SEVEN LOCHS
wetland park

Seven Lochs Project
Annual Report 2021/22



heritage lottery fund
LOTTERY FUNDED

The **Seven Lochs Project** is a major greenspace regeneration project that aims to:

- deliver the Seven Lochs Heritage Project, with reference to the Seven Lochs Landscape Conservation Action Plan;
- establish and develop the Seven Lochs Wetland Park as a new heritage and nature park of national significance; and
- drive forward the creation of the Seven Lochs Green Network, a high quality, multi-functional network of open spaces and green corridors.

The project is coordinated by the **Seven Lochs Partnership**. Partnership members are:

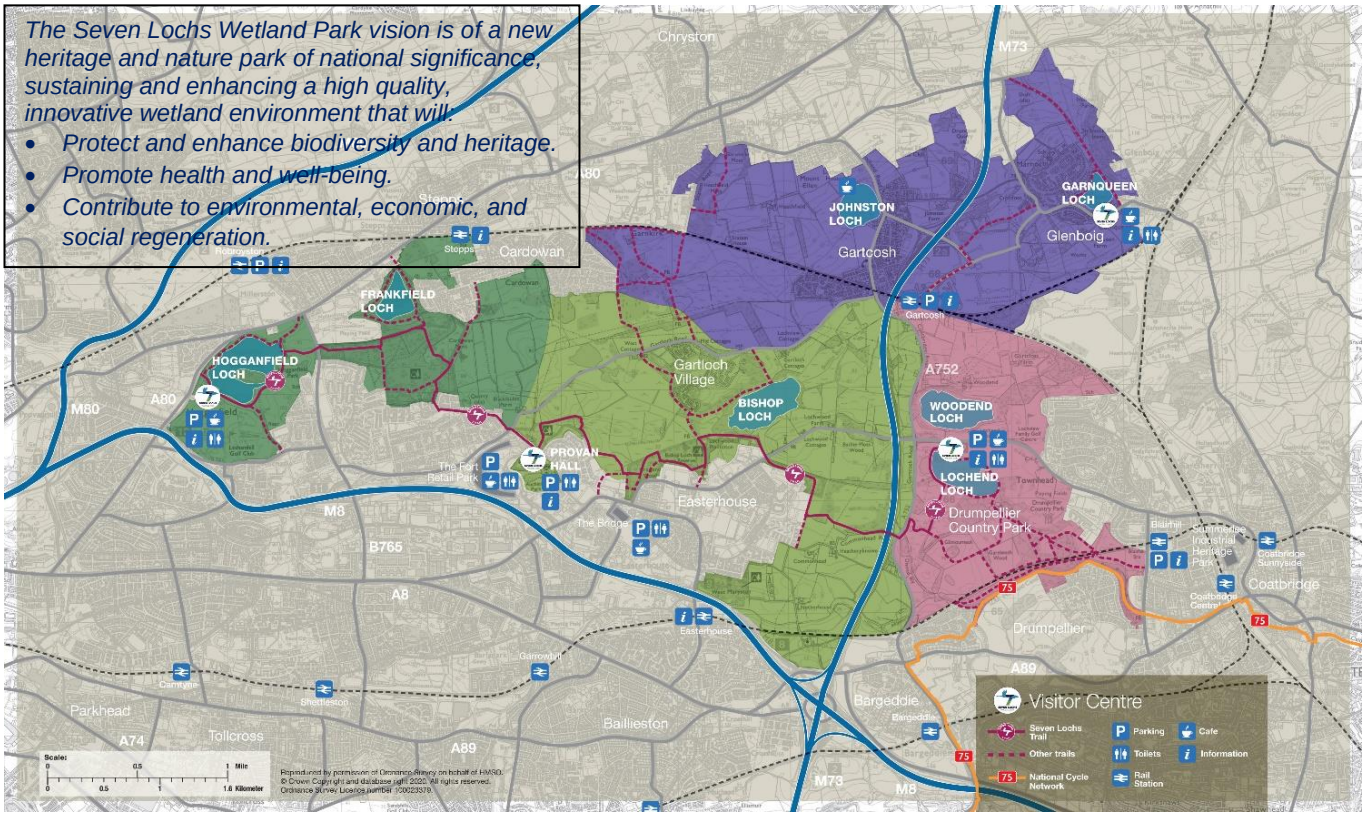
- Forestry and Land Scotland
- Glasgow City Council
- Glenboig Development Trust
- Nature Scot
- North Lanarkshire Council
- Provan Hall Community Management Trust
- The Conservation Volunteers Scotland
- The Royal and Ancient

At the heart of the Seven Lochs Project is the creation and management of the **Seven Lochs Wetland Park**. Spanning the Glasgow City / North Lanarkshire council boundary between Easterhouse, Coatbridge and Stepps, it is Scotland's largest heritage and nature park.

The Seven Lochs Project is supported by staff team of officers from Glasgow City Council (GCC) and The Conservation Volunteers (TCV) Scotland. The team works as a single unit, and with staff from all the project partners, to develop and deliver capital works and community engagement activities.

The Seven Lochs Wetland Park vision is of a new heritage and nature park of national significance, sustaining and enhancing a high quality, innovative wetland environment that will:

- *Protect and enhance biodiversity and heritage.*
- *Promote health and well-being.*
- *Contribute to environmental, economic, and social regeneration.*



Capital projects

We are developing four visitor centres at the Seven Lochs Wetland Park to provide orientation information and heritage interpretation, and to act as hubs for heritage learning and engagement activities.

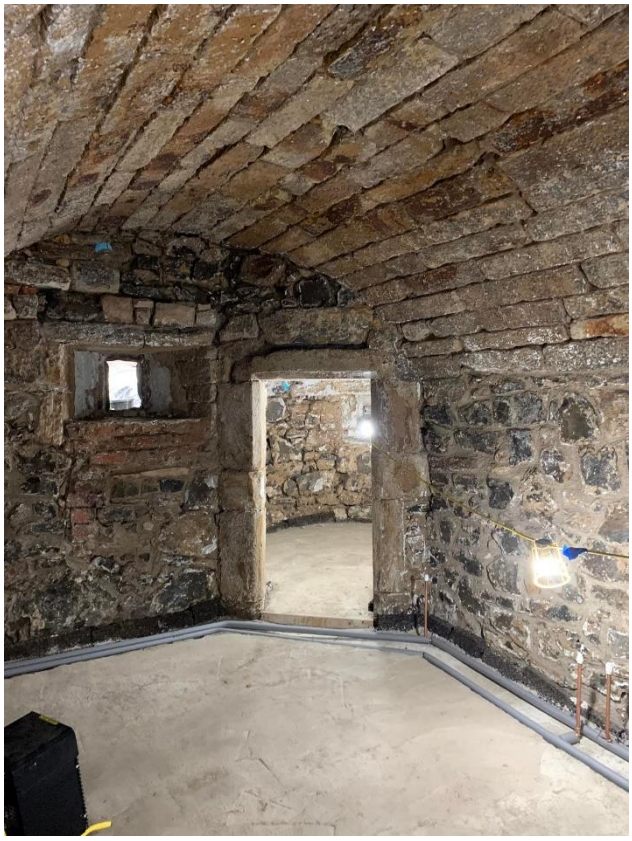
At **Provan Hall** we have continued the full heritage restoration of the Grade 1 Listed Buildings. Working closely with Provan Hall Community Management Trust – a charity set up to operate the building following its restoration – we have completed the design of new interactive heritage interpretation to be installed prior to the building re-opening to the public in 2022.

In 2021 GCC concluded missives for the sale of Lethamhill golf course to The Royal and Ancient (R&A). The R&A and Seven Lochs Partnership have worked together to combine the R&A's plans for a major new golf centre with the creation of a Seven Lochs visitor centre and staff team base at **Lethamhill golf course / Hogganfield Park**. Design of the new centre was finalised in early 2022, and building work will start in June 2022. Golf It' Glasgow is expected to open in June 2023.

In 2020 Glenboig Development Trust (GDT) completed a major re-development of the former Glenboig community centre and opened **Glenboig Life Centre** as a hub for community activity. We have worked with GDT to install new heritage interpretation in the Life Centre foyer and design of further interpretation is underway. We have also helped develop plans for an outdoor learning area and pollinator planters in the Life Centre garden

An extension to the **Drumpellier Country Park** visitor centre was completed in 2020, and over the last year we have worked with interpretation designers to develop new park welcome and orientation information, including an interactive touchscreen, as well as new information about the park's history and wildlife. The new interpretation is in production – and fit out of the Visitor Centre is scheduled for summer 2022.

Provan Hall restoration





The **Transforming Avenue End Road** project will create a new, multi-functional greenspace, including active travel route, outdoor learning area and habitat creation, on an area of vacant and derelict land (V+DL). Through 2021/22 we worked in partnership with Green Action Trust to develop the design and secure funding for the project. In July we heard that our application to the V+DL Investment Programme had been successful, and a contractor was appointed to start work on the £650k transformation in March 2022.

Working with Growing 21 – a recently formed community trust that runs a community pantry in Ruchazie – we have developed the **Ruchazie Greening and Growing** project. This will create new community greenspace on two former primary school sites that have been derelict for over 15 years. Using a series of community consultation activities, design consultancy Lateral North developed a site masterplan that will see the site regenerated to create food growing areas, outdoor play and learning spaces, and improved access for community activities. We have now secured £670k from the V+DL Investment Programme to take the project forward in 2022 to 2025.

In November we completed the Seven Lochs **Sp**ecies **Ri**ch **N**etworks **T**eam (**SpRiNT**) project. Supported by the Biodiversity Conservation Fund this project created new, species-rich grassland, woodland, and wetland habitats where past management – or lack of management – had led to areas of low value for biodiversity. Volunteers and trainees led by TCV Scotland have delivered habitat creation and enhancement at 14 parks and amenity greenspaces – including tree and hedge planting, meadow creation, and removal in invasive non-native species. Over 12.5ha of grassland, woodland and wetland habitat was improved for nature by skilled teams of volunteers and trainees.

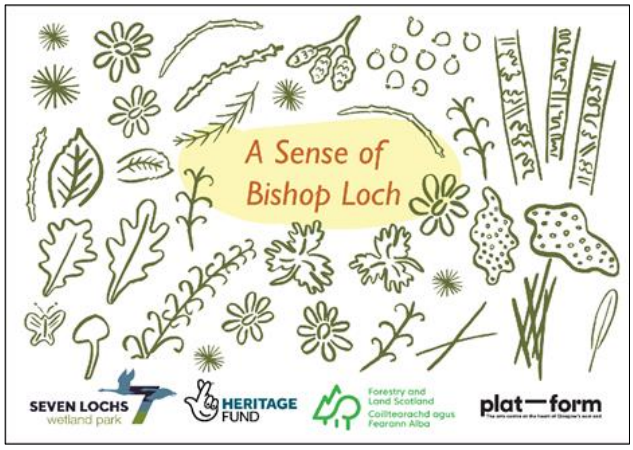
Proposed Golf It centre at Lethamhill



Community projects

During 2021/22 we worked with 15 local community groups and schools on 4 projects to involve people in learning about, celebrating and helping to improve their local heritage. In 2021 two projects were part of Scotland's Year of Coasts and Waters.

In spring 2021 we produced the **Sense of Bishop's Loch Exploration Pack**. To develop this creative activity pack we commissioned artists to work with ESL students, Lochend Community High School pupils, and residents at Abbey Court Care Home to explore the history and nature of Bishop Loch through sensory walks, living history and memory.



A History Shaped by Water worked with local community groups and schools to explore how the inland water of the Seven Lochs Wetland Park has attracted and supported human subsistence and habitation for over 10,000 years. Inspired by an archaeological site or heritage collection discovered within the park, each group explored the park's history through hands-on activities and events. Their findings were then brought together to create engaging online interpretation and a series of activity sheets for young people https://www.historyshapedbywater.org/

"This project re-awakened my interest in history and the outdoors, connected me with new people and gave me something to look forward to. I will keep this up long after the project." Shaped by Water project participant.

The **Shelters for Lochside Learning** project saw local schools and residents work with Seven Lochs staff and artists to upcycle three redundant shelters at Hogganfield Loch. The design of each shelter was inspired by a theme celebrating the importance of Scotland's freshwaters to people and nature.



Rebuilding the Community Brick by Bricks explored Ruchazie's fireclay history through creative tile and brick making. Working with Growing 21 and Platform we delivered a series of interactive, artist-led community and school workshops. The participants' work will be the inspiration for an exciting new entrance feature into Hogganfield Park from Ruchazie.



"The project was well arranged, and the staff were excellent at trying to adapt the activities to the needs of our pupils." Teacher involved in Shelters for Lochside Learning project.

Outdoor learning and nature-based play

TCV Scotland continue to lead Seven Lochs' activities with nurseries, schools and youth groups. Our programmes focus on giving pupils regular outdoor sessions that build their confidence and knowledge of heritage and nature. In 2021/22 we worked with 10 classes from 7 schools / nurseries, including 5 classes for pupils with additional support needs. We've delivered 90 sessions to over 200 pupils.

Watch our Outdoor Learning @ Seven Lochs film below:



Re-Wild the Child delivers nature-based play sessions to after school / holiday clubs and families. Children and carers from 36 families took part in 28 free-play sessions, with Seven Lochs staff providing a range of resources that aim to build skills and confidence for both children and adults. We also ran 22 nature-based play sessions for 7 groups, including working with Chattersense to run activities for children with complex learning and emotional needs, and with Pavillion Youth Café to involve young people in creating a nature garden.

Watch our Re-Wild the Child video below:



In 2021/22 we delivered 12 outdoor learning training sessions to 32 education and play practitioners, helping them build their skills and confidence in leading outdoor activities. Alongside this we produced 'how to' guides and videos for 6 outdoor learning activities.

In October we started a new project with adult learners on an Employability and Citizenship course at Glasgow Kelvin College. Working with college staff we have delivered 10 outdoor learning sessions for this group. Activities have included survey skills, bushcraft and habitat enhancement – which will contribute to students learning portfolios, and towards a John Muir Discovery Award.

Feedback on our outdoor learning activities and resources:

Children;

- *I used to be scared of everything in nature but now I've been out more I like it*
- *I like being in nature because it's nice and fun and you get to see lots of things you usually wouldn't.*
- *My mum says 'could you settle down' and outside it's easy because there is no television*

Parents and teachers:

- *We just need to be brave with vulnerable children, worry less and just wrap up really well* – Class teacher, Croftcroighn ASN Primary
- *The teachers just needed to have confidence that they could safely take children outside the school grounds, and that activities normally done in the classroom could easily be adapted and be even better outside* – Depute Head, St Benedict's Primary
- *"I feel so much more confident around wildlife! Can't wait to now lead bug hunting sessions with my play session kids"* – Playworker, Molindinar Family Learning Centre

Employability, volunteering and wellbeing

TCV Scotland also to lead volunteering and training programmes, delivering a range of activities focussing on bringing local people together around a shared interest in heritage and nature, or developing people's skills, confidence, and wellbeing to help them into further education and employment.

Running 2 days per week throughout the year the **Seven Lochs Employability Project** offers people who are currently seeking employment an opportunity to improve the park for people and nature while receiving training and gaining accredited qualifications in practical skills. 15 volunteer trainees completed SQA Employability Award units and gained 35 LANTRA qualifications while also delivering 268 days of volunteering. During 2021/22 10 trainees moved into employment or further education / training.



The **Seven Lochs Volunteers** met weekly through the year to carry out nature conservation and park improvement projects. Over 45 sessions have taken place at parks, local natures reserves and other greenspaces – achieving 214 volunteer days.

Our **Wildlife Counts** volunteers undertake nature surveys across the park area. Volunteers took part in 40 survey sessions, focussing on bees, butterflies, and wetland birds. We have delivered 6 volunteer training sessions on survey and identification skills. All of the data gathered is submitted to the local biological records centre.



Using the Glasgow Living Wage the contribution made by volunteers at Seven Lochs is valued at over £37,000.

From May to September we ran a **Branching Out** programme in Partnership with Forestry and Land Scotland and NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde. 8 participants referred through the NHS ReStart service took part in an outdoor activity programme that focusses on mental health and wellbeing. The programme, which ran for 12 sessions, focused on forest skills, mindfulness and learning about nature – with participants working towards a John Muir Discovery Award



Plans for 2022/23

The partnership aims to have 3 Seven Lochs visitor centres fully fitted out with new welcome information and interpretation in 2022. The new visitor centre under construction as part of the R&A Golf It project will be under construction and scheduled to open in June 2023. These visitor centres will be hubs for a range of heritage learning and engagement activities.

We will continue to develop and deliver projects that transform V+DL into new, multi-functional greenspace, including the Ruchazie Greening and Growing project. Transforming Baldragon Road is a new project for 2022, and aims to improve grassland water vole habitat and create new access links and outdoor learning areas on the Easterhouse edge of the Seven Lochs Wetland Park.

The unique population of grassland water voles in the Seven Lochs area is of national significance. In 2022 we will work with project partners to develop a Seven Lochs and N.E. Glasgow Water Vole Conservation Action Plan that focuses on ensuring good conservation management of this flagship species.

To support high quality planning and design of new development we will work with partners to produce a Seven Lochs Design Guide, and work with developers to apply the Building with Nature standards to new development.

TCV Scotland lead a range of outdoor learning, volunteering and wellbeing activities linked to the Seven Lochs heritage and nature. These will target groups that face additional barriers to accessing the outdoors – ensuring that everyone has the opportunity to benefit from regular contact with nature on their doorstep. We want the Seven Lochs to be a community resource that local people value and enjoy.

We will put renewed effort into raising awareness of the Seven Lochs Wetland Park as a place to visit, enjoy and get involved in. This will focus on promoting the park and the range of activities it offers to people across central Scotland – and working towards our aspiration of the Seven Lochs as a visitor attraction of national significance.

