



PROJECTS LIST

Compiled by the Coigach-Assynt Living Landscape Partnership

July 2016

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

These projects represent the culmination of five years of joint working and collaboration between the project partners, local community and wider stakeholders. The project development would not have been possible without the valuable contributions, support and involvement of the Coigach-Assynt Living Landscape Partnership Scheme Board, the local communities of Assynt and Coigach, and Project Staff Members (past and present).

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Declarations of Interest:

Richard Williams – Development Manager and involved in the ongoing management of the Isle of Tanera Mor, which has a project contained within the scheme.

Fiona Saywell – Assistant Development Manager and part-time Project Officer with Culag Community Woodland Trust, which has three projects contained within the scheme.

The Coigach-Assynt Living Landscape Partnership Scheme was generously supported during its development phase by the following organisations:



Cover Photo: CALLP Board, October 2014 at Glencanisp Arts Studio, Assynt Foundation ©Julia Campbell

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This document is an excerpt from the Landscape Conservation Action Plan (LCAP) submitted as part of the Stage two application to the Heritage Lottery Fund Landscape Partnership Scheme. The following projects represent the culmination of five years of work, consultation, research and development by the Coigach-Assynt Living Landscape Partnership and the communities that live and work within the project area.

The project area is blessed with some of the most dramatic and instantly recognisable landscapes in the British Isles, and within these some of the rarest and most endangered of habitats. These landscapes represent the interaction of man and place that has occurred over the past two millennia. The importance of the area is recognised by the various natural heritage designations bestowed upon it along with its inclusion within the North-West Highlands Geopark.

The area boasts a population of just 1,200 people across its 635 square kilometres, the majority of whom live around the coastal fringes and the inland crofting townships of Elphin and Knockan on its eastern boundary. Many local residents are involved in primary industries, whilst tourism is also an important mainstay of the local economy.

The Landscape Partnership Scheme aims to address a number of priorities and opportunities that have been identified through the research and consultation undertaken in the process of project development. It is hoped that through delivery of the collective projects, lasting social, economic and environmental benefits can be realised across the area.

The Partnership is an eclectic group of organisations which represent and reflect the unique heritage and structure of land ownership and management present in this part of the Highlands. The recent history of the local area has been both informed and shaped by the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003.

The Scheme aims to allow those organisations within it to fully realise their ambitions for sustainable land management, whilst delivering lasting benefits for the local communities and serving as an inspiration and model for other communities across Scotland.

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THE PROJECTS

1. Woodland Expansion, Connection and Protection

(Project Lead: The Woodland Trust)

The project area's existing native woodland extends to approximately 4,000 hectares - roughly 6.5% of the total land area. Much of this comprises of small, scattered fragments found along the area's coastal fringes. Due to their small size most native woodlands are not designated, but offer considerable potential for protection and expansion to improve their connectivity and resilience. This potential has been identified in the 'Woodland Opportunities Map' developed by SWT and detailed in the Woodland Project Appendix. The area does contain a number of sites which are designated for their woodland features and these are detailed below;

Site	Designation & Feature	Area*	Condition
Ardvar	SSSI – Upland Birch Woodland	275.00 ha	Unfavourable Declining
Cam Loch	SSSI – Upland Birch Woodland	2.65 ha	Favourable Recovering
Inverpolly	SSSI – Upland Birch Woodland	370.00 ha	Unfavourable Declining

**Estimated.*



Birch woodland at Eisd Brachaidh ©Adrian Wayne

Scattered along the lower edges of the coast, lochs and lochans, up gullies and in places sheltered from the sometimes dramatic elements the area experiences, lie some beautiful, species rich woodlands, but many are in need of protection and enhancement if they are to both survive and thrive into the future.

Our Vision

The aims and vision for this project are threefold;

- To protect the existing native woodland fragments in the area;
- To facilitate expansion through encouraging native regeneration and where appropriate the planting of native species, with suitable protection of the form of fencing, and;
- To promote the connection of woodland fragments thereby providing habitat corridors for woodland and associated species.

As well as delivering environmental benefits the project will also aim to look at the practical benefits that woodland can provide, namely:-

- Shelter – from the elements for people, wildlife and stock.
- Fuelwood – a local sustainable and environmentally friendly option.
- Orchards – support for establishing community orchards.
- Wildlife – shelter, food and habitat network linkage.

What we'll do

2016

- Recruit Woodland Manager Staff Post.
- Start implementation of 3-4 woodland projects which will be approved prior to delivery stage starting. (Fencing, ground preparation, planting, fertilising and maintenance).
- Hold targeted meetings with Common Grazings committees to raise greater awareness of the possibilities now that it's open for delivery.
- Two options will be available for delivery, the first will be directly through the Scheme, the second will be indirectly having the support and advice/supervision of the Scheme's Woodland Manager, but the finances will be supported through the Woodland Trust Scotland, with whom we will be collaborating throughout the project.
- Work up applications for permissions and consents for year 2 projects
- Update the opportunities map and start to make targeted approaches to land managers looking for a collaborative woodland project design.

2017 - 2020

- Implement approved woodland schemes each year.
- Maintain all woodland projects, regular inspections for any issues (particularly for fencing and deer problems). In very general terms, fencing in spring/summer/autumn, ground preparation in spring/summer/autumn, planting in winter/spring, fertiliser in spring, weeding and other maintenance in Summer.
- Continue to build on relationships with local land managers to promote and develop potential additional projects for implementation.

The Benefits

- Protection of existing woodland resource, particularly within designated sites.
- Species enrichment planting within existing woodlands where appropriate to encourage species diversity within the woodland and the associated wildlife.
- Build on relationships with land managers and raise awareness of the benefits of woodland for shelter, fuelwood, riparian improvement, food (orchards) and the flora and fauna associated with appropriately planted woodland, long term woodland will allow deer to grow more healthily as they will have shelter.
- People enjoy an improved natural environment
- Future generations have a landscape that provides a greater range and quality of ecosystems services

The Outputs

- 1 full time woodland manager post
- 250 hectares woodland brought into active management
- 200 hectares native woodland planted
- 2 designated woodland areas brought into recovering condition
- 20 Crofters / land managers engaged in the project
- 100 volunteer days over the 5 years of the project

Culnacraig, Ben Mor Coigach

Culnacraig spans 2 croft boundaries, it contains 1ha of existing native atlantic oak wood and 0.5ha (800 trees) of proposed new planting. The fencing will help protect the precious existing woodland from deteriorating any further from rabbit, stock and deer browsing. Bracken will be treated and trees will be planted in tubes (for rabbit protection), as this area is relatively protected from the wind.



Birch woodland at Culnacraig © Mark Foxwell

TOTAL COST	£20,026
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Achduart, Ben Mor Coigach

Achduart is within the boundary of one working croft, some of the fields are still needed for grazing. The proposed woodland scheme takes in 0.94ha of existing native Atlantic oak and hazel wood, and it is proposed to extend this woodland by approximately 2ha, planting new native trees. The area has a rabbit population, so it will be deer and rabbit fenced and rabbits will be controlled within the fence prior to planting, some bracken treatment will also be needed to ensure successful establishment. The Posties' Path (see Project 13) runs through the proposed planting area.



Atlantic oak woodland at Achduart © Mark Foxwell

TOTAL COST	£30,786
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Eisg Brachaidh

Eisg Brachaidh is a privately owned estate. It is also a designated SSSI for its woodland feature. The proposal is to enable much of the existing woodland that is in declining condition to be enclosed through an SRDP actual costs scheme and also to plant an area of new woodland: approximately 80ha surrounded by 6km of deer fencing. During year 1 of the project a woodland management plan will be drawn up and agreed with all interested parties, then during year 2, the existing woodland will be fenced (via SRDP actual costs) and the new woodland creation area will be planted.



Eisg Brachaidh viewed from the north © Adrian Wayne

TOTAL COST	£350,176
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Druim Suardalain, Assynt Foundation



Druim Suardalain Woodland © Elaine MacAskill

Located on the community owned Assynt Foundation. This proposal takes in 5.32ha of existing mixed woodland and 7.67ha of existing native woodland and proposes to plant about 50ha of new native woodland on appropriate soils, creating open natural woodland. It surrounds the east end of Loch Druim Suardalain extending the existing woodland to the east and south, joining some remnant native woodlands. It will provide shelter around Glencanisp lodge.

TOTAL COST	£374,728
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Enrichment Planting Projects, various locations

The location of these projects is as yet unknown but they will come out of a survey being carried out by CALLP, funded by the Forestry Commission Scotland to look at areas of woodland planted during the last 25 years and look at opportunities to increase species diversity. Some of the costs associated with these projects are likely to include fence maintenance and perhaps deer control as well as planting and perhaps fertiliser application.

TOTAL COST	£40,500
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Other Woodland Projects, (e.g. Fuelwood, Orchards), various locations within CALLP boundary

The location of these projects are as yet unknown, they may include tree planting by schools and appropriate protection and maintenance, establishing a community orchard or two, assisting with fuelwood planting applications either as individuals or for communities, costs may include fencing, ground prep, fertiliser if appropriate etc...

TOTAL COST	£28,500
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Ecologist/Landscape Architects – Professional Fees

The costs in here will contribute where needed to all of the above projects.

TOTAL COST	£15,000
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Legacy/Maintenance after year 5 – for all Woodland projects.

TOTAL COST	£70,000
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2. Hazel Wood Audit

(Project Lead: Assynt Field Club)

The Atlantic Hazel woods are one of Scotland's most ancient woodlands, and they are likely to have been present in the project area for over 9,500 years. People have made use of the hazel resource in Coigach and Assynt in many ways over thousands of years. They are important for a whole range of connected species but in recent years their condition has suffered, for a variety of reasons. We know that many of the old hazel stools show little or no regeneration; they are aging and will die if not protected from grazing.

Our Vision

To identify the: extent, location and condition of hazel woods remaining in Coigach and Assynt. To map and catalogue all major stands of hazel and to assign an index of importance based on the presence/absence of key indicator species and assign an index of the threats each stand faces. We will search existing records and databases and consult Forestry Commission Scotland (FCS) for information and advice.

In doing so we hope to raise the profile of this important habitat locally and further afield, promote a better understanding of the habitat and instil a sense of pride and local identity, which together with having a better understanding of the health and condition of this habitat will allow for better decisions about future management to be made.



Hazel stand at Inverkirkraig, 2015. ©David Haines.

What we'll do

Spring / Summer 2016

- Set up a project steering group, drawn from the Assynt Field Club, to manage the work
- Produce tender documents and advertise for consultant field surveyor
- Field surveys undertaken, preceded by letters informing land owners / managers of the work
- Two field trips for interested local volunteers and a family day of events
- Two local school trips

Autumn 2016

- Production of final report and summary leaflet
- Two presentations of the report to local communities

The Benefits

- Improved awareness, understanding and appreciation of the area's hazel woods
- Improved condition of the area's hazel woods
- Opportunity for skills and training development
- Future potential for more projects to bring woodland into better management

The Outputs

- Hazel audit produced for the entire project area
- 10 site management plans developed
- 2 field strips for specialist enthusiasts

- 2 field trips for local schools
- 1 family event to raise awareness and promote the importance of this asset
- 20 volunteer days

Project Costs

TOTAL	£8,000
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3. Freshwater Lochan Survey

(Project Lead: West Sutherland Fisheries Trust)

Freshwater forms a significant part of the Assynt and Coigach landscape, with the lochs dominating this habitat. While we have a reasonable amount of data on the rivers and burns within the area, only the annual catch data provided by anglers exists for the lochs. This project will build on this existing knowledge. It will involve the various stakeholders, anglers and owners, within the community and will help with management of the resource to the benefit of the users and the fish.



Bog bean, lochan on Quinag © Fran Lockhart

Our Vision

To generate greater awareness and knowledge of Assynt and Coigach's freshwater environment and its importance to the health of the wider environment and also economy of the area. The survey work will specifically focus on the fish species present in the area's freshwater lochans: identifying the extent and range of different species, and what factors determine their presence or otherwise. We envisage that this will help to build a greater appreciation and protection of this important asset from an environmental, social and economic perspective.

What we'll do

Determine survey sites (2016)

- Discussion with different stakeholders, including SNH, anglers and owners
- Create opportunities for residents to participate in surveying and learn new skills

Complete surveys (2017)

- Conduct monitoring surveys on the lochs, in discussion with SEPA and SNH
- Complete dissections of the fish capture, looking at age and growth rates, diet and parasite loading

e-DNA testing (2018)

- To be completed by SEPA, the data will be used to verify the technique being developed in order to monitor lochs in a non-lethal manner

Reporting (2018)

- Deliver a report on the project, and hold an open meeting to disseminate results

The Benefits

- The freshwater environment is better understood and appreciated by the local population
- The lochs are more widely appreciated, and the management of the resource improved
- Increased knowledge of the distribution of arctic charr within the area
- More people are engaged with freshwater issues locally and nationally

The Outputs

- 20 lochs in the local area surveyed and audit produced
- Management produced for the lochs surveyed
- 20 volunteers trained in surveying techniques

Project Costs

TOTAL COST	£12,954
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4. High Value Open Habitats Survey

(Project Lead: Assynt Foundation)

There has been some extremely important survey work undertaken in the past of these internationally important habitats. However, in areas this survey work is incomplete and where data



is available it is often not in a modern web and GIS compatible format. Collected information will be used to inform more detailed land management planning, including woodland planting and associated fencing proposals – particularly to avoid funnelling deer and livestock through corridors which may contain sensitive habitats, such as ladder fens, other species-rich mires, flushes or species-rich grasslands.

Our Vision

The project undertakes to obtain more information on a range of lesser-known but both high-value and, often, sensitive habitats in the Coigach and Assynt area. This information will then be used to inform better overall landscape planning, including for woodland expansion, but also to promote better awareness of these habitats among land managers, the local population and visitors.

Species-rich flush, Inverpolly. ©Brendan O’Hanrahan.

What we’ll do

2017

- Set up a project steering group to manage the work
- Produce tender document and advertise for consultant field surveyor
- Species rich wetland field surveys undertaken
- Produce report and present data in GIS format

2018

- Survey of potential hepatic mat hotspots (liverworts communities)
- Produce report and present data in GIS format

2019

- Production of leaflet, web page publicising survey reports, connections with geological richness of area, links to web GIS
- Set up connections to online GIS version of report and share with wider scientific reporting community

The Benefits

- Improved awareness, understanding and appreciation of the area’s natural heritage
- Improved condition of the area’s natural heritage
- Opportunity for skills and training development
- More informed future land management decisions taken

The Outputs

- User-friendly coloured maps – in forms which are more widely accessible than is currently the case – in both graphic and shapefile (ESRI GIS) form.
- Converted databases using NVC (and other including Annex I, EUNIS) classification systems.
- Awareness-raising outputs: publications (leaflets), talks, walks, panels.
- Production of maps illustrating tiers of conservation priority for the most sensitive habitats.

Project Costs

TOTAL COST	£15,608
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5. Soil Fertility Research

(Project Lead: North-West Highlands Geopark)

In the rocky landscape of the North West Highlands soil is a rare and precious resource both for agriculture and woodlands. Inland, Assynt benefits from patches of limestone bedrock which provide occasional oases of fertile soil. Although the soils of this area have not been studied in detail, recent research across the North Atlantic region and Scotland has revealed that where past human settlement existed, soil depth may have been artificially increased. In Scotland this typically involved composting materials such as household waste and ash and mixing this with seaweed, turf/peat, seaweed, animal manures and sand to create very fertile soils for growing crops. This system of land management would have started in prehistory and was widely used until just a century ago. In the North West Highlands the abandoned settlements of the Highland Clearances may contain a rare and important soil resource which is poorly understood and may be useful to local communities for both heritage and agricultural purposes in the future.



Soil sampling. ©Laura Hamlet.

Our Vision

To understand the nature of this resource and how current land management may be affecting its historical record, structure, chemistry and fertility; developing a future use for these soils as a contribution to building resilient communities through sustainable land management practices. We plan to study the soil resource in Assynt, detect past land management practices and work together with current land managers to understand what they have learned from their experience of the land. We want to share this knowledge with current and future land managers, from gardeners to large estates to help everyone become the best stewards that they can be of the soil resource. As we undertake field work we want to involve the young people in the area, inspiring and empowering them to think about a career in science, crofting and beyond.

What we'll do

By end 2016:

- Select a candidate and award a PHD studentship to undertake doctoral research
- Recruit volunteers to help with fieldwork
- Undertake a short fieldwork season, involving local schools and training school students and volunteers in field methods
- Select sites for study
- Build relationships with local land managers

By end 2017:

- Complete a second season of fieldwork including field visits for schools
- First opportunity for work experience for school students at the University of Stirling Soil Laboratories
- Informal workshops and presentations for land managers, crofters and gardeners on past land management practices and how they have impacted soils today
- Begin outreach programme for land managers

By end 2018:

- Second opportunity for work experience at the University of Stirling Soil Laboratories
- Second round of informal workshops and presentations for land managers etc.
- Final round of field-visits for schools
- High-school student projects/dissertations
- A report describing the archaeological character of soils
- A report on the nutrient status of soils around selected sites

By end 2019

- Final round of informal workshops and presentations for land managers etc.
- Produce an electronic booklet summarising past land-use and management and how this has impacted present day soils with a forecast for soil sustainability under different land-management strategies to be published on-line
- Produce Doctoral Thesis and associated international journal publications
- A mobile exhibition on the project, based in the North West Highland Geopark's (NWHG) visitor centre and taken to other venues

The Benefits

- Clearer understanding amongst land managers of soil fertility and documentation showing how past land management has affected this;
- Deeper understanding amongst local people of the area's cultural heritage with regards to soil legacy;
- Training opportunities for land managers, crofters and gardeners in field analysis of soils provided by the NWHG;
- Young people both informed and inspired by field work, university work experience and opportunities to study sciences/history and be more aware of their cultural heritage;
- Information available to influence policy at a governmental level to properly support resilient communities.

The Outputs

- 1 land management booklet (from soil's perspective)
- 1 Doctoral thesis
- 2 School visits to University of Stirling
- 4 Public presentations of past land management practices and resultant soil fertility
- 2 High School projects undertaken
- 1 Video producing detailing the project's findings
- 4 Informal workshops held in the local area

Project Costs

TOTAL	£88,390
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6. Outdoor and Woodland Learning

(Project Lead: Culag Community Woodland Trust)

Encouraging education about the area's natural environment creates a legacy of understanding and respect for the local environment. Pilot sessions carried out with the local primary and pre-school in Lochinver encouraged closer interaction for both the children and teaching staff with the local woodland, Culag Woods. These sessions demonstrated the local natural resource and the links which can be made with the curriculum along with building a base for respect and enthusiasm for the local environment. The Outdoor and Woodland Learning (OWL) project will be the central access point for all school activities associated with the Landscape Partnership projects delivery.



Our Vision

Our vision is to work with schools in, and associated with, the CALL project area to deliver and facilitate Outdoor Learning Sessions on a regular basis demonstrating the broad range of themes which can be taught outdoors. Over the duration of the project we will work closely with schools and teaching staff to assist with training and development to ensure that the project will have a largely self-sustaining legacy.

Outdoor Learning Session at Little Assynt Tree Nursery. ©Viv Halcrow.

The project will provide employment for 1.5FTE outdoor learning leaders to coordinate, plan and deliver the programme in conjunction with teaching staff and CALLP project partners. The programme will incorporate themes from various CALLP projects and include delivery of the John Muir Award. Part of the project will focus on developing an outdoor learning business, the aim of which will be to financially assist the on-going delivery of the project.

What we'll do

2016-17:

- Recruit Education Manager and Training and Volunteer Officer
- Plan sessions for 2016-17 academic year with teachers from Primary and Secondary Schools
- Research & develop suitable sites for outdoor learning
- Begin market research for development of bushcraft activity business plan
- Undertake outdoor leadership and bushcraft training as necessary

2017-18:

- Continue supporting teaching staff to plan and deliver sessions for academic year
- Deliver CPD training
- Begin marketing of bushcraft activity business (in line with developed plan)
- Deliver pilot bushcraft activities for bushcraft business

2018-19:

- Continue supporting teaching staff to plan and deliver sessions for academic year
- Deliver bushcraft courses through summer 2018
- Develop detailed suitable sites database and educational resources

2019-20:

- Continue supporting teaching staff to plan and deliver sessions for academic year
- Deliver CPD training
- Deliver bushcraft courses through summer 2018

2020-21:

- Continue supporting teaching staff to plan and deliver sessions for academic year
- Deliver bushcraft courses through summer 2018
- Complete sites and activities database and educational resources

The Benefits

- Weekly outdoor learning sessions for local Pre & Primary Schools and Ullapool High School.
- Residential and embedded John Muir Award (JMA) for Ullapool High School pupils.
- Outdoor Learning CPD training sessions as required for teaching staff to enable them to regularly plan and lead sessions in the future.
- Culag Wood facilities developed to provide a centre for outdoor learning in West Sutherland.
- Market research carried out to determine whether providing bushcraft activities could generate income to support the continuation of an outdoor learning facility in Lochinver.
- A bushcraft activities business (set up if the above output shows that such a business is a feasible proposition) employing 2 part time seasonal staff.
- Employment and training for 1.5 FTE posts for the duration of the project

The Outputs

- 240 High School pupils, 70 Primary school pupils and 15 Pre School pupils will attend sessions during each year of the project
- 80 High School pupils will have attended a residential course as part of a JMA.
- 240 High School pupils and 70 Primary School pupils will have achieved at least one JMA.
- 60 members of teaching staff from local and schools outwith the area have attended outdoor learning training sessions.
- A database of sites suitable for outdoor learning and within the vicinity of each school and a guide to suitable activities and education resources for the individual sites.
- In Culag Woods there will be a storage site for equipment, a sheltered area for sessions in poor weather and five sites within the woodland developed as base for each session.
- Each school will have at least one local site suitable for outdoor learning within walking distance of the school but outwith the school grounds.
- Profitable bushcraft activities business by the end of year 5

Project Costs

TOTAL	£68,273
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7. Woodland Artisan Project

(Project Lead: Culag Community Woodland Trust)

There is currently local demand for training courses utilising local timber and woodland products to create products such as spoons, bowls, furniture, hazel hurdles, baskets and wild food products. This project aims to fulfil that demand by organising and running up to 6 courses a year over 5 years in conjunction with the local learning centre at various locations throughout Coigach and Assynt.



The products of a wooden spoon carving course in Achiltibuie, 2014. ©Richard Williams.

Our Vision

The project aims to run appropriate training courses for the public creating woodland products from local timber and natural sources within the CALL area. These courses will aim to:

- Introduce the art of working with natural products to ensure that traditional crafts and skills are maintained and passed onto the next generation;
- Reconnect people with the land and uses of the natural products;
- Foster a desire to manage the land in order to increase local natural sources for future use.

Woodworking artisans will be contracted to run courses as and when required. The involvement of local schools will be encouraged and incorporated with the Outdoor and Woodland Learning Project.

What we'll do

2016-17:

- Volunteer & Training Coordinator to identify suitable courses for delivery in year 1
- Work with Assynt Learning Centre to arrange suitable venues and marketing of courses
- Identify tutors to run and deliver courses
- Feedback forms to be arranged, and incorporated into future programmes
- Arrange an Artisan's blog for each course/tutor

2017-18:

- As above for year 2
- Arrange for courses to include developing an outdoor learning area for Coigach

2018-21:

- As above for years 3-5
- Exhibition of woodland products from 5 years of courses

The Benefits

- Traditional crafts and skills will be maintained and introduced to both residents and visitors
- People will be reconnected to uses of natural products
- People will have a better understanding of the management of land for production of natural products for use in crafts and woodland products

The Outputs

- 30 courses (6 per year) offered throughout the duration of the project.
- 150 people attended the 30 courses.
- 100 school pupils have engaged with the project and gained traditional skills.
- An outdoor learning area for Coigach incorporating shelter belt and shelter area has been created through running courses on hazel hurdles.

Project Costs

TOTAL	£25,236
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8. Crofting Project

(Project Lead: Scottish Wildlife Trust)

Crofting is a unique social system which stems from the Highland clearances of the Nineteenth Century and has played a crucial role in shaping the landscape, natural environment, cultural heritage and social economy of the all the crofting counties. In the project area there are three main areas under crofting tenure; the Coigach Peninsula, the Assynt Coast from Lochinver north to Stoer and then east to Kylesku and the townships of Elphin and Knockan on the eastern edge of the project area. Crofting is the primary form of small scale land tenure in the project area and a key part of the social and economic fabric. In addition crofting land management can have considerable environmental benefits, and perhaps most importantly provides a vital link between the local community and the land.



Achiltibuie Crofts ©Mark Foxwell



Our Vision

The project aims to provide support and practical assistance to crofters throughout the local area to allow them to realise their ambitions, make the most of the land under their custody and to encourage new entrants. This will be delivered through a number of different mechanisms but collectively overseen and managed by the Scheme's Rural Projects Officer staff Post

What we'll do

2017

- Recruit Rural Projects Officer
- Purchase ArcGIS Licence and assist croft mapping (repeated annually)
- Hold community consultation events (repeat throughout project)
- Select first demonstration croft, draw up a management plan and assist implementation
- Establish and run Scottish Crofting Federation (SCF) training events
- Hold demonstration croft training events/workshops
- Undertake Croft, Grazing committee and landowner visits and networking

2018

- Select second demonstration croft, draw up a management plan and assist implementation
- Continue SCF training events and demonstration croft training/workshops
- Continue Croft, Grazing committee and landowner visits and networking
- Produce and publish a report on issues facing CALL crofters – The 'State of CALL crofting'

2019

- Support development of the two demonstration Crofts
- Continue SCF training events and demonstration croft training/workshops
- Continue Croft, Grazing committee and landowner visits and networking
- Prepare Croft township/Common Grazing's Plan and assist with grant application process

2020

- Support development of group area plan
- Continue to support development of the two demonstration Crofts
- Continue with demonstration crofts training/workshops
- Draft a follow up report and strategy for future work
- Hold 2 open days for wider dissemination of the project's lessons

The Benefits

- A full time staff post living, working and getting involved in the local area, supporting collaborative working for the greater benefit.
- Delivery of formal training courses through the SCF, tailored and driven by local demand, and informal training and workshops on the demonstration croft(s) or other suitable locations within the area, to support crofters working the land more efficiently.
- Assistance with Croft registration, GIS mapping and access to grant funding opportunities: helping with the general administration of crofts and ongoing future management.

Outputs

- 1 project officer post
- 40 crofts mapped and recorded with Registers of Scotland
- 20 SCF training courses delivered (5 per year over years 1-4).
- 2 demonstration crofts established.
- 26 demonstration croft informal training/workshops held
- 50 croft visits made to support practical land management advice
- 10 croft plans prepared and grant applied for
- 8 meetings with grazing committees undertaken and 1 management plan produced
- 1 croft township/common grazing group plan prepared (Year 4)
- 1 report: 'The State of CALL Crofting' published (Year 3)
- 1 Follow up report and strategy for future work.

Project Costs

TOTAL	£145,845
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9. Sustainable Deer Management

(Project Lead: John Muir Trust)

Deer management in Scotland is overseen by SNH, with decisions and actions at a local level undertaken by Deer Management Groups (DMGs) who co-ordinate activity between the land-owners and managers within each area. The CALL area falls with the West Sutherland Deer Management Group (WSDMG) which itself is split into four sub-groups, two of which fall within the CALLP Scheme area. All DMGs across Scotland are required by the Scottish Government to have plans prepared and approved by 2016. This projects endeavours to contribute to and assist in the delivery of the management actions identified within the two WSDMG sub-group plans, currently under development, which cover the project area.



Stags on Quinag. © Fran Lockhart.

Our Vision

Deer range is one of the primary land uses in Coigach and Assynt and deer management impacts on the local economy (by generating income), the community (by employing stalkers and support workers) and the environment (by the impact of deer on habitats). Our vision is to support deer managers in the area to implement and deliver on the actions identified within the deer management plans currently under production, thereby delivering benefits for the common wild deer herd, contributing to the socio-economic wellbeing of people working in the local deer sector and improving open and woodland habitats. We will focus on gathering basic data to inform deer management plans, training for land managers and investigating opportunities for deer product businesses. This latter point will be addressed by a feasibility study which explores the potential for more local collaboration around venison processing and marketing, and retaining more of the value of this important resource within the local area.

What we'll do

2016

- Assess impact of grazing and trampling on open and woodland habitats across the area
- Establish a habitat impact assessment baseline for 3 different habitats with 30 plots for each habitat
- Fund 2 people to do Deer Stalking Certificate (DSC) level 1
- Deliver 3 days training on gathering information for deer management plans

2017

- Deer count by foot to facilitate population modelling across Coigach and Assynt
- Fund 2 people to do UHI Sustainable Deer Management (SDM) module
- Fund 4 people to do DSC level 1 and 2 people to do level 2
- 1 site visit to another working sustainable deer management model in Scotland
- Deliver 2 days training on gathering information for deer management plans
- Establish WSDMG working group and develop contractors' brief for venison feasibility study

2018

- Deer count by foot
- Fund 2 people to do UHI SDM module, 2 people to do DSC level 1 and 2 people to do level 2

- Deliver 1 day training on gathering information for deer management plans
- Implement study to identify options for improving economic benefits of deer products

2019

- Deer count by foot
- Fund 3 people to do UHI SDM module, 2 people to do DSC level 1 and 3 people to do level 2
- 1 site visit to another working sustainable deer management model in Scotland
- Deliver 1 day training on gathering information for deer management plans

2020

- Contribute to an area wide helicopter deer count
- Deer count by foot
- Repeat habitat impact assessment to determine change
- Fund 3 people to do UHI SDM module and 3 people to do DSC level 2
- Deliver 1 day training on gathering information for deer management plans

The Outputs

- 5 Non-CALLP Partner Estates involved in the project
- 1 area wide habitat impact assessment monitoring system in place
- 4 area wide foot counts undertaken
- 1 area wide helicopter count undertaken
- 15 Deer Stalking Certificate (DSC) training courses delivered in project area
- 2 visits to working models in Scotland
- 10 subsidies places offered on UHI Sustainable Deer Management module
- 1 feasibility study for venison processing and marketing produced

The Benefits

- Increased awareness, understanding and use of scientific data by land managers
- More land managers are engaged in collaborative deer management, meeting best practice guidelines and addressing public interest concerns
- Improved condition, viability and worth of the local deer herd
- Improved natural environment for the enjoyment and benefit of the wider public
- Future generations enjoy a greater range and quality of ecosystems services
- Greater understanding of current venison market and opportunities for local processing

Project Costs

TOTAL COST	£67,426
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10. Marine Project

(Project Lead: Scottish Wildlife Trust)

The culture and prosperity of Coigach and Assynt has been linked to the sea for centuries but as sea health has diminished many of those links have been lost. This project builds on previous work undertaken, particularly that of the Highland Seashore Project, to give greater prominence to the local marine environment. The project area includes the Wester Ross Marine Protected Area (MPA), designated in 2014, one of around 30 across Scotland, and being incorporated into the National Marine Plan in 2015. MPAs form part of a network of nature conservation sites around the Scottish coast aimed to protect and aide recovery of important habitats and species. Several groups have been involved in developing the project. All have strong ties with the local community and a keen interest in marine issues.



Fox Point and The Summer Isles, part of the Wester Ross MPA. ©Peter Muir.

Our Vision

To generate greater awareness and knowledge of Coigach and Assynt's rich marine heritage and how people can engage more actively with it. In turn we hope to build a greater appreciation and desire to protect this important asset from an environmental, social and economic perspective.

What we'll do

Inter-Tidal Zone Surveying (2016-2018)

- Survey new sites and continue existing survey sites to fill any gaps in existing records and contribute to long-term seashore wildlife data collection
- Create opportunities for local school children and adults to participate in surveying and learn new skills, contributing to Duke of Edinburgh and John Muir Awards

Cetacean Monitoring, with Hebridean Whale and Dolphin Trust (HWDT)(2016-2017)

- Conduct monitoring surveys of cetaceans and basking sharks in the area
- Expand the Community Sightings (and Strandings) Network
- Offer HWDT's education and outreach programme in the area

Sustainable Seafood Festivals (2016 & 2017)

- Deliver two annual festivals which promote the other three elements of the project whilst allowing for a celebration and enjoyment of the area's rich marine harvest
- Engage with local suppliers, producers, retail outlets and restaurants/cafes/bars to reach a wide audience

Oral History of Fishing Industry in Coigach (2016-2018)

- Record the history and stories associated with fishing around the peninsula from the first use of prawn creels in the early 1970s
- Chart the evolution of fishing practices and livelihoods over the last 50 years and capture lessons for contemporary management approaches

The Benefits

- The seashore environment is better understood and appreciated by the local population
- The area's rich marine harvest is more widely appreciated, as is the importance of its sustainable future management for the area's ongoing prosperity
- Increased knowledge of the distribution of whale and dolphin species around the coast
- Better monitoring of invasive species and the long term impacts of climate change
- More people are engaged with marine issues locally and nationally

Outputs

- 60 volunteers trained in inter-tidal zone surveying techniques, over 3 years
- 24 days of surveying undertaken, over 3 years
- 6 training days/workshops/school visits held per year, over 3 years
- 3 kilometres of shoreline surveyed and records archived
- Expansion to the HWDT Community Sightings Network in the local area
- 2 HWDT boat based educational trips, and open boat evenings
- 4 HWDT cetacean monitoring trips
- 2 sustainable seafood festival/celebration events
- 1 oral history project DVD produced
- 1 oral history mobile exhibition produced and displayed at various locations

Project Cost

TOTAL COST	£52,777
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11. Natural Heritage Data Project

(Project Lead: Assynt Field Club)

The Assynt Field Club set up a website in 2009 to provide a window to Assynt's natural heritage and landscapes for local residents, visitors to the area and the wider scientific community. It also encourages observations to be contributed. From 2013-14 the website received 1,441 contributions. The present website only allows the display and storage of limited information from these contributions.

Our Vision

The aim is to create a modern, vibrant website improving public access to large quantities of currently inaccessible natural heritage data. By showcasing and interpreting the landscapes and natural heritage of Assynt, this website will enhance the appreciation, understanding and enjoyment of this area for all users and encourage further input of data and records from users. The website will have the capacity to collect and store more data and it is hoped this new data will enhance and add to the available information, helping to build a better picture of the Assynt Landscape and how it is changing. This data can then be used to input into future land management decisions.



Mating Shield Bugs. ©David Haines, 2015.

Both residents and visitors will be encouraged to take an interest in the landscape and natural heritage through the website. Information collected through the website will be regularly communicated to the wider biological recording community thereby engaging the wider scientific community. It will also be stored on the local Assynt Community Digital Archive which will be used as a safe and secure repository for the data. By using the archive more people will be trained in data inputting techniques, thereby increasing local capacity and use of the archive.

What we'll do

2016-17:

- Set up a steering group to oversee project and appoint a website designer
- Build and trial new website with some existing data
- Add new content
- Training given for data inputting to archive

2017-18:

- Build new web pages to add to website and continue to add new content
- Training given for data inputting to archive

2018-21:

- As above for years 3-5
- Final reorganisation of the site

The Benefits

- Improved storage of current website data and other data
- Improved availability of data

- Enhanced awareness of the landscapes and natural heritage of Assynt
- Identification of areas of data deficiency determining potential future research projects
- Increased volume of data submitted
- Regular transfer of data to the archive, enhancing its appeal
- Regular transfer of data to the wider scientific community
- A better picture of how the Assynt landscape is changing allowing for more informed future management decisions

The Outputs

- An upgraded Assynt Field Club website
- Transfer to the new website of all existing information and images
- Incorporation on the new website of a data capture system to transfer information to regional and national databases, including the National Biodiversity Network
- Transfer of data to the Assynt Community Digital Archive
- 6 AFC members have enhanced computer skills

Project Costs

TOTAL COST	£17,117
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12. Community Grants Scheme

(Project Lead: CALLP Staff Team)

The main aim of the Community Grants Scheme (CGS) is to support activities at a community level that complement those taking place through the wider LPS and provide benefit to people living within the project area. The intention is to encourage as wide a range of groups and individuals as possible to have involvement with and benefit from the LPS.

HLF Outcomes

The CGS will seek to support projects which broadly meet the Heritage Lottery Fund's (HLF) nine outcomes, whilst contributing specifically to at least two of these. The outcomes are as follows;

- **Heritage (Natural, Built & Cultural):** is better managed, in better condition and better identified / recorded.
- **People:** have developed skills, learnt about heritage and volunteered time.
- **Communities:** have reduced environmental impacts, are more engaged with heritage and the area will be a better place to work, live and visit.

The overall mix of projects granted an award each year should broadly reflect these nine outcomes and between all the small grants awarded demonstrate delivery across all nine objectives. In addition to HLF's Outcomes individual projects will also have to demonstrate delivery against the Scheme's specific objectives and outcomes.

Scheme Summary

The CGS will offer small grants, at different rates and amounts, on the two bases outlined below;

1. Locally constituted Community Groups and Organisations

To enable projects and activities which meet the LPS' objectives and provide community benefit. Groups that would be eligible include, but would not be limited to; Community Councils, Grazings Committees, Tourist Associations, Heritage and other special interest groups. Grants up to a total value of £5,000 per project would be available.

2. Individuals within the Project Area

To enable projects / opportunities to be undertaken which provide benefit to an individual and the wider area through a combination of the specific heritage focus and project outcomes. Grants up to a total value of £1,000 per project would be available.

In both scenarios grants would be awarded up to a maximum of 75% of the total project cost, with the remaining 25% to be met by a combination of other grants, private cash contributions and in kind contributions (in line with HLF's prescribed rates).

CGS Management and Oversight

The CGS will be managed and administered by the Core Staff Team. Decisions on applications will be made by a panel comprising a minimum of 4 members and be drawn from the Partnership, members of the local community and local stakeholders to ensure the process is objective and transparent.

The Core Staff Team will also provide ongoing support for the delivery of individual projects.

Proposed Timetable

The CGS will start mid-way through the LPS' first year and run for a period of 4 years, to end mid-way

through the LPS' final year. The total monies available for award by the scheme will be £100,000 and these will be distributed evenly across the 4 years (at a rate of £25,000 per year).

Stage	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
EOI Invited	September - December 2016	September - December 2017	September - December 2018	September - December 2019
Final Applications Due	February 2017	February 2018	February 2019	February 2020
Grant Awarded	April 2017	April 2018	April 2019	April 2020

Proposed Submission Process

Stage 1 – Expression of Interest

Interested parties will be invited to submit an 'Expression of Interest' (EOI) containing a brief overview of the proposed project, how it addresses the LPS's objectives and priorities and a broad outline budget. A standard template will be produced to assist with the process. Following submission the EOIs will be assessed by the CGS panel and feedback provided to each applicant.

Stage 2 – Detailed Application

Successful applicants will then be invited to make a formal detailed application (for which a standard form will be produced – with one version for groups and one for individuals). A 'mentor' from the project team will be appointed to assist in the detailed development of each successful EOI. Unsuccessful applications will receive feedback, and if appropriate assistance to develop an alternative proposal for re-submission the following year.

Stage 3 – Grant Award

Detailed applications will then be subject to the panel's assessment, and if successful an award will be made with terms and conditions for delivery outlined. Unsuccessful applications will receive feedback, and if appropriate assistance to develop an alternative proposal for re-submission.

Stage 4 – Project Delivery, Monitoring and Reporting

Successful applicants will be invited to an inception meeting with the CALLP team to:

- Run through the terms and conditions of their award to ensure these are fully understood;
- Provide ongoing support and monitoring through the project's life; and to
- Discuss the most appropriate financial arrangements for their project's delivery.

CGS Budget

Initially the Scheme will have a budget of £100,000 but this may increase over the Scheme's life depending on uptake the success of attracting match funding.

13. The Posties' Path

(Project Lead: Scottish Wildlife Trust)



The Posties' Path is a spectacular coastal walking route linking the communities of Coigach and Ullapool. It was the main land-based communication route to Coigach until the early 1900s used by postmen carrying royal mail to and from Ullapool. Today it is much loved and used by locals and visitors alike. The path is mainly a mountain route passing through wild land. The two more accessible ends of the path are more widely used, offering short walks to places of interest like the impressive Iron Age hill fort at Dun Canna.

The Postie's Path was the recipient of HLF Grant Funding in 2002 through SWT's Reserves Project – this involved upgrading a 1,500 metre section of the path between Culnacraig and Achduart, at the Achiltibuie end of the path, increasing the range of users accessing the path. This project will build on that work by improving further sections of the route and increasing awareness of this important local asset.

Looking south along the Postie's Path to Isle Martin. ©Richard Williams.

The Challenge

The path needs considerable repair and improvements to increase its accessibility to a wider range of users while protecting the coastal environment and natural beauty of the area. The two ends of the path need to be repaired and upgraded to give a good easy access path. The mountain section of the path needs clearer way-marking, helping to maintain the path in a suitable wild land condition whilst helping avoid walkers losing their way. The sections at each end of the path are of gentler gradient and here a more formalised machine constructed path has been developed in places. If considered appropriate this may be extended and consolidated, alternatively an upgrade to the existing rough path line, with repairs to the sections in worse condition may be advocated. Local community engagement will be important in shaping work, planning and delivery, and in developing linkages to other related projects such as other path projects and Clachtoll broch.

What we'll do

2016

- Consult local communities, landowners, & Highland Council on their aspirations for the path
- Develop a detailed brief for a specialist path survey
- Develop interpretation strategy for the route, linking to related local projects

2017

- Appoint a contractor to undertake a detailed survey of the needs and opportunities
- Develop detailed brief for path repair works, and put the work out for tender
- Commission a contractor to undertake path works

2018

- Contractor starts path repair work
- Install information boards and implement wider interpretation strategy

2019

- Develop and implement maintenance plan to keep the path in good condition

The Benefits

- A wider range of people encouraged to access and explore Coigach's coast
- Increased information and guidance for visitors and local users of the path
- Greater awareness of the path's history and evolution
- Improvements to certain sections of the path
- A future management and maintenance plan in place
- An upgraded and better promoted tourist attraction for the local area

The Outputs

- Future management and maintenance planned produced and put into action
- Sections of the path (comprising 250-400 metres) brought into improved condition
- Improved information, way-marking, and interpretation along the path route

Project Costs

TOTAL COST	£85,659
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14. Acheninver Coastal Path

(Project Lead: Coigach Community Development Company)

The Acheninver Path has been used by walkers to access the youth hostel for at least the last 100 years. It links to a network of local paths forming a circular route that includes the core path between Achduart and Culnacraig and onwards from Culnacraig round Ben More Coigach to Strath Cannaird (the Posties' Path – see Project Summary 13). To the north the path links to a rough track which runs up to the Achlochan Peninsula (see Project Summary 26).



Acheninver Path ©Julia Campbell.

The Challenge

The current path to the coast at Acheninver is uneven, eroded and waterlogged in places. The connecting coastal route to the Broch at Achlochan lacks clear way-markers and easy access. As a result, walkers in the area are more likely to contribute to erosion, trample habitats and disturb wildlife and livestock. The project will seek to respect the original path construction and feel, whilst adding drainage features to improve water management across the path thereby reducing surface run off and further erosion. Some sections of the path will require raising and re-surfacing to assist with water drainage and retention of surface material. These proposals have been developed by the Coigach Community Development Company in consultation with the local community including Achiltibuie Tourist Association, Coigach Community Council, local crofters, neighbours and landowners.

What we'll do

2018:

- Upgrade the existing path (1.35km) and extend to create a circular route
- Way-mark 2.73km of coastal route
- Provide interpretation boards and leaflets to increase understanding of culture, built heritage and crofting
- Improve car parking provision through the creation 5 new car parking spaces

- Maintain and manage the paths for 10 years after completion of the project

The Benefits

- Improved access to the coastline and natural heritage for the local community and visitors.
- Ongoing maintenance of the paths will reduce erosion and disturbance to habitats and wildlife over the longer term.
- More people will be able to walk for pleasure and health and to appreciate local built heritage such as: the former Acheninver Youth Hostel, Acheninver Mill (ruins and millstone) and Sheep Fank.
- The project will contribute to an improvement in local tourist amenities overall, resulting in longer and higher quality visitor stays and potentially increasing footfall for local businesses.
- Path construction/maintenance should also create employment and training opportunities for local people and generate demand for traditional skills such as drystane dyking.

The Outputs

- 850 metres of path upgraded and improved
- 250 metres of new path constructed
- 15 volunteers engaged with the project
- 2 training courses delivered through the project
- Improved signage and information provided on site

Project Costs

TOTAL COST	£99,839
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15. Polbain Coastal Path

(Project Lead: Coigach Community Development Company)

The Polbain Coastal Path will be a new path built to complete the circular recreational route around the crofting village of Polbain, connecting the existing Polbain Peat Track and Waymarked Hill Path. Polbain and Dornie Amenities Group (mainly local crofters) proposed the creation of the route 10 years ago and subsequently commissioned a feasibility study, resulting in the construction of the existing parts of the route.



Polbain Crofts looking west to Dornie. ©Anne McGee

Our Vision

The challenge is to make more accessible the rich cultural and natural heritage of the Coigach coast from Polbain to Big Dornie by building a new path that is widely accessible to visitors and residents of 'mixed abilities' whilst recognising that the terrain and gradients will prevent the new path from being a truly 'all abilities' path. The aim is to increase use of the route while minimising negative impacts by encouraging visitors to follow a designated path that limits disturbance to habitats, wildlife and livestock. The new route will serve as an important addition to Coigach's tourism offering whilst providing year round recreational opportunities for local residents. The newly constructed path will be a laid path, with topside ditch with a variety of water bars and cross drains / culverts as appropriate at different locations along its length. Where possible materials will be won locally, but stone for drainage features may need to be imported.

What we'll do

In 2016

- Develop a management plan for the path site, consulting the local community and especially crofters whose land is affected
- Appoint a suitable contractor and agree a work plan, including volunteering and training opportunities for locals and visitors

In 2017

- Build 973 metres of new path, including fencing, drainage and surfacing
- Raise awareness of the new path
- Gather feedback from path users
- Monitor and review the path's condition annually
- Put in place a maintenance plan for future works and upkeep of the path

The Benefits

- Creation of a coastal walking route through croft ground linking townships
- More people from the local community and visitors alike will enjoy easier access to the sea
- An opportunity to explore the cultural and natural heritage of the Coigach coast, supported by interpretation boards and leaflets
- A contribution to the area's general tourism amenities, encouraging visitors to stay longer and increasing footfall for local businesses.
- Training and employment opportunities for local people by using manual labour rather than machines and generate demand for traditional local skills such as drystone dyking

The Outputs

- 973 metres of new path constructed
- 10 people benefitting from training opportunities through the project
- 2 information boards installed
- Stock fencing installed and / or improved with installation of access gates

Project Costs

TOTAL COST	£113,368
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16. Suilven Path Restoration

(Project Lead: John Muir Trust)

This project aims to upgrade the main approach path to Suilven and repair the erosion caused by recreational access on Suilven itself. The project will create a more durable and sustainable path protecting the landscape from erosion and ensuring visitor's experiences aren't adversely affected by an eroded and deteriorating path.



Suilven from the north-west ©Joe Cornish/2020Vision.

Our Vision

Suilven is one of the most dramatic and iconic hills of Assynt. Recreational access to the summit of Suilven is having an adverse effect on vegetation and soils along the established access routes. Trampling of fragile vegetation, poaching of peaty soils and erosion of the hillside on steeper gradients is detracting from the natural beauty of the landscape and the experience of walkers venturing up Suilven. Experience from elsewhere in Scotland suggests that the steep side of Suilven could become badly eroded into a loose and mobile scree slope tens of metres across which would be unpleasant to try and walk on and a visible scar on the hillside. Once erosion becomes this acute it would be difficult, if not impossible, to repair. Small sections of the path have deteriorated over the last few years and this process will only continue if the path is not consolidated and protected.

This project will repair the path to an appropriate condition in keeping with the wild, rugged landscape of Assynt and create a more sustainable path line, helping to ensure walkers enjoy their experiences on Suilven and that the area continues to be considered a desirable and highly regarded destination for hill walking. The project will also demonstrate how major path restoration work in a wild landscape can be undertaken sensitively and appropriately and not create an overly engineered path out of keeping with the environment. To achieve this, the path will need to be more formally

constructed than the present evolved route currently is. This will involve quarrying gravel on site to lay a durable path surface and importing stone to construct steps and drainage features. Careful consideration at the design stage will help to identify the most appropriate line and level of construction so that the path 'fits' within the landscape

What we'll do

The works will be divided into two main sections corresponding to the areas described below.

Section 1: From the small cairn on the Glencanisp track where the path branches off work will involve excavating gravel and mineral material from the ground to use as a durable path surface while constructing drainage features from natural stones to help deflect water off and away from the path. This section is about 1.6km long of which about 1km will end up being a gravelly surface while much of the rest of the path already is as it crosses drier ground. Some steps will also need to be built where the gradient increases.

Section 2: On the steeper ground up to the saddle, work will involve stabilising some of the loose and mobile ground using bigger boulders. About 120 tonnes of stone will be required for the work, much of which will need to be airlifted to the site by helicopter from nearby boulder fields as there isn't enough stone on site.

2016-17:

- Advertise and let contracts for path works
- Airlift of materials for section 2
- Work carried out on sections 1 & 2
- Begin development of interpretation
- JMT volunteers to assist with path works

2017-18:

- Airlift of materials for section 2
- Continue path work on sections 1 & 2
- Continue development of interpretation
- JMT volunteers to assist with path works

2018-19:

- Finish path work on sections 1 & 2
- Produce final interpretation materials
- JMT volunteers to assist with path works

2020-21

- JMT volunteers to assist with path work maintenance

The Benefits

- The views and enjoyment of walking up Suilven are protected;
- Promotion of Suilven through the work;
- Helping to sustain the number of people visiting the area;
- Opportunity for local contractors to tender for the work;
- Trickle-down effect for local businesses during repair project.

The Outputs

- 1.6km of the main approach path repaired and upgraded.
- The steep ascent path and ridge path (400m) are protected and consolidated.
- Improved information and interpretation associated with the hill and path.

Project Costs

TOTAL COST	£221,129
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17. Quinag Summit Path Repairs

(Project Lead: John Muir Trust)

Quinag's paths are exposed to some of the most extreme weather that the Assynt area experiences throughout the year. The paths are also extremely popular with both local and visiting hill walkers, and have predominantly evolved over time due to recreational access and are currently in mixed condition as a result of this access and the harsh climate. Hill walkers are an important component of the local economy and maintaining a high quality experience is important to the area's tourist industry. The erosion not only has a detrimental effect on the paths but also impacts on the soils and vegetation through users walking off the edges of the paths and widening them where they have become difficult to walk on.



Quinag summit path. © Chris Goodman.

Our Vision

The project aims to repair the eroded sections of path by using a pre-emptive and light touch approach. To ensure the long term sustainability of the path network, John Muir Trust (JMT) have been undertaking repairs over the last 5 years using local contractors, concentrating on the worst affected sections. Through the additional works planned within the scheme, JMT will use low impact methods to repair and restore the route to a naturalised path which will maintain a high quality, wild land experience for hill walkers together with protecting the fragile upland environment. Higher sections of the path are currently particularly at risk where rainfall and snowmelt have washed away the route. Using experienced contractors, boulders from the nearby hillside will be used to stabilise the steeper ground and also to construct drainage features to shed water off the path. Gullied sections will be filled using on site materials. All work is done by hand and involves long walks into the site.

What we'll do

2016-17:

- Obtain three written quotes for works to a steep 52 metre section
- Appoint a contractor to carry out works

2017-20:

- Obtain three written quotes for works specified by JMT Path Project Officer
- Appoint a contractor to carry out works

The Benefits

- The views and enjoyment of walking up Quinag are protected
- Protection of the landscape qualities of the area
- Promotion of Quinag and hill walking in Assynt through the work

- Helping to sustain the number of people visiting the area to walk up Quinag and income to the local economy
- Opportunity for local contractors to tender for work
- Trickle-down effect for local businesses during repair project
- Part of a wider opportunity to make Assynt a must visit location for outdoor enthusiasts and nature lovers

The Outputs

- Maintain the 17km of paths on Quinag in a suitable wild land condition
- A steep 52 metre section of the path will be repaired

Project Costs

TOTAL COST	£38,400
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18. Culag and Little Assynt Paths

(Project Lead: Culag Community Woodland Trust)

Culag Community Woodland Trust Ltd (CCWT) owns and manages on behalf of the community two areas of land in Assynt for amenity use:

- Culag Woods - a 40 hectare mixed woodland in Lochinver, and
- Little Assynt - a 1,200 hectare estate approximately 5 miles east of Lochinver.

Both contain a variety of paths which have been worked on at various points since CCWT was established in 1995. Technical upgrades and repairs are now required on short sections of several paths to improve old pitching, replace wooden steps and improve drainage to reduce the impact of future adverse weather and keep future maintenance liabilities and costs to a minimum.



Little Assynt Paths © CCWT



Culag Woods Paths © CCWT

In Culag Woods some areas of the path network needs particular attention: the School Path & Billy's Path require further stone pitching steps, replacement of a set of timber steps with material such as recycled plastic timber and re-profiling of gradients to assist with access on the steeper sections. This would make the paths safer for those that are less able. Adverse weather is also becoming an increasing problem creating large scours and removing surface material. By adding in steps and drainage features the impact of water flowing over the path surface will be reduced, as will future maintenance costs.

The paths at Little Assynt are more exposed to the elements and the effects of weathering and erosion can be clearly seen in the removal of path surfacing. By adding in additional drainage features and stone pitching steps at certain points along the paths the effects of heavy rain will be lessened thereby reducing the amount of path maintenance required and improving the walking experience of path users.

Our Vision

The path improvements at both Culag Woods and Little Assynt will improve the experience of path users giving better access to people of "more abilities". The additional features will create easier access to both areas enabling the woodlands to be enjoyed by more people. More access means more people become connected to these places which in turn can lead to more volunteers to help

look after the woodlands. An increased awareness of the local environment can help foster individual and collective responsibility for the natural environment.

What we'll do

Work will be carried out at Little Assynt in year 1 and at Culag Woods in year 2.

2016-17:

- Draw up formal specification brief for works at Little Assynt
- Obtain three written quotes, Select, Appoint contractor
- Contractor to carry out works
-

2017-18:

- Draw up formal specification brief for works at Culag Woods
- Obtain three written quotes
- Appoint contractor
- Contractor to carry out works
- Formal opening of new steps

The Benefits

- Paths accessible to more people due to gradients reduced and secure steps added
- Improved visitor experience due to resurfacing sections of eroded path
- The impact of adverse weather conditions reduced by improved drainage on paths
- Reduced maintenance costs on path works assisting with the future sustainability of CCWT

The Outputs

- 12 metres of new stone pitching steps on the School Path
- 10 metres of new stone pitching steps on Billy's Path
- 3 metres of re-profiled path to reduce the gradient
- 10 metres of new timber/recycled plastic steps on Billy's Path
- 20 metres of new drainage ditches on Loch an-t Sabhail Path and Leitir Easaidh Path
- 15 new stone steps on Ken's Path & Loch an-t Sabhail Path
- 100 metres of resurfacing on Loch an-t Sabhail Path
- 10 new water bars on Ken's Path & Loch an-t Sabhail Path

Project Costs

TOTAL COST	£10,555
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19. Glencanisp Nature Trail

(Project Lead: Assynt Foundation)

The centre for the community owned Glencanisp Estate is the Glencanisp Lodge area which contains the office for Assynt Foundation, a Community Arts building, a pole barn, a local pottery and a walled garden. This area also marks the start of the path to Suilven, a walk and hill climb which takes on average 9 hours to complete. There is also the Glencanisp to River Inver Loop Path, the circuit of which takes approximately 2½ hours to complete. At present there are no way-marked shorter walks and no paths allowing exploration the ground and wildlife found in the vicinity of the lodge.



Path building © Hilary MacDonald

Our Vision

The aim of this project is to construct a 450 metre long path which loops to the north of the lodge area, starting from the Arts building and finishing at the entrance track to the lodge. Walkers will be able to complete a circuit of the path learning about the nature of the area using the nature trail leaflet developed during the project. The path will be constructed to a width of 1.2 metres with an unbound dust surface. This type of path, although not truly all abilities, would mean that people with many varying abilities and levels of fitness are able to better appreciate and interact with the surrounding area. Along the route nature trail posts will link with information and interpretation on the leaflet.

What we'll do**2016-17:**

- Obtain quotes for the path construction and appoint a contractor to carry out works
- Develop a leaflet to accompany the nature trail
- Install nature trail posts
- Formal opening of new trail

The Benefits

- A new path for people of many abilities to explore and a new resource for tourists and locals alike.
- People are better informed about the immediate area's natural heritage through the interpretation prepared as part of the nature trail leaflet
- Volunteers have learned new skills in path maintenance, broadening the local skills base thereby assisting to look after other local paths
- Local contractors have had the opportunity to tender for work in the local area
- More people are aware of the Glencanisp Lodge area as a destination for short local walks

The Outputs

- A 465 metre long 1.2 metre wide path linking a circuit around the Glencanisp Lodge area.
- A nature trail leaflet illustrating the wildlife of the area and history of the landscape here.
- Informal training for local people wanting to learn about footpath construction and maintenance

Project Costs

TOTAL COST	£33,049
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20. Glencanisp Wildlife Hide

(Project Lead: Assynt Foundation)

Black throated divers are synonymous with the Assynt and Coigach areas. Black throated divers are classified in the UK as an Amber List species (under the Birds of Conservation Concern review) and as a Priority Species (in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan). The area's lochs are breeding grounds for these rare and special birds and offer the opportunity to study them and their habitat. One such loch is Loch Druim Suardalain near to Glencanisp Lodge, where breeding pairs of black throated divers have successfully raised young over the past few years. Otters also regularly visit this loch. A viewing hide here would be easily accessible allowing people of many abilities to watch and learn about the wildlife of the area.



Black throated Diver © Sutherland Partnership Biodiversity Collection

Our Vision

To build a viewing hide providing the means for the public to watch birds and wildlife near Glencanisp Lodge, on the edge of Loch Druim Suardalain. The hide will be constructed on an island, 10 metres from the north shore of Loch Druim Suardalain. At this point the loch is very shallow and a boardwalk will be constructed to link the access path to the hide. The hide and path will be constructed by contractors during the winter months to limit disturbance to the birds.

Once constructed, there would be opportunities for local volunteer birdwatchers to keep an eye on the hid, recording and reporting any sightings to the Assynt Field Club, to feed into the Natural Heritage Data Project (Project No: 10). Displays and interpretation of the loch's ecology will be developed and displayed within the hide. The project will be advertised through leaflets in the Tourist information centres, in the Highland press and through social media networks of bird clubs and field clubs.

What we'll do

2016-17:

- Preparation of design & planning application
- Prepare tender documents for hide
- Obtain quotes for ground works, hide construction, access path and boardwalk
- Appoint contractors to undertake hide construction

2017-18:

- Construction of path and boardwalk
- Production of display and interpretation material
- Grand opening of the hide
- Volunteer birdwatchers keeping a presence in the hide

The Benefits

- Improved visitor numbers to the area.
- Boost to eco-tourism opportunities for the area.
- Improved awareness of the area's natural heritage, leading to less unwitting disturbance of black-throated divers.
- Educational opportunities for local and visiting schools

The Outputs

- 1 hide built
- 1 leaflet promoting the hide
- 1 information board installed
- 2 field trips by visiting bird groups
- 8 visits by the local schools
- 20 volunteer days
- 2000 visitors to the hide every summer

Project Costs

TOTAL COST	£33,047.46
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21. Landscape Routes App

(Project Lead: CALLP Staff Team)

Information on the path networks through the CALL area is available through a number of sources at present, but these are of limited supply, not easily updateable and costly to print and distribute. A digital app for the new North Coast 500 route is currently in development but this focuses on driving rather than walking routes in Assynt and Coigach. Through the development of a North West Highlands Geopark business plan, community consultation and a workshop focused on developing an interpretation strategy for Coigach and Assynt (CALL workshop on landscape interpretation) it was noted that although interpretation and information on walking routes and landscape is a key part of visitor experience, digitisation into an app would create a central hub and improve access to this data.



On the path at Little Assynt ©CCWT

Our Vision

The aim of this project is to produce an app providing interpretation of the landscape from walking and driving routes passing through the project area. Geology underpins the landscape of the local area and the interpretation will highlight this and link it to the features of the landscape that people are passing through. The app will also contain local service providers' information which can be easily updated and added to at low cost. The interpretation will include several sites where virtual tours can be taken. This has the added benefit of being used as a marketing tool for attracting potential visitors to the area. The app will be available to download for a small charge and will not require Wi-Fi or a mobile signal to operate.

What we'll do

2018:

- Develop the virtual trail app
- Hold School and community workshops
- Data capture and creation of the virtual tour

2019

- Develop trail apps

2020

- Training, provision of management interfaces, and further app enhancement
- Marketing of app, to include guided walks and local events

The Benefits

- App users have a better understanding of the local geology and why the landscape around them looks the way it does
- People who have engaged with the app are more aware of the benefits of walking for physical and mental wellbeing
- There are increased links between service providers and features of interest
- The number of paper leaflets being produced and circulated has reduced
- Future maintenance & update costs are covered through charging a low rate for downloads (circa £2)

The Outputs

- Local landscape route app(s): downloadable and capable of use anywhere in the area
- Virtual tour app which will make use of Wi-Fi to deliver high fidelity content whilst in range of data/internet and having links to relevant web sites for further background info.
- Routes on the app include paths and public transport routes (Bus routes from Ullapool to Achiltibuie, Lochinver and Durness)
- 10 guided walks to promote the path app
- Use of the Assynt Digital Archive to host the digital content
- “Walking for wellbeing” campaign & events to promote path app
- Links on the app to local service providers in vicinity of each path
- Marketing of path app through social media and local hubs including Geopods

Project Costs

TOTAL COST	£59,542
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22. Salmon Fishing Bothies Restoration

(Project Lead: Coigach Salmon Fisheries Ltd)

Commercial salmon fishing was carried in Coigach for over 300 years, up to 1995. During its commercial heyday the local salmon fishery was an important employer and contributed significantly to community wellbeing. In addition to the main base at Badentarbet, up to eight smaller fishing stations were operated at different locations along the extensive Coigach coastline. Each fishing station included a boat slip, a net drying green and a purpose built bothy for a crew of four. This project seeks to continue the legacy of an important local fishery by preserving and restoring three well-crafted wee 19th Century buildings and making them available to 21st Century outdoor activity focused visitors.



Fox Point Salmon Bothy. ©Peter Muir.

Our Vision

Our vision is to preserve the craftsmanship and the charm of three small bothies and fishing stations located on Coigach headlands, each with its own unique attributes and spectacular setting. With this project we wish to continue the legacy of the centuries old business. Moreover we wish to see this project underpinning and strengthening the attraction of Coigach as a maritime tourism destination with the bothies serving as unique accommodation offerings for campers, walkers, kayakers and visitors wishing to experience our coast, its scenery and wildlife. In addition interpretation will be installed at each site.

What we'll do

- Restore bothies and surrounds
- Fit out to a usable state similar to that when last used
- Interpretation will be installed at each site
- Make available for use by visitors to the local area
- Use income generated through use of the buildings to fund ongoing maintenance and repair

The Benefits

- Improved condition of the area's cultural (maritime/fisheries) heritage
- Iconic coastal gems preserved for future generations
- Accommodation created for campers, kayakers, bird watchers and walkers wishing to experience the coast, its scenery and wildlife
- Continues the legacy of a 300 year old local industry
- Local area, landscape and built heritage better understood thanks to installed interpretation

The Outputs

- 3 bothies is restored condition
- Interpretation signage at each of the 3 sites

Project Costs

TOTAL COST	£117,898
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23. Badentarbet Old Ice House Restoration

(Project Lead: Coigach Salmon Fisheries Ltd)

Commercial salmon fishing was carried in Coigach for over 300 years, up to 1995. During its commercial heyday the fishery encompassed a number of buildings at the Badentarbet Fishing Station, and amongst the remaining buildings is the 180 year old former Ice House building (last used as a net shed) which faces further deterioration and permanent disuse.



Badentarbet Former Ice House Building, Achiltibuie. ©Peter Muir.

Our Vision

Our vision is to retain the authenticity and charm of the formerly busy Badentarbet fishery by preserving features that will allow the area to continue be one of Coigach's main attractions. The project will restore and convert the building to a viable space for uses such as: offices, events, heritage centre, art gallery, artist's studio & workspace, or seafood restaurant / café (all popular suggestions for this central location) – uses which may change at times over the expected life of the preserved building (60 to 100 years). Furthermore it is intended to restore the previously managed ice pond (e.g. renew sluice gate), restore some smaller artefacts; and develop suitable interpretation to be installed on the site. This interpretation will help visitors appreciate the local area and its history better. The fishing station thus remains a tantalising draw for touring visitors and a regular destination for sightseeing tours, photography and art classes which thrive on the abundance of heritage motifs.

What we'll do

2016: Design and plan restoration work

2017: Undertake restoration work utilising traditional skills where appropriate

2018: Complete ice pond restoration; design, produce & install interpretation panel

The Benefits

- Iconic coastal gem preserved for future generations
- Improved condition of the area's maritime/fisheries heritage
- Local area, landscape and built heritage better understood thanks to installed interpretation
- Training and employment opportunities for local contractors
- Continues the legacy of a 300 year old local industry

The Outputs

- Sympathetically restored rural building adapted to make it viable for decades to come
- Restoration of ice pond, sluice and sluice gate
- Interpretation installed on site

Project Costs

TOTAL COST	£118,000
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24. Tanera Mor Bothy Restoration

(Project Lead: Tanera Mor)

The Isle of Tanera Mor had a population of around 120 people at the start of the 20th Century. This figure fell steadily through the first decades of the 20th Century, until the early 1930s when the last inhabitants left the island. Today just nine of the buildings used then are habitable (after upgrades and refurbishments over the past 50 years) with the others in various states of ruin and abandonment across the island. One or two of these ruins are in relatively good condition and restoration work in the near future could consolidate these structures providing a new lease of life, and an opportunity to demonstrate traditional building techniques and materials.



Arnagoine ruined former dwelling, Isle of Tanera Mor. ©Richard Williams

Our Vision

Our vision is to restore one of the island's former dwellings as an example of traditional local accommodation from around 100 years ago. We will use locally sourced materials where possible and traditional building techniques to provide bunk-house style accommodation suitable for overnight stays by groups of up to twelve people. The proposed building is located close to the island's cafe and wash block, reducing the need for providing services and amenities into the building itself. The accommodation will be available to visiting volunteer and school groups, as well as independent travellers - particularly sea kayakers - and those seeking an alternative to the island's existing self-catering accommodation. The project will provide opportunities for people to develop skills in traditional building techniques, as well as a variety of volunteering opportunities.

What we'll do

2016:

- Complete design work, including structural surveys and material costings
- Offer 5 day opportunity for John Muir Trust volunteers to undertake site preparation
- Submit planning application to The Highland Council

2017:

- Put work out for tender, select and appoint contractor and undertake construction works
- Offer training and volunteering opportunities within the construction programme
- Marketing the completed for by school and groups for the 2018 season

The Benefits

- A deteriorating former dwelling will be restored and given a new economically self-sufficient lease of life, improving the condition, awareness, and appreciation of the area's built and cultural heritage.
- The Isle of Tanera Mor, and the community of Coigach, will benefit from an improved tourism offering
- Greater potential for school and volunteer groups to stay on the island, particularly for undertaking the John Muir Award
- Training and volunteering opportunities for locals and visitors to use existing skills and develop new ones
- Traditional building techniques showcased

The Outputs

- Former building in improved state of repair
- Bunkhouse accommodation available for up to 12 individuals
- 3 training courses delivered
- 15 volunteers engaged with the project

Project Costs

TOTAL COST	£31,517
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25. Clachtoll Broch

(Project Lead: Historic Assynt)

Clachtoll broch is one of the most iconic monuments in northern mainland Britain and a Scheduled Ancient Monument. It is in a dilapidated state and choked with rubble debris. As a result, visitors can only access the broch by climbing over rubble to walk around the site on the wall head. This is both damaging to the broch and hazardous for visitors. Local concerns about the deterioration and public safety were raised in 2006 and resulted in a 2009 Conservation Management Plan funded by Historic Scotland. Further consolidation to secure the entrance area took place in 2011 and emergency propping for the south wall in 2014.



Installing support prior to investigatory works at Clachtoll, 2013. ©Gordon Sleight.

Our Vision

Our vision is a fully excavated site giving visitors a unique insight into the broch's original structure and use, as well as safeguarding it for future generations. The team will aim to restore visitor access through the original entrance, open up the interior of the building and improve understanding of how the settlement surrounding the broch was used.

We will explore options for an architect designed structure that gives access to the broch and views of the surrounding settlement from a vantage point without visually distracting from the original setting. This structure should also seek to protect the broch from further wind and wave damage and discourage visitors from climbing on the monument. We hope that it may be possible for materials clarifying the site's archaeology, geology, natural history and land use to be incorporated into the access structure, along with an interpretation hub at the Clachtoll beach car park.

A Broch Interpretation Officer will coordinate a range of education and training opportunities for locals, tourists and schoolchildren. The excavations will be open and free for all to participate in developing archaeological skills.

What we'll do

2016:

- Award contracts for archaeology, design/construction and stone mason work
- Create project website
- Site preparation

2017:

- Complete archaeological fieldwork and structural consolidation
- Begin training and outreach programme
- Submit detailed planning consent for broch viewing and access structure

2018:

- Complete archaeological post excavation programme
- Develop interpretation materials
- Complete access and viewing structure

2019

- Complete interpretation centre at Clachtoll beach car park
- Produce archaeological report

The Benefits

- A new visitor attraction that stimulates community development and tourism, bringing long term benefit to the area through increased visitor numbers
- More awareness of, and pride in, Assynt's built heritage by local people and visitors, many of whom will have engaged in the education and training opportunities
- Enhanced understanding of the Scottish Iron Age generally and in particular of broch architecture, structure and use (through excavation findings)
- Greater national recognition for the importance of the site
- Reduced need for future maintenance through careful design and conservation work

The Outputs

- Consolidated broch structure safe from further erosion and collapse
- Excavated broch site with artefacts analysed and displayed for view
- Broch officer in post for two years through the excavation programme
- Viewing structure installed within the excavated broch
- Interpretative material available for viewing close to site

Project Costs

TOTAL COST	£503,960
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26. Achlochan Coastal Heritage

(Project Lead: Scottish Wildlife Trust)

The Achlochan peninsula and Loch Poll an Dunan were once vibrant places. The natural shelters of the peninsula, its coastal location, the presence of inland fresh-water and readily available construction materials have sustained settlers since the Iron Age. Geologists believe the lochan reed bed (the largest in Wester Ross, and a SSSI) was once a sea loch and in more recent times a working waterway. The peninsula's ruined broch is one of the few in North-West Scotland and the nearby World War One rifle range and drill hall are similarly rare. Remains of 19th century kelp kilns and boat nausts (or shelters) point to the 19th century. The geological SSSI is of national importance as rocks of two different ages lie adjacent to one another. There is very little information available locally about the area's rich cultural heritage, yet great interest among locals and visitors. Few people who walk the Achlochan peninsula are aware of its heritage and the two designated Sites of Special Scientific Interest.



Our Vision

To safeguard and restore the peninsula's natural, built and cultural heritage with managed and responsible access. The project, which is led by local crofters, will give visitors and locals improved access to heritage features and more information about them. Our aim is to undertake the first comprehensive archaeological survey of the broch and its surrounds before undertaking essential repairs to the surrounding buildings, consolidating the firing range and providing information to help the public interpret and explore these heritage assets.

Looking south-west over Achlochan. ©Mairi Thornton.

We also aim to reclaim an area of open water on Loch Poll an Dunan and add a small sheltered bird watching point overlooking it. The loch has gradually silted up over the years with fewer people living in the area and less active management. Its restoration has been a long held ambition locally - approval was granted in the 1990s under the Rural Stewardship Scheme but plans never actioned.

What we'll do

2016

- Produce management plan for entire site
- Complete archaeological survey
- Consolidate broch buildings
- Repair existing access path at Polglass
- Clear Loch Poll an Dunan (first phase)
- Undertake an oral history project
- Train young people and volunteers in traditional skills and conservation
- Monitor bird life
- Develop heritage information archive

2017

- Construct a path from the Piping School (Old Drill Hall) to the Firing Range
- Consolidate Firing Range structure, interpret and sign
- Continue restoration of Loch Poll an Dunan
- Design interpretation materials for entire site and heritage information resource
- Training and ongoing wildlife monitoring

2018

- Install interpretation information
- Complete work on Loch Poll an Dunan
- Way-mark routes
- Construct bird watching point

The Benefits

- Greater access to natural and cultural heritage for locals and visitors
- Heritage assets and information safeguarded for future generations
- Improved condition of loch (SSSI)
- Improved biodiversity of whole area
- Local volunteers gain experience in traditional skills and conservation

The Outputs

- An area (to be determined in conjunction with SNH) of open water returned to the lochan
- 1 broch recorded and surveyed
- 1 peninsula wide conservation management plan produced
- 5 buildings surrounding the broch made stable and consolidated
- World War One Firing Range stances and target consolidated and interpreted
- 1 km of access path constructed
- 0.4 km of access path repaired
- 1.6 km of peninsula path waymarked
- 1 bird watching point constructed

Project Costs

TOTAL COST	£80,522
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27. Artist in Residence Project

(Project Lead: Assynt Foundation)

Artists, selected through a process of recruitment and interview, will spend time in the project area living and working alongside either a single project or possibly a number of projects, to explore how the project's processes and outcomes can be expressed and interpreted in artistic forms. The



Fallen Glencanisp, 2013. ©Nigel Goldie.

periods of the residencies will vary according to the specific project(s) in question, the preferred medium of the artist selected and wider community engagement outcomes identified.

Our Vision

To engage the people of Coigach & Assynt, as well as visitors, through active participation in the creation and expression of ideas and concepts brought to the Scheme by artists selected to participate in the residencies. In turn it is hoped that this will enhance and develop Coigach & Assynt as a place of artistic and creative activity

and bring together the many creative people living in the area. The work produced will be varied and will hopefully puzzle and engage viewers with different and original ways of thinking about, interpreting and understanding the living landscape of this area.

What we'll do

2016

- Establish a steering group to draft criteria for the selection of artist(s) for the project
- Identify opportunities across the Scheme's portfolio of projects for artistic involvement
- Host an event to engage with local groups, project partners and figures from the arts world
- Engage with funders and creative partners to agree the scope of a pilot residency for 2017

2017

- Advertise the opportunity for the pilot artist residency
- Select and engage artist to engage with the selected project(s)
- Delivery outputs in accordance with the project brief
- Review the pilot residency and refine for later years of the Scheme

2018-2020

- Run a further three annual residencies building on the lessons from the pilot residency

The Benefits

- Innovative and varied ways of interpreting the findings and experiences of certain projects
- Involvement of local schools in the creative and investigate process of artistic interpretation
- Increased public engagement in the Scheme through participation in the arts projects
- Creation of permanent art works: either on display in the local area or further afield serving as a promotional link back to the project area
- Creation of links with galleries and exhibition spaces elsewhere in Scotland and beyond

The Outputs

- 4 Artistic residences held over the scheme life
- 2 school trips held per residency
- 2 workshops held per residency for members of the local community to attend
- 4 projects interpreted through artistic investigation
- 4 lasting artworks produced and installed / available to view in the local area

Project Costs

TOTAL COST	£29,190
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28. Music and Tales of Coigach and Assynt

(Project Lead: Coigach Community Development Co)

A living landscape is more than just scenery; it is the interaction between people and place. Stories, music and song reflect these interactions, helping us better understand where we have come from and where we might go. Coigach and Assynt have a wonderfully rich cultural heritage - the area was Gaelic speaking until three or four generations ago and it has produced more than its fair share of musicians, many of whom have achieved national acclaim. The Summer Isles Festival, first held in 2012, showcases some of the best of this local talent, serving as an inspiration for future musicians.

Our Vision

Our vision is to produce a song and music book enabling musicians and others to bring old tunes back to life and ensuring future generations can access and use them.

An important part of this will be unearthing new material as well as researching and connecting existing archived information. We will also commission and record a modern piece of music, inspired by the area's living landscape, to encourage our young musicians to promote the area through their music.



Coigach Gathering. ©Alison Sinclair.

What we'll do

2016

- Collate research findings on the area's music and song, connecting existing archive material and other published works, transcribing music where needed
- Audition for four local young musicians and identify a professional musician to accompany them on a local ceilidh trail entertaining tourists and locals alike

2017

- Publish a book of songs and music collated in year 1
- Potential repeat of ceilidh trail (or in a subsequent year)

2018

- Capture and record the influence music has had on people living in the landscape through oral history

2019

- Commission a professional musician to write a 45 minute living landscape music piece

2020

- Record modern music piece and produce 1,000 CDs & digital download
- Three night concert tour of the piece in the area

The Benefits

- Coigach and Assynt's cultural heritage is promoted and preserved for the future
- Greater appreciation of the area's cultural heritage
- Better trained local musicians
- Young musicians have access to better tuition and grow in confidence
- Young musicians better understand their cultural heritage and have more pride in it
- Quality entertainment and opportunities for participation in local cultural activities

The Outputs

- 250 people attending the ceilidh trail
- 5 unpublished tunes and 5 songs identified
- 10 participants in oral history project
- 200 books purchased
- 5 connections made with previous cultural studies
- 500 people attending commissioned piece concerts
- 250 CDs of commissioned piece purchased
- 4 local young musicians trained

Project Costs

TOTAL COST	£61,190
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Confirmed project funders for the Coigach-Assynt Living Landscape Partnership Scheme delivery phase to date include:

