

Connecting people & nature:

how making space for nature supports wellbeing and attainment in East Ayrshire

[Make Space For Nature](#) is a seasonal campaign from NatureScot, Scotland's natural heritage agency. It provides practical tips for everyone to reverse nature loss and fight climate change. East Ayrshire schools and learning partners have used #MakeSpaceForNature tips as part of their John Muir Award activities to improve wellbeing and attainment.

Here's a hand-picked selection of **Five Ways to Wellbeing** examples that aim to inspire us to Make Space For Nature in our everyday lives:

Ways to Make Space For Nature...



Be a citizen scientist

East Ayrshire Council wellbeing and attainment John Muir Award examples...

Give... Do something good. Seeing yourself, and your happiness, linked to the wider community can be incredibly rewarding.

Pupils from Fenwick Primary School completed The Conservation Volunteer's [Deadwood Survey](#) in their local woodland. Feeling part of, and giving back to, something bigger is at the heart of each John Muir Award experience – boosting self-esteem and giving confidence to tackle issues such as nature loss that can seem daunting at first. [STEM By Nature](#) offers more connections between STEM skills, wild places and outdoor learning approaches.



Learn outdoors

Keep learning... Try something new. Take on different responsibilities. Learning new skills will make you more confident.

Pupils and teachers from Galston Primary School used the Keep Scotland Beautiful [Youth Climate Film Project](#) as motivation to learn film making skills and help share their John Muir Award. They chose to document the planting of a small woodland in their school grounds and why this was important to them and the planet. Watch their [When should we plant trees?](#) short film inspired by thinking globally, acting locally.



Volunteer near and far

Connect... Spending time in nature is a great way to connect with the people as well as the nature around you.

Whatriggs Primary School grounds adjoin the Bellfield Estate, a public park. Combining a John Muir Award with Archaeology Scotland's Heritage Hero Award, staff and pupils volunteered their time to meet and interview local residents and produce a collaborative community [Bellfield Estate Heritage & Nature Trail](#).



It's good for you

Take notice... Be curious. Catch sight of the beautiful. When we slow down and take the time to engage, our senses, sights and sounds become clearer. Stronger nature connections boost enjoyment and wellbeing.

Family support workers used local greenspaces to support literacy skills. Their Family John Muir Award activity included fun syllable sound scavenger hunts (bumblebee 3; dandelion flower 6), bug hunting and bird song identification – with the sound of “head banging” tree sparrows becoming firm favourites. [Literacy and nature](#) offer a suite of resources to help develop literacy skills through engaging with our natural world.



Go Local

Be active... Exercising makes you feel good. Find a physical activity you enjoy and that suits locality and levels of mobility and fitness.

St Joseph's Academy Nat 5 and Higher Geography John Muir Award group used Glen Sannox on neighbouring Isle of Arran as a location for pupils to carry out river study coursework activities. The walk into the glen was for some pupils their first experience of remote Scotland. The sense of physical and mental wellbeing shone through with smiles on tired bodies at the end of the day.

Find out more...



[Five ways to wellbeing](#): research based accessible day-to-day actions important for our wellbeing.



[Learning Outdoors Support Team](#) (LOST) is part of East Ayrshire Council's Education Service.



The [John Muir Award](#) is the John Muir Trust's national environmental award scheme.



Wild and Well is the John Muir Trust's campaign celebrating the invaluable connection between wild places and people's health. Browse or contribute towards the growing evidence and wide-ranging information highlighting the power of wild places to support and enhance our wellbeing – emotionally, spiritually, physically, and mentally.

johnmuirtrust.org/wild-and-well