

Young Ambassadors exploring and enjoying the River Foyle

Thirty young people are graduating today after they successfully completed a 10 week natural heritage programme to become the next Foyle Ambassadors.

The project, which was led by the Loughs Agency with funding from HLF's Young Roots programme, aimed to connect the young people with the natural heritage of the Foyle and raise awareness of its importance.

The participants completed a range of classroom-based activities to develop their personal skills such as confidence building and teamwork. They also spent time at the river bank learning about its biodiversity, species and habitats, picking litter and taking part in activities such as canoeing, boating, hiking and fishing. All of these activities helped the young people as they worked towards achieving the John Muir Discovery Award.

The special graduation ceremony to celebrate their achievements was held as part of the Foyle Maritime Festival. Sailing legend Sir Robin Knox-Johnston was among the invited guests to congratulate the young participants on their success. Speaking at the graduation Sir Robin said "It gives me great pleasure to meet so many young people who are eager to work hard at maintaining the waterways around Derry-Londonderry. As Foyle Ambassadors, they have taken on a very important role here to protect the environment around the lough. We all have a duty to look after our oceans, our loughs and our rivers because they are essential to our very being, and fundamental for all of our futures."

[quote=Tony McCusker, HLF committee member for Northern Ireland]"The young people have learned a host of new skills and really connected to the natural heritage of the river and the shore"[/quote]

Tony McCusker, member of HLF’s committee for Northern Ireland, was also in attendance. He added: “It’s fantastic to be involved in this project which has had such a positive impact on both the young people and the river Foyle. The young people have learned a host of new skills and really connected to the natural heritage of the river and the shore. Their continued support and care will help to safeguard this vital resource and protect it for generations to come and I am delighted to congratulate the Foyle Ambassadors for their hard work and commitment to the project.”

Rosemary McCloskey, Community Engagement Officer said "These young people have really engaged with this programme, shown themselves as true Ambassadors with most taking on volunteer roles during the Foyle Maritime Festival. We couldn’t be prouder".



Foyle Ambassadors enjoying and exploring the river

The Foyle has 30 new Ambassadors