

SCOTO COMMUNITY TOURISM GATHERING LEARNING EXCHANGE DAY 3 MARCH 2023

Programme and Options

Programme:

Each exchange takes place on Friday 3rd March 2023 starting and finishing at the Duke of Gordon Hotel in Kingussie, Cairngorms National Park.

- 10 am - 10.30 am Groups assemble and meet their hosts, do round table introductions, and get an outline of the day ahead.
- 10.30 am Depart from Duke of Gordon Hotel
- 10.30 am - 4 pm Hosted learning exchange including lunch
- 4 pm Latest return to Duke of Gordon Hotel for onward travel home.

Who are these Learning Exchanges for and what will they gain from taking part:

The exchanges are targeted at community activists and will bring together individuals interested or involved in community tourism around six different themes. As a participant you will:

- gain a better appreciation of what others are achieving under the chosen theme, the operational models they use and solutions they have found to different challenges
- learn about what others have done in response to covid and recovery, the issues they have faced and the opportunities they have seized
- be equipped to develop and apply learnings that are relevant to your own circumstances

The exchanges are free to participants from community groups and organisations. A small fee is charged for anyone not currently working within a community organisation.

Six Themed Learning Exchanges:

Six themed learning exchanges are available for up to 10 people per exchange. Each exchange is hosted and presented by community organisations within the Badenoch and Strathspey area of the Cairngorms National Park. Each host will provide talks and tours showcasing projects they have been working on, operational models they are using and key lessons they have learned. Partners will also contribute where appropriate. There will be ample opportunity for questions and

discussions and for participants to share what they are working on to get peer-to-peer support and insights. We will have at least one other community led tourism operator from outwith the area joining each exchange to share their story and prompt group discussions on optional ways of doing things.

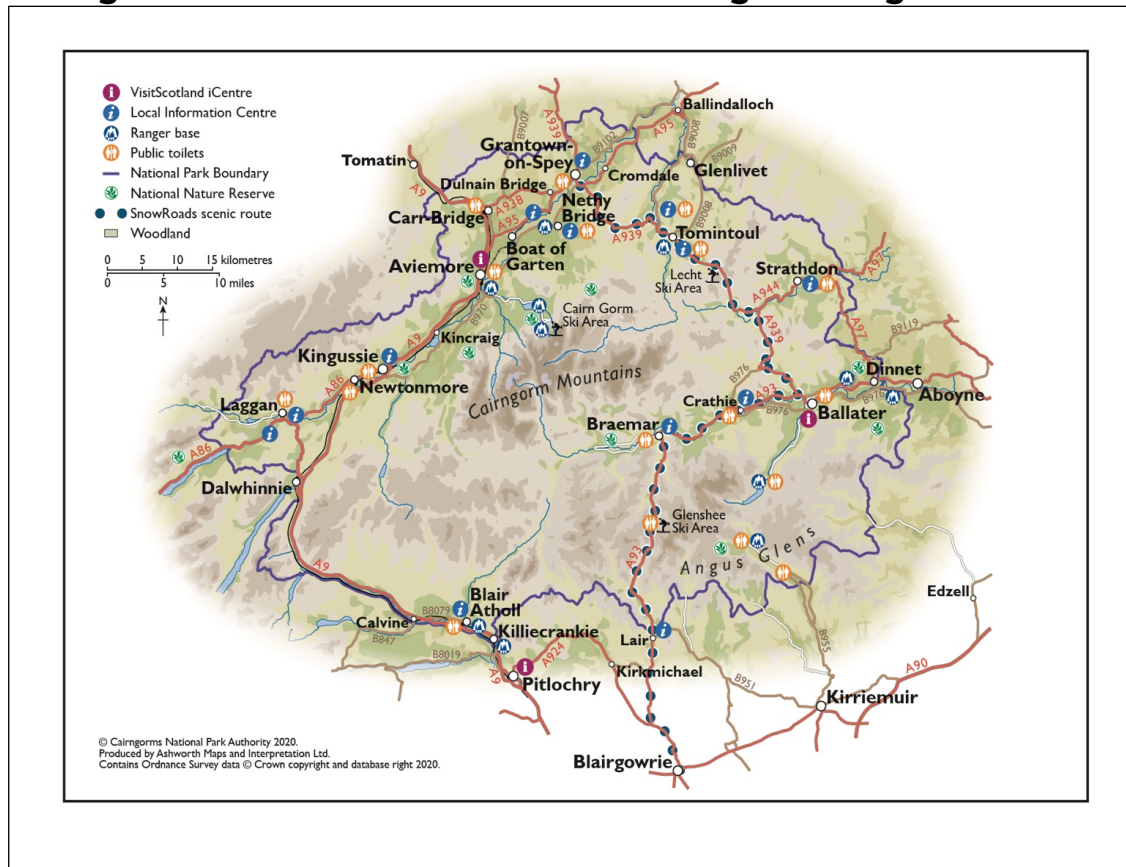
Timing and Travel:

Each exchange will start at 10.00 am with a briefing at the Duke of Gordon Hotel in Kingussie. Participants will either travel by minibus, car share or on foot (depending on location and group make-up). Lunch and refreshments will be provided. All exchanges will conclude in time for everyone to return to Kingussie by 4 pm at the latest for onward travel home.

OPTIONAL LEARNING EXCHANGES:

The exchanges have been created covering six very different themes and visiting different social enterprise, charitable and partnership initiatives. In all cases the community are at the heart of providing visitor facing services and experiences. Please note the details are being finalised and may be subject to tweaks and amendments. Weather will be a key consideration on the day.

Cairngorms National Park with the Learning Exchange Locations



	LOCATION	THEME
A	Glenlivet and Tomintoul	Community Owned Assets: Discovery Centre, Hostel and Dark Skies Park
B	Aviemore	Community Led Attractions, Transport and Activities
C	Kincraig and Glenmore	Managing for Visitors: Long distance Trails, Wild Camping, Motorhomes and Campsites
D	Kingussie	Community led Placemaking: cycle friendly, paths, community gardens and festivals
E	Newtonmore	Heritage & Culture: community led area initiatives, apps, asset inventories, trails, and heritage centres
F	Laggan	Community run mountain biking trails and services, social enterprise cafe and bike hire

A: COMMUNITY OWNED ASSETS

LOCATION	Glenlivet and Tomintoul
THEME	Community Owned and Operated Assets
TOPICS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Smuggler's Hostel - Tomintoul Discovery Centre and Museum - Glenlivet & Tomintoul Landscape Partnership - Dark Sky Park status - Local affordable housing
HOST(S)	- Oli Giles and Lydia Fisher, Tomintoul & Glenlivet Development Trust
TRAVEL	Car share – to be arranged
LUNCH	Lunch at the hostel provided by a local café.
CONTEXT	The Community has been active in a number of visitor related initiatives and recently took over the local museum and have re-opened it as a new Discovery Centre providing visitor information and developing the displays and collections. The Trust also now owns and operates the local hostel. In 2018 as part of a bigger Landscape Partnership Project progressed with Cairngorms National Park Authority, they achieved Dark Skies Park status and have an active events programme
SITES AND ACTIVITIES	Arrive in Tomintoul and explore the Discovery Centre which provides visitor information and is a museum. The community acquired this building and now operates it. Oli will share the story of the local development trust and how the Landscape partnership

	<p>helped build capacity and enable the community to acquire a number of assets and operate them.</p> <p>Lunch will be at the hostel with a guided tour and a walk to one of the dark sky sites nearby.</p> <p>Towards the end of the visit the group will visit the new local affordable housing which the trust has developed and has only just been completed.</p>
CLOTHING AND EQUIPMENT ADVICE	<p>This visit will not be overly strenuous and largely indoors with the exception of the walk to the dark skies site.</p> <p>Please have suitable footwear for the walk and wet weather layers.</p>

B: COMMUNITY RUN VISITOR ATTRACTIONS, EXPERIENCES AND ACTIVITIES

LOCATION	Aviemore and Badaguish
THEME	Community owned and operated Attractions and Experiences
TOPICS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Aviemore community ice rink - Community Transport - Business sponsorship of community activities - Outdoor centre promoting access for all - All abilities access to the countryside
HOST(S)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Kirsty Bruce, Aviemore & Glenmore Trust - Maggie Lawson MBE Badenoch & Strathspey Community ConnXions - Maureen Cuthbertson, Strathspey Railway Association - George Hobson, Badaguish Outdoor Centre & Speyside Trust - Gemma Hendry, Able2Adventure
TRAVEL	Community Minibus – NB numbers are restricted to 10
LUNCH	Route 7 café – a sponsor of the Aviemore Community Ice Rink
CONTEXT	<p>Early in 2021 the local community in Aviemore launched a campaign to purchase an ice rink and house it in a marquee within the town. With partnership funding, business sponsorship and significant community effort the rink opened in October 2021 creating eight new jobs and providing social skating and ice sports for the local community and visitors. The community now aims to develop a sport-sized rink within an insulated and energy-efficient building.</p> <p>Based at Aviemore station, the Speyside Railway Association operate the heritage railway in the summer</p>

	<p>months linking Aviemore to Broomhill on the Highland Line.</p> <p>Badenoch & Strathspey Community ConnXions operates a demand responsive transport system across the area with a time-tabled service and is also available for hire by visitors and to support events.</p> <p>Badaguish Outdoor Centre is operated by the Speyside Trust which seeks to promote outdoor access for all. It has a large centre with forest lodges, camping pods and group camping facilities. Able2Adventure is a community interest company based at Badaguish and offering a mobile outdoor activity provider for people of all ages and abilities and using adaptive equipment and a can-do approach.</p>
SITES AND ACTIVITIES	<p>Transport from Kingussie will be via the Badenoch & Strathspey Community Transport minibus and driven by Maggie who will tell their story.</p> <p>Kirsty will welcome everyone to the ice rink, tell their amazing story and then everyone will get a chance to try curling on the ice. Maureen from the Strathspey Railway Association will tell their story over lunch at Route 7 café - which is one of the ice rink's business sponsors.</p> <p>The afternoon will move to Badaguish in Glenmore to meet George from the Speyside Trust who run the Badaguish Outdoor Centre with a focus on access for all. They provide forest lodges and camping pods plus group camping. Hear about how their outdoor centre operates then meet Gemma from Able2Adventure, a social enterprise and community interest company delivering outdoor experiences for people of all abilities and seeking to develop more disability adventure sports..</p>
CLOTHING AND EQUIPMENT ADVICE	<p>The ice rink will be cold and the afternoon activities will be partially outdoors so please wear layers, have waterproofs for being outdoors and suitable footwear for being on the ice and outdoors (with a grip).</p>

C: MANAGING FOR VISITORS – WILD CAMPING, MOTORHOMES, CAMPSITES, ACTIVE TRAVEL, RANGERS AND LONG DISTANCE TRAILS

LOCATION	Kincraig, Glenmore and Loch Morlich
THEME	Managing for Visitors in the Countryside

TOPICS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Community involvement in the Speyside Way extension - Wild camping and campsites - Motorhome provision - Ranger services - Active travel and transport - Working in partnership
HOST(S)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Colin Simpson, Cairngorms National Park Authority Head of Visitor Services and Active Travel - Ali McKnight, Kinraig Community Trust - Aviemore & Glenmore Community Trust - TBC - Cairngorms Ranger
TRAVEL	People carrier and ranger vehicle
LUNCH	Rothiemurchus or Glenmore TBC
CONTEXT	<p>Glenmore is an extremely popular part of the National Park for outdoor activities and throughout the year. The Glen is a cul-de-sac and vehicle management, and alternative/active travel is a key consideration. A careful balance is needed in managing for visitors and meeting the needs of the local community both within the glen and in nearby Aviemore. Various initiatives have been progressed and more are in the pipeline. Partnership working is key to providing effective management for visitors</p>
SITES AND ACTIVITIES	<p>The visit will first visit Kinraig to meet Ali McKnight from Kinross Community Trust to hear how the community worked on the new path which is part of the extension to the Speyside Way and provides active travel links.</p> <p>The group will then travel to Inverdrue where Colin Simpson will share what has been happening with the Old Logging Way and active travel provision. Lunch will be indoors and allow ample time for discussion on the morning's visits. The afternoon will focus on the Cairngorm motorhome site which was recently developed and then visit Loch Molrich beach and camping area to hear about the role of rangers and to hear from the community on their proposals for an asset transfer of the campsite on FLS land.</p>
CLOTHING AND EQUIPMENT ADVICE	This visit will involve a number of outdoor visits and short walks. Please wear layers and have wet weather gear and sturdy footwear.

D : COMMUNITYY DRIVEN PLACE MAKING – CYCLE FRIENDLY, PATHS FOR ALL, COMMUNITY SPACES AND EVENTS & FESTIVALS

LOCATION	Kingussie
THEME	Community Driven Place Making
TOPICS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cycle friendly towns and villages - Active travel - Community hydro schemes and community grants - Community woodlands - Community paths groups - Rejuvenating community spaces - Community run festivals - Annual festival programmes
HOST(S)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sandy Maxwell Kingussie Community Development Company - Ian Moffat, Chair of KCDC and Badenoch Heritage Group - Alistair Bell, KCDC and Hydro Scheme (TBC) - Lydie Bocquillon, ARC and Film and Food Festival
TRAVEL	On foot
LUNCH	The Drill Hall TBC
CONTEXT	<p>Kingussie has undergone a number of transformations in recent years driven by the community. Relationships and partnership are key to making things happen and this exchange will explain how this has worked locally. KCDC is a key local community organisation which was set up in 2006 to build and operate a small hydro scheme on the river Gynack which flows through the town. This has enabled them to fund a grant scheme in the town for individuals and groups for initiatives that will benefit the local community. The hydro scheme also allowed them to take ownership of a small community woodland and to maintain and improve paths in the woodland and wider around Kingussie. More recently KCDC became the umbrella for a new group 'Cycle Friendly Kingussie' which recently received a gold award from Cycling Scotland for their work on large scale development projects and active travel initiatives plus weekly rideouts. Kingussie had an active festival programme for many years and post lockdown has successfully reintroduced</p>

	<p>the Food & Film Festival in February 2023 using as different delivery model.</p> <p>Sandy Maxwell is our host for the day and will be joined by Ian Moffat who chairs KCDC and Lydie Bocquillon from ARC in Kingussie who coordinates the festivals and is developing innovative ways to make the events more sustainable.</p>
SITES AND ACTIVITIES	<p>The exchange will take the form of a walk around the town visiting key sites and building and meeting local players. The route and length of the walk will be dependent on weather and the group composition and interests.</p> <p>Starting in Gynack gardens opposite the hotel Sandy will outline Cycle Friendly Kingussie's 5 year strategy and projects that have been progressed including links to neighbouring communities. The group will walk to Ardvonie Park to hear about the Community Hydro grants and the volunteer path group's work. KCDC will highlight some of the issues they have with on road walking and alternatives they are considering. The group will then visit the hydro and adjacent community woodland and volunteer built sections of path.</p> <p>Lunch will be at the Old School House and Lydie and Ian will share the work of ARC and the events and festivals activity and Badenoch Heritage Group.</p> <p>The afternoon will visit Caberfeidh Horizons who operate three charity shops and the community hub which have a strong interface with visitors too.</p>
CLOTHING & EQUIPMENT ADVICE	<p>This exchange will involve walking between different places within the town so sturdy footwear, layers and waterproofs are recommended. As noted, the route and length will be dependent on weather.</p>

E: COMMUNITY LED CULTURE AND HERITAGE INITIATIVES AND ATTRACTIONS

LOCATION	Newtonmore
THEME	Community led Culture and Heritage Initiatives
TOPICS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Community based heritage groups - heritage asset mapping and inventories - tangible and intangible heritage - area based heritage initiatives and trails - developing an app

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - heritage festivals - museums and heritage centres - working with lottery funding
HOST(S)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Graham Fraser, Badenoch Heritage - Karen Derrick, CEO Voluntary Action Badenoch & Strathspey - The Clan Macpherson Museum
TRAVEL	Car share
LUNCH	TBC
CONTEXT	<p>Badenoch the Storylands was a pilot Lottery funded Great Places initiative spanning three years. The project initially mapped and created an inventory of all the tangible and intangible heritage assets, then developed an interpretation plan with key outputs being an app, a series of trails and an annual heritage festival. The Badenoch communities of Kincaig, Kingussie, Newtonmore, Dalwhinnie and Laggan all came together to progress this exciting initiative ensuring each community was well represented and progressed new visitor facing heritage experiences on offer. The project also worked with the key visitor attractions in the area – the Highland Wildlife Centre and the Highland Folk Museum and HES who manage Ruthven Barracks and others important built heritage assets. The Clan Macpherson Museum in Newtonmore has recently been refurbished and has also progressed a digital project to allow clan members who cannot readily visit Newtonmore to view artefacts from within the museum collection.</p>
SITES AND ACTIVITIES	<p>Graham and Karen will take the group on a tour from Kingussie down to Newtonmore and visiting a number of the key sites in the villages including the award winning Highland Folk Museum. Over lunch they will share details of the Great Places project and their experience with developing the app, the trails and leaflet, and also the annual festival. The group will visit the recently refurbished Clan Macpherson Museum in Newtonmore.</p>
CLOTHING & EQUIPMENT ADVICE	<p>This will involve a few site visits and short walks subject to the weather. Sturdy footwear and layers are recommended with wet weather outer clothes.</p>

F: COMMUNITY RUN MOUNTAIN BIKING AND WALKING TRAILS

LOCATION	Laggan Wolftrax
THEME	Community run mountain biking and walking trails
TOPICS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Operating a mountain bike facility - Building different grades of track - E-bike hire and bike services - Social enterprise café
HOST(S)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cristian Pizarro, Business Development Officer and colleagues at Laggan Forest Trust and Laggan Wolftrax
TRAVEL	Car share (agree in advance)
LUNCH	Lunch at the Laggan Wolftrax Cafe
CONTEXT	The mountain bike trails at Laggan Wolftrax are owned and maintained by Forestry and Land Scotland with the Centre run by the Laggan Forest Trust with a social enterprise café, toilets and showers. The centre has recently been extended with an outdoor area for the café and new interpretation boards installed. A new paths leaflet has been published, and there is work underway on developing the trail network.
SITES AND ACTIVITIES	The plan, subject to weather is to do some cycling on e-bikes (being provided) to experience the Laggan Wolftrax trails, recent investments and also see where new contract works are about to begin on a blue trail to understand the challenges and opportunities. The cycle will not be overly strenuous and suit most fitness levels. Over lunch Cristian will explain how the Laggan Forest Trust operates Laggan Wolftrax and its component parts, funding for the trails and the bike service and hire operation. The café is a social enterprise, and the group will also learn how it operates (which is 12 months a year).
CLOTHING & EQUIPMENT ADVICE	The biking will be weather dependent. Assuming it does go ahead please come dressed suitably for cycling including layers for warmth, wet weather gear and suitable footwear. If the cycling doesn't go ahead there will e some outdoor walking to view different features.