

## A Summary of the John Muir Award in 2016

The John Muir Trust vision is of a world where wild places are protected, enhanced and valued by and for everyone. The John Muir Award aims to be a leading UK-wide initiative for engaging people in activity promoting the value of wild places. It contributes to the work of the Trust by:

- encouraging people to value and care for wild places
- promoting the values associated with them; relating to public policy initiatives including health, wellbeing and education; developing new partnerships and innovative ways of connecting people with nature
- enhancing wild places in a wide range of settings.

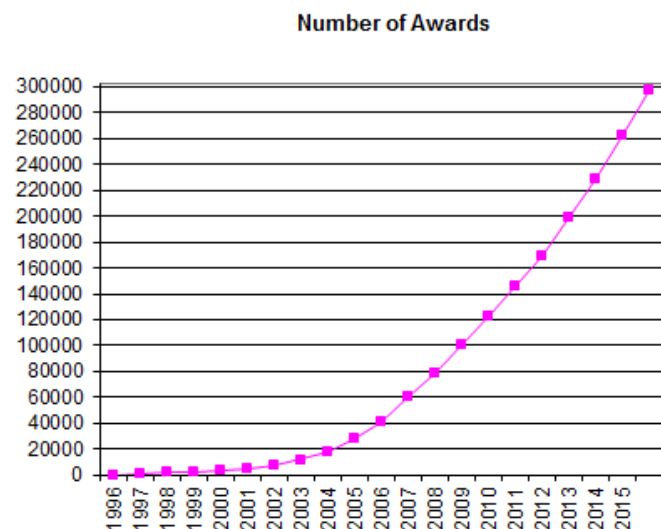
## Awards & Providers

2016 saw continued growth with 34,928 Awards achieved, a 4% UK-wide increase on 2015. This is our highest annual total for the eighth consecutive year (with only one 'dip' year since 1997). Activity in England and Scotland consolidated well (16%, 3% growth) whilst remaining constant in Wales, where a milestone of 50,000 Awards was marked at a special presentation. We worked with 1,480 organisations (Award Providers) during the year, up 22%, indicating that we are working with smaller groups on average. As the John Muir Award turns 20, almost 300,000 Awards have been achieved in total.

Each year since the John Muir Award was launched at least 25% of take-up has been with individual participants from 'inclusion' backgrounds. We work hard to maintain this ratio as overall numbers increase, and continued to exceed this target in 2016 (30%, 10,423 Awards).

We maintained a fairly even 52% male to 48% female gender split, in keeping with participation ratios from recent years. Whilst Award engagement is largely youth-focused (45% is with 10-11 year olds; 37% is with 12-16 year olds) there is significant involvement (12%) of adults aged 17 and above. This is highly consistent with the age spread for 2015.

We used a Conserve Audit exercise to take a fresh look at what people put back through taking part in the John Muir Award by quantifying Conserve activity throughout 2015. This was



valued at £1.3 million, and interpreted in terms of different actions, locations and group types. Detailed information was collated for Scotland, England, Wales; schools (England, Scotland); National Parks (UK, Scotland, Lake District); and Youth Social Action.

Strategic partnerships continued to be a fundamental part of our management and delivery model. All 15 National Parks use the John Muir Award to varying degrees, with Cairngorms, Lake District and Loch Lomond & The Trossachs all hosting Award staff and extending their partnership arrangements. The Award is referenced as an engagement indicator in Defra's 8 Point Plan for National Parks. The Outward Bound Trust delivered nearly 10% of total Awards through their Adventure & Challenge courses. We worked with 18 Wildlife Trusts, giving a strong foundation for substantive working links in 2017.

A core grant funding relationship with Scottish Natural Heritage has been continued, and a grant extension received from Heritage Lottery Fund. Working closely with colleagues in Fundraising, Finance, and the Trust CEO, over 80% of departmental costs were covered by funds raised in 2016 (with additional significant 'in kind' and volunteering activity).

Contributions to formal education agendas in England and Scotland have strengthened in 2016. Links to Character Development and Attainment have been articulated; relationships with Education Scotland have been consolidated, particularly through engagement with Learning for Sustainability and Outdoor Learning working groups and networks. School-based activity increased by 22% in England, 15% in Scotland. The Learning Away #BrilliantResidential campaign was promoted, with Scottish presence in a UK consortium resulting from John Muir Trust leadership. Contributions to Natural England's Natural Connections pilot scheme were limited, although efforts to position the Award in relation to its 'next steps' have been well received.

Contributions to Citizen Science, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Wales' Year of Adventure, #treecharter and the #iWill campaign (with a pledge to involve 100,000 young people by 2020) all helped to position the John Muir Trust in relation to relevant contemporary themes and social action. Support for It's Our World, London National Park City, and *Mission:Explore* offered creative and innovative connections.

Momentum in recent years in promoting John Muir (since Year of Natural Scotland 2013) was maintained. Resources such as the graphic novel and *Mission:Explore John Muir* continue to be popular; [www.discoverjohnmuir.com](http://www.discoverjohnmuir.com) web pages received 15,000 views; 31 groups used the John Muir Way as part of their Award activity, and John Muir's Birthplace was visited by many. The John Muir Working Group was stood down.

Web-based information is being used to good effect; whilst resources and case studies continue to be well presented, there is scope to make them easier to access online. Increased use of social media is also spreading Award stories to positive effect, with #JohnMuirAward now well established.

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