



southern uplands partnership
living land, living community

SUP NEWSLETTER

Project updates...

Welcome to the latest projects update from the Southern Uplands Partnership team. It feels like it has been a winter of Dudley, Eunice and Franklin, rather than a more seasonal cloaking of crisp snow, but we hope you have come through it all unscathed. Over the next few pages you can read all about, among other things, glow-worms, antique farming implements, golden eagle successes, and a new long distance walking trail...

Keeping in touch

www.sup.org.uk



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SUP led/hosted project updates:

- *Connecting Threads*
- *Talla-Hartfell Wild Land Area Ecomuseum*
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- *Net Zero Project Scottish Borders*
- *Dumfriesshire East Community Officer*
- *Recharge in Nature*

Southern Uplands Partnership Team

Updates: Pip, Darren, Katy, Sheila

Events:

- *South of Scotland Golden Eagle Project community events*
- *Glow-worms event with a guest appearance from SWSEIC*

Funding and Training opportunities:

- *DECBG*

And finally...



Connecting Threads: Gathering Together, community event conceived by Jules Bradbury as part of her residency at Merlindale Meadow

South of Scotland Golden Eagle Project

WWW.GOLDENEAGLESSOUTHOFSCOTLAND.CO.UK

South Scotland Golden Eagle population reaches new heights thanks to novel research technique

The pioneering South of Scotland Golden Eagle Project has become the first in the UK to successfully translocate free-flying young golden eagles (aged between 6 months and 3 years) to boost a low population of this iconic bird. These new additions bring the total number of golden eagles in the south of Scotland to around 33 – the highest number recorded here in the last three centuries.

Taking a new research approach, under licence from NatureScot, the team leading the ground-breaking charity project have successfully caught, transported and released seven golden eagles from the Outer Hebrides. The Outer Hebrides were selected as the source to boost the south of Scotland population because these Islands host one of the highest densities of golden eagles in Europe. The birds were released almost immediately on arrival in a secret location in the southern uplands of Scotland.

The project team is continuing to monitor the birds' progress to see if they settle and breed in the area. If they do, this could be a ground-breaking moment for the project. Throughout the process, the project team followed NatureScot's strict novel-research



Dave Anderson, independent ecologist

guidelines which were assessed by Scotland's Nature Agency against the Scottish Code for Conservation Translocations. Only a small number of projects have used this technique. If successful it could be used further to support wider raptor conservation programmes.

The team has previously (from 2018 to 2021) successfully released 12 young eagles collected as chicks from nests in the Highlands and Islands. This is a process that is much more widely used for raptor conservation programmes. The released eagles have all settled in south of Scotland, with frequent sightings of interactions including with other native eagles.

South of Scotland Golden Eagle Project

WWW.GOLDENEAGLESSOUTHOFSCOTLAND.CO.UK

In the past, the Project has focused on collecting much younger chicks (aged 6 to 8 weeks) directly from nest sites with twins, but the team has struggled to source a sufficient number of birds, particularly when Covid-19 restrictions were in place. After thorough research and consultation over welfare and ecological issues with an expert Scientific Advisory Panel, the Project identified a new research-based approach involving catching and moving free-flying young golden eagles from a naturally densely populated area. At every stage, the welfare of the birds has been paramount.

An experienced team of expert raptor ecologists, Dave Anderson and Robin Reid, and Scottish Raptor Study Group member Graeme Anderson carefully caught the young (sub-adult) birds at bait sites in the Outer Hebrides. The team was careful not to select adult or breeding birds, and aged the birds based on their plumages. Five females and two males were housed in specially designed travel boxes and quickly transported by road and sea to the south of Scotland. The birds were satellite tagged by licensed individuals and swiftly released.



The seven new arrivals have been named by a range of individuals, school children and organisations. Sir E Scott School on Harris in the Outer Hebrides, where the eagles came from, named their eagle Rowan - the project is forging links between the school and Sciennes Primary School in Edinburgh.

Project partners RSPB Scotland, Scottish Land and Estates, Scottish Forestry, NatureScot and the Southern Uplands Partnership, had worked on the project together for more than 11 years before releasing the first eagle chicks in 2018. Funded by The National Lottery Heritage Fund, project partners and the Scottish Government, the initiative is a key project under 'Scotland's Biodiversity. A Route Map to 2020', supporting the Government's '2020 Challenge for Scotland's Biodiversity.



Talla Hartfell EcoMuseum

DONALD GREIG

The EcoMuseum has been busy taking submissions over the last few months from all over Ettrick, Moffat and Tweedsmuir.

Here are a few pictures taken from the Wild Land Area Project Officer, Donald Greig, meeting with Idy Davidson in Moffat. Idy's father, Simon Davidson, farmed at Ettrick when Idy was a girl, before moving to Granton down Annanwater, north of Moffat.

This collection of old Moffat guides has some wonderful period images, an old farming castration tool and will be included in the new digital ecomuseum.

To find out more please email ecomuseum@btinternet.com. The project was funded by the Rural Communities Testing Change Fund, managed by Scottish Borders Council.



Idy Davidson chatting to Project Officer, Donald Greig



Antique sheep castration tool



Moffat Hydropathic burned down in 1921



Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba
gov.scot

Connecting Threads

[WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/TWEEDRIVERCULTURE](https://www.facebook.com/tweedriverculture)

After 16 months of intense research and consultation, and a lively programme of pilot activities, the Connecting Threads development phase is coming to an end. What this work has shown us is the benefits that arts and culture can bring to our rural communities and how we can work creatively to address the climate and biodiversity emergencies.

Using the river Tweed as a universal connector, we can reach people who need support; to recover from the impacts of the pandemic, to nurture personal health and wellbeing, or to combat social or geographic isolation and loneliness.

Connecting Threads is a project that will support the creative sector in the south of Scotland, creating opportunities for employment and professional development, and connecting creative people with the communities that they live and work within.

We want to thank all the people we have met with and spoken to during this development phase. Through them we have discovered a high level of interest and support for what Connecting Threads can deliver, and a great enthusiasm to engage with our planned five-year programme of activity. We have produced a handbook, accessed via the website (<https://sup.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Connecting-Threads-Handbook.pdf>), which sets out a clear vision for the project and how it can make a positive difference to place and people.



*Yellow Rattle
(Rhinanthus minor)
study III and Grasses in
the Meadow, bleaching.
2021, Jules Bradbury,
produced as part of
Connecting Threads'
pilot artist residency at
Merlindale Meadow.*

Connecting Threads

[WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/TWEEDRIVERCULTURE](https://www.facebook.com/tweedriverculture)

A major funding application to the National Lottery Heritage Fund has been submitted for Destination Tweed, including Connecting Threads. Thanks to additional support from the Southern Uplands Partnership, we will be continuing to connect through the spring and summer until we hear the outcome of the application. If we are successful, we look forward to growing our team and germinating the project along the Tweed from late summer 2022. Rachel Hunter and Emily Cropton, Feb 2022

*Details from Edge Encounters,
July 2021 and River Portrait No.
1, June 2021*



Connecting Threads Handbook

South West Scotland Coastal Trail

RICHARD CLARKE

Our new Coastal Trail Project Officer, Richard Clarke, started in post in early January and will be working on delivering a new long distance trail along the Solway Coast from Gretna to Portpatrick, linking the England Coast Path to the Ayrshire Coast Path. Richard can be contacted at richard@sup.org.uk.



This article appeared in the Dumfries and Galloway Standard



Couple of shots while out and about near the River Sark and Mossband hall Marsh

Net Zero Project - Scottish Borders

Visit Kelso, working with the Southern Uplands Partnership, held a second event for the Net Zero project, which looked at some of the industry opportunities that net zero will bring. The event was aimed at young people, trades and those thinking of installing air-source heat pumps or perhaps retraining for this growth area and had two speakers: Greg Steel, Curriculum and Learning Manager at Borders College, and Richard Moncur, Regional Business Manager for Vaillant Heat Pumps (Scotland).



Martin Valenti of SoSE, taken at the first event held last year

Dumfriesshire East Community Officer

Our new Project Officer, Jamie Dent, started in post in January and will be working on projects supporting the communities across east Dumfriesshire. If you live in that area and are part of a community group/charity that needs a hand with finding funding for a project, or have some big ideas but not sure how to bring them to life, then Jamie can help. He can be contacted at jamie@decbg.org.uk.

Jamie to help communities shape their future

A NEW community officer role has been created to help groups across Dumfriesshire East develop projects and apply for funding.

The area benefits from funds from three different windfarms - Ewe Hill, Solwaybank and Minsca - with more funds in the pipeline as the Crossdykes development reaches completion and further windfarms are planned.

And the new post has been established in response to community consultation feedback where more than 80 per cent of respondents agreed with having a shared community officer to move projects forward.

Jamie Dent has been taken up the position and is working with local organisations to make the

most of the funding and find other sources to develop innovative community projects that have the potential to transform the region, improve community life, and help ensure a sustainable future for rural communities.

He said: "This is a very exciting opportunity to develop a broad range of community projects from small, but important, improvements such as better local play facilities to larger projects such as renewable energy, transport and housing."

"By making the best use of funds from windfarms and other sources, I hope to be able to assist local people in transforming their communities to meet the challenges of the 21st century."

"The recent community consultation undertaken by DECBG and available online shows there are

no shortage of ambitious ideas. My role will be to help turn these ideas into reality."

His job is funded by Scottish Power Renewables' Ewe Hill windfarm and company spokeswoman Siobhan Jarvie said: "Being a good neighbour and supporting our communities is a big part of what we do and the new community officer will help all the local windfarm developers do this to maximum effect."

Jamie, who has a background as a planner and many years experience working to develop community-led affordable rural housing projects in Dumfries and Galloway, is currently contacting community councils and organisations to arrange meetings and discuss ideas. To contact him, call 07391 618359 or email jamie@decbg.org.uk



This article appeared in the Moffat News / Annandale Herald.

ReCharge in Nature

ReCharge in Nature is a brand-new App being developed and piloted in the South of Scotland showing electric vehicle charging points, tourism businesses and outdoor things to do in the area.

This new piece of technology is under development by Electrek Explorer, in partnership with NatureScot and Southern Uplands Partnership, and will help guide people along curated electric car and bike routes and connect people with EV-friendly accommodation, local businesses, wildlife hotspots, walks, adventure activities and community groups.

The team is also creating a new E-bike data atlas to the area to improve access and usability along cycle routes, which will highlight businesses and locations that are electric vehicle (EV) and E-bike friendly. SUP is busy at the moment collecting a lot of the raw data that will sit behind and drive the content on the App. The project has been funded by South of Scotland Destination Alliance, Destination Net Zero and South of Scotland Enterprise. Keep an eye on our social media pages for news of its launch.



Elaine Ford MD of Electrek Explorer

Southern Uplands Partnership Core Team Updates

PIP TABOR/SHEILA ADAMS / KATY EWING / DARREN FLINT

Pip's news...

As you can see, we are working on a number of exciting projects and the team has been incredibly busy ensuring that each project delivers as required. The pandemic has not made it easy, but everyone has coped remarkably well.

SUP Services, our wholly-owned trading company, has been bidding for work, and winning some interesting contracts which will generate funds to support the charity. One area where we are starting to specialise is that around energy-efficiency where there is a huge task to get our rural housing stock modified to meet the net-zero target. At present, there are too few people with the skills to undertake this work so we are working with local partners to try to raise awareness of the issue and to point out the scale of the opportunity for local businesses if they have the right skills and training. So far this work has concentrated on the Scottish Borders, but we are starting to link with partners in Dumfries and Galloway.

We are also working with partners on a number of large-scale projects that we hope will attract funding. One of these concerns upland biodiversity, where we have been coordinating **black grouse monitoring** for many years. Previous conservation efforts have failed to stop the decline in this charismatic species and other upland species are also declining. The proposal now is to try to better integrate and join-up the sites where good populations persist and to link a range of initiatives (such as Tarras Valley, the Galloway Glens, Carrifran, etc) where positive action is already underway. We hope to have a fully worked-up proposal in the next few months and we will then seek funding to create a 5 year project. The feeling is that if we don't do something now it will be too late.

Last year, we teamed-up with the Langholm Initiative, John Muir Trust, South of Scotland Enterprise and Scottish Government on a **Civtech Challenge**. Our challenge was: "How can we use technology to help land managers make informed land-use decisions and increase carbon capture and storage".

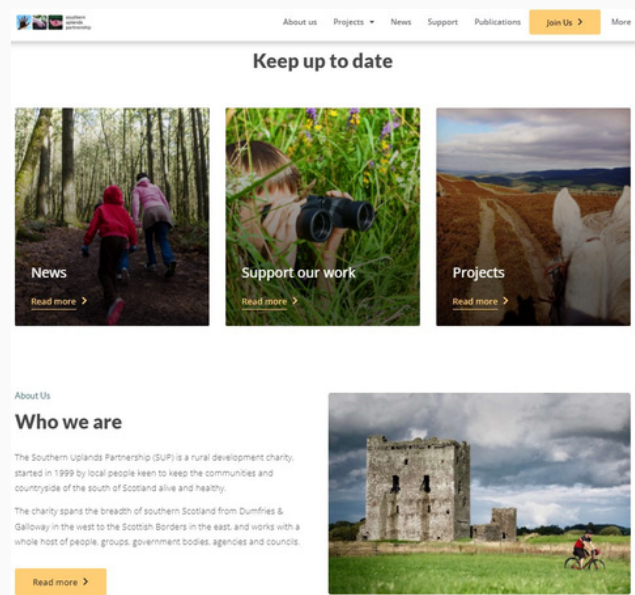
The Civtech process is all about problem solving, innovation and business development. It has been quite a commitment for all involved, but the result is that a company (Gingerland) has developed a radical new platform (Rethink Carbon) that uses a range of data sources and calculators to present data in a form that will help land managers make better decisions. The company has now been awarded funding to take the idea to the next level and we are all very excited at the potential. You can see the "Demoday" pitch here: <https://www.civtechdemoday.com/challenge-4-ginger-land>

Southern Uplands Partnership Core Team Updates

PIP TABOR/SHEILA ADAMS / KATY EWING / DARREN FLINT

Darren's news...

Website revamp: Our old website has served us well but it was starting to look a little dated, so we are now in the process of giving it a spring clean with a thorough dust down. Here's a sneaky peak of the early new look, and we will let you know once it is all up and running.



Projects: We've been working on the early plans for some exciting future projects. Can't say too much at the moment, but as a little teaser they include things such as Local Guide training, a relaunch of WildSeasons, GIS internships and a lecture series.

Recharge in Nature: Recharge in Nature is a partnership between Electrek Explorer, the Southern Upland Partnership and NatureScot researching, promoting and mapping electric vehicle recharging infrastructure. We've been doing a bit of leg work researching the locations and technical specifications of the charge point across the area. A new app will be coming soon not only showing the locations of the EV charging points but giving lots of ideas for exploring the area and great outdoors while waiting for the charge to complete.

Southern Uplands Partnership Core Team Updates

PIP TABOR/SHEILA ADAMS / KATY EWING / DARREN FLINT

Darren's news...

Social media: We've been doing a variety of themed posts over the last few months, testing what works, what people enjoy seeing, and those they don't. During Advent we revealed a daily post promoting the whole range of SUP projects - from eagles to new walking routes, community grants to eco-museums. While on Valentine's Day we shared our year-round love for Southern Scotland.

If you aren't signed up to our Facebook, Instagram or Twitter the details are on the front cover of this newsletter.



If you'd like to know anymore about the above contact Darren at darren@sup.org.uk

Southern Uplands Partnership Core Team Updates

PIP TABOR/SHEILA ADAMS / KATY EWING / DARREN FLINT

Katy's news...

As well as being involved in some of the work mentioned above, including 'ReCharge in Nature', and continuing to improve our social media presence, I've also been networking and learning more about various strands of what's happening in the field:

- In December I attended an excellent Cross Party Group on 'Rural Policy: Sustainable rural tourism in a post-pandemic Scotland' hosted by Scotland's Rural College, with speakers from across Scotland presenting on some specific challenges and opportunities for rural tourism since 2020, many of which are very relevant to South Scotland. Minutes and slides are available here, including links to relevant resources, do take a look: <https://www.sruc.ac.uk/research/facilities-capabilities/rural-policy-centre/rural-policy-events/>



- In January I met with Katharine Wheeler of the Stove Network, Dumfries to discuss ways of learning from and linking with their innovative methods of using creativity in community engagement. I'll be having a closer look at their ground-breaking 'What We Do Now' collaborative project which works with artists, communities and organisations across Dumfries and Galloway, to observe this in practice! <https://thestove.org/what-we-do-now/>
- Also in January I took part in a workshop hosted by the James Hutton Institute and ECom (Ecosystem Services Community Scotland): 'Going with the flow – where next for catchment and landscape partnerships?' with speakers discussing the pros of partnership working at landscape scale and the innovative approaches to funding that are emerging. A report on the event should be forthcoming!

Southern Uplands Partnership Core Team Updates

PIP TABOR/SHEILA ADAMS / KATY EWING / DARREN FLINT

Katy's news cont'd...

- Also in January I took part in a workshop hosted by the James Hutton Institute and ECom (Ecosystem Services Community Scotland): 'Going with the flow – where next for catchment and landscape partnerships?' with speakers discussing the pros of partnership working at landscape scale and the innovative approaches to funding that are emerging. A report on the event should be forthcoming!
- In February I met with the Galloway and Southern Ayrshire Biosphere team to both ensure continuation of the strong relationship between our organisations since their becoming independent from SUP and to explore ways that we can all continue working effectively together – and was really excited to see how well their newly-expanded team is working together on diverse projects, collaborating with and supporting businesses, land managers and communities in making the most of their UNESCO Biosphere status – find out more about the work they're doing here: <https://www.gsabiosphere.org.uk/>.
- We've also been exploring exciting potential links with the University of Glasgow's Dumfries-based School of Interdisciplinary Studies environmental degree programmes with a view to looking at how SUP could improve graduate pathways into work in the South Scotland environmental sector – early days, but watch this space!...

Contact me about any of the above at katy@sup.org.uk

Sheila's news...

All of the exciting projects that you have read about have me in the background, keeping the finances in order! As we approach the end of another financial year, I will be preparing for the annual audit of accounts by making sure that all the paperwork is up-to-date, submitting grant claims and reconciling funds. SUP Services Ltd is also generating a lot of work for me in the administration of new contracts. I have also been supporting project staff with funding applications. Part of the work SUP does is administering the grants process for DECBG so I have been busy with the assessment of the last round of applications to Ewe Hill 16 and Solwaybank Community Benefit Funds and reviewing some of our procedures for these schemes.

South of Scotland Golden Eagle Project

The project will be having some pop-up information stands throughout the Easter holidays. Volunteers will be there to say hello, tell visitors about the project and answer any questions, so be sure to pop along to one of the following...

- Waterwheel Tearoom at Philiphaugh - Saturday 2nd April
- Grey Mares Tail, Dumfriesshire - Friday 8th April
- Waterwheel Tearoom at Philiphaugh - Sunday 10th April
- Grey Mares Tail, Dumfriesshire - Tuesday 12th April
- Grey Mares Tail, Dumfriesshire - Wednesday 13th April
- Harestanes - Friday 15th April
- Harestanes - Saturday 16th April
- Bowhill - Sunday 17th April

For more information on these events, contact Philip at philip@sup.org.uk



South of Scotland Environmental Information Centre

Be sure to book your free place on this talk all about Scotland's glow-worms. Our very own Mark Pollitt will be a guest speaker.

SCOTLANDS' GLOW-WORMS - AN EVENING OF ILLUMINATION

WED 23 MARCH, 7PM - FREE ONLINE TALK

Did you know we have Glow-worms in Scotland? How do they glow? What habitats do they live in? How do you go about finding them? In which parts of the country are they found?

Join Charlotte Martin of Scottish Glow-worms and guest speakers (Mark Pollitt - SWSEIC, Davina Gray, Fiona Rogerson, Chris Cathrine - Caledonian Conservation) to discover more about this fascinating and charismatic beetle.

Free online talk using Zoom, booking essential. For more information and to book please visit

<https://t.co/g5Pz2apZbA>

FREE



SCOTTISH
GLOW-WORMS



@ScottishGlow

Event kindly hosted by Caledonian Conservation

Funding and Training opportunities

THE EWE HILL 16 FUND

The Ewe Hill 16 Fund will receive an annual contribution from ScottishPower Renewables of at least £184,000 (index linked over the operational life) to be distributed to worthwhile projects and initiatives which benefit the people living and working in the area of East Dumfriesshire, and includes the following communities:

- North Milk area,
- Tundergarth
- Middlebie and Waterbeck
- Langholm, Ewes and Westerkirk
- Canonbie and District
- Springfield and Gretna Green
- Gretna and Rigg
- Kirkpatrick Fleming and District
- Eastriggs, Dornock and Creca
- Kirtle and Eaglesfield
- Brydekirk and District
- Hoddum and Ecclefechan
- Lockerbie and District
- Eskdalemuir

The Ewe Hill 16 Fund will be awarded to projects through an Open Grant Application process. The Grants process is administered and initial assessments of applications made by The Southern Uplands Partnership.

Deadlines for applications to the Ewe Hill 16 Fund are:

- The next round of funding from Ewe Hill 16 Windfarm Community Benefit Fund and Solwaybank Windfarm Community Benefit Fund is now open to applications, with a closing date for both of 31 July 2022.
- Application forms and guidance can be downloaded from the website www.decbg.org.uk or email decbgscio@gmail.com.
- For assistance with project ideas or applications, contact Jamie Dent at jamie@decbg.org.uk.



Funding and Training opportunities

THE SOLWAYBANK WINDFARM COMMUNITY BENEFIT FUND

Solwaybank Windfarm Community Benefit Fund will receive an annual contribution from Solwaybank Energy Ltd of at least £60,000 (index linked over the operational life) to contribute to community activities in the following areas:

- Langholm, Ewes and Westerkirk
- Canonbie and District
- Kirkpatrick Fleming and District
- Kirtle and Eaglesfield
- Middlebie and Waterbeck



The Solwaybank Windfarm Community Benefit Fund will be awarded to projects through an Open Grant Application process.

Application Forms are available to download from the DECBG website www.decbg.org.uk or obtained by emailing decbgscio@gmail.com or telephoning 01750 725154 or phoning or texting 07741 076997.

The Grants process is administered and initial assessments of applications made by The Southern Uplands Partnership. The Solwaybank Windfarm Advisory Management Panel of DECBG will make the decisions on all applications to Solwaybank Windfarm Community Benefit Fund.

Investing in Communities Fund Round 2

This major community funding pot is expected to open March/April 2022 for applications with projects commencing after 1st April 2023 and running for up to three years to a value of £350,000.

The four areas for action are:

- Tackling Poverty & Inequality, including Child Poverty
- Developing and Sustaining Place Based Approaches
- Community-led Regeneration
- Ensuring a just transition to Net Zero



More information can be found at

<https://www.gov.scot/policies/community-empowerment/empowering-communities-fund/>

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AND SUPPORT ALL THE ACTIVITIES IN THIS NEWSLETTER



WHY BECOME A PATRON?

- be part of a strategic rural charity with 20+ years experience.
- help communities make sustainable use of their natural and cultural heritage.
- join a partnership that includes exciting projects such as golden eagles and River Tweed culture; biological recording and equestrian tourism; an ecomuseum and walking trail development...

further details: contactus@sup.org.uk

Current SUP Patrons



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Registered Office: Studio 2, Lindean Mill, Galashiels, TD1 3PE
01750 725154 www.sup.org.uk

AND FINALLY...

And finally...

Kirkcudbright harbour in the 1960s (an old family photo from our Project Officer Katy) and a more recent shot taken last month - different weather, different boats but still very recognisable!



Funders and Patrons:



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