

GLENKENS GAZETTE

News from Balmaclellan, Carsphairn, Corsock, Crossmichael, Kirkpatrick
Durham, Laurieston, Mossdale, New Galloway, Parton and St John's Town of Dalry

June/July 2022

ISSUE 130

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Scheme

LAND USE IN THE GLENKENS

We live in the Glenkens; perhaps we have been here for generations, or perhaps we have only recently arrived.

Regardless of timescale, the Glenkens is the place we call home, and where we find our sense of family and of community.

Everyone has an interest in the land around us, whether it's members of the community using spaces for recreation and amenity, farmers utilising the land for agriculture, or industry such as forest and wind interests.

Another aspect which is becoming more and more influential is land use in response to the climate and biodiversity crises. The BBC Scotland programme, *Landward*, recently had a focus on Galloway which gave a snapshot of the impact the surge of farmland sales to institutional investors is having. Farmland is being bought in order to plant trees for carbon capture and carbon credits, resulting in skyrocketing prices outpricing local buyers as well as changes to the landscape itself when farmland is turned into blanket forestry plantations.

The Glenkens is traditionally a hill farming area, renowned for its Galloway cattle and blackface sheep. In the 1930s huge changes took place with the creation of the hydro system. Then,

post-WW1, the Forestry Commission began to plant Sitka spruce to replace trees utilised in war efforts.

Our human landscape is a constantly evolving one, changing in response to society's needs and demands; we cannot expect it to stay static. However, we do have a responsibility to make sure that decisions made today which impact the world around us create the best outcome for future generations.

So how do we allow change to happen while ensuring communities continue to thrive and are empowered in their landscape? We need the tools to enable our communities to be listened to by governing bodies and the people in charge of land use policies affecting us all. Here in the Glenkens, where land use is changing so rapidly, we need this before it's too late.

In this issue we look at Local Place Plans and how community councils can have an input, ensuring the people's desires and needs for land use in the community are recorded and will be considered by the local authority, and therefore developers. Will Local Place Plans have an influence, will it be soon enough and what can we do now? In other parts of the British Isles, communities have responded strongly to rapid afforestation, such as the Save Leitrim campaign in Ireland and a 17,000 strong petition requesting changes to a scheme at Frongoch Farm in Cwrt-y-Cadno, Wales (see p22).

We have articles from local residents who are keenly feeling the loss of their wild spaces; voices from community groups liaising with the commercial forestry sector to enable a community voice in planting policy; views from a professional forester; and articles by local trusts and groups which are emerging in a bid to gain community footing among the corporate bodies who control more and more of the land around us.

Included are perspectives from advocates for Galloway as a National Park, as well as information on international mining interests scoping in the Glenkens and what this may mean for us. Small scale woodland management, and the potential for woodlots and woodland crofts or smallholdings, are considered.

Local food production is looked at – the demand is increasing, but will we lose the ability to produce food through losing our farms, and our farmers? And we delve into forestry policy and try find out how effective the plantations spreading across our hills actually are in fighting the climate crisis.

In this issue of the *Gazette*, we don't have space to include all perspectives – if you feel an issue hasn't been covered and have a piece you would like to submit, please get in touch.

To read this issue's land use focus, turn to page 15...

New Faces for Balmaclellan Stores

Balmaclellan has recently welcomed new owners to Balmaclellan Stores in the heart of the village.

Debbie Murdoch who took over as shop manager from her parents six years ago has handed over to Jackie and Chris Wells.

Balmaclellan Community Council chair Martin Warnock presented flowers and cards to Debbie on behalf of the village to thank her for all her hard work over the past six years - especially during lockdown when the shop continued to provide essential support to the community. Debbie received a British Empire Medal for services to the community during this time.

Jackie and Chris and family have moved up to the Glenkens from Kent to start their new life as shop-owners. Martin presented a welcome card and flowers from locals who are delighted to see the shop continue as the hub of village life. Debbie has been working with them during a handover period while they adjust to their new life in the village and meet all the regular customers.

Gill Warnock



New owners Jackie and Chris outside the shop in Balmaclellan.

SCOTTISH ALTERNATIVE GAMES SET TO RETURN



After missing two years because of the pandemic, the Alternative Games will be back on Sunday 7 August!

Since moving from Parton in 2001, the popular event had been held on the first Sunday in August every year until the Covid outbreak prevented New Galloway's 20th staging of the Games in 2020. Again in 2021, plans were thwarted by the continuing pandemic restrictions but thankfully now, as we slowly return to something like normal, we will finally celebrate the 20th Alternative Games in New Galloway - and we look forward to seeing everybody there!

The event is organised by a small committee and we greatly appreciate all of the willing volunteers who turn out to help on the day with the set-up/take down. We would also appreciate additional help on the organising committee too.

If you would be willing to help out, please get in touch on bjedgar19@gmail.com or 01644 420 374.

News from WriteOn

WriteOn, the online offspring of the Glenkens Writing Group, has launched a monthly blog and is starting to return to live in-person meetings.

WriteOn evolved from the book project *Writedown**, published in 2020, in which the Glenkens Writing Group group recorded early experiences of lockdown. Looking back on the book now, I'm struck by how strange it all seemed to us then, and how quickly we've become used to a very different world.

Although there are no current plans for a further book, the new monthly blog will publish on a rolling basis

the work of WriteOn's 25 members - ranging from fiction and poetry to memoir and travel writing and much else besides. You can access the blog at www.writeongalloway.wordpress.com or you can find us via the Glenkens Community & Arts Trust website www.gcat.scot

We currently have space for new members, and when there are no spaces we keep a waiting list. If you're interested in joining you can email me at writeongalloway@gmail.com

**Writedown* is available from CatStrand priced £7 (£9 incl p&p).

Margaret Elphinstone

CLIMATE CHANGE PANEL

Four young people from Dalry - Elizabeth Stevenson (12), Laya McCallie (12), Keshet Lamb (10) and Daniel Williamson (12) - attended the Climate Change Panel for Dalry Residents.

15 members of the community, made up of 11 adults and four young people, met in Dalry Town Hall to discuss ideas for how Dumfries & Galloway can become net zero by 2025.

Dr Jamie Hamilton from the Community Chartering Network, who organised the event, said: "All the adults in the room were bowled over by the intelligent and articulate contribution of the young citizens to the complex discussion and outcomes, which would have been much the poorer without them."

Here Laya and Elizabeth give an overview of the discussion:

The term net zero means achieving a balance between the carbon emitted into the atmosphere, and the carbon removed from it. Carbon is emitted through things like power stations and exhaust fumes from cars. Carbon is removed through things like forests, peatland, sea plants and grasslands, where the process of photosynthesis absorbs carbon.



At the meeting, many points were brought up by young and older residents about conditions within the village. Some of the points raised were:

- *school funding and school transport. Young residents experienced that teachers were bringing up the fact that they couldn't supply certain class materials because they had not been returned and that they could not buy any more due to the budget.*
- *young residents were also concerned with the fact that their bus to school had stopped picking some of them up, and one had difficulty getting in because her family was having car troubles.*
- *forestry; people expressed their frustration on the fact that the trees that were being planted were*

bad for the environment, and that people were getting kicked out of their houses for space for trees to be planted; this made most people at the panel believe that companies just bought land to plant trees, look good and make money without checking if it would be good for the local people and environment or not.

- *younger people weren't getting drawn to the area because some houses had little or no wifi.*

We enjoyed the meeting, and I think all the young participants felt happy because we felt that we were being listened to.

Pictured above is the event, with the table which included the young Dalry citizens at the back.

Our Covenanter Heritage

Some two years ago Dalry Town Hall, with support from Galloway Glens Landscape Partnership and the Glenkens & District Trust, commissioned a video called *Dalry and the Glenkens Rising*.

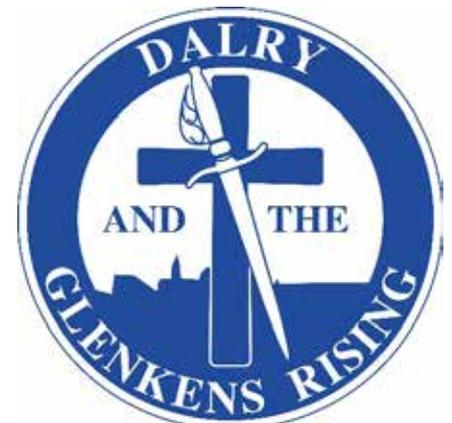
This told the story of a local rising against religious persecution, that started in Dalry in 1666, and its cruel aftermath. This became part of the Covenanting movement.

The plan has always been to show

the video within Dalry Town Hall to attract visitors to the Glenkens and to encourage interest in our heritage. Unfortunately, Covid restrictions delayed this aspect of the project until this year.

What we now hope to do is to show the video between 2pm and 4pm on Saturdays and Sundays throughout the summer. **But to enable this we need a small group of volunteers willing to join a rota to be present within the hall during these periods.**

Some training will be provided in setting up the projection equipment, but it is really no more complicated than a home video system. Equally, there is no expectation that volunteers will be historians - the video explains it all.



If you are interested in helping with this project, please contact me on 07776 034 260 or at jamescreid@hotmail.co.uk

Jim Reid



LING

Local Initiatives in New Galloway

LING are thrilled that, after interviewing some really excellent applicants, we have made three fabulous appointments.

First, we have a Project Manager to oversee the renovation and refurbishment of the Town Hall - Ronnie Bradford. Secondly, we have an Events, Activities and Inclusion Manager - Angie Bradford. Angie will take the place of Neil Paterson, but with a wider brief and a two-year position. Angie comes to us from Ferry Friends, with Creetown Initiative, who will miss her sorely. And, yes, you probably spotted that the Bradfords are a couple; completely separate interview panels, no overlap in decision-making - just two excellent, separate appointments. And last, but

by no means least, we have a Youth Activities and Development Worker - Olivia Donald; Olivia brings a wealth of experience and will work closely with Cat at the Catstrand. All three seem delighted to be joining us and we are very pleased indeed to be welcoming all three.

Our thanks go to Architectural Heritage Fund, the Scottish Government's Communities Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund, and GDT and the Blackcraig Community Fund, respectively, for the grant funding that underpins these appointments. Grant giving bodies like these provide us and our community, not just grant funding that makes things possible, but also a wealth of advice, support and learning opportunities which is much appreciated.

Bob Glaister, LING

Loch Ken Trust Summer Plans

The Loch Ken Trust is a new charity, set up to support Loch Ken and the surrounding communities.

Overseen by a Board of Trustees, the Trust runs the Loch Ken Ranger Service and the Boat Registration Service, helping users and stakeholders around the Loch.

Power Boat Registrations are handled by the team at the Loch Ken Marina, who can be contacted for more details. The Loch Ken Ranger Service, led by Ken Scott, is working to support responsible access and compliance with the Scottish Outdoor Access Code. To get in touch, email lktranger@protonmail.com or call 07918 300889. If you are interested in becoming a member of the Trust or to find out more about their work, visit www.lochken.org.uk.

Dear Kenmure Dog Walkers,

Can anyone walking a dog around Kenmure Castle grounds please remember to keep it on a lead at all times.

Today a dog which was not on a lead attacked and mauled a sheep and we had to inform the farmer. Luckily we managed to get the dog off the sheep but it was a horrible situation, and there were also lambs in field.

*Thank you,
A Concerned Resident*

LAUNCH OF THE DRAGON BOATS

We are pleased to announce the launch of dragon boats on Loch Ken on 24 July - save the date!

Before this date we need to have some fully trained helms who are prepared to go on a rota and we are offering training dates at the Galloway Activity Centre (GAC), on either Saturday 16 or Sunday 17 July. There is no cost attached to the training, and up to six people can be trained each day so it really is first come first served.

Senior instructor, Andy, from the GAC will be our trainer. The day will start at 9am until midday on theory/safety, etc. After an hour's break for lunch each participant will helm under supervision, finishing at 4pm.

On completion of this training you will be ready to helm. In the afternoon only we will also need people to be paddlers from 1pm to 4pm, to enable our trainee helms to practice.

Please contact our secretary Joyce on pf1ssw@gmail.com if you are interested in training and/or paddling either days.

Paddlers for Life

dragon boats on loch ken

RELAUNCH COMING SOON

Join us this spring for the relaunch of Dragon Boats on Loch Ken.

Watch this space for more information!

All ages welcome.

GAVIN'S UKRAINE FUNDRAISER

Gavin McGhie and his brother Frank walked non-stop round Clatteringshaws Loch, a 60-mile round trip, to raise funds for people in need in the Ukraine.

"I would like to thank everyone for their kind donations", said Gavin. "Especially a huge 'thank you' to my beautiful wife Melissa for the posters and all her help, and a great big thanks to our good friend Steve Grimshaw for his support round the challenge and

bacon rolls and coffee at 2am at Glentroot! And thanks to the *Gazette* for sharing this, and to readers for contributing!"

A grand total of £3,500 was raised and sent to the Humanitarian Appeal for Ukraine.



Gavin and Frank at the end of their walk holding the Ukrainian flag.

Open Garden

The gardens at Balmaclellan House were opened again on Sunday 24 April under Scotland's Gardens Scheme (SGS).



The weather was glorious and there were more than 130 visitors in attendance over the day, with just under £1,000 raised for charity.

This year the proceeds were split between SGS and Glenkens Community & Arts Trust, with the latter providing a team of volunteers to assist with the teas and washing up on the day. Thank you to all who helped out, especially Ian and Anne who spent most of the afternoon by the sink!

The formal garden, which is based on the design of the Balmaclellan Mirror, was particularly popular this year and it was great to have a bronze replica of the mirror on loan from The Smiddy

in Balmaclellan for visitors to see. A further copy of the mirror is currently on display in the Stewartry Museum in Kirkcudbright, in an exhibition running in tandem with the Galloway Hoard exhibition which runs until 10 July.

Plant sales, courtesy of Billy Orr of Blackthorn Nurseries, were also popular, as was the display of classic and sports cars. The lovely weather allowed people to linger and socialise whilst enjoying the views and having cups of tea, something which has not always been easy over the last few years.

Alan Smith

Settling

Rook discord as wings, a black cloud, descend to roost.

Leafless trees blur in failing light, evening gives way to night.

Winter dusk is that magic time of things half seen, where sounds from far seem near.

Birds finally settle, harsh voices fall silent among untidy nests.

by Anne Micklethwaite

#Tossers

There will be an update on the #Tossers campaign featured last edition in the August/September issue of the *Gazette*.

In the meantime, remember to send in your examples of #tossers to glenkengazette@hotmail.co.uk

David Tallontire CHIMNEY SWEEP

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Spring Fling's 20th Year

Nearly 100 artists and makers are ready to welcome back the public for Dumfries and Galloway's annual open studios event.

A total of 96 participants from all parts of the region will throw open their studio doors and welcome in the public between 2-5 June for Spring Fling. Visitors can get behind the scenes of artistic practice, learning about their processes and inspirations, and have the opportunity to buy a piece of art direct from the artist.

This is the 20th Spring Fling and will mark the first full in-person event since the pandemic.

Catherine Corfield, who moved to St John's Town of Dalry last year, is one of the artists participating for the first time.

"I'm so excited to be part of such a prestigious event - it brings so many people to the region and has huge

artistic importance. I'm really looking forward to being able to talk to people in person; it's something I have really missed during the pandemic."

Catherine, who is a landscape oil painter, will be holding her open studios event at the CatStrand in New Galloway where she currently has her work on display and where she works as the CatStrand Youth Arts Coordinator.

Some other Spring Fling artists in and around the Glenkens are Adam Booth, Pamela Grace and Clare



Dalry-based landscape artist Catherine Corfield is on the Pink Route for this year's Spring Fling event.

Dawdry near Kirkpatrick Durham; Jo Gallant, Pete Machell and Geoff Forrest near Mossdale; and Fitch & McAndrew, Amanda Simmons and Natalie Vardey near Corsock.

To find out more about the event visit www.spring-fling.co.uk

FINLAY CARSON MSP

Member of the Scottish Parliament for Galloway and West Dumfries



If you would like an appointment, please get in touch

Write to:

107 King Street, Castle Douglas, DG7 1LZ

Email: Finlay.Carson.MSP@parliament.scot

Phone: 01556 504991

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STEERING FOR CHANGE

The Glenkens & District Community Action Plan (CAP) Steering Group held its first full meeting in early May.

The key role of the steering group is to be the custodian of the Glenkens & District Community Action Plan, and the Terms of Reference of the group can be found on www.glenkenstrust.org.uk. The steering group is supported by Helen Keron, the executive manager at the Glenken Community & Arts Trust, and the bulk of the meeting was spent reviewing progress against the Plan and agreeing the areas of focus going forward. The Glenkens and District Trust also provided an update about their funding strategy and plans, so that the local context that the Community Action Plan sits in is continuously updated.

The steering group was pleased to see progress by community groups on a number of projects highlighted in the CAP, including the development of a community-wide communications tool led by GCAT, a youth work project led by Local Initiatives in New Galloway and the plan for a distribution network for local produce, led by Propagate. They

also noted the recent publication of the Loch Ken Plan by the Loch Ken Trust, which reinforces many of the priorities of the Community Action Plan.

Fiona Smith, Interim Chair of the CAP Steering Group said:

"It was great to come together as the full group for the first time. We are all aware that the CAP is very ambitious and will take time, energy and funding to progress, so we agreed we should encourage realistic planning and timescales for these important projects and priorities. Having said that, becoming a Carbon Neutral Community is a particular priority at present, with the main challenge being how to balance short-term delivery with really ambitious projects."

Helen, together with the new GCAT 'Connecting in Communities' team, is



planning to get out and about over the next few months to meet as many local organisations as possible to discuss the Community Action Plan and the priorities within it.

The Steering Group decided that a Glenkens Forum on the topic of Food and Farming would be an important next step, and that will be planned for the summer.

Pictured are members of the newly formed CAP Steering Group.




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GLENKENS MUSINGS

The CatStrand Youth Players

When I started to work/volunteer at the CatStrand nearly six years ago, I never knew how popular and successful the youth players had been.

I only joined in my late teens because I went through a little dark period and was looking for a way out of it. And I'm so glad I did because I can honestly say it is the most fun I have ever had.

The SCDA Festivals that happen annually, (apart from 2020-2021 due to Covid) are always a fun and rewarding time. I have been involved with them since 2018 under the watchful eye of award-winning directors Zoe Kirkpatrick and Brian Edgar. When this year's festival date was set, I was happy to just be behind the scenes, helping Brian as the director. I was stunned and honoured when Brian asked if I'd like to try.

The play we decided to Produce is 'Lockdown' by Douglas Craven. Set in a dark classroom, eight students sit

in an "official" lockdown, (note: not the ones we're used too!) not knowing if it's just a drill or an actual emergency. When a hysterical first year bolts from the classroom and the teacher rushes after them, the remaining students are left alone to decide if it's safer to stay or run.

So far with this production we have had amazing success! In the District round at The Fullarton in Castle Douglas, we picked up four awards which we are very grateful for. The next round at the Western Divisional final in Dunoon, we also did really well, being placed first and now being sent to represent the west at the Scottish Youth Final in Bathgate on 11 June.

CatStrand Players is such a great time and such a laugh. It brings people together and gives a distraction from a problematic world. If you would like to get involved with the players in any shape or form or would like some more information, please do



The Youth Players team in rehearsal at the CatStrand.

not hesitate to contact the CatStrand, Brian or myself - Youth Players is open people aged from 12 to 18.

A massive thank you to all the cast and crew of 'Lockdown' and for everybody's support towards us. Thank you again to Brian for giving me a chance!

We all hope we do you, the Glenkens and the South West, proud in June.

James Wallace

Talking Murder in Dalry

JUNE IS FLAMING MURDER
NATIONAL CRIME READING MONTH

Talking Murder in Dalry

Meet four successful crime authors talking about their inspirations and how they turn a simple idea into gripping page turners.

Having spent twenty-seven years in the Metropolitan Police, Ian Robinson is now a full-time writer. Seven of his crime novels have been published and Rubicon was optioned with the BBC for a six-part TV series. Ian is published by Fahrenheit Press and The Book Folks of London.



Jackie Baldwin sets much of her work in Dumfries and Galloway and was a solicitor in Dumfries for twenty years. Her debut crime novel, *Dead Man's Prayer*, was published by Killer Reads, Harper Collins in 2016. The second in the series, *Perfect Dead*, was published in 2018 with the third, *Avenge the Dead*.



John Dean, a former journalist who specialised in crime for much of his career, is the creator of the DCI John Blizard and DCI Jack Harris series of novels inspired by the northern cities of his working life and the wild countryside of his Scottish home. He is published by The Book Folks of London.



Ann Bloxwich is a lifelong fan of crime fiction who started writing after attending her first crime writing festival in Harrogate. Her debut novel *What Goes Around* was published by Dark Edge Press in the summer of 2021.



Dalry Town Hall
Friday June 24 at 7.30pm
Tickets £10
Booking details available from
www.dalrytownhall.co.uk

Dalry will support National Crime Reading Month in June by staging an 'In Conversation With...' event featuring crime writers Jackie Baldwin, Ian Robinson, Ann Bloxwich and John Dean.

National Crime Reading Month is an initiative developed and run by the Crime Writers' Association, and is staged this year in collaboration with The Reading Agency. It aims to bring new books to existing readers and attract new readers to one of the most popular and best-selling

genres.

The Dalry event will take place in Dalry Town Hall, at 7.30pm on Friday 24 June.

Many *Gazette* readers may be familiar with Ian Robinson as he has been featured in previous editions, having previously been based in the Glenkens.

Ian spent 27 years working in the Metropolitan Police and is now a full-time writer. Seven of his crime novels have been published and Rubicon was optioned with the BBC for a six-part TV series. Ian is published by Fahrenheit Press and The Book Folks of London. Ian said: "When I first moved to Scotland, I wrote in The Clachan Inn while my daughter was at the local playgroup. It's an honour to be invited back to Dalry for National Crime Reading Month."

Tickets for the event are £10 and are available from www.dalrytownhall.co.uk - follow the link to DTH Promotions.

For more information please contact John Dean on 07889 554 931, and to find out more about National Crime Reading Month visit www.thecwa.co.uk

CatStrand Highlights

There is plenty to look forward in the CatStrand Arts programme as we move into the summer months - here's some of the things I am most looking forward to - I hope to see you there!

In The Weeds: An Tobar and Mull Theatre, Friday 3 June

A gothic thriller about who gets to claim ownership of the land we all live on. Exploring island identity and our troubled relationship with the natural environment.

The Galloway Agreement: Ken Bridge Song Suite, Sunday 12 June, Dalry Town Hall

This is a special concert launching a programme of Ken Bridge bicentenary



An Tobar and Mull Theatre will present In the Weeds on Friday 3 June.

events. Including the premier of Wendy Stewart's Ken Bridge Song Suite which takes The River Ken, The Crossing, and the life of engineer John Rennie as inspiration.

Watson Birdsong Day, Saturday 25 June, Dalry Town Hall

A day dedicated to Donald Watson and bird song. Events include a birdsong and landscape walk, the birdsong recording studio, the book launch of *Jackdaws and Other Friends*, and culminates in The Conference of Birds concert with Peter Cowdry

SongWave Choir: Songs of the Summer, Sunday 25 June, Crossmichael Church

Castle Douglas based choir, SongWave, known throughout the region for their uplifting and entertaining performances, present a concert based on songs of community, friendship, changing seasons and the many cycles of life.

Peter Renwick, Arts Culture and Heritage Manager, CatStrand

For full listings and details of events visit www.gcat.scot or pick up a CatStrand brochure from retail outlets in and around the Glenkens.

CATSTRAND

YOUNG CREATIVES

The CatStrand Young Creatives have a brilliant summer programme lined up, with events and activities for ages ranging from five to 25.

Some of the exciting things on offer during June and July are:

- A **Youth Beatz Excursion**, which is an accompanied trip to the Youth Beatz festival.
- **Stomping Ground Creative** are hosting a Music in Film workshop over six weeks.
- A **Drama Rama Workshop** led by CatStrand's youth worker, Cat, who will take children on a fun, creative adventure to a magical land, exploring through role-play, drama, movement and storytelling.
- **Eco Art Forest School** sessions - led by Kay from Irose Studio, children will gather materials outdoors and learn how to make their own art materials such as ink, paint, and painting tools before returning to the Catstrand to make their own art.

For full information, please visit the CatStrand website at www.gcat.scot or take a look at the CatStrand programme.

CATSTRAND EST 2007
A GLENKENS STREAM OF ARTS & EVENTS

CATSTRAND JUNE HIGHLIGHTS





1ST **YYorkston, Thorne & Ghatak**
7:30pm, CatStrand
James Yorkston Jon Thorne & Ranjana Ghatak's Music crosses the worlds of Indian Classical, Jazz and Folk music. Expect new pieces exploring the beauty of sacred vocal music played with a new flavour and excitement.

24TH & 25TH **Though This Be Madness**
Fri 7:30pm, CatStrand
Babes in arms performance
Sat 10:30am, CatStrand
Award-winning writer and performer Skye Loneragan brings her fragmented portrayal of motherhood, sisterhood and experience of loved ones debilitating mental illness.

3RD **An Tobar and Mull Theatre**
7:30pm Caststrand
A gothic thriller about who gets to claim ownership of the land we all live on. Exploring island identity and our troubled relationship to the natural environment.

25TH **Watson Birdsong Day**
Various times, Dalry
A day dedicated to Donald Watson and Bird Song. Events include a Birdsong and Landscape Walk, the Birdsong recording Studio, The book launch of *Jackdaws and Other Friends*, and Culminates in The Conference of Birds Concert with Peter Cowdry

9TH **Bancroft & Lyne**
7:30pm, CatStrand
Heralded as a 'must see' act at a recent Xerox Rochester International Jazz Festival, New York they have performed at many venues and festivals around the UK, Europe and North America.

25TH **SongWave Choir: Songs of the Summer**
Crossmichael Church, 3:00PM
Castle Douglas based choir, SongWave, are known throughout the region for their uplifting and entertaining performances present a concert will be based on songs of community, friendship, changing seasons and the many cycles of life.

12TH **The Galloway Agreement - Ken Bridge Song**
7:30pm, Dalry Town Hall
This is a special concert launching a programme of Ken Bridge bicentenary events. Including the premier of Wendy Stewart's Ken Bridge Song Suite



Threave Landscape Restoration Project

FIRST YEAR HIGHLIGHTS

2021 saw the start of the National Trust for Scotland's Threave Landscape Restoration Project, with the re-establishing of natural processes and habitats across the 80 hectare Threave Nature Reserve at Kelton Mains near Castle Douglas. The river has been reconnected to the wetlands, hardy native cattle are grazing the land, with fences and non-native trees being removed. The site aims to become a restored woodland-wetland ecosystem, self-sustaining and self-adapting to Scotland's changing climate. Have a look at what we have done in our first year and if you have any queries or want to get involved, get in touch...

Smart Cows, Grazing & Access

- Over 6000 metres of fencing removed
- 14 Belted Galloways trained and wearing the collars
- 1 Herbivore Impact Assessment completed
- Archaeological Surveys completed over entire site
- 31 soil samples taken
- 2415 metres of new grass paths around Kelton Mains

Dam Busters, Ponds & Scrapes

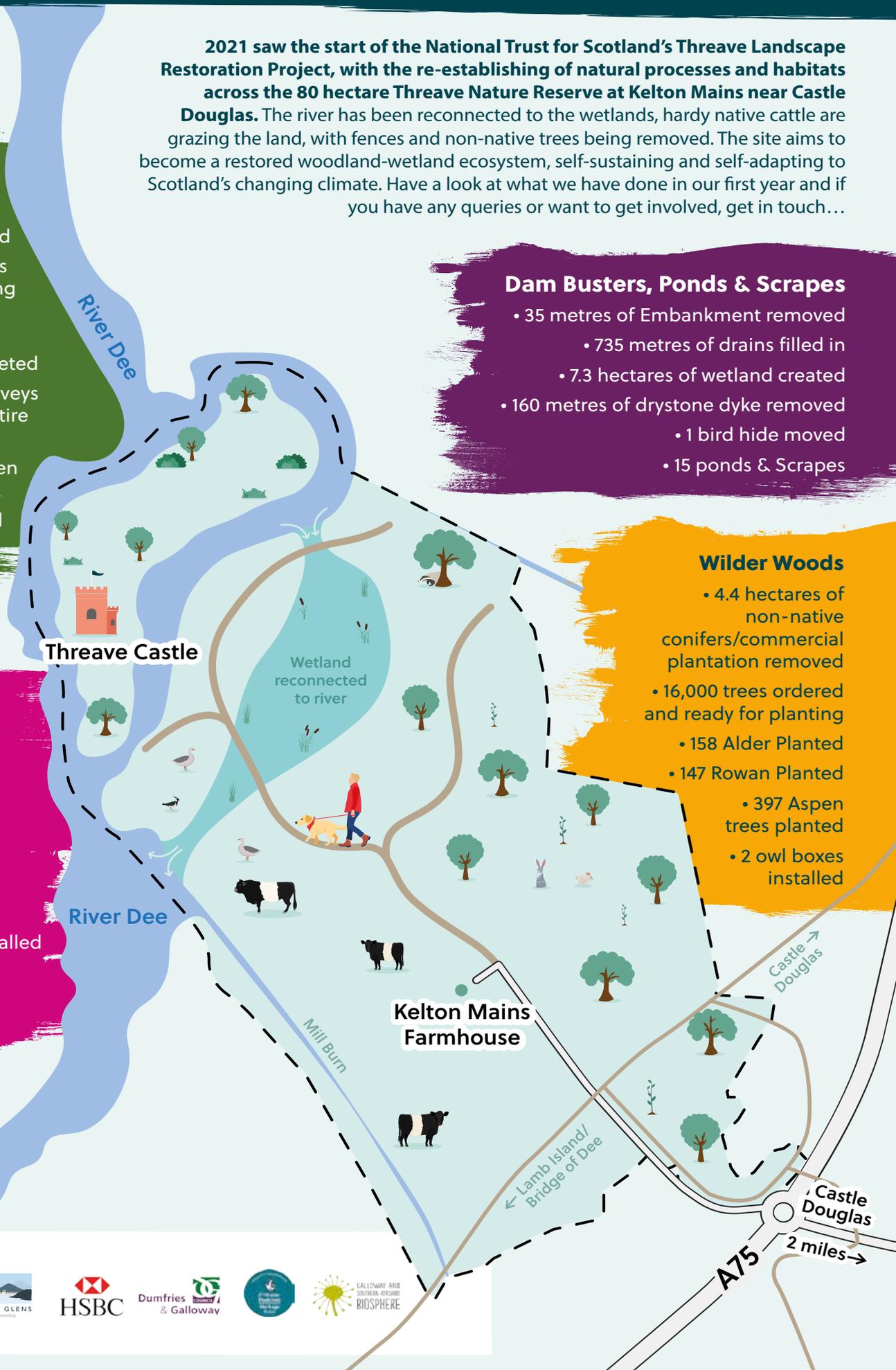
- 35 metres of Embankment removed
- 735 metres of drains filled in
- 7.3 hectares of wetland created
- 160 metres of drystone dyke removed
- 1 bird hide moved
- 15 ponds & Scrapes

Wilder Woods

- 4.4 hectares of non-native conifers/commercial plantation removed
- 16,000 trees ordered and ready for planting
- 158 Alder Planted
- 147 Rowan Planted
- 397 Aspen trees planted
- 2 owl boxes installed

Mill Burn Restoration

- 6 'kickers' Installed
- 1 heavily poached section re-profiled
- Year 1 invertebrate surveys completed
- Year 1 fish surveys completed
- 1 brush feature installed
- 3 v-shaped flow detectors installed



PROJECT IN FOCUS

Mammals in the Garden

Are there wild mammals in your Galloway garden? Help us find out!

There are more than 60 species of wild mammals resident in Scotland and, discounting those that live in the sea, the majority of them are found close to human habitation. A project led by South West Scotland Environmental Information Centre (SWSEIC) is seeking volunteers in the Galloway Glens area willing to host an infra-red camera or a bat detector to better understand our wild neighbours and their distribution.

Remote Highland Glens and wilderness areas are certainly important for wildlife, but there are more species of mammal in our towns, villages and gardens. Some wild mammals, especially bats, actually live in the same buildings as us. Red foxes reach their greatest population density in towns and cities, and even the otter, often thought of

as a shy mammal, is at home in many urban watercourses. Yet we rarely see our mammal neighbours, mainly because they are active during the night, whilst we are asleep. Which wild mammals share your living spaces, possibly more than you think?!



A badger in a Stewartry garden captured with an infrared night camera.

If you live in the Ken/Dee Valley, between Carsphairn and Kirkcudbright Bay, and would like to find out about your wild neighbours, now is your opportunity. Contact Peter Norman from South West Scotland Environmental Information Centre (SWSEIC) on pnorman@swseic.org.uk to borrow an infra-red camera or a bat detector, together with expert assistance from SWSEIC. Both pieces of equipment can be set up in your garden or local greenspace and left unattended

to monitor wild mammals whilst you sleep. The equipment will be automatically triggered to record when an animal is detected close-by, and the information collected will assist local and national conservation projects.

The project is funded through the Galloway Glens 'Our Heritage' Small Grants scheme. The scheme is overseen by Anna Harvey, Galloway Glens Administrator. Anna said:

"The 'Wild Mammals at Home' project is an opportunity for people to find out about any wild visitors to their Ken/

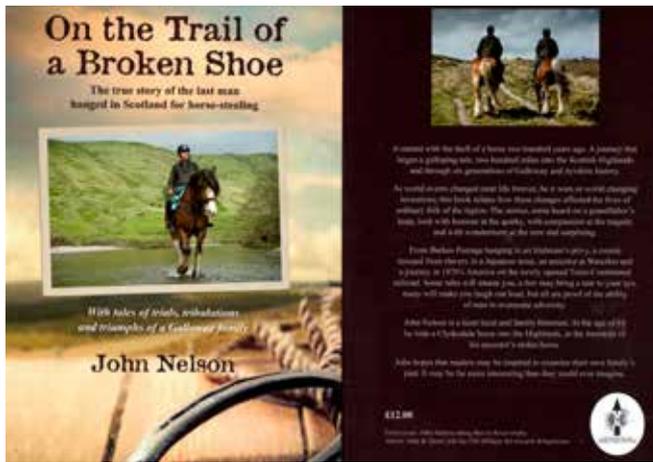
Dee gardens or open spaces, while also improving our wildlife records by supplementing SWSEIC's database of sightings. This is 'citizen science' in action! A big thank you to the National Lottery Heritage Fund for supporting this great project."

A number of infrared clips have already been filmed and published. Visit the SWSEIC channel on www.youtube.co.uk to see clips – some expected sightings and some quite unexpected!



Sponsored page, working in partnership





On the Trail of a Broken Shoe

Ten years ago John Nelson rode into the Highlands on a Clydesdale horse, following in the footsteps of an ancestor's pursuit of his stolen horse.

Now, after continuing his research into that little known story and many other tales, John has published the beautifully produced book *On the Trail of a Broken Shoe*. It is available locally at Crossmichael Shop, CatStrand in New Galloway, Tarff Country in Dumfries, Smarts bookshop in Castle Douglas, Gallovidia Books in Kirkcudbright and Old Bank Books in Wigtown.

SOPHIE'S POEM

Spring is Here

Flowers blooming all around,
Plants growing in the ground,
Leaves growing on the trees,
Everywhere there are bees

Birds chirping in the wood,
Piglets rolling in the mud,
Blue skies everyday,
All grey clouds have gone away

In this tranquil spring all around me,
I wonder how this came to be,
In this peace, this order, this calm,
I'm surrounded by so much charm

I wish to be for evermore,
Here standing on this forest floor,
For evermore my ears ringing,
With bees buzzing and birds singing

By Sophie Roberts



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NB change of date for June only

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Watson Birds Branches Out

A significant number of Donald Watson's paintings were exhibited at Fingask Castle in Perthshire during their annual Fingask Follies event.

The paintings shown were a number that had been found during a review of Donald Watson's archive - now superbly framed by Leo Blamire in Castle Douglas - along with a variety of his other paintings.

Having the project showcased in this manner means that Watson Birds, our new trails, etc, will reach a much wider audience, and hopefully bring more people to the Glenkens.

Many people have been asking for cards of Donald Watson's paintings.

Using the excellent printing services of Small Print in Castle Douglas, three A3 sized posters, six A4 posters, 12 letter cards and six postcards are available for purchase at the CatStrand shop and at various Watson Bird events. *Roger Crofts*

Pictured below is the Fingask Castle exhibition of Donald Watson's paintings.



PUBLIC MEETING

There will be a public meeting in Dalry Town Hall on Thursday 23 June at 7pm to discuss the management/ownership structure of the town hall.

Residents of the Parish of St John's Town of Dalry are invited by the Dalry Town Hall Management Committee to attend a meeting at the above time and place to discuss and vote on the proposal: "That the building and grounds of Dalry Town Hall be acquired by a charitable body namely Dalry Town Hall SCIO from the present historic Trust, Dalry Town Hall Trust, through such legal means as are appropriate"

Note: A SCIO is a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation and the proposed move is explained in the article on page 32.

J Reid, Vice Chair, Dalry Town Hall Management Committee

CROSSMICHAEL HERITAGE CENTRE

Crossmichael Heritage Centre re-opened its doors on the 1 June.

The heritage centre, which was opened originally by Ted Cowan and Lizanne Henderson, will be open each Wednesday and Friday afternoon between 1.30pm and 4.30pm - do drop in to see the excellent local history exhibition.





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Ted Cowan and Local Music

My first introduction to Ted was through a book he edited called *The People's Past: Scottish Folk, Scottish History* (1980).

At the time I was a research student, doing fieldwork in the Glenkens, and quickly discovering that by asking questions about music-making I was also learning a great deal about local history. Many historians are thirled to the written record as a primary source of information. For Ted, however, songs and stories were just as important to an understanding of history, revealing a great deal about people's view of themselves and the times they lived in.

He had a particular interest in ballads, a type of song that tells a story: another of his books is called *The Ballad in Scottish History* (2000). I love to sing ballads, and I shared the stage with Ted several times.

Ted passionately wanted to see D&G better known and understood. He asked me to contribute a chapter on music

and dance to the book *Dumfries and Galloway, People and Place c.1700-1914* (2019). He especially wanted me to include the local version of the ballad 'Lord Ronald', which was written down by William McMath of Airds of Kells in the late 19th century. We had good fun launching that publication at Wigtown Book Festival.

In recent years Ted was instrumental in encouraging me to revisit, share and write about my research in the Glenkens. For example, I have greatly enjoyed taking part in the work of groups like 'The Glenkens Story', 'Ken Words', 'Carsphairn Heritage Initiative' and 'Dalry Heritage Group'. Tributes to Ted in the last issue of the Gazette

all conveyed what good company he was. We both, I think, actively sought opportunities to engage with audiences outside academic settings. He was one of several local contributors at a Ken Words event for Logan Paterson, and as I recall his performance of Logan's humorous poem *McSkimming's Flaughterin' Spade* had everyone in stitches. It was my impression that he delighted in being a participant in, as much as an observer of, local culture. To put it another way, as others have noted, while Ted was happy to initiate and be the 'front man', he also liked to be in the audience.

On my last visit to Ted, I discussed plans for a new book about local music and dance. Typically generous, he offered to help in any way he could, and I left with a renewed sense of purpose and enthusiasm. While he is greatly missed, I have no doubt that Ted's contribution to the Glenkens and its folk will continue to make an impact in the years to come, including for myself. Not least because, in his own words, folk tradition "enables us to catch the echo of the people's past across the wide valleys of Time".

Jo Miller



Ted and Jo giving a presentation on ballads in Dumfries in 1986.

An Evolving Conversation with the Hill

A summit book or summit register is a traditional way of recording visitors to the top of a mountain.

The book on Waterside Hill is tucked away in an inobtrusive, weatherproof canister at the cairn where, as well as noting their presence at the summit, visitors are invited to take in their surroundings and relate something of the experience. These personal reflections will provide a layer of information and nuance that explores sense of place over a long period, with people offering thoughts in the course of their everyday wanderings, special visits, or long-distance walks, but always in their own time.

The summit box will be available until 23 September 2022, and the first hundred arrivals who open it to write, or draw, in the register will find a small token left for them to take in return for their musings.

The tokens, prepared by Morag

Paterson, consist of a traditional photograph of Waterside hill made into a postcard which offers a memoir of the hill now, and a small reproduction of a mono-print, presented on a plantable card impregnated with wildflower seeds, which gestures back towards the village and an ongoing wildflower planting project taking place this summer.

A parallel summit box will be also be left at a location in Dalry, beginning with the old phone box, to allow contributions from different people, and engaging with Waterside Hill from a different vantage point. Some tokens will also be available in the phone box.

Jane McBeth will be caretaker of the books until the autumn, when she and Morag will gather them in and add their own reflections. The registers will then travel from place to place in the community where they can be read and enjoyed.

Although the project is initially for a six-month period, the intention is to continue replacing the book on the summit cairn over the coming years to create an ongoing record of the changes on the hill, and how people experience and reflect on this change in the landscape.



The summit box, where walkers can leave their comments, is nestled into the cairn at the top of Waterside Hill.

This project concept has been developed by Morag Paterson (artist) and Jane McBeth (Ken Words) in association with Glenkens Community & Arts Trust and funded by Creative Scotland. Jane McBeth

LAND USE IN THE GLENKENS

Communities for Diverse Forestry

With land sales accelerating by the day and new commercial forestry schemes expanding rapidly across the Glenkens, we wanted to give you an update on what Communities for Diverse Forestry (CDF) have been doing.

We're lobbying at both a local and national level for new woodland creation to be a mixture of tree species. This is important not only from a visual perspective, but also due to the fact that well structured, mixed forests offer habitat for more species and can be more resilient to pests, diseases and climate change, therefore providing a response to the climate and biodiversity emergency which monoculture plantations do not.

We're calling for meaningful community engagement that fully explores Sense of Place and incorporates invaluable local expertise re access routes, archaeological features, cultural history and resident flora and fauna, etc. Protecting our peatlands and open habitats is also important, and we'd like to see joined up thinking around cumulative proposals that ensures these habitats are connected rather than swallowed up. Peat is one of our most important carbon stores and it's important that we don't release that carbon unnecessarily by planting trees in the wrong places.

Timber and forests are a valuable resource, provide jobs and have the potential to provide long term carbon sequestration when used in buildings.

However, planting on peat, burning it for electricity in large scale power stations and churning out short shelf-life products has the opposite effect.

We're contributing to a group response

to the UK Forest Standard review and recently spoke at a fringe event at the Scottish Labour conference organised by the Woodland Trust. The event was chaired by Claudia Beamish and Colin Smyth MSP was also on the panel.

In February we had a virtual meeting with Màiri McAllan, the minister for environment and land reform, which gave us the chance to present our concerns to the government directly.

We were very clear that we need urgent help to develop a more holistic view when woodland targets are rolled out as the current 'gold rush' threatens to displace both people and nature.

We've also had two meetings with the CEO of Confor, Stuart Goodall, which we hope have already led to positive action being put in motion with respect to community engagement, and maybe even cumulative impacts.

Over the last year we have compiled a set of free guidelines that walk a community through how a woodland creation application consultation works and how, when, and why they can engage with developers. Scottish Forestry recently confirmed that they appreciate our initiative on this and that the minister is keen to ensure Communities for Diverse Forestry are fully engaged and consulted with respect to principles and engagement around responsible land use.



We plan to roll out some FREE training sessions on forestry engagement for individuals and communities over the coming months. Please get in touch if you would be interested in attending at commsdiverseforestry@gmail.com

Morag Paterson, CDF

Pictured: Top - Cairnsmore of Carsphairn, newly planted; over 900 hectares of new Sitka spruce dominant plantations have been consented in Carsphairn over a one-year period. Above: Land owned by Duchrae Estates, Dalry, which is due to be planted. The community don't feel there was sufficient local engagement, and the sign reflects increasing anti-Sitka sentiment due to the dramatic rise in local plantations (photograph submitted by a Gazette reader).

WHAT IS REGENERATIVE FARMING?

A quiet revolution is happening in agriculture across Scotland and the rest of the UK.

Words like 'regenerative' and 'agroecology' are making their way into policy frameworks that will pave the way for new farm payments after 2024. But what do these words mean? And how can farmers learn more to get ready for the changes ahead?

In a nutshell, regenerative and agroecological systems are farming with nature. Valuing biodiversity, reducing inputs and maximising soil health through changes in management from what we think of as 'conventional' - for example introducing holistic planned mob grazing, reducing ploughing and tillage, valuing diversity in the pasture. Regenerative systems are about supporting your underground livestock, so that they do all the hard work increasing fertility and structure! It's economical, profitable and offers huge benefits in terms of carbon sequestration, water management and more.

The Regenerative Farming Network is open to all farmers and food producers across D&G, South Ayrshire and East Ayrshire. Already at 140 members, this peer-to-peer knowledge exchange

group organises farm walks, talks and film screenings to support transitions to more sustainable nature-based farming practices. You don't have to be an expert, or even (yet) implementing regenerative practices - just have a curious and open mind and willingness to find out more.

The Glenkens has a rich and diverse farming heritage. A patchwork of small family owned or long term tenanted farms sits alongside larger estates and holdings. The majority of our local farming is sheep and beef cattle. Vegetables used to be produced in fields around Dalry, and perhaps could be again; there's certainly a demand for it. Our mix of uplands and lower lying land create opportunities for different soil distribution and habitat types. Our uplands are good for grazing livestock, but also offer potential for agroforestry and increased native broadleaf tree cover, such as birches, rowans, hawthorns, willows and hazels. When done properly, this tree mix is compatible with grazing livestock,

providing shelter, fodder and nutrients.

The Regenerative Farming Network for South West Scotland already counts some local Glenkens farmers amongst its members. New members are always welcome, and more info can be found at www.dgsustainablefoodpartnership.org/regenerative-farming-network and there is also a Facebook group; just search for Regenerative Farming Network South West Scotland

To read more about regenerative farming check out the Groundswell website at www.groundswellag.com/principles-of-regenerative-agriculture

Abi Mordin



Vision for land use and land management in the Galloway and Southern Ayrshire Biosphere in 2050

The Biosphere is a diverse, mixed and integrated living and working landscape. It supports a wide range of innovative low carbon and biodiversity friendly land-based activities including farming, forestry, tourism, and nature conservation. The Biosphere is recognised internationally as a region that demonstrates how sustainable development is good for people, the environment and the local economy.

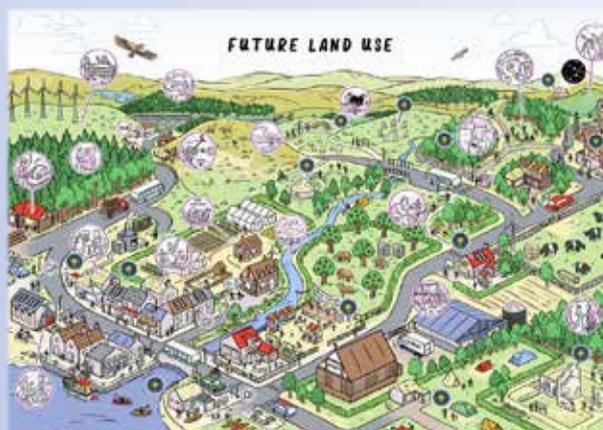
The Biosphere is an excellent place to live and work. Better digital and physical infrastructure, public transport and affordable low-carbon timber housing will support the local economy, making the Biosphere an attractive and pleasant home for all age groups. Employment opportunities and accessibility retain those who have grown up locally and stimulate inward migration from folk who left the region and outsiders charmed by the Biosphere's reputation as an attractive and innovative rural community.

The Biosphere has a strong identity. Natural and cultural heritage sites and local traditions and culture are respected and celebrated, strengthening sense of place and inspiring local arts and culture. Pride and knowledge of natural and cultural heritage drives the Biosphere's reputation for nature-based tourism, traditional crafts and local art, and regional food which provide an important contribution to the Biosphere's economy.

Land uses are integrated to provide multiple benefits and support biodiversity and carbon storage. Environmental protection upheld and conservation targets are achieved. Degraded peatland is restored, and existing forest plantations restructured to increase biodiversity and amenity value. Any additional woodland is carefully considered to maximise benefits (climate mitigation, biodiversity, jobs, timber, and recreation opportunities) and avoid negative impacts on the open landscape character and local infrastructure.

Local food, timber and energy provides many local needs. Less imported food and timber reduces carbon emissions from transport and support local employment. A local circular economy maximises value and environmental standards and minimises waste. Energy needs are met with local community and household renewable energy generation. Mixed productive woodlands provide quality timber, including native hard woods that support local industries.

Cooperation, collaboration and consensus help achieve integrated land use. Regional partnerships identify priorities and help translate national priorities into what is needed and suitable for the Biosphere. Where there are competing land use demands, changes are properly guided, scrutinised, assessed and justified to ensure that the future outcome is greater than before. Regulations, incentives and support are aligned to favour mixed and integrated land use that provides multiple social, environmental and economic benefits.



This vision was developed in a participatory process of two workshops and a web-based survey with a diverse group of stakeholders in the Biosphere as part of the EIT Climate KIC funded FORLAND R project. For further information contact marc.metzger@ed.ac.uk



Illustrations by
Glenkens Biosphere

Farming in a Changing Landscape

by **Patrick Laurie**

The speed of land use change in Galloway is extraordinary.

In what seems like no time at all, extensive areas of traditional hill farming country have gone to commercial forestry, and given the time delay between approval and delivery of new forest projects, it's hard to grasp the enormity of what's coming next.

When I travel to other parts of the UK for work, it's hard to convey a sense of these dramatic changes to people who have not seen it with their own eyes. In the same way, when visitors come here to see what's happening, many are staggered by the transformation currently unfolding in the hills.

In 2010, it wasn't unusual for hill grazing in Galloway to be bought and sold at around £850 per acre, but in recent months the same acre of land might cost seven or eight thousand pounds. Major commercial investors are battling to buy our land, and as we approach a period of uncertainty for hill farming, it's easy to see why many farmers are taking the opportunity to sell up and get out.

The average age of a farmer in Scotland is 57, and it's fair to say that many Galloway farmers are treating the sale of their land as an unexpectedly generous

windfall in advance of their retirement. That makes sense, and it's hard to blame people for selling now. But it also means that it's almost impossible for younger farmers to get a foot on the ladder. Land is hard to get hold of at the best of times, but when so much of it suddenly vanishes



Patrick Laurie with one of his Galloways, photograph by Polly Pullar.

into forestry, it's like the future is being switched off.

In many ways I blame the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) for this mess. Several decades of supportive subsidy drove farmers to follow a single thread of income through sheep, even as those animals became less financially viable. There's no doubt that sheep are part of the answer for hill farming systems, but it's never sensible to place all your eggs in a single basket. Leaving the CAP, it's

no wonder that some farmers are feeling panicked – they've been driven into a specialised business that seems horribly uncertain, but while sheep farming as we know it today seems like an ancient practice, it's actually quite a recent creation. Even fifty years ago, parts of most hill farms were cropped for cereals and root crops and many had pigs or cattle of some kind. The uplands used to offer a far more diverse mixture of revenue streams, but these have steadily eroded down to one.

The traditional model was more diverse, but there is an even wider range of options for modern hill farming. Hill farmers can run their sheep and cows alongside renewable energy, sustainable timber production and tourism. We're working towards a system that will pay for hill farms to store carbon in peat, and it's likely that future subsidies will provide proper support to protect and conserve our fantastic upland biodiversity.

We have the potential to build a really bright, diverse and exciting future for hill farming in Galloway which will dramatically boost local communities. It's an exciting place to work, but as land continues to sell at exclusive prices to pension companies and green investors from across the world, it's getting harder to see how we'll ever be able to realise the true potential of our hills.

Land Use in the Biosphere

The underlying ethos of the Galloway and Southern Ayrshire UNESCO Biosphere is sustainability.

For the Biosphere sustainability is about "Thinking Global, Acting Local" - it's about dealing with the needs of the local environment, the local economy and our local society in a balanced and even-handed way.

We extend this to our approach on land use too. We believe the Biosphere can support an environment that is good for production of food and fibre, that can help alleviate the impacts of climate change, can enhance and celebrate our rich natural and cultural heritage, can provide new employment opportunities and a place for the health and wellbeing of local people and visitors to the region.

For us that landscape is a mosaic of

integrated land uses, where people work together to shape a future that doesn't just benefit us here and now but will also ensure that future generations will be able to meet their own needs.



GALLOWAY AND
SOUTHERN AYRSHIRE
BIOSPHERE

Ed Forrest, G&SE Biosphere Director

- The Galloway & Southern Ayrshire (G&SA) Biosphere have created a Sense of Place Toolkit, which is available on their website for anyone to use.

This may be helpful for communities to help focus on what areas are valued by members of the community, and to help people identify what's special about their area.

To find out more visit www.gsabiosphere.org.uk and search under 'Business in the Biosphere' and then 'Business Resources'.

What is a Woodlot?

A woodlot allows local people to rent and manage an area of woodland from a landowner on a long-term basis.

The Scottish Woodlot Association encourages woodlots in Scotland using a similar model to how woodlots are run in Canada, where this has been common practice for decades.

To find out more you can visit the Scottish Woodlot Association on Facebook or Twitter @ScottishWoodlotAssociation

TREES, CARBON OFFSETTING

It would seem whether fighting in the name of the fatherland, the motherland or the homeland, that one word - land - has probably been at the back of every conflict since mankind could wield a club.

Land is a dear and precious thing and people everywhere instinctively see keeping control of their territory as key to their survival. Well, everywhere, it seems, except Scotland.

The blue and yellow flag Ukrainians proudly fight under is said to depict their farmed heritage and its landscape, and I read recently that the Ukrainian people have a great affinity for the

soil and land, much of which comes from memories of the Holodomor, a famine that killed 3.5 million Ukrainians in the 1930s. This was a man-made famine which occurred within the breadbasket of Europe and was caused by the political doctrines of far off city-bound politicians who thought they knew best about how farming should be organised.

One of the most disturbing stories I've heard with regard to the effect of propoganda and media influence recalls relatives in Russia refusing to believe family members in Ukraine as to the extent of Putin's 'special operation'. I imagine, though, that these people are not 'bad' people - just ones who choose to believe the official narrative.

Facts are paramount, but even in our world where free speech is taken for granted, facts sometimes get buried in mountains of information or are simply ignored by popular narratives, reinforced again and again in a media that instinctively knows it is good business to tell consumers what they want to hear.

I would contend "tree planting is good for the environment" is one such popular narrative that few in the media or corridors of power seem able to see past. Even bodies that should know better, like the National Farmers Union, fall into the trap of talk of "integrating farming and forestry". Those concerned about the amount of land being lost to

forestry in places like Galloway must stop talking of integration; and stop using the language of compromise. As a representative of RSPB put it so well, "all the forest industry wants is just a little bit more land, and after that, all they will want is just another little bit more land" and so on. They just keep chewing away at Scotland to try to satisfy the insatiable demand of their clientele, or the new breed of corporate investor trying to offset their businesses' responsibilities (and guilt) for the harm they have done - and continue to do - to the planet.

It doesn't matter if it is one of the few larger areas of open farmland so crucial for conserving hard-pressed ground nesting birds like the curlew - the

"The current climate change mitigation strategy is built around tree planting that will see the destruction of farmland and...the loss of habitats, flora, fauna and people, all to be replaced by foreign-owned carbon-offset Sitka forests that don't actually offset carbon or slow global warming at all, but actually contribute to it."

supposed "panda of UK conservation" - or land backing directly onto the thousands of acres of the Galloway Forest Park; it just all gets 'integrated', ie covered in Sitka spruce.

Planting under current legislation is a one-way street whereby when land gets planted, it cannot come back out of trees for the foreseeable future. Environmental bodies like NatureScot and SEPA have been gagged and neutered by concordant agreements with Scottish Forestry that they have been forced to accept by an urban-bound government that 'knows best'. And what does it know best? That at around 18%, Scotland's forest cover is lower than the European average, and to them this lack of 'being average' is something that must be corrected by state doctrine.

Scotland has a land area of 7.8 million hectares and a population of five million and, despite much of the country being unsuitable for forestry, Scotland still produces around 8.5 million metres cubed of timber annually. By comparison, Europe as a whole has a land area of 620 million hectares (excluding Russia), has a population of 627 million and produces 542.5 million metres cubed of timber (State of Europe's Forest Report 2020).

If you do the maths, Scotland by land area currently produces 25% above the European average, and by population

(probably a more useful assessment of timber requirements) Scotland actually produces double the timber of the European average on this per capita basis - all in a country where more than half the land area is totally unsuitable for forestry. Furthermore, according to the National Forest Inventory, Scotland timber production is set to soar to 12 million metres cubed by 2030. So in just eight years time Scotland will be producing around three times more timber than the European average on this per capita basis.

To add context, further consider that Europe (the UK included) is a net timber exporter (30 million metres cubed surplus) produced from a vast and

growing timber resource felled at a very sustainable 73% of annual incremental forest growth. Further, Europe currently burns 112 million metres cubed of roundwood, and could burn more, such is its abundance. In addition to this, Europe burns tens of millions

of tonnes of waste wood, all of which could be recycled into useful products like particleboard, but using this type of wood efficiently is simply not needed, such is the abundance of virgin timber.

All this is set in a world where roughly half of all timber produced annually is burned, the burning of which constituting around 4-5% of all anthropogenic warming (Jacobsen 2010) in soot effects alone. Note that this still excludes the global warming effect of all the emissions of CO₂, methane and nitrous oxide also emitted at combustion.

As we've established, facts are paramount, so for those believing the idea that planting trees is a valid climate mitigation strategy, please consider the following: There have been very few actual measurements of soil carbon changes following afforestation of organo-mineral soils (shallow peat) in the UK uplands (Reynolds 2007). However, one such study by Edinburgh University researchers of a Sitka spruce forest at the Forestry Commission's (FC) study site at Harwood Forest in Northumberland (on soils very similar to much of the Glenkens) recorded a massive 134 tonnes per hectare loss over the first 40 year rotation, which is a similar amount to the carbon accumulated in the trees.

AND THE LOSS OF OUR LAND

This soil carbon loss throughout the rotation was then followed by a further additional large soil carbon loss at clearfell which was followed by a slow soil carbon recovery through the second rotation, reaching a balance 80 years after initial planting (Zerva and Mencuccini 2005).

Other studies, also at the FC Harwood Forest site, have shown additional significant nitrous oxide warming emissions equivalent to 10% of the cooling effect of the growing trees (Ball et al 2003). In a very similar study, Benanti et al (2014) found the net effect of the land use change from wet grassland to Sitka spruce forest also reduced the assumed CO2 global warming amelioration capacity by 10% through the release of nitrous oxide.

This loss of soil carbon during the first Sitka rotation, followed by a gradual recovery during second rotation as recorded by Zerva and Mencuccini, is backed up by the Forest Research Study Venguelova (2018), and this loss and slow recovery in the second rotation appears to be the Forest Research official line on this point. However, given Scottish Government's commitment to a 'net zero' date of 2045, the 50-60 years or so that this 134 tonnes soil carbon per hectare is lost to the atmosphere (and the global warming feedback effects it brings) needs to be carefully considered, in addition to several other global warming effects from afforestation such as the change in surface albedo (or reflectivity) that's caused by the change in land cover from open ground to conifer forest.

In the briefing note, Morison (2019), written by James Morison, head of UK Forest Research (and a 'go to' advisor to the UK's Climate Change Committee), the albedo effect is described as a "substantial component of the net climate change effect of afforestation" and the range of "25 to 45%" is offered as "the likely reduction in the cooling effect by the carbon stored in the trees by the warming effects of the albedo change caused by tree planting in the UK". Therefore, even at its lowest value, this warming effect is the equivalent of the release into the atmosphere of 37.5 tonnes of carbon per hectare in a typical Sitka forest situation.

Adding these afforestation warming

effects of soil carbon loss, forest nitrous oxide emissions and albedo change effects together comes to an equivalent warming effect of over 180 tonnes of carbon per hectare by the year 2062 for a forest planted today.

Set this against 150 tonnes of carbon per hectare stored in the trees over the same time frame - though this carbon may also eventually be released back into the atmosphere after harvesting by burning these trees as biomass fuel - in a Europe which currently has hundreds



of millions of cubic metres of timber surpluses to our requirements, what else are we going to use it for? It should be noted all these figures come from either Forest Research/Forestry Commission or from research conducted at their study sites; if their research is correct, the planting of more forests in the Glenkens will in actual scientific fact impede, not help, Scotland reach its 2045 net zero target.

It may be hard to believe the figures could get any worse, but if trees from these local forests are burned as biomass - or it displaces trees elsewhere from their market that are then burned as biomass - the energy debt to transport, dry and process this wood for burning as a fuel is estimated by the Food and Agriculture Organisation and others to be around 25% of the total energy value. So even if biomass fuel is used instead of fossil fuel in this process, this means for every three hectares burned as biomass an additional hectare (with all its inherent 180 tonnes of carbon cost/debt) needs to be grown just to 'fuel' the whole process, meaning the potential effect isn't of 180 tonnes of carbon being released by 2061 but the equivalent of 240 tonnes of carbon being released into the atmosphere for every hectare of biomass fuel delivered to the burner (which when burned loads

another 130 tonnes or so of carbon per hectare into the atmosphere), ie 370 tonnes carbon from every hectare of Sitka harvested from the Glenkens come 2062.

Or convert that 370 tonnes carbon into CO2 equivalents - a release of 1,356 tonnes CO2 per hectare. This is what is actually happening according to the forest sector's own research.

All this and, say, a long haul airline perhaps based in Australia boasting it is helping the environment in its purchase of carbon credits in Scotland (I'm told this is actually the case for land near Dumfries) while it continues to blast aviation fuel into the upper atmosphere on a daily basis. However, in reality, their supposed offset forest in Scotland is actually pumping another 1,356 tonnes CO2 per hectare into the atmosphere over its first 40-year rotation.

The current climate change mitigation strategy is built around tree planting that will see the destruction

of farmland and upland bird habitats that's already well under way (eg 5,000 breeding curlew pairs and many, many more lost from Galloway and Border hills alone - RSPB). It is a 'strategy' that will not only oversee rural depopulation and the end of a farming tradition and occupancy of the land that stretches back five or six thousands years, but will 'help' cause local extinction of birds such as curlews, plovers, skylarks and black grouse. It is a strategy for the loss of habitats, flora, fauna and people, all to be replaced by foreign-owned carbon-offset Sitka forests that don't actually offset carbon or slow global warming at all, but actually contribute to it.

Finally, almost everyone I speak to seems to think to go against the popular narrative around tree planting - to go against Scotgov doctrines and to turn around its forestry bandwagon - is a nigh on an impossible task. However, if the current system is to be halted or even slowed down then the facts must be heard - and the Glenkens Gazette seems as good a place as any to start this much needed process!

James Ramsay

Pictured is James with his sheep up on the hill with plantation forestry and wind turbines in the background.

WOODLAND CROFTS AND FAMILY FORESTRY

Some years ago, I attended an interesting forestry workshop at which a local forester outlined the history of a particular woodland.

However, he then went on to confess - if that is the right word - that he had only managed to visit the wood once in the previous 18 months. Many in the audience were slightly taken aback by this, but to me it was not a surprise. You only have to 'do the maths' to realise that this is the current reality: fewer foresters than in the past, with ever more things to do, trying to cover ever larger areas of country.

Many would not see this as an issue, but rather evidence of enhanced efficiency. With improved information technology - computer-based mapping and sub-compartment databases, brought together in sophisticated GIS systems - the 'forester's footprints' are perhaps less critical to forest management now than they once were.

Many would agree, however (not least foresters themselves), that it would be desirable to be able to spend more time in the woods, enhancing their local knowledge, which would improve management, leading to better benefits being delivered. But until someone finds a way to increase management input without adding to costs, is this just wishful thinking?

Maybe we are approaching the issue in the wrong way. Arguably, a model already exists where high levels of management input can be sustained without incurring crippling costs. We may not be all that familiar with it yet in Scotland, on account of the way our forest industry has developed in the past, but it is common the world over, where it is better known as 'family forestry'. Various definitions for this can be found but the one I like particularly is, "small scale forestry, based on personal involvement and strong stewardship values".

In considering how family forestry can deliver more for less, it is worth looking closer at one model of family forestry that we do have, which now enjoys the support of the Scottish Government - woodland crofts.

This support was the culmination of many years of discussion and

patient promotion of the concept by its proponents, and followed a comprehensive 'official' examination of the issues. The study was delivered by a steering group tasked by the Scottish Government with examining "whether, and how, national forest estate (NFE) land might be used to create new crofts under crofting legislation". Though the given focus was the NFE, the report actually addressed the general principles involved and as such its conclusions regarding the benefits of woodland crofts could be applied much more widely.



Ros and Rab Nash, woodland crofters at Cogle Wood Croft, Caithness ©WoodlandTrust/JohnMacPherson.

Though published several years ago, the steering group report still remains one of the best-argued cases for woodland crofts we have. Its strength lies in its hard-headed focus on public benefits: woodland crofts are worth having, because they can deliver more. These potential benefits were grouped under the usual economic, environmental and social headings. One in particular is worth quoting here in respect of my earlier remarks. Woodland crofts, the report considered, had the potential to: "Derive economic benefits from local intensive management of areas of forest that may be difficult to achieve with remote management on an extensive basis".

Though economic benefits were highlighted in that statement, environmental and social ones could just as easily have been included too, as highlighted elsewhere in the report. The key point is the recognition that local intensive management can bring additional benefits, which may be difficult to achieve under conventional management models.

Why, then, might a resident woodland crofter be able to justify a greater

intensity of management than a more remote forester? The answer lies in multiple benefits - to the crofter. The crofter derives not just a degree of income from his woodland, but it is also for him a place to live, grow food and fuel, and carry out other business activities. Not all of his work in the woods needs to be remunerated directly.

Enhanced knowledge of the woodland built up through time on site allows an attention to detail which maximises the opportunity to add value. Integrated with silviculture, other uses of the woodland such as grazing or tourism activities, add economic value to the woodland beyond simply its production of fibre. And the intimate knowledge of the forest held by the working woodland crofter, and his frequency on site, enable management for biodiversity of the highest level.

By making woodland management a part of people's lives, rather than a waged activity only, we allow more to be done for less money, whether that is provided through timber income or grant support. You might call that 'sweat silviculture'- analogous to the 'sweat equity' invested by self-builders in their homes.

If family forestry characterised by woodland crofts - and other emerging models such as woodlots - is unquestionably a good thing, then we surely need much more of it. In practice, a significant expansion of family forestry in Scotland would only require a small fraction of existing woodland - a fraction which will be more than offset by the planned increase in woodland area under Scottish Government targets. And one area where woodland area is rapidly increasing is the south of Scotland - but there's a problem here.

It is at present only legally possible to create new crofts (including woodland crofts) in the Highlands and Islands. However, Scottish Ministers have the power to designate new areas for croft creation and have used this power in the past, though currently there is no policy to do so again. The legislation involved is very simple, so this ultimately comes down to a question of politics - so if you think woodland crofts would be a welcome diversification to the local forestry scene, you'll need to give your MSP a call...

Jamie McIntyre

For further information visit www.woodlandcrofts.org

WHO SHOULD DECIDE ON LOCAL LAND USE?

The current approach to land use in rural Scotland is unbelievably outdated.

It is centralised in government departments and agencies. It is fragmented to suit different purposes that are all too often in conflict with each other. It fails to link all of the government's environmental, climate change, economic and community benefit targets. And the consultations of local interests are often a sham, with decisions imposed in spite of our representations. Oh dear, it has to be better than this!

What is needed? First, leave the decisions to informed local communities, including local farmers and managers of land, to deliver outcomes which will benefit local natural environments, local landscape and amenity, and of course local communities.

We have the ingredients for making decisions better than remote interests with no 'on the ground' knowledge. We have a perfectly good national framework - the Land Use Strategy. And this is encouraging the development of Regional Land Use Strategies.

We have a world class ethical basis for looking after the land and how each interest group has both rights and responsibilities in taking this

forward - the Statement of Land Rights and Responsibilities approved by the Scottish Parliament. Its roll out is being led by the Scottish Land Commission.

We have the challenge of delivering a new basis for supporting food production following Brexit, and the promise of a new incentive scheme in 2024. We have also the promise of new environmental legislation on the same timescale.

Locally, we are well advanced. We have an excellent local framework - the Glenkens and District Community Action Plan with staff employed to facilitate its achievement. We have an excellent enabling mechanism - the Galloway and Southern Ayrshire Biosphere Partnership, which has already led local discussions on land use. We have local understanding of the global and national imperatives for use of the land; there is nothing to stop us deciding for our ourselves.

Of course, we need to be sure that the newly elected local councillors and our Holyrood representatives are fully supportive of our efforts. And we do need the support of the national 'powers that be' in future-proofing decisions and actions to favour a mutually supportive contribution to providing local social and economic benefits, redressing climate change, improving biodiversity and landscape amenity.

What do we want to achieve? That is



Surely we want more of this (above) and not more of this (below)...



not for me to prescribe. However, I am sure there are ingredients shared by the majority of local interests. For example, farming which produces wholesome food for local, as well as wider, consumption on land that provides jobs for future generations, provides shelter for animals through tree planting, that sequesters carbon and improves soil structure, soil biodiversity and the look of the landscape.

Roger Crofts

Wind Farms and the Glenkens

Are you aware of what is happening in the Glenkens?

Before long, every hilltop between Dalmellington in the northwest, Sanquhar in the northeast and Parton in the south will be covered with giant wind turbines.

The approach of the Scottish government to planning permission for onshore wind farms in the area is relentless. Even on those occasions when the Dumfries & Galloway Council has the resources to address developers' applications, the government rides roughshod over them.

Although almost everyone would agree that it is crucial to cut carbon emissions and to strive one way or another for net zero, a balance has to be struck between that and other interests, such as tourism on which the fragile economy of Dumfries & Galloway depends.

Our landscape and environment are important to all of us. Dumfries & Galloway has already done far more than its fair share towards green energy, indeed to such an extent that it is a massive exporter of power from the region, largely to England where demand is greatest. By contrast, onshore wind farm development in England depends on the consent of the local communities affected: consent which is almost never forthcoming.

There is no need for this headlong rush to cover the hills with wind farms. Even now the grid lacks the capacity to transmit all of the power produced by those which are operational, let alone those which are planned, and ends up having to make huge constraint payments to the wind farm operators. Moreover, back-up is required for times when the wind does not blow; with the government currently setting its face against fossil fuels and conventional

nuclear power, some alternative is still needed.

Before onshore development proceeds further, there needs to be a comprehensive investigation of the relative merits of other sources of green energy, particularly offshore wind and small nuclear reactors (SMRs - classified as green by the EU), and of the damage which onshore wind farms do to our livelihoods, particularly to tourism. The problem is that once built, an onshore wind farm will almost certainly never be dismantled: the damage is irreversible.

In the meantime, it is essential that the voice of local communities in the areas affected is heard.

If you want your voice to be heard, contact Save Our Hills Dumfries & Galloway through at www.saveourhillsdumfriesandgalloway.co.uk or find us on Facebook.

*Iain Milligan, Chairman,
Save Our Hills Dumfries & Galloway*

COULD NATIONAL PARKS PLAY A ROLE IN LAND USE CHANGE?

The land use of the Glenkens and wider Galloway is undergoing change at a pace and scale that has not been seen since the creation of the Forest Park.

Many of these pressures for change are national with 'nature recovery' and 'climate change' as the headlines, but with many more acting locally and in some cases dramatically.

National parks in Scotland were only enacted in 2000, with the first two being created soon after (Loch Lomond & Trossachs and Cairngorms). Scottish national park legislation differs from that south of the border. It shares the aims of 'conserving and enhancing the natural and cultural heritage' and 'promoting understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities' but adds two further aims - 'sustainable use of the natural resources of the area' and 'promote sustainable economic and social development of the area's communities'. Uniquely in Scotland there

is no presumption that in the event of conflict the first aim will take precedence. You can view the full wording of the purposes at www.gallowaynationalpark.org

Like much legislation, the National Parks (2000) Act makes no specific reference to climate change or the biodiversity crisis, though this may be considered in the current review of the national planning framework.

The Act already allows considerable scope to include them and intentionally provides the flexibility to tailor the national park to more closely reflect local circumstances, aided by a management board where local elected representation is in the majority.

National Parks influence land use in their area in one of four broad ways:

1) Through the production of a National Park Plan.

2) Through encouraging and assisting land managers to deliver the vision set out in the Plan and directing them to possible funding incentives for this.

3) As the planning authority it can control inappropriate development.

4) Through a Ranger service which helps manage access and visitor conflicts.

National Parks don't have a different planning system to the rest of the country but are using the same system to deliver the more targeted vision agreed in the National Parks Plan.



The 'carrot and stick' approach above is not designed to produce 'a one size fits all' solution. It is more effective in practice than it appears on paper, in part because a significant amount of rural land use is influenced by various forms of government incentives. It provides more and new alternatives to land managers on what they might do with the land where these options deliver the aims of the National Park. The 'Cairngorms Connect' and 'Great Trossachs Forest' projects are examples of this being carried out at a landscape scale through collaboration with many land managers in a way not seen outside National Parks.

Perhaps the biggest, though possibly least tangible, influence that a National Park can have is the certainty of the future vision for the area. Many rural land use changes are long-term and the rewards gradual. Over the last 70 years, new National Parks have been created in the UK and existing ones extended but none has ever been disbanded.

A National Park won't solve all of Galloway's challenges but, done well, it can make a really positive contribution to a vibrant and sustainable future for the area.

Rob Lucas

Pictured is farmer Robert McTurk with Carsfad Loch and Glenkens hills in the background.

Share Your Views



What do you think of forestry development in the Glenkens?

My name is Kavita Sharma. I am a PhD student at ETH Zürich, researching tree planting in Scotland. You can help me with my research by letting me know your thoughts and views on forestry developments in the Glenkens.

Please send me an email on kavita.sharma@usys.ethz.ch, call or message over WhatsApp, or send an SMS to 0041 1788 616 140.

Both positive and negative views are welcome, including what landscape changes mean for you, ideas for improving consultation or anything else you consider important.

All comments would be held confidentially, and all responses will be anonymized if used in reports or papers.

Once my research is completed, I will submit a summary of the findings for publication in a future edition of the Glenkens Gazette.



In other parts of the British Isles, communities are responding in a variety of ways to the rapid rise in afforestation.

A couple of examples are the Save Leitrim campaign in Ireland, the inception of which is explained on their Facebook page as being "founded by a group of like minded people... to fight for the survival of our rural communities which are being decimated by the relentless subsidised afforestation programme".

Another campaign which gained a lot of media attention was a 17,000 strong petition requesting changes to a scheme at Frongoch Farm in Cwrty-Cadno, Wales, where a London-based firm had bought four farms in the area with the intention of planting them as a carbon offset for their clients.

How Could Mining Impact Us?

An Australian mining company's prospecting has raised concerns of toxic pollution, radioactive release, ecological damage and the destruction of historically and culturally important sites and protected habitats in the Glenkens.

Walkabout Resources/JDH Exploration have secured Crown licences from the Scottish Government to prospect for minerals within three areas of Galloway centred around Newton Stewart, Gatehouse of Fleet and New Galloway.

Walkabout has been drilling 200 metres down through the water table into galena-rich rock looking for gold and silver, as well as minerals associated with renewable technologies.

Galloway has a history of mining across the region, being rich in copper, lead (galena, wolfanite, etc), silver, gold, zinc, arsenic and other rare earth metals. However, metal sulphide mining is notoriously difficult and comes with significant unavoidable environmental impacts and risks to health from minerals which are toxic and cumulative in the body.

Water courses are particularly vulnerable

to pollution of drinking water supplies, rivers and marine areas. Thousands of tonnes of earth and rock would need to be blasted, removed and processed; again, often with hazardous processing to remove the mineral from the ore, eg mercury amalgamation.

There is a very real risk of radioactive release of uranium, thorium and strontium as the rock in Galloway is exceptionally heavily metamorphosed and extremely hard, and therefore blocks short wave microwave signals, trapping radioactive molecules within the rock structure.

Walkabout/JDH have focused on old mine sites and spoil heaps, surveying areas around Glentrool, Talnotry, Blackcraig and Pibble Hill. They have conducted drilling at Blackcraig/Palnure over the past year and have recently begun to survey in the Glenkens.

Walkabout have to date not conducted themselves well in terms of community engagement. They have been in Galloway since 2018, and only late last year did it become wider public knowledge due to a local resident in Blackcraig publicising the fact. In the current climate, there needs to be stronger policy for sustaining intrinsic geological substructures and the biodiversity of ecosystems of rocks, rivers, marine life and water courses, and although not required, the company have chosen not to adopt the Scottish model for community consultation.

Mine sites are difficult and challenging for local communities on a social,

environmental and financial level. If there is to be mining in Galloway, there needs to be an open dialogue between all parties - national government, local government, business interests and communities.

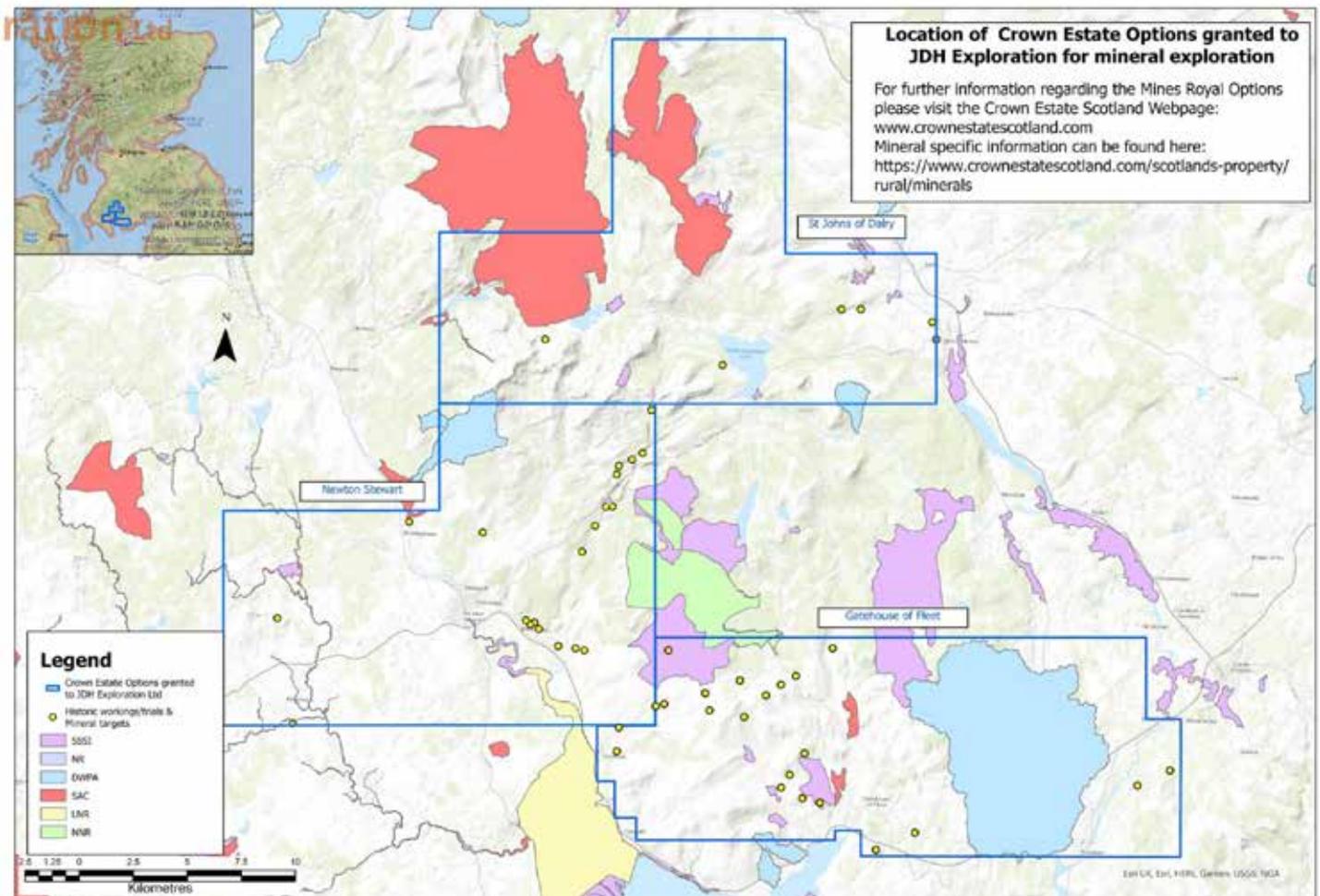
Mining is paradoxical as there is a need for minerals in various capacities to facilitate the transition to zero carbon, and for many consumer goods. The war in the Democratic Republic of Congo, that has lasted for 20 years and claimed five million lives, has been driven by mining for the minerals which run our mobile phones, electronics and cars. Is it right that we, in Scotland, continue to offload our responsibilities; out of sight out of mind? Or do we look at alternatives where mining isn't needed, instead 'mining' waste consumer electronics or furthering developments in zinc or sodium ion or carbon batteries, etc.

Mining in Galloway needs to be very carefully considered in social, economic, cultural, historical and environmental terms. The Galloway Mines Action Group has been established to ensure that these discussions take place at the highest level, that proper evidence-based research informs the decision making, and that Galloway is protected from irresponsible mining.

*Chris Helson,
Galloway Mines Action Group*

The Galloway Mines Action Group can be found on Facebook, as well as another local group called Galloway Against Mining.

Pictured is a map of areas with Crown prospecting licences © JDH Exploration - this can be viewed at www.jdhscotland.com



Perspective from a Forester

We asked Tom Clark, Forest Manager for Czernin-Kinsky, a Dalry-based commercial forestry company, to give us an insight into current changes to the forest sector.

With regard to the way Government targets on planting are being rolled out, what are your thoughts on how this is being progressed?

Government targets for tree planting and forest expansion are ambitious and perhaps unsurprisingly, as a professional forester, I would broadly support the mission to increase forest cover. The annual targets have been met for the last few years now, so on that basis alone, the conclusion must be that forest expansion is on target. However, I appreciate that the devil is in the detail and there can be more to it than simply the number of acres planted.

Is this sustainable, in terms of land use balance?

Scotland definitely has room for more forest. However, we must be extremely careful that this forest expansion takes place only in areas of least value to the agricultural sector and the communities it supports. The recent spike in land values, which is largely being driven by the demand from corporate and institutional interests to offset their carbon emissions, is leading to better and better farms being identified for woodland expansion as the price per acre becomes comparable to that of the poorer quality land. In my view, this situation which is being turbocharged by Scottish Government incentives and indirect funding via the National Investment Bank, is as naïve as it is unsustainable and is leading to a

rapid and irreversible change in rural demographics, concentration of land ownership into fewer hands, and raises justifiable concerns surrounding food security and agricultural critical mass.

Should communities have more say and if so, how?

Communities currently have a mechanism to influence, consult with, or oppose new woodland creation schemes via Scottish Forestry's (SF) public consultation process. This system I believe works reasonably well, however given the number of schemes now on the system, some community councils are finding it difficult to fully assess each proposal within the 28 day timescale. Perhaps a longer consultation period would be of benefit to allow communities enough time to fully weigh up each proposal would be of benefit.

I also see no harm in visitors to the SF website being able to access outline woodland designs, scoping maps, etc which are currently only available on request. Foresters also need to improve their engagement with communities - gone are the days of sticking a scheme into the system and hiding behind the state regulator. We need to be known, approachable, able to communicate our aims effectively, and willing to make some compromises where appropriate, something that I concede the industry has failed on in the past. Put simply, we need to be part of the community.

As an established forestry manager in the area, how do you see new planting schemes in terms of the future of the area - can you see how things could potentially be done better/differently?

New planting schemes will continue to come on stream in the coming years. The increasing age demographic of hill farmers coupled with decreasing relative returns from farming and increasing returns from timber long-term will likely see that trend continue. In Galloway we have the combination of a perfect



climate, nearby industrial processing facilities, a skilled labour resource and suitable land for planting which makes it a very attractive proposition for commercial forestry. In my ideal world, I'd like to see existing landowners consider planting some trees as part of their farm or estate businesses, a scaled grant system favouring smaller landowners would help this. This would help build the link between forestry and farming as well as keeping a working population near the forests and engaged with them, as opposed to being owned, managed and profited from remotely.

The company I represent owns around 12,000 acres of mostly commercial forestry in the Glenkens. This directly supports six well paid, permanent jobs as well as approximately seven full-time equivalent contract jobs in a remote rural area. We all live locally, many of us putting kids through schools and spending money in the local economy. We have run a successful apprenticeship scheme in the past and will soon be advertising for a six-month internship programme in association with the Galloway Glens Partnership. It is in our interest to hire locally and reinvest as much locally as possible. I would like to think this is a good example of how forestry can be of real tangible benefit to rural areas.

Valuing Our Peatlands

For some, peatlands may not seem the most attractive of places.

However, at the Crichton Carbon Centre we're passionate about these 'squadgy' landscapes, the life they support, and the climate benefits they provide.

Over the next 18 months, the

Peatland Connections project will be raising awareness of the importance of these landscapes through integrating science with art and creative engagement approaches to connect and re-connect us to our Galloway peatlands.

Over the course of the project we will be commissioning artists, co-delivering a series of citizen science projects focusing on water quality and peatland

ecosystems, organising walks and talks with a variety of experts, and co-developing a decision making tool. The overall aim is to reconnect local rural communities, scientists, land managers and policy makers to land use decision making in order to realise a more sustainable and climate resilient future.

To find out more visit www.peatlandconnections.com/blog and <https://www.carboncentre.org/blog>
Kerry Morrison,
Peatland Connections Project Officer

Navigating Land Use Changes from a Small Business Perspective

When I came to live in the beautiful Glenkens, six years ago, I was quite unprepared for the speed and scale of local land use change, and the affect this would have on my ability to set up in business.

Despite being self-employed for 40 years I had never before felt the need to inspect planning applications, let alone participate in a public planning inquiry.

My dive into the public planning system was a fascinating journey, albeit a time-consuming one. Setting up a new business requires a great deal of planning but it is unusual for a micro land based start-up to also have to become a registered lobbyist.

The sheer scale of land use change in the Upper Glenkens is extremely challenging, compounded by the tag-along politics. We chose our property for its potential to contribute

to the local community as a rural economic hub; as a place that has the capacity to accommodate many types of enterprise. With a peaceful natural beauty, proximity to the Southern Upland Way and availability of additional rental grazing for our 30 Highland cows, the business model was very clear.

Within days of moving in it became apparent that all was not well, and that massive land use changes had been wreaking havoc on the community for decades. Pasture for grazing was in short supply, usurped by forestry operations. To make matters worse the plantations had become havens for all manner of agricultural predator.

Within two months we discovered all the local beauty spots and great trails were to be filled with wind turbines and within 18 months we were told that our additional grazing ground was to be sold for plantation. Our original business model was crushed.

Six years on, we are now working on our seventh land-based business model, and one which will hopefully be immune to what is going on around us. Each of our previous business ventures had been viable but each

relied heavily on honest political exchange to mitigate the effects of very dominant government policy. Net zero, carbon credits, Brexit, Covid-19 and the sequestration of the public road network to serve the sole needs of government partners have been the reasons for the collapse of viable business models.

The demise of the Upper Glenkens' economic vitality is not for the want of effort from those who live there. This area has more potential to grow as a strong remote rural economy than anywhere else in Scotland. The decline is a measure of the government's obsession with big politics, global agendas and handouts to economic elites.

Gardeners who set aside areas for large ornamental bushes are not concerned with the natural and organic regeneration of micro species. Rather they enjoy the fact that the stronger plants act as a kind of weedkiller.

Once the government has done its thing and planted its garden, I sincerely hope there will be a little space left for us.

*Fiona Clubb,
Carsphairn*

Upper Urr Environment Trust

There is more development proposed in the Upper Urr catchment in the next ten years than was undertaken in the last 50.

From windfarms to forestry, whether we like it or not, the area is going to be changing - both in terms of landscape character and use, but also the simple cash investment that will be made into the area. Land prices continue to skyrocket with all but the most wealthy or investment funds prevented from purchasing property when it comes to market.

The role of the Community Council is clear; to represent local views and opinions on these developments. However, once the developments are consented - what then? There is a role for a local organisation to make sure that anything being built or impacting our landscape delivers the most local benefit to

the people and natural habitats of the area. Irrespective of whether we are for or against the proposals, once they are being built, we need to make sure every opportunity is taken to get maximum local return and benefit.

The Upper Urr Environment Trust (UUET) has been set up to fulfill this role. Initial activities have included:

- Dialogue and agreement with a proposed forestry development which will include a dedicated piece of community managed space, a site able

to host footpaths and other amenities.

- The Trust has also secured funding from the Corsock & KPD Community Council Blackcraig Microgrant scheme to purchase river temperature monitors to monitoring changes and areas of risk for the river ecosystem

- Exploring the potential for riparian native tree planting in the catchment to combat the effects of climate change

- Upper Barr Farm near Corsock came up for sale and UUET lodged an interest with the agent. Ultimately it was sold to an unknown buyer but the Trust remains alive to the opportunity of land purchase.

- UUET has registered as a SCIO (SC051592)

If you would like to get involved email uuet.scotland@protonmail.com

Founding Trustees of UUET

Pictured: The current view from Glaisters woods looking over at Blackcraig ridge and windfarm - but what landscape will our children be looking at in years to come?



A Farmer's Take on Rewilding

The concept of rewilding seems to be everywhere.

With its potential to address the twin crises of global warming and biodiversity loss, that's understandable. And who wouldn't be excited by what's now happening - for example, on the Threave Estate? But is that re-wilding (they graze cattle)? What exactly is re-wilding anyway, and how would it affect our present agriculture-dominated landscape, especially here in the Glenkens?

I have a small (75 acre) livestock farm near Crossmichael with sheep and Galloway cattle. We are organic. We have planted hedges and 12 acres of trees (native broadleaves), and made ponds. We have hay meadows full of yellow rattle (it parasitises grass, so encouraging a greater diversity of plant species). I'm a member of several conservation organisations as well as the Nature Friendly Farming Network and the Regenerative Farming Network for South West Scotland. I have read and learned from Isabella Tree, George Monbiot and other re-wilders. Why, then, do I feel ambivalent about the idea of rewilding?

If rewilding means withdrawing from chunks of land and turning them over to 'nature', this sits within a deeply embedded way of thinking that assumes a dichotomy between 'man' and 'the natural world'. According to the biblical account, God gave us 'dominion' over the rest of creation. Although this binary structure has since mutated through a variety of shapes at the hands of Renaissance, Enlightenment and Romantic thinkers, the basic framework remains: human beings (Society, Culture, Reason) on one side; nature (whether resource, wilderness, solace or inspiration) on the other. (I'm over-simplifying - and probably being Eurocentric as well; but for better or worse, something like this model now drives the entire world system.)

But since Darwin, we have known that human beings are not separate from the rest of life but an intrinsic part of the evolutionary process. The discoveries of genetics make clear that we share most of our DNA with other species (including insects and plants). And we know that our bodies are home to billions of bacteria and fungi, and depend on them for our health. At the same time, ecologists have discovered that there seem to be vanishingly few (perhaps no)

human capacities that are not shared to some extent by other species, including communication and social organisation (and this also extends to insects and plants). Life on earth forms a holistic system, within which *homo sapiens* is but a single thread. If we don't find a way of living within this web that treats it as a self-sustaining community, we shall surely perish.

There are some parts of the world where setting aside really large areas for rewilding may have value - parts



of the Scottish Highlands may fall into this category. But in most of Scotland, rewilding is likely to fall victim to the binary trap, with chunks of 'nature' interspersed with areas of conventional farming. There are several reasons why this would be problematic:

- Nowhere in the world is now free from the effects of human activity; human withdrawal is impossible.

- Insects, birds, mammals, even seeds don't respect farm boundaries. Ecological health requires supportive habitat at landscape scale.

- We still need to produce food. If withdrawing from substantial areas of land implies ever greater intensification of production, this will be ecologically counterproductive.

- Above all, if we continue to evade the need to find a way of living responsibly within the 'web of life', exploitation and damage - affecting ourselves as well as the rest of life - will carry on. Cashing in 'natural capital' - as in the current carbon credit scam that is powering the explosion in commercial afforestation in Scotland - is no substitute for finding a place in an ecological community.

A holistic response would require suitable financial support for farming, replacing the old EU system. England appears to have chosen the binary route I have criticised above. 'Public money for public goods' is going largely into 'rewilded' areas while

at the same time farmers are encouraged to go high-tech and intensify even more on the rest of their land. (The rocketing prices of synthetic fertiliser, diesel and livestock feed - much of it sourced from imported ingredients from ecologically sensitive areas - might suggest that further intensification is a dead end.) The Scottish Government is still developing and consulting on a new framework, due to come in 2026, but seems to be focused on a more across-the-board, whole-farm approach that continues to support food

production but increases the proportion of support going into biodiversity enhancement and greenhouse emissions reduction. This is a good start - though so far the proposals are far from sufficiently radical in my view. To come close to what is needed would demand a coherent framework of change in social as well as agricultural policy areas:

- A large-scale shift towards regenerative farming methods; ecologically healthy soil is fundamental.

- Social policies that ensure everyone can afford and has access to nutritious, good-

quality, sustainably produced food.

- A shift in diet towards a reduction in consumption of meat and dairy, and an increase in fruit and vegetables; and an appropriate response from food producers.

- Support for local and community-based food supply chains with the aim of cutting food miles, boosting food security and enhancing the local economy.

- Radical land reform, aiming to reduce average farm holding size, which, alongside large-scale investment in training and financial support for new entrants, would boost the numbers of land workers; less capital intensity, more labour intensity - a healthy social ecology is an intrinsic part of a healthy web of life.

This is a challenging agenda, not least for farmers, especially in South West Scotland where pretty much all of us are livestock farmers. Is it do-able? I don't know. But I do believe that without it, the future of food production here is bleak and the future of the web of life even bleaker.

For more information about regenerative farming, see the article on the second page of this Land Use section.

Richard Middleton

Richard farms at Lochhill Farm, Crossmichael. Pictured is part of Lochhill Farm with some of the new woodland in the background, with Ercrogo Loch and in the distance Scree and Bengairn.

Turn to the back page of this edition for details of 'Land Use Conversations: A Glenkens Future', an online event where you can get involved in the conversation about land use in the Glenkens.

The Optimistic Environmentalist

Technology, Gadgets & Gizmos - Part Two...

Get the most out of your batteries by treating them carefully.

Different battery chemistries need handling differently. For instance, mobile phones usually have a lithium-ion battery. For maximum battery life always run the battery down to 20% before then charging it up to around 80%; allowing the battery to go out of this range makes it less efficient.

As batteries begin to lose capacity after a certain number of cycles, make sure that you don't stick it on to charge for a little bit, just because you've got 20 minutes spare, but run it down and then charge to 80% each time. Don't forget, batteries contain valuable minerals so don't throw them in the bin, take the them to the Council's household waste sites for recycling.

There have been many fires because people leave their chargers plugged in but unused for many hours; only plug them in when you need them - it's safer and saves power.

Look for equipment that can be mended or upgraded, eg have the batteries replaced (look at www.ifixit.com for repairable/upgradeable devices and

how to do it). Change components and don't automatically get a new piece of technology just because your contract has run out and you've been offered it.

Only buy technology that meets your needs rather than getting a 'bigger and better' bit of equipment just because you can. Be clear to a shop assistant what you need the technology for and don't be persuaded to buy extra bits just because the seller is pushing it hard.

Buy equipment that is flexible for your changing needs. Fairphone produce a mobile which is made to minimise impact on the environment - replaceable glass, aluminium casing not plastic, upgradable, etc. For instance, you can remove the camera, the screen and the battery (yes, it's not glued in!). To encourage you to repair bits to prolong the lifespan of the phone, they even send you a screwdriver which fits.

Pass on or recycle equipment that you don't want any more, eg list it on Freecycle, sell on ebay, etc. Funded by electrical equipment manufacturers, www.recycleyouelectricals.org.uk covers re-use and repair as well as recycling of electricals.

Don't always buy new when secondhand is good enough; sometimes you can buy

better items that are secondhand rather than paying brand new prices.

Lobby companies to produce equipment that uses less power and can be mended or upgraded, and demand clear, truthful and verifiable information about how the equipment is recycled at the end of life, not just thrown into landfill.

If equipment is not made to last or is difficult to mend on purpose - in-built obsolescence - tell the company and publicise to other customers or websites to put pressure on companies.

Contact politicians to ask how laws and regulations are to be changed to encourage, motivate or force companies to create products and services that allow for reuse, ability to mend or upgrade, and for responsible recycling or disposal.

Encourage people in your local area to share equipment and technology; pass on what is not wanted any more; maybe form groups to make it easier to recycle products en masse; share ideas and think of ways that equipment can be used in different ways or sold to locals or tourists. For instance, some creative companies in Britain are using components from unused devices for alternative uses or decorative items e.g. circuitboard notepads.

Denise MacDonald-Kiernan



Fancy foraging? Above are some of the amazing edibles growing around Galloway at this time of year, courtesy of Mark Williams of Galloway Wild Foods. Why not see what you have growing around you?

Glenkens Freecycle

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 natural power

If you would like to list something on this page, please get in touch on 07727 127 997 or glenkengazette@hotmail.co.uk

FREE

Lovely chair, needs some repair to the basketwork on one side and perhaps a craftsman to freshen up the embroidery. **Glass-fronted cabinet** is fine but needs the lock reset in order to close properly. Someone handy with a chisel looking for a place to display the family treasures perhaps?! Other items also including bedside cabinets, coffee tables and books on cats. Contact Rhoda on 07484 296 868.

Brown sideboard. Please collect. Contact: Annikki 01644 460 640

Garden 'strawberry' net available for any keen gardener. It stretches, so measurement is dodgy but say approximately 14m x 3m. It is two pieces joined together so could be separated. Please collect. Contact: 01644 430 293 or 07770 830 727

Children's slide, 2.5m long. NOT freestanding – suitable for tree-house or similar. Can deliver. Contact: 01556 670 691

Horse manure, rotted and fresh, no weed killers used. Dig your own from a large heap, bring sacks or trailer. Contact: 07889 229 340

WANTED

Miniature Painting. By mistake I gave away a miniature painting on an easel to the Dalry Charity Shop. It's only about two inches high. Did you by chance buy such a painting from the shop in April?

I would dearly love to have it back as it was painted by a relative. Cost reimbursed plus a reward and my undying thanks. Contact: Paul on 07973 174 342

Chest freezer. Contact: Tony on 07507 704 821

Old lawn mowers/strimmers/other small machinery. Non-runners/broken welcome. Contact: 07845 562 217

King size mattress, 2-seater sofa, water butt, outdoor bench, outdoor table & chairs. Contact: Sarah on 07453 858 505 or saraheathomas@gmail.com

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We are seeking to buy a home with 2-3 bedrooms and 3-5 acres of land, somewhere in the Glenkens.

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For more information or to download an application form, please go to www.pamelayoungtrust.co.uk, or telephone Peter Matthews of A B & A Matthews on 01671 404100.

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Every Wednesday
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Eco Feature

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Villagers in Parton volunteered their time to plant a new community woodland in the village.

Around 30 people of all ages turned out on Sunday 3 April and between them they planted over 300 saplings in the field behind the village hall. The trees have been chosen to provide a mix of native species suitable for the location with space left in the middle for picnics!

A lovely chance to catch up with all our neighbours and also create a woodland for future generations to enjoy.

A special thank you to Paul Murray and Barbara Turnbull for organising and providing the saplings and expertise. Thank you too to Penny and Bridie for keeping everyone supplied with tea and cake.

Pictured are some of the village's dedicated tree planters.

Tom Marshall




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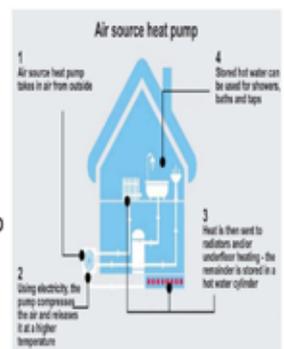
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GLENKENS PLACE-NAMES: PART XVI

I was recently reading an article in a place names journal which referred to Tom a' Mhòid in Glenlyon and I was struck by the correspondence with our own Tormoid Knowe, near Brockloch north of Carsphairn.*

The word *tom*, 'hillock, knoll' doesn't occur in the Galloway place-names so Tormoid is the closest Gallovidian Gaelic equivalent I guess. *Tòrr* also means 'hill, mound etc'. The Gaelic term *mòd* means 'assembly, meeting, court etc' so *Tom a' Mhòid* and *Tòrr a' Mhòid* 'the knoll of the assembly'. JSNS states:

The knoll (Tom a' Mhòid) was investigated in 2017 and 2018 during the Early Christian landscape of Glen Lyon project, and analyses showed that the striking topography of the site was mostly due to natural sediments deposited from the nearby mountainside. Traces of quarrying activities conducted at the top of the knoll likely contributed to the sediments found in the excavation trenches further down the slope. There were also indications of attempts at levelling up and creating a platform; however these could not be verified (Busset, Maldonado and Kasten 2019a; Busset, Maldonado and Kasten 2019b, 14). While the archaeology could not confirm human intervention on the shaping of the knoll, this does not diminish its striking appearance. On the contrary, it seems natural that such a prominent feature supports further the choice to hold political or religious assemblies at this place, as discussed above.

The Glenkens Tormoid is also quite a striking natural mound. It is situated on a bend on the northern bank of the Polcorroch Burn, *Pol Corrach*, 'steep or

angry burn' in a gap between two areas of Sitka spruce. Could this place also have been an ancient assembly site? If so what kind of assembly and for what purpose?

Alan James has pointed out to me that *mòd* in Scottish Gaelic seems to correspond to Old English (*ge-*)*mōt*, and, judging by the senses in Dwelly (Scots Gaelic Dictionary), referred very specifically to meetings of an official, judicial kind – baron courts, etc (except for the specialised sense of a music and poetry competition). This specific meaning of *mòd* would seem to preclude one potentially promising line of enquiry: that the assembly refers to a mustering of the *tainchell*, 'beaters' (a Scots term derived from Scots Gaelic *timcheall*, 'surround'). *Timcheall* is probably found in the Glenkens place-name Knocktinkle, a small knowe overlooking Dalarran Holm and with a great view to the Rhinns of Kells (although note Markús's reservation in respect of early forms on the Place-Names of the Galloway Glens website).

My suspicion is that Tormoid may be another of these gathering places for hunters is to some extent supported by the existence of the hill-name Craigencolon. This is the hill just north of the place-name Eldrick (from *eileirg*, 'deer trap'), and given that proximity, it might be expected that the name could reflect hunting in the area. Craigencolon may be derived from *Creag nan Còmhlan*, 'rock of the bands, bodies of people, circle, company, groups or troops'. This would fit well with the name being a reference to the *tainchell*. Many helpers would have been required to drive the deer to the *eileirg*. It may be noted however that the PGG website prefers *Creag a' Chuilinn*, 'rock of the holly', as the derivation for Craigencolon.

Reverting to the narrower definition of *mòd* then, are there any indications in what is now the upper part of Carsphairn parish of centres of judicial authority that might have generated the place-name *Tòrr a' Mhòid*? Well, close by is marked on the OS map Brockloch Moat, just to the east of the Carsphairn Lane. There is also a Lamford Moat a bit further north. However at page 63 in the *Inventory of Monuments in the Stewartry of Kirkcudbright 1914*, it states: "*Mote', Brockloch.-The O.S. map indicates a mote here. This is a long natural gravel ridge or moraine on which there are no indications of defenses*". Also stated is:



"Mote' - Lamford. The mote marked by the roadside here is a natural mound, and though a broken section on the top discloses a few stones, laid there by the hand of man, there are no indications of any defenses whatsoever".

Lamford itself is another hunting place-name, being derived from Scots Gaelic *longphort*, a word originally meaning 'ship harbour' but coming to mean 'enclosure' or 'encampment'.

In a record dated from 1645 Lamford or Over and Nether Lang Foordes was mentioned together with a place called Darnsekall. This is the modern-day Darnshaw, over the other side of Lamford Hill near Waterhead. This may be derived from Scots Gaelic *Doire nan Sgall*, 'copse of the heroes', or even *Doire nan Sgàill*, 'copse of the ghosts'. I have been told by a neighbouring resident, Liz Holmes, that Darnshaw is now deserted, its roof having apparently been removed thirty or so years ago.

As Alan James has highlighted the relationship between Scots Gaelic *scáil*, 'a man, champion, hero' and Scots Gaelic *scáil*, 'shade, shadow, ghost' in Scottish and Irish Gaelic usage is a bit confusing – basically, they're the same word, Middle Irish *scál*, which the Dictionary of the Irish Language sv *scal* reckons was primarily used for supernatural beings, later for (super)humans. There is even a sense recorded in Scotland as 'calf' (Forbes in Dwelly) however I guess this was probably just an optimistic name for a bull-calf, 'champion male'.

The Gaelic word *sgal*, 'ghost, spectre', may be cognate with the English words 'shy' and 'scare'1. These proposed connections will go back thousands of years to the common Indo-European roots of the Celtic and Germanic languages. *Michael Ansell, Cars Fèarna*

* *Places of Belief In Medieval Glen Lyon and Beyond: Onomastic and Archaeological Perspectives* by Anouk Busset and Sofia Evemalm-Graham, University of Glasgow. *Journal of Scottish Place-Names Studies*, No14.




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VISITORS AND NEW MEMBERS WELCOME

THE BATTLE OF RULLION GREEN

Many readers will have heard of the Pentlands Uprising, which should more correctly be known as the Glenkens Uprising according to the late Professor Ted Cowan.

But as a reminder (very briefly)... In November 1666, four men attempted to rescue an old man being tortured by soldiers in St John's Town of Dalry. The incident escalated and resulted in a rebel Covenanter army marching on Edinburgh. The rebel army were met by government troops at a place called Rullion Green, near Penicuik, and this resulted in the battle of Rullion Green in which the rebels were defeated.

There is a memorial at the site of the battle and I had long promised myself a visit, which I finally managed in March. The photographs show the memorial, a close-up of the explanatory plaque and a view of the battlefield with Edinburgh in the background.

A number of articles have been written about this period of history and several of these were published in the *Glenkens Gazette* and can be found online.

Paul Goodwin



Connecting in Communities

After the retirement of Brian Jones and Chris Jowsey from our Connecting in Communities (CiC) project, the team is finally back up to full strength!

We have two new team members - Lisa Ridley as Project Leader and Jo Jackson as Activity Officer. They will join Fiona Limbrey who remains in post as Volunteering and Capacity Building Officer. It's great to see the team back in place, and I know that Lisa and Jo are looking forward to hitting the ground running for the final year of CiC delivery.

Lisa joins us from the Met Police, where she was a Police Officer, having previously been a Police Staff Investigator. Prior to that, she was a Senior Area Youth Worker for Hertfordshire County Council for 21 years, where she worked in partnership with regional and other organisations to support her teams to deliver various youth-based projects. She now lives in Mossdale and is looking forward to getting to know the Glenkens communities.



L-R Lisa Ridley, CiC Project Leader, and Jo Jackson, CiC Activity Officer, with Helen Keron, Executive Manager of GCAT

Jo took early retirement from teaching drama in Kirkcudbright Academy in 2019. Since then, she has been supporting individuals within the community, as well as supply teaching. She lives in Kirkcudbright, but will be well known to some of you from her support of the CatStrand Arts programme.

Lisa's main objective for the year is to work with local organisations across the Glenkens and district to really understand the needs of our communities so that we can plan for what we need to do across the area in 2023 and onwards. She'll also be working closely with me to move the Community Action Plan forward, along with Fiona. Meanwhile, Jo will be putting on a series of activities targeted at different groups across

the area, and she's got loads of great ideas for that, so do look out for those new plans from June.

Thanks as ever to the Big Lottery, who core-fund Connecting in Communities, to the Postcode Lottery for supporting the activity programme and to the Blackcraig Wind Farm Community Benefit fund, administered through the Glenkens and District Trust with Foundation Scotland, for supporting and extending the project. Their support means that we can put on a lot of our CiC activities for free or low cost, and is very much appreciated.

Helen Keron, Executive Manager, GCAT

Gordon McAdam

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SCHOOLS' VISIT TO THE GAC

S2 and S3 pupils from Castle Douglas High School and Dalry Secondary attended the Galloway Activity Centre (GAC) to enjoy a range of outdoor experiences.

The activities on offer included archery, laser tag, the giant swing, paddle boarding, windsurfing, sailing and kayaking. The pupils had a great time and, as always, were a credit to their school.

*Liam Fleming,
Physical Education/
Pupil Support Teacher*



Should Dalry Town Hall Become a Charity?

Dalry Town Hall is a fine old building, built in 1858 and enhanced at the end of the 19th Century.

It was founded by a group of local benefactors and constructed on a piece of land called the Kirk Knoll, part of what was known as the Moat Park, probably named from the adjacent motte and bailey structure overlooking the River Ken at this point.

The plot was granted by John Eden Spalding and the Spalding name continues in the village in the name of the nearby Spalding Bowling Club.

He and others: James Alexander, Thomas Barbour, Rev Samuel Blair, Wellwood Maxwell and David Cowan, formed a Trust to hold the building and

its environs in trust for the inhabitants of Dalry and the public generally.

The Trust continued by virtue of agreement amongst the existing Trustees as to the appointment of suitable newcomers to join the Trust whenever needed – particularly as numbers were diminished by death.

It appears that the Trustees originally managed the hall directly but at some point a Committee of Management was needed and nowadays the present Management Committee operates under a Deed of Trust from 1964.

Today the committee is the active partner in running the hall, with the current trustees being more or less silent partners. Decisions as to maintenance, activities, fundraising, hiring, accounts, etc all lie with the Management Committee. The trustees are now a number of separate individuals and the Trust is no longer a coherent body, having no formal structure, office bearers, meetings, bank account or decision making procedure. Nevertheless, the Trust remains the effective 'owner' of the hall, albeit on behalf of the larger community.

In recent years this historic arrangement has placed the Management Committee at a disadvantage as it is not the owner of the hall and surrounding land. Thus, it cannot seek funds for significant works or developments on a building it does not own. The committee is aware that a proportion of funders will not provide grants to bodies other than charities and in many application forms, the first question is "Do you own the property?"

Additionally, the trustees (and probably the committee as well) carry unlimited liability for any debts that might arise.

In 2005 the Scottish Government brought forward legislation that

created bodies named Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisations or SCIOs. A SCIO is a legal form unique to Scottish charities that can enter into contracts, employ staff, incur debts, own property, sue and be sued. It also provides a high degree of protection against liability. Moreover, the trustees must submit themselves to annual re-election and the SCIO can therefore be viewed as more democratically accountable than a historic trust.

Since its establishment, many organisations have been created within this form of charitable structure and many existing bodies have transitioned to it to take advantage of the greater freedoms and protections it allows.

The Dalry Town Hall Management Committee would like to see the hall move to becoming held by a SCIO, to allow it the freedom to develop the hall for the benefit of the community.

The 1964 Deed suggests a mechanism for doing so. As a first stage, this requires that a Public Meeting be held in the hall and a vote be held indicating the approval and support of the community for such a move.

Consequently, Dalry Town Hall SCIO (SC049437) was formed some two years ago to pursue this course of action. However, Covid intervened, and it is only now that progress can be made.

A Notice of Public Meeting (p8) has been published to allow those who are interested in the future of Dalry Town Hall to discuss and vote on this move.

*J Reid
jamescreid@hotmail.co.uk*

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St Margaret's Fundraising

After a three year Covid hiatus, the annual St Margaret's Guild Plant & Bake Sale took place at the beginning of May at the church in New Galloway.

This was very successful, raising over £620 for Dumfries and Galloway Blood Bikes, the charitable organisation set up by local volunteers to deliver essential blood and urgent medical supplies between NHS hospitals and healthcare sites in Dumfries and Galloway.

Christine Rankin, chair of the St Margaret's Guild, said: "It was wonderful to get back to having a social event in the church and being able to chat with people face to face, whilst raising money for a popular local charity".

There was also a one-prize raffle in aid of Ukraine for a tower of chocolate treats. This raised £150 and the lucky winner was Eva Pennington.

Although relatively small, the congregation at St Margaret's has always been committed to outreach in Dumfries and Galloway and beyond. The

guild directs the fundraising and social activities and were delighted to welcome back the Balliol Singers, postponed from April 2020 due to the pandemic.

Their concert, entitled *Paella and Pasta: Musical Nourishment from Spain and Italy*, was held at the church in early May. It was a real pleasure to listen to live music again whilst raising money for Guild funds.

St Margaret's is currently without a priest but there is an ongoing advertisement in the *Church Times* and it is hoped that a suitable applicant will come forward and be appointed. Meanwhile the vestry is most grateful to the team of visiting clergy enabling St Margaret's to hold a Service every Sunday at 10.30am. *Nicolette Wise*

Pictured below is the fundraising Plant & Bake Sale.



Glenkens Hustings

Prior to the last local authority elections, Glenkens Community & Arts Trust hosted a hustings meeting at CatStrand on the evening of 25 April.

Given that there were a number of new faces amongst the candidates, this was considered necessary so that the Glenkens electorate could see and hear from those putting themselves forward to represent us.

Six out of the seven candidates attended and a lively session ensued in front of a large audience.

Following the election Dougie Campbell (Independent), Andy McFarlane (SNP) and John Denerely (Scottish Conservative and Unionist) were elected for the Dee & Glenkens ward.

WINDY STANDARD WIND FARM - FAMILY FUN OPEN DAY -

Come and visit Windy Standard Wind Farm and take part in a fun filled family open day!

Saturday 25 and Sunday 26 June from 10am to 3pm

Attendees will gather to be transported to the wind farm from the bottom of the access track. At the top they will be taken on a magical, and educational, tour of the wind farm site before retiring for complimentary lunch and refreshments in our marquee.

The team will be on hand to talk about all things wind power before the event draws to a close and everyone is returned safely to the bottom of the hill by 3pm.

To book visit www.windystandardwindfarm.co.uk

For further information email communities@fredolsen.co.uk or call 07435763900.



Boosting biodiversity, businesses and community benefits

With 14 turbines, Quantans Hill Wind Farm will add around 90MW to Dumfries and Galloway's home-grown electricity capacity, as well as battery storage. As a Vattenfall project, this major investment has also been designed to deliver tangible economic, biodiversity and community benefits to the local area around Carsphairn and across South West Scotland. The planning application expected to be submitted in the summer identifies potential for:

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- Estimated £7million boost to local economy
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Find out more about the Quantans Hill Wind Farm proposal and Vattenfall's local approach by visiting: www.vattenfall.co.uk/quantanshill

Data from Quantans Hill Environmental Impact Assessment Report (2022), Natural Power et al; and Vattenfall. Images top & bottom from Lee Williams for Vattenfall's Pen Y Cymoedd Wind Farm in South Wales.

GLENKENS GLASS RECYCLING POINTS

- Balmaclellan Stores, Balmaclellan
- Memorial Hall, St Michael's Road, Crossmichael
- Kirkland Street, St John's Town of Dalry
- New Galloway, Carson's Knowe Car Park
- St David Street, Kirkpatrick Durham

For details of other recycling points visit www.dumgal.gov.uk/wasterecycling - follow the 'Recycling Points in the Community' link. There is also a 'Find My Nearest' tool that enables you to find a range of local services, including recycling points.

ADVERTISE IN THE GAZETTE

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Call 07727 127 997

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Sports in Dalry

Outdoor Bowls (from April) - for details contact Fiona Ramsay on 01644 430 587

Indoor Bowls (October to March)

Table Tennis (available 24/7)

Badminton (available 24/7)

Snooker (available 24/7)

For details for table tennis, snooker, indoor bowls and badminton contact Gary Blissett on 01644 430 521.

CROSSMICHAEL THERAPY CENTRE

- Your Health is Important -

Acupuncture & Chinese Herbal Medicine

Acupuncture and Chinese Medicine is probably best known for its treatment of pain. However, they can be used to treat a broader variety of conditions, from achy joints to anxiety, skin troubles to insomnia, acupuncture could help change the way you manage some of life's health challenges.

Matthew Pajo has been studying and practising Chinese medicine for over 25 years and has attained a Bachelor Health Science and Master Applied Science in Acupuncture and Chinese Herbal Medicine.

As a highly skilled and trusted clinician, Matthew uses safe, effective, and natural treatments that can bring relief from acute and chronic conditions.

Matthew is a member of the British Acupuncture Federation and the Association of Acupuncture Clinicians.

To make an appointment call 07786 079 845

or email info@matthewpajo.co.uk

For more information visit www.matthewpajo.co.uk

Psychological Therapy

Amber Dunlop-Pajo has spent over 20 years working as a psychologist and has attained a Bachelor Psychology (Hons) and Master Psychology (Health) and is a Chartered Psychologist with the British Psychological Society.

Amber specialises in Women's Health as well as depression, stress, anxiety and has a focus on health psychology.

Contact Amber on 07389 713 106 or info@gallowaycounselling.co.uk

For more information visit www.gallowaycounselling.co.uk

**Crossmichael Therapy Centre,
The Old School, Crossmichael, DG7 3AP**

THE STEWARTRY VETERINARY CENTRE

CASTLE DOUGLAS SURGERY HOURS
Mon-Fri 8.30am-6pm

DALBEATTIE SURGERY HOURS
Mon, Wed, Fri 3-3.30 pm
Tues & Thurs 6-6.30 pm

FOR APPOINTMENTS AT BOTH SURGERIES
OR IN CASE OF AN EMERGENCY

01556 502263

VETERINARY SURGERY
OAKWELL ROAD
CASTLE DOUGLAS

**GLENKENS
MEDICAL PRACTICE**

**General Medical &
Dispensing Services**

*The Surgery
High Street
New Galloway*

FOR APPOINTMENTS CALL

01644 420234

The Community Kindness Cupboard outside Dalry Library has home baking in every Thursday.

WHERE TO LOOK FOR LOCAL JOB LISTINGS

Dumfries & Galloway! What's Going on @DGWGO on Facebook; What's Going On Glenkens @WGOGlenkens on Facebook; Glenkens Gazette @GlenkensNews on Facebook – once on the page for any of these, use the search function to look for jobs. The Glenkens' largest employer, Natural Power Consultants Ltd, also have a jobs page - www.naturalpower.com/uk/careers

KEY GLENKENS CONTACTS

LOCAL DOCTORS' SURGERY

Glenkens Medical Practice - 01644 420 234

COMMUNITY CONTACTS

- Balmaclellan: Martin Warnock - 07939 261 391
- Carsphairn: Liz Holmes - 07718 358 160
- Corsock: Julie Garton - 07769 647 702
- Kirkpatrick Durham: Heather - 07551 639 629
- Crossmichael: Richard Middleton - 01556 670 691

- Dalry: Graham West - 01644 430 503

- Mossdale: Shop - 01644 450 281
- New Galloway: Hayley Edgar - 07741 656 601
- Parton: Erica or Brian - 01644 470 277

FOOD DELIVERIES

- Galloway Foodbank - 07730 788 335
- Hidden Veg - www.openfoodnetwork.org.uk/hidden-veg/shop
- Ballards Butchers - 01556 502502 (they also deliver groceries)

- Grierson's Butchers: 01556 502 637
- Henderson's Butchers: 01556 502 654
- Mitchell's Greengrocers: 01556 502 077
- Fleet Fish: order before 1pm on Mondays for delivery the following week. Delivery days can be found when ordering at www.fleet-fish.co.uk or call 07966 103 912
- Roan's Dairy - 01556 620 374

LOCAL COMMUNITY GROUPS

Glenkens Community Shop: Contact Liz Lewis on 07530 804 217 or drop by the shop on Main Street, Dalry

Local Initiatives in New Galloway (LING): Contact Ros Hill at ros.hill@rathanhouse.co.uk

Dalry Communities Properties Trust (DCPT): Contact Gary Blissett at garyblissett51@gmail.com or 01644 430 521

Dalry Town Hall: Contact Lesley Blissett at lesleyblissett52@gmail.com

Glenkens Community Centre: Contact Gary Blissett at garyblissett51@gmail.com

New Galloway Community Enterprises (NGCE): Contact ngce5000@gmail.com or pop into New Galloway Community Shop

Balmaclellan Community Trust: Contact Julia Higgins at julia.higgins55@outlook.com

CatStrand: Contact Fiona Limbrey at fiona@catstrand.com or 01644 420 374 or pop in to the CatStrand

Schools: Visit the school office or call Dalry Primary on 01644 430 105 (for Nursery/ELC too), Dalry Secondary on 01644 430 259 or Kells on 01644 420 340

Carsphairn Heritage Initiative: Contact Karen Hall at carsphairnhi@gmail.com

Galloway Glens Landscape Partnership (GGLP): Contact McNabb Laurie at mcnabb.laurie@dumgal.gov.uk

If you would like to add your community organisation to this list please get in touch with the Gazette - contact details are on the back page.

Carsphairn Community Woodland Open Day

Sunday 12 June

All Welcome

Come along and see what's been happening in Carsphairn's new community space!

To find out more email carsphairncw@gmail.com

CHURCH TIMES

CHURCH OF SCOTLAND:

Sunday Services

Balmaclellan: 11am - 5 June & 3 July
Carsphairn: 11am - 12 June & 10 July
Kells: 11am - 19 June & 17 July
Dalry: 11am - 26 June & 31 July

Special Services

Communion, 10 June, 11am, Carsphairn Church. **Quiz Night**, Friday, 17 June, Dalry Town Hall. **Presentation to minister** followed by light buffet lunch, Sunday 31 July, 12.30pm, Dalry Town Hall

Local Church of Scotland congregations can be accessed on YouTube or can be emailed. Contact

David on 01644 430 380 for paper or email copies, or simply for a chat.

SCOTTISH EPISCOPAL CHURCH:

St Margaret's Church, Kenbridge Road, New Galloway, DG7 3RP

Sundays: 10.30am Sung Eucharist, followed by coffees/teas

Visitors are always welcome - for further information, including directions, please see our website www.stmargaretsnewgalloway.org or call our vestry secretary, Christine Rankin, on 01644 420 259.



**GALLOWAY
COMMUNITY TRANSPORT**
www.gallowaycommunitytransport.org
 email gct@catstrand.com
 phone 01644 420374 mobile 07841 512449

June - July 2022

Regular Services

GK2 Glenkens-Castle Douglas

(Tesco)
 Wednesday Evenings
 (Registered Route)

Out		Return
19:00	Dalry (Underhill)	21:15
19:05	New Galloway	21:10
19:15	Mossdale	21:00
19:25	Laurieston	20:50
19:30	Townhead of Greenlaw	20:47
19:37	Castle Douglas (Market St)	20:37
19:40	Castle Douglas (Tesco)	20:35

Booking not required

Glenkens to Newton Stewart

Fortnightly - Tuesday mornings

Outward Pickups:

Dalry (Underhill) 09:30

New Galloway (Town Hall) 09:35

CatStrand) 09:37

To Merrick Leisure Centre and Aldi

Return Pickup Newton Stewart (Aldi Car Park) 11:30

Return fare £3.50 Advance booking required.

Member Hire



GCT has 16-, 15-, and 8-seater minibuses and a fully wheelchair accessible electric car available for hire by community organisations.

For information about membership and terms and conditions of hire see the GCT website or phone 07841 512449.

GCT Ebike Club

If you are interested in joining the GCT Ebike Club please see

<https://www.gallowaycommunitytransport.org/gct-ebike-club>

phone 07704 662925

or email jon@catstrand.com

EXCURSIONS

18 June 2022 Saturday THE MACHARS GARDENS

A leisurely drive to Wigtownshire and visits to two private gardens full of interest and colour. Lunch at the Isle of Whithorn.

Pickups: Dalry (Underhill Bus Stop) 0900, New Galloway (CatStrand) 0910, Castle Douglas (Market Hill Car Park) 0935, Kirkcudbright (Harbour Square Bus Stop) 0950, Gatehouse (Spar Shop Bus Stop) 1005
 Admission £5. Fare £7

23 July 2022 Saturday THE LAKELAND GARDEN

To Pooley Bridge, a leisurely scenic drive beside Lake Ullswater and over Kirkstone Pass with a lunchtime stop in Bowness-on-Windermere.

Pickups: Dalry (Underhill Bus Stop) 0830, New Galloway (CatStrand) 0840, Kirkcudbright (Harbour Square Bus Stop) 0905, Castle Douglas (Market Hill Car Park) 0925, Dalbeattie (Craignair St Bus Stop) 0945, Dumfries (Wickes Car Park) 1000
 Admission £5. Fare £12

For more info please see the website:

<https://www.gallowaycommunitytransport.org/excursions>

Drivers Needed

Galloway Community Transport needs your help to provide a wide range of community transport services across the Stewartry and beyond.

MINIBUS DRIVING

Minibus drivers with D1 (101 or by test) are needed to do volunteer and paid driving for our wide range of member community groups.

PATIENT TRANSPORT

We also urgently need drivers with their own cars for our patient transport service. Our volunteer patient transport drivers receive a generous mileage reimbursement and the satisfaction of providing a vital service to vulnerable people in our communities.

Interested?

Email gct@catstrand.com or phone 07841 512449

What's On June/July

JUNE

Wed 1, Yorkston, Thorne & Ghatak, 7:30pm, CatStrand

Thu 2 to Sun 5, Spring Fling Open Studios, see p6

Fri 3, In The Weeds: An Tobar and Mull Theatre, 7:30pm, In The Weeds: An Tobar and Mull, CatStrand

Fri 3, In The Weeds: An Tobar and Mull Theatre, 7:30pm, In The Weeds: An Tobar and Mull, CatStrand

Sat 4, Producers Market, 10am-1pm, Dalry Town Hall, see p12

Thu 9, Glenkens Writer's Cafe, 7pm, CatStrand

Wed 8, Film: Dune, 7:30pm, Dalry Town Hall

Thu 9, Bancroft & Lyne, 7.30pm, CatStrand

Fri 10, GB Ultras registration and start, Dalry Town Hall

Sat 11, Resuscitation and Defibrillation: an open introduction, 10.30am-12noon, New Galloway Town Hall

Sun 12, Carsphairn Community Woodland Open Day - all welcome

Sun 12, The Galloway Agreement presents the Ken Bridge Song Suite (marks the start of the Ken Bridge bicentenary celebrations), 7.30pm, Dalry Town Hall, tickets from CatStrand

Sat 18, GCT Bus Trip The Machars Gardens, see p37

Thu 23, Public Meeting, 7pm, Dalry Town Hall, see p13

Fri 24, Crime Writers Evening, 7.30pm, Dalry Town Hall, see p8

Fri 24, Though This Be Madness, 7.30pm, CatStrand

Sat 25, Youth Beatz Trip, 11am-6.30pm, 12yrs+, 9am pickup CatStrand, see Young Creatives, see p9

Sat 25, Donald Watson Bird Event, all day drop-in from 10am, Dalry Town Hall

Sat 25, Watson Birdsong Day: Birdsong and Landscape Walk, 10am-12noon, Dalry Town Hall

Sat 25, Watson Birdsong day: Birdsong Studio, 2pm, 45 Main Street, Dalry

Sat 25, SongWave Choir: Songs of the Summer, 3pm, Crossmichael Church

Sat 25, Watson Birdsong day: Jackdaws and Other Friends - Book Launch, 6.30pm, Dalry Town Hall

Sat 25, Watson Birdsong Day: The Conference of Birds Concert, 7pm, Dalry Town Hall

Sat 25 & Sun 26, Windy Standard Family Open Day, 10am-3pm, Carsphairn, see p33

Sat 25, Though This Be Madness - Babes in Arms performance, 10.30am, CatStrand

Thu 30, Land Use Conversations - a Glenkens Future, 7-8.30pm, online event, see back page

Thu 30, Kirkcudbright Writers' Cafe, 7pm, Selkirk Arms

JULY

Sat 2, ICAT 22 (Industry Community and Alternative Technology) event, 1.30-5.30pm, Community Centre, Cotton St, Castle Douglas, for info contact 01644 420 361

Sun 3, J George Murphy Duo, 6.30pm, The Clachan

Inn

Mon 4, 11 & 18, Music in Film Workshop, 5.30-7.30pm, CatStrand, New Galloway, age 12-16

Tue 5, MaMa - Family Workshop, 2pm, CatStrand

Tue 5, MaMa-by Cosmic Dance, 7pm, CatStrand

Sat 9, Producers Market, 10am-1pm, Dalry Town Hall, see p12

Mon 11, Dance the Beach Life, 10am-2pm, CatStrand, New Galloway, age 3-7yrs

Wed 13, Drama Rama Workshop, 11am-12noon, CatStrand, New Galloway, age 6-9

Wed 13, Play in a Day Drama Workshop, 12-4pm, CatStrand, New Galloway, age 10+

Thu 14, Ken Words-Glenkens Writers' Cafe, 7pm, CatStrand

Mon 18-Fri 22, DG Dance week, 10.30am-3.30pm, CatStrand, New Galloway, age 11+

Tue 19, Collagraph Printmaking Masterclass, 10am-2pm, Smiddy, Balmaclellan, age 10-16

Tue 19, Canvas; Beginners Art Workshop, 2.30-5pm, The Smiddy, Balmaclellan, age 13+

Fri 22, 'Up My Street' Art Workshop, 10am-12pm, The Smiddy, Balmaclellan, age 10+

Sat 23, GCT Bus Trip The Lakeland Garden, see p37

Sun 24, Launch of Dragon Boats on Loch Ken, see p4

REGULAR EVENTS

Balmaclellan Village Hall:

Tuesday Afternoon Teas, first Tues every month, to book email julia.higgins55@outlook.com

Glenkens Crafters, Wed 10am-2.30pm, for info contact Julia Higgins on 01644420297

Books in Balmaclellan Community Library, Mon 6-7pm, Wed 10am-12.30pm & Sat 10.30am-12.30pm

Glenkens Art Group, Thur afternoons, contact Tom Leach on t_leach1@sky.com

Lagwyne Hall, Carsphairn:

Craft Group, Fri 10am-12noon, includes tea & coffee, Lagwyne Hall

Bairn Banter; family stay & play session, 0-7 years, Sat 10-11.45am, Lagwyne Hall, Carsphairn

CatStrand, New Galloway:

Margaret Morris Movement: Health Play (age 3-7), Mon (during term time), 3.45-4.30pm

Margaret Morris Movement: Children's Grades & Youth Dance (age 8-15), Mon (during term time), 4.30-5.30pm

Youth Volunteers (age 11-16), monthly, 5.30-7.30pm

Scriptless Drama Club (age 11-19), Tue, 5.30-6.30pm

Newton Stewart Bus Service to Tesco, Wednesday evenings

A Chance to Dance, Thu bi-weekly, 6-8pm

Dance Weekenders (age 12+), Sat - monthly, 1-4pm

Art Explorers, Sat - monthly, 10-11am (age 5-8) & 11.15am-12.30pm (age 8-12)

CatStrand Youth Players, meet weekly to work on festival plays and an annual pantomime, contact briangm@catstrand.com

New Galloway Town Hall:

Crafty Corner with tea & biscuits, Mon 2-4pm, contact Kristina on 07789 680468

LING Lunches, Tue, Elevenses 11am & lunches from 12.30-2pm. No need to book, contact Ros on 07749 249 781

Sports Evenings with indoor bowling and table tennis, Tues 7-9pm, drop in or contact Ray on 01644 420 438

Tai Chi, Wed 10.30-11.30am, includes coffee & biscuits, contact Ju-lie gentletaichigroup@gmail.com

Wee Messy Crafters, Wed, 1-2pm, contact weemessycrafters@gmail.com

Zumba, Wed 6.30-7.20pm & 7.25-8.15pm, contact samantha.rushton@hotmail.co.uk - booking essential

Martial Arts, Thur 5.30-6.30pm (children) & 7-9pm (age 6 and up), contact Brian or Nancy

on Facebook KMANews or kmabrian@gmail.com

Gentle Yoga, Fri 5.45-6.45pm, contact kathyr64@hotmail.co.uk

Informal Family Badminton, (net and racquets but no line markings), New Galloway Town Hall, contact Ros on 07749 249 781

Dalry Library:

Random Writers (age 12+), Thu bi-weekly, Dalry Library, 3.45-5pm

Dalry Town Hall:

Tai Chi, video-led instruction, Mon, 2-3pm, contact lesleyblissett52@gmail.com

Dog Training, Tue, 7pm, contact Eric Broadhurst 07831 590 822

Film Nights, Wed, see listings opposite

CatStrand Singers, Thu, 11am-12.30pm, contact anne.chaurand@btinternet.com

Song Share, 1st Friday each month, 8-11pm, contact anne.chaurand@btinternet.com

Glenkens Producers Market, 2nd Sat each month, 10am-1pm, contact lesleyblissett52@gmail.com

Various:

Crossmichael Heritage Centre
Open Wed & Fri, 1.30-4.30pm

Dalry Library & Customer Service Centre

Main Street, Dalry, Tel: 01644 430 234 or 01556 502 643

Tuesday: For books and other walk-in services: 2-5pm

Friday: For NEC Bus Pass and Blue Badge appointments and PCs: 11.30am - 12.30pm; for books and other walk-in services: 1-4.30pm.

Appointments can be booked in the library or on 01387 260 196.

USEFUL NUMBERS:

- Pot-hole Hotline: 0845 276 0000
- Police, non-emergency: 101
- Doctor: 01644 420 234
- NHS 24: 08454 24 24 24
- D&G Council: 030 33 33 3000

Results of Housing Survey

The Glenkens housing survey is now complete.

The survey, carried out by South of Scotland Community Housing (SOSCH), was commissioned by the Glenkens and District Trust (GDT), based upon findings contained in the Community Action Plan. This type of survey - a Housing Needs and Demand Assessment (HNDA) - is the key that unlocks funding support for community-led housing.

This survey looked at the 10 communities within the GDT area. The aim of the survey was to produce data for individual communities and community organisations, who could then explore the potential for community-led housing solutions using the survey findings to underpin the start of any future project.

In total there were 146 responses to the survey with most responses coming from four communities: Balmaclellan, Carsphairn, New Galloway and Kells, and St John's Town of Dalry. Some key concerns highlighted were the lack of rental housing available, as well as affordable housing to buy, due to issues such as competition from buyers purchasing second homes, houses becoming short-term holiday lets, and

the difficulty in securing affordable land for self-build opportunities. The knock-on effects of these issues were suggested in comments on how school rolls were falling, and that the vitality and sustainability of communities was being affected.

With the ongoing trend of homeworking, many respondents felt that workspace within the home and workshops within/ alongside/in proximity to affordable housing was required. Future housing projects should consider how it might address the demand for such spaces.

Another key element was energy-efficiency. The survey results highlight the need for low-energy homes that are affordable to run, whether re-developing existing property or new build. Respondents highlighted the need for more energy efficient homes, with over 50% of respondents indicating that fuel inefficiency was a factor in their homes not meeting their needs. By considering this through measures such as higher



levels of insulation, triple glazing, etc, this would address both climate change and the rising cost of energy, to combat the increasing levels of fuel poverty.

Going forward, communities can use the survey as evidence of community engagement for community-led housing grant funding as well as providing local level information on the need and demand for different types, size and tenure of housing. For further advice and information please contact SOSCH at www.sosch.org

You can read the full report at www.glenkenstrust.org.uk/news

GDT will also consider how best to use this report and ensure it is circulated to all relevant groups and individuals, hopefully gaining some momentum in addressing the numerous issues raised.

Fiona Smith, GDT

LAND USE CONVERSATIONS: A GLENKENS FUTURE

30th June, 7-8.30pm

This Online event brings together a panel of local & national land use experts, organisations, artists and most important of all...you, to learn more about land use discussions and how we can all input our thoughts.

Join us for a stimulating discussion & to share your views.

Book your free online ticket, search on **Eventbrite.co.uk for 'Galloway Glens'**

Event organised by local artists Leeming & Paterson, in partnership with the Galloway Glens Scheme.



WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Submit events, activities, news stories, cartoons, reviews, tips & techniques, fiction, photos, ads or ideas... Contact Sarah Ade on 07727 127 997 or glenkengazette@hotmail.co.uk

AUG/SEP COPY DEADLINE: 5 JULY



Editing & Design:
sarah.ade@gmail.com