PARKLIFE

YOUR NATURAL HEALTH SERVICE

ISSUE - 4
SUMMER 2022

Glasgow CITY COUNCIL

CONTENTS

See what your council's Parks Development Team, partners and community groups have been doing for your area this year.

Please note that Glasgow City Council is not responsible for the content on any links to facebook groups or external partners pages within this document.

01. **INTRODUCTION**
BY ALISON MACDONALD

02. **COUNTRYSIDE RANGER'S DREAM**
THE MAGNIFICENT 11

03. **ALEXANDRA PARK PLANTING PROJECT**
NHS RESTART SERVICE

04. **GLASGOW HEALTH WALKS**

05. **ADDRESSING CLIMATE CHANGE ACROSS OUR CITY**

06. **QUEEN'S PARK POLLINATOR PARK UPDATE**

07. **DELIVERY OF SCOTLAND'S COVID MEMORIAL**
A COLLABORATIVE SUCCESS

08. **POLLOK COUNTRY PARK**
OUR HIGHLAND CATTLE

09. **ELCHO GARDENS COMMUNITY PROJECT**

10. **RESTORATION OF THE DOULTON FOUNTAIN ON THE GLASGOW GREEN**

11. **ENHANCING AND PROTECTING PEATLANDS**

12. **CLEANING THE MAIN RANGE OF GLASSHOUSES AT GLASGOW BOTANIC GARDENS**

13. **RECYCLING GRANITE KERBS FROM GEORGE SQUARE TO GLASGOW BOTANIC GARDENS**

14. **GBG CARNIVOROUS PLANT COLLECTION**
GOING PEAT FREE

15. **MEET THE TEAM**
KEVIN MCCORMICK

I AM VERY HAPPY TO HAVE BEEN INVITED TO INTRODUCE THIS LATEST EDITION OF GLASGOW CITY COUNCIL'S PARKLIFE NEWSLETTER. THE EVIDENCE OF THE BENEFITS OF GREENSPACE FOR OUR HEALTH AND WELLBEING HAS BEEN ACCUMULATING OVER MANY YEARS AND IT IS VERY MUCH OUR NATURAL HEALTH SERVICE, BENEFITING OUR HEALTH DIRECTLY THROUGH PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND NATURE REDUCING STRESS AND INDIRECTLY THROUGH OUR SOCIAL INTERACTIONS. IMPORTANTLY FOR OUR CHILDREN, THERE IS STRONG EVIDENCE THAT EXPOSURE TO GREENSPACE IS ASSOCIATED WITH IMPROVED MENTAL WELLBEING, OVERALL HEALTH AND ENHANCED COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT. HOWEVER, UNFORTUNATELY EVEN BEFORE COVID-19, THERE WERE DISPARITIES IN OUR ABILITY TO ACCESS AND USE GREENSPACES.

More recently, as we increased our understanding of the direct and indirect impacts of climate change on health and health inequalities, we have also become more aware of the importance of ensuring our adaptation and mitigation responses both minimise the harms and maximise the benefits for health. How we manage our greenspaces is a crucial part of this.

In Glasgow, we are rightly proud of our flagship parks and I have spent many happy hours walking, cycling and playing in Pollok Country Park and on Cathkin Braes. However, for those who find it more difficult to get out and about, it is our local parks that are our most important resource. Whether for half an hour of peace and quiet from a busy house, for a quick game of football with the kids before bedtime, or to meet a friend for a walk after being stuck alone in the house all day, it is our local parks and their ability to meet a range of our different needs that matters most.

01. INTRODUCTION

Public Health Scotland recently published a summary of people's experiences of using their local greenspace during Covid-19. People who used greenspaces reported positive benefits, particularly for their mental health and wellbeing, but these benefits were not experienced equally. While many people's use of greenspace increased, some people, including those that did not have access to a garden or shared outdoor space at home, did not access or use parks and other public greenspaces. Unfortunately, this was more likely in those who were older or who had an underlying health condition or disability, or who were on lower incomes. Worryingly, during the first lockdown, in our Covid Early Years survey one third of children hadn't visited any public greenspace at all in the week before it was carried out, while fewer families from lower-income households reported positive experiences of greenspace, both at home and in the local area

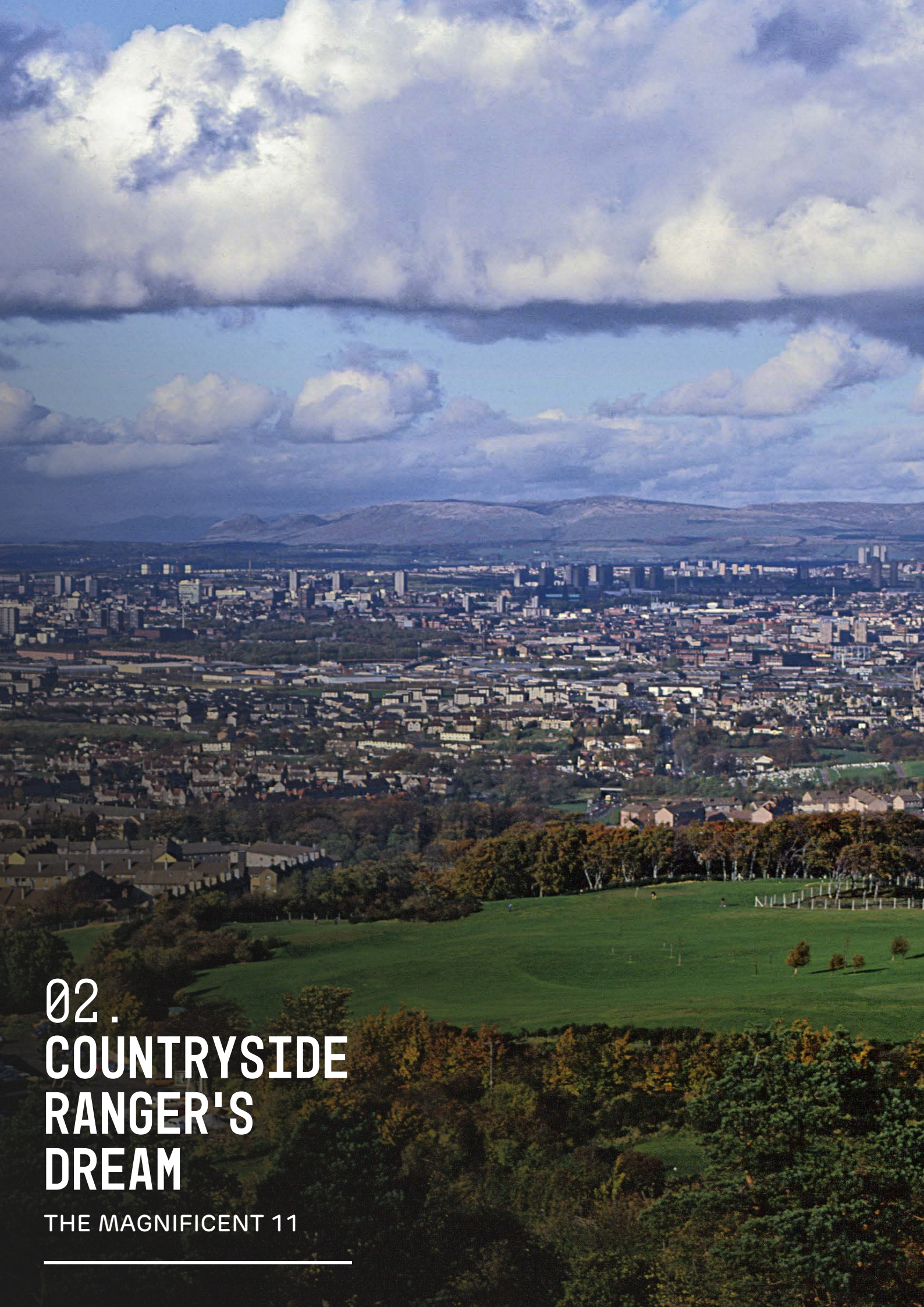
This is particularly concerning because there is some evidence that greenspaces may have an important role to play in tackling health inequalities. This also means thinking about the facilities available within our parks that improve access for those who do not currently benefit. This includes benches for sitting, resting or chatting, and toilets, a vital resource at both ends of the age spectrum, as well as the quality of the walking and wheeling environment travelling to and within these spaces.

The recent Improvement Service report, highlighting the reduction in real term spending in parks and open spaces over the last decade is a wake-up call. Our greenspaces are crucial public health and community assets, and it is time to revisit their value and include the health, community and environment benefits in our decision-making on investment, resourcing and management.

We have an opportunity through the development of Open Space Strategies and undertaking Play Sufficiency Assessments for communities to come together with health, environment and planning to improve access to local high quality green space to ensure everyone has the opportunity to experience their benefits. Let's commit to working together to do that.

ALISON MACDONALD

Organisational Lead, healthy active environments
Public Health Scotland



02. COUNTRYSIDE RANGER'S DREAM

THE MAGNIFICENT 11

At the end of last month, the *'greenest urban walk in Scotland'* – **The Magnificent 11 Trail** was officially opened by broadcaster and outdoor enthusiast Cameron McNeish.

It comes 14 years after Gary Linstead, a NRS Countryside Ranger for south-east Glasgow first had the idea of creating this circular route linking green spaces on the Southside of Glasgow.

As Gary explains:

The idea for the Magnificent 11 happened in 2008 after looking at my area map and seeing there may be potential for some of Glasgow's quality green spaces to be linked together and so also, into a possible walk.

With these links established, and a community ally in Glasgow Ramblers, our next step was to connect local communities around this route. Initially this was with each of their own parks or green spaces in new, or re-stablished Friends of Groups. The ultimate aim is for each of the groups to then come together in a FoTM11; 'green connections' that will sustain and maintain the Magnificent 11 into the future.

That said, a different take on connections may be in our hearing people say today, how well they are 'connected'. However, this is too often for their WIFI and/or to the world wide web. But how many of us are actually 'connected' to our local natural green spaces?

Group Image are Left to Right:

- **Dave Garner** - Natural Environment Officer (NRS – Parks Development)
- **Kevin McCormick** - Assistant Manager (NRS – Parks Development)
- **Gary Linstead** - Countryside Ranger (NRS – Parks Development)
- **Lucy Wallace** - President (Ramblers Scotland)
- **Cameron McNeish** - Broadcaster, Author and Outdoorsman
- **Annette Christie** - Bailie (Glasgow City Councillor)
- **Allison Greig** - Senior Countryside Ranger (NRS – Parks Development)
- **Alan Watt** - Treasurer (Glasgow Ramblers)
- **Jeannie Cranfield** - Delivery Officer (Ramblers Scotland

The 11-mile trail visits several local nature reserves, two city parks, two farms, a site of special scientific interest and Glasgow's highest point at Cathkin Braes. It takes in Linn Park LNR (Local Nature Reserve), King's Park, Castlemilk Park, Fernbrae Meadows LNR, Cathkin Braes LNR inc' Windlaw Marsh and finally the Cart and Kittoch Valleys SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest). From woodland and heaths, to wild grasses and bird reserve marshes. A walk that can be enjoyed as a whole, or in each of its four parts, either independently or together.

The route's development was led by the council's Countryside Rangers and Glasgow Ramblers volunteers; works included step building, path surface and drainage improvements, stile installations, vegetation cutback and strimming and one or two walk-over bridges. Oh and 130+ way-markers around its 11 miles. None of this could have happened without good support from friends of groups and volunteers - for Linn, King's and Castlemilk Parks, for Fernbrae Meadows and from Carmunnock Heritage Society, Carmunnock Community Council and Parklee Farm.

Cameron McNeish and Gary Linstead install the final way marker

Gary concludes:

> The Magnificent 11 offers, improving health and wellbeing not just to all the local communities in and surrounding Castlemilk, but to all Glaswegians citywide, and of course our city's visitors. It's a fantastic walk; in fact, a Magnificent walk - up to 90% of the route is in green space. Can any other urban environment in Scotland offer an 11mile circular walk route with that amount of quality green space around you?

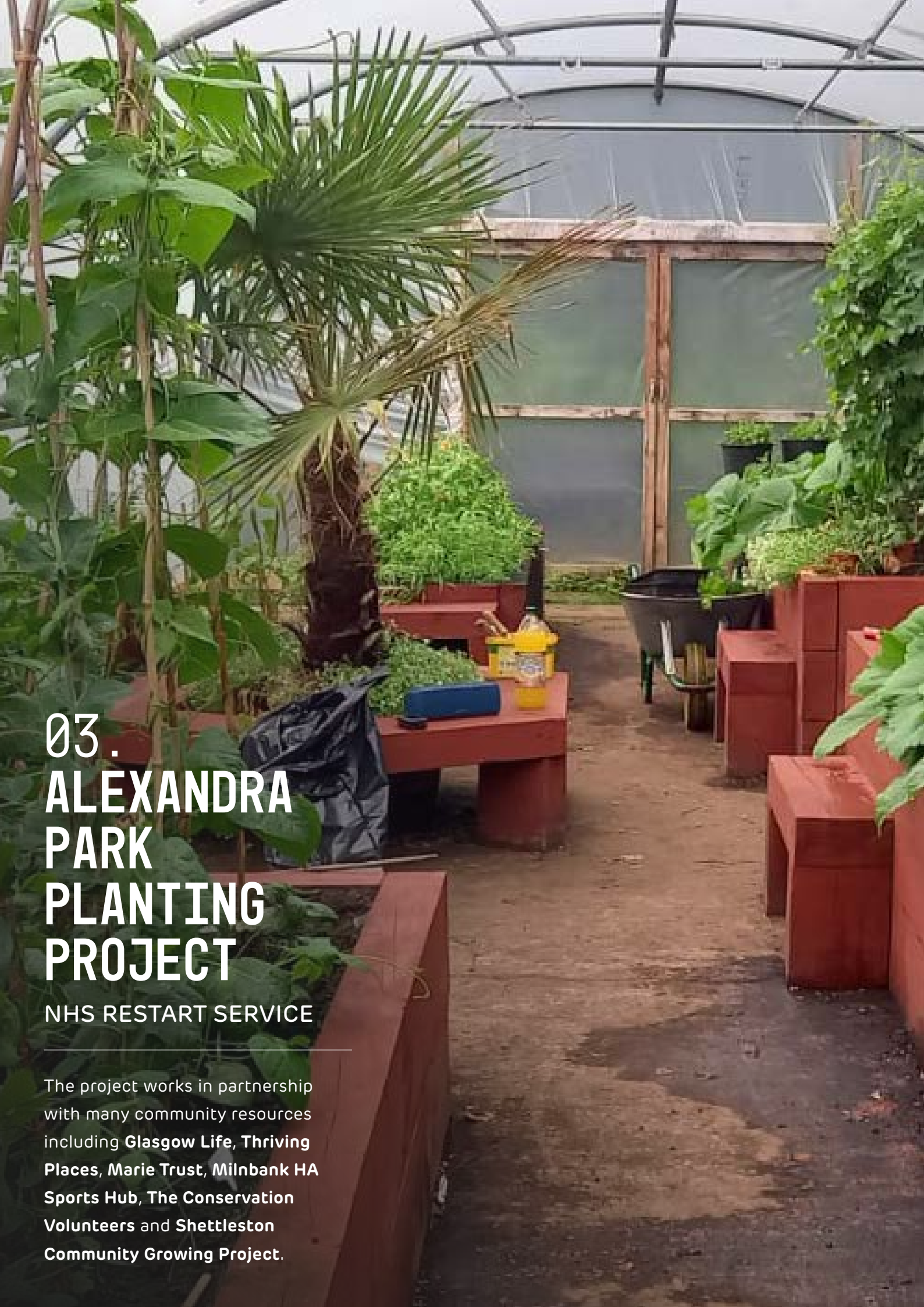
At the official opening Cameron McNeish was joined by Bailie Annette Christie, Community Volunteers, Glasgow Ramblers and Council Officers, to hammer in the final way-marker at the top of the Cathkin Braes.

The route was developed on a modest budget of less than £5000 and with funding from Ramblers Scotland and the council's Wee Green Grant.

Visit *www.glasgowramblers.org.uk/mag11* to see the route and download a map or GPS file.

And on Facebook at *www.facebook.com/Magnificent11Glasgow/*

Feel free to share a 'like' or after walking the route, add your own walk feedback in a bit of chat and images.



03. ALEXANDRA PARK PLANTING PROJECT

NHS RESTART SERVICE

The project works in partnership with many community resources including **Glasgow Life**, **Thriving Places**, **Marie Trust**, **Milnbank HA Sports Hub**, **The Conservation Volunteers** and **Shettleston Community Growing Project**.

Together with Glasgow City Council Parks Development Team and Property and Consultancy Services, the NHS Restart project has established a growing base at Alexandra Park. We are in the process of working together to establish a longer-term occupation agreement for the sustainability of the planting and growing project.

Various studies now show that being outside and connecting with nature can promote and enhance feelings of wellbeing, improved energy and motivation, alleviation of depressive symptoms and an overall sense of wellbeing are recognised positive effects of engaging with nature. This service offers training in horticulture skills, planting and growing, sowing and harvesting your own food and the upkeep of a garden (from pots on balconies to larger garden areas).

Restart is an NHS community-based project that provides a service for people who have had a mental illness and are part of a community mental health team. The project provides training and education for those individuals and refers to them as trainees. Restart offers the trainees a wide range of meaningful activities and group work in various types of training areas across the city.

The Restart Project is a recovery focused/orientated service and recognises that working in partnership with the trainees empowers them to take an active role in their placement at Restart. This helps them to set and achieve their personal goals and plan for the next step in their recovery journey. We can monitor their distance travelled through paperwork purposefully designed to chart wellbeing.

Restart works on the ethos of CHIME, which is a mnemonic for Connectedness, Hope/optimism, Identity, Meaning/Purpose and Empowerment. The aforementioned are all the ingredients required for recovery and Restart provides each of these within the training/groupwork sessions.

Restart is nurse led and also employs the expertise of Trainers and Vocational Guidance Counsellors who walk side by side with our trainees to support them to fulfil their potential. We also have a number of volunteers that facilitate and co-facilitate groups within the service.

Attending the Restart project provides our trainees with a safe place to meet other people who understand how they are feeling, a reason to get up and gain structure in their week, opportunities to take part in meaningful activity and training and enables them to take ownership of how they would like their recovery to move forward in the future whether this involves working towards employment, volunteering or further education.

Various studies now show that being outside and connecting with nature can promote and enhance feelings of wellbeing, improved energy and motivation, alleviation of depressive symptoms and an overall sense of wellbeing are recognised positive effects of engaging with nature. This service offers training in horticulture skills, planting and growing, sowing and harvesting your own food and the upkeep of a garden (from pots on balconies to larger garden areas).

04. GLASGOW HEALTH WALKS

Heather Macleod
Sport and Physical Activity
Development Officer
Good Move Team
heather.macleod@glasgowlife.org.uk

Health Walks are free, friendly walks around an hour long led by volunteers taking in a local park or greenspace. They are a great way to get a bit more active, explore your local area in the company of others and meet new people. With over 50 health walks a week happening across the city there will be one near you!

Everyone is welcome!

Why walk? Regular physical activity has been proven to:

- Help keep your brain active
- Helps you relax and reduces stress levels
- Help you sleep
- Help maintain a healthy weight
- Reduce risk of heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes, cancer and depression

Health Walk participants tell us they feel:

- Happier and enjoy meeting people
- Less tired and have more energy
- Healthier and fitter
- More confident to go out and walk on their own or with family and friends
- More positive about things

Glasgow Life is also currently recruiting new volunteer Walk Leaders to support the Health Walks. So, if you like walking, have a wee bit of free time and would like to help others please do get in touch.

For more info and the current Health Walk timetable visit *www.glasgowlife.org.uk/communities/good-move/walking*, email *walking@glasgowlife.org.uk* or call **0141 287 0963**

05. ADDRESSING CLIMATE CHANGE ACROSS OUR CITY

Glasgow residents will be noticing new signage being displayed across our parks and openspaces in the months and years ahead.

As part of the City's response to the Climate and Ecological Emergency the Council have approved the Climate Plan which includes a series of measures, projects and initiatives aimed at achieving the City's ambition of Net Zero by 2030.

We are all asked to play our part in reaching this goal by looking at opportunities to reduce our carbon output such as recycling more, using public transport, upcycling and growing food locally to name a few.
A number of measures will be undertaken by NRS Parks including adjusting the way we manage our grassland and planting of more trees and hedgerows.

Our wildflower/Green Connector project will see areas sown with wildflower, more bulbs planted and areas allowed to naturalise.

Grassland Management:
Wildflower Action Plan - Green Connectors

LBAP:
www.glasgow.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=31719andp=0

This work in combination with essential changes to how grasslands and recognised habitats are managed to support biodiversity will introduce new dynamic landscapes for the local communities to enjoy bringing people and nature together.

It is also recognised that such initiatives assist in addressing climate change at a local level offering mitigation on rainfall by intercepting surface water runoff and holding it like a 'sponge' as well as plants and soils absorbing and storing atmospheric carbon dioxide. They are also capable of intercepting pollution particulates along roads.

This work is an important aspect of the City-wide aspiration to create habitat networks incorporating active and recreational travel routes by connecting parks, open spaces, road verges and showing how they can play pivotal roles in supporting a wide range of environmental strategies including; the Local Biodiversity Action Plan, Pollinator Plan, The Climate Plan and the Glasgow Open Space Strategy.

Areas will be assessed and, where included, will fall within one or more of the following:

- Plots where naturalisation has been recommended to us by community or biodiversity organisations
- Slopes to assist in the reduction of surface water run-off
- Areas under trees, to improve habitats and minimise damage to the tree trunks
- Areas of wetter ground less suited to year-round grass cutting
- Plots near watercourses, where naturalisation could help slow the flow of water or pollutants into these watercourses
- Plots where grass cutting necessitates lane closures, on the adjacent road, which would impact on traffic flow
- Plots where protected species, or significant habitats are already present
- Plots near areas of significant habitats, or river corridors, where there are opportunities to extend the benefits and connectivity of this habitat
- Plots recommended by colleagues working in Flood Risk Management
- Plots on or adjacent to peatland.

Additional benefits for us all include:

- Cost savings arising from reduced use of fuel, vehicles, plant and staff;
- Reduced carbon emissions as a result of reduced fuel use;
- Improved air quality as a result of reduced fuel use;
- Reduced traffic congestion as a result of reduced vehicle use;
- Less regular cutting reduces CO_2 release and helps lock-up carbon in soils.

If you would like to nominate a space to create a new wildflower/ green connector area within your neighbourhood, please get in touch with the Parks Development team to discuss further.

06. QUEEN'S PARK POLLINATOR PARK UPDATE

Thanks to **Friends of Queen's Park** and **The Conservation Volunteers**

Our Parks Development Team have been working on the creation of Glasgow's first Pollinator Park, Queen's Park with works beginning in Spring 2021. Hogganfield Park LNR's Pollinator Pit was the first example of this type of work in Glasgow, installed there in 2014.

The vision for Queen's Park to be a Pollinator Park was one dedicated to the conservation and development of pollinator habitat for current and future generations. Projects within the park will promote awareness and understanding of the role of pollinators in achieving local and global environmental sustainability and showcase pollinator projects that are a model for citizens and communities in Glasgow and beyond.

Queen's Park (approximately 148 Acres) was laid in design by Sir Joseph Paxton, and has gone through changes over the years.

The COVID-19 pandemic emphasised the importance of our parks and open space and the key role such locations play in our physical and mental wellbeing as well as providing an important role in maintaining connections for the city's biodiversity.

By re-imagining and creating a focal point for Queen's Park we tried to encourage residents to spend more time in the outdoors. The opportunity to provide people with a place to walk, cycle, play or simply sit and enjoy the experience of nature buzzing around them in the heart of the city cannot be underestimated.

The attached video highlights the impact small changes have made to the landscape and the environment: *www.youtube.com/watch?v=6PBKXCYEpZU*

The following is the rationale for designating Queen's Park as a Pollinator Park in support of not only the variety of butterflies (e.g. ringlet and meadow brown) and other invertebrate species (e.g. buff-tailed bumblebees) to be found there but also to provide the local community with the knowledge that this is a special place.

When we looked closely at Queen's Park and its unique topography, we see that it already has a series of landscapes and habitats with Camphill clothed in woodland that continued to the west side of the park and its boundary with Pollokshaws Road and Langside Avenue.

It is however, to the south and east that we saw that opportunities could be opened up both subtle and more significant changes to enhance, diversify and increase pollinator habitats in the Park by developing flower-rich meadows.

In a time when Glasgow had declared both Climate and Ecological Emergencies it was essential that, as officers and citizens, we reviewed our green spaces to see how they can bring to an urban situation the resilience and vibrancy that can support climate mitigation and reverse biodiversity decline. A review will also play an integral role in how a city like Glasgow manages the resulting changes in weather patterns and unprecedented rainfall events.

Queen's Park offered a template of how subtle changes can bring about major benefits for people and wildlife in the City's parks and larger open spaces.

Surveys carried out by GCC Biodiversity officers highlighted areas within Queen's Park where a change in cutting regimes and enhanced planting could contribute, not only to the local environment, but to the overall ambitions of the city. These areas have been carefully selected so that the shorter, more wildflower rich areas are prioritised for reduced/meadow cuts each year.

In such a proposal there is always the aspiration to extend the season of interest and ensure that there are food sources for early season pollinators and in doing so the opportunity exists to introduce the mass planting daffodils and other spring bulbs, in partnership with the local community.

We see these mass plantings as the spring herald to the colour of the summer meadows that grow up around them as their spring colour fades for another year.

To engage through collaborative activities with a variety of groups from the Friends of Queen's Park, Community Councils, local schools, as well as local and national environmental groups participating in biodiversity enhancements in the first instance would be explored. The Friends of Queen's Park have already contributed time and effort into assisting with the creation of perennial wildflower area with the park and now over twelve months later we can see the natural side of the park and the introduced wildflower beginning to mature with annual splashes of colour including poppies and corncockle alongside the perennial buttercups, bird's-foot trefoil and ox-eye daisies.

AN EVOLVING LANDSCAPE

Parks are living landscapes and there is an opportunity to manage them sympathetically for both people and wildlife and in doing so create a seasonally dynamic and ever-changing visitor experience where every visit would shed new light on nature.

A total of around 1200m2 of wildflower area was created in April 2021 using a partnership of Parks Development officers and NRS operations, this area was sown with wildflower seed and will create a pollen source and a vibrant flower display for years to come, The Friends of Queen's Park and Local Councillor assisted with the seed sowing, this was following up from planting spring flowering bulbs in Autumn 2020 in the park.

A further 35000 bulbs and 6000 wildflower plants were planted on steep sided slopes by NRS operations in this park in Autumn 2021.

07. DELIVERY OF SCOTLAND'S COVID MEMORIAL

A COLLABORATIVE SUCCESS

The development of Scotland's National Covid Memorial is a true tale of Scotland's community coming together to achieve a common goal. Reverend Neil Galbraith asked the public in an article with The Herald in 2020, 'when and how do we remember this?' The poignant question inspired the editor of 'The Herald' Donald Martin to launch a national campaign to raise funds for a memorial, and the response was overwhelming.

Individuals across the country took part in personal challenges in order to raise money for the campaign, with many local businesses and organisations also contributing to the cause.

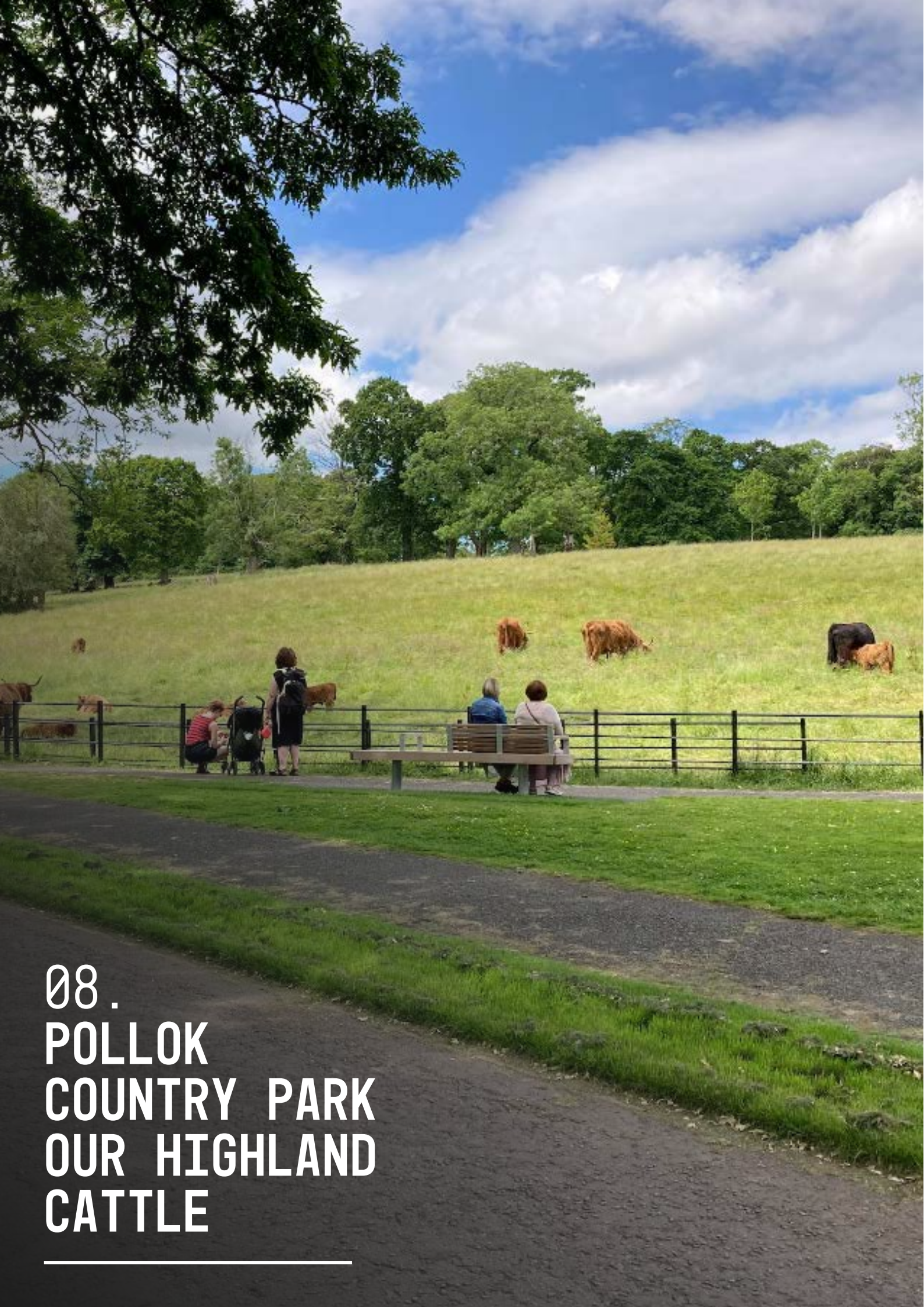
Glasgow City Council worked closely alongside The Herald and social enterprise charity Greenspace Scotland to identify a suitable location for the memorial. The group set up an advisory panel and commissioned local artist and poet Alec Findlay as creative lead.

Alec worked to develop the material and spirit of the memorial, collaborating with highly skilled craftspeople, photographers and technicians to curate and communicate the emotive input from members of the public and families who have experienced loss due to the pandemic.

Glasgow City Council NRS Parks Development staff (including Countryside Rangers, managers, officers and operational staff) across Pollok Country Park worked tirelessly and collaboratively to ensure that Alec's vision and the work of his team were installed successfully and on time. Pollok Country Park, Estate Manager Paul Brannan and his highly skilled team of operatives worked alongside NRS biodiversity specialists, horticulturists, arboricultural consultants, landscape designers, highway/structural engineers and graphic designers. Planting took place across the site with volunteers supported by TCV Scotland.

Rachel Smith, NRS Assistant Group Manager, Parks Development said, 'The collective team were determined to ensure the work of Alex and importantly the wishes of the families were portrayed within this national memorial to the pandemic. This location within the Country Park is now a place where loved ones and future generations can visit for years to come and reflect, in their own way, on what was a deeply challenging time for everyone.'

The development and delivery of the project culminated in an emotional public ceremony at the site on Friday 27th May 2022. In attendance alongside members of bereaved families were Deputy First Minister John Swinney, Lord Provost Jacqueline McLaren, artist Alec Finlay, Donald Martin, Editor of The Herald.



08. POLLOK COUNTRY PARK OUR HIGHLAND CATTLE

Our ever popular Highland cattle fold are a huge draw to tourists and locals alike while visiting Pollok Country Park. Looked after by a small team of dedicated staff the cattle not only bring great joy to park users but continue to showcase their talents on a wider stage by picking up numerous awards across the country at agricultural shows.

Melissa Lurinskey, Livestock officer, explains, 'After a quiet 2 years on the agricultural show front due to covid 19, Glasgow City Council's Pollok Fold of Highland Cattle are off to a flying start within the show circuit. Starting the year at the Beith show on 23rd April, Pollok Country Park took 1st and 2nd prize in the cow classes and 3rd on the yearling heifer class and a 1st in the pairs class.

Onto the 7th May we attended Neilston Agricultural Show and walked away again with a 1st in the senior cow class, a 2nd in the junior cow class, 2nd and 3rd in the yearling heifer class and the same for the calf class with a second in the pairs class.

With many shows still to come such as Stirling, the Royal Highlands show, Turriff show which will hold the biannual national show of highland cattle in addition to the Biggar and Stars of the Future calf show in November we hope to continue to showcase Glasgow City Council's world-famous fold and have a very successful year.'

Well done to all the team and please come to Pollok Country Park, enjoy the gardens, visit the amazing Burrell collection and Pollok House and watch the world pass by with our fantastic Highland cattle.

09. ELCHO GARDENS COMMUNITY PROJECT

Elcho Gardens is a public greenspace in the heart of Calton in Glasgow's East End, nestled between the Gallowgate and Glasgow Green. The garden is located on Millroad Street where it meets Elcho Street.

Rosemary Robertson of Thenue Communities explains more about this inspiring project:

We first got involved at Elcho Gardens in 2014 when we transformed the space into the Calton Commonwealth Beach. At the time, Glasgow was hosting the Commonwealth Games, and this was our way to ensure that the local community had the chance to participate in the celebratory atmosphere that was being enjoyed across the city. Over 750 people attended over the five-day event and enjoyed ice creams, paddling pools, 30 tonnes of play sand and live music celebrating five Commonwealth countries.

This amazing community participation motivated us to begin a long-term process of garden improvements, food growing, volunteering and wellbeing activities. Since 2014, we have secured range of grants to continually improve the space and increase local use of a beautiful Glasgow Park. Grants were awarded by the Spirit 2012 Fund, Glasgow City Council's Stalled Spaces, The National Lottery Community Fund and Thenue Housing Association. Our most recent grant awarded by The Glasgow Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund will help us to deliver a wellbeing programme in this gorgeous space until December this year.

Activities will take place every Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday 10am – 3pm. All are welcome to come along and meet our Gardener Jane, have a cuppa and find out how they can get involved. Additionally, we will continue to work with local groups such as Calton Area Association, Roots to Recovery (We are With You) and our gardening Steering group to develop new activities on an ongoing basis.

Elcho Gardens continues to be improved physically, with more support provided by Clyde Gateway URC in the form of a Community Benefits Contract with R.J McLeod. This will help us to provide a warm indoor space at the garden with basic kitchen facilities that can be enjoyed by all the wonderful people who use the space. We also hope to provide additional raised beds, improve the storage in our container and add a cycle rack.

Throughout the period, the Parks Development team has provided the project with advice, support and relevant permission agreement for our occupation as part of their community engagement action.

If you would like to get involved or can offer any workshops in support of our wellbeing programme, please get in touch with our Manager Rosie who is based in one of our two community centres, Calton Heritage and Learning Centre, 423 London Road, Glasgow, G40 1AG.

You can email Rosie at: *Rosemary.Robertson@thenuecommunities.co.uk* or call **0141 550 9573**.

Alternatively, you can pop into the gardens to meet Jane as mentioned. We look forward to welcoming you to this beautiful space.

10. RESTORATION OF THE DOULTON FOUNTAIN

ON THE GLASGOW GREEN

The Category 'A' listed Doulton Fountain on the Glasgow Green was manufactured in 1888 and is the largest three-storey structure terracotta fountain in the world. Designed by Arthur Edward Pearce and modelled by William Silver Frith in the fashionable lavish French Ecole des Beaux Arts style.

Dunville Park off the Falls Road in West Belfast contains a 'sister fountain' - a smaller but very similar beautiful buff Victorian terracotta fountain, designed by A E Pearce and built by Doulton of Lambeth.

www.belfastcity.gov.uk/things-to-do/parks-and-open-spaces/a-z-parks/dunville-park

The Doulton Fountain is 13m high, and has an outer basin diameter of 21metres and features 13 individual figures and groups of figures which are just under life size.

The fountain is a monumental piece of sculptural work produced to commemorate Queen Victoria and the British Empire. The fountain features four groups of figures representing India, Canada, South Africa and Australia

The fountain was first displayed at the Glasgow International Exhibition of Industry and Science (The Great Exhibition) of 1888. The fountain was then relocated to Glasgow Green in 1890. Following a £3.75 million refurbishment and relocation project the fountain was restored to its former glory around 2005.

Every July NRS has to turn on the water for the Doulton Fountain in time for the Events season. The season runs till November when frosts come, with the threat of blown pipes.

Terracotta is a fragile material, prone to frost damage. The two years of Covid have not been kind to the fountain, so an inspection in May 2022 revealed that the fountain required a significant amount of repairs by skilled artisans.

These repairs were carried out in June by NRS sub-contractors and the fountain turned on by City Building just in time for the 2022 TRNSMT Festival at the start of July.

11. ENHANCING AND PROTECTING PEATLANDS

AT THE SEVEN LOCHS

Members of NRS Parks Development Team were pleased to join a large group of international volunteers to carry out critical conservation work at Commonhead Moss Local Nature Reserve – one of Scotland's few remaining lowland raised peat bogs, and the largest in Glasgow at 18Ha. This priority habitat is incorporated in the Seven Lochs Wetland Park, with the base for the volunteers on the day located at Drumpellier Country Park (North Lanarkshire Council).

Peatlands cover only about three per cent of our planet's land, but account for nearly half the world's wetlands.

Billions of tonnes of carbon are sequestered in these bogs. It's estimated that they store more than four times the carbon held by the world's forests even though those forests cover six times the area that peatlands do. The amount of carbon locked in peat bogs may be twice that in the atmosphere.

The bog is considered 'degraded' due to centuries of anthropological processes which have caused the systematic drying out of the ground. This degradation has facilitated the invasion of the habitat by native pioneer Betula hirsuta (Downy Birch) whose roots take up even more water from the land. Left unchecked, the vast amounts of carbon stored within the anaerobic peat will be released into the atmosphere as the land dries out – a global issue responsible for 5% of all greenhouse gas emissions. Work on the peat bog involved the clearance to ground level of scrub stem and leaf growth to enable habitat regeneration.

Co-ordinated by Seven Lochs project lead Scott Ferguson and supported by TCV Scotland, GCC staff were accompanied by representatives from the RSPB, Chivas Brothers Ltd and idVerde Ltd.

Scott said;

> It was great to have so many volunteers assisting within the Wetland Park. Restoring our Peatlands is a priority for the project with the benefits of fully functioning boglands well documented. I'd really like to thank them and their companies for their support and look forward to welcoming everyone back again in the not too distant future.

The volunteers were also engaged in other conservation work taking part across Commonhead Moss and Drumpellier, including clearance of fly-tipped waste, the planting of wildflower/wetland species, wildlife species recordings and the construction of new bird boxes to encourage roosting and to boost biodiversity. Hospitality was provided, conversation was buzzing and the highly collaborative team worked tirelessly between two local authorities to deliver positive environmental benefits.

Peatlands are a type of wetland that occurs in almost every country on the globe. They store vast amounts of carbon—twice as much carbon as all the world's forests. By conserving, protecting and restoring peatlands globally, we can reduce emissions and revive an essential ecosystem that provides many services, for people, the planet and the climate—including their vital role as a natural carbon sink.

12. CLEANING THE MAIN RANGE OF GLASSHOUSES AT GLASGOW BOTANIC GARDENS

One of the tasks carried out at Glasgow Botanic Gardens is the cleaning of glass at high level both in the Kibble Palace and the Main Range of Glasshouses. This task normally involves the hire of high-level access equipment over a long period of time with down time in cleaning often used to gain access to high hedges for seasonal maintenance.

This year high hedge cutting was delayed to avoid any disturbance to nesting birds and the high level work at the Kibble Palace was paused until autumn. Clear glass in the Kibble Palace is not always desirable and can lead to scorching of the leaves of plants held within National Tree Fern Collection. Some may not be aware that in past times the Kibble Palace had applications of whitewash applied to glazing panes to reduce sun damage in summer. It is planned that a late summer/autumn 2022 clean will enhance light levels at the Kibble when the plants are approaching another Glasgow winter.

This still leaves NRS with the task to clean the Main Range of Glasshouses at Glasgow Botanic Gardens, with this year's clean was the first for 4 years!

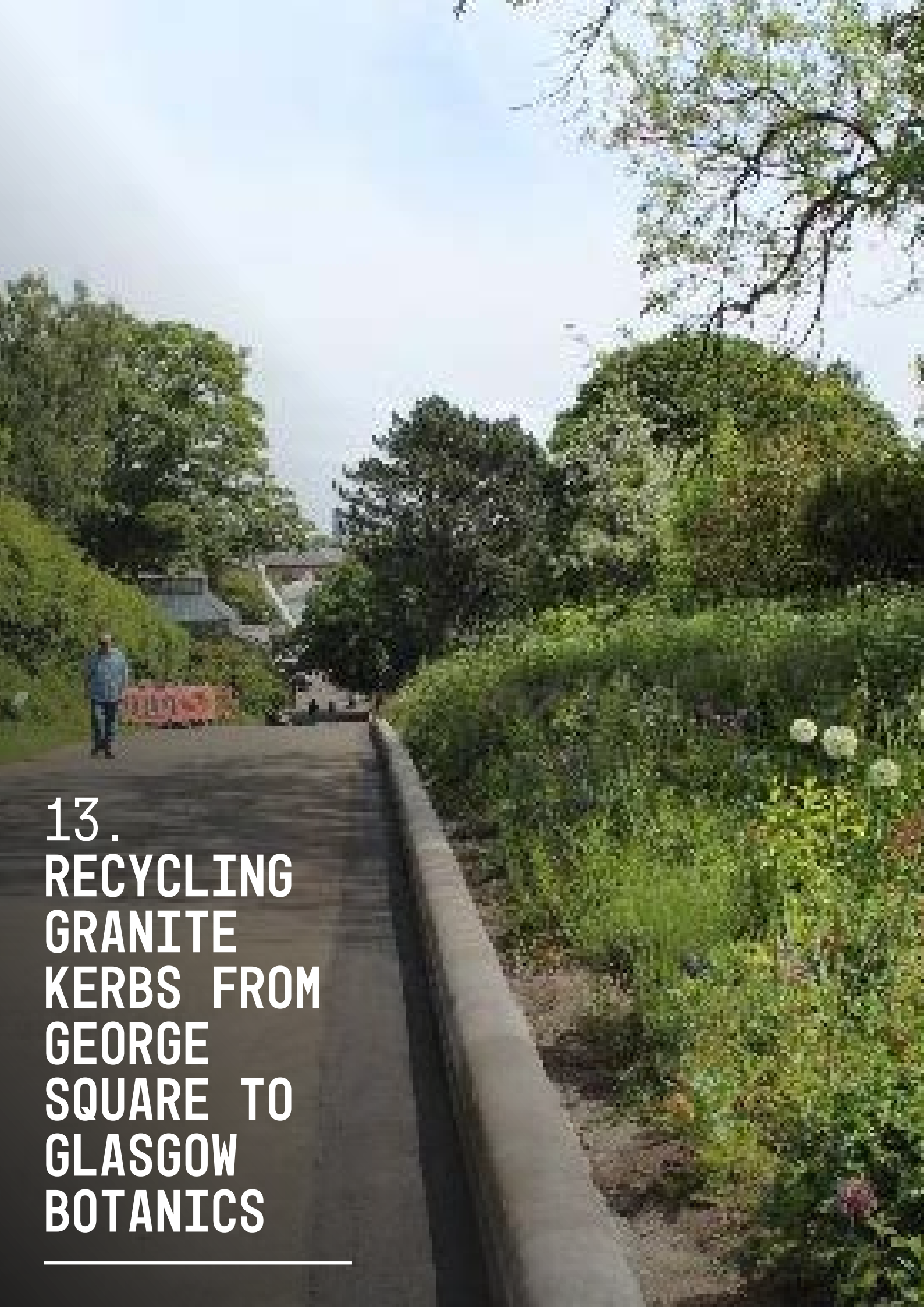
This is an enormous undertaking, the main range is over 250 feet long and 90 feet high at its highest point around the Palm House – in general terms the main range consists of around ten thousand square feet of glass. While low level cleaning is carried out by Glasshouse staff, high level access is more of a challenge.

In June 2022 NRS contractors had to steam clean the outside of the Palm House glass using a DOFF steam cleaning machine accessed by a telescopic crane with a fifty-metre boom. More confined areas to the rear of the glasshouses had to be steam cleaned using a smaller machine to obtain access, namely a Spider telescopic mini crane.

The gutters had to be carefully cleaned out with a DOFF steam cleaning machine as they were choked with bird guano, grass, and vegetation. The pigeons at the Botanic Gardens are a bit of a local feature and they like nothing better than to warm their feet on the high-level Palm House as they keep a watchful eye for visitors with crisps, cakes or a packet of more appropriate seed-based bird food.
There is a however a considerable Health and Safety issue here, as there is a risk of the public catching infections from pigeon droppings and bird borne diseases with high level vents often surrounded by flocks of birds. The very highest levels of the Palm House are a more opaque polycarbonate covering but the majority is glass and aluminium with the original footings and supporting structure carrying a Grade B listing from Historic Environment Scotland.

As the cleaning started the improvement in light levels at medium and low level was immediately apparent and this will benefit the more tropical plant collection within the Palm House. The taller palms will act as a natural sunscreen for the understorey planting and ground flora display. The reduction of herbage and guano held in the guttering will reduce any strain on the aluminium shell around fixtures and fittings.

The Main Range of Glasshouses is built along the same layout as the original teak range of glasshouses that was moved from the original Glasgow Botanic Gardens Sandyford site in 1841.The glasshouses are open from 10am till 6pm, 365 days a year and feature an award winning national collection of orchids and begonias, as well as ten other spectacular display houses.... and some very, very clean glass.



13. RECYCLING GRANITE KERBS FROM GEORGE SQUARE TO GLASGOW BOTANICS

For generations, stone has been sent to landfill in the United Kingdom. Many of us can remember being disappointed when Glasgow's red sandstone tenements were demolished, whin kerbs and granite setts were lifted from our streets, and the lovely stone taken away to disposal at landfill.

This is no longer the case. Recycling stone has become a strategic objective of NRS. Over the last few years, whin kerbs and granite setts rescued by our colleagues in Roads Operations have been gratefully re-used in parks such as Dawsholm and along the Kelvin Walkway.

A recent example of this policy is the re-use of 90 metres of exquisite granite kerbing which once graced the western lawns of George Square. Many of the kerbs were two metres long and weighed 0.6 tonnes. This kerbing was saved during a redesign of the Square and stored in Victoria yard till a suitable project was identified, namely along the edge of the herbaceous border at Glasgow Botanic Gardens, directly opposite the Main Range of Glasshouses.

Aside from the sustainability argument, there is a valid economic case for re-cycling stone. This particular granite would cost in excess of £800 a linear metre to buy in 2022, so arguably this inventory of reused stone is worth around £72,000.

In May 2022 the rescued stone was laid out by NRS contractors in its new incarnation along the edge of the herbaceous border leading from the entrance to the herb gardens at the Botanic Gardens all the way to the Glasgow Flower Garden at the top of the 'hill'. The kerb takes the place of a thin strip of turf and will now act as solid edge to protect the plantings from damage while acting as an attractive foil to the seasonal herbaceous display. This is a very appropriate end point for the upcycled kerb border as The Glasgow Flower Garden organisation is a community group committed to cutting out the 'flower miles' in cut flower production.

Another great example of NRS supporting recycling, carbon reduction and the circular economy.

14. GBG CARNIVOROUS PLANT COLLECTION

GOING PEAT FREE

The reduction of the amount of peat used in horticulture is a goal for Glasgow Botanic Gardens in line with Glasgow City Council's declaration of both a climate and ecological emergency. Often the specialised collections of plants at the Botanic Gardens were excluded from peat reduction targets but ways can be found to grow these collections without peat use. Terrestrial carnivorous plants, in cultivation, have traditionally been grown in peat. In the wild, their habitat, although acidic and wet, does not necessarily contain peat. When the carnivorous plant display was established in the North wing following the restoration of the Kibble Palace in 2006 peat was used combined with a top dressing of live Sphagnum Moss.

To find peat free alternatives for the carnivorous plants at GBG, trials were carried out using coir as a growing medium. As sections of the main display became stagnant, the peat was replaced, using a growing medium based on the peat free mix used by National Collection holder, Mike King of Shropshire Sarracenias. He recommended one part Cornish grit and 2 parts of fine milled bark and we eventually arrived at 2 parts fine propagation bark and 1 part grit.

By 2021, the pond in the middle bed was overrun with the aquatic fern, Marsilea quadrifolia and had to be refilled every day because the liner leaked. The bed was also very weedy with bedstraw, oxalis and Marsilea. In early 2022, the middle bed was rejuvenated using a peat free compost made of 2 parts milled bark, 1 part washed grit and1 part perlite.

The plants were dormant when the work was carried out, but they are now putting on fresh growth and establishing nicely. The old peat which was removed from the bed has been recycled on the compost heap. Peat free mixes will be used for any remaining sections when that work is scheduled.

Sphagnum Moss

The display beds are top dressed with live sphagnum moss. This was collected in 2006 with permission from a site in Western Scotland. The sphagnum has proliferated across the display house and surplus moss is harvested further propagated. GBG is now self-sufficient in its sphagnum moss supply and does not need to wild collect this valuable carbon capturing resource.

I joined GCC at the end of 2021, having spent 8 years at a previous Local Authority. Like a lot of colleagues, my first couple of months with the Council were spent mostly from home. Thankfully, the past few months have meant I've had opportunity to visit many of our amazing parks and open spaces, as well as get to meet so many of our great team members and community groups. All of whom have made me feel very welcome.

15. KEVIN MCCORMICK

MEET THE TEAM

A little about me: I'm firstly a Dad of 3 amazing kids - Angus, Struan and Bonnie. I'm married to Ailsa, who is a Zookeeper. I'm musical and play in a band (when I get the chance).

I don't get much time for sport nowadays, but when I do, you'll see me on my bike or at Firhill cheering on the Jags (trying to remain positive). In terms of my role, I'm an Assistant Manager (Parks and Greenspaces Vision) within Parks Development team. A central part of my work is to implement and develop our Parks Vision, which sets out how we manage and maintain our parks and open spaces.

We complement the pride and passion our residents have for the diverse array of parks and open spaces we're so lucky to have in Glasgow. For a further read of our Parks Vision, visit: *www.glasgow.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=44167andp=0*

Alongside our Project Officers, a large part of my day job involves working with our 70+ Friends of Groups and other community organisations, all of whom are at different stages. Being from the city myself, it's a privilege to support them in enhancing Glasgow's parks and greenspaces. Some of the work going on in the city is truly humbling.

My team also includes 8 extremely dedicated and experienced Countryside Rangers, all of whom work across our 92 parks and greenspaces. Thanks to the hard work from our Ranger Service, a notable success story of late was the opening of The Magnificent 11 - *www.glasgowramblers.org.uk/mag11.html*.

It's been a busy summer and looking ahead, myself and team have a range of exciting projects being worked on including our Parks Lighting Review and continuing our good work with the Glasgow Friends Forum.

Feel free to get in touch should you wish more information on our work and how we can help you enjoy your greenspace or develop your own group.

If you would like to share a story or wish to speak to one of the team regarding Glasgow Parks please email:

land@glasgow.gov.uk