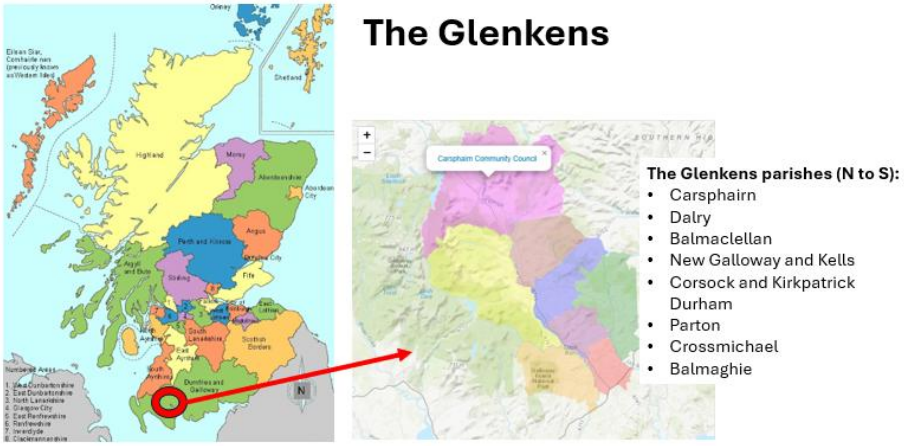
Glenkens Community & Arts Trust

Cultural Glenkens:
Preserving the heritage of our place

The Glenkens

The Glenkens is a collection of remote-rural villages in Galloway, SW Scotland, who have a strong cultural and geographical identity. Characterised by an enviable sense of self-sufficiency and empowerment, and with unrivalled landscapes and natural beauty, it is also an area that faces severe challenges of biodiversity loss, depopulation, social isolation and rural poverty. It sits in the Galloway and Southern Ayrshire UNESCO Biosphere, the Galloway Forest Park, the UK's first Dark Sky Park and the new South of Scotland Natural Capital Innovation Zone. It has about 3,000 residents across 10 settlements and outlying farmsteads.



Our Heritage

Our **natural heritage** is of key importance to us here in the Glenkens. We are situated in a UNESCO Biosphere due to the uniqueness of our landscapes, yet they are changing very rapidly. Biodiversity loss and the climate crisis are underlying themes that affect us all.



Loch Ken and the Glenkens

Glenkens Community & Arts Trust

Our **cultural heritage** is also highly valued here in the Glenkens. From the Covenanters to the Galloway Hoard to 20th century rural living, our heritage is celebrated and revered – but often only by small groups of enthusiasts. As is often the way, national conversations overlook the hyper-local, deep-dive enthusiasm for culture that place-based communities naturally foster.



2023 Cultural Glenkens: 'The Glenkens Story' event at CatStrand

At the Glenkens Community and Arts Trust, we have a 17-year track record of weaving together Arts, Community and Heritage to create meaningful experiences for all our residents and visitors so that they can better understand and connect to the heritage and environment of the Glenkens.



2021 CatStrand Arts: 'On the water' Ken Bridge Song Cycle

The Challenges

1. Our amazing volunteers, many of whom were inspired and supported by the Galloway Glens Landscape Partnership, are ageing and getting tired. Succession planning is hard when so many people have to work so hard to stay afloat nowadays. The critical memories, knowledge and expertise that make up our cultural heritage are at risk of being lost through the passage of time and the lack of support.

It is difficult to imagine a small group of volunteers achieving what The Glenkens Story has done without the professional back-up and encouragement of the staff at GCAT.

Mike Brown, TGS volunteer, 2024

"In an area where there is considerable volunteer fatigue it has mitigated the impact and helped galvanise people into doing things."

Galloway Glens feedback response, 2023

2. Our landscapes, shaped by agriculture and renewable energy over centuries, are now changing at an unprecedented rate. National planting targets mean that some Glenkens parishes are *83%* afforested with commercial planting. Biodiversity and carbon storage in peat bogs is at risk, as well as community connections with treasured landscapes. People feel powerless in the face of the change. We have created a Vision for Land Use in the Glenkens and are actively working to see it realised.

Everyone who takes value from our lands returns value to them
Glenkens Land Use Vision headline, 2023.

3. Our young people are leaving the area, feeling that there is no route for them to forge a career, despite their strong sense of place. We know from the Galloway Glens experience that paid internships often generate jobs within the area, as well as allowing the young people to gain experience and confidence.

I have no doubt that the expertise I have gained will greatly enhance my CV and support my future career in the field

Our solution

We seek to appoint a 'Cultural Glenkens Project Lead' who will support and amplify the enthusiasm of our Glenkens communities for their heritage. In an 80% FTE position, over 3 years, they will:

1. Create an annual programme of heritage events

Incorporating existing events from current Cultural Glenkens projects but also catalysing new initiatives including a Festival of Land, field trips and research projects. Working with our existing excellent network of local, regional and national partners and using our artistic credentials to better engage people with both their cultural heritage, their natural heritage and the environment.

2. Create a monthly programme of heritage talks - Galloway Conversations

We know from the Galloway Glens that hyper-local hybrid talks delivered by experts will appeal both locally, across Scotland and even world-wide if we have the resources to publicise them accordingly. Working with our partners to provide place-based outreach for regional and national organisations.

3. Amplify the efforts of our volunteers

Support existing and new Cultural Glenkens projects with marketing, project management, start-up support and (crucially) time and enthusiasm.

4. Improve the online preservation of our heritage

Including:

- Digital recording of events and talks.
- Digitisation of photos and bringing them to life with associated stories and exhibitions.
- Oral histories. Reaching out to older voices and voices less heard.
- The creation of a digital Glenkens Archive.

5. Create an Intern programme.

Five full-time paid 6-month positions within the Glenkens and district. High quality opportunities that will make a real difference to the young people involved.

6. Carry out schools liaison around Glenkens heritage projects.

Use the youth-led approach that we are expert in to see which topics could be modified to increase reach to high school students.

1. Rationale for the ask – Project Lead

Objective

Recruit a highly skilled project manager with a demonstratable interest and expertise in Galloway heritage and the CatStrand Artistic Policy.

Outcomes

The project will be driven to success by a motivated person with the right qualities and experience to deliver all projected outcomes.

Beneficiaries

All who participate in the project – see other objectives for detailed breakdown.

Value for Money Consideration

- Wages set at best possible level within the third sector / Glenkens context to attract high calibre candidates.
- Making the role a 3-year role may be enough to convince someone to move to the area for it.
- On consideration and some reduction in outputs, the role has been reduced to 80% FTE

Supporting info (if not linked, then attached separately)

- Draft Cultural Glenkens Project Lead contract and job description.
- GCAT Equalities Policy (which references recruitment policies)
- GCAT Fair Work policy (which references the challenges of offering the Job Security pillar)
- CatStrand Artistic Policy.
- CatStrand Arts Business Plan.

Alignment with NLHF Principles:

- Saving Heritage
- Protecting the Environment
- Inclusion, Access and Participation.



The Ken Bridge Bicentenary celebrations, a 2023 Cultural Glenkens project

2. Rationale for the ask - 50% contribution to 5 Intern positions

Outcomes

5 young people will have gained experience and skills that will significantly increase their chances of being able to live and work in the Glenkens or join the Heritage sector.

5 organisations will be more likely to employ interns than before because the barrier to offering such opportunities has been significantly lowered and they then see the value in creating future opportunities.

Possible outcome – based on the Galloway Glens statistics, we would expect at least 2 of the 5 interns to have a permanent role created for them by the host organisation – although this is not part of the initial contract with the host organisation and therefore cannot be guaranteed.

Beneficiaries

5 young people – very high impact.

Value for Money Consideration

- The learning from Galloway Glens experience is that a 50% contribution to wages and employment on-costs is required to 'jump' organisations into creating the opportunities.
- Intern wages set at Real Living Wage level so that interns from all socioeconomic backgrounds can participate (not just those able to live at home / be subsidised).

Supporting info (attached separately)

- Example Intern Memo of Understanding with partner organisations
- Blank contract of employment for a GCAT intern.

Alignment with NLHF Principles:

- Organisational Sustainability
- Inclusion, Access and Participation
- Saving Heritage.



Amber, a 2021 Galloway Glens intern for Natural Power, a renewables company based in the Glenkens.

3. Rationale for the ask - Start-up and Project Delivery funding

Outcomes

Start-up funding, 3 years £10k: The Cultural Glenkens Project Lead will be able to catalyse new projects by removing barriers such as publicity or small logistical costs. We know from Galloway Glens experience that this makes a huge difference. People in the Glenkens will then have access to a wider range of heritage activities that leads to them valuing their natural and cultural heritage more highly.

Creation of digital archive, 3 years £5k: Oral histories, paper photos and in-person talks that would otherwise be lost are preserved for future generations.

Land Use Festival, £6k for 2: People feel more connected with their landscapes and are more empowered to monitor and report on them. Developers have easy access to evidence about Glenkens Treasured Landscapes and how to engage more effectively with communities for mutual benefit.

Cultural Glenkens budget, 3 years for £7k: Cultural Glenkens volunteers feel supported and valued by the provision of small amounts of funding for publicity, venue hire, accessibility etc. They are more likely to continue volunteering for longer. Their efforts are amplified and reach more people.

Beneficiaries

Start-up funding for new Cultural Glenkens projects:

- 12 new volunteers – high impact
- 200 attendees – medium impact

Creation of digital archive:

- 10 people (researchers) – high impact
- 2000 people (residents) – low impact

Land Use Festival:

- 10 artists and contributors – high impact
- 5 local advocates for land use change – high impact
- 100 attendees – medium impact
- 2000 people (residents) – low impact through effect of Festival on land use change.

Cultural Glenkens budget:

- 10 current volunteers – high impact
- 300 attendees – medium impact.

Value for Money Consideration

- Each element individually per year is relatively modest. The combined effect will be far more than the sum of its parts, by galvanising and supporting new and existing volunteers.
- A Galloway Glens Evaluation key learning was: *The team adopted a pro-active and 'can-do' attitude which was commented upon by a range of partners. A shared ambition to deliver maximum benefit for the valley, aligned with an appropriate level of risk management, meant the Team sought to say 'yes' wherever possible.* Having these modest budgets available will allow the Cultural Glenkens Project Lead to continue this 'can-do' approach and say Yes!
- The Festivals will be 3-day events, designed to further the Glenkens Land Use Vision and based on subsequent reports into participatory monitoring and land use mapping. We will use our NatureScot connections to lever in significant support-in-kind to make these events a success locally and useful nationally.

Supporting info

- Cultural Glenkens Project Plan – proposed Year 1 programme of events.
- Report: Participatory Monitoring of Land Use in the Glenkens, Dr Kerry Morrison (recommends a Land Use Festival)
- Glenkens Land Use Vision.
- Blank Memo of Understanding for new Cultural Glenkens projects
- List of existing CG projects – see page 19.
- Most recent CatStrand Arts Events Guide
- Compiled Letters of Support – local, regional and national organisations.
- Pecha Kucha Cultural Glenkens review event video, Feb 2024.
- CatStrand Arts Audience Survey results, March 2024.

Alignment with NLHF Principles:

- Saving Heritage
- Protecting the Environment
- Inclusion, Access and Participation.



Ken Words Poetry Walks, 2021

4. Rationale for the ask – GCAT Full Cost Recovery

Outcomes

GCAT can assure delivery of this high-quality project due to proportionate contribution to: Line Management, Office Space (inc. energy and insurance overheads), IT Support, Business / Finance Support, external Payroll support and ad hoc HR support.

The project will benefit from the more-than-the-sum-of-the-parts working of all GCAT projects – being intertwined with both our Artistic Vision (funded primarily by Creative Scotland and The Holywood Trust) and with our Community Action Plan delivery work. This project will have access to the Glenkens Hub, the Glenkens Gazette, Galloway Community Transport, the Glenkens Community Spaces Network, the Glenkens Youth Group, the CatStrand Touring Arts programme and CatStrand Young Creatives – all GCAT projects.

The project will be based at our regionally-recognised Arts Centre, the CatStrand, which is fully accessible and shortly, carbon emission-free (capital project ongoing to replace oil boiler with Air Source Heat Pumps and PV solar panels).

Beneficiaries

3000 people – medium impact due to the ongoing sustainability of GCAT as a key anchor organisation in the area.

Value for Money Consideration

- Set at 10% of project value, on the understanding that any ticket income can also come towards GCAT core costs to make it up to the more usual 15%.

Supporting info

- GCAT 2023-2028 Strategy
- The Glenkens Hub – an example GCAT project
- CatStrand nominated as Trad Venue of the Year, 2024.
- GCAT's Environmental Action Plan.
- Helen's video tour of the CatStrand

Alignment with NLHF Principles:

- Organisational Sustainability
- Inclusion, Access and Participation
- Protecting the environment
- Saving Heritage

5. Rationale for the ask – Programme of Hybrid Talks

Outcomes

The heritage of the Glenkens is effectively communicated to a new and wider audience.

Accessibility of this information is much improved.

More people are better connected to their natural and cultural heritage through access to a new programme of talks.

Regional heritage and environmental organisations such as DG Woodlands, Southern Uplands Partnership, Propagate and the Galloway and Southern Ayrshire UNESCO Biosphere will have effective access to good networks of local people to increase their reach.

Beneficiaries

2600 attendees (100 per event) – medium impact.

Value for Money Consideration

- Based on Galloway Glens and CatStrand Arts experience, speakers will attend for free – leveraging our excellent local, regional and national networks to ensure a breadth of informative and engaging talks.
- By paying for the tech to put the events on as hybrid and to digitally store them permanently, the reach is significantly extended. We have put a modest number of beneficiaries – some Galloway Glens videos in this model have 2,000 views and most are in the mid-hundreds.

Supporting info (if not linked, then attached separately):

- Cultural Glenkens Project Plan – proposed programme of Talks (Year 1)
- Galloway Glens You Tube channel
- Letters of Support from DG Woodlands, Southern Uplands Partnership, Propagate and the Galloway and Southern Ayrshire UNESCO Biosphere

Alignment with NLHF Principles:

- Inclusion, Access and Participation
- Saving Heritage
- Protecting the environment

6. Rationale for the ask – Publicity and Accessibility

Outcomes

More people are aware of and have access to the project content and therefore receive its benefits.

General public – an effective publicity campaign ensures high levels of attendance at events, particularly from those who haven't engaged before (this in the context of the very low population levels of the Glenkens, 3,000 people across 500km2.

People with access needs – a small budget to allow adaptations ensures that we can continue the existing high level of GCAT and CatStrand Arts commitment to inclusion and accessibility. Might be used for transport, captioning, easy read publicity or personal support.

Beneficiaries

- 30 people with additional access needs – high impact through being better supported to engage.
- 4000 attendees (Glenkens residents and diaspora) – low impact of awareness of project.

Value for Money Consideration

- We will match the NLHF publicity contribution with support from our existing communications networks, which Cultural Glenkens will be able to access:
    - CatStrand Social media channels (circa 35,000/month reach)
    - Production and distribution of our bi-monthly Events Guide (1,200 print run)
    - Inclusion in our monthly What's On emails (1,600 subscribers)
    - Inclusion on our website (1,600 monthly users).
    - Inclusion in our Monthly Events poster which we print and distribute locally.
    - Promotion by What's Going On D&G (100k followers)
    - CatStrand Arts booking page
    - CatStrand TicketSource page

    This will raise the profile of the project far more quickly and effectively than if it were a stand-alone project.

- A Galloway Glens Evaluation key learning was: *The Scheme adopted a pro-active approach to communications, using opportunities through local media and other outlets to keep the Scheme in the public eye and to build momentum. Social media channels were also used proactively.* This budget will allow us to do that.
- The Accessibility budget is modest but will allow the Project Lead to react nimbly to individual need.

Supporting info (if not linked, then attached separately):

- GCAT website
- CatStrand Arts website / booking page.
- CatStrand Arts Marketing Plan.
- GCAT Equalities Policy
- GCAT EDI Action Plan

Alignment with NLHF Principles:

- Inclusion, Access and Participation
- Saving Heritage
- Organisational sustainability.



The CatStrand Singers open-access choir in 2022 with their 'Singing the Galloway Glens' album.

7. Rationale for the ask – Evaluation and Monitoring

Outcomes

Ongoing evaluation throughout project delivery means that it remains responsive to need and effective in delivery.

Final evaluation means that benefits can be quantified and can inform our strategy for the next stages in our culture and heritage work. Learnings can also be shared with other Glenkens and NLHF projects, plus our regional partners.

Beneficiaries

- 4000 people – medium impact. All attendees and volunteers benefit from a nimble and responsive programme.
- 50 people – medium impact through sharing of learnings.

Value for Money Consideration

- Through-project evaluation and adjustments will be included in the Project Lead's Job Description and will be their responsibility with no additional cost.
- CatStrand Arts carries out annual Audience Surveys, and this Project will be included in that as part of the FCR contribution.
- The lump sum for final evaluation will allow for quantitative and qualitative surveys, assessment and analysis by an external consultant and the creation and sharing of a useful final report.

Supporting info:

- Galloway Glens Evaluation Tool Kit.
- CatStrand Arts Audience Survey results, March 2024.

Alignment with NLHF Principles:

- Inclusion, Access and Participation
- Organisational Sustainability



Word cloud from our 2024 Audience Survey results

Heritage Lottery Principles

The outcomes from this project will support all four Heritage Lottery principles:

Saving Heritage

Our project will foster a living appreciation and understanding of our heritage, creating a proactive community who take pride in researching, understanding and communicating different aspects of the Glenkens' Cultural Heritage. Creating public understanding and pride in the things which make us unique, and the ability to communicate this better to visitors.

Our project will also save heritage by recording oral histories that are in imminent danger of being lost forever and by creating a digital archive for the Glenkens. This archive will include digital photos and the stories that give them life, as well as recordings of the talks programme.

Natural Heritage will be saved by the ability to better work with committed volunteers to celebrate what we have and to advocate to mitigate the losses caused by national policy or market forces.

By amplifying the huge volunteer efforts that already go into these topics, and by catalysing new efforts, we will embed preserving and celebrating heritage into the culture and practice of our communities for another generation.



2023 CatStrand Arts: The Galloway Agreement 'The Village on the Road' highlighting rural depopulation

Protecting the Environment

Our natural heritage is of key importance to us here in the Glenkens. We are situated in a UNESCO Biosphere due to the uniqueness of our landscapes, yet they are changing around us very rapidly. This project will tie in with much other work that GCAT is doing to meet its Aim of 'Interweaving Arts, Community and Heritage to enrich the life of the area'.

Land Use is a particular focus at present, and we are being supported by NatureScot as one of the only community-led initiatives working in this way in the country.

We will work with local artists and residents to shine light on natural heritage issues through creative lenses. Recent examples include the Fantastic Forestry Festival, the Crichton Carbon Centre 'Bog Banquet', the Leeming and Paterson exhibition on biodiversity in land use and our 2022 Eco-Festival, designed by our Arts intern to address eco-anxiety in young people.

At an organisational level we're excited to be installing solar panels to power Air Source Heat Pumps in the CatStrand in January 2025, replacing our oil boiler and removing nearly 10tonnes of CO2e emissions from our operations.

76% of our staff walk or bike to work, we minimise and recycle our waste, and by creating opportunities for our communities on their doorstep, we reduce the numbers of 30-mile round trip to the nearest population centre.

We're also excited about a pending Climate Action Fund application being made by Propagate Scotland with GCAT as one of their place-based partners. The aims of this project are to increase understanding of sustainable and regenerative food systems, empower communities to implement positive actions for climate, nature, food and farming and to influence policy change and action. Our Cultural Glenkens Project Lead would be their key link in the Glenkens to deliver these Climate, Nature and Justice outcomes.



The CatStrand Auditorium dressed for the Bog Banquet. Celebrating peatlands with a themed dinner

Increase inclusion, access and participation

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion is at the heart of GCAT, and this project will benefit from our past work and future plans on this. We have an Equalities Policy and an EDI Action Plan specifically used to bring a wider range of people into contact with all of our artistic strands, including Cultural Glenkens.

Our action plan focuses on the areas where we believe that we can best make a positive impact and that most impact our local population. These are currently:

- Disability
- Socio-economic deprivation
- Sexual orientation and Gender reassignment.

From our EDI plan:

- We aspire to be a leading venue in demonstrating best practice for an accessible Arts programme. Our programme is accessible by and represents disabled communities.
- We are committed that our people will not be disadvantaged by their income or background. We will take all practical steps to ensure the programme is accessible and engages these groups and provides fair pay and representation to contributors and staff.
- We value members of the LGBTQ+ community as audience members, staff and volunteers. LGBTQ+ people are welcomed in the building, represented in the programme and do not face any barriers to employment or discrimination at work.



2024: Paragon 'All-In' music troupe performing at the CatStrand Young Creatives Annual Showcase

Organisational sustainability

This project aligns exactly with our Artistic Policy for the CatStrand and our wider mandate to lead on the delivery of the Glenkens and district Community Action Plan, thereby 'making the Glenkens an excellent place to live for people of all ages' by 'interweaving Arts, Community and Heritage to enrich the life of the area.' Resourcing this project appropriately is a key under-pinning of our strategy for 2023-2028 and will be a key contributor to maintaining GCAT's delivery ambitions.

The Full Cost Recovery element of our application is also an important element of our organisational sustainability. We very much enjoy working with funders like the National Lottery Heritage Fund who understand that high-quality projects cannot be delivered in a vacuum but need an ecosystem of support underpinning them to assure delivery. Our funding model is predicated on a strong and sustainable suite of projects that deliver key outcomes for our community and make a fair contribution to GCAT core costs.

GCAT remains an excellent and unique delivery vehicle for action on the ground in the Glenkens. We have recently been designated as one of two 'anchor organisations' in the wider area by the Glenkens and District Trust, which comes with associated core-cost support to assure stability and delivery.



Some of the CatStrand Arts team at the 2024 DG Life Awards, where we received 2 nominations

Partnerships / Networks

Our 17-year track record of place-based working in the Glenkens puts us in a unique position to be able to get this project moving quickly. Our local, regional and national networks are excellent. We have a reputation as a nimble, constructive and useful partner with all.

Glenkens Networks

- Existing Cultural Glenkens projects:
  - Ken Words writers' café
  - Watson Birds
  - The Glenkens Story
  - Write On writing project
  - Dalry Film Club
  - Clachan Folk Sessions
  - CatStrand Singers
  - Glenkens Food Month
- Existing GCAT projects:
  - Glenkens Hub and Glenkens Gazette
  - Galloway Community Transport
  - CatStrand Touring Arts programme
  - CatStrand Young Creatives
  - Glenkens Youth Group
  - Glenkens Community Spaces Network, including Local Place Planning.
  - CatStrand café, bar and visitor centre.
- Other Glenkens projects supported by our Community Action Plan work, including:
  - The Galloway Food Hub
  - The Pamela Young housing trust
  - The Loch Ken Trust.
  - Energy efficiency in Glenkens Town Halls.
- The Glenkens and District Trust
- The Glenkens Community Action Plan Steering Group

Regional partners

- Southern Uplands Partnership
- D&G Woodlands Initiative
- Galloway & Southern Ayrshire UNESCO Biosphere
- Third Sector Dumfries and Galloway (our TSI)
- Dumfries & Galloway Arts Festival
- The Stove 'What We Do Now' creative place-making
- Communities for Diverse Forestry.
- The South of Scotland Regional Economic Partnership (our Executive Director, Helen Keron, is a member)

National links

- NatureScot
- Propagate Scotland
- Strong links with community development on Uist.
- Helen was asked to consult on the Agriculture and Rural Economy Bill at Holyrood in early 2024.



Logan Paterson, New Galloway farmer, songwriter and poet.
An example of the Historical archive which needs preserving and to be made available

Project Management

The Cultural Glenkens Project Lead will report to Peter Renwick, the CatStrand Creative Director, whose remit is to deliver the CatStrand Artistic Vision.

They will also be supported in the community development and Intern aspects of the project by Helen Keron, the GCAT Executive Manager. Her previous role was Education and Community Activities Officer for the Galloway Glens scheme, where she planned and delivered the Intern programme.

They will be further supported by:

- CatStrand Arts Marketing Officer – tying Cultural Glenkens new events into the existing CatStrand Arts marketing strategy.
- GCAT Business Support – paying Cultural Glenkens invoices, monitoring ring-fenced funds, supporting budget management.
- GCAT Facilities Manager – providing Cultural Glenkens with safe, accessible venues (CatStrand, New Galloway and the Smiddy, Balmaclellan)

Governance

CatStrand Arts is supported by the CatStrand Arts Steering Group, which comprises 4-5 volunteers with a keen interest in and expertise in the arts. They will provide strategic oversight and assurance to the GCAT Board as to the progress of Cultural Glenkens, as well as operational / moral support to the Project Lead if required. The Memo of Understanding that governs the relationship between the Steering Group and the Board is attached.

The Board of GCAT maintains overall responsibility for the delivery of GCAT's strategy and assurance of good process. Because of the project structure of GCAT, they devolve some of the duties of this to the relevant Steering Groups but maintain overall accountability for strategic delivery and governance. The GCAT Executive Manager reports to the Chair of the Board.

The GCAT Audit & Finance Committee also supports the Board in robust governance and oversight.

Risk Management

The GCAT Board maintains a Risk Register which is reviewed regularly. The GCAT Executive Manager has a key role in surveying the horizon and overviewing projects for emerging risks. Project Leaders assume full responsibility for the effective delivery of their projects, and risk management within that. Our 17-year track record of delivery with funders and supporters and our growth over that time suggests that our risk management processes are proportionate and effective.

Evaluation Strategy

The aim of the evaluation will be two-fold:

Within project:

- To ensure that we are responding nimbly to changing contexts and needs.
- To ensure that we are engaging with and benefitting as many people as possible through effective delivery.

End of project:

- To assess the success of the project in delivering its Outcomes and therefore furthering the NLHF principles.
- To assess the success of the project with respect to delivery of the relevant elements of the GCAT Strategy, the CatStrand Artistic Policy and the Glenkens Community Action Plan.
- To draw conclusions as to what can be learned from both the successes and failures of the project and to share them with other like-minded organisations.

For the Within Project evaluation, we will use our well-established GCAT and CatStrand Arts protocols:

- Surveys at the end of big events, to assess satisfaction and learning points.
- Exit interviews with both interns and the host organisations at the end of each placement.
- Creating excellent personal / professional relationships such that informal constructive feedback is given semi-continuously.
- Seeking testimonials and feedback from people who have seen high impact benefits.
- Regular review of online engagement data from Google Analytics, TicketSource and social media analytics.
- Cultural Glenkens included in the annual CatStrand Arts audience survey.

We have assessed the full suite of evaluation documents from the Galloway Glens, and although this project is on a much smaller scale, would look to follow a similar model for the End of Project evaluation:

- A survey of volunteers engaged in all elements of the Cultural Glenkens programme.
- A public survey open to all who have attended or benefitted from the programme (online and paper)
- Collation and analysis of informal/unsolicited feedback received throughout the project in the form of e-mails received and social media comments.
- Final collation of online engagement data from Google Analytics, TicketSource and social media analytics.
- Creation of a final evaluation report that summarises the aims, delivery, within-project learning and responses, final evaluation and a conclusion of project effectiveness.

Summary

Cultural Glenkens represents the opportunity to meet a real need in the communities of the Glenkens through a project that builds on the strengths of GCAT, the legacy of the Galloway Glenk and the enthusiasm of our volunteers for their natural and cultural heritage. This application would make a step change in our ability to be able to connect people with their heritage, and will make an impact disproportionate to the funding due to its position within the weight of the GCAT organisation and our networks. It will also build on our existing strong relationships with regional and national partners, and allow us to be a better partner to them as they look to further their aims in the Glenkens.

We are a credible and high-quality organisation, with a 17-year track record of excellent delivery. Our place-based nature means that we are rooted in the Glenkens, but we look out and up in order to achieve our aims more effectively. We are strategic in our planning and personal in our delivery. We are most excited about the possibilities that the next 3 years offer, if we are successful in this application!



A young fan.

Glenkens Community & Arts Trust

Appendix 1:

Indicative Programme, Years 1 & 2

Galloway Conversations: indicative topics.

1. **The Ken-Dee Hydro Scheme.** The first full scale hydro-electric scheme in Scotland is in the Ken-Dee valley. It opened in the 1930s but the planning started around 100 years ago. There are many aspects to the story to be researched and communicated - political, economic, social and environmental.
2. **Neart-Uisge nan Gleann (water-power from the glens).** Possibly in conjunction with the hydro topic above, exploring the pre-electricity era hydro power of the Glenkens. Archaeological and place-name evidence points to many now-abandoned water mill sites in the Glenkens.
3. **Robert the Bruce and the Glenkens.** The Glenkens were a major area of action in the Scottish Wars of Independence/ Civil War in the early years of the 14th century. Interesting details of Bruce's insurgent Galloway Campaign, taking in Glen Trool, Glen Owrie, Glen Ken and Glen Cairn, can be found in early charters that are not widely known.
4. **Bruce and the sovereignty goddess.** The tales of Bruce's recognition by a cailleach at Craigencallie and at Polmaddy / Carlin's Cairn may be manifestations of the early Gaelic sovereignty goddess motif. How did the Glenkens come to preserve not one but two such myths? It is hoped to have Professor William Gillies, the pre-eminent authority on the subject, deliver a paper on the topic.
5. **Hill Forts of the Glenkens.** General information, plus initial findings from the Stroanfeggan excavation, plus any specialist post-excavation evaluation. While the focus should rightly be on Carsphairn parish, a set-piece talk on the findings could be held at the CatStrand to bring it to a different audience.
6. **Missing railways.** Although there is a painting of Dalry Railway Station hanging in Dalry Town Hall, no such station ever existed. There were however numerous ideas for canals and railways connecting the Glenkens with the existing network to the south at Crossmichael or Mossdale (New Galloway) and northwards over the hills to Carsphairn and the Ayrshire coalfields. Who was proposing them, where would they run, and why did they never happen?
7. **Covenanters.** The Glenkens were a focal point in the 17th century religious war between the Covenanters and the Stewart Kings. David Bartholomew, an erstwhile Glenkens resident, published a comprehensive book on the Glenkens Covenanters in 2023. David will talk on the subject and his ongoing research, and will offer further insights into Glenkens society in the late 1600s. Building on Galloway Glens-funded work and research with Can You Dig It and Dalry Town Hall.

8. **The Galloway Hoard.** The amazing discovery of the Galloway Hoard was well publicised by the Galloway Glens in 2022 and we will be monitoring the continuing research into its complexities and hidden stories for upcoming talks.
9. **Digging into history.** The cumulative story of the many finds of local detectorists provide valuable insights into local history, not least by highlighting the connections a so called 'remote' area had with a much wider world. Building on the Galloway Hoard discovery again, and highlighting the importance of responsible detection as well as the insights it can give.
10. **Folklore, Literature and Music.** Building on the success of previous events, such as for SR Crockett's centenary and local folklore research.
11. **Glenkens Farming history:**
    - The much loved 'Belties' (Belted Galloways) and the native small black cattle.
    - The ancient drove roads, their economic benefits to villages locally and the identification of ultimate markets, particularly in England, e.g Huntingdon, which were important centres for cattle sales.
    - The distribution of limited but valuable arable land in our locality, and the means of improving yields in poor stony acidic ground by using animal manure and local lime supplies, usually supplied via lime kilns. What were the principal cash crops in the clachans? How widespread was the use of oxen, if at all, for ploughing in our area, before being superseded by horses?
12. **The Glenkens and Tam o'Shanter.** Burns set the story of Tam o'Shanter in Ayrshire but there is a persistent belief the story emanated from St John's Town of Dalry in the Glenkens. Further information relating to the burial practices of the local Gordon family has provoked more speculation. The Glenkens Story hopes to present some remarkable theories resulting from this work.

Heritage events: proposed topics.

1. **A partnership project with Carsphairn Heritage Initiative** to bring more of their Galloway Glens-funded digitized archive to life through exhibitions in the Carsphairn Heritage Centre and the CatStrand and/or the Smiddy.
2. **Woodland History in the Glenkens.** A conference and field trip on the history of our woodlands: how they have changed over the centuries and the many purposes they have served, including estate management, rural industry and recreation. In partnership with **D&G Woodlands Initiative.**
3. **Bruce and the cailleach.** The site known as "Bruce's Wa's" at Craigencallie is supposedly the croft where Robert the Bruce encountered the cailleach (old woman) of Craigencallie (Creag na Cailliche). A site visit to assess its condition and survey it with a view to ensuring its conservation. See above for related talks.

4. **The Glenkens Field Name Project.** Field names provide much historical information on land use, farming practice and language history. Knowledgeable individuals have been identified but time is of the essence to record their stories. Volunteers need to be recruited and organised to visit sites and attend events such as markets or shows where the farming community can be found. The neighbouring Borgue project has achieved great success, which we would look to learn from.
5. **Citizen Science natural heritage outreach work** in partnership with **Southern Uplands Partnership.**
6. **Local Food Sustainability** work with **Propagate Scotland.**
7. **The Stroanfreggan Hill Fort Excavation**. The Carsphairn Heritage Initiative (CHI) is planning to excavate a hill fort site at Stroanfreggan, east of Carsphairn. This could be a significant site, in the order perhaps of Trusty's Hill at Gatehouse. It is hoped to follow and help publicise the process of a significant local dig from the start. The dig is planned to start during 2025. See above for related talks.
8. **The Carsphairn School of Crosses.** The pilgrims' way which led to St Ninian's shrine in Whithorn passes through the Glenkens. On the high route (running south of Carsphairn) it is marked by an unusual set of markers in an area already rich in ancient remains. Site visit to explore further.
9. **The Neolithic landscape**. The Glenkens is rich in Rock Art - cup and ring marks etc. Field trip and lecture.
10. **Climate Action** events in partnership with the **GSA Biosphere Climate Hub.**