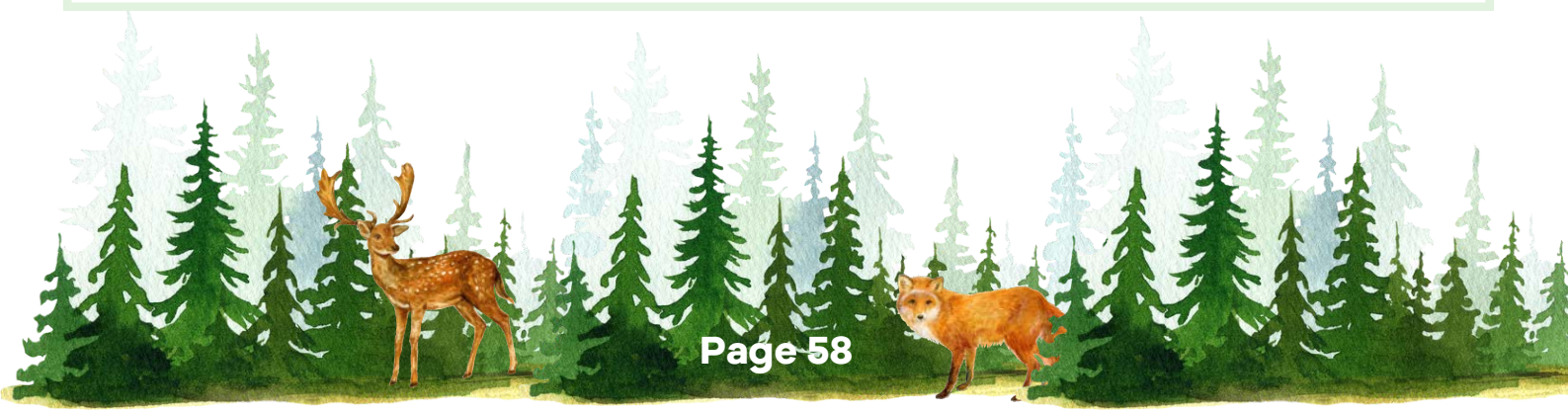
Industry Champions are all previous finalists from their learner of the year awards and act as positive role models for young people and influence issues affecting their own industry.

On the **My World of Work green careers page**, you can:

- Explore the different types of green jobs
- See examples of some subjects you can take if you're interested in a green career
- Discover things you may not have known about green careers
- Find different routes in how to get a career which protects and supports our environment
- See organisations that are making an impact on green careers

Activities & Guides

Climate Kick-start Green Careers: This resource has a selection of activities and lesson plans to support young people to create a 'green career profile'.





Green employability: what is a 'green job'?

Skills and Career Activity Booklet: These activities aimed at 14 – 24 year old's can be adapted to focus on green skills and consider the kind of experience young people might need.

Get Inspired

Meet Josie from Scotland's Young People's Forest Youth Leadership Panel: Josie is a tree nursery assistant and this is a day in the life of her job.

Skylar interviews Dr Lauren Smith, a marine biologist. Lauren founded her own marine research and conservation organisation, Saltwater Life, and shares her passion about sharks with Skylar.

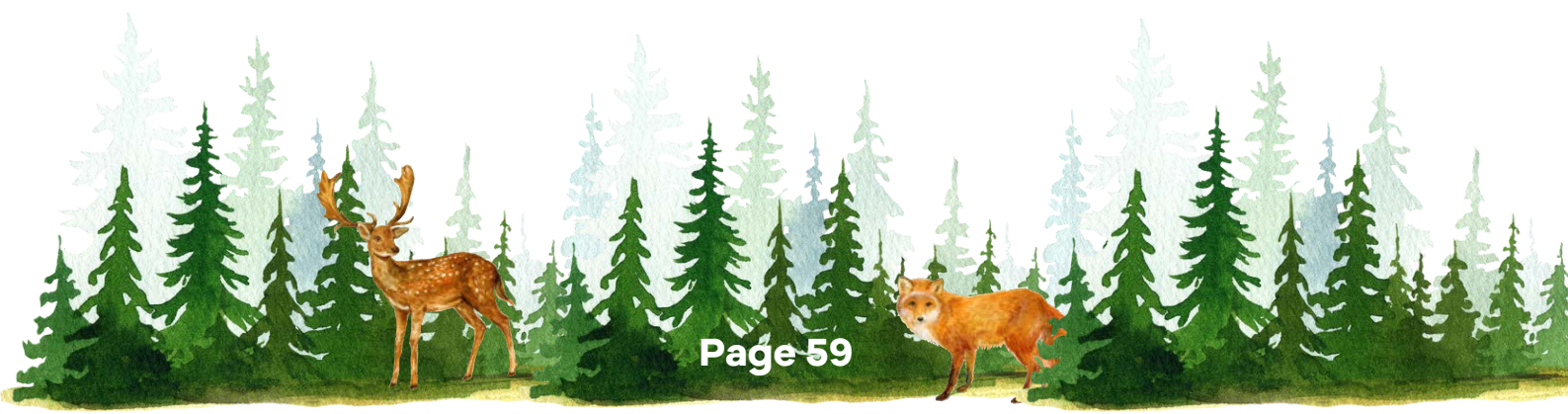
Skylar talks to Emily Burton, Conservation Officer with the Scottish Seabird Centre. Emily's route to her role involved four years of volunteering in the conservation sector, even taking her as far as Malta and Greece!

Skylar chats with Arina Russell, Public Affairs Manager for Scotland at the Woodland Trust. Arina's role is all about pushing for environmental change at the Scottish Government and Parliament level. She also shares her top job application tips and advice with Skylar.

Skylar chats to Cornell Hanxomphou, Climate Change Officer with CEMVO Scotland. Cornell talks about the journey into his current role coordinating the Ethnic Minority Environmental Network, which combines environmental and racial justice.

Green employability webinar: This recorded webinar takes a look at some of the different skills that are needed in green industries, featuring guest speakers who are young people working in climate-related jobs, as well as focusing on how youth workers can support young people to improve their green employability credentials.

Green jobs youth workshop: An insightful webinar to learn more about careers in the green sector. Young speakers talk about their experience of getting into the sector and share their top tips. You will hear from job experts offering useful advice on how to get your dream green role.





Place Based Learning: Journey Mapping

Activity

Inspired by the [Sensory Trust](#), this activity allows young people to explore their environment, collect natural items and map out their journey, to enhance their connection with their local green spaces and sense of place. The aim is to collect natural materials of specific categories and use them to remember and replot their routes. Replotting a journey is important as it cements the memory and gives a shared experience to relive and talk about, with physical items as prompts.

Purpose

For young people to:

- Enhance their connection with their local natural spaces.
- Instill a sense of place.
- To effectively talk about a shared experience or environment.

Equipment

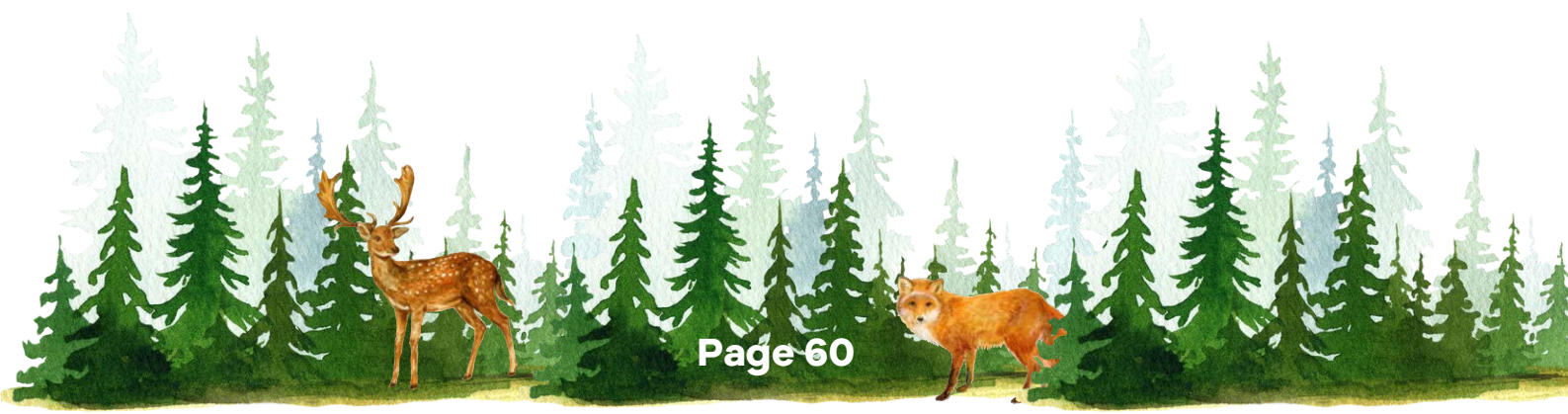
- 10 sealable freezer bags per pair of young person
- Something to tie them together with e.g. string
- Sticky labels to go on each freezer bag
- Large paper (A3)
- Coloured pens



Scotland's Young People's Forest Outcomes and Objectives

Health and Wellbeing: To create outdoor spaces for people to reconnect with nature: places to enjoy for their own health and wellbeing or to share with others.

Culture and Innovation: To create inspiring natural spaces for people to explore the connectedness of natural and cultural heritage through arts and technology both ancient and modern.





Place Based Learning: Journey Mapping

National Youth Work Outcomes

- Young people build their health and wellbeing
- Young people participate safely and effectively in groups and teams
- Young people consider risk, make reasoned decisions and take control
- Young people broaden their perspectives through new experiences and thinking

Skills Developed by Young Person

- Confidence
- Communication
- Organising and planning
- Decision making

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

- SDG11: Sustainable Cities and Communities
- SDG13: Climate Action
- SDG15: Life on Land



Prep

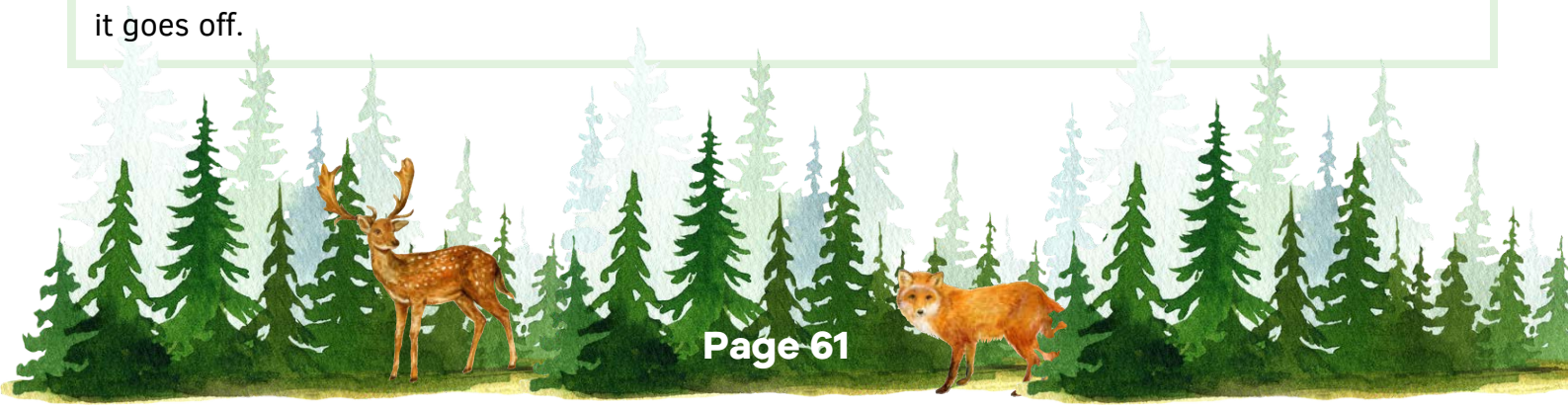
Hole punch the corners of the freezer bags and string sets of 10 together so they're connected and stacked on top of one another.

Label each bag with the following (or create some of your own categories with the group): start, end, colourful, smell, messy, 'ooh', collection (something that fits in the same category e.g. 3 of the same leaf), your choice, ??? (something intriguing), sound.

Go on your journey and get collecting (30 mins)

Once the bags are assembled and divided out into pairs, head outside. Move around the area or route you have chosen, stopping at certain points to pick up things that match the categories.

Your group can move at their own pace and choose places to stop or if you would like to make it a bit more random you can set the timer for any number of minutes and see where you are when it goes off.





Place Based Learning: Journey Mapping

Encourage the group to explore the environment with their senses – discover textures, smells and colours. Once the young people have found items and materials that are interesting and fit with the categories, they can put them in the freezer bags according to their labels (one item per bag).

Make sure the group know not to put any live animals or insects in the bag, and only collect things that have fallen on the ground e.g. do not pick flowers or remove leaves or twigs from plants. Make sure you follow the Scottish Outdoor Access Code.

Show and tell (5 mins)

After the journey, do a show and tell and ask the pairs to pick out their favourite items and share why they chose them.

Map the journey (10 mins)

Back inside, use a large piece of paper to map out the area you travelled. Once you have drawn the journey out together, get the pairs to add their items they collected and where. If it's easier, you can also use photos or drawings e.g. if the items are too large.

Prompt questions:

- Did you find anything that surprised you?
- Did the same things peak your interest?

Optional extras (15 mins)

If you want to expand this activity, you can get your group to:

- Research the items to find out their names
- Write a story using all of the items collected
- Draw the items collected or turn them into a sculpture
- Photograph instead of collect your items and create a collage of the images





Place Based Learning: Journey Mapping

Facilitators Notes

Be it an unloved grassy area, a woodland, a local authority park, or anything in between, taking learning into local greenspaces can foster a sense of place, cultural heritage, stewardship and encourage the wider community to engage and value their local green space too. Connection to nature and place can last a lifetime and be a foundation for pro-environmental behaviours, helping your youth groups become responsible citizens.

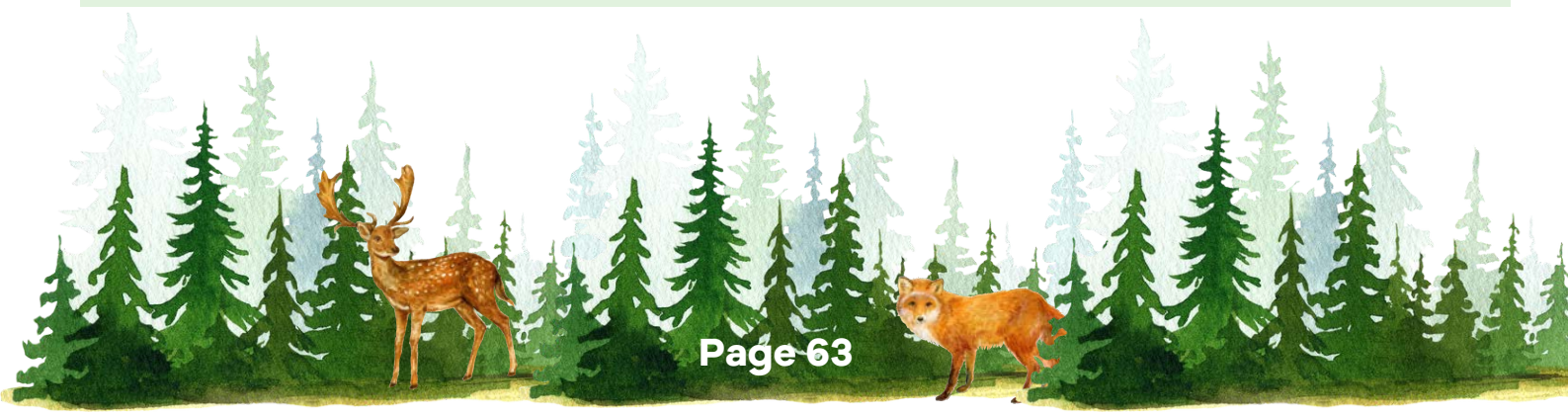
A green space is likely to be more diverse than a school grounds for example, offering a greater diversity of learning opportunities: opportunities to apply concepts in a real context; capitalise on seasonal and other changes; experience the unexpected; use natural items; foster creativity and imagination; and build resilience and independence. Learning in local greenspace is also more cost effective than hiring a bus to travel further afield and brings added benefits such as being more sustainable.

It can be easy particularly in an urban environment to think 'there is no greenspace within walking distance I can take my youth group to'. But most of the time this is not true. The easiest and best way to find out is to take a walk. Ideally take some colleagues with you to bounce ideas off. The space doesn't need to be big or 'special', and remember it can and will change, so what might appear to be an urban desert or overrun with nettles will not always be so. Involve young people; where do they play or hang out? They could design and carry out a survey to find out about local greenspaces and how they are used. They might create a map of the local area for others to annotate with information and memories as a starting point for their own visits.

Additional Resources

Find out more

[The Scottish Outdoor Access Code](#) is all about your rights and responsibilities when you're making the most of Scotland's great outdoors. Whether it's your local green space or beyond, it's important that you #KnowTheCode.





Place Based Learning: Journey Mapping

Take a look at the [Woodland Trust website](#) to find woods near you with this helpful map, [discover an RSPB nature reserve](#) near you, or search for green spaces through [NatureScot's greenspace map](#).

Activities & Guides

Young Place Changers Toolkit: Young people will learn new skills about how to evaluate places, map their community and influence local decision making. This toolkit gives examples of icebreakers, place activities and further reading and information you can use with your group.

Know the code before you go activity guide: Developed to help leaders support young people to explore and understand their rights and responsibilities in the outdoors and apply them to their daily lives. It provides activity ideas that are around the themes of the Curriculum for Excellence, including Learning Outdoors and Citizenship.

Beyond your Boundary: A resource for educators of any subject, working with young people of all stages. It will help you to find, access, use and improve your local greenspace and spread and embed learning.

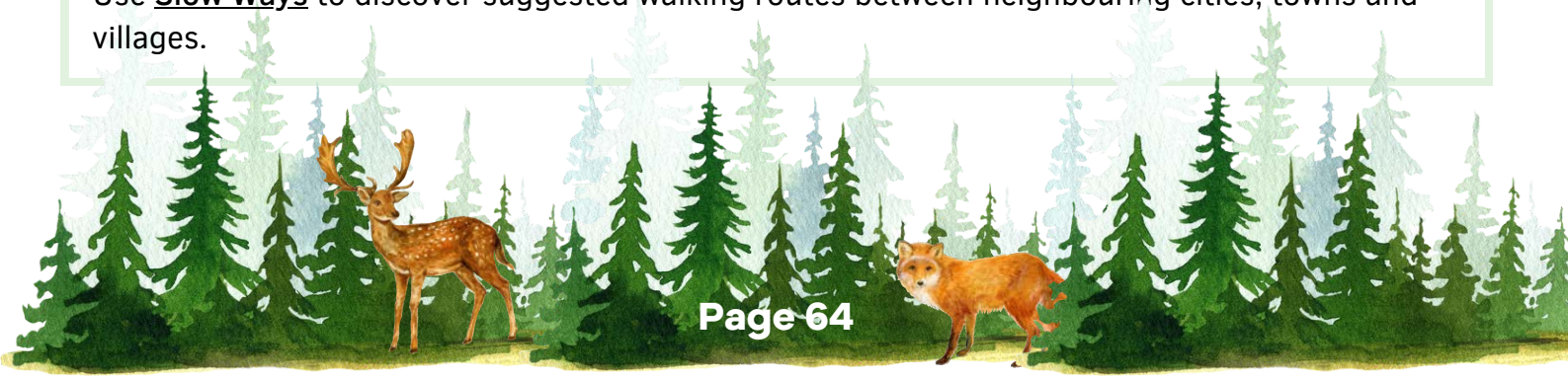
Learning Through Landscapes Outdoor Learning Ideas: These free outdoor learning ideas and outdoor lesson plans are ideal for curricular led outdoor learning or forest school type activities.

Urban Nature Youth Worker Toolkit: This toolkit details activities and ideas that you can use with young people to explore nature in cities. Designed so that no prior knowledge about nature is required, it has been developed By the Natural History Museum in collaboration with The Prince's Trust, Voyage Youth and other regional partners.

Geocaching: This is an outdoor recreational activity, in which participants use a Global Positioning System receiver or mobile device and other navigational techniques to hide and seek containers, called "geocaches" or "caches", at specific locations marked by coordinates all over the world.

Get Inspired

Use [Slow Ways](#) to discover suggested walking routes between neighbouring cities, towns and villages.





Climate Action: Visions for Future Political Change

Activity

This activity was adapted from the YouthLink Scotland and Keep Scotland Beautiful 'Visions for a Climate Friendly Future – Scotland 2050'. Visualising positive climate futures is a great way for young people to turn their eco-anxiety into optimism and climate action. It can also be a way to show decision-makers that young people are serious about creating change, and have alternatives in mind which are different to the status quo. Through this activity, young people are empowered to influence climate policy by sending drawings, poems or stories about the future to their political representatives, explaining why this future vision is important, and asking what those in power are going to do to make it a reality.

Purpose

For young people to:

- Consider what a sustainable future in 2050 will look like and how we might get there.
- Be able to contact their local elected representative.
- Understand how to influence policy change and decision making.
- Have an increased sense of empowerment to make a difference.

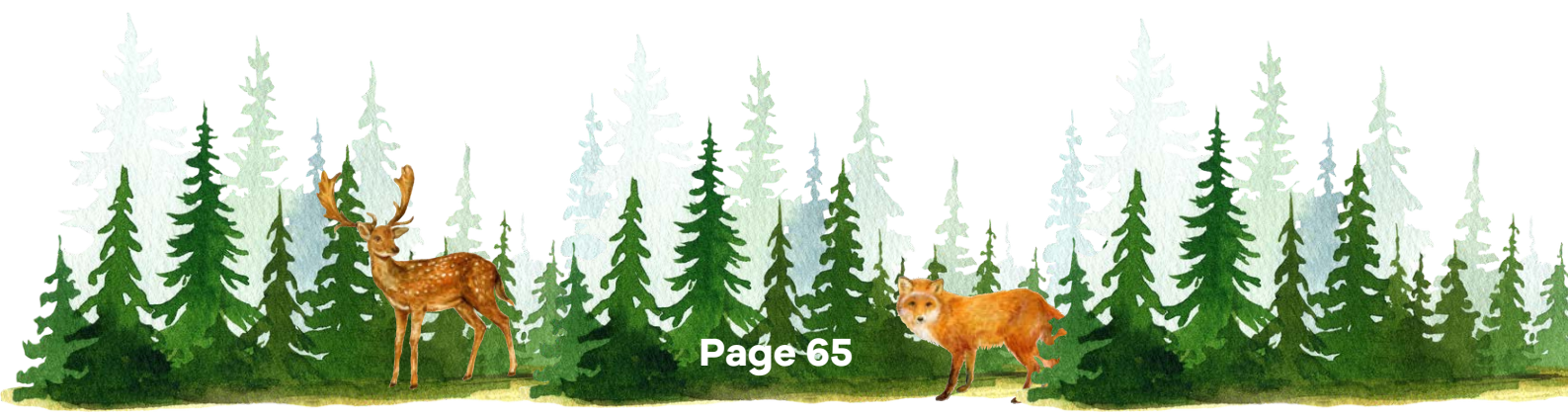
Equipment

- Access to Adaption Scotland Climate Ready Places interactive website (optional)
- Access to 2050 Climate Group Policy Hub
- Ability for young people to send emails to their elected representatives
- Paper and panels/pencils for creating artwork or writing stories
- Envelopes and stamps



Scotland's Young People's Forest Outcomes and Objectives

Young People: To enable and empower other young people to take action on issues of climate change and environmental concern.





Climate Action: Visions for Future Political Change



National Youth Work Outcomes

- Young people build their health and wellbeing
- Young people participate safely and effectively in groups and teams
- Young people broaden their perspectives through new experiences and thinking

Skills Developed by Young Person

- Confidence
- Communication
- Problem solving
- Creating change

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

All 17 SDGs can be linked to this activity depending on which themes come up when thinking about young people's futures.



Fears about the future (5 mins)

Discuss with your group what their fears are for the future. It's important not to dismiss these as unimportant or ignore them. You could do this via mentimeter, mind maps or use sticky notes.

Discussion – what would society look like in 2050? (10 mins)

Now turn those fears around and ask the young people to imagine what their lives might be like in 2050 if the problems they're worried about didn't exist or had been solved.

- What would you be doing each day?
- What would the world around you look like?

Don't get bogged down in whether something is practical or realistic, let their imaginations run wild and create a vision where everyone can live a happy, fulfilled life. You could use the [Adaption Scotland Climate Ready Places](#) as a tool for thinking about the future.





Climate Action: Visions for Future Political Change

Guide further discussion (15 mins)

To guide discussion further, suggest different sectors of society that are important to your group that would need to run differently in this new world. This could include:

- Food
- Transport
- Land use
- Wildlife and so on.

Start at the ideal end point and work backwards. For example, if you're discussing food, the young people's ideal vision in 2050 might be that everyone has access to affordable, healthy and local, seasonal food that doesn't damage the planet. From there you can discuss how you would reach this goal, for example through food sharing networks.

You could use a mind map or jamboard to focus on solutions to each of these themes.

Create your ideal future story or artwork (20 mins)

When the young people have a good idea in their heads about what they'd like their ideal futures to look like, encourage them to express this either as a story, a drawing, poem or piece of artwork.

Send to your elected representative (10 mins)

When the young people are happy with their stories or artworks, support your group to send them to their MP, MSP or local councillor.

Use the [2050 Climate Group Policy Hub](#) to find out how to contact their local representative and some top tips.

Politicians receive hundreds of emails every day, but not so many hand written or drawn, so the groups stories and artwork could make a big impression and empower your young people to feel heard at a policy and decision making level. Make sure they include an explanation of what the vision is and why they believe we need a different future to solve the climate crisis. They could then ask the politician what they could do in their position to make this future a reality.





Climate Action: Visions for Future Political Change



Writing to your elected representative may seem intimidating initially, but remind the group that letters and emails assume even more importance where they form part of a larger, collective campaign. When lots of people raise issues with their representatives, the issue is likely to be paid greater attention.

Sending emails or writing letters might be something your group go away and do between now and your next session.

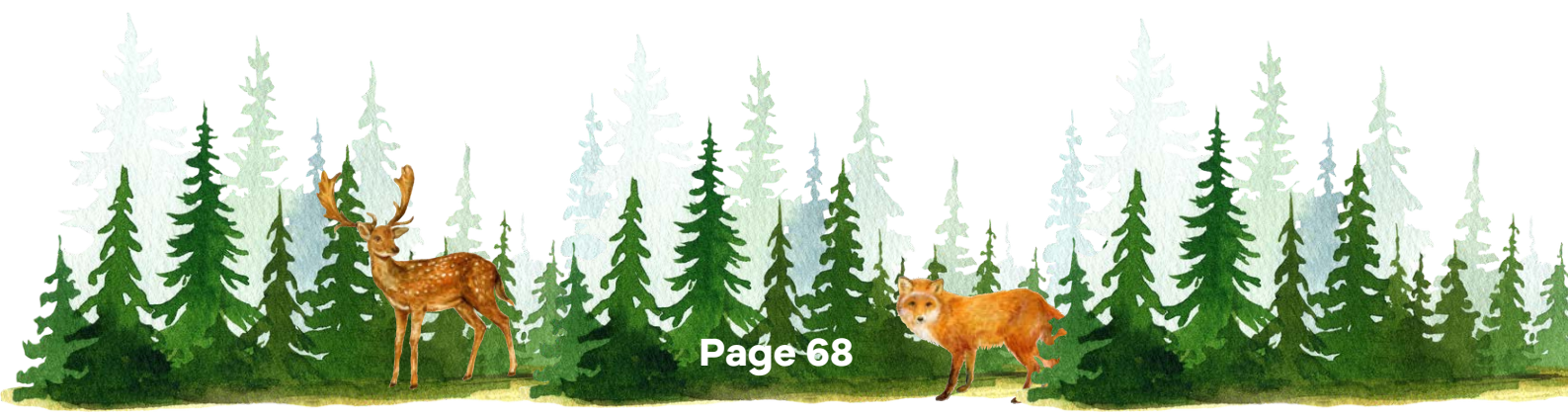
Another way to utilise these stories or artworks is as a tool for discussion with friends of family about the future and climate crisis.

Facilitators Notes

Social action is the act of doing good in the world. It can take place in an education setting, at a youth group, at home, online or within a local community. Social action is a movement of motivated people who work individually or together to improve the lives of others or their local surroundings through a range of actions including campaigning, fundraising or volunteering. There are a number of ways young people can influence and improve the quality of our lives, both locally and globally, in relation to the climate and nature emergencies.

Ongoing political participation and discussion is an essential part of our democracy in Scotland and in the UK. It's not just about ensuring that national and local government tackle climate change, but how it will be done. Climate policy affects all the choices young people make on a daily basis; how they get to school, what their future job might be and what their parents or guardians pay for fuel bills.

Ongoing engagement with local representatives is more essential than ever if Scotland is to move towards a fairer, more sustainable society for all. If constituents engage with decision makers and educate them about the risks and opportunities of climate change, it is possible to convince even the most skeptical to take action.





Climate Action: Visions for Future Political Change



In the face of red tape and obscure bureaucracy, it is easy to feel powerless when it comes to creating real systemic change. But it is important not to underestimate the difference that a simple email or letter from you can make, as most Parliamentarians do take their duty to listen to their constituents seriously. It's your MSP's job to make young people's voices heard in Parliament whether they voted for them or not. They represent their local area and can raise concerns on behalf of local people. This means that your Councillors, MSPs and MPs represent you and should respond to your youth group's communications as well as actively take account of the public's concerns when they are making decisions.

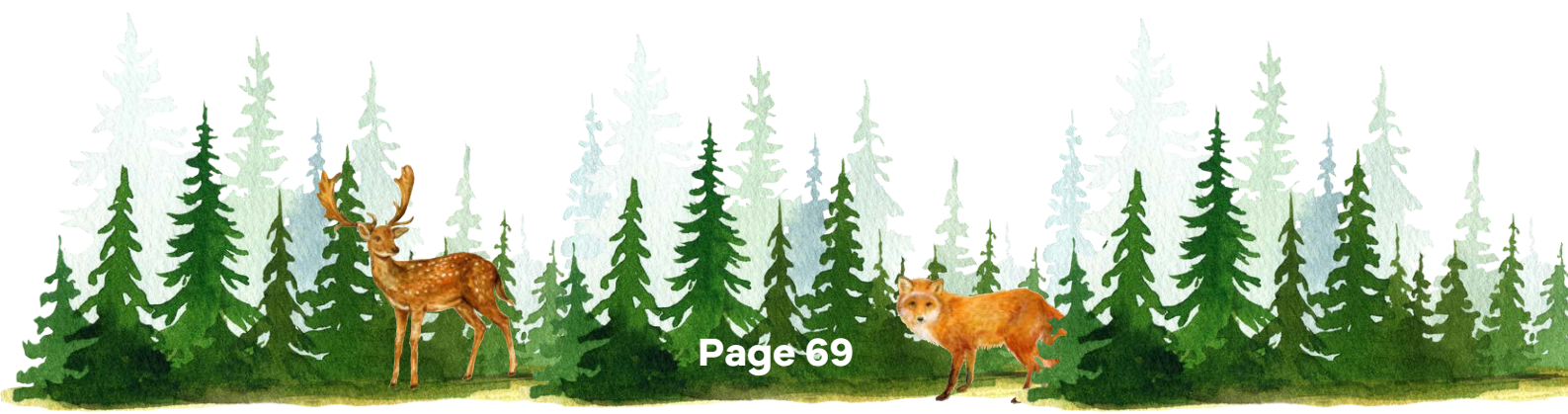
Additional Resources

Find out more

Why work with your MP on climate change? Hope for the Future exists to mitigate climate change and strengthen democracy.

Take Action on Climate Change Policy: The hub from the 2050 Climate Group has been created by to make climate policy in Scotland more accessible to young people. It includes a jargon busting glossary of often used climate policy terms, ideas for how young people can get involved in decision making processes through writing to elected representatives, responding to consultations, starting petitions and more, and information on who makes decisions on climate policy to help young people speak to the right people. You can also find blogs and interviews from their Policy Team.

2050 Climate Group - The Young Leaders Development Programme: This programme is free and open to young people aged 18-35 in Scotland. It consists of 6 day-long training modules spread over a year which equip young people with the skills they need to take climate action in their personal, professional and civic lives.





Climate Action: Visions for Future Political Change



Hope for the Future Training and Events: Hope for the Future has been working to equip communities, groups and individuals across the country to communicate the urgency of climate change with their local politicians for the last eight years. Using our experience of engaging representatives on climate change, our training covers the fundamental aspects of relationship-building including communicating with empathy, finding common ground, asking for effective action and conversational techniques.

Join a Climate Action Group: Find a climate action group near you through Friends of the Earth.

Form your own Climate Action Group: Register your interest in becoming a Climate Action group to join hundreds of groups across the country campaigning for urgent climate action.

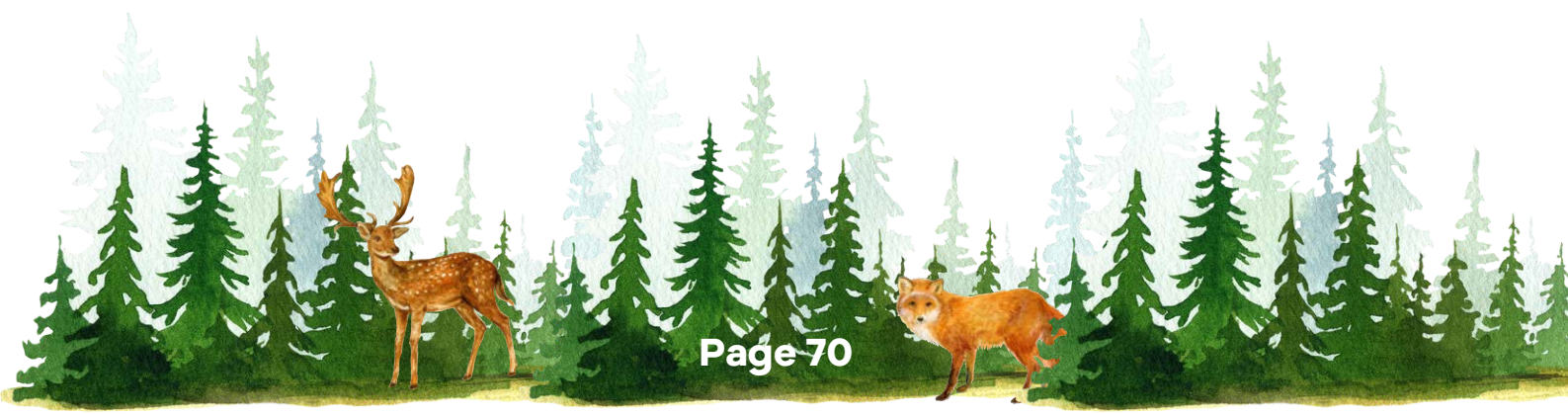
#StopCambo: The #StopCambo campaign is made up of individuals, grassroots groups and organisations across Scotland, the rest of UK and the world who are dedicated to ending all new oil and gas extraction and bringing existing production within safe climate limits. The campaign started in 2021 to fight the Cambo oil field and has expanded to take on all new fields in the UK, specifically focusing on Shell's Jackdaw gas field and Equinor's Rosebank oil field.

Activities & Guides

Your Meeting with your MP: There are more ideas and support for contacting politicians at the RSPB's website.

Tips for engaging and connecting with others in your community: The RSPB have created this useful guide to bringing people together makes your message loud and clear.

Hold Your First Climate Action Event: Whether online or in person, making a difference in the places where we live is the most powerful way we can respond to the climate emergency. Read guidance on how to host your first Climate Action event.





Climate Action: Visions for Future Political Change



Climate Action Plan for Councils: We need councils to turn their political promises on the climate emergency into concrete action by adopting a climate action plan. Find out how to get your council to adopt a Climate Action Plan.

Oxfam - Take Climate Action at Home: Inspired by some of the communities Oxfam works with around the globe, this resource includes ideas for taking climate action at home.

Six Ways to Change Hearts and Minds About Climate Change: An accessible and easy to understand toolkit outlining six tips for communicating climate change in a way that will change people's minds about taking action.

Virtual Lobbying Guide: This outlines the process of virtually lobbying your MP about taking action against climate change, with tips on how to have a good conversation, templates for letters to get in touch with your MP, and other information to help you get creative.

Telling Your Climate Story Workshop: Young people are ideally placed to have conversations with adults in their lives about climate change and to influence their decision-making around this. Children and young people have a huge amount of influence, and youth workers can help them realise this and prepare them for these difficult conversations.

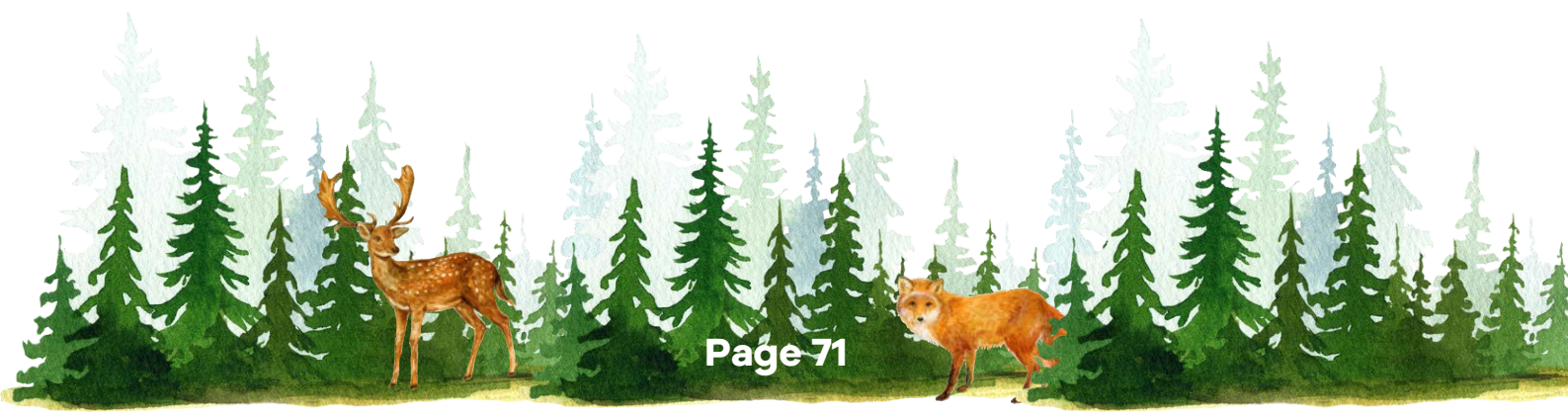
Climate Leadership – Social Action: This handbook provides an introduction to social action and provide links to session plans which you can use with your young people.

Teach the Future: Sign the petition and write to your MSP to train educators to teach students about climate change in schools.

Get Inspired

Stop Climate Chaos Scotland: Access this useful network of climate civil society in Scotland.

Dear World Leaders: Young people from North Lanarkshire Youth Climate Ambassadors address a series of climate action requests to world leaders.





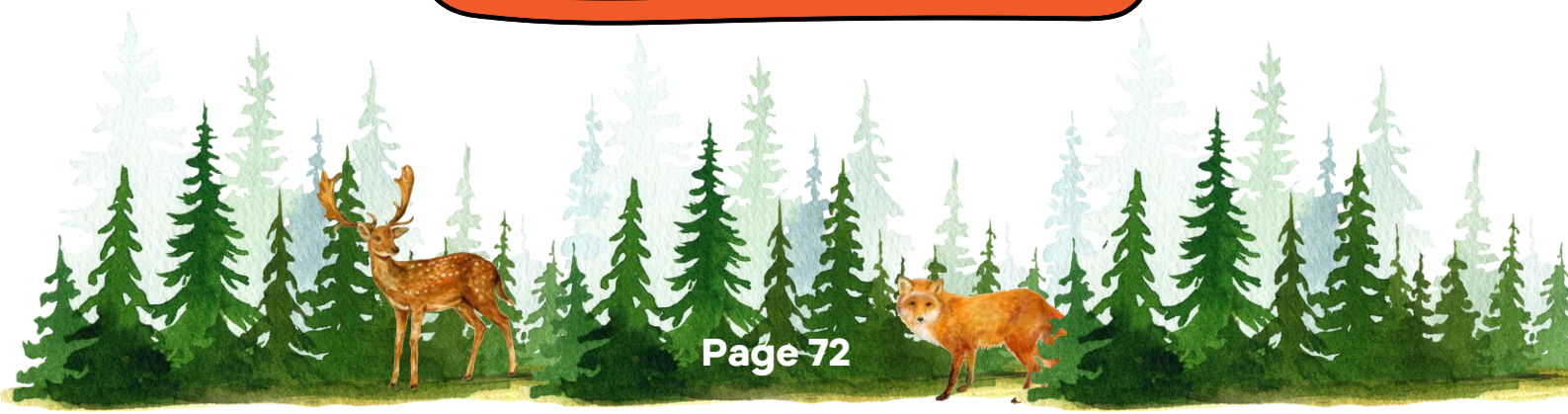
Climate Action: Visions for Future Political Change



Local Elections: How can young people influence decision making on climate issues? This recorded webinar features guest speakers from a variety of organisations and backgrounds, all discussing different ways that young people can get involved in climate decision making at a local level, with a focus on the council elections on May 5th 2022.

The Climate Hot Seat 2022: Through YouthLink Scotland and Our Bright Future, Young Climate Activists from across Scotland joined together for The Climate Hot Seat event with politicians, to make sure the climate and nature emergency was still top of their political agenda. This event was an opportunity for politicians to listen to the concerns of young people and explain what their party is doing to ensure the climate emergency is still a top priority.

Young people in governance roles: involving young people in decision making to tackle the climate emergency: This recorded webinar takes a look at what youth governance is and why it is important for young people's voices to be heard in policy and decision-making processes, within the context of tackling the climate emergency. This webinar features guest speakers from Children's Parliament, an #IWill ambassador and MSYP, as well as North Ayrshire Council's Green Participatory Budgeting experiences. Speakers are either young people themselves, or support young people in governance roles and as active citizens, spotlighting the role of young people in Scotland's policy space.





Acknowledgements

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- Claire from the Sensory Trust's Journey Mapping
- Theodore Blossom from the Natural History Museum's Urban Nature Youth Worker Toolkit
- Ellen Devine and Sarah Wood from Forestry England's Forest Bathing Guide and Tree Trumps
- Brock Luek from RSPB Scotland's Plant Safari
- Meghan Wise who created the Climate Doom to Messy Hope Handbook

Get In Touch

If you have any questions about the toolkit, resources or would like to find out more about the Scotland's Young People's Forest Project, you can get in touch with:

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