SEPTEMBER 2022



southern uplands partnership living land, living community

SUP NEWSLETTER

Project updates...

Welcome to the latest Southern Uplands Partnership project updates. Well, after a damp start to the summer and heatwaves over large swathes of the UK, things did eventually warm up a bit in our neck of the woods – for a few days at least. There's a reason why our countryside tends to look green and lush! Over the next few pages, we have a roundup of some of the SUP hosted/led projects' activities, upand-coming events like the Moffat Eagle Town Festival, ways to support our vision and some funding opportunities for your groups.

- www.sup.org.uk
- southernuplandspartnership
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Keeping in touch

o southernuplandspartnership

IN THIS EDITION...

SUP led/hosted project updates:

- Connecting Threads
- Dumfriesshire East Community Benefit Group
- Scottish Borders Construction Forum
- South West Scotland Coastal Way
- South West Scotland Environmental Information Centre
- Talla-Hartfell Wild Land Area project

Southern Uplands Partnership Team Updates: Pip, Sheila, Katy, Darren

Awards and Events:

- Connecting Threads Harvest Festival
- Moffat Eagle Town Festival 2022
- SUP shortlisted for a RSPB Nature of Scotland Award

And finally...



Connecting Threads

WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/TWEEDRIVERCULTURE

The Connecting Threads team is delighted to announce that, as part of the wider Destination Tweed initiative, it has been successful in securing funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund for its five-year programme!

Destination Tweed will receive a grant of £2,980,000 from the Lottery, with Connecting Threads forming a major engagement strand within the total portfolio of thirteen projects. The Lottery award brings Connecting Threads a huge step closer to being able to begin its work and recognises the central role that arts and culture plays in the social, environmental and economic development of places and communities.

Connecting Threads is the first major arts and culture project to be hosted by the Southern Uplands Partnership; a shift for the organisation and one which supports the connection between the environmental and cultural changes needed to address the climate and biodiversity emergency.

Rachel and Emily are now working to secure match funding for their year one activities, whilst continuing to collaborate with and offer support to existing projects, including the Crook Inn participatory mural in Tweedsmuir, the Abundant Borders community garden in Kelso and the Moving Images Film Seeds programme. They would like to thank all those who have supported their journey so far, and would welcome conversations with anyone interested in supporting their work into the future.

See our events section for the Connecting Threads Harvest Programme



Left: Work begins to create the Kelso's new community garden Right: Handmade drawing tools, by artist Irene Campbell

Dumfriesshire East Community Benefit Company

WWW.DECBG.ORG.UK/

The DECBG Community Officer, Jamie Dent, has been in post since January and has been engaging with communities and community groups throughout the region to develop projects and project ideas. A community event was carried out in Boreland to look at ideas for community projects with more workshops in other communities in the pipeline for the autumn.

The last awards from the ScottishPower Renewables' Ewe Hill 16 Fund totalled £174,000. Four awards were for improved play and recreation facilities:

- Middlebie Play Park received £20,000 towards new play equipment;
- Hoddom Primary School Parent Council was awarded £9,750 towards improvements to the school playing area;
- Lockerbie Ice Rink was granted £24,000 for refurbishment of toilets and
- Springfield and Gretna Green
 Community Asset Trust was granted
 £20,700 to upgrade their playing field.

Four of the projects are to improve community facilities:

 Canonbie Green Bowling Club was granted £3,350 to renovate their kitchen;



- Kirkpatrick Fleming Village Hall received £14,250 to insulate the hall, and
- £30,000 was awarded to Langholm Community Centre for internal improvements.
- The Langholm Alliance was allocated £35,700 over two years to promote tourism to the town;
- £4,100 went to Lockerbie Wildlife Trust to install a defibrillator and solar panels;
- Muckle Town Media received £4,750 to train a new assistant editor;
- Eskdalemuir Expressive Arts was granted £2,850 for a community arts project and
- Lockerbie Old School Community Hub received £4,500 for equipment and materials to convert a disused bank into a community space.

Dumfriesshire East Community Benefit Company

WWW.DECBG.ORG.UK/

A further £27,000 of awards were made from the Solwaybank Windfarm Community Benefit Fund. Projects funded by Solwaybank included:

- a play park renovation in Middlebie and
- road safety project for speed sensitive road signs in Canonbie.

In terms of new proposals, Jamie has been working with several groups to develop applications. These include:

- the Upper Eskdale Hub at Eskdalemuir seeking to put itself on a more sustainable footing;
- a proposed new horse transporter for Sports Driving Unlimited (a local group that provides carriage driving for disabled people);

and he has been assisting several small community projects, including:

- Kirkpatrick Fleming Village Christmas lights,
- new sports facilities in Canonbie, and
- traffic management equipment for the Canonbie Vintage Tractor Club.



Decisions on these applications will be made later this month and **both Ewe Hill 16 and Solwaybank Community Benefit Funds are open again to applications, with a deadline of 31 January 2023.**

Scottish Borders Construction Forum

HTTPS://SUP.ORG.UK/SCOTTISH-BORDERS-CONSTRUCTION-FORUM/

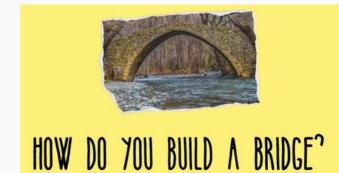
SUP Services Ltd was successful in a bid for Community Renewal Funding, which is allowing the Scottish Borders Construction Forum (SBCF) to explore some of the issues affecting Borders trades people, local businesses and trade suppliers.

As part of that funding the Forum has recently completed the following:

 Produced comprehensive leaflets covering energy efficiency courses aimed at Trades and new entrants; and Accreditation, Competent Persons and Quality Assurance Schemes



 Commissioned Flatpack Creative to create a number of films to engage young people in careers in the built environment and Net Zero.



To see the videos or leaflets visit: <u>www.sup.org.uk/projects/scottish-borders-</u> <u>construction-forum</u>.

The SBCF initiative has been funded by Scottish Borders Council and to find out more about SUP Services Ltd and how it can help your community/project visit: www.sup.org.uk/services

South West Scotland Coastal Way

RICHARD CLARKE

From Richard Clarke, Coastal Way Development Officer:

I have continued to survey the ground for routes that could be included in the new coastal way, and along the route I have come across so many wonderful sights that the Solway and surrounding landscape have to offer. I thought I would share with you my top five favourite locations so far, which are in no particular order, some of which are natural, some man-made. This is what exploring the countryside is all about, discovering new locations, experiencing the region, and while it's still here the fantastic weather that we have all been experiencing!



Lochmaben Stone

The Lochmaben Stone is the last survivor of what was a Neolithic stone circle, about a mile to the West of the mouth of the Sark. The stone is a well-known landmark, and from early times has been used as a meeting place for gatherings of peace as well as war.

Powfoot Beach

Walking along the sandy coastline from Annan, the distinct red brick houses come into view, which is the hamlet of Powfoot. These houses were the start of an ambitious idea by two local builders, John Bell and Joseph Burnie, to create a seaside resort. Due to objections by the local fishermen, and the lack of funds, the resort was never completed.



South West Scotland Coastal Way

RICHARD CLARKE



Brow Well

Brow Well is a mineral-rich well beside the Brow Burn, on the coast south-west of Dumfries. The well water is rich in iron and other mineral salts and has traditionally been regarded as having health-giving properties but I wouldn't fancy a dip now. In the summer of 1796 poet Robert Burns used this well to aid his recovery from his extremely poor health, probably suffering from rheumatic fever (though he called his ailment 'flying gout'). On returning to Dumfries, after spending three weeks at the Well, he sadly passed.

Ward Law

This unassuming hillock of Ward Law rises over 300 feet above the Solway, offers unlimited views across the Firth to England, and to Criffel on the opposite bank. This is a site of a hill fort, which was surrounded by a rampart with terrace, that also served as a watch station where signal fires were lit, to aid the defence of Caerlaverock Castle just over a mile away.



South West Scotland Coastal Way

RICHARD CLARKE



Kingholm Quay

Kingholm Quay was built in 1749 as part of the port of Dumfries. The port of Dumfries was at one time known as the Scottish Liverpool for its role in tobacco imports from American Virginia and later in the early 1800s as a place from which emigrant ships sailed to the colonies, particularly Canada. Despite its appearance today, the quay suffered many years of neglect and only recently, in 2010, a team of volunteers from the Port of Dumfries Development Group brought the facilities back to life as a safe place for inland boat repair and as a working harbour for leisure sailors.

The above list was not easy, as they are so many other items and locations that I could share, but I would be here all day writing about them. If you have locations that you feel should be included within this route, then please do get in touch at **richard@sup.org.uk**

South West Scotland Environmental Information Centre

HTTPS://SWSEIC.ORG.UK/

Wild Mammals at Home

South West Scotland Environmental Information Centre has been running a project with Galloway Glens Landscape Partnership to discover which wild mammals share the glen with people. Of the 60 or so species of wild mammals resident in Scotland, discounting those that live in the sea, the majority of them are found close to human habitation. There are more species of mammal in our towns, villages and gardens than in some parts of the countryside, and some wild mammals, especially bats, actually share the same buildings as us. Yet we rarely see our mammal neighbours, mainly because they are active during the night whilst we sleep.

The project has involved the loan of infra-red cameras and a bat detector for people to use in their gardens or local greenspaces. The equipment is automatically triggered to record when an animal is detected close by, and the information collected will assist local and national conservation projects.

To date, at least six bat species have been detected, along with most of the other small mammals including Water Shrews at two sites. Larger species have included Hedgehogs, Rabbits, Brown Hares, Red Squirrels, Foxes, Badgers and Roe Deer. A number of non-native species have been recorded, including American Mink and Grey Squirrels, but the project has also successfully collected video evidence of some of our less commonly seen native mammals, including Pine Marten and, most recently, some great footage of two young Otters - see here:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=dv2r6oEtCEQ.



Two young otters

Talla Hartfell Wild Land Area

DONALD GREIG

The key activity over the past three months has been the organisation of a series of talks which will be presented between now and next spring. The first talk, a hybrid event, was held on 11 August at Tweedsmuir Village Hall and streamed online. Turn-out was good with around 50 people attending.

Chaired by SUP's Convenor, Dr Chris Miles, we were fortunate to be able to welcome two speakers: Simon Brooks, NatureScot's Strategic Planning Manager, who travelled down from Inverness on what was one of the hottest days of the year to speak on Talla-Hartfell and Scotland's Wild Land Areas; and landscape architect Emily Cropton, who gave a stimulating presentation on Theatres of Nature: Connecting People and Place through a UNESCO Biosphere in the Scottish Borders.





The background to Scotland's Wild Land Areas can be found on the NatureScot website www.nature.scot/professional-advice/landscape/landscape-policy-and-guidance/landscapepolicy-wild-land. Simon's talk was illuminating, with an explanation of the process of how Wild Land Areas are identified and details of the sort of attributes that make each Wild Land Area so distinctive.

Emily's presentation was based on a piece of work she carried out for SUP last year in which she scoped out the possibility of creating a UNESCO Biosphere in the Scottish Borders. The resulting document can be viewed at: www.sup.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Scottish-Borders-Biopshere-Scoping-Study-5.pdf, while the slides from her presentation can be viewed at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mHbA4MJgLno.

Talla Hartfell Wild Land Area

DONALD GREIG

The event was recorded and the recording will be made available shortly on the SUP YouTube channel. Technical issues were a slight challenge and we would be pleased to hear from anyone who has experience of organising hybrid events about how to iron out audio-visual glitches.

The next confirmed event will be held at 7pm on Wednesday 9 November and will take Forestry as its focus, with guest speakers Stuart Goodall, Chief Executive of Confor, and Morag Paterson from Communities for Diverse Forestry.



The venue will once again be Tweedsmuir Village Hall, with free tickets for in-person attendance available through Eventbrite and on the door. For online attendance, please request the access link by emailing suptalks@btinternet.com. The link will be sent out 24-48 hours before the talk.

In other news:

- work on the Talla-Hartfell Charter is continuing, with a number of discussions underway with stakeholders across the area, including Borders Forest Trust, various landowners, National Trust for Scotland, NatureScot, Visit Moffat and Moffat and District Community Council, Tweedsmuir Community Company and Tweedsmuir Community Council, and Ettrick and Yarrow Community Development Company and Ettrick and Yarrow Council.
- an e-bike try-out has been held at Tweedsmuir, with e-bikes loaned by Ettrick and Yarrow Community Development Company to Tweedsmuir Community Company. The weekend for a success with almost 20 residents trialling e-bikes.
- we have now completed several days of drone filming across the Talla-Hartfell project area.

The next meeting of the local Talla-Hartfell Steering Group will be held on Friday 30 September. If you would like to attend, please contact Project Officer, Donald Greig, on: dgatwork@btinternet.com

Southern Uplands Partnership Core Team Updates

PIP TABOR / SHEILA ADAMS / KATY EWING / DARREN FLINT

Pip's news...

Prior to going on a well-deserved holiday, Pip has been very busy liaising and developing a range of projects, working on the Supply Chain / Borders Construction Forum mentioned above, as well as assisting with the preparation of a programme of community consultation events discussing the Regional Land Use Partnership, which SUP Services Ltd has been contracted to organise on behalf of South of Scotland Enterprise. See below for more information on these.

Sheila's news...

Sheila has been busy preparing and collating lots of information required by the Company's Accountants, JRW Group, to carry out the annual audit of SUP and SUP Services finances. She has also been liaising with applicants to the Ewe Hill 16 and Solwaybank Community Benefit funds; assisting the team with grant applications and making sure that grant claims are submitted when required.

Katy's news...

As well as continuing to work on social media and other ongoing tasks, there have been some excellent online meetings and events on rural land use and community development – fantastic that despite the downsides of the pandemic, it has prompted an increase in access to many events and meetings that otherwise would be difficult for many to attend!

In June I attended the latest quarterly Cross-party group (CPG) on Rural Policy in the Scottish Parliament, titled 'Doing More with Less'. Presentation topics included: a community-friendly alternative to Airbnb on Tiree, the Warm Hubs movement in Northumberland, the future of funding for rural community development, sustainable intensification and efficiency from an agricultural perspective and the Net Zero Arran project which was started in 2019. Recordings and minutes are available at: https://www.sruc.ac.uk/research/research-impact/rural-policy-centre/rural-policyevents/

Southern Uplands Partnership Core Team Updates

PIP TABOR / SHEILA ADAMS / KATY EWING / DARREN FLINT

Katy's news cont.

In August I attended the first 'Lighting a Spark' Regional Land Use Partnerships (RLUPs) community conversations webinar, which highlighted some useful commonalities and differences in challenges around land use across Scotland. More info at: https://your.socialenterprise.academy/pluginfile.php/21963/mod_resource/content/2/Li ghting%20a%20Spark%20Leaflet%20Final.pdf

On 1st September I attended the first of a series of events on Creative Placemaking by The Stove Network's What We Do Now project – full programme of events at: https://thestove.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/KOP-Programme-2022-6.pdf

I also met with the newly appointed Network Coordinator for the <u>Scottish</u> <u>Communities Climate Action Networks</u> (<u>SCCAN</u>) D&G Climate Action Hub, Steven Clark – more news on this soon! If you are part of a group or organisation in D&G working in any kind of climate action or community resilience and support or if you would like to know more, contact Steven at: steven@scottishcommunitiescan.org.uk



Steven Clark visiting the SUP Kirkgunzeon office

Darren's news...

Website

www.sup.org.uk continues to be tweaked and developed. The website content is constantly being added to and updated, the Homepage now has social media feeds and a donate button created. Why not take a look? Maybe start with the 'Current Projects' or 'News' pages to get a flavour of the range of projects SUP is involved in delivering.

Southern Uplands Partnership Core Team Updates

PIP TABOR / SHEILA ADAMS / KATY EWING / DARREN FLINT

Darren's news cont.

Black Grouse

The 'Black Grouse - Undoing the Silence of the Uplands' project continues to be developed with lots of hard work between SUP and the other lead partner, RSPB Scotland. Our initial aim is to have the project suitably developed for hitting the short window of opportunity provided by NatureScot's Nature Recovery Fund. We will have more information on development over the coming months.

Community support

I represent SUP and offer support to a range of community groups across the area, where the breadth of SUP knowledge can help with developing new projects or ideas. In the Upper Annandale a small group of residents, with support from SUP, continue to develop the idea of creating a Project Officer post to help local groups realise their project ideas and assist with unlocking funding for the area. While in the Nith Valley, monthly meetings take place at The Stove in Dumfries exploring a possible community, rural regeneration and environmental project spanning the valley.



Darren at Moffat Project Officer meeting



Darren at Nith Life meeting

South of Scotland Regional Land Use Partnership Events

The South of Scotland has been chosen by the Scottish Government as one of five Regional Land Use Partnership (RLUP) pilots, to help develop Scotland's approach to land use in support of our green recovery, the Just Transition to net-zero, and to address the climate change and biodiversity emergencies. The work is being delivered through a partnership of Dumfries and Galloway Council (DGC), Scottish Borders Council (SBC) and South of Scotland Enterprise (SOSE). The aim of the RLUP pilots is to test the practicalities of:

- delivering a collaborative approach to informing land use change decisions, involving national and local government, landowners and managers, communities and stakeholders
- identifying and agreeing current and potential land use change priorities across the region that support the delivery of Scottish Government's climate change targets and other environmental objectives, including improving biodiversity
- signposting funding opportunities for landowners and managers, or community groups.

Work started on this process in November 2021 and the next phase is to consult with local stakeholders across the region about how the process might work and what it's priorities should be.

There are 20 (18 live events and 2 online) consultation events across south Scotland to maximise the opportunities for a wide range of people with an interest in land use to feed into the process. To book your place go to: <u>https://south-scotland-regional-landuse-partnership-pilot-luc.hub.arcgis.com/</u> The consultation events start in Selkirk on 21st September and run through to early November.





Connecting Threads Harvest Programme

Connecting Threads will be marking the harvest this year through a programme of events exploring the uses and value of plants, culturally and ecologically. For full details, sign up to the Connecting Threads newsletter by emailing the words 'Newsletter Opt In' to emily@sup.org.uk



CONNECTING THREADS -HARVEST PROGRAMME

Natural Drawing Tools, with artist Irene Campbell Sunday 25th September, times tbc, St Ronan's Wells, Innerleithen

Film Seeds at Greener Peebles, with Moving Images Friday 30th September, 10am - 4pm, Greener Peebles Community Garden

Film Seeds at Birkhill House, with Moving Images Saturday 8th October, times tbc, Birkhill House, nr. Earlston

AWARDS AND EVENTS



Moffat Eagle Town is back this September, Friday 16th – Sunday 18th

Evening talks with **Peter Cairns from Scotland: The Big Picture**, **Professor Anna Meredith from Edinburgh's Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies** as well as photographer **Laurie Campbell** and wildlife cameraman, **Gordon Buchanan**. On Saturday there will be an Enviro Day. Come along to find out about the fantastic work being undertaken by a host of organisations to protect, improve and promote wild places across the south of Scotland.

On Sunday there is a free family fun day at Hope Johnstone Park. Scale the climbing wall to the eagle's nest, get your face painted, test your eagle eye with some archery, meet the eagle and our special guests, the alpacas! Food from Unique Sweet n Savoury and other wild craft activities.

For the full programme and information on tickets, please visit our website: https://www.goldeneaglessouthofscotland.co.uk/outreach/moffat-2022





Watch highlights from the Moffat 2021 Golden Eagle Festival



Southern Uplands Partnership shortlisted for an RSPB nature of scotland award!

We are so excited to be a finalist in the RSPB Scotland Nature of Scotland awards in the Nature and Climate Action category. Yippee!

Also, big well done to all the other nominees including Threave Garden and Estate Threave Landscape Restoration Project.



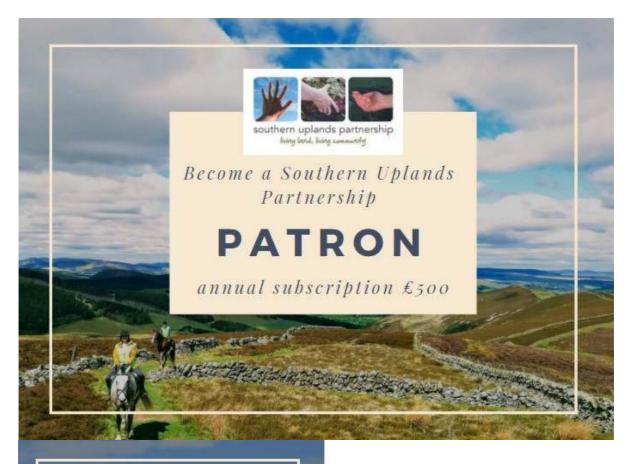
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www.peoplesfundraising.com/donation/ southern-uplands-partnership Or visit <u>www.sup.org.uk</u> and click the 'donate' button

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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

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And finally...

Richard Clarke, our South West Scotland Coastal Way Officer, was out and about scoping the possible route for this new long-distance trail and came across this wonderful adder at Ironhirst Moss, south-west of Dumfries. We are not sure who was the most surprised!



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