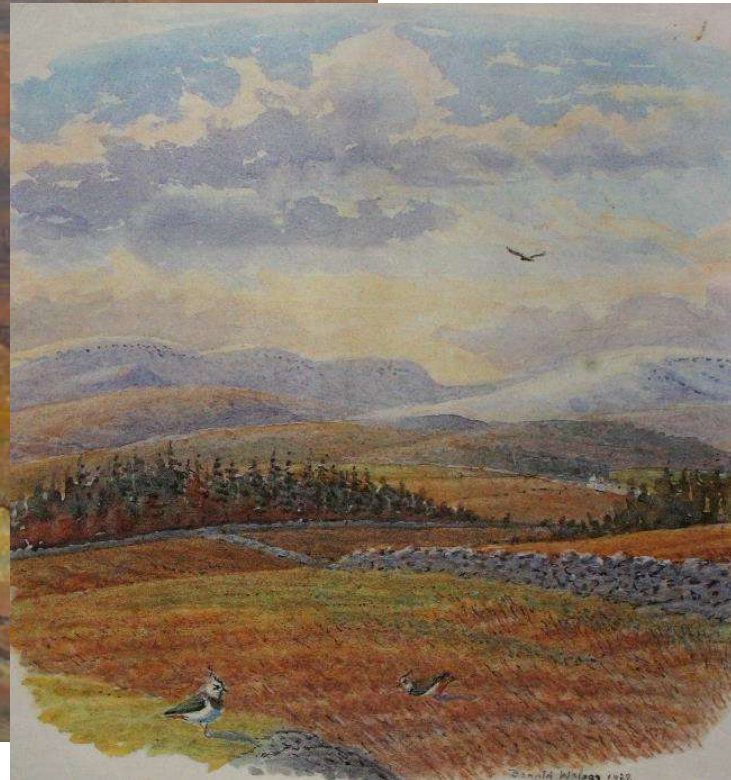
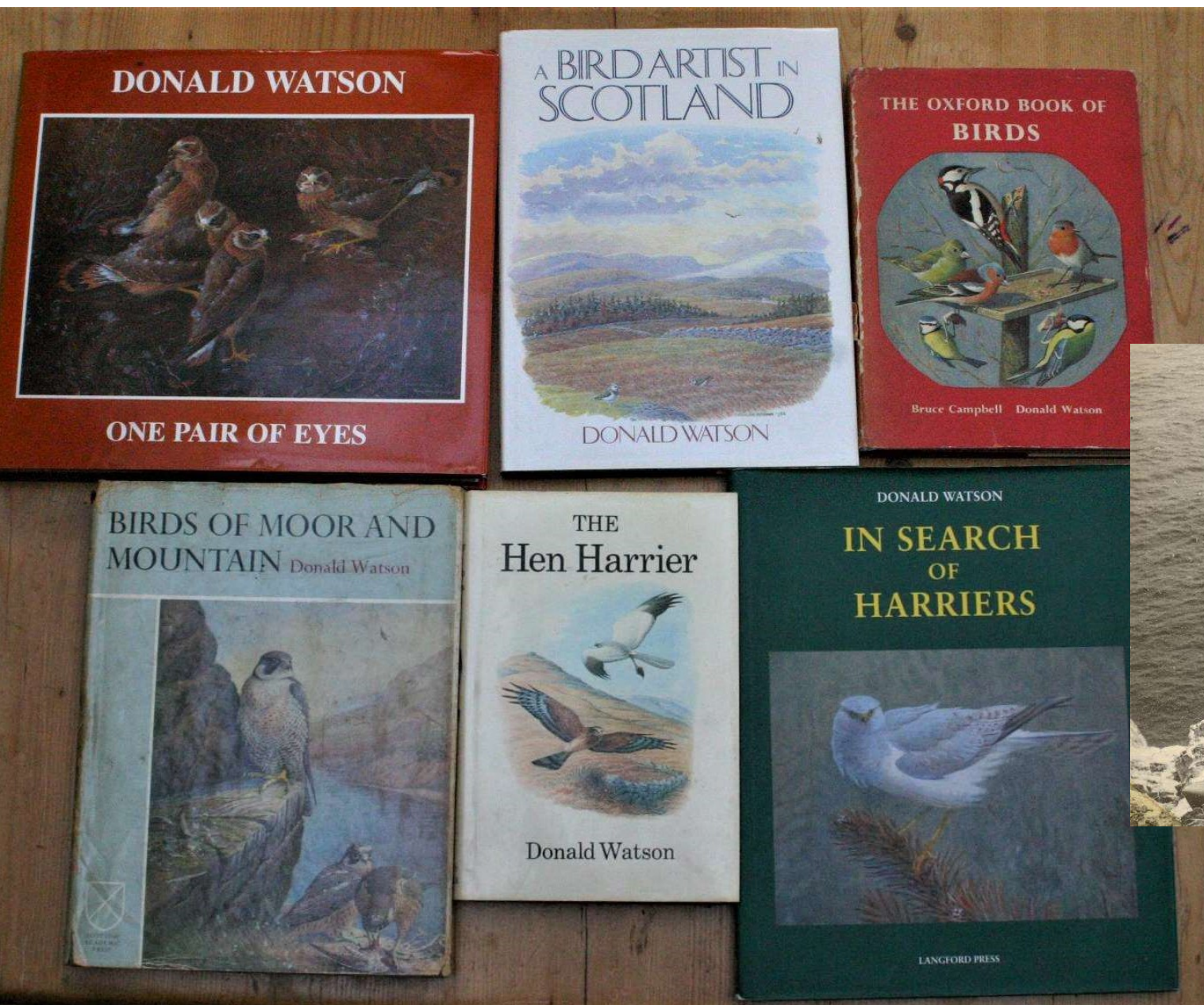


**Watson Birds Trails:  
paintings and perceptions  
Roger Crofts**



[www.watsonbirds.org](http://www.watsonbirds.org)





**Artist, observer, recorder  
and author**





# DONALD WATSON BIRDS, NATURE & ART TRAILS & DISPLAYS

WATSON BIRDS 

Watson Birds celebrates the work of bird artist & nature writer Donald Watson and seeks to instil public interest and enthusiasm for birds, nature and the arts. The logo captures 3 birds. The Golden Eagle is the iconic bird of Scotland studied by Donald's ornithologist son Jeff. The Hen Harrier was the main focus of Donald's scientific studies, writings and paintings. The Swift nests in the village of Dalry and is an evocation of the Watson's long connection with the village.

## DONALD WATSON

Donald Watson lived with his wife Joan at Barone 54 Main Street St John's Town of Dalry from the early 1950s until his death. He was the most prolific bird artist of his generation in Britain. His paintings and sketches number many thousands and are still found on the walls of many houses in The Glenkens. Donald was a careful observer of birds in the field and in the garden. He was a campaigner for nature conservation and an insightful critic of bad practice, especially in commercial forests. He captured the imagination of many through his paintings and prose. His writings are an evocative combination of inspiring art, acute observation and a kindly spirit. His *crie de Coeur* was "I am always happiest in relating birds to their environment".



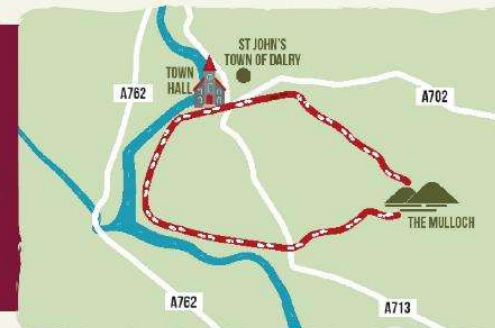
## WATSON GALLERY THE SMIDDY BALMACLELLAN

We hold periodic exhibitions of Donald's paintings in the Watson Room at The Smiddy, along with a permanent show of his easel, painting table and other artefacts.



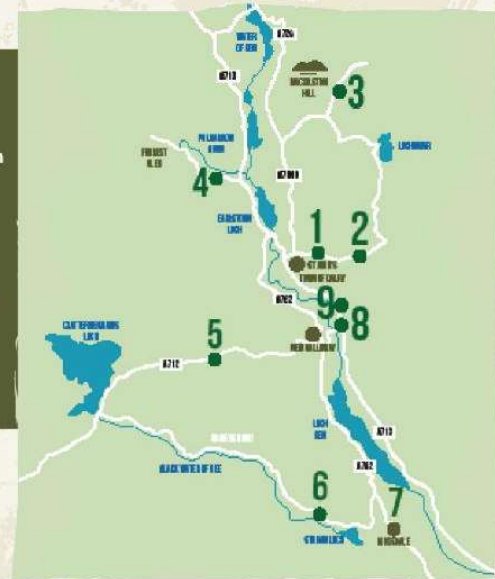
## A WALK

Enjoy one of Donald's favourite walks, providing a good selection of birds and great views of the countryside around the village. The entire route is easily walked in two hours by the able-bodied, and in just over an hour at a brisk pace.



## A RIDE

The trail is arranged as a loop beginning and ending in Dalry with nine stops at Donald's outdoor painting sites. It is approximately 47 miles long. However, the Raiders Road is closed from October to March and then the trail is reduced to eight points and to about 38 miles. Visitors can, of course, undertake the trail by any route they choose and visit whichever sites they wish.



For more information go to  
[www.watsonbirds.org](http://www.watsonbirds.org)

[www.watsonbirds.org](http://www.watsonbirds.org)

Part of the UNESCO Galloway and Southern Ayrshire Biosphere

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Community  
& Arts Trust



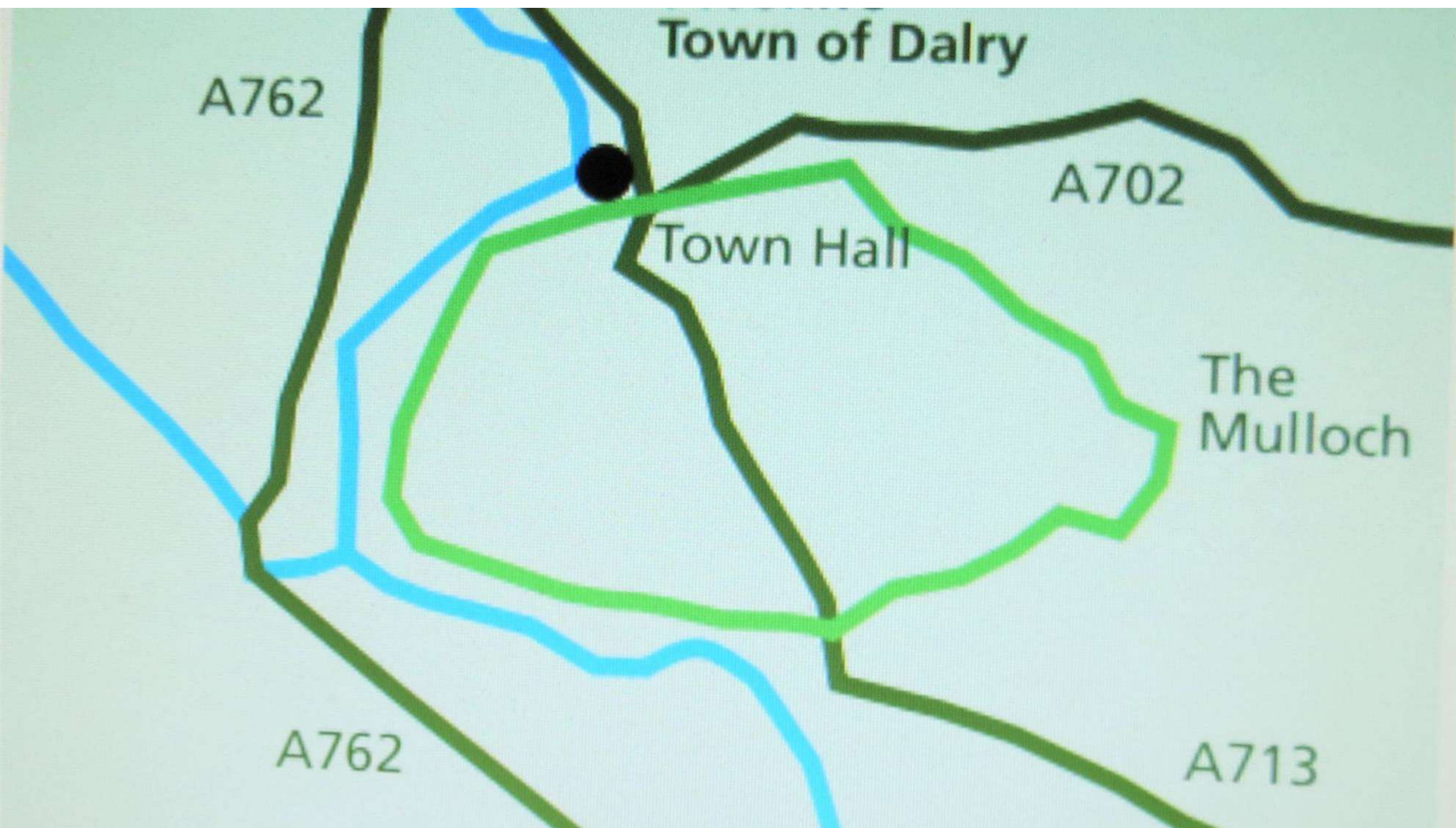




Viewing and thinking about  
birds and  
the changing landscape:  
Watson Trails







Town of Dalry

A762

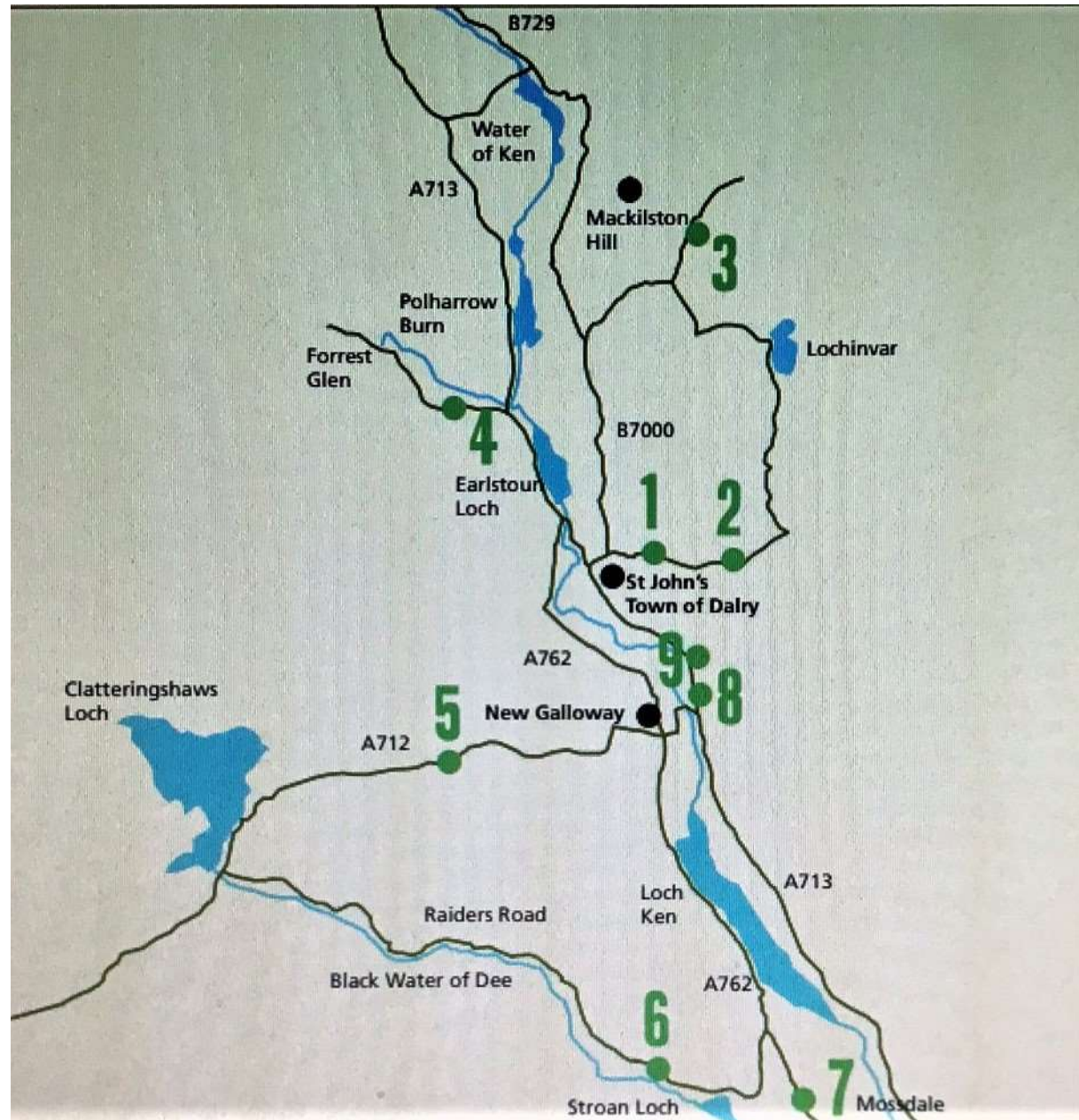
A702

Town Hall

The  
Mulloch

A762

A713





# DONALD WATSON ART TRAIL SITE 1 MOSS RODDOCK



## WHAT DONALD WATSON SAW AND PAINTED



A short walk from his home, Donald painted curlews grazing in pasture fields above the village. Looking towards Dalry & The Rhinns of Kells. 1951.

## WHAT'S YOUR VIEW?

How different is the scene now?

What do you like and what could be better?

How do you react?

Why not take a photo, make a video, write some prose or a poem.

Send us your views to [info@watsonbirds.org](mailto:info@watsonbirds.org)

For more information go to [www.watsonbirds.org](http://www.watsonbirds.org)



## WHERE NEXT?

NX653814 Continue along the A702 for 1½ miles. Stop in the old quarry on left hand side opposite the path to Holy Linn waterfall.



[www.watsonbirds.org](http://www.watsonbirds.org)

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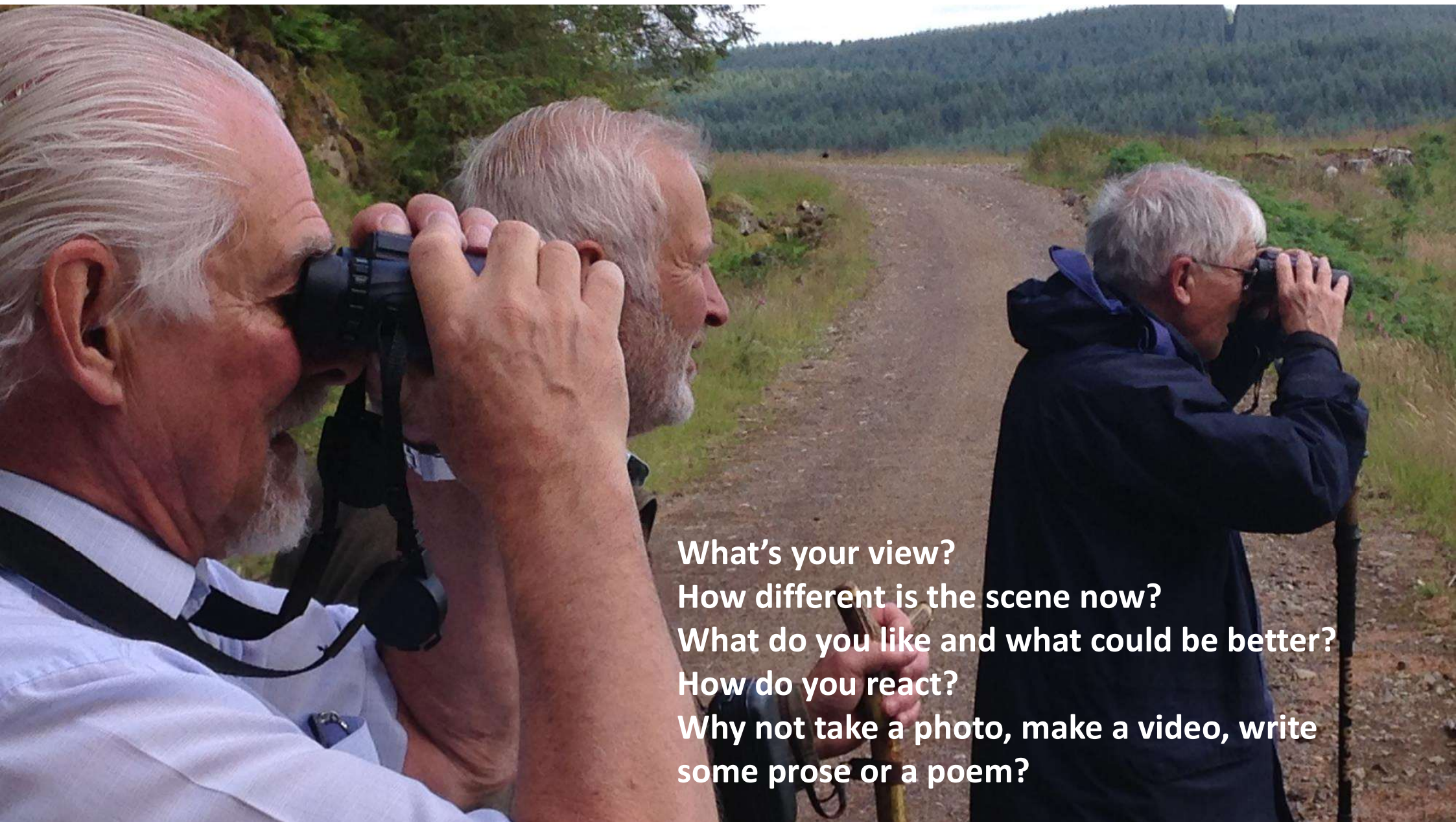
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Community  
& Arts Trust

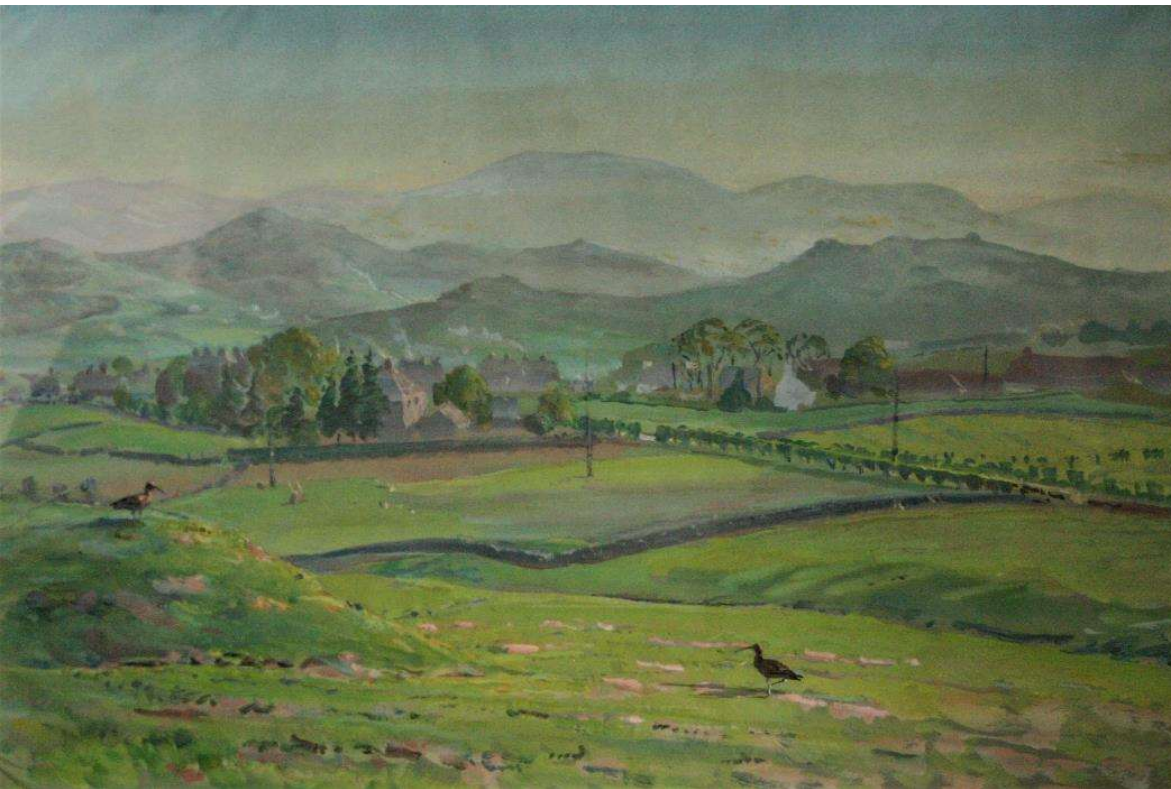






**What's your view?  
How different is the scene now?  
What do you like and what could be better?  
How do you react?  
Why not take a photo, make a video, write  
some prose or a poem?**





1951

## Site 1 Moss Roddock

2018







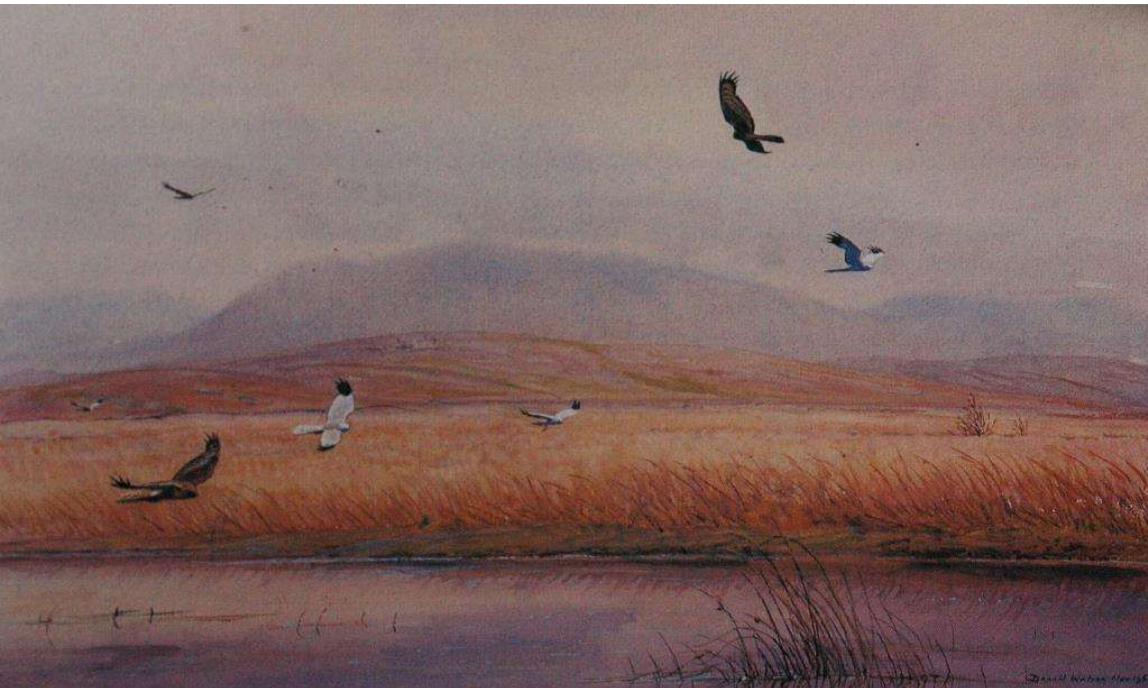
1952

## Site 4 Polharrow

2018







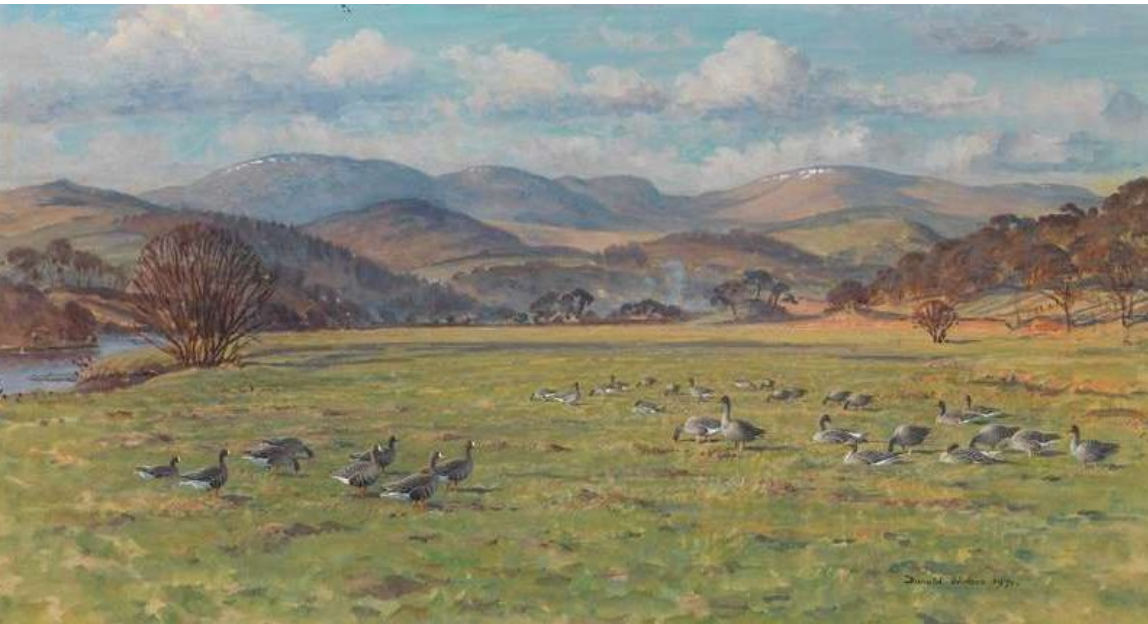
1969

## Site 6 Airie Flow Boddam's Isle

2018







**1971**

## **Site 9 Grennan Holm**

**2018**





## How do we cope with landscape change?

“I am very concerned about the huge increase of conifer afforestation in this area...I have spoken to many local people and visitors who are horrified at what has been happening...I have noted the mainly adverse changes in landscape quality and wildlife it has brought.”

Donald Watson to  
Ian Lang MP  
December 1987

















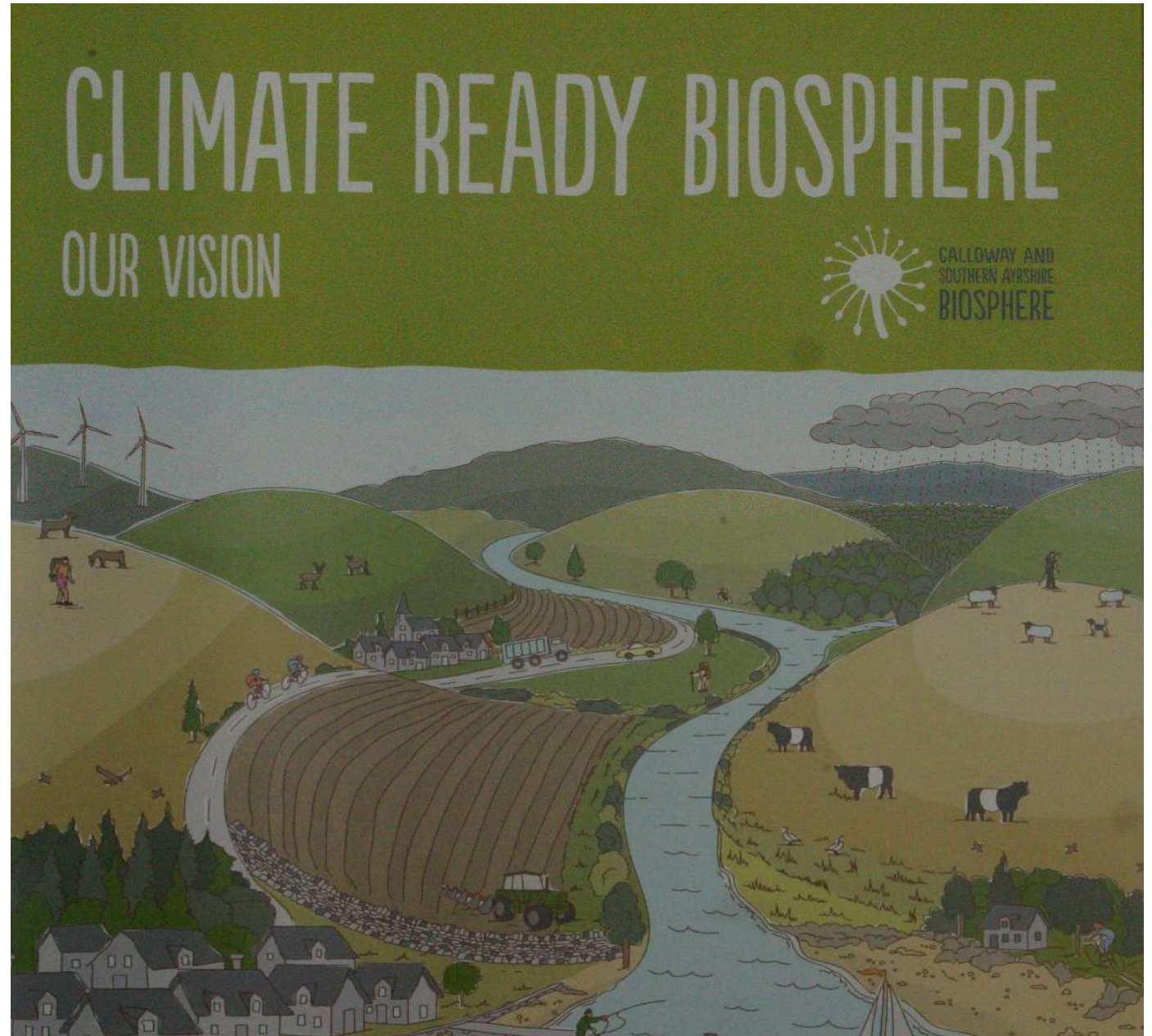
## **The way forward**

- **Developing the Land Use Strategy**
  - **Implementing Rights & Responsibilities Statement**
- 
- ✓ **Increasing integration and reducing conflicts**
  - ✓ **Land use working with nature**
  - ✓ **Responsible stewardship the norm**
  - ✓ **Communities positively influencing land use**





**Ideal opportunity in the  
Biosphere  
& in The Glenkens**





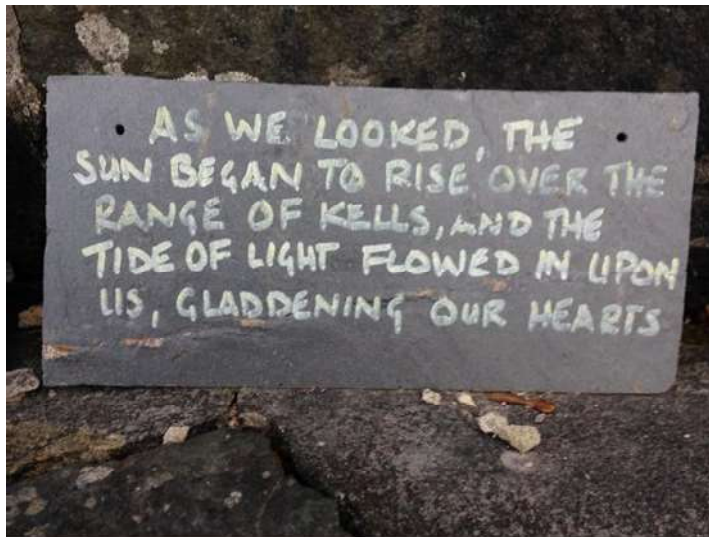
## Linking birds, nature and the arts

How different is the scene now?

What do you like and what could be better?

How do you react?

Why not take a photo, make a video, write some prose or a poem?





**Ken Words & Watson Birds**

**Walking trips in The Glenkens  
Writing workshops**

**Linked to Donald Watson  
exhibitions**





## Birds and Acting





## Birds and music



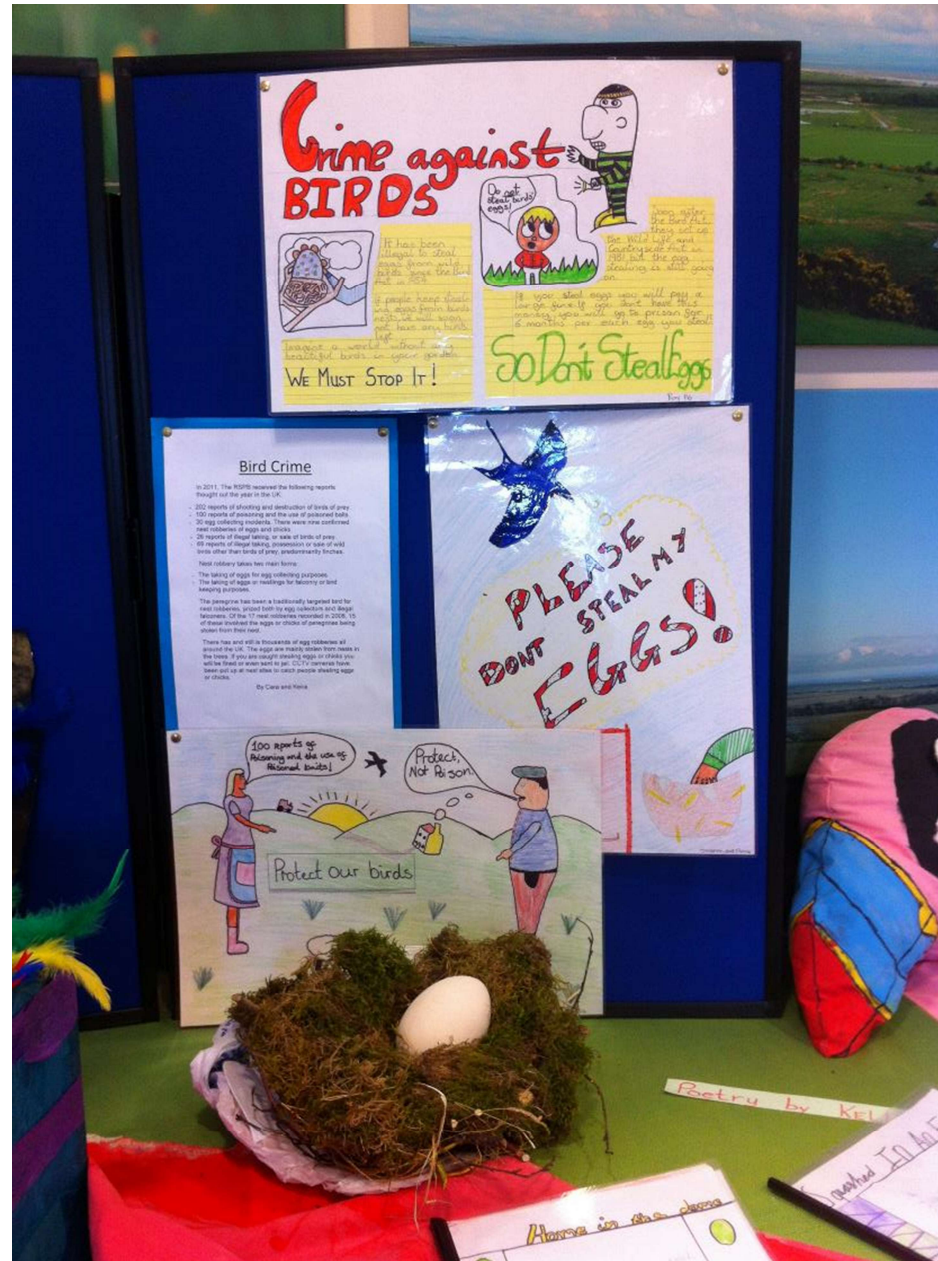


## Birds and painting





## Birds and societal ethics







Donal Watson  
The Smiddy  
Balmaclellan

**Visit  
Donald Watson Room  
The Smiddy  
Balmaclellan**