

# **Fishing for Knowledge**

## **Year 1 Progress Report for Leader**

### **Background**

This innovative partnership project involves introducing children and young people between the ages of 4 and 12 years of age from Dumfries and Galloway to the freshwater environment, its associated animal, plant life and angling in their local river catchment through a series of six tried and tested structured sessions with local schools. Solway Heritage is coordinating the project with the partners delivering the project including the Nith and Annan District Salmon Fishery Boards, Galloway Fishery Trust, Buccleuch Estate and Borderlines. Funding support is from Leader, Scottish Natural Heritage and the Catchment Management Planning Project in Dumfries and Galloway.

All of the sessions with the schools are designed to build both knowledge and anticipation; they improve not just participants angling skills but also knowledge of their local environment, its history, geography, geology, climate, hydrology, animal and plant life. The object of the sessions is not just to improve standards of angling and teach youngsters how to fish. It is also to try and instil a caring attitude towards their local environment and get young people to respect the needs of wildlife and other users of that environment, thus reducing littering, fly tipping and disorderly behaviour. It is also important to encourage children out into the countryside and encourage them to take part in healthy sport and recreation.

The project also held family fishing activity days to allow adults and children the opportunity to try out a new sport not tried before, along with learning about the freshwater environment. The sessions were held at the waterside and included most of the practical elements covered in the schools sessions such as dipping for invertebrates, looking at river flow and plant, animal and birdlife in its natural environment. There was also an opportunity to have a go at casting with rods.

### **Year 1 Progress**

The schools that took part in the Fishing for Knowledge project in Year 1 were:-

- Penninghame Primary
- St Ninians Primary
- Glentrool Primary
- Port William Primary
- Lochrutton Primary
- Kirkgunzeon Primary
- Johnstonbridge Primary
- Hottsbridge Primary
- Mouswald Primary
- Hecklegirth Primary

287 children from those 10 schools have completed the schools programme. This was a total of 144 sessions delivered i.e. 6 sessions to each of the 42 classes during May to Dec 09.

The three family fishing days which were also organised in Year 1 were:

- The River Nith at Thornhill on 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2009
- The River Esk in Langholm on 5<sup>th</sup> August 2009
- Powfoot Flounder Fishing Day on 19<sup>th</sup> September 2009

Unfortunately the day on the River Nith had to be cancelled due to torrential rain during the night making the river too high to provide safe fishing. The other two days were both very successful and people gave positive feedback. A total of 44 people took part in the family fishing days in Langholm and Powfoot.

### School Fishing Sessions



Port William Primary



Lochrutton Primary

### Family Fishing Sessions



River Esk at Langholm



Powfoot Flounder Fishing