

# MEMBERS' NEWS

JANUARY 2019

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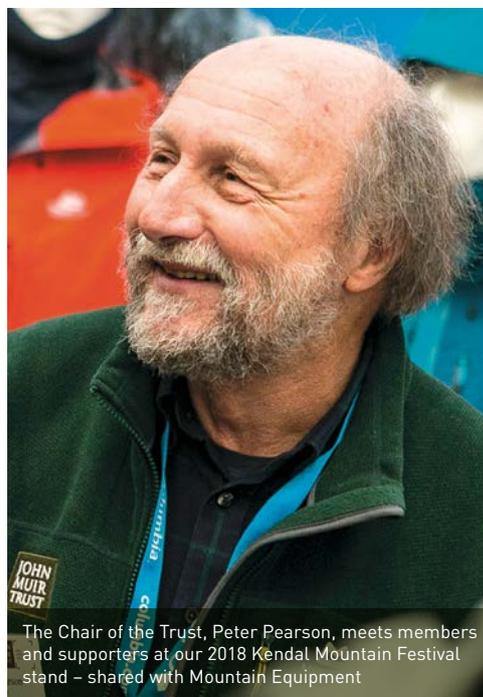
## Chair's welcome

In my experience the Trust is always an effective and active organisation, but I can't remember a period feeling quite as busy as this past six months. That largely reflects the enthusiasm and endeavour of our staff, as well as the commitment of our trustees and the many people who volunteer with us. While we have a wonderful history and a track record as one of the most progressive conservation organisations in the UK, we must not rest on our laurels. We all share a responsibility and a requirement to look ahead.

My fellow trustees and I have recently been involved in agreeing a new strategy for the Trust. It's not revolutionary, and I mean that in the most positive way. It's a considered and thoughtful piece of work that reflects our legacy and strengths but also recognises that we must continue to evolve and adapt to be a relevant and sustainable conservation organisation into the future. You can download and read our new strategy document on our website.

Continuing to place community relationships at the heart of our work to care for wild places is a key aspect of the strategy. So I'm delighted that the Trust is welcoming an eighth partner to the Heart of Scotland Forest Partnership: Garth Wood Wilding Project, headed by Emma Kareno and Henning Hoerber. Garth Wood is an area of some 70 acres in Highland Perthshire that comprises a mature conifer plantation which is being felled ahead of its own rewilding project.

I joined trustees recently in visiting our own woodland regeneration project at Glenlude. Our team there is in the process of introducing horse logging, working with a local organisation and two beautiful horses, to remove timber in a sensitive and natural way that fits with our approaches and values.



The Chair of the Trust, Peter Pearson, meets members and supporters at our 2018 Kendal Mountain Festival stand – shared with Mountain Equipment

Rob Bushby, a significant force behind the John Muir Award becoming the UK's leading and most inspirational conservation engagement activity, recently left us for new adventures after 17 years of dedicated service. We all wish him a fond farewell and send our best wishes. This has created an opportunity to look again at what makes the John Muir Award tick, and we'll be reviewing our main engagement initiative shortly.

Your support is never taken for granted. We've recently benchmarked our member's subscription rates against other organisations, with the trustees agreeing to recommend an increase for the first time in three years to help us meet our organisational costs. Members will ultimately decide if this is agreeable through a special resolution at the AGM.

A happy new year to you all and my thanks for your incredible support for wild places.

**Peter Pearson**

## Trust tackles visitor pressures

The Trust has been awarded crucial funding to help us build toilets and improve car parking provision at the foot of Blà Bheinn.

The Rural Tourist Infrastructure Fund – administered by Visit Scotland – is worth £65,579, which would cover around 65 per cent of the estimated £100,000 cost of the project. We will raise the balance and, meanwhile, have submitted a planning application to Highland Council.

This plan would involve doubling the capacity of the existing car park from around 16 to 34, including disabled access and the building of two composting toilets which will require minimal maintenance. It will also include interpretation to help visitors better understand the local landscape, wildlife and culture – and to remind people of the importance of responsible visitor behaviour.

## 2019 AGM

Our 2019 AGM and Members' Gathering is at the Birnam Arts and Conference Centre in Perth and Kinross from 24-25 May 2019. See the booking form or visit [johnmuirtrust.org/agm2019](http://johnmuirtrust.org/agm2019)

# Keep it Wild campaign

## Work still to be done for wild land protection in Scotland's planning system

In mid-November, Trust staff attended the Scottish Parliament's Local Government & Communities Committee to hear MSPs debate and vote on an amendment to forthcoming planning legislation which would increase protection for Scotland's 42 Wild Land Areas. Many Trust members and supporters had added their voice by contacting their MSPs.

Sadly, while there was some support for wild land protection, none of the MSPs voted for the amendment. However, comments made by Committee members have left the door open to identify what measures each political party would support in the common aim of protecting and enhancing wild land. While the amendment may have been defeated, our campaign has ensured that wild land has been given continued profile.

Amendments which had been proposed to introduce Equal (or Community) Rights of Appeal gathered a lot of support, but did not get approved. However, there is a possibility that this may be revisited at the Bill's next stage (Stage 3), which has a full parliamentary debate.

Ahead of the next phase of Scotland's planning system reform in 2019, we will continue to make a positive case for protecting and enhancing wild land, demonstrating its value to rural communities socially and economically, as well as environmentally. A sincere thank you for your support.



Trust staff outside the Scottish Parliament ahead of the Local Government & Communities Committee consideration of the Planning (Scotland) Bill

PHOTOGRAPH: JOHN MUIR TRUST

## A fond farewell

After nearly 18 years with the Trust, our John Muir Award Manager Rob Bushby is leaving in search of a fresh challenge.

Rob said: "It's been a pleasure to see the Award grow from a small-scale project, to a presence across the UK - particularly in Scotland, and with growing influence in England and Wales. It's helped the Trust be more relevant, inclusive, engaged - and brought the ethos of John Muir to new audiences."

We wish Rob every success in the future and marked his enormous contribution to the Trust, and our engagement work, by presenting him with an original framed drawing that captured our thoughts and feelings.

Left: Illustrator Tom Morgan-Jones created an inked interpretation of Rob's contribution to the Trust and our John Muir Award.

Below: Rob Bushby joined over 100 people in Dunbar early in 2018 to celebrate the 21st anniversary of the John Muir Award on 26 February 1997.



PHOTOGRAPH: KEVIN LELLAND

## Scottish Rewilding Alliance

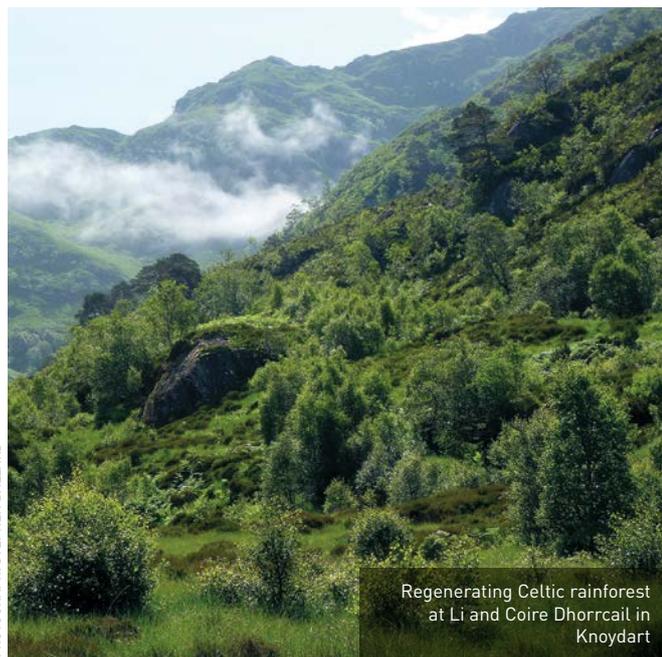
The Trust has been working with a network of organisations to establish a Scottish Rewilding Alliance. The project has a long-term ambition to revitalise and repeople some of Scotland's most sparsely populated areas by transforming damaged landscapes and ecosystems and creating sustainable nature-based economies. An official launch is planned for 2019.

## Atlantic Woodland Alliance

The Trust has signed up to the Atlantic Woodland Alliance, an initiative funded by Woodland Trust Scotland which aims to address the key threats to Scotland's West Coast rainforest (often referred to as the Celtic rainforest) a unique habitat of ancient and native woodlands, birds, insects, rare plants, fungi, crags, ravines, gorges and open glades.

Joint action to protect the rainforest will include reducing grazing pressures, clearing invasive species, monitoring ash dieback and expanding native woodland around the rainforest.

Temperate rainforests are found in limited areas, usually only along coasts, where they are shaped and sustained by mild oceanic climates and clean air. Seven John Muir Trust properties are within the Atlantic Woodland zone.



Regenerating Celtic rainforest at Li and Coire Dhorraicail in Knoydart

PHOTOGRAPH: STEPHEN BALLARD

## Trust takes silver at TGO Awards

The Trust has been awarded silver in the revamped *TGO* Magazine's The Great Outdoors Awards for 'Campaigner of the Year'. Nearly 10,000 readers, the length and breadth of the UK, voted the Trust into one of the top places for the sixth year running.

One of the people who voted for us commented: "Consistent and dedicated, the Trust put

their money where their mouth is... Truly committed to securing the sustainable protection of our lands."

Our campaigns officer Mel Nicoll said: "The category was stacked with campaigns or campaigners we admire, like the winner Chris Packham. It's tremendous to be awarded silver. Thank you to everyone who nominated and voted for us."

### Glendye wind farm

The Trust has submitted an objection to a proposed 26-turbine wind farm near popular mountain Clachnaben in Aberdeenshire on the basis of adverse landscape, visual, peat and socio-economic impact.

### Hilltracks update

Following publication of its report in September, the LINK Hilltracks Campaign, with the support of the Trust and Mountaineering Scotland, continues to make the case for stronger control of damaging vehicle tracks in the uplands.

Thank you to all who contacted their MSPs in support of Green MSP Andy Wightman's Planning Bill amendment (amendment #165). Sadly this was voted down, but efforts are continuing while the Planning Bill is still before Parliament. Keep an eye on our website for details of any further actions you can take.

### Welsh Government consultation

The Trust has responded to a Welsh Government consultation on proposals for a planned, multi-year transition following Brexit. We welcomed the fact that the consultation is considering ways to support and encourage land management for the public good, and that it recognises that in the long term there needs to be a system of public funding to support such progressive land management.

### National Parks and AONBs review

The Trust has responded to the UK Government's independent review of National Parks and AONBs, led by writer Julian Glover with the aim of ensuring designated landscapes are fit for the future. We feel it should encourage the adoption of land management practices in wild places that deliver nature-based solutions to economic, social, health and environmental challenges.

### Hydro schemes

The Trust has submitted comments on proposals for several run-of-river hydro schemes proposed for the Leanachan Forest, near the Grey Corries, Fort William. We also commented on proposals for schemes on the Allt Hallater, the Allt Cloiche Finne and the Allt nan Clach Sgoilte Glen Kinglass, to the south of the Loch Etive group of Munros and in Wild Land Area (WLA) 9 Loch Etive Mountains.

### More Monadhliath turbines?

The Trust has submitted comments in response to early proposals for another wind farm application in the Monadhliath mountains being made by SSE – Cloiche wind farm. The development, still at scoping stage, of up to 40 turbines, would form an extension to the east and west of the Stronelairg wind farm site.

We have also submitted a holding objection to another proposed development in the area at Glenshero on the basis that some of the information provided in support of the application is inadequate, especially in relation to visualisations and peat. The development by SIMEC (part of the consortium which recently purchased the Rio Tinto Estate in Lochaber, which includes Glenshero) would comprise another 39 turbines and approximately 28km of new access track immediately south of the Stronelairg site.



## Trust and young people

As Year of Young People 2018 (a celebration of young people's achievements and contributions in Scotland) drew to a close, the Trust geared up for the UK Government's 2019 Year of Green Action that holds children and young people at its heart.

Both themed campaigns provide the Trust with a perfect opportunity to examine current thinking around young people and nature connections. To help us do this we've:

- listened to young people through a series of workshops and events
- worked with young people to co-design an approach to explore the connection between young people, nature and wild places
- recruited young people as conservation rangers on properties that we manage
- supported 1,500 organisations and learning establishments to deliver over 34,000 John Muir Awards to young people across the UK during 2018
- enhanced partnerships with organisations helping to put connections with nature at the heart of youth work
- continued our #iwill social action pledge to help 100,000 young people achieve a John Muir Award by 2020
- collated research and feedback, information on initiatives, and stories to highlight the ways that young people can, and do, take practical action for nature.

Visit [johnmuirtrust.org/youngpeople](http://johnmuirtrust.org/youngpeople) to find out more.



Izzy Filor started as Conservation Officer on Schiehallion this year, thanks to the ALA Green Trust which is funding paid work experience for young people starting out in a career in conservation

PHOTOGRAPH: LIZ AULTY



PHOTOGRAPH: KAREN PURVIS

## Horse power in the Borders

Glenlude Manager **Karen Purvis** reports on an exciting 10-day trial to see if horse logging is sustainable on her patch

Our plantations of Sitka spruce and larch were planted by the Forestry Commission in 1995 and they have had very little maintenance since then.

We have very good quality timber at Glenlude and want to make the most of the resource. The aim was to extract the timber with a gentle touch using small scale forestry equipment. However, at 70 hectares the plantation was too small to interest many of the commercial operations I approached.

Thanks to funding from the Forestry Commission we were able to train some of our regular volunteers to use chainsaws. This has enabled us to start harvesting the timber ourselves by felling trees and creating racks by hand (removing every sixth row of the plantation). Trainee forestry students from the Borders College have also been helping with the thinning.

To help us extract the timber, we approached Homestead Horses logging based just two miles down the road. They were keen to help and agreed to take part in a 10-day trial. The team comprises Rab Erskine with his horse Clyde and daughter Caitlin with her horse Craobh aided by her husband Tom Newton. Caitlin is a

member of the British Horse Loggers professional register and works for the Forestry Commission alongside Tom. Both help Rab in their spare time.

The horses work part time and have been coming along at weekends, weather dependent. They work for six hours a day – two three-hour stretches with a lunch break – before they walk the two miles home. We've created a corral in the larch, where they can rest and be fed and watered. It's a peaceful method of forestry – you can still hear the birds singing while the work is being carried out.

Our initial aim is to extract 25 tonnes of wood – the minimum load that will be picked up from site by a timber wagon. It's been a slow start as all the preparation has been done by hand but we are now starting to see the results – the timber pile is expanding and a network of paths is growing within the plantation.

We hope to hold an open day in February 2019 when people are welcome to explore the new paths, meet the team and learn more about this traditional forestry method. By then we'll hopefully have a big stack of timber to show what can be achieved with horsepower!



Homestead Horselogging power: Caitlin and Craobh – a six-year-old, part Comtois, part Breton horse weighing in at 850kg

PHOTOGRAPH: PENNY DIXIE, LONDON WILDLIFE TRUST



## 'Keeping It Wild' in London

Throughout October, young people participating through schools, youth clubs and community organisations took part in Wild Action Days organised on London Wildlife Trust (LWT) nature reserves. Some participants embarked upon Wild Action Programmes, embedding our John Muir Award and practical conservation opportunities into their experiences.

Over the next three years, the Keeping It Wild project (funded by The Heritage Lottery Fund funded Kick the Dust project and led by LWT) will increase opportunities for young people in the capital to get to

know the wildlife and natural environments on their doorstep.

As part of the project, participants working with London Youth, vInspired and Headliners will be offered a chance to achieve a John Muir Award, take part in media training and get involved in a youth forum on nature and conservation.

Keeping It Wild Project Manager Emily Morshuis said: "We hope to inspire hundreds of young Londoners to take notice of and care about the world around them, creating a new generation of guardians for the capital's nature and wildlife..."



PHOTOGRAPH: CAT BURTON

## Schiehallion community grows

Thanks to the generosity of everyone who donated to our Heart of Scotland Forest appeal and funding from The April Trust and Original Buff, S.A., work has started on connecting woodlands across Highland Perthshire.

With help from over 100 volunteers, including staff and volunteers from within the Heart of Scotland Forest Partnership, we planted over 5,000 trees at East Schiehallion this autumn as part of our native woodland creation project.

Some of our corporate supporters also lent a hand with teams from Scottish Widows, Network Rail, Siemens, Heart of Scotland Tours and Tree of Knowledge planting a mixture of native species including oak, bird cherry, Scots pine and aspen.

We've also had help from Breadalbane Academy and a group from Corbenic Camphill Community. An incredible turnout demonstrating the huge support for the project. Thanks to everyone for their hard work. Find out more about the project at [johnmuirtrust.org/heartofscotland](http://johnmuirtrust.org/heartofscotland)

## Schiehallion Path Appeal update

We'd like to thank everyone who has given so generously to our appeal to carry out repairs to the Schiehallion path this summer.

At time of writing, you have raised over £36,000 towards the cost of a full programme of footpath repairs – urgently needed to halt the erosion before it puts the surrounding landscape and habitat at risk.

Funds raised through the appeal will help pay for essential materials and skilled path work by our contractors, who will repair damaged sections of the path and reinforce areas at risk. With your help, we can restore the path to its original condition and ensure the mountain is kept in fine fettle for years to come.

If you'd like to contribute, visit [johnmuirtrust.org/schiehallionappeal](http://johnmuirtrust.org/schiehallionappeal) or call 01796 470 080



PHOTOGRAPH: CAT BURTON

## New look for Sandwood and Quinag

Thanks to a grant from the Big Lottery Fund's Coastal Communities Fund, the Trust is working with local communities to upgrade our existing facilities at Sandwood and Quinag.

At Sandwood, we have finished upgrading the car park surface and have refreshed the toilet block which will house a new interpretation panel. We are currently consulting with the community about upgrading the start of the trail to Sandwood Bay by renewing the main gate, the walker's gate and the surface around it, plus installing a notice board. A new people counter will help monitor visitor numbers taking the four mile hike to one of Britain's most beloved beaches.

Students from the local high school have contributed artwork which will be installed along the track. We are also working with a community 'Leave no Trace' group to help tackle various issues around some of the small beaches on our Sandwood estate.

Work on the Quinag car park has been completed and the project to refresh the interpretation is still ongoing.

PHOTOGRAPH: LWINIMAGES



## Wild Moment: Chris Puddephatt

The Assynt-based photographer shares his latest project

Quinag is one of my favourite mountains. It has a three-armed summit ridge and very different landscape on each side.

I wanted to get to know it better. Looking at a map, I realised there was only one rocky obstruction to a walk along the contour line at 1,000 feet (about 305 metres in new money). Apart from the section near to Ardvreck, it looked possible.

It took a few trips between July and November 2018, but I'm delighted with the results – you can see them online at [johnmuirtrust.org/wildmoment](http://johnmuirtrust.org/wildmoment)



## Rare mountain flora on Helvellyn



We are delighted to have secured funding of over £2,600 from the Lake District Foundation towards a new project that aims to increase the populations of threatened arctic-alpine species found on the high crags of the Helvellyn range.

The project will bring together national experts, local green-fingered volunteers and our team in a joint initiative to safeguard our nationally important, but extremely vulnerable, populations of arctic-alpine flora – many of which are growing at the southern edge of their range.

Pete Barron, the Trust's Land Manager for Glenridding Common, said: "This funding will enable us to begin the re-introduction of species lost or under threat due to pressure from footfall and erosion. The project will also help future-proof upland floral and shrub populations against the impact of climate change. Among the species likely to benefit from a gradual increase in their population size are Alpine mouse ear, Alpine cinquefoil and purple saxifrage." (Pictured above).

Beginning in the autumn and winter months of 2018, the project will start with a detailed survey of the existing arctic-alpine species on the mountain, together with collecting seeds and cuttings. We will then work with the local community in Patterdale to propagate and 'grow-on' a stock of young plants.

PHOTOGRAPH: CHRIS PUDDEPHATT

# The Wild in Me, too

This month sees the release of the next film in our new series, *The Wild in Me*, which celebrates wildness and the relationships between people and wild places. The second film follows landscape and climbing photographer Dave 'Cubby' Cuthbertson through Steall Gorge and up the slopes of Ben Nevis, as he reflects on a life shaped by the mountains. See the film at [johnmuirtrust.org/thewildinme](http://johnmuirtrust.org/thewildinme)

## Dig where you stand

Join a conservation work party in 2019 and get up close and personal with the wild places you love

Date	Location	Proposed activity
7 February – early December	Glenlude Thursdays	General work every Thursday
16-17 March	East Schiehallion	Path maintenance, tree planting
28-30 March	Glenlude	Variety of general tasks
1-5 April	Skye	Drystone walling, path maintenance
6-8 April	Li & Coire Dhorrcail	Path maintenance (requires wild camping)
12-14 April	Sandwood	Beach cleaning, path work, general
27-28 April	East Schiehallion	Path maintenance, tree planting
29 April-3 May	Corrour	Brash hedge construction, tree planting, invasive control
6-10 May	Western Isles	Tree planting, beach cleaning, path work, general
20-24 May	Knoydart Foundation at Inverie	Rhoddie control, path work
8 June	Ben Nevis	Summit litter clean, path maintenance
14-17 June	Sandwood	Beach cleaning, path work, general
24-28 June	Quinag/CALL	Tree nursery, woodland, path work, general
12-14 July	Glen Nevis	Monitoring, path work, general
15-19 July	Western Isles	Beach cleaning, path work, general
19-21 July	East Schiehallion	Path maintenance, tree maintenance
26-28 July	Glenridding	General
23-25 August	Sandwood	Beach cleaning, path work, general
26-30 August	Quinag/CALL	Tree nursery, woodland, path work, general
31 August	Ben Nevis	Summit litter clean, path maintenance
2-6 September	Western Isles	Beach cleaning, path work, general
13-15 September	Glenridding	Variety of general tasks
21 September	Ben Nevis	Summit litter clean, path maintenance
23-27 September	Isle Martin/CALL	Woodland, path work, general
28-29 September	East Schiehallion	Path maintenance, tree planting
3-5 October	Glenlude	Variety of general tasks
21-23 November	Glenlude	Variety of general tasks

## Des Rubens and Bill Wallace Grant now open

Adventurers and expeditionists – of all ages, shapes and sizes – are invited to apply for a Des Rubens and Bill Wallace Grant for 2019. This adventure grant aims to give people the opportunity to seek out life-changing experiences in the wild places of the world in ways which benefit both the person, and the wild places themselves.

Download your application to the small grant that can make a big difference!

More at [johnmuirtrust.org/grants-and-awards/the-bill-wallace-grant](http://johnmuirtrust.org/grants-and-awards/the-bill-wallace-grant)

Find out more at [johnmuirtrust.org/workparties2019](http://johnmuirtrust.org/workparties2019)  
To keep up-to-date with work parties, join our email listing at [workparties@johnmuirtrust.org](mailto:workparties@johnmuirtrust.org), or contact Sandy Maxwell, Sandy Maxwell on 07766 380663, or email [sandy.maxwell@johnmuirtrust.org](mailto:sandy.maxwell@johnmuirtrust.org)



PHOTOGRAPH: KEVIN LELLAND

## Local Members' Gatherings

A variety of inspiring talks and events took place across the country this autumn thanks to the dedicated volunteers who run our local members groups.

At the Southern Members' Gathering in Bristol the Trust's head of development and communications, Kevin Lelland, and John Muir Award inclusion manager in England, Coralie Hopwood, spoke about and answered questions on recent Trust activity across the UK. After lunch, Julie Doherty from Avon Wildlife Trust (pictured above) gave an overview of the work being done by her charity, with a focus on urban wild spaces, while Donald Campbell, an author and naturalist, gave a photo talk on the Undercliffs National Nature Reserve located between Seaton and Lyme Regis.

Members in Edinburgh discussed 'Wind Farms and Wild Landscapes.' Trust member, and organiser of this local group, Benedict Bate gave an overview of wind power generation and planning issues in Scotland in relation to wild places. John Muir Trust policy officer John Low presented further detail on whether the value of wild land is being fully considered in planning decisions on industrial wind farms. In the afternoon, two of the Trust's conservation officers (Izzy Filor at Schiehallion and Isaac

Johnston at Glenridding Common) spoke about their work – deer fences, monitoring, tree planting and volunteering opportunities were all covered.

The North East Scotland group had a busy autumn with a variety of conservation days at locations including NTS Mar Lodge, the Balmoral Estate and a walk to the summit of Mount Keen that combined a litter pick and minor path repairs. An evening presentation held at Aberdeen University with local photographer and long-term Trust supporter Anke Addy was well attended. Her pictures of the Cairngorms, inspired by the writing of Nan Shepherd, and her storytelling of time spent in the 'great moss' was well received.

Finally, thank you to Benedict Bate. Having organised the Edinburgh local members' group for the past three years he has passed on the baton to ex-Trustee Hugh Salvesen and member Enid Forsyth.

Can you organise a local member event, work party or discussion (however big or small) in your area? We can support you. Contact [membership@johnmuirtrust.org](mailto:membership@johnmuirtrust.org) to express interest and find out more.

To keep up-to-date with local member group activities for 2019 sign up to our eNewsletter at [johnmuirtrust.org/newsletter](http://johnmuirtrust.org/newsletter)

### MEMBERS' GROUPS FORTHCOMING EVENTS

#### North West England

**23-24 February**, North West England Local Members' Gathering at Glenridding Village Hall. Find out more and book a place at [johnmuirtrust.org/nwelmg](http://johnmuirtrust.org/nwelmg)

**26-28 April**, Restoring Hardknott Forest Spring weekend. To book a place email John Hodgson at [j.h.hodgson@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:j.h.hodgson@leeds.ac.uk)

#### North East Scotland

Monthly dates at Glen Tanar – **19 January, 16 February, 16 March, 20 April, 18 May, 15 June, 20 July, 17 August, 21 September, 19 October, 16 November, 14 December**. Email [NEScotland@johnmuirtrust.org](mailto:NEScotland@johnmuirtrust.org) if you would like to attend.



Visit our website for further details of all events!

PHOTOGRAPH: JAMES BROWNHILL

### Membership offers

We're delighted to provide a range of fantastic member offers – including 5% off books bought at our Wild Space Visitor Centre in Pitlochry. For details and promotional codes needed to take up these offers, and the terms and conditions, visit [johnmuirtrust.org/member-offers](http://johnmuirtrust.org/member-offers) or email [membership@johnmuirtrust.org](mailto:membership@johnmuirtrust.org)

### Tell us your news!

What have Trust members and local groups been up to? Tell us your news and stories. Email [helen.mason@johnmuirtrust.org](mailto:helen.mason@johnmuirtrust.org)

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**Managing editor:** Nicky McClure  
[nicky.mcclure@johnmuirtrust.org](mailto:nicky.mcclure@johnmuirtrust.org)

**Editor:** Alan McCombes

**Design:** Connect Communications

**Print:** Thomson Colour

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