



## C2.1 An Active Landscape

### Project Overview:

This project aimed to deliver opportunities for the communities of the Inner Forth to take part in a variety of outdoor activities that will enable them to get active and explore the many natural and cultural facets of the landscape. IFLI worked with a number of local healthy walking groups and with Stirling Cycle Hub to deliver many of the walks and cycles that were offered. These included Braveheart, Active Stirling and Wee County Walkers. The project lead also attended the Forth Valley Access group meetings to share and learn from the experiences of other organisations running similar initiatives in the area. During the delivery stage it became more and more apparent that the Inner Forth is well provided for in terms of walking and cycling opportunities for a range of groups and abilities. However An Active Landscape enabled us to encourage people to visit parts of the area they may not have experienced before, as we were able to pay for transport costs to allow people to travel to more distant locations. We were also able to provide refreshments to groups, which encouraged people to stay and talk after the walk or cycle, which allowed us to explain more about the landscape and heritage of the area. Having built up a close relationship with a group, we were then able to offer walk leaders training in wildlife and heritage skills, which they could then pass on to walks they led independently. They were also keen to learn to create and upload Phototrails, and we led workshops and created resources to help them to do this. A number of the attendees were planning to create their own trails as a result. The project also funded the purchase of path management equipment to help two volunteer groups to manage paths installed through IFLI projects. Signage was created to be installed on all IFLI-funded paths, not only as acknowledgements but to highlight the importance and value of walking and cycling to health and wellbeing.

It became apparent that rather than duplicate existing information about path and cycle networks, with the problem of keeping them current after the end of IFLI, it would be more effective to create an online resource. and so the decision was taken to instead create a directory of existing information about these routes around the whole area. Before this much of the information was fragmented between local authority areas. A virtual 'geocaching' trail was also incorporated into the digital app which is part of the Telling the Inner Forth Story project. This allowed us to encourage people to explore the area, visit our beacons and markers, and avoided issues of caches being removed or damaged.

In essence the project has helped to widen the horizons of those who enjoy walking and cycling, and encouraged more people to get out and explore the natural and historic heritage of the Inner Forth in a healthy and companionable way.

Project lead  
organisation and other  
organisations involved:

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Sue Walker, IFLI Communications Officer

## Inner Forth Landscape Initiative End of Project Report

Project Location: Landscape-wide

Project dates May 2014 to March 2018 (Year 1, quarter 1 to Year 4, quarter 4)

### Project Outputs

Measure	Target	Delivered	Notes
<i>People trained as photo trails surveyors</i>	7	8	Training workshop held and online resources created to help people to create more Phototrails
<i>People trained as walk leaders</i>	8	0	Walking groups offered their own free walk leader training, so there was no demand for this
<i>People trained as assistant cycle leaders</i>	4	0	Cycling groups offered their own free cycle leader training, so there was no demand for this
<i>Routes uploaded to the Fieldfare Trust's 'phototrails' website</i>	18	4	Undertaken by trainee
<i>Creation and printing of IFLI wide 'trail route' maps</i>	500		Online resource created that includes map and description of access routes, heritage information and other locations of interest in the landscape.
<i>People participating in led cycles or walks</i>	Cycles: 60 Walks: 150	641	
<i>Led cycles or walks delivered</i>	Cycles: 12 Walks: 28	34	A further six walks were led after the official end of the project.
<i>Groups involved in mapping IFLI Trail Routes</i>	5	0	Local authorities, community and environmental organisations had already produced a wealth of walk, cycle and trail guides.
<i>Volunteers signed up as Sustrans Active Travel Champions</i>	6	0	This was found to be a duplication of effort with Sustrans project officers
<i>Volunteers participating in maintenance of trail routes</i>	15	0	Not counted through this project.
<i>Geo-caching trail created and promoted</i>	1	0	Incorporated into the Telling the Inner Forth Story project.
<i>Training events delivered</i>	N/A	4	Photo trails, wildlife, history – all for walk leaders of groups.
<i>Publicity materials for walks</i>	N/A	2	For walks with Braveheart

<i>Equipment for volunteer groups</i>		2 sets	For SWT and RSPB groups maintaining paths in the landscape, particularly those installed through IFLI projects at Black Devon Wetlands and Cambus Pools.
<i>Promotional signs for paths</i>	N/A	30	Small 'signs' produced to signpost path improvements funded through IFLI

### ***What difference has this project made to the built, cultural and natural heritage of the Inner Forth?***

As a project mainly focussing on activities An Active Landscape has not made any physical differences to the built, cultural and natural heritage of the Inner Forth. However, in line with the first IFLI strategic theme '**turning perceptions of the Inner Forth around and increase local pride in this place**', the project has raised the profile of the area with local people and visitors, increasing their appreciation and value for its heritage. We hope that this will translate into increased concern and interest in its protection, restoration and improvement in the future.

### ***What difference has this project made to people?***

The project has helped to widen the horizons of those who enjoy walking and cycling, and encouraged more people to get out and explore the natural and historic heritage of the Inner Forth in a healthy and companionable way. The Explorer map and online resources will make it easier for them to navigate around the landscape, and discover new routes they would not have known about. The digital app's 'scavenger hunt' will encourage people to visit some of our key project sites, which teaching them more about the Inner Forth's heritage and wildlife. The equipment for the path volunteer groups will allow them to do their work more easily and effectively, and help to maintain these routes to make them more accessible and pleasant for those using them.

### **Useful Links**

IFLI Explore the Forth interactive website page allowing people to search for appropriate walks and cycles around the area. <http://www.innerforthlandscape.co.uk/explore/walking-cycling>

IFLI Explore the Forth app can be downloaded from AppStore or Google Play

### ***Future Plans***

Although the activities associated with the project came to an end in March 2018, one walking group were keen to continue visiting new areas, and the project lead agreed to continue leading walks for a further five months. In many cases walkers have said they will now revisit sites themselves having been introduced to them through the project. IFLI paths will continue to be maintained using the equipment

funded through the project, while to online resources will be maintained for a further 10 years through the IFLI management and maintenance plan.

### Lessons Learned

It became clear quite quickly that rather than create new walking and cycling groups, it was much better to work with the existing groups and help them to maximise their impact.

Tea and cake are a vital part of any walk or cycle. They enable you to spend some 'quality time' with the people on the walk, finding out what they feel is important, and building a relationship that results in those people sharing their positive experiences with their own friends and family.

### Photographic Evidence

*A healthy walk through the Kinneil Estate showcased a number of IFLI projects*



*Braveheart walk leaders learning about local plant ID to share with their walkers*



*Birding by bike proved a popular event*



*Signs were put up to highlight IFLI projects and encourage more people to use these new facilities*



This path has been improved as part of the **Inner Forth Landscape Initiative** by the Central Scotland Green Network Trust, to encourage people to walk and cycle more in the Inner Forth area. **Active travel is good for your health and the environment.** The project was supported by the National Lottery through the Heritage Lottery Fund.



### Funding Partners

**Funding raised by  
The National Lottery**  
and awarded by the Heritage Lottery Fund

