

## Support Agencies for Highland Eco Schools

**\*The Highland Council Countryside Rangers are the key contact for Highland Schools on Eco Schools – see number 7 below**

### 1. Abriachan Forest Trust

The Abriachan community bought their local woodland and have transformed it over the years into a centre of excellence for forest education. It is brilliantly resourced with trained Forest School leaders, Forest School courses, and on-the-ground resources such as tree houses, nature trails, bird hide & loch, adventure playground, iron-age hut, sustainable classroom & compost loos. Abriachan has become a centre for Forest School training, catering for all age groups.

**[www.abriachan.org.uk](http://www.abriachan.org.uk) Phone: 01463 861 259 Email: [visit@abriachan.org.uk](mailto:visit@abriachan.org.uk)**

### 2. Aigas Field Centre

Aigas is committed to delivering quality programmes in a child-friendly manner that aim to introduce new concepts and ideas through play and exploration. The Field Centre is run on environmentally friendly policies and this approach is part of the educational experience of groups visiting Aigas. The centre is the first Eco-Centre in the Highlands with a residential centre open to all Highland schools.

**Pre-school Topics:** The senses, plants & animals, nature walk & scavenger hunt, a load of old rubbish, creepy crawlies.

**Primary Topics:** Look after your own backyard, mini beasts, water studies, biodiversity in our local area, the wonder of birds, wild woods & plentiful plants, recycling & decomposition, our changing world.

**Secondary Topics:** Geography fieldwork, biology fieldwork.

**[www.aigas.co.uk](http://www.aigas.co.uk) Phone: 01463 782443 Email: [info@aigas.co.uk](mailto:info@aigas.co.uk)**

### 3. BTCV

The main BTCV programme is called Green Gym, which offers participants a chance to get fit through a planned programme of exercise through gardening and other landscaping activities. A team of adult volunteers can visit a school to work on clearing an overgrown area for example. Secondary pupils can join in an adult Green Gym session in their community. There is a cost for these services, but BTCV can help source grants to cover the costs.

**[www.btcv.org](http://www.btcv.org) Phone: 01463 811560 Email: [inverness@btcv.org.uk](mailto:inverness@btcv.org.uk)**

### 4. Community Energy Scotland

Community Energy Scotland is a Scotland-wide support agency for schools & communities wishing to install sustainable energy systems. The North of Scotland Education Officer, Brid McKibben, is available to run focused workshops with schools on renewable installations. Funding advice is also available on the main grants available for renewables.

**[www.communityenergyscotland.org.uk](http://www.communityenergyscotland.org.uk) Tel: 01349 860120**

**Email: [info@communityenergyscotland.org.uk](mailto:info@communityenergyscotland.org.uk)**

## **5. CSV's Action 4 Sustainability Project**

CSV's Action 4 Sustainability project has run since 2004, supporting Highland schools. Project Co-ordinator Elanor Gordon is a trained & experienced assessor for Eco-Schools Scotland & through a contract with Highland Council was the official contact in Highland for Eco-Schools. The website [www.action4sustainability.org](http://www.action4sustainability.org), has a substantial back-catalogue of good practice seen in schools, guidance, & sharing of the outcomes of the Eco-Schools Forum events, with space for schools to share good practice. Also, CSV itself has several key national campaigns which are useful to schools – the grant scheme [www.actionearth.org.uk](http://www.actionearth.org.uk), and the national volunteering day, Make a Difference Day- [www.csv.org.uk/campaigns/csv-make-difference-day](http://www.csv.org.uk/campaigns/csv-make-difference-day).

## **6. Forestry Commission Scotland Education Rangers**

The Forestry Commission has education rangers based in their districts around Highland. Forest ranger-led visits can be arranged at Forestry Commission sites or at schools in the area free of charge. Various topics relating to woodlands and forestry can be covered and activities will be relevant to the 3-18 Curriculum for Excellence and appropriate to the stage of the pupils concerned. A visit will provide an enjoyable and educational experience, increasing the understanding, skills and interest of the children. Staff are fully disclosed, and first-aiders.

[www.forestry.gov.uk/scotland](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/scotland) Tel: 01463 791575

email: [invernessross&skye@forestry.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:invernessross&skye@forestry.gsi.gov.uk)

## **7. Highland Council Countryside Rangers Team**

From May 2010, the Council Countryside Ranger team will become the key contact for Highland Schools on Eco Schools. This can include practical assistance to schools or sign-posting them to other key support agencies in Highland. To date the Rangers have supported schools in a wide-variety of outdoor activities including: leading ranger walks, supporting school ground developments – building bat & bird boxes, advising & aiding the development of wildflower meadows – carrying out biodiversity monitoring, and supporting school Eco-Committees to carry-out practical environmental improvements. Every school in Highland is matched to a local Countryside Ranger in their area and this list can be found at: [www.hvlc.org/Eco Schools](http://www.hvlc.org/Eco%20Schools) or [www.highland.gov.uk/leisureandtourism/what-to-see/rangers/](http://www.highland.gov.uk/leisureandtourism/what-to-see/rangers/)

Tel: 01463 702279 Email: [george.duff@highland.gov.uk](mailto:george.duff@highland.gov.uk)

## **8. Highland Council Energy & Sustainability Team**

The team have extensive experience working with Highland schools on climate change, energy efficiency and renewable energy. They can work with all age groups with presentations, workshops, films and inspiring resources to help young people learn about energy issues. The team can also help co-ordinate sourcing funds/ scoping the feasibility of installing renewable energy, and can offer various energy efficiency improvements for the building. There is also an online discussion forum, Highland Energy Forum. For details of all their services, check their website at:

[www.highland.gov.uk/businessinformation/propertyandarchitecturalservices/energyandsustainability/energyadvice/](http://www.highland.gov.uk/businessinformation/propertyandarchitecturalservices/energyandsustainability/energyadvice/)

Tel: 01463 703506 Email: [dennis.mackay@highland.gov.uk](mailto:dennis.mackay@highland.gov.uk)

## **9. Highland Council Health Promoting Schools Team**

Support is available from health promoting schools to maintain health & wellbeing as part of your core school life. The website has key guidance on all aspects of nutrition regarding healthy packed lunches, food for celebrations, home baking and school snacks, maintaining health promoting schools status, and details of the latest version of the Your Choice Implementation plan.

[www.highland.gov.uk/learninghere/childrensservices/healthyliving/?wbc\\_purpose=ba](http://www.highland.gov.uk/learninghere/childrensservices/healthyliving/?wbc_purpose=ba)

Tel: 01463 702066 Email: [louise.jones@highland.gov.uk](mailto:louise.jones@highland.gov.uk)

## **10. Highland Council Litter Education & Enforcement Officers**

Since 2009, the authority has employed three litter education & enforcement officers, in Inverness, Nairn, Badenoch & Strathspey; Caithness, Sutherland & Easter Ross; and Ross, Skye & Lochaber. The team work with school pupils of all ages, running a range of competitions to engage schools positively in dealing with litter in their school grounds and wider environments. The team also can also offer engaging workshops to inspire pupils to deal with their litter in effective ways, and take the problems it causes seriously. The team have run a Highland-wide film & poster competition for primary & secondary schools, and the winning entries are available for all schools to use.

<http://www.highland.gov.uk/yourenvironment/wastemanagement/wasteawareness/wasteawareschools/default.htm>

Tel: 01349 868 439 Email: [recycle@highland.gov.uk](mailto:recycle@highland.gov.uk)

## **11. Highland Council Waste Aware Team**

The team has several officers located in key locations around Highland – Dingwall, Caithness, Skye and Lochaber, meaning that all schools can access their services. The team can offer a variety of free workshops on a range of waste minimisation topics to pupils of all ages – composting, the three Rs, waste-free lunches and more. In particular, they have very engaging giant floor games and resource boxes to loan out to schools. The team can also provide free compost bins & lessons on how to use them. Additionally, their mascot, Compost the Cow, is available to visit schools to give a sense of fun to proceedings!

<http://www.highland.gov.uk/yourenvironment/wastemanagement/wasteawareness/wasteawareschools/default.htm>

Tel: 01349 868 439 Email: [recycle@highland.gov.uk](mailto:recycle@highland.gov.uk)

## **12. Highland Environment Network**

This regional environmental forum provides services to schools including a website, newsletter, annual environmental conference, and the Plot to Pot project which worked with four schools to grow vegetables. As a consequence, its website has guide sheets on growing vegetables available to download. It also developed a resource to support biodiversity field trips called Schools Out, and some of these are still available.

[www.highlandenvironment.org.uk](http://www.highlandenvironment.org.uk)

## **13. Highlands & Islands Enterprise**

The regional enterprise agency has been supporting schools on climate change & renewable energy learning since it launched 'The Renewables' toolkit & workshops in the Highlands & Islands. Initially, 45 schools in Highland's P6/7 classes had an interactive workshop with lots of

games & gadgets on climate change, energy efficiency, & renewables, with a resource box they got to keep, and brief training for the lead teacher. The second phase of the programme has seen HIE offer twilight CPD sessions around the region, with teachers getting to take revised version of the original toolkit back to school to use with their classes.. For secondary schools, they run a regular debating competition – the Big Green Challenge. See their website to find out more about all the activities for primary & secondary pupils.

<http://www.hi-energy.org.uk/Education/education.html>

#### **14. Highland One World Group**

Highland One World Group's Development Education Worker Janis Keast introduces a global dimension to learning and sustainable development – the concept which underpins the Eco-Schools programme. Janis offers engaging workshops for pupils, CPD for teachers, runs the Global Teacher Network (a peer education forum for teachers), has invaluable resources for loan and a termly newsletter for schools & nurseries.

[www.globaldimension.highlandschools.org.uk](http://www.globaldimension.highlandschools.org.uk)

**Tel:** 01349 868289 **Email:** [janis.keast@highland.gov.uk](mailto:janis.keast@highland.gov.uk)

#### **15. John Muir Award**

The award programme aims to promote educational, social and personal development through exploration of wild places and involvement in conservation. It has four challenges – Discover a wild place, explore its wildness, conserve – take personal responsibility and share experiences, and is carried out at one of three levels, introductory, intermediate and advanced. The award is available to Highland schools through Alan Smith in the Cairngorm National Park Authority Office.

[www.jmt.org/jmaward-about-the-award.asp](http://www.jmt.org/jmaward-about-the-award.asp)

**Tel:** 01479 870518 **Email:** [alansmith@cairngorms.co.uk](mailto:alansmith@cairngorms.co.uk)

Phone 01796 470000

#### **16. Royal Highland Educational Trust**

RHET offers a range of activities for pupils of all ages to learn about farming & rural issues. Specifically they offer farm visits; classroom speakers; projects/activities – Count & Grow, Farmhouse Breakfast, Estate Days, A Tractor goes to School, Charles Brown Trophy; resources: Meaty matters, Scotland's Farming Year DVD, Landscape of Scottish Agriculture, Looking at the Farm, SAC Biology resource; teacher training. Its Highland Countryside Initiative is project managed by Maggie Wormald.

[www.rhet.org.uk](http://www.rhet.org.uk)

**Tel:** 0131 335 6227 **Email:** [rhetinfo@rhass.org.uk](mailto:rhetinfo@rhass.org.uk)

#### **17. RSPB**

The national charity for birds has an extensive range of resources & support for schools in Highland with field teachers based at reserves or available for school visits. The RSPB website can tell you where they're based. Additionally, programmes like Bird Friendly Schools, Big Bird Watch, BBC Breathing Places Schools, Wildlife Explorers, the largest children's environmental club in the world and Wild Square, their web-based survey project, which all schools can take part in.

[www.rspb.org.uk/school\\_visits/sitesbycountry/scotland.asp](http://www.rspb.org.uk/school_visits/sitesbycountry/scotland.asp)

## **18. Scottish Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SSPCA)**

The local education officer for this charity offers a variety of workshops to schools around the region about cruelty to animals. One which is particularly relevant to the Eco-Schools programme is the workshop on litter, and the harm that dropping it causes animals. Other topics can include: Pets; Farming; Scottish Wildlife; Conservation; Pollution, and Animals and Citizenship. The education officer also has a range of interesting resources to give to schools on these themes.

[www.scottishspca.org/education](http://www.scottishspca.org/education)

Tel: 03000 999 999

## **19. Soil Association Scotland**

The Soil Association has two programmes in Highland: Food for Life – a campaign that works with the Local Authority's catering service to improve the quality of school meals to include 75% unprocessed, 50% local and 30% organic ingredients. The other programme, Crofting Connections, works with the Scottish Crofting Foundation & the Crofters Commission to encourage young people to sustain the crofting way of life, through learning traditional skills from crofters, and creating their own climate friendly growing project. There are also workshops available in Food for Life, From Farm to Fork, Food Miles & Down on the Farm (there is a cost for these).

[www.soilassociation.org/scotland/tabid/269/default.aspx](http://www.soilassociation.org/scotland/tabid/269/default.aspx)

Tel: 0131 666 2474

## **20. Waste Aware Scotland**

Marina Fraser is the Zero Waste Adviser working in the Highland Council area. Marina promotes waste reduction programmes such as home composting; Love Food, Hate Waste; Stop the Drop and promotes the use of peat-free compost. Free compost bins, caddies & compost workshops are also available.

[www.recyclenow.com/home\\_composting/get\\_advice/advisers/marina\\_fraser.html](http://www.recyclenow.com/home_composting/get_advice/advisers/marina_fraser.html)

Tel: 0845 6000 323 Email: [adviser@wrap.org.uk](mailto:adviser@wrap.org.uk)