

NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2026



Letter from the Editor

Hello,

We have had such a great response to our call for Volunteers and it was great to meet so many of you at our Volunteer Information Session. Thank you everyone who came along to find out more.

This month has also seen the start of our Loch Ken Wall Art project with a lovely display of art and Loch Ken paintings and photography- thank you to everyone taking part

Our Junior Ranger Sessions will be launching Sunday 8th March and we can't wait. Read on to find out more!

Lindsay Stewart- Editor

Loch Ken Wall Art Project



vineyard

This month we asked a simple question:

What does Loch Ken mean to you?

As part of our Wall Art Project at The Crannog, we invited people of all ages and abilities to create artwork inspired by the loch – and you delivered.

Paintings. Drawings. Photographs. Collage. Mixed media.

Sunrises over still water. Windswept shorelines.

Hidden corners only locals know.

The first mural is now underway, and seeing the wall slowly transform has been something special. Even more special? Watching community members stand back and say, “That’s mine.”

Soon we’ll be adding artwork from local schools, bringing young artists into the heart of the exhibition. A celebration event is coming too – because this isn’t just an art display.

It’s a shared story.

FEBRUARY BROUGHT NATIONAL HEDGEHOG DAY



February brought National Hedgehog Day — a lovely reminder that beyond the views and walking routes, Loch Ken is home to remarkable wildlife.

Looking after the land means leaving space for species like hedgehogs to thrive.

We're also preparing for important Willow Tit survey work this spring. Training sessions are being held at Threave Nature Reserve in partnership with:

National Trust for Scotland
RSPB Scotland
Dumfries & Galloway Woodlands

This collaborative effort will help gather vital data on Willow Tit populations around Loch Ken & Threave— shaping future habitat creation and conservation priorities.

It's conservation in action. And it starts with community.



WE RECRUITED 11 NEW VOLUNTEERS.

One of our proudest moments this month?

We recruited 11 new volunteers.

At our Volunteer Recruitment Session at Galloway Activity Centre, people came along for a cuppa, a bacon roll and a chat with our team — and left ready to make a difference.

We're now welcoming:

Volunteer Rangers
Wildlife Recording & Survey Volunteers
Photographers
Community Cardiac Responders
Litter Champions
Water Safety Advocates
Junior Rangers (Ages 10–18)

No experience needed. Just care for this place and a willingness to get involved.

A huge thank you as well to Dalry Community Café for fundraising in support of the Glenkens Cardiac Responders Group — helping equip volunteers with portable defibrillators and refresh CPR skills locally.

EVENTS THAT BROUGHT US TOGETHER

The return of Steppingstones CDCX brought colour, energy and muddy smiles to The Crannog. From balance bikes to adult racers, it was brilliant to see all ages taking part and cheering each other on.

A big thank you to the Council team who were out last week sweeping pavements and streets with their wee lorry — it definitely made the job easier for us. What we collected was mostly from communal areas, hedges and spots the lorry couldn't reach.

In total we gathered:

- 3 full bags (almost a third of a wheelie bin) in Crossmichael
- Nearly 4 bags in New Galloway

Huge thanks to the brilliant volunteers who braved the weather and made the day such a success. Everyone we spoke to was delighted to see both villages getting a wee extra spring clean.

And behind the scenes, our rangers have been busy too — clearing blocked drains near the Burn car park, removing nails from fire pits, and gently reminding visitors to follow the Scottish Outdoor Access Code and take litter home.

Small actions. Big impact.





LOCH KEN TRUST JUNIOR RANGERS

We're excited to be kicking off our very first Junior Ranger session on Sunday 8th March, 13:00-15:30 – and it's going to be a great afternoon of outdoor adventure and teamwork.



Junior Ranger Volunteers Wanted!

Ages 10-18

We now have a date for our first junior ranger session!

Outdoor activities

Wildlife & conservation

Confidence & teamwork

Interested? Get in touch

rachael@lochken.org.uk

MOMENTS THAT MATTER

Among all the events and activity, there have been quieter moments too.

A mindful pause at the water's edge.

A shared flask on a colder day.

A volunteer staying behind to help tidy up.

Loch Ken has a way of bringing people side by side.



Looking Ahead to March

Next month brings:

Community Litter Picks

Ranger Education sessions for home-educated children

Youth Water Safety Programme 2026

Junior Ranger launch

Continued wildlife survey work

drax

WATER SAFETY

Be safe around water

Don't swim in the water

Don't enter the water if someone is drowning

Use a rope if someone is drowning

Help

I'm drowningggg



SAVE THE DATE!

**Our Loch Ken Family Water
Safety Day will be held on
Tuesday 4th August 2026**

We would love to hear from any groups , organisations, stallholders, businesses, individuals who would like to get involved in this growing event.

Please email office@lochken.org.uk



COOP LOCAL COMMUNITY FUND

CHOOSE US AS YOUR LOCAL CAUSE

Co-op Members can help us
receive a share of £5m from the
Local Community Fund.

Choose us on the Co-op App
or at coop.co.uk/membership



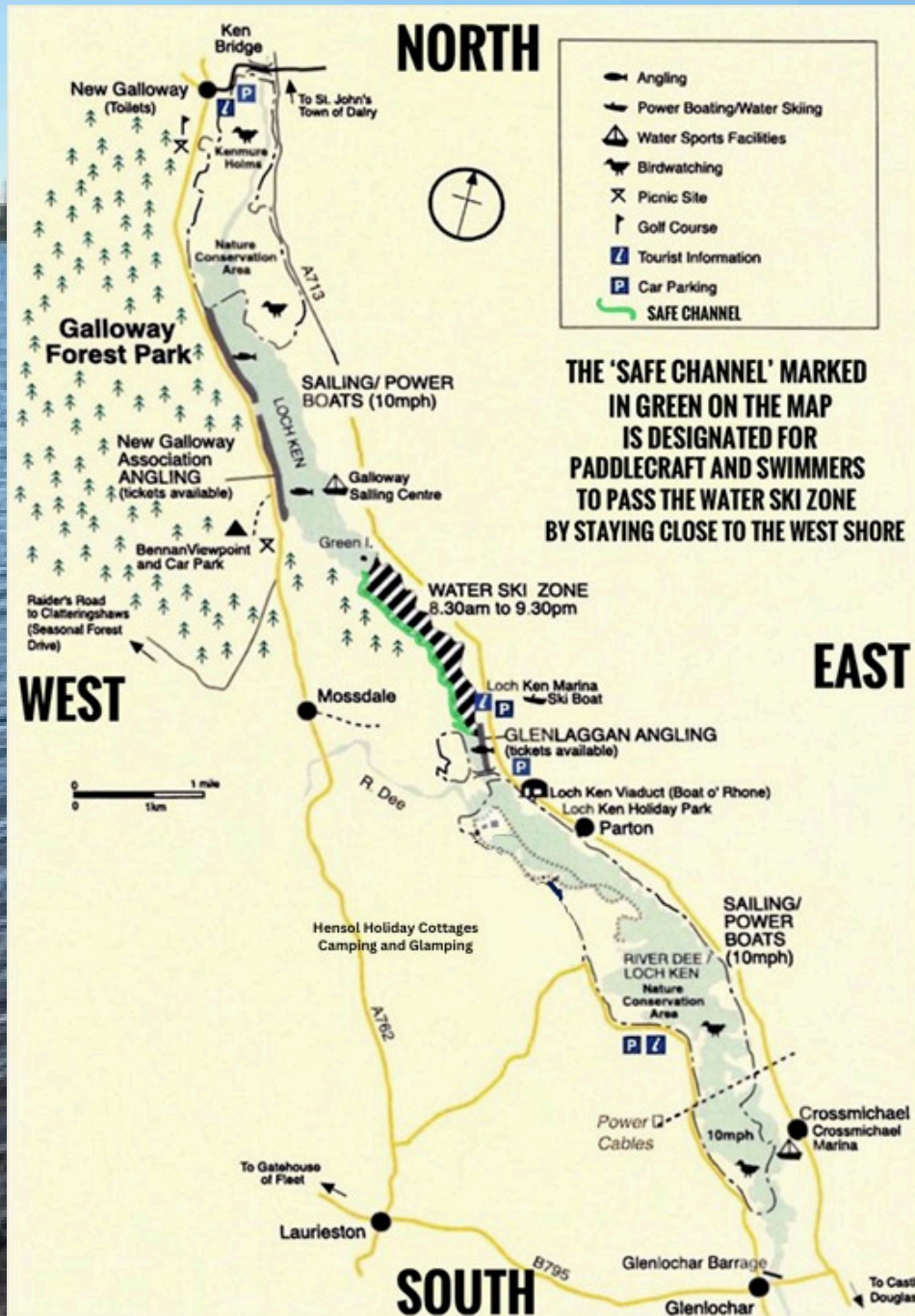
OWNED BY YOU.
RIGHT BY YOU.

**You can support the Loch Ken Trust through the Coop
Local community fund on the link below.
If you are a member you can support our project, or
become a member and support by following the link**

[HTTPS://MEMBERSHIP.COOP.CO.UK/CAUSES/94695](https://membership.coop.co.uk/causes/94695)

High Speed Zone

Please be aware that there is a High Speed Zone on Loch Ken. There is a designated channel where paddlecraft can pass, avoiding the High Speed Zone by staying close to the West Bank.



ON PATROL WITH THE LOCH KEN TRUST RANGER SERVICE

Our Ranger Service continues to patrol through the Winter months and make preparations for the season ahead.

Head Ranger

Leanne collected several bags of litter left on the shoreline.



CONTACT NUMBERS

07539029175 / 07918300889

RANGER@LOCHKEN.ORG.UK

Be water Smart

Listen for sirens
Look out for strobe lights

Take care of your dogs

Stay with an adult

Watch out for changes in water levels or flows

Obey all warning signs and keep out of restricted areas

Stay clear of dams, power lines and all electrical equipment

If someone is in the water call 999 or you can throw a rope to them



Never swim in the water

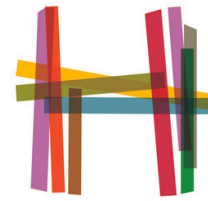


drax

We would like to extend our thanks to all of the funders who support us. We are extremely grateful for your support.



Foundation
Scotland



The Holywood Trust

Scottish Charity No. SC009942



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FOR ALL
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Garfield Weston
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www.gallowayassoc.org.uk



GALLOWAY GLENS
Landscape Partnership

