



Let's Explore Trees in Fife: A Guide for Children and Young People



Benefits of Trees and Forests:

Did you know trees are like superheroes for our planet? Trees do so much – they clean our air, provide homes for wildlife, prevent soil erosion, and even improve our mental health and well-being. Spending time in nature among trees can help us feel happier, healthier, and more connected to the world around us.

Native Trees of Fife:

In Fife, we're lucky to have a rich variety of trees that have been growing here for centuries. Some of our native trees include the mighty oak, the graceful silver birch, and the tough Scots pine. These trees are not just beautiful to look at – they're also essential for our local ecosystems (a big family of plants and animals that live together) and cultural heritage (all the special stories and things that make our community awesome).



Oaks are like the kings and queens of the forest because they're big and strong! Did you know that oaks make little hats called acorns? Squirrels love to collect them for snacks! Lots of animals, like birds and bugs, make their homes in oak trees. It's like having a tree neighbourhood!

Silver birch trees have bark that shines like silver in the sunlight. They're like nature's shiny jewels! When the wind blows, the leaves on silver birch trees dance and shimmer, making them look like they're whispering secrets to each other. People use the smooth bark of silver birch trees to make special paper. It's like the tree is sharing its art with us!



Scots pine trees stand tall and proud, reaching up to touch the sky. They're like guardians of the forest! They grow funny-shaped pinecones that squirrels love to nibble on. They're like crunchy snacks for our forest friends! Even in the winter when everything else is covered in snow, Scots pine trees stay green and strong. They're like nature's winter warriors!

These are some fun facts about a few of the amazing trees we have in Fife. There's so much more to discover about them by getting out in the woods! Find out more facts about different trees [here](#).

Special Trees in Fife:

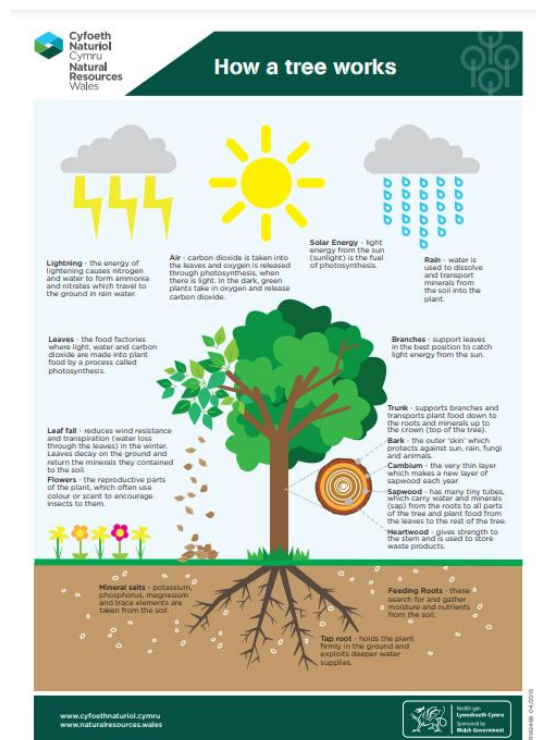
In Fife, we have some truly special trees that hold a special place in our hearts. From ancient oak trees that have stood for hundreds of years to beloved beech trees with stories to tell. They're not just pretty – they help birds, bugs, and other animals too! You can find some of Fife's oldest and most special trees on the [ancient tree inventory](#). In Fife we have a [special trees map](#) that anyone can add their special tree or wood (it doesn't need to be old, just special to you).

Life of a Tree:

Have you ever wondered what it's like to be a tree? From a tiny seedling reaching for the sun to a towering giant providing shade and shelter, the life of a tree is full of adventure. Trees grow, change with the seasons, and support a whole community of plants and animals along the way. Trees have exciting lives, just like us!

Carbon Cycle and Trees:

Trees are nature's carbon superheroes! That's why planting trees helps our planet stay healthy. Trees soak up *carbon dioxide* (a greenhouse gas that traps heat from the sun) from the air, storing it in their leaves, branches, and trunks and woodland soil. If we have too much carbon dioxide in the *atmosphere* (which is like a big bubble around our planet) it makes it too hot. We need to be careful not to add carbon dioxide into our atmosphere. We need to protect the trees that are acting like a carbon store and plant more trees to keep soaking carbon up to help to keep the planet's temperature down. You can find out more about [How a Tree Works \(see picture opposite\)](#).



Keeping Trees Safe in Fife:

Fife is home to beautiful trees, woods and forests, which are essential for our planet's health and well-being. In Fife, we need to look after our trees. We have laws (rules) that ensure their safety and through conservation efforts, manage woodlands because they're so important for us and nature.

But we can't do it alone! Everyone in our community plays a vital role in protecting our precious trees. Here are some simple actions that you can take that would make a big difference in protecting trees:

1. Keep a look out: if you see any trees being damaged tell an adult as it might be a tree that needs protection. Sometimes trees must be removed because they have been planted in the wrong place or have a disease. If you have a query about a tree needing protection you can always email protected.trees@fife.gov.uk

2. Spread Awareness:

Talk to your friends and family about the importance of trees and why they need our help. You can also create posters or presentations about tree conservation for your school or community. The postcard competition is a great way to shout out about how special trees are.

3. Care for Trees:

Adopt a tree in your neighbourhood and take turns watering it regularly. Make sure to remove any litter or weeds around the tree to keep it healthy.

4. Volunteer:

Join local tree planting event or conservation groups. Many communities have groups that organise tree care and planting events, and they're always looking for volunteers of all ages.

5. Respect Trees:

Treat trees with kindness and respect. Climbing or carving into trees can harm them, so always ask an adult before interacting with trees in public spaces.

6. Learn More:

Explore your local area and get to know your trees. Go further afield and visit nature centers, botanical gardens, or arboretums (like a big outdoor museum full of lots of different trees from over the world) to learn about different types of trees and why they're important. The more you know, the better you can help protect them!

7. Reduce, Reuse, Recycle:

Encourage recycling paper and cardboard to save trees from being cut down for new paper products.

8. Support Tree-Friendly Practices:

Encourage your community to do things that make trees and animals happy, like farming and growing food in ways that don't hurt trees or animals and making sure wild animals have safe places to live.

9. Tree planting:

You could look for places where trees can be planted in your garden, local park or greenspace and organise a tree planting events with friends, family, or classmates. Did you know that every year, community groups in Fife plant around 18,000 trees? It's like a big tree party! These new trees are like tiny superheroes, helping to combat climate change and provide homes for wildlife. By planting trees, we're not only making our environment greener but also creating a better world for future generations.



Please enter our Postcard for the Future design competition to help share the benefits of Fife's trees, woods and forests. Think about the words connect, grow and thrive, make some artwork and write a message to the Fife Climate Forest.

Additional Resource for teachers, parents and guardians:

There are lots of woodland activities and learning resources from the [Woodland Trust](#), [Outdoor and Woodland Learning Scotland](#) and [The Tree Council](#).

See the [Tree Planting: A Guide for Teachers and Youth Workers](#) for more information and how you can get involved.

For links with STEM subjects see STEM By Nature: [Trees, Woods and Forests](#)