



Healthy Rivers, Healthy Communities

Update 2016

Welcome to the final Healthy Rivers, Healthy Communities project update!

Healthy Rivers, Healthy Communities has been an exciting and inspiring project which saw five primary schools from the Clyde and Ayrshire river catchments take an active role in the stewardship of their local river environment.



Delivered by the **Clyde River Foundation** and the **Ayrshire Rivers Trust** between 2015 and 2016, the project was supported by the Greggs Foundation, Rivers and Fisheries Trusts of Scotland and Keep Scotland Beautiful.

The project explored the connection between the health of a river and the health of the community living around it and aimed to promote responsible use of rivers and greater enjoyment of the wildlife on our doorsteps. This final update focuses on some of the highlights along the way.



Phase 1: Meet Your River

A class from each school visited their river with scientists from the Clyde River Foundation and Ayrshire Rivers Trust to assess river health in a range of activities...

- **Electrofishing** demonstration: to find out what fish were present
- **Site mapping** - making notes of man-made impacts (e.g. pollution) and the presence of any invasive non-native species (e.g. giant hogweed)
- Kick sampling for **aquatic invertebrates** - a useful indicator of water quality (see front cover!)
- **Tree identification** - pupils learned how to identify trees along the riverbank and learned about the many important roles trees play in the environment

Back in class, children identified the aquatic invertebrates they collected in a pop-up laboratory and collated all of their data to produce a **River Health Score**. The findings were used to produce posters to spread the word throughout the schools and their communities. Meet Your River sparked some great **discussions** and many **ideas** for the next two phases in adopting their river.



Discovering endangered wildlife on our doorsteps

Greenmill to Greenland!

Atlantic salmon were found in Lugar Water near Greenmill Primary, Cumnock. They migrate to the Atlantic Ocean to mature before returning to our rivers to breed and face many threats along the way.



We were delighted to discover protected species in our biodiversity surveys - another great reason to care for a river!

European eels in Dumbarton and Kilsyth!

European eels are Critically Endangered so it was great to find them in two of the rivers. This eel started its life in the Sargasso Sea and is now maturing in the Gruggies Burn near St Patrick's Primary School, Dumbarton.



Water voles in Airdrie! The North Burn near St Serf's Primary School is home to water voles (entrance to burrow shown). This is Britain's fastest declining wild mammal so it was great to discover this urban population just five minutes away from the school!



Site meeting with Greggs plc! Pupils from St Serf's Primary School met with members of the Greggs team, the Clyde River Foundation, the Rivers and Fisheries Trust of Scotland and The Rivers Trust at the North Burn, Airdrie to discuss the project and showcase river adoption in action!

Phase 2: Take action!

Armed with facts and lots of creative ideas, pupils began to **take action** to improve their rivers and to **raise awareness** about how we can take better care of our rivers as a society.

Each school performed river corridor clean-up and pupils recorded data on the different types of litter collected. This provided real **data** to analyse and helped target any campaigning efforts. They learned about pollution and invasive non-native species found along the riverbank including Giant hogweed and Japanese knotweed, both of which were discovered across the five sites. The positive impact on the environment was noticeable from the first clean up and now schools are acquainted with their sites, they look forward to using their river resource for future **outdoor learning**.



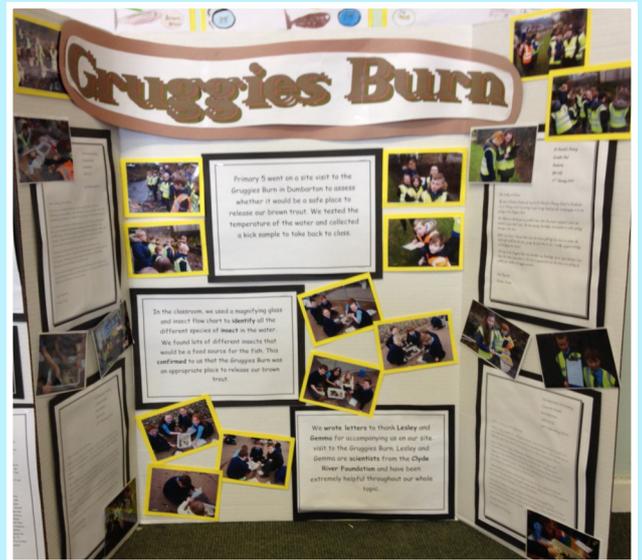
River adoption receives recognition

Healthy Rivers, Healthy Communities appeared in local news which was a great way to promote the project and spark interest from the community. West Dunbartonshire Council awarded the Clyde River Foundation an 'Amazing Things' education award for their work with St Patrick's Primary School on the Gruggie's Burn. The project received high praise from teachers as it provided an ideal basis for delivering many learning outcomes for the Curriculum for Excellence. Well done to all involved!



Phase 3: Community outreach

For the river adoption process to be both **successful and sustainable** in the long term, the building of good relationships between the school, the community and their burn or river was essential. Community outreach included highlighting the project through local press coverage; welcoming families to school open days for a showcase of work, sharing learning across teaching classes and inviting the community along to river days and clean-up activities. We were delighted by the enthusiasm shown by everyone involved and hope that the five schools, their rivers and communities continue to benefit from the Healthy Rivers, Healthy Communities initiative.

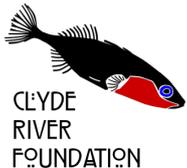


Thank you!

We are very grateful to all of our participating schools and project supporters for making Healthy Rivers, Healthy Communities a success. The project was delivered by the **Clyde River Foundation** in partnership with the **Ayrshire Rivers Trust** and was supported by the **Greggs Foundation, Rivers and Fisheries Trusts of Scotland** and **Keep Scotland Beautiful**.

The following schools participated:

Greenmill Primary in Cumnock, Ayrshire, St Patrick's (Dumbarton), St Serf's and Golfhill Primaries (Airdrie) & Kilsyth Primary.



<http://www.clyderiverfoundation.org/education/healthyrivers>

Contact us!

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