

## Members' Event at RSPB Skinflats Reserve

**There will be a Forum members' visit to the RSPB Skinflats Reserve at 1:00 on Friday 18th November, with a presentation and tour of the reserve.**

**Please note that you will require private transport to the reserve; the reserve lies next to the Kincardine Bridge. Full directions to the tour meeting point are below.**

The reserve hosts the Skinflats Tidal Exchange Project (or STEP Forth): seawater is allowed to flood what was a grass field, at high tide. The water creates saline pools and salt marsh on the reserve, benefiting many different types of bird as well as other wildlife such as otters. A new flood embankment at the back of the site contains the water on the reserve and ensures that no other properties or land will be affected.

The project will improve the area for wildlife and create a safe feeding and breeding ground for birds like pink-footed geese, ringed plover and redshank, as well as a nursery for juvenile fish – some of which have been seen in the pools already – and feeding area for otters.

It is the first time the technique of Tidal Exchange has been implemented in Scotland and is only the second managed retreat project in Scotland. This is also the first step in realising RSPB Scotland's vision of a much more extensive wetland complex around the Forth.

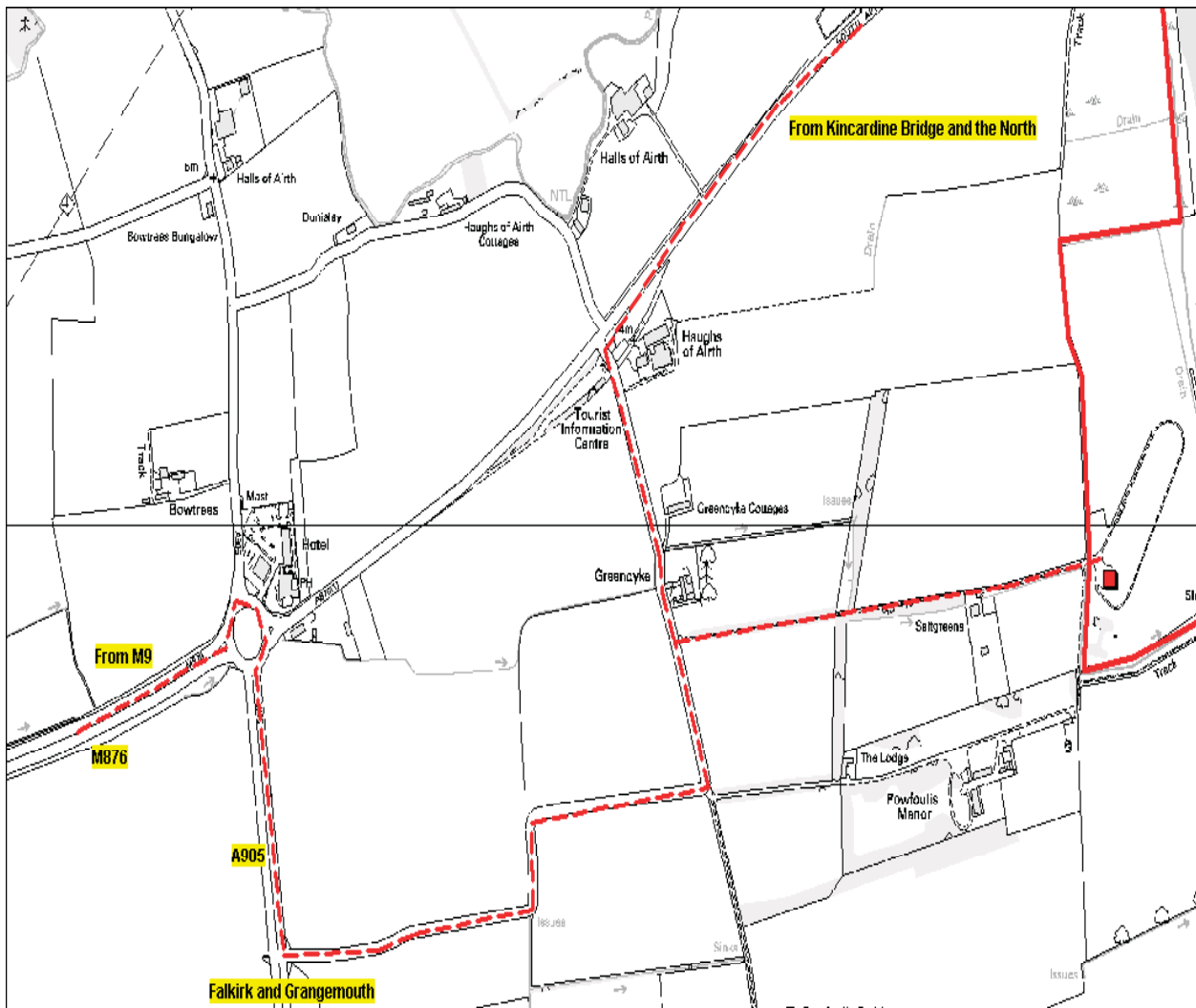
Two pools with gravel topped islands have been created on the site, which is hoped to attract breeding ringed plover. Other plans for the future include the building of a hide on the reserve, allowing people to get close-up views of the resident and visiting wildlife. Fencing will be erected as there may be a need to graze the field with cattle in the future. The reserve boundary extends out-with the seawall onto an area of mudflats, which are internationally important for wintering ducks, geese and waders, and which are covered by the Firth of Forth Special Protection Area (SPA) and Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) for these species.

Please note, if you wish to attend, please e-mail or phone the Forum Administrator by Wednesday 16th November at [secretary@forthestuaryforum.co.uk](mailto:secretary@forthestuaryforum.co.uk) or 01383 420104 to confirm attendance. We will need this confirmation to inform the RSPB of numbers attending on the day. Tea, coffee and biscuits will be ready on your arrival. Please wear stout shoes or Wellington boots, and wet weather gear may be needed!

We look forward to seeing you there. The Forum would like to thank Toby Wilson and Nick Chambers of the RSPB for helping arrange this event.

## Getting to RSPB Skinflats – FK2 8PP

- Take the M876 signed to Kincardine Bridge off the M9.
- Leave the motorway at the Bowtrees roundabout – A905 (signed Grangemouth).
- Take the A905 south towards Grangemouth.
- After 100m turn left where signed to the Powfowlis Hotel. Follow this road until a T junction/offset crossroads is reached where the hotel is to the right.
- Turn left and then right down the lane with a 15mph speed restriction, a mossy centre and an avenue of trees. Follow this to the end, over the speed bumps. Bothkennar research station is at the very bottom.



Any problems getting there on the day, please contact Nick Chambers, the RSPB Central Scotland Reserves Site Manager, who will be showing us around on 07843 513369, or Chris Cutts (mob: 0776 2488572).