



LEARNING JOURNEY TO GALLOWAY AND SOUTHERN AYRSHIRE BIOSPHERE (SCOTLAND)

15 – 18 October 2019



One of the objectives of the SHAPE project is to establish enduring stakeholder partnerships that maintain and develop cultural and natural heritage assets in SHAs through ecotourism initiatives that contribute to the sustainable growth of local communities, and transnationally share the experience gained through a set of learning journeys.

Aims of the learning journey

- Sharing of best practice
- Sharing lessons learned through the development of the eco-tourism initiative
- Connecting places together – rural with town based activities (heritage and culture activities) – museum, to community to landscape
- Opportunities to develop silent/tranquillity tourism, Dark Skies tourism, wellness tourism
- Development of local Biosphere Experience Guides to support eco-tourism
- Learning about wildlife tourism
- Community led tourism development

Learning Journey to Galloway and Southern Ayrshire Biosphere

Glentrool and The Cree Valley

Agenda

15.10.19 Tuesday

Day 1 Arrivals

18.00 Pick up at Edinburgh Airport (PLEASE SEE NOTES on logistical information)

21.00 Approximate arrival at Creebridge House Hotel, Newton Stewart



A 3-night stay is planned at the hotel for the duration of the Learning Journey

<http://www.creebridge.co.uk/>

Evening meal on arrival at the hotel and relaxation time.

16.10.19 Wednesday

Day 2: Visit to Glentrool and Cree Valley area

9.00 Briefing session at Creebridge House Hotel – Welcome to our Biosphere

9.15 Mini-bus pick - Departure from hotel

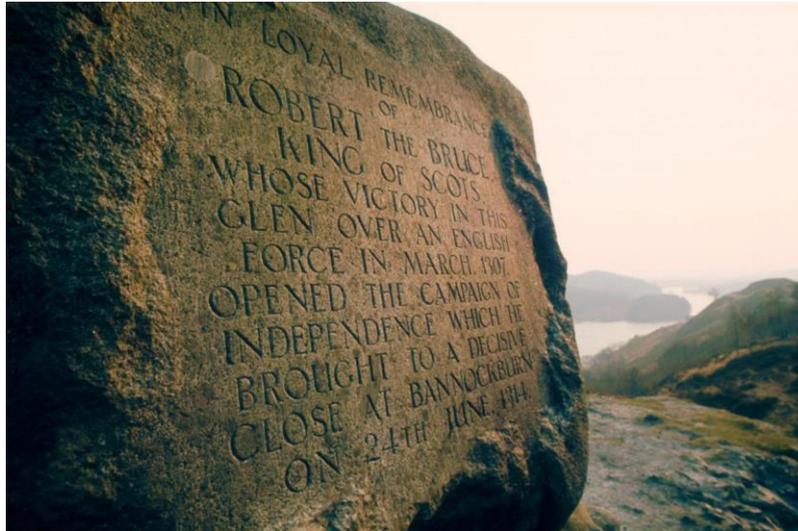
A guided journey to Glentrool Village – Barry Donan (Biosphere Experience Guide)

<https://www.facebook.com/adventureonyourdoorstep/>

- Stop off at Barcyle in the RSPB Wood of Cree to meet Crystal Maw – RSPB Galloway Reserve Site Manager

The Wood of Cree is the largest ancient wood in southern Scotland and the oak woodland is the main feature of the reserve - known as Atlantic oak woodland, or Scotland's rainforest, this habitat is home to many birds, mammals (especially bats), invertebrates and wildflowers. Barclye is the newest part of the reserve where more than 200,000 trees have been planted to extend the woodland.

- Onward journey to Loch Trool



Bruce's Stone commemorating Robert the Bruce, King of Scotland, and Battle of Trool 1307.

- Journey continues to Glentrool village and the Glentrool Art Gallery and Craft Shop
Here we meet the members of the Glentrool and Bargrennan Community Trust to learn about Glentrool village and their plans for the village, tourism and visitor accommodation development. Sue Clark and Meta Maltman - Trustees
- Galloway Forest Dark Sky Park and tourism development around the Dark Skies – Elizabeth Tindal Freelance Ranger and Biosphere Dark Sky Ranger

12.30 Networking Lunch at the Centre

14.00 Participation in 2 local experiences

Visit to Miiniwick the home and studio of ceramicist and potter Andy Priestman

Nature Walk – Development of Nature and cultural based tourism experiences –
Martin Webber - Biosphere Experiences Guide

17.00 Evening meal at House O' Hill. Traditional Inn set in the Galloway Forest Park

19.30 Dark Sky Experience with Elizabeth Tindal – Biosphere Dark Sky Ranger

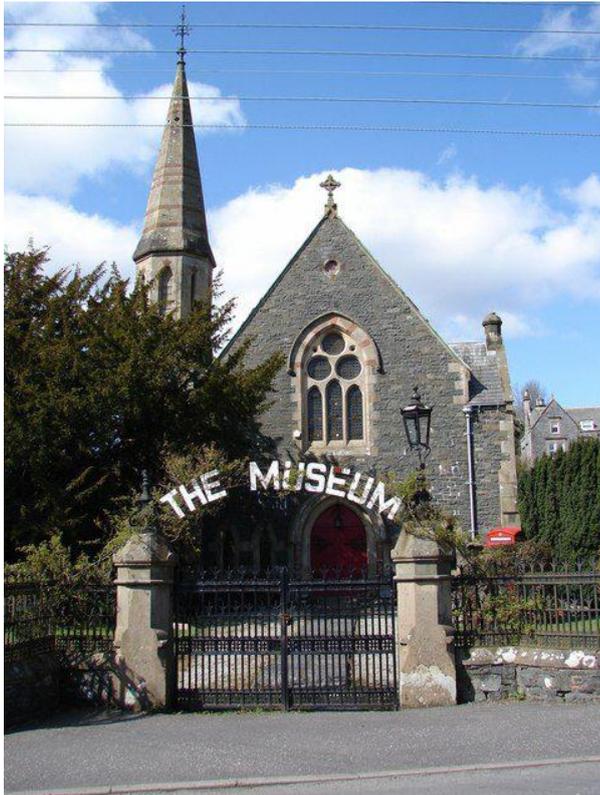
21.30 Return to Creebridge House Hotel

17.10.19 Thursday

Day 3: Newton Stewart Cultural Day

9.00 Guided heritage walk through Minnigaff -and Newton Stewart – Biosphere Experience
Guides Nic Coombey and Janice Bannister

10.30 Visit to Newton Stewart Museum – Margeret Shankland – Chair and Curator



Leisure time in Newton Stewart

12.30 - 13.30 – Lunch at Creebridge House Hotel – joined by stakeholders.

13.30 Afternoon session – Sharing, learning and reflection

Facilitated discussion exploring:

Development of Experiential Tourism in Galloway and Southern Ayrshire Biosphere

Common challenges in developing ecotourism and solutions

Reflections and feedback on the learning journey

16.30 Close

18.30 Farewell Dinner at Creebridge House Hotel

18/10/19 Friday

Morning Departures (Departure to Edinburgh airport will be 5.00 hrs /5am)

Logistics Information

Accommodation and Meals

Accommodation has been reserved at Creebridge House Hotel (<http://www.creebridge.co.uk/>) for the 15th to the 18th of October. **Individual Rooms can be paid for in advance or on departure. If contacting hotel please refer to 'Biosphere' booking dates 15th October – 18th October**

Meals on the Wednesday 16th October (non-hotel)

House O Hill evening meal to be paid for direct to House O Hill after meal (cost dependent on menu choice but approx £25 per person)

Buffet Lunch at Glentool Art Gallery and Craft shop – Glentool and Bargrennan Trust will invoice each SHAPE project lead - £10 per participant

Transfer Edinburgh airport – to GSA Biosphere

The meeting point for the transfer from Edinburgh to GSAB on the 15th October will be at the flight/passenger arrival doors at the Airport. Participants from Iceland and Wester Ross will be joining Finland participants for the journey on the mini-bus to GSA Biosphere so they will be meeting at the doors too. **The flight from Finland is due to arrive at 17.15 hrs /5.15pm so those not arriving by plane from Finland should be at the doors no later than 5.45pm/17.45 hrs**

IMPORTANT - PLEASE NOTE: The minibus is not able to collect direct from the arrival doors as minibuses are not allowed to go in that area.

Shuttle Bus Service – On exiting the airport doors there is a shuttle bus service that takes people to and from the Long Stay Car Park (As you leave the airport exit doors the shuttle bus pick-up point is usually to the left) (Every 10mins)

WHEN ALL PARTICIPANTS ARE TOGETHER AND YOU ARE READY TO TAKE THE SHUTTLE BUS – SOMEONE WILL NEED TO PHONE THE MINIBUS DRIVER. Driver is called Gary Blisset
Mobile number +44 07794 875457 (Vehicle Number CU11 CXN)

THE DRIVER WILL THEN TELL YOU WHICH SHUTTLE BUS STOP NUMBER YOU NEED TO GET OFF AT. THE MINI-BUS AND DRIVER WILL BE WAITING THERE FOR YOU.

The journey to the hotel in Galloway and Southern Ayrshire Biosphere will take approx 3 hours. There will be no planned stops on the return journey so could you prepare for that before you leave. There will be snacks and a drink on the mini bus till you get to the hotel for your evening meal

WHAT TO WEAR – THE WEATHER!

Weather in Scotland can be a bit unpredictable. The forecast is showers next week so you will need to bring outer clothing that keeps you dry in the rain! Warm clothing also for the star gazing – darkness experience

We will not be doing any hiking or climbing but shoes or boots fit for walking which will keep your feet dry would be advisable.

Useful links

- Galloway and Southern Ayrshire Biosphere - <http://www.gsabiosphere.org.uk/>

Emergency contacts

- Marie McNulty - Telf: +44 07467374963
- Ed Forrest – Telf: +44 07717767936

Social Media – Reflections On-Route and Soicla Media Posts

We would like to encourage you to use your social media through your favourite social media channels to share your experience during the learning journey

Please remember to use the hastags

#ShapingEcotourism

#BiosphereExperiences

#ShapeLJ

and tag SHAPE and Galloway and Southern Ayrshire Biosphere.



@SHAPE.Project @ScotlandBiosphere
@SHAPE_Project @ScotBiosphere