



Central Scotland Green Network



CSGN CASE STUDY:

FAIFLEY KNOWES GREENSPACE

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Developed and delivered in four years over two phases, the Faifley Knowes Greenspace project has significantly transformed the area, making it a more accessible, biodiverse, and enjoyable space for the local communities of Faifley and Hardgate in West Dunbartonshire.

The improvements provide safe, off-road routes that connect residential areas to local shops and schools, enabling green active travel.

Alongside providing opportunities to improve health and wellbeing, the project has also enhanced the biodiversity and ecological value of the site.

INTRODUCTION

The Faifley Knowes Greenspace project spans a 19-hectare area, strategically located within the Central Scotland Green Network on the edge of Faifley and Hardgate, an area of multiple deprivation identified in SIMD 2020. The project is part of West Dunbartonshire Council's Local Development Plan and aims to enhance both the ecological and recreational value of the area.

Although the site already connected residential areas to local amenities, it was affected by a range of issues such as fly-tipping and littering, while the degraded paths were overgrown and footbridges unsafe, meaning there were significant barriers to use of the space.

The project took advantage of the site's potential to deliver multiple benefits to the local community. Upgrades to the path network and bridges have made Faifley Knowes more accessible to all. New waste bins were also installed at key locations, contributing to the ongoing maintenance and cleanliness of the area.

Alongside the greenspace enhancements, native broadleaf tree planting will increase the biodiversity and long-term development of the site.



Formal paths improve access

PROJECT OUTPUTS

Major access improvements: the focus was to upgrade the existing path network. This included resurfacing paths to improve accessibility and by re-grading or removing steps to create smoother, more navigable routes for all users.

The replacement of degraded wooden bridges with durable metal ones further improved the safety and longevity of the infrastructure. Drainage works and the installation of a new bridge at the northern entrance will also avoid access being compromised by flooding in the future. The new walled entrance to the south also creates a sense of place and a meeting point.

Biodiversity improvements: these included the removal of invasive species like laurel and bracken, and the planting of native trees to create a sustainable and diverse woodland environment. These efforts have also helped to address CSGN priorities like climate adaptation and combating biodiversity loss.

CSGN & NPF OUTCOMES

In delivering CSGN outcomes, the project also contributes to several outcomes within Scotland's National Performance Framework.

- **Environment:** healthier habitats to improve biodiversity were created through the removal of invasive species and new woodland planting.
- **Communities:** a more attractive, accessible, and safer space has been created with the local community's involvement, for use by all.
- **Health:** improved access to an enriching environment means more people are spending time outdoors, taking exercise and enjoying nature. This delivers multiple mental and physical wellbeing benefits.
- **Poverty:** the project has tackled environmental inequality and provided access to local services via active travel routes.

PARTNERS & FUNDING

The project was delivered in 2024 after 4 years of planning and development, with funding secured from the Nature Restoration Fund.

The project is a testament to the collaborative efforts of West Dunbartonshire Council, Green Action Trust, and the local community.

The Faibley Knowes Greenspace project was supported by the Scottish Government's Nature Restoration Fund, managed by NatureScot.



Hardgate entrance: before



Hardgate entrance: after