

Environmental Volunteer Network Newsletter

Autumn 2017

The Volunteer Network

South Lanarkshire Council's Countryside and Greenspace Service work with environmental volunteers across the county in a number of ways. We continue to work closely with a number of groups to help improve sites and engage with local communities.

In this newsletter we have updates from a couple of our newer community groups, Friends of Cadzow Glen and Calderglen Heritage plus articles from Lanarkshire Botany and an introduction to Stonehouse Park.

We also have details of the final few months of our competition, our wildlife challenge, in conjunction with CAVLP!

We are able to facilitate training for our volunteers and we are always interested in suggestions for potential courses that would help fulfil your objectives and build capacity within your group!

- Outdoor Skills
- Getting to grips with Social Media
- Health and Safety
- Funding tips
- Bat survey training

Networking and skill-sharing is important too so again we are always keen to facilitate our groups and volunteers getting to know each other a bit better!



Enthusiastic Volunteers!



Friends of Cadzow Glen

Friends of Cadzow Glen is new group set up in early 2017 for this natural woodland space running through Hamilton Town Centre. Events in glen have been held including litter picks and a bat walk.

Local schools and nurseries are making increased use of the excellent resource on their doorstep. The friends work together with assistance from Countryside Ranger Service and have had great help from individuals, groups, companies and council departments.

Paths and artworks have been repaired. Pollution issues with the Cadzow burn are being resolved and the amount of litter has been greatly reduced.

A newly created wildlife area looked fantastic in the summer with colourful wildflowers attracting many bees and butterflies.

Our next project is to obtain funding to improve our "Poplars" wildlife area with fencing and benches, and continue to forge links with the organisations on our doorstep.

For more information:

www.friendsofcadzowglen.wordpress.com

Facebook – "Friends of Cadzow Glen"



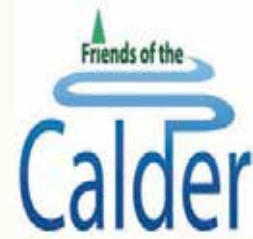
Wildflower seeding



Cadzow Bridge



What a year for the Friends of Calder (FOC)



It's been a busy year for the CAG team and the FOC, managing and promoting the greenspace to the west of High Blantyre, which encompasses Greenhall park, Milheugh and Barnhill. It has been non stop from the installation of our new pond at Barnhill in November last year, to forestry and access improvements this September.

Events and practical conservation projects have been well attended and the FOC with local volunteers have helped in creating two wildflower meadows at Milheugh, planting aquatic / marginal vegetation and

removing overhanging trees at Barnhill pond. In July we had the Royal Zoological Society for Scotland's "Wild about Scotland" tour bus for one of our most successful events, with 130 people visiting the site to discover the wildlife at Milheugh.

A big thanks must go to SGN (Scottish Gas Network), who not only provided many volunteers for a day, but also machinery and materials for the installing of a new path, providing access to the pond, clearing drinking dens and removing non-native and invasive plants.

The biggest news of the year for the group with the help from the CAG team and CSGN (Central Scotland Green Network Trust) was the successful grant awards from Forestry Commission Scotland WIAT and WREN funding programmes, resulting in the removal of the large conifers from Greenhall and the much needed improvements to the network of paths connecting all the parks together.

For more information about this Greenspace and events throughout the year, please refer to the SL Countryside Rangers and The Friends of Calder Facebook pages.



SGN hard at work



Making a difference

CAVLP Wildlife Challenge!

Keep an eye out for the characteristic species of the Clyde and Avon Valley in 2017. From October to November, the species to look out for are salmon, nuthatch and roe deer. Download a checklist, join an event to look for wildlife, be inspired to take part in the 500 Word Competition and to find out more, visit www.clydeandavonvalley.org

Record your sightings at iRecord: www.brc.ac.uk/irecord/join/clyde-and-avon-valley-wildlife-challenge

You can also email your sightings to CAG@southlanarkshire.gov.uk

Complete the Clyde and Avon Wildlife Challenge Checklist for your chance to win

Salmon

An iconic Scottish fish that can grow to over 1m in length. The adults are a bright silver colour with dark spots along the top edge. Salmon are migratory and return to the waterways where they hatched in order to spawn; they can be seen leaping up waterfalls on their journey back to their breeding grounds.

Visit the new fish passes at Old Avon Bridge, Hamilton and at the Millheugh Weir, Larkhall for great opportunities to see salmon leaping. There is also a salmon ladder at the bridge over the Clyde near the David Livingstone Centre in Blantyre. Spawning generally takes place in November and December, but can also occur October – February so keep an eye out for salmon leaping if you walk past the fish passes.



Nuthatch

A small woodpecker-like bird that hops up and down tree trunks looking for food. About the same size as a great tit, the nuthatch is bluey-grey above with a black stripe from the bill through the eye, and buff-coloured below. It feeds mostly on small invertebrates that it finds on tree bark, and will also eat hazel nuts, acorns and other nuts and seeds.

A recent newcomer to the Clyde Valley, this bird likes deciduous woodland with mature trees, but can also be seen in parks and gardens. It nests in tree holes, plastering the entrance with mud to make it more secure. If your garden has large trees or is near a woodland it may come to a bird feeder. Tempt them in with peanuts, sunflower hearts or a suet ball.



Roe Deer

The shy roe deer is relatively small; roughly the size of a labrador dog. It has a reddish brown body with a black nose and white chin, and a white rump patch. Only the males have antlers, which are shed in winter. When the male's antlers begin to regrow, they are covered in a thin layer of velvet.

Roe deer can be seen all year round. Active mostly at night, they can be seen in the early morning or evening. Look out for stripped areas of bark on small shrubs and trees, made by the buck as he rubs the plant with his antlers and leaves his scent behind.



Competition

Pull on your wellies and grab a pencil – it's time to get involved in the Clyde and Avon Valley Wildlife Challenge and 500 Words Competition!

The Clyde and Avon Valley is home to a fascinating array of wildlife. The area is home to the Clyde Valley National Nature Reserve (NNR) which is one of the ecologically richest areas of Scotland, as well as other spectacular woodlands. The woodlands are often hidden in dramatic river gorges, creating ribbons of wild land that lace the local landscape where nature thrives.

The campaign, including wildlife spotting events and two competitions, focuses on 12 species that can be found throughout the year in local woodlands such as Chatelherault Country Park, RSPB Scotland Baron's Haugh, Dalzell Estate and Scottish Wildlife Trust Falls of Clyde. The species are goosander, otter, great spotted woodpecker, kingfisher, badger, blue tailed damselfly, bats, candlesnuff fungus, comma butterfly, nuthatch, roe deer and salmon.

Get involved to find out more about local wildlife, visit local nature reserves, take part in wildlife spotting events and help contribute to the iRecord wildlife database.

There are two competitions you can enter as part of the campaign.

1. The Clyde and Avon Valley Wildlife Challenge #CAVWChallenge

Complete the 12 species checklist from the CAVLP website, to be awarded with a certificate and be entered into a special prize draw.

Join in with wildlife spotting events (see below), download your own spotting guides and enter your findings to iRecord, to tick off the 12 species that you are challenged to find on the checklist – links and downloads are available on the CAVLP website

2. The Clyde and Avon Valley 500 Words Competition (open to children ages 5–9 and 10–12)

Pick one of the 12 species (goosander, otter, great spotted woodpecker, kingfisher, badger, blue tailed damselfly, bats, candlesnuff fungus, comma butterfly, nuthatch, roe deer and salmon) to write a fictional story or poem about, in under 500 words. Be creative! The more imaginative the better - perhaps it could be a day in the life of, or a funny story. Each entrant will win a certificate and be entered into a special prize draw.

Entries will be judged on originality, plot, characterisation, language and enjoyment by a panel of expert judges: C A Hope (author of the New Lanark trilogy), the Lanark Writers Group and South Lanarkshire Countryside Rangers.

Download and print the 500 Words Competition full guidelines and submission form by again downloading from the CAVLP website.

The Clyde and Avon Valley Wildlife Challenge and 500 Words Competition must be entered by Sunday 31 December 2017.

The campaign is a partnership project between Heritage Lottery Fund supported Clyde and Avon Valley Landscape Partnership, North Lanarkshire Council, RSPB Baron's Haugh, Scottish Natural Heritage, Scottish Wildlife Trust Falls of Clyde and South Lanarkshire Countryside Rangers.

Calderglen Heritage

Who we are:

We are a recently constituted organisation comprising members with different skills who deeply care about the Calderglen Gorge and surrounding area – by joining together in an official capacity we achieve a lot more through partnership than we can individually.

Our aims and objectives:

We have set the ultimate objective to restore the former glory of the Calderglen gorge not just for what it means as a local landscape – but also for what it offers to the national stage in terms of public engagement, biodiversity, archaeology, historical legacy, and designed landscape vistas. We aim to do so through volunteering activities, talks, research projects, and grant restoration.

How we started:

Following 17 years of committed research on all aspects of the area, the effort saw 37,000+ items accrued into an archive providing ample proof of the nationally important features of Calderglen. With years of path erosion & lack of forest management, alongside recent landslides, Calderglen is at risk of losing its innate charms. Some unbelievable viewpoints haven't been appreciated in the memory of most peoples' lifetime, and many paths are inaccessible. The group started as Friends of Calderglen a couple of years ago to offer a protective voice for 'the Glen'.

What we do:

We are a multi-disciplinary organisation who wish to arrange activities to allow the public to experience the natural, scenic, and built heritage of the Calderglen area first hand. We will work together to raise funds to improve access and forestry, as well as consolidate the remains of the designed landscapes.

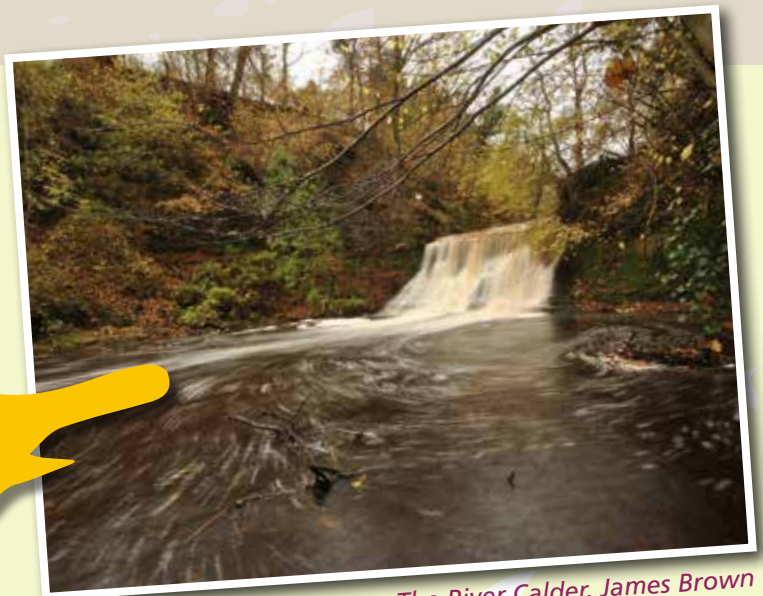
Where to find us:

The Heritage Board currently meets during the last week of each month in St Leonards, East Kilbride, and makes its presence known through Facebook at www.facebook.com/groups/calderglenheritage. Meeting locations and times can vary, so interested parties should contact calderglenheritage@gmail.com for info.

Events are usually notified well in advance, and minutes are distributed to all followers.

Progress:

Our members are currently involved in hot talks on several exciting subjects such as furthering Calderglen as a nature reserve, Bio Blitz surveys, and working alongside the BSBI, and Council Greenspace Team, as well as future prospects of heritage grants. Great progress is being made in formalising our structure, applying for SCIO status, and tackling alien plants within our gorge.



The River Calder, James Brown



Lanarkshire Botany

2017 is proving to be a good year for field botany in Lanarkshire.

Read on to gain a flavour of what's been happening - and there are adventures yet to come before the end of the season!



Some facts and figures

Over 650 separate species have been found, a total which is still rising steadily

There are now 56 people in the 'Team 77' network

Areas surveyed include sectors of Glasgow as well as more remote countryside

27 individuals have been active in the field this year - an impressive level of commitment!

One recent outing at Camps Reservoir employed bicycles to reach the survey zone

There have been 18 full-day weekend outings and 14 weekday evening outings so far

5 species have been recorded for the first time in Lanarkshire

Significant progress has been made towards fulfilling Lanarkshire's input into Atlas 2020

Well over 10,000 Lanarkshire records have been added to the national database so far in 2017

If this sounds like something you would be interested in, please contact:

Michael Philip
botany@opus44.co.uk



Help celebrate the landscape and learn new skills



Volunteering with CCI and CAVLP

From archaeology to archival research, education and environmental volunteering roles, there are a wide range of volunteering, training and learning opportunities available in conjunction with Clydesdale Community Initiatives. Learn some new skills or contribute skills you already have individually, or as a group, and make a difference along the way.

Chatelherault

Volunteer conservation and heritage enthusiasts will carry out vital path repair work, vegetation clearance and carpentry projects to help improve the biodiversity value of the woodland and enhance the visitor experience in the most visited designed landscape in the Clyde and Avon valley.

Volunteering will take place on various Wednesdays from 10.15am – 2.30pm

Jocks Burn, Carluke

Roll up your sleeves and get behind a community clean-up of Jock's Burn in Carluke with Clydesdale Community Initiatives (CCI). All ages and backgrounds are urged to come together and lend a hand to spruce up this little oasis of nature in the town. Help out with de-littering, clearing debris from the burn, and tidying up and repairing steps.

Lesmahagow Allotments

Put your green fingers to good use or learn new skills at Lesmahagow Allotments, Brocketsbrae, every second Tuesday, 10.30am – 12.30pm.

There are plenty of jobs at varying levels to keep all occupied whilst allowing you to get some fresh air, learn new skills, meet new people, have fun and get your hands dirty.

Volunteers are urgently required to assist in essential maintenance such as planting, pruning, weeding and dead heading and are all important in the ongoing upkeep of the allotments.

For info on any of these opportunities and many more, get in touch with Clydesdale Community Initiatives by contacting colleen@cciweb.org.uk or call 01555 664211.



Chatelherault Volunteers



Jock Burns Group



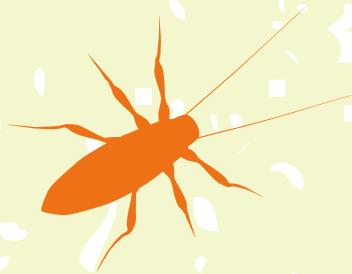
Life in the Cadzow Oaks

The Hunterian Museum, University of Glasgow are looking for volunteers to assist in regular fieldwork, including trap checking and general surveying duties at the Cadzow Oaks site until March 2018. No experience is necessary as training will be given.

The survey focuses on invertebrate species, most notably spiders and beetles such as the nationally notable rove beetle *Biblopectus pusillus* or the cobweb beetle *Ctesias serra*. Survey results will be compared to a survey completed over 50 years ago, the results of which are held in the Hunterian Museum. It is hoped that the survey will confirm the presence and abundance of key species that were recorded in the past and note any changes. Findings will be used to inform management plans, ensuring the appropriate conservation of these unique habitats for the future.

Volunteers will be able to enjoy surveying whilst spending time in a beautiful landscape, some of which is usually inaccessible to the general public. The amount of time that volunteers can contribute to the project is flexible, but volunteers should be available through the day on Thursdays and / or Fridays to fit in with the project schedule.

Contact Jeanne Robinson, Curator of Entomology at the Hunterian Museum at jeanne.robinson@glasgow.ac.uk / 0141 330 2303, Monday – Wednesday.



Invertebrate survey techniques



Cadzow Oaks



Friends of Stonehouse Park

Friends of Stonehouse Park are going from strength to strength and have had great experiences with Outdoor play, having had 10 families in attendance who enjoyed the mud kitchen, outdoor craft making bird feeders, tree climbing, den building and of course the awesome tree swing! This session was the 5th session to be funded by Clyde and Avon Valley Landscape Partnership. Now two FOSP committee members have been trained in Fire and Tools Skills, again funded by CAVLP, to allow the outdoor play sessions to continue and expand.

FOSP had this one final session with OUTlet play and they are now going it alone!

Karen Kelly, FOSP secretary said 'We are really excited about our little saplings events as they continue to sell out really fast and all families in attendance seem to enjoy the experience, returning month on month. Now that we have more committee members trained we plan to develop the sessions further from preschool children to primary aged children, giving kids the benefit of free play in the woodlands. We cannot thank CAVLP enough for the funding, and ongoing expertise of Jackie from OUTlet Play Resource in helping FOSP develop this group. Keep an eye out on the facebook page for further events!'

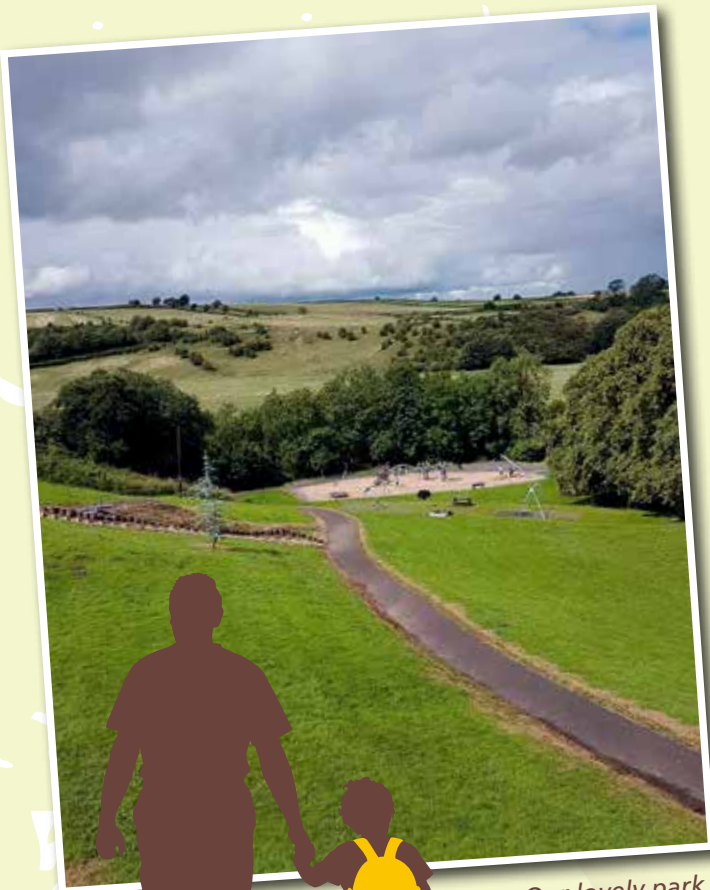
If that wasn't enough activity, CCI and Friends of Stonehouse park also have a great opportunity the second Thursday in the month for people to take part in environmental volunteering, including clearing pathways and making new benches. All are welcome, please wear weather appropriate clothing and footwear. All tools will be provided.

If you would like to book a place or find out more information, please call CCI on 01555 664 211 or email enquiries@cciweb.org.uk

To find out more about FOSP visit their Facebook page, where you can find lots of information about their various walks and events happening throughout the year!



Toasting marshmallows!



Our lovely park

CAVLP Heritage

Local Landscape Heroes oral history volunteers

Do you, or does anyone you know, have any memories of industry, horticulture or agriculture in the area they would like to share? CAVLP Heritage are looking for people who would be willing to share their stories as part of the Local Landscape Heroes project that will make up part of the Clyde and Avon Valley Exhibition in February and March 2018.

Training will be given on how to record voices/ memories. Dates will be announced soon. Please contact pmurtagh@yorkat.co.uk / 01555 661 555 to register your interest and to find out more.



Castle Qua trench

CAVLP Heritage GIS map making volunteers

Interested in heritage and technology? Volunteers are being recruited to help create GIS (geographic information system) 3D maps of heritage features in the Clyde and Avon valley through time, such as glasshouses, brickworks, Roman roads, farms, etc. Maps will be created using information currently held and once volunteers have been trained, they will be able to work on projects at home.

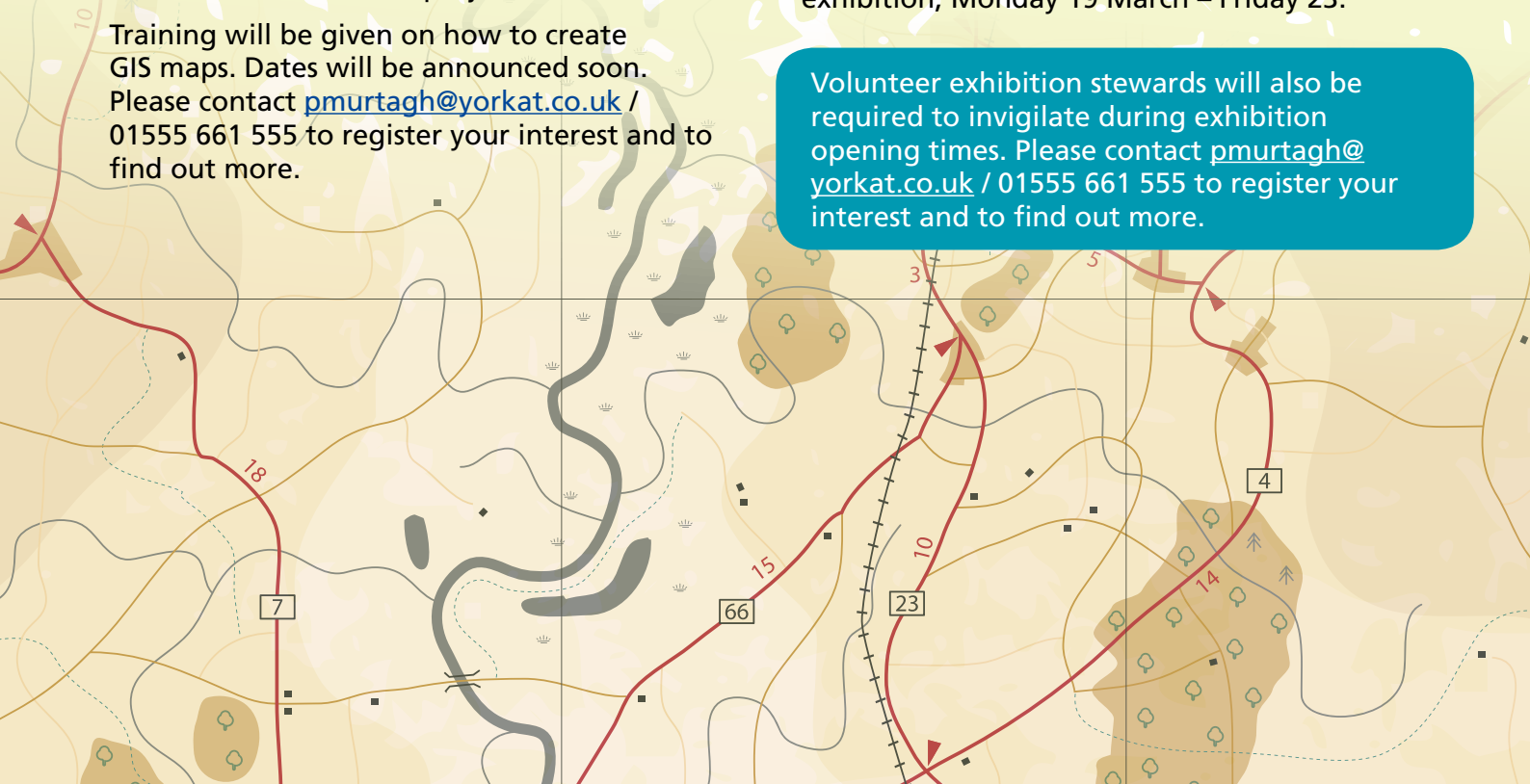
Training will be given on how to create GIS maps. Dates will be announced soon. Please contact pmurtagh@yorkat.co.uk / 01555 661 555 to register your interest and to find out more.

CAVLP Heritage Exhibition Installation and Steward volunteers

A final exhibition, celebrating the culture, heritage and unique landscape of the Clyde and Avon Valley is set to take place at Chatelherault Country Park in February and March 2018.

CAVLP Heritage are looking for volunteers to help with the installation, Monday 12 – Friday 16 February 2018, and dismantling of the exhibition, Monday 19 March – Friday 23.

Volunteer exhibition stewards will also be required to invigilate during exhibition opening times. Please contact pmurtagh@yorkat.co.uk / 01555 661 555 to register your interest and to find out more.



Get in touch!

To see previous copies of this newsletter visit www.southlanarkshire.gov.uk and search for "Volunteer Newsletter".

If you would like to join the volunteer network, suggest courses or events, or would like any more information, please get in touch with us using the details below.

Contact us

We have a Facebook page! This shows events and lots of information on local wildlife and activities.



Like us at "South Lanarkshire Countryside Rangers"
www.facebook.com/CountrysideRangers

Email: cag@southlanarkshire.gov.uk

Phone: 0303 123 1015

Write to: Countryside Ranger Service, Calderglen Country Park, East Kilbride G75 0QZ

If you need this information in another format or language, please contact us to discuss how we can best meet your needs.

Phone: 0303 123 1015 Email: equalities@southlanarkshire.gov.uk

www.southlanarkshire.gov.uk