

John Muir Award and community engagement on John Muir Trust properties, including Partnership links, in 2016



Historically, the John Muir Trust has positioned itself as part of, not apart from, communities. The John Muir Award – the Trust’s main engagement initiative – is used by thousands of people across the UK each year to encourage connections with and care for nature.



This includes involvement on and near the properties it owns, with land-based partnerships and with local communities.

Summary

Over 2,500 people achieved their John Muir Award as part of direct involvement with Trust properties and partnerships during 2016. These were delivered through 25 Provider organisations, and include support from Trust land staff.

Ben Nevis

- Nevis Landscape Partnership: 7 Volunteer Rangers achieved their John Muir Award as part of their Nevis Training Programme placement.
- The Outward Bound Trust: A longstanding partner, Outward Bound Loch Eil, works effectively with Trust staff and Highland Rangers in Glen Nevis and surrounding areas throughout the year, in a partnership that delivered 1,260 Awards.
- George Watson’s College (Edinburgh): A residential trip included practical footpath conservation. It’s part of an extensive programme of outdoor learning expeditions in Scottish wild landscapes that has used the John Muir Award for the last 13 years. In 2016, 135 pupils achieved their Award, including time spent across various properties.
- Spean Bridge Primary School: 21 P6/7 pupils visited Glen Nevis, participating in pond dipping, invertebrate classification, and guided walks with the Highland Council Ranger Service as well as creating artwork with local artists from the Outlandia artist in residence project.
- Comunn na Gàidhlig: 1-day John Muir Award training course delivered for 8 youth workers.

“We feel volunteer involvement has increased community engagement in local conservation, and we hope this leaves a legacy. Having learned so much about the area we have a feeling of pride that we have done a small act to preserve and enhance this wild place.”
Trainee Volunteer Rangers at Nevis Landscape Partnership



Canoeing beneath Ben Nevis – Chryston High School, Glasgow

Sandwood Bay

- Ridgway Adventure Ltd (Loch Laxford): A key Trust partnership has been promoting the John Muir Award for over 15 years, and delivered 178 Awards in 2016.
- Ingrid & Chris Todd joined a Trust work-party to repair damaged footpaths and beach clean as part of their self-guided Explorer Award.
- George Watson’s College (above): Camping and beach clean undertaken.

Schiehallion

- Pitlochry High School: 47 pupils joined a guided walk on Schiehallion and planted trees on neighbouring Dun Coillich Trust estate.
- George Watson's College (above): Guided walk and brash hedging undertaken.

Quinag (Coigach & Assynt Living Landscape)

- Ullapool High School: It is the 5th year of taking a residential trip to Tanera; 14 pupils worked with Summer Isles Enterprises Ltd and Highland Ranger Service. Additionally, 4 senior pupils on an employability programme and 30 S3 pupils on a broader outdoor learning course took part in the John Muir Award.
- Coigach & Assynt Living Landscape (CALL): Before moving on to Ullapool High School, 34 pupils from feeder primary schools in Lochinver, Stoer, Achiltibuie and Ullapool completed a 3 month 'Discovering Wild Places' project with CALL. Pupils learnt skills in GPS and wildlife tracking and got involved in heather monitoring, tree sampling and wildflower identification. Read more [here](#).
- George Watson's College (above): 1 day of conservation work with Caithness and Sutherland Countryside Rangers.

Skye

- University of Highlands and Islands, Broadford Campus: 12 Explorer Awards were achieved through a Further Education Outdoor Adventure Unit.

Li & Coire Dhorrcail & Knoydart Foundation

- George Watson's College (above): Pupils and teachers carried out a beach clean.
- Inverie Primary School: 6 pupils achieved their Discovery Award working with the Knoydart Foundation Ranger.

Glenlude

- Phoenix Futures: A respected drug and alcohol rehabilitation service has established a 'Phoenix Forest' partnership with the Trust. 62 service users achieved their Award.
- Tomorrow's People Galashiels Works!: A 12 week employability programme for young adults includes building brash-hedges. 23 young people and 3 staff achieved their Awards.
- The Green Team: 46 young people and volunteer leaders on a Green Volunteers programme got involved in woodland management practical activities.
- All Saints Primary School: 35 pupils and parent helpers achieved their Explorer Award, including a 3-day wild camp at Glenlude.
- Tweeddale Youth Action: 4 young people got involved with conservation activities.
- Cartmel Priory (Cumbria): 11 pupils wild camping & involved with conservation work.



Green Team volunteers at Glenlude

"Our job was to plant 400 native trees in the area the Green Team are looking after. I was given my John Muir Explorer Award for work with the Green Angels and the Green Team. Everyone was very tired, but very pleased to have achieved so much."
Esme Allan, Green Team Volunteer

Glenridding Common

- The Outward Bound Trust: 20 Outward Bound Ullswater participants completed footpath drain clearance and maintenance on Glenridding Common as part of their John Muir Award.

North Harris Trust/Na h-Eileanan Siar

- Scaladale Activity Centre: 29 young people from the Lewis & Harris Youth Clubs Association and Robert Gordon's College (Aberdeen) achieved their Discovery Award with the North Harris Trust Ranger, working on footpath maintenance. 10 young people with Cashback Community Funding achieved their Explorer Award by taking on responsibility for a small woodland where they improved fencing, built stiles, and cleared fallen trees to help access.



The Outward Bound Trust © volunteers at Glenridding Common

Also:

John Muir's Birthplace Trust

- The Museum is regularly visited by John Muir Award groups from across Scotland, including: East Lothian Countryside Junior Rangers, Dunbar Grammar, Ross High School, Edinburgh College, and Falkirk Council Community Learning and Development, through a Family Award programme.
- East Lothian Primary Schools: 578 pupils achieved their Award with support from Museum staff and East Lothian Countryside Rangers.

Wild Space (support from Wild Space staff team)

- 2 visits from John Muir Award Providers including Wilderness Scotland Family Award groups and Pitlochry High School.
- Field Studies Council Teachers Conference supported by Cairngorms National Park.

Wilderness film

Film-makers Tem Doran and Alastair Humphreys captured a week of adventures on Trust properties – Sandwood, Quinag, Blabheinn, Ben Nevis – co-ordinated with John Muir Award Manager Rob Bushby. The collaboration resulted in a 4 minute film, 'Wilderness', set to a narrative of John Muir's words, that has been viewed over 400,000 times.



Sandwood Bay, featured in 'Wilderness'