

Galloway and Southern Ayrshire UNESCO Biosphere

Ed Forest – Director



GALLOWAY AND
SOUTHERN AYRSHIRE
BIOSPHERE

Galloway and Southern Ayrshire Biosphere

Where is the Biosphere?

- Approx 9,800 km² (inc. 4000 km² marine)
- Centred on Galloway Hills
- New Geography
- 3 local authorities
- 100+ communities
- 100,000+ people
- 3645 business (90% micro business)

Contains Ordnance Survey data
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Core - Cairnsmore of Fleet, Merrick Kells and Silver Flowe



Buffer - Galloway Forest Park



Transition - Farmed Landscape



Transition - Marine Environment

Galloway and Southern Ayrshire Biosphere Partnership

We are a not-for-profit, non-regulatory organisation (registered Scottish charity SC044137)

Designated UNESCO Biosphere in 2012

Partnership Board -- 18 Trustees + Chair

- Representation from Public Sector, Private Business, Communities and Environmental NGO's who live and work in Galloway and Southern Ayrshire.
- Sets the strategic direction of Biosphere and monitors delivery

Audit Risk and Governance Committee

Thematic Groups - Involving Staff and Trustees and local representatives

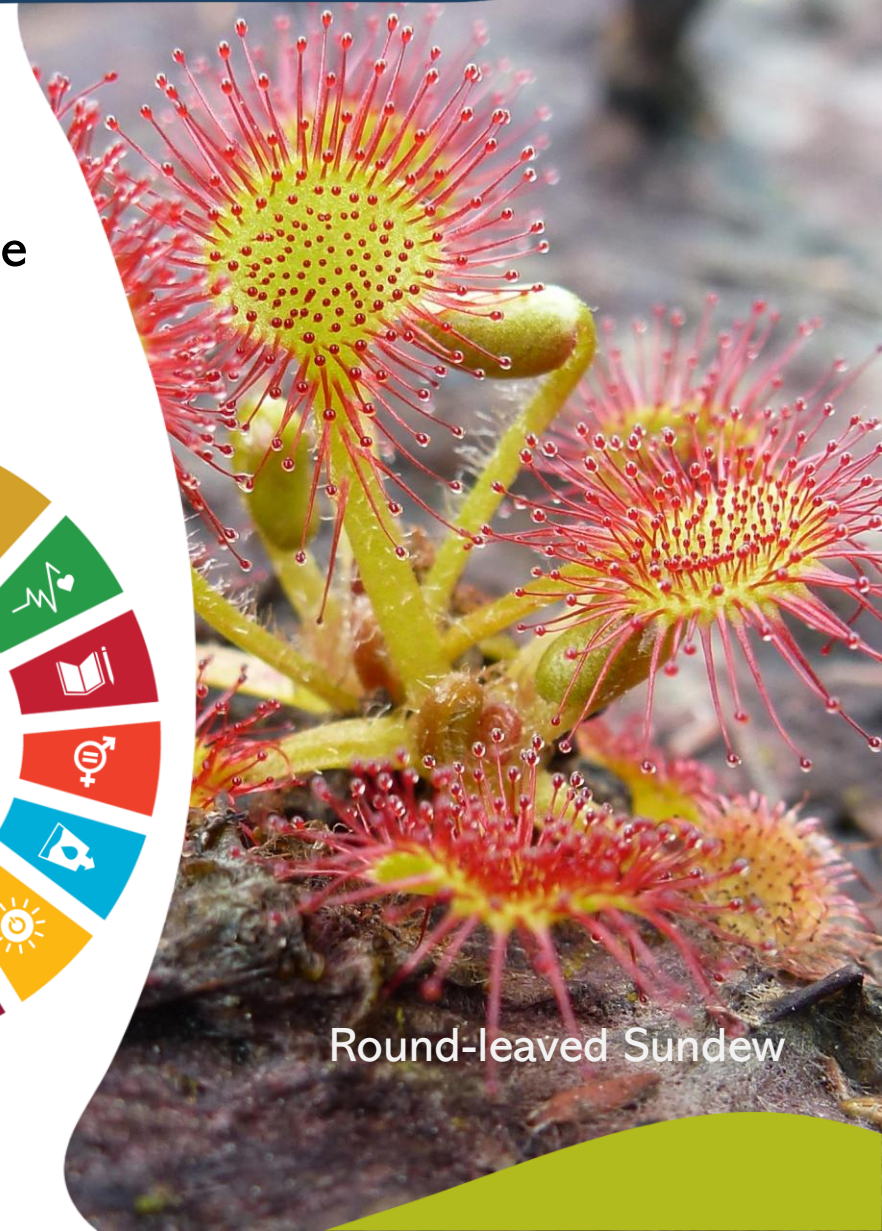


GSA Biosphere Partnership

The GSA Biosphere vision:

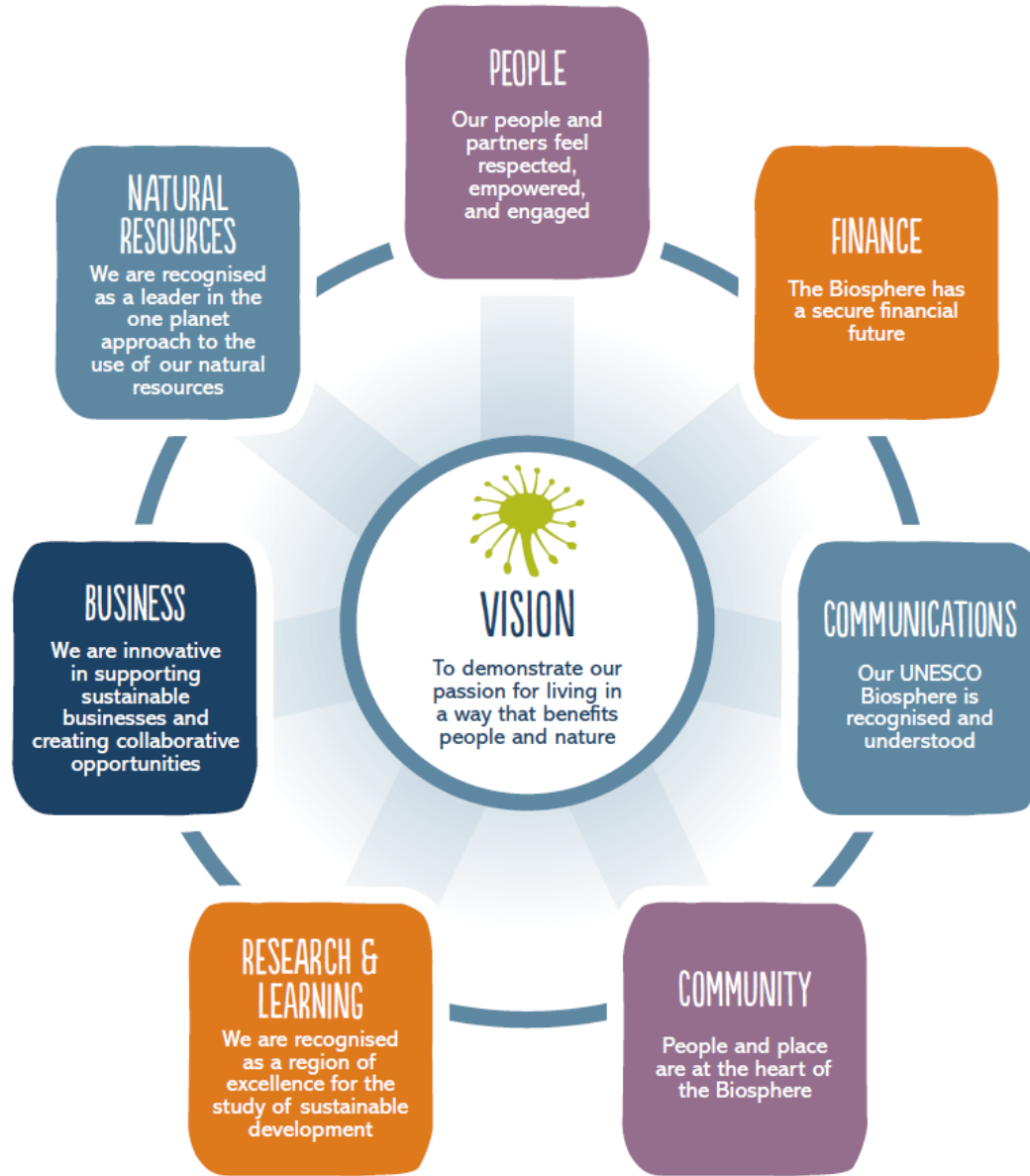
“Demonstrating our passion for living in a way that benefits people and nature.”

- Encourages **sustainable development** that will keep people living and working in the UNESCO Biosphere
- **Research and Learning** - Supports a better shared understanding of local and global, social and environmental issues
- **Conservation** - Promotes the protection of wildlife, habitats and ecosystems
- Seeks to address the impact of **climate change**



Round-leaved Sundew

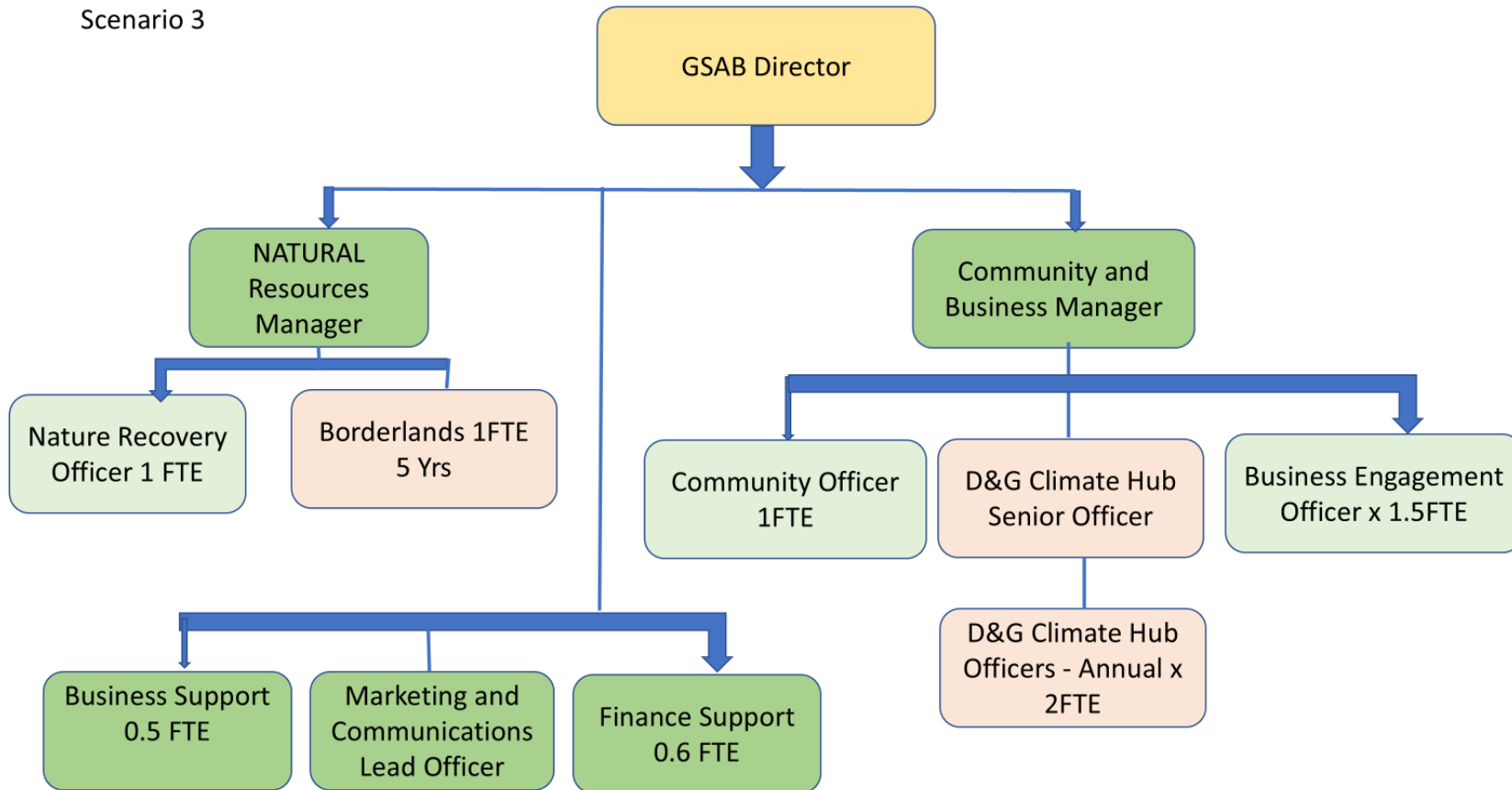
Strategic Plan 2023-33



Round-leaved Sundew

Galloway and Southern Ayrshire Biosphere Partnership

Scenario 3



Business Development

- Biospheres are the **only internationally recognised ‘badge’** for demonstrating excellence in sustainable development.
- The Biosphere brings us an **opportunity to brand and market** the businesses and communities of SW Scotland under the **international banner of being a UNESCO Biosphere**



Biosphere - Good for Business

260 Business Proud Supporters

OUR BIOSPHERE CHARTER

By signing up as a Proud Supporter you will demonstrate a commitment to our UNESCO Biosphere and help shape a sustainable future for this region.



GALLOWAY AND
SOUTHERN AYRSHIRE
BIOSPHERE



THE SIX PRINCIPLES OF THE BIOSPHERE CHARTER ARE:

- Help conserve the natural resources of the Biosphere
- Support the economy to benefit people and nature
- Promote cultural heritage and local products
- Contribute to the health and wellbeing of the community
- Develop knowledge, understanding, and promote research
- Raise awareness of Galloway & Southern Ayrshire Biosphere

If you live, work or play in the Galloway & Southern Ayrshire Biosphere then it belongs to you – be a part of it! Our Proud Supporter scheme is open to all – individuals, businesses, schools, organisations and community groups – and you don't have to live here to join.

SCAN THE QR CODE TO SIGN UP,
OR TO CONTACT OUR TEAM. EMAIL
INFO@GSABIOSPHERE.ORG.UK

FOR NEWS AND OPPORTUNITIES
TO GET INVOLVED, VISIT
WWW.GSABIOSPHERE.ORG.UK

GALLOWAY & SOUTHERN AYRSHIRE UNESCO BIOSPHERE
BROUGHTON, CARRON, STROMBOL, NEWTON CRYMMAH, AIG 7/2
ROSSIGNOL SCOTTON, DUNDEE SCOTLAND



unESCO
Galloway & Southern Ayrshire
Biosphere Reserve
1992-2004
Member of the Biosphere
Reserve Network



INSPIRE A POSITIVE FUTURE

WWW.GSABIOSPHERE.ORG.UK

Biosphere Certification Mark

- Established 2019
- Trade marked
- Independent Awards Panel
- Business renews every 3 years
- Currently free to businesses
- 50 Certification Marks
Businesses

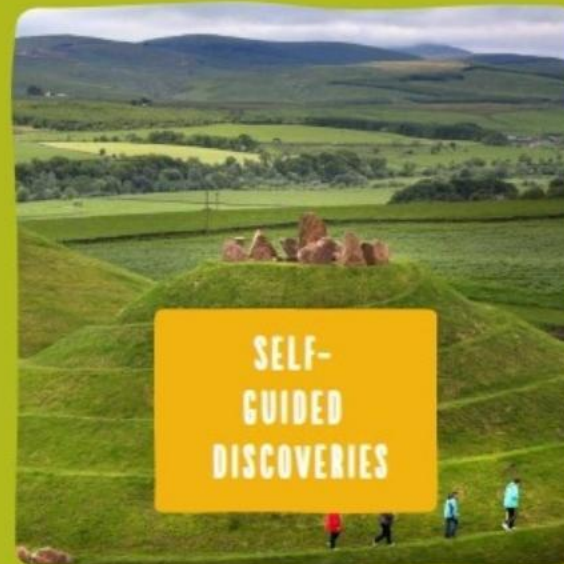
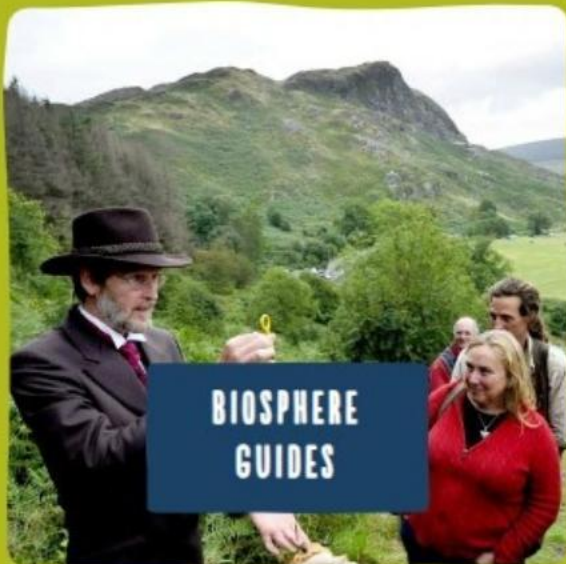


Experience the Biosphere

- Encourage business development
- Encourage active networking
- Shared marketing and brand building (businesses and GSAB)
- Integration with tourism organisations
- Visit Scotland UNESCO Trail



<https://www.gsabiosphere.org.uk/explore-the-biosphere/biosphere-experiences/>



Event Charter

Name of Event



GALLOWAY AND
SOUTHERN AYRSHIRE
BIOSPHERE

PLEDGES TO SUPPORT THE FOLLOWING PRINCIPLES:

- Help to conserve the natural resources of the Biosphere
- Support the economy to benefit people and nature
- Promote cultural heritage and local products
- Contribute to the health and wellbeing of the community
- Develop knowledge, understanding and promote research
- Raise awareness of the Galloway and Southern Ayrshire Biosphere



unesco

Galloway & Southern Ayrshire
Biosphere Reserve
since 2012
Man and the Biosphere
Programme

Biosphere Communities programme

Currently 14 featured Biosphere Communities

(Not to be confused with communities in our Biosphere 😊 , of which there are over 100).

- These are communities who want to have a stronger association with the UNESCO Biosphere for their own reasons;
- Tourism opportunities
- Aligns with their action plan
- Aligns with a community ethos of sustainability

Biosphere Communities

- Sense of Place activities.
- Their own page on GSAB website & social media take-over.
- Receive delivery of our entire offer across all teams and any new resources first.
- Biosphere Communities network that share experience and feed directly into GSAB board.
- GSAB can be part of community projects and events and act as funding partners.



Education & Learning

Learning resources for all ages include;

- Learning for Sustainability Toolkit and Blue Biosphere toolkit for primary schools
- Biosphere Badge for Scouts and Guides
- Certified carbon literacy training for community groups and secondary schools
- Biosphere Footsteps – a series of workshops for community groups focussed on key topics such as climate and biodiversity.

In development now:

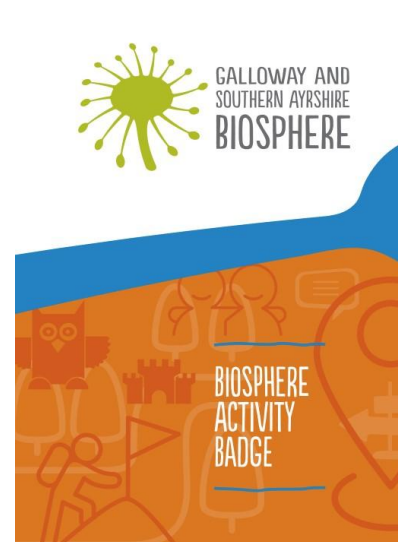
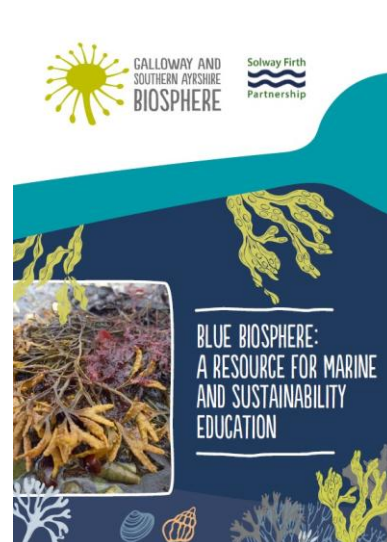
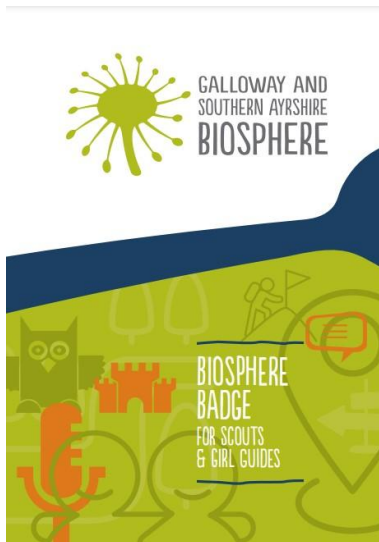
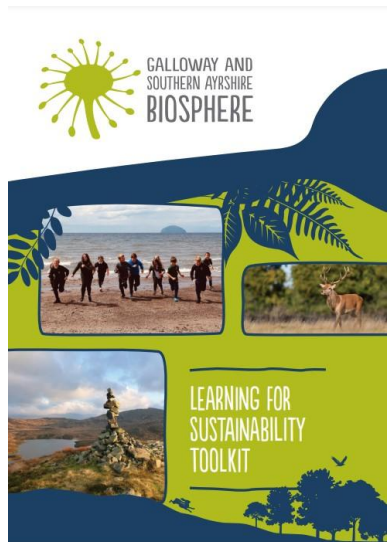
- Biosphere achievement badge for outdoor centres & youth groups
- New research project to develop climate learning resources for additional supports needs young adults.



Education resources

Our resources are all *locally based*. They feature local maps, communities and landmarks that help young people fully connect with learning.

- Based on embedding sustainability ethos
- Do not require leaders/teachers to be knowledgeable on the subjects – encourage learning together through interactive learning.
- Are curriculum linked.
- Include indoor & outdoor learning.
- Feature heavily the SDGs.
- Are made in partnership with delivery organisations or schools.
- Are free to schools and groups.












Natural Resources Management

- Ecosystem Services Approach
- Natural Heritage Management Plan 2016
- Changing Landscape Event 2018
- Moorland Forum 2018
- Forland 2019 – 21
- PhD on Land Use Trade Off's
- Annual Nature Friendly Farming Conference



High Focus Species and Habitats

High Focus Habitats	 Black Grouse	 Golden Eagle	 Golden Plover	 Curlew	 Red Squirrel	 Water Vole	 Brown Trout	 Juniper	 Downy Willow
Blanket & Raised Bog	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		
Upland heathlands	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	
Purple Moor grass & Rush pasture	✓	✓		✓		✓			
Montane heath & Montane scrub	✓	✓	✓					✓	✓
Native upland oak woodland	✓				✓				
Native wet woodland	✓				✓				
Acid grassland	✓	✓	✓	✓					
Oligotrophic (nutrient poor) lochs						✓	✓		
Other habitats important for some high focus species									
Woodland fringe for black grouse	✓	✓						✓	✓
Woodland for red squirrel					✓				
Fresh water habitats for water vole & Brown trout						✓	✓		
Coastal habitats for curlew			✓	✓					



Northern Brown Argus

Ayrshire Tree Planting Grant

- Small areas (0.25ha/0.6 acres)
- Native trees
- Up to £1,000
- Within South Ayrshire & Biosphere

A public / private funded opportunity;
2023/24 as a £10k Project
2024/25 has increased to £25k
2025/26 projected to increase to £35k



Natural Capital

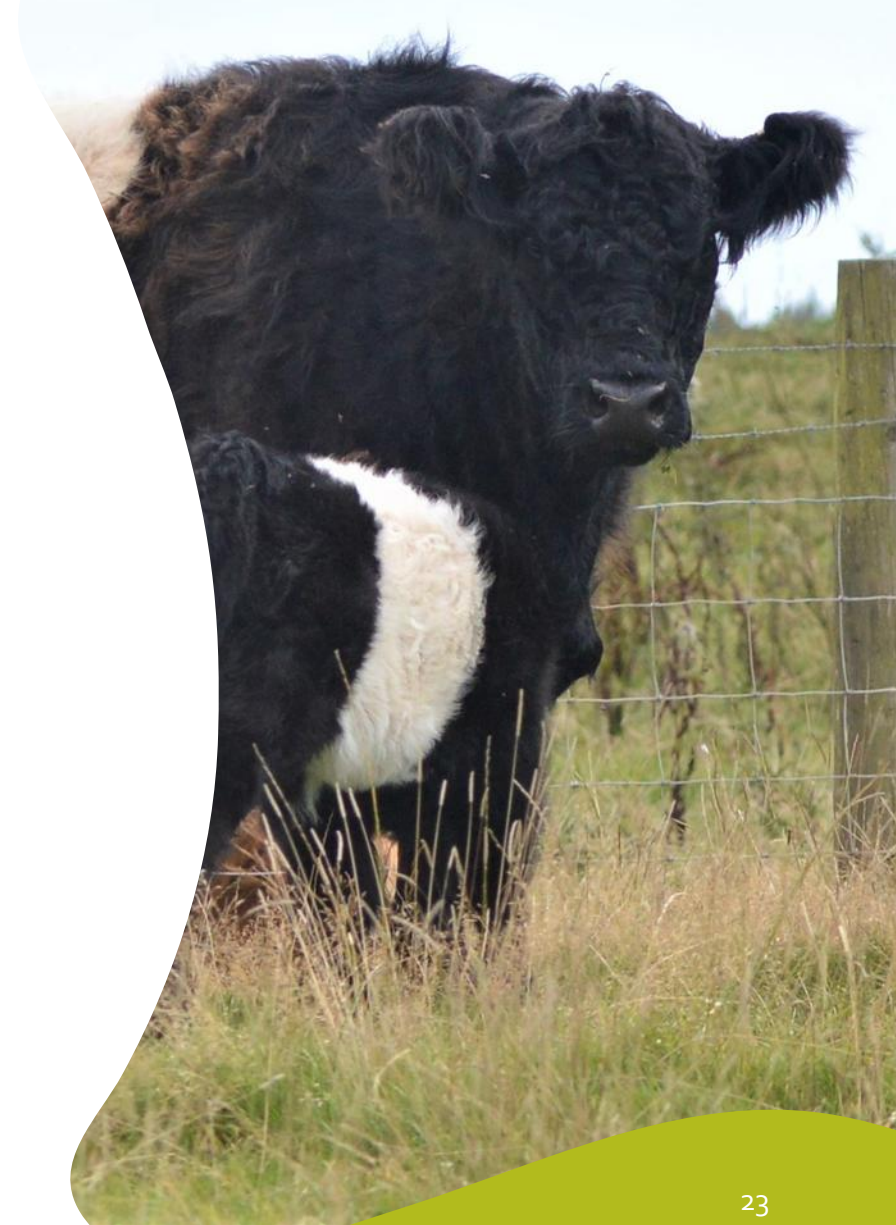
- South of Scotland Natural Capital Innovation Zone
- Twin crises of biodiversity loss and climate change
- Focusing on Nature Based Solutions
- Securing private investment
- Supporting a Just Transition



Natural Capital – Audit Methodology

Compile, evaluate and select audit tools for six project “pillars” as basis for methodology to conduct whole-farm planning

- Biodiversity
- Water footprint
- Soil health
- Carbon sequestration
- Operation inputs and emissions
- Landscape character and access



Natural Capital – OPIN (On Farms Plan Integrated with Nature)

Work with 12 farms over 5 years to:

- Conduct Natural Capital audits
- Develop holistic whole farm plans
- Fund Natural Capital interventions
- Measure change
- Share learnings



Natural Capital – River Nith

- Review research from a range of partners that have been / are active in the River Nith Catchment area
- Explore options for catchment modelling taking account of hydrology, biodiversity, soils, carbon, ghg emissions, land use etc.
- Produce a draft project framework for comment by the commissioning team
- Produce a final project framework that can be taken forward by the lead partner, Galloway and Southern Ayrshire UNESCO Biosphere



Partnership Working

Galloway and Southern Ayrshire Biosphere Partnership SCIO (Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation)



Biosphere Enterprises

- Set up in 2023 a Company Ltd by Guarantee
- Three main focuses;
- Consultancy services
- Biosphere Experiences
- Merrick Scottish Blackfaced Sheep Knitwear



Merrick Scottish Blackface Knitwear

- Development of Website
www.merrickscotland.com
- BBC 'The One Show'
- Merrick Scottish Blackface Sheep Knitwear
Official Online retail Launched 28th October
<https://merrickscotland.com/>

MERRICK
SCOTTISH BLACKFACE KNITWEAR

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Merrick specialises in luxury knitted outerwear

Our knitwear is created using 100% Scottish Blackface wool, the finest grade, sourced from local hill farms. The quality of our unique yarn and the techniques we use in creating each piece promises years and decades of wear. Beautiful and robust – made to last beyond a lifetime.

Raised in the Southern Uplands, the Scottish Blackface sheep roam. Bold,





GALLOWAY AND SOUTHERN AYRSHIRE BIOSPHERE

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Heath Spotted Orchid