

NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2026



THE LOCHKEN TRUST

LOOKING AFTER TODAY, FOR THE SAKE OF TOMORROW.

Letter from the Editor

Welcome to our Spring Newsletter. Over the past few months, the Loch Ken Trust team, volunteers and partners have been busy delivering education sessions, supporting young people through our water safety programmes, running Junior Ranger activities and continuing ranger patrols around Loch Ken. This newsletter shares some highlights from recent projects and events, along with upcoming opportunities to get involved and stay connected with the work happening across the loch and wider community.

Lindsay Stewart- Editor

Short update about recent activity



Spring has been a busy season for the Loch Ken Trust, with a wide range of activities taking place across the loch and surrounding communities. From water safety education and ranger patrols to Junior Ranger sessions and community engagement events, it has been fantastic to see so many people getting involved. We have also continued working with schools, families, volunteers and partner organisations to help promote safe enjoyment of the water and local environment.

YOUTH WATER SAFETY PROGRAMME

The Loch Ken Youth Water Safety Programme 2026 is now underway, with the first session taking place this spring. More than 25 young people joined the session at Loch Ken, taking part in hands-on activities designed to build confidence on and around the water while learning essential life-saving water safety skills.



Delivered in partnership with the team at Galloway Activity Centre, the programme gives young people practical experience in a supportive outdoor environment while helping promote safe enjoyment of Loch Ken and other open water spaces.

A huge thank you to the instructors and staff at Galloway Activity Centre for providing such a positive and engaging learning experience on the water, and to all of the young people who took part.

We would also like to thank our funders for helping make this programme possible, including The Holywood Trust, Drax Group UK, Glenkens & District Trust, Tesco Stronger Starts and the Galloway Association of Glasgow.

EDUCATION SESSIONS



Over recent weeks, the Loch Ken Trust Ranger Education Programme has welcomed a range of young people to outdoor learning sessions focused on local wildlife and environmental awareness. The first sessions were attended by a small group of home-educated learners, followed by a visit from pupils at Kells Primary School.

Working alongside partners from the Galloway Fisheries Trust, sessions explored the topic of Invasive Non-Native Species (INNS) through interactive games, bioblitz activities and kick sampling, giving pupils the opportunity to identify and observe both native and non-native species within their local environment.

Educational INNS resource packs were also provided by Galloway Fisheries Trust, including activity materials and curriculum-linked learning resources to help continue discussions beyond the sessions.

JUNIOR RANGER SESSION

Members of the LKT Junior Rangers Group recently visited the village to learn more about woodland management and path building. The group got stuck into a range of practical tasks including moving rocks, shovelling soil and riddling stones, while continuing work previously started by the Resilience Team earlier in the week. It was a fantastic hands-on session and a great opportunity for young people to learn new skills while helping improve the local environment.

A big thank you to the Community Trust for allowing use of the Hall facilities, and to Culgruff House for providing access to the site, which made transporting equipment much easier for the group. We are going batty for our next Junior Ranger session on Friday 8th May 8-10pm. Please see [booking link below](#) for more information

[Junior Ranger Bat Event](#)



Ranger Patrols

The 2026 ranger season has begun with a strong focus on visitor engagement, environmental care, water safety and community partnership working around Loch Ken. Rangers have carried out regular land and boat patrols, speaking with visitors, anglers, paddlers and local residents while monitoring activity around the loch and supporting safe, responsible access to the area.

Throughout the pre-season and early spring period, significant work has taken place to prepare for the busy visitor season, including boat preparation, installation of bird nesting signage on islands around the loch, volunteer inductions, staff training and partnership planning meetings. Rangers and volunteers have also undertaken extensive litter picking across the loch shore, roadside laybys and village areas, collecting large amounts of rubbish and helping maintain the area for both wildlife and visitors.

Education and youth engagement have continued to grow this season through Junior Ranger sessions, home education activities and school visits. Young people have taken part in outdoor learning sessions focused on water safety, wildlife, invasive species, navigation, woodland management and environmental conservation.

The Loch Ken Youth Water Safety Programme launched successfully with more than 25 young people attending the first session at Galloway Activity Centre.

The ranger team has also continued to strengthen links with partner organisations, volunteers, community groups and local agencies, supporting projects including path improvements, climate resilience discussions, wildlife surveys and public engagement initiatives. Seasonal fire warnings, visitor safety advice and wildlife protection messaging have formed an important part of patrol work as visitor numbers begin to increase heading into summer.

WILDFIRE RISKS



Alert!



VERY HIGH WILDFIRE RISK

in place across Western Scotland
on Thursday, 23 April

THREAVE GARDEN & CRAFT FAIR

MON 4 MAY | 10-4 | £6 ENTRY | KIDS FREE

Craft marquee, plant stalls, free facepainting,
kids activities, gardening demonstrations & more

FOOD STALLS
New for 2026!

Scotland's
GARDENS
Scheme
OPEN FOR CHARITY

NATIONAL TRUST
for
SCOTLAND



WE ARE LOOKING FOR YOUR HELP

No experience
necessary – full training
will be provided. All you
need is a love of nature
and enthusiasm for our
work!



RANGER GROUP MEETING

Thank you to everyone who came along to the first Ranger Group meeting of the season. There are no formal minutes from the meeting as it was an informal discussion focused on how we move forward. We agreed that we will attend each community to listen to local views and understand how we can best support communities going forward.

Next Ranger Meeting

We will be taking the Ranger meetings out into local communities going forward, with the aim of listening to community views and identifying how we can best offer support.

The first session is planned for 3rd June in Crossmichael, with the exact location to be confirmed.



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.**

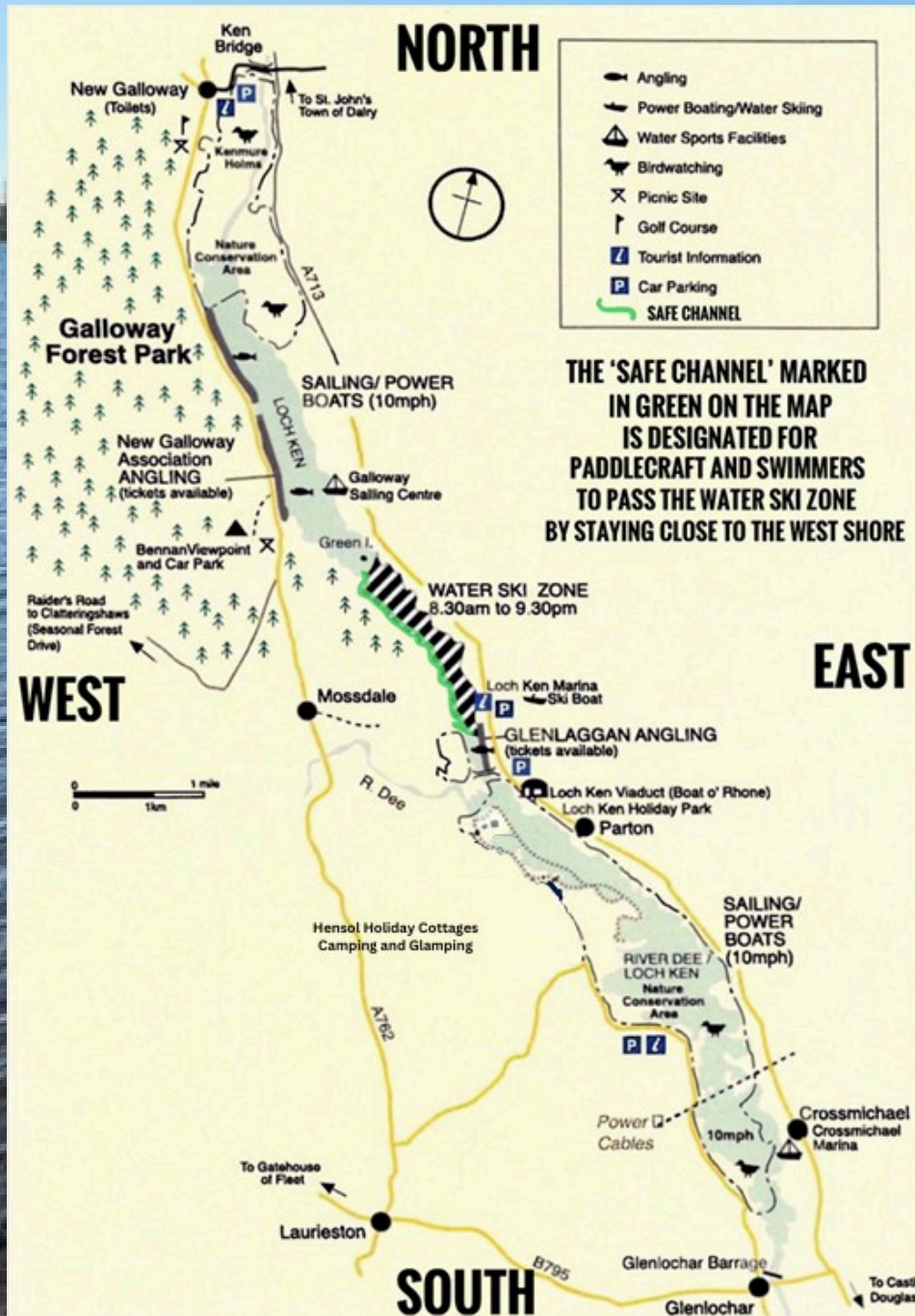
**If you are a member you can support our project, or
become a member and support by following the link**

[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

Now the season has begun you will see our rangers increasing patrols
both on and around Loch Ken.

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



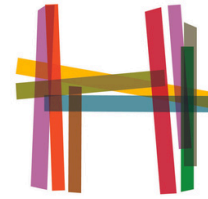
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We would like to extend our thanks to all of the funders who support us. We are extremely grateful for your support.

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**Foundation
Scotland**



The Holywood Trust

Scottish Charity No. SC009942



**AWARDS
FOR ALL
SCOTLAND**



**Garfield Weston
FOUNDATION**



Funded by



Charity Registration Number SC006642
www.gallowayassoc.org.uk



GALLOWAY GLENS
Landscape Partnership

