

# MEMBERS' NEWS

JANUARY 2020

JOHN  
MUIR  
TRUST

## Chair's welcome

Happy New Year. I am pleased to welcome our new Chief Executive – David Balharry – who will join us on 27 January. He has long been an admirer of the Trust's work and – with senior roles on his CV in the Deer Commission, the Crofting Commission and within Scottish Government – he should be more than capable of leading our mission forward.

David comes on board following another positive year for the Trust. With the support of our members, and many other people and organisations, we were able to start and/or complete several significant infrastructure projects at the wild places in our care, or managed by our community partners.

Path work on the popular mountain Suilven (in partnership with the Assynt Foundation) was completed, a new low-level easy access path was started at Schiehallion that further links us with our neighbour the community run Dun Coillich, while car parking facilities were expanded and toilets upgraded at Sandwood Bay and Bla Bheinn.

Our John Muir Award programme continues to go from strength to strength with another cohort of more than 40,000 people being inspired to care for wildness last year. It's been heartening to watch environmental issues rise up the political agenda: climate crisis and the need to tackle biodiversity loss are now daily national news stories. It's clear that now is the time for change.

The Trust, working closely with other environmental charities, has a strong and positive case to make in how reducing deer numbers can help meet the climate change

targets, expand and diversify woodlands, bring back wildlife, enhance landscapes, regenerate fragile rural areas, repopulate glens and allow communities real influence over how their local landscapes are managed. Expect to see and hear more on this during the year.

Another strength that sets us apart is our desire to work in genuine partnerships with other organisations and communities. We've renewed several partnership agreements with community land trusts recently and are working collaboratively with policy makers on land management and destination management. We are starting to see landscape considerations being taken more seriously in areas like tourism and rural infrastructure and that is a good thing.

Finally, please note that our AGM this year will be in Innerleithen in the Scottish Borders on Saturday 6 June. The Trustees are not expecting to bring forward any constitutional changes at this year's AGM, but will introduce the start of a six month consultation with all members on governance. Our aim is to consult fully and transparently. We're looking to get your input into aspects such as the size of the board, co-options and election processes to help maintain the organisation as fit for its purpose today. Your views will then be used to inform any changes proposed for membership approval in 2021.

This coming AGM will be my last as Chair. It's been an honour and a privilege to represent the membership of this wonderful organisation. Do please consider standing as a future Trustee.

**Peter Pearson**

## Governance review

Following last year's AGM in Highland Perthshire, it was agreed to consult with all members on Trustee proposals for future changes to the governance of the John Muir Trust. A full and transparent consultation process will take place from the 2020 AGM on 6 June until the end of November 2020.

The Trustees want to hear from all members on what the scope of governance changes to be proposed in the future might be. Our aim is to ensure our Articles of Association are 'fit for purpose' to meet up-to-date legislation; follow best practice and maintain the core values of the organisation.

A questionnaire will be available online and also sent to all members during the time period of the consultation. It will explain the reasoning behind proposed changes and seek member views. There will also be an opportunity to engage and give opinion across the six month period via the Trust's website, on e-mail and through meetings and conversations. The Trustees' objective is to obtain as representative a response as possible to inform proposals that will be brought to the 2021 AGM.

## 2020 AGM

Our 2020 AGM and Members' Gathering is at the Innerleithen Memorial Hall near Peebles in the Scottish Borders from 5-6 June 2020. To find out more, see the booking form or visit [johnmuirtrust.org/agm2020](http://johnmuirtrust.org/agm2020)

## News in brief

- **Lord Balfour of Burleigh**

6 January 1927 – 18 September 2019

We were sad to hear of the death of Lord Robert Balfour of Burleigh at the age of 92. Lord Balfour was a well-respected ex-board member of the John Muir Trust. He was also an engineer and a strong supporter of the arts in Scotland including founding the Edinburgh Book Festival in 1983.

- **Improving views**

We have recently sent a letter to Scottish & Southern Energy Networks by way of support for work they are proposing to energy regulator Ofgem aimed at reducing the impact of existing transmission lines in the Loch Lomond & Trossachs National Park. Work would involve removing some of the overhead line, including steel lattice towers, at Glen Sloy and Glen Falloch and those seen on the shoulder of Ben Vorlich from the Inverglas lookout.

- **Tourist tax consultation**

At the end of October we discussed the role a tourist tax might play in helping to protect and enhance wild places, in response to a Scottish Government consultation on the possible introduction of such a tax. We noted that local consultation is vital for understanding the impact of a levy on local people and the environment, and that a tourist tax needs to be part of a national strategy to address the pressures we are seeing from rising numbers of visitors on wild landscapes and the communities that live there.

- **Glen Etive progress dammed**

The Trust is keeping a watchful eye as reports indicate that SEPA, Highland Council and the developer of the run of seven river hydro schemes at Glen Etive are in discussion as to whether the engineers can actually progress the work that was approved, in a way that doesn't damage the natural environment – the very thing the planning conditions were supposed to protect in the first place. The Trust objected to three of the seven developments.



Glen Etive with Allt Mheuran in the foreground

PHOTOGRAPH: DAVID LINTERN



PHOTOGRAPH: GRAHAM NICOLL

Scottish Government to look at planning control for hilltracks in light of "significant public concern"

## Scottish planning concerns in 2020

A major Scottish Government review of Permitted Development Rights (PDRs) has begun. This is an important area of work because the review is looking at the extent to which the need for planning permission could be removed for certain types of rural developments.

In practice, Permitted Development Rights grant planning permission for particular types of development without the need for an application. The Government describes PDRs as typically relating to "minor or uncontroversial developments where planning permission would likely be granted."

The development types being considered in the first phase of the review include agricultural developments, digital communications infrastructure, micro-renewables, peatland restoration and hilltracks ("private ways").

Hilltracks are somewhat different because, subject to some exceptions, they currently already benefit from PDRs – long a controversial issue in the conservation and outdoor sector. However, the Government has said it will look again at the balance of planning control in the light of "significant public concern," delivering on the commitment it gave to do so during the Planning (Scotland) Bill process in 2019.

Members may recall that proposals to tighten planning for hilltracks were

voted down at that stage. This was in spite of representations from the Trust, its members and many others as part of the Scottish Environment LINK Hilltracks campaign, that highlighted the damage that such tracks can cause to the upland landscape and sensitive habitats.

Overall, a fine balance will need to be struck in any changes because relaxing rules for some development types – such as peatland restoration, micro-renewables and building conversions – could bring important benefits such as helping to address the climate emergency, support the delivery of affordable homes in rural areas and reduce the rate of rural depopulation. At the same time, it is vital that we understand as much as possible about the possible negative impacts on the environment, landscape etc from the possible relaxation of these rules, including the cumulative effects of changes across the range of development types being considered as part of the review.

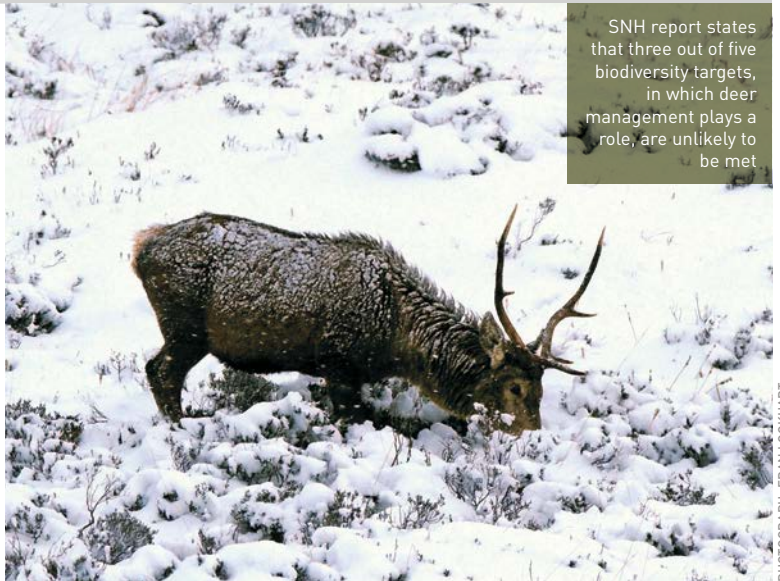
In our bid to protect wild places from inappropriate developments, we have also started to influence the National Planning Framework – the long term spatial plan for Scotland that sets out where the Scottish Government considers that development and infrastructure is needed. Look out for more news on this, and the review of PDRs, and opportunities to get involved as these processes get underway.

# Step change needed in deer management

Trust and others respond to SNH deer management report

The Scottish Environment LINK Deer Group, which includes the John Muir Trust, has warned that a step change is needed in deer management if climate and biodiversity targets are to be met. Responding to Scottish Natural Heritage's deer management report, the coalition acknowledged that some progress has been made in the functioning of deer management groups. They also recognised evidence of reductions in deer densities in some areas on the ground.

But the report also states that insufficient progress had been made in protecting and restoring native woodlands and peatlands from the impacts of deer, especially in upland landscapes. This means that three out of five biodiversity targets, in which deer



PHOTOGRAPH: FRANK LOCKHART

SNH report states that three out of five biodiversity targets, in which deer management plays a role, are unlikely to be met

management plays a role, are unlikely to be met.

The Trust's Head of Land, Mike Daniels, said: "The report shows us we still have a long way to go to deal with the continuing destructive impact of unsustainable high deer densities head on.

"Deer numbers need to be managed at levels compatible with natural processes on wild land and, in the absence of natural predators, that requires vigorous and enforceable deer management. For too long we have had a voluntary system in the hands of private landowners."

A separate review into deer management in Scotland is expected to be delivered to the Scottish Government shortly by the independent Deer Working Group.

## Monadhliath wind farm objection

The Trust has welcomed Highland Council's decision to oppose an application for a 39-turbine wind farm at Glenshero in the Monadhliath Mountains (pictured below) adjacent to the recently constructed Stronelairst development.

In 2013, Highland Council decided not to object to Stronelairst after the developer, SSE, agreed to reduce the number of turbines from 83 to 67, reducing the visible impact on the surrounding area.

In its objection to Glenshero, Highland Council points out that this new application, by SIMEC, would negate the design change that allowed Stronelairst to be built without the scrutiny of a Public Local Inquiry (which is triggered automatically when a Scottish local authority objects to a large scale energy proposal).

By objecting to Glenshero, the new application will be subject to a Public Local Inquiry before Scottish Ministers make the final decision.

The Trust submitted its own objection to Glenshero earlier this year, and welcomes the Highland Council's assessment that this development would come at significant cost to landscape, visual amenity and wild land.



PHOTOGRAPH: ALAN MCCOMBES



Trustee  
David Gibson

PHOTOGRAPH: DAVID GIBSON

## Trustee call

We're looking for new Trustees who share our values and can carry on the work of those who came before. But, we'd also like members to identify, bring forward and vote for candidates with specific skills that will best support the Trust's governance. People with fresh ideas from more diverse backgrounds will be vital if we are to remain relevant and influential in the coming years.

Seven Trustee places become vacant on our Board in 2020. Any member is welcome to stand and we aim to make the process as straightforward as possible. The Trustee nomination process will close on Tuesday 3 March 2020 at midday. Find out more at [johnmuirtrust.org/trusteecall](http://johnmuirtrust.org/trusteecall)

## Young and wild in Scotland

The John Muir Award helped smash our #iwill youth social action target made in 2016, by supporting over 125,000 young people to take responsibility for the UK's wild places – and we're not done yet! We have now extended our pledge to support 150,000 young people by the end of 2020.

In late November, the Trust helped launch the Scottish #iwill4nature climate campaign to 'increase the opportunities for young people to connect with nature and the environment'. This campaign aims to inspire and connect people with wild places and wild nature and will contribute to our plans to support people's enjoyment and appreciation of coasts and waters during Scotland's Year of Coasts and Waters 2020 initiative.



PHOTOGRAPH: PANINAL PRIMARY SCHOOL

## Wales focus reaps results

Since July 2018, the Trust – supported by Natural Resources Wales – has been connecting some of the most vulnerable and disadvantaged individuals in Wales with wild places.

Partnering with Urdd Gobaith Cymru, and led by our new Wales Inclusion and Welsh Language Manager Bedwyr Ap Gwyn, we have developed opportunities for Welsh speaking participants, groups and communities to be better supported through the John Muir Award.

Over 18 months we have engaged with 74 organisations to support 2,759 participants from Welsh language and social inclusion audiences to take responsibility for wild places. An impact study demonstrated that each participant contributed (on average) over 7.5 hours of conservation activity – equating to a total of over 3,000 days of voluntary social action, valued at over £97,500. We've also supported training leaders, and the development of Welsh language resources.

# Wild Space in 2020



Last year's refurbishment of the outside of our Pitlochry visitor centre – including a specially commissioned John Muir mural, kindly donated by Perth-born artist Ian Cuthbert Imrie – gave a much needed lift to the Wild Space which opened in April 2013.

We are now looking forward to our first art exhibition of the new year – 'Into the Wild Woods' – which opens on 27 January. It features four local artists who make their art from materials found in nature. Artwork includes baskets weaved from willow, pottery and tree section prints.

Alice Carbone, manager of the Wild Space, said: "This is our first collective exhibition. The artists are all women from the local community who use nature as their inspiration. All pieces of artwork are created from materials found in nature and are being made especially for the Wild Space exhibition."

A big thank you to everyone who has supported the John Muir Trust through buying Christmas cards, diaries, calendars and other gifts.

[johnmuirtrust.org/wild-space](http://johnmuirtrust.org/wild-space)

## Membership offers

We're delighted to provide a range of membership offers – including 5 per cent off books bought at our Wild Space visitor centre in Pitlochry, discounts on subscriptions to *Trail* magazine and *The Great Outdoors* magazine and much more.

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)



PHOTOGRAPHS: DAVID LINTERN

## Glenlude felling progress

Our wetter than average autumn may have caused a few delays, but our new three year plan for Glenlude is forging ahead. The plan, supported by Andy Howard from Pennine Forestry, is to thin the spruce, removing every sixth row of trees to maintain canopy cover.

"This enables the remaining trees to grow on, while we fell 90 per cent of the larch," says Glenlude manager Karen Purvis.

"We are pre-emptively felling our larch due to the risk of *Phytophthora ramorum* – an algae-like organism that has caused a great deal of damage already in Southern Scotland.



PHOTOGRAPH: KAREN PURVIS

Contractors are thinning the spruce at Glenlude

"Using the smallest harvesting machinery possible, the extracted timber is being sold commercially with the proceeds going towards keeping Glenlude self-sustaining.

"Our new plan respects our ethos, the work done so far by volunteers plus the ongoing need for volunteer and other group activities. Our Thursday work parties have continued throughout the new operations with our regular volunteers seeing the progress first hand and gaining an understanding of the operations."



# Wild Woods Appeal update

We're thrilled to have now exceeded our Wild Woods appeal target of £60,000 thanks to your incredible support. At time of writing, you'd donated an amazing £62,000 towards the first year of our project to plant and protect 50,000 native trees.

What's more, thanks to support from the Kestrelman Trust, the Lizandy Charitable Trust, the Linley Shaw Charitable Trust, the Banister Charitable Trust and a generous donation in memory of Julian Walker, we've managed to raise a total of £147,000 towards the full three year costs of this work.

Planting will begin on Strathaird on the Isle of Skye this spring, and once the temporary fenced enclosure on Knoydart has been built, planting will continue on both Knoydart and Skye throughout 2020.

If you'd still like to contribute, any further donations to the Wild Woods Appeal will go towards woodland restoration work across all of our properties.

Visit [johnmuirtrust.org/wildwoods](http://johnmuirtrust.org/wildwoods) to donate and watch our film starring conservation officers Sarah and Izzy.



PHOTOGRAPH: SUSAN WRIGHT

## Fantastic fundraisers: we salute you!

2019 was a vintage year in terms of members and supporters fundraising for the Trust so we'd like to say a huge thank you to all of you who ran marathons, took on Tough Mudders, threw tea parties, cleared litter from mountainsides or donated in lieu of wedding or birthday gifts. Particular mention goes to Gabrielle Macbeth, who ran six half marathons on six Scottish islands to raise funds and personally planted a tree for each one of her sponsors; to Ian Ferguson and friends who cycled the John Muir Way (in a deluge); and to James Brownhill who traversed the John Muir Trail in the US. Then there was our very own Graham Watson, John Muir Award Manager for Cumbria, who raised funds while completing the Joss Naylor Lakeland Challenge (an epic round of 30 summits). And we're sure there are plenty more ideas out there.

We are calling lovers of wild places to 'Journey for Wildness' in 2020 - whether on foot or bike, on land or on water. If you are planning a journey this year, and would like to raise funds for wild places and natural climate solutions, email [fundraising@johnmuirtrust.org](mailto:fundraising@johnmuirtrust.org) to let us know what you're up to!



"I feel happier when I am outside." - East Ayrshire pupil

PHOTOGRAPH: TOBY CLARK

## Award makes an impact in East Ayrshire

Thanks to our John Muir Award, our partnership with East Ayrshire Council is making a strong contribution towards meeting a Scottish Government target to achieve equity in educational outcomes by closing the poverty-related attainment gap.

Attainment Project Officer Lorna Sloan is supporting local schools with our Award to encourage experiences of wild places and help ensure that every pupil has the same opportunity to succeed.

Lorna said: "The Award is fantastic at helping people from all backgrounds reconnect with wild places and understand the significance of John Muir, the Trust and environmental care. Staff and pupils across East Ayrshire's schools are enjoying being active in nature, sharing those 'wow' moments to enhance their learning

through the John Muir Award."

She reports that since the partnership started, over 2,500 pupils, through 80 per cent of the schools, have achieved their John Muir Award - an increase of 300 per cent. 37 per cent of these Award recipients were children from the highest areas of the Scottish Government's index of multiple deprivation.

Research has shown that pupils' social and emotional wellbeing improved by achieving a John Muir Award. An East Ayrshire pupil said: "I feel happier when I am outside and less depressed and bored. It also makes me calmer and stops me from being angry."

Our experience in East Ayrshire demonstrates that the Award is hugely beneficial to educational establishments.

# Planting high on Helvellyn

October saw the Glenridding Common team planting out on Helvellyn a little later than usual. Three types of willow were in the mix this time including downy, tea-leaved and a rare cross between the tea-leaved and dark-leaved willow. All were grown from cuttings that originated in the local crags and were propagated by a great group of volunteer growers from the Ullswater valley.

The team of three successfully planted the saplings high up on steep ledges away from the mouths of grazing animals. As if rewarded for their efforts, they were treated to some amazing bird action. Up on the rocks was a flock of rare twite. Further down they spied a flock of ring ouzel, probably en route to North Africa from Scandinavia, feeding on juniper and rowan berries.

Glenridding Common Manager Pete Barron says the project to safeguard the rare downy willow – driven by Natural England and supported by the John Muir Trust on Helvellyn – is now showing results.

“The montane shrubs are flowering and we await our first self-seeded willow on the crags in the not too distant future – now that will be a result!” says Pete.

## Glenridding Common future

Following two successful years leasing the land at Glenridding Common, the John Muir Trust is in conversations with the Lake District National Park Authority about next steps. The Trust continues to be interested in the possibilities for the much longer-term management of this part of the Cumbrian landscape. We expect to be able to say more by the summer.



PHOTOGRAPH: PETE BARRON

Montane willow safely planted out on Helvellyn

## New five-year community partnership agreement signed in the Western Isles

The Trust has signed a new five-year Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Urras Oighreachd Ghabhsainn (Galson Estate Trust). The community landowner manages 56,000 acres of coastline, agricultural land and moorland in North West Lewis, which is home to a population of nearly 2,000 people in 22 crofting townships.

The signing is the third MoU agreed between the Trust and major community land trusts on Lewis and Harris. In July 2019, an agreement was renewed between us and the West Harris Trust, with a further MoU approved with the North Harris Trust in August 2019.

We have also secured funding for a new full-time ranger post to work with community land trusts on the Western Isles.

Funded by the ALA Green Trust, the ranger will support land management, education and community participation in outdoor activities.

Manager of Urras Oighreachd Ghabhsainn Lisa Maclean (pictured right with John Muir Trust Land Operations Manager Richard Williams) said: “We are very pleased to be working with the John Muir Trust more closely. The relationship was once very strong and from it we were able to carry out some great work. We

look forward to the year ahead to get some of the planned activities up and running, and we welcome the ranger post that will be established on the islands.”



PHOTOGRAPH: JOHN MUIR TRUST

## Foss Loop completed

Construction of the new low level easy access loop from the Braes of Foss car park at Schiehallion is now complete. The 1 mile (1.5km) route – named the Foss Loop – includes a stone-surfaced path and boardwalk and gives great views of the nearby hills Dun Coillich and Schiehallion.

The project is part of the work of the Heart of Scotland Forest Partnership and the new trail links land owned by Forestry and Land Scotland, Highland Perthshire Communities Land Trust and the John Muir Trust. The project also included resurfacing the first section of the existing Schiehallion path.

We are planning a launch event for April 2020 and meanwhile are working on interpretation panels about the path, the natural and historical heritage and the work of the partnership.

The path infrastructure has been funded through the SRDP Agri-Environment Climate Scheme's Improving Public Access fund and Perth and Kinross Community Environment Challenge Fund, and the April Trust has funded the interpretation work.

Since the route was finished volunteers, school pupils and staff have planted trees nearby, including the 262 trees donated by supporters of the Marathon Training Academy podcast – whose host ran the London Marathon in support of the Trust.

Liz Auty said: "It's great to see the route complete, it's going to be a great resource. This is a fantastic partnership project – thanks to all the hard work of everyone involved and to all the funders."



Trust staff plant trees by the easy access Foss Loop

PHOTOGRAPH: JOHN MUIR TRUST

## Wild Moment: Michael Hughes

A member shares an excerpt from his wintry poem – *No Such Thing As Bad Weather*

### Harris Squall

From a Harris headland  
sea shimmers to the  
horizon.

Close-cropped grass  
for my couch,  
clover for my pillow,  
salt-tanged zephyr  
for my cover.

The dark line of  
an Atlantic squall  
races shoreward,  
North Harris hills  
disappear behind sheets  
of rain.

Through wind torn clouds,  
shards of light turn the  
sea's surface  
emerald, amethyst,  
aquamarine, cobalt,  
and violet.

A kaleidoscope of colour  
above white shell sand.  
The squall passes as all  
things must pass.

Read the rest of Michael's  
poem and our collection of  
**Wild Moments** at  
[johnmuirtrust.org/  
wildmoment](http://johnmuirtrust.org/wildmoment) and find out  
how to submit your own  
wild moment



PHOTOGRAPH: JAMES BROWNHILL

## Dig where you stand

Join a conservation work party in 2020 and get up close and personal with the wild places you love

Date	Location	Proposed activity
19-21 February	Glenlude	Brash hedges and other
7 March	Ben Nevis (NLP)	Tree planting
9-12 March	Glenlude	Brash hedges and other
4 April	Ben Nevis (NLP)	Drystone walling, path maintenance
10-12 April	Sandwood	Paths and beach cleaning (requires wild camping)
13-17 April	Skye	Brash burning and path work
18 April	East Schiehallion	Path work
20-24 April	Western Isles	Tree planting, paths, beach cleaning
27 April-1 May	Knoydart (Inverie)	Rhodie control, path work
2 May	Ben Nevis (NLP)	Allt a'Mhuillin path work
11-15 May	Corrour	Woodland
6 June	Ben Nevis	Ben litter clean and path work
12-14 June	Sandwood	Paths and beach clean
22-26 June	Quinag (CALL)	General
27-28 June	East Schiehallion	Woodland and path work
4-5 July	Glen Nevis	General
13-17 July	Western Isles	General
24-26 July	Glenridding	General
TBC August	Glenlude	General
8-9 August	East Schiehallion	Path work
14-16 August	Sandwood	Paths and beach cleaning
22 August	Ben Nevis	Ben litter clean and path work
7-11 September	Quinag (CALL)	General
14-18 September	Western Isles	General
21-25 September	Isle Martin (CALL)	General
26 September	Ben Nevis	Ben litter clean and path work
3-4 October	Glenridding	General
24-25 October	East Schiehallion	Tree planting and path work

Other dates may be added during the year. Find out more at [johnmuirtrust.org/workparties2020](http://johnmuirtrust.org/workparties2020). For further information, or to register interest in any work party contact [workparties@johnmuirtrust.org](mailto:workparties@johnmuirtrust.org)

# Local Members' Gatherings



PHOTOGRAPH: JAMES BROWNHILL

North East Scotland Local Members' Group helps out with peat restoration

As the leaves turned gold and brown and some of us enjoyed a few early clear winter days, our members were getting together for our autumn local members' gatherings.

Our North East Scotland Local Members' Group were fresh from a two-day residential work party at the Mar Lodge Estate when they met at Aberdeen University for a moving talk from writer and photographer David Lintern on 31 October.

David asked the 40 attendees to consider key questions of landscape photography. Information or inspiration? Document or story-telling device? His talk took us on a journey across Scotland, looking at how humans have shaped and are shaped by landscape.

Thank you to James Brownhill and his team for organising the event and this year's popular work parties in and around Deeside.

As November rolled in, over 100 people joined us in Edinburgh for an impassioned discussion on the link between communities and conservation.

Alastair McIntosh, writer and advocate, joined Sally Reynolds of the Carloway Estate Trust, Linsay Chalmers of Community Land Scotland and the Trust's Public Affairs Adviser Alan McCombes to speak of the need to weave together the needs of communities with protecting the natural environment.

Alan mentioned the Trust's vision for this renewed partnership between people and nature, as we look to commission new research into the Wild Land Areas map to help local economies and ecological restoration work together.

Congratulations to Hugh Salvesen and Enid Forsyth for organising their first Edinburgh Members' Gathering. Thank you to Alastair, Linsay and Sally who all travelled a long way to speak to our members.

Lastly, thank you to everyone who attended our London Members' Gathering on 11 December. Those who came heard about the new ways the Trust is engaging with communities and working to tackle climate change, as well as our ongoing work in England and Wales.

Thank you, also, to Violet and Krishna from London Wildlife Trust's Keeping it Wild project, who told us about their work to encourage young people from all backgrounds to connect with nature in an urban environment. We hope to see more events in London soon.

We look forward to seeing more members at the 2020 gatherings, with a new Midlands group planning their first gathering in March.

Want to see a Local Members' Group near you? Get in touch with our Engagement Officer, Ross Brannigan, at [ross.brannigan@johnmuirtrust.org](mailto:ross.brannigan@johnmuirtrust.org).

## MEMBERS' GROUPS FORTHCOMING EVENTS

### North West England

29 February to 1 March, North West England Local Members' Gathering at Glenridding Village Hall. Find out more at: [johnmuirtrust.org/nwelmg](http://johnmuirtrust.org/nwelmg)

Restoring Hardknott Forest regular volunteering dates for 2020: 12 and 28 January, 9 and 25 February, 8 and 24 March, 12, 18/19 and 28 April, 10 and 26 May, 14, 23 and 27/28 June, 13 and 22 September, 3/4, 11 and 27 October, 8 and 24 November, 13 and 22 December.

### Midlands

10 March, Save the date for our first Midlands Local Members' Group Gathering – details to follow.

### North East Scotland

Monthly dates at Glen Tanar – 18 January; 15 February; 21 March; 18 April; 16 May; 20 June; 18 July; 15 August; 19 September; 17 October; 21 November; 12 December.

Email [NEScotland@johnmuirtrust.org](mailto:NEScotland@johnmuirtrust.org) if you would like to attend.

Visit our website for further details of all events. [johnmuirtrust.org/latest/events](http://johnmuirtrust.org/latest/events)

## Tell us your news!

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

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**Editor:** Alan McCombes

**Design:** Connect Communications

**Print:** McAllister Litho  
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COVER BANNER IMAGE: BELIG TO BLA BHEINN STORM BY CHRIS RUTTER

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