



# Combining heritage with a healthy and active programme

## Enhancing an existing active travel programme with guided tours training

The Our Heritage, Our Future team works with communities to develop a range of heritage skills such as creating guided tours, creating exhibitions and displays, carrying out historical research and recording the historic environment. Through these activities participants can work towards obtaining accreditation or get involved just for fun! We provided guided tour training for a group in East Kilbride and caught up with one of the participants to see how she benefitted from the sessions and how she will use her new skills in the future.

### How it started

Healthy and Active in East Kilbride is a community focused organisation offering health and wellbeing services, a community hub, mobility services and activities that support people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities to make positive changes to their lives. They expressed a strong interest in the Our Heritage, Our Future guided tour training after seeing the course made available to a

nearby group in Carluke. Having completed similar training many years ago they saw this opportunity as a way to build on local knowledge and those hidden stories on their doorstep.

They also recognised that the training would enable them to increase their offering to the community members they work alongside. As a result of the training, they have connected with other local heritage groups, gained a qualification and most importantly, learnt more about the past people and places of East Kilbride.



Above: Claire and her fellow volunteers preparing to give their tours in East Kilbride.

## Training sessions

The in-person training sessions combined interactive presentations, activities and practical work over two days during which candidates carried out historical research, planned and risk assessed a route, explored the area, created content, delivered a two-stop guided tour and reflected on their performance. The Our Heritage, Our Future team were on hand to advise throughout the training and during self-study when candidates researched and wrote their guided tours to include local historic features of their choice.

## Participant feedback



Claire Lees, one of the Healthy and Active in East Kilbride team, gave us some great feedback about what she enjoyed most about the training and how it will help her combine local heritage with the healthy and active activities she helps run.

Left: Claire presenting on one of her tour stops (former bank on Stuart Street, East Kilbride village).

*“I thoroughly enjoyed the course and would recommend it to other organisations. The trainers were all very knowledgeable and friendly and provided refreshments and lunch for both sessions which was very much appreciated.”* – Claire Lees, Community Engagement and Project Worker, Healthy & Active in East Kilbride.

## **Tell us about yourself and what you do at Healthy and Active in East Kilbride.**

I am a Community Engagement and Project Worker so I focus on engagement and networking with local organisations to share the current and upcoming activities and services available within Healthy and Active in East Kilbride.

I currently work on a programme which offers access to weekly sessions covering topics including long-term condition management, pain management, nutrition, diet and physical activity. Participants can then select from a menu of ongoing self-management support through exercise classes, wellbeing and peer support and activities which are available on a flexible basis. I also work on the EK Community Connectors project and help run a wide range of activities and classes from different locations within East Kilbride Town Centre.

## **Why did you want to participate in the Guided tours training?**

The course appealed to me as learning new skills on walk leading would allow me to expand my knowledge on topics such as health & safety and good tour guidance regarding my project work within Healthy and Active in East Kilbride, where we offer guided walks as part of our active travel programme. This course will give me the qualification to assist on these walks.

## **What heritage did you include in your guided tour?**

Having the walk around in the village prior to the training was very insightful and inspiring and gave a lot of inspiration beforehand, there was so much history to be found online. I really wanted to research something that I know everyone would enjoy and I liked that I could add some personal information too. I chose the church as my friends were married there. I then chose the sheltered housing complex as we work closely with them. Both buildings were visually attractive with various historical features and I knew these would be interesting not only to me but for others on the tour.



Above: Claire used props to tell the story of East Kilbride Old Parish Church where her friends got married.

## What did you learn from the Guided tour training?



Above: Claire included a talk about the history of the former manse, which is now a sheltered housing complex, during her guided tour.

I have learned so much about the area I live in during my research, I have lived in East Kilbride my whole life and was unaware of how much history there actually was. I have learned useful breathing techniques to help project my voice, helping to maintain clear communications. The guided tour paperwork was very helpful to break down each section of the planning process, this is good practice, and I will continue to use this process as guidance in organising future guided walks.

## What did you enjoy the most about the Guide tour training?



Above: Claire and her fellow volunteers also received Heritage Heroes Awards from Archaeology Scotland as well as accreditation from the Our Heritage, Our Future team after successfully completing their Guided tour training and assessments.

I enjoyed the group work, the outdoor learning was great, and the sessions delivered by the trainers were enjoyable and insightful. I thoroughly enjoyed the course and would recommend this to other organisations. The trainers were all very knowledgeable and friendly and provided refreshments and lunch for both sessions which was very much appreciated.

## What do you plan to do with the skills you have learned during the Guided tours training?

These newly gained skills will allow me to deliver a better level of instruction and service when organising group walks and has heightened my awareness on how to deliver a safe and interesting guided tour to various groups and ages. The introduction to many of the technical apps were really beneficial, especially apps I was not aware of such as What 3 words.

If you would like to know more about the heritage skills training we provide, please visit the Our Heritage, Our Future webpages or email [communities@keepscotlandbeautiful.org](mailto:communities@keepscotlandbeautiful.org).



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