



River Ericht Catchment Restoration Initiative

A Community-led Investment Ready Riverwoods Project

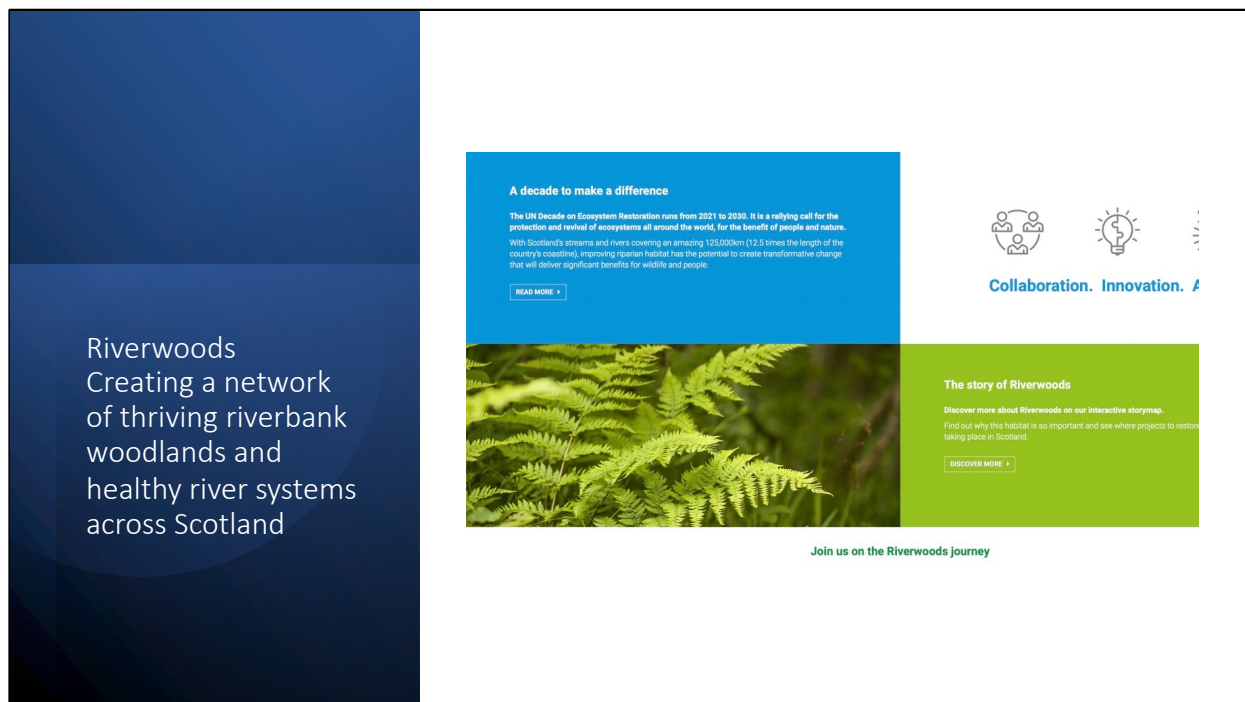
One of two National Demonstrator Projects that has won the accolade and the funding to be a Riverwoods Investment Readiness Pioneer (other project also in Perthshire – PKCT Almond Headwaters Riverwoods project)

Our project is centred on the River Ericht Catchment in east Perthshire – one of the most important Atlantic Salmon spawning grounds in Europe - although already we are in conversation with three other neighbouring river restoration projects about how we might all connect.

Seven organisations involved, 6 of whom are not for profit

- Two community anchor orgs
- One focusing on local wild fisheries
- One community led culture/heritage org
- Bioregioning Tayside, a new platform nature regeneration and
- One nature restoration finance business

Our Design stage commences on August 1 and runs through until the end of May 2024

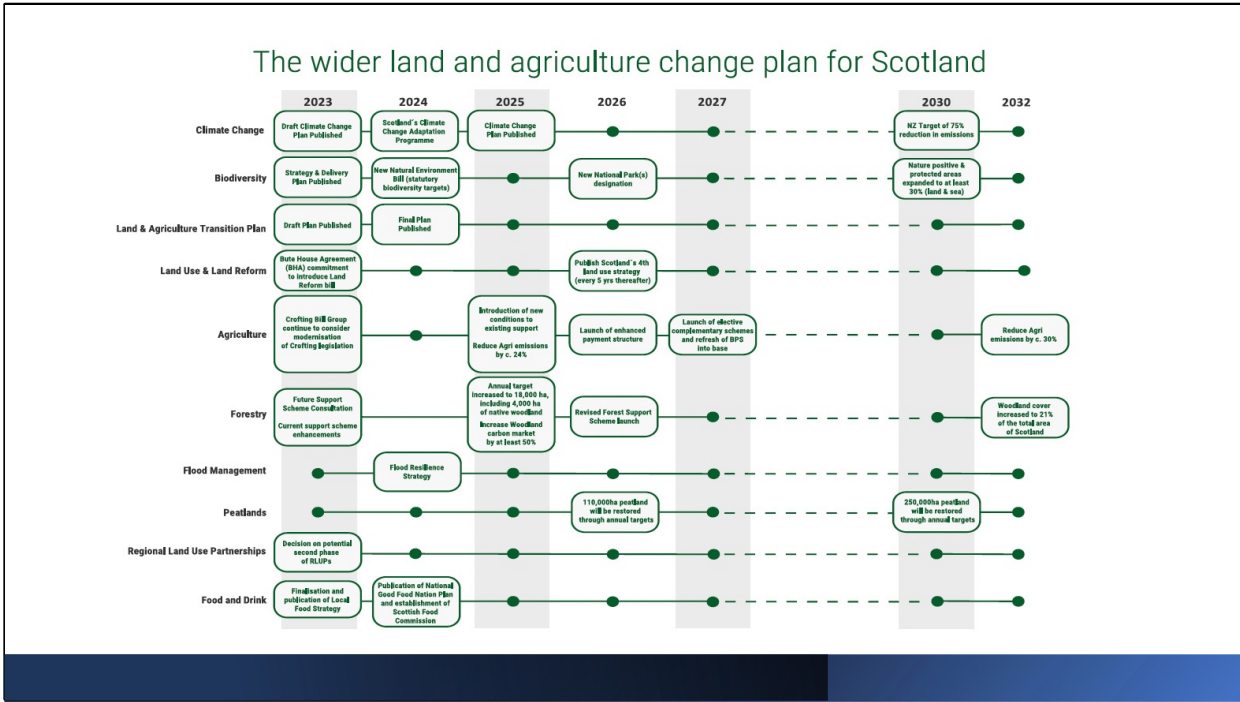


Riverwoods is a national project (Scotland) set up to drive **transformative change**

...seeking to deliver change at a Scotland-wide scale. Making our habitats and wildlife more connected will help make them more resilient, in turn ensuring they are capable of delivering the essential benefits upon which our wildlife, economy and wellbeing depend.

by

...creating a network of riparian woodland and healthy river systems throughout Scotland, which will deliver a range of benefits including flood protection, improved water quality and improvements for salmon fisheries, as well as helping to tackle the twin challenges of climate change and biodiversity loss.



The Riverwoods initiative sits within the policy context for wider land and agricultural change in Scotland.

Riverwoods Investment Readiness Pioneers

- Scotland's nature is in crisis
- Finance Gap for nature restoration estimated by SG to be £20 billion over the next 10 years
- Pioneer projects offer opportunity for communities, landowners and other stakeholders to work together to identify Riverwoods projects that have the potential to be financed using new mechanisms beyond traditional grants.



Scotland's nature is in crisis: its unique habitats and ecosystems will only continue providing the benefits to our wellbeing if we act now to value it and invest in it.

The finance gap for nature in Scotland for the next decade has been estimated to be £20 billion – Public funding can't cover it all – SG working to find ways to bridge this finance gap through leveraging responsible private finance.

Opportunity to demonstrate whether and if so how blended finance can be brought in to nature restoration

River woodlands can contribute to achieving Scotland's goal of net zero carbon by 2045.

Natural river systems and river woodlands can store a substantial amount of carbon:

- on the banks as standing trees
- dead wood material in stream
- beneath the surface as leaf litter, humus and soil

Communities

- Opportunity to participate in discussions and influence decisions about riverbank nature restoration
- Opportunity to get support and resources to develop **commercially viable river woodland restoration initiatives**
- Opportunity to shape the Riverwoods initiative for Scotland.

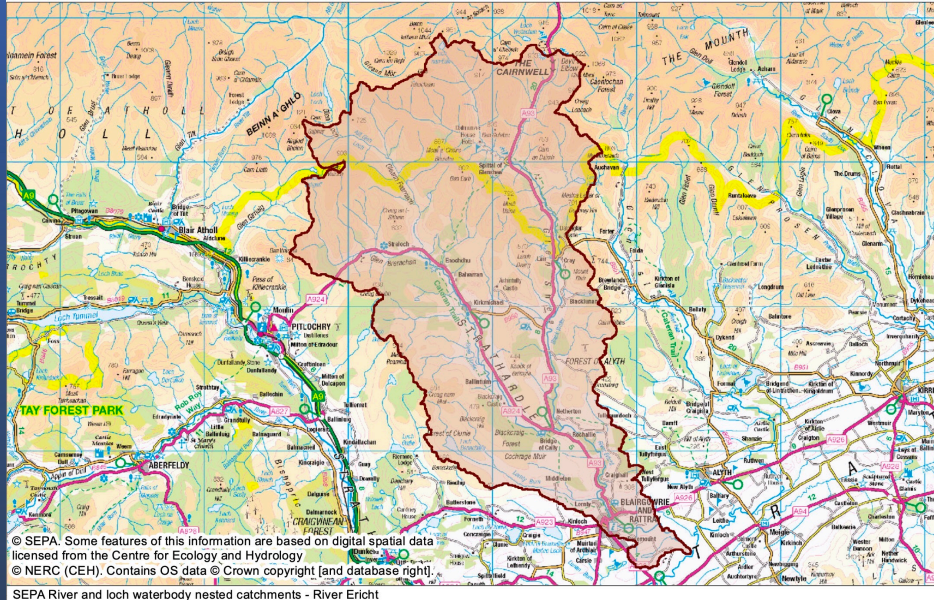
Landowners

- Opportunity to benefit from expert advice on financing nature restoration on your land
- Opportunity to get support and resources to develop **commercially viable river woodland restoration initiatives**
- Opportunity to demonstrate an inclusive and meaningful community engagement with your initiative.

Becoming involved in Riverwoods will be an opportunity to help shape a transformative project, bringing access to knowledge, new partners and new sources of funding. At the same time, we will be looking to showcase existing projects and activities, giving important profile to exemplars of riparian restoration in Scotland. This will provide an opportunity to demonstrate leadership and achieve additional benefits through collaborative working.

Also see this link: <https://www.riverwoods.org.uk/about/faqs/>

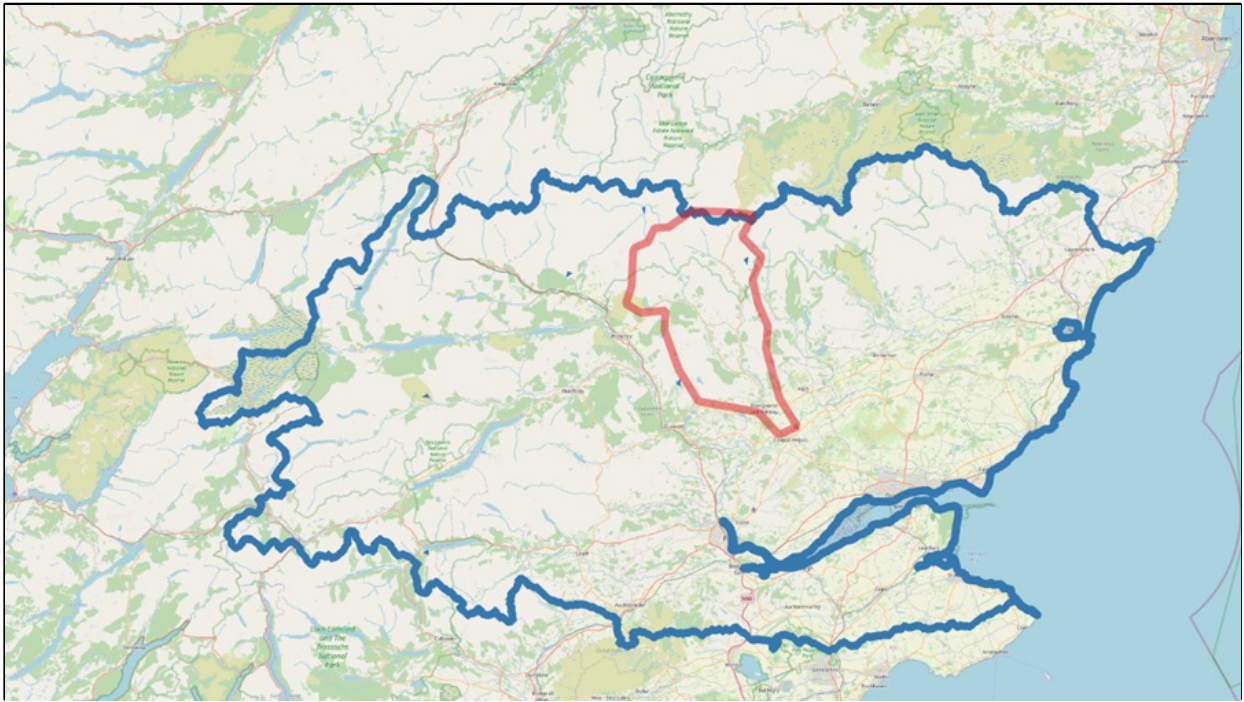
And this link: <https://www.riverwoods.org.uk/project/riverwoods-investment-readiness-pioneers/>



Here is a map of the Ericht catchment – some 43,000 hectares (17.5k acres)

We've got 10 landowners interested to find out more so far – a mix of estates and farms - and we hope to add to this list.

- Invercauld Estate, Glenshee
- Straloch Estate, Kirkmichael
- Dirnanean Estate, Kirkmichael
- Balnakilly Estate, Kirkmichael
- Wester Tullochcurran, Kirkmichael
- Milton of Drimmie Estate, Bridge of Cally
- Lochlands Farm, Blairgowrie
- Thomson Farms, Blairgowrie
- Balbrogie Farm Blairgowrie



And its position in the larger Tay catchment.

Objectives

- Blended Finance into nature restoration
- A new dedicated investment vehicle (via a Special Purpose Vehicle) for the restoration initiative that involves local communities in its ownership and governance and which is designed to catalyse investment from community groups and individual community members, and
- Design and model a place-based evaluation approach that evidences the benefit of nature restoration for all stakeholders involved in the catchment including local communities.



The design period will aim to design a new Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) that will attract blended finance into the restoration of the catchment which involves local communities in its design, ownership and governance

and as investors - both as groups or individuals.

We're super excited also to be a field site for another successful Facility For Investment Ready Nature (FIRNS) <https://www.nature.scot/funding-and-projects/firns-facility-investment-ready-nature-scotland> bid that has just won through to develop a new Community Benefits Standard for the UK Nature Investment Market.

Environmental problem description

- Deforestation and habitat fragmentation
- Peatland degradation
- Water quality
- Water Abstraction
- Erosion
- Invasive species
- Increased flood risk
- Increased drought risk



There is a classic set of issues ...

Schedule of Works

Deliverable	Description	Date Due
Project management and launch	Project partners establish project	1-Aug-23
Natural capital baseline assessment	Assessment of current land use and condition	31-Sep-23
Restoration vision and ecosystem service generation calculations	Agreeing vision for nature restoration and evaluating the scale of ecosystem services that could be generated	31-Dec-23
Financial model and identification of offtakers	Excel model covering costs, revenues, gross margins. Letters of interest from offtakers of ecosystem services	30-Jan-23
Proposed Investment structure	Excel model including cashflow, and debt, equity / mix scenarios and community investment options	31-Mar-24
Community and landowner engagement plan	Landowner and community engagement plan led by On Site partners	31-May-24
Delivery plan	Delivery team set up and resourcing plan agreed	31-May-24

Interventions

- Nature based solutions, via woodland creation and peatland restoration. This will focus primarily on riparian planting, as well as broader planting opportunities within the catchment.
- Easing and/or removing active barriers to fish passage. These activities will focus on removing historic infrastructure along the river Ercht.



Depending on landowner permission, Palladium have initially estimated 29,000 hectares of new woodland could be created and 4,780 of peatland, although this is likely to reduce once the baseline assessment has been fully completed.

We're also aiming to be support with our wild fish experts to resolve decades old issues relating to the historic industrial textile mill infrastructure at the lower end of the catchment in Blairgowrie, which is hampering fish passage.



Community Involvement Investment Readiness Stage

- **Community feed in and feed back into the project development**
- **Hands-on experiential learning experiences of landscape-based activities**
- **Keeping local people informed and generating interest in engaging with relevant activities**

We have a range of plans for community involvement in the Investment Readiness Stage including a set of cultural and heritage activities that will offer people unusual ways in to reconnecting with their river.

Some we have raised money for already via the Cateran Ecomuseum, such as a suite of palaeoenvironmental projects that will involve local people. One in particular will be focusing on how the Industrial Textile Industry 'terraformed' the Ericht upstream and downstream from Blairgowrie and the issues that remain today as a result of that.

Together with the Tay Ghillies Association, we're fundraising for a film and an outdoor exhibition about the Ghillies and their role and next Spring we're hoping to put on a big concert with the musician Hamish Napier of his amazing album 'The River', which we want to use as an 'investor attractor'.

We're also planning to develop a River Charter for the River Ericht with local people linked to another, much bigger cultural project called 'The Parliament of Waters', which will actually give a voice to the water.

All funding permitting of course. But our view is that the arts, culture and heritage are massively powerful drivers of what we in the Bioregional world call 're-inhabitation' - which means to learn to live-in-place in an area that has been disrupted and injured through past exploitation. In essence re-inhabitation embodies a 'coming home' because it reconnects us – physically and to place in ways that are life sustaining – not just human life but all life.

Community Involvement Delivery Stage

- **Opportunity for community-based investment and profit sharing in nature-based solutions**
- **Opportunity for local job creation and improved wellbeing**



In the delivery stage, in addition to creating opportunities for local people to invest, we want to use the project as a platform to develop new land based jobs and are already fundraising with Alyth Development Trust to pilot this.



Project Partnership



A Bioregion is a geographic area defined **not** by political or economic boundaries but by its natural features – its geology; topography; climate; soils; hydrology and watersheds; agriculture; biodiversity, flora and fauna and vegetation.

<https://bioregioningtayside.scot>

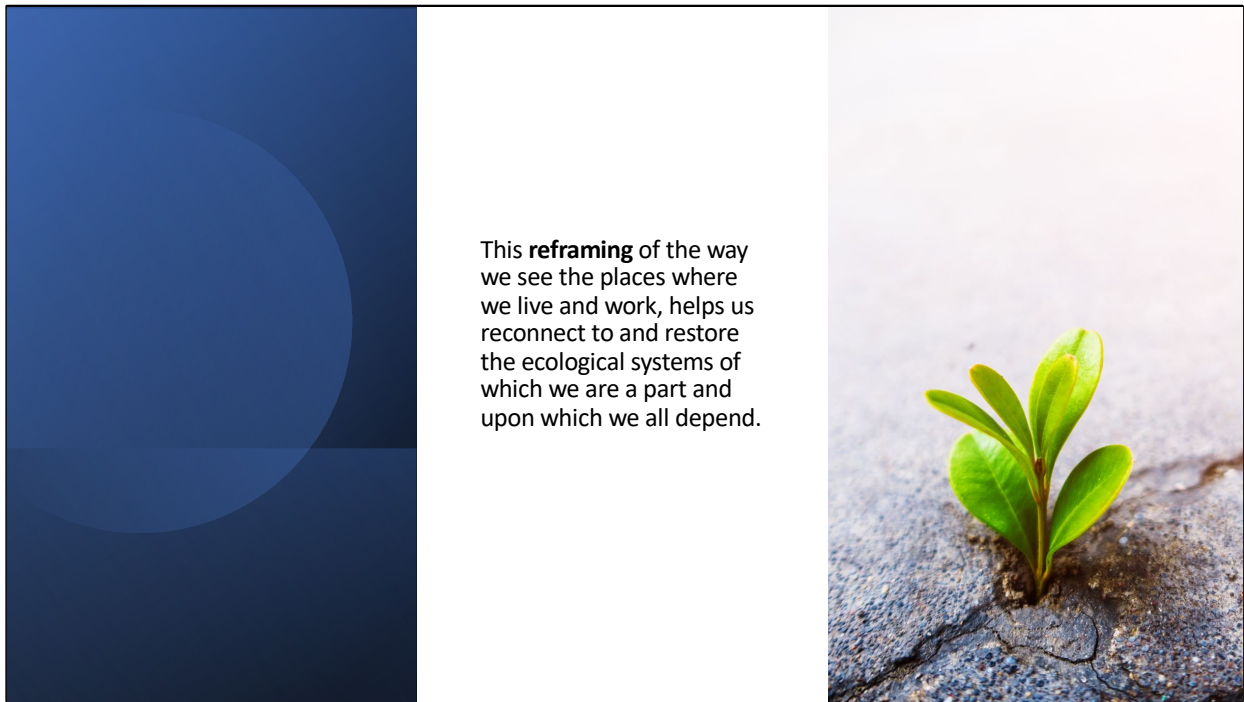


Acting as the legal vehicle or the design stage of the project, ... BT is a new platform which is bringing people together to build community resilience in the face of:

- **global heating**
- **collapsing biodiversity**
- **and a broken economic model**

We aim to build that community resilience through the concept of a Bioregion - a **place** - where boundaries are defined first and foremost by natural topographic and biological features rather than human designed political or administrative boundaries.

Our Bioregion is based on the Tay River catchment, but Bioregions can also focus on mountain ranges, marine environments – even deserts!



This **reframing** of the way we see the places where we live and work, helps us reconnect to and restore the ecological systems of which we are a part and upon which we all depend.

Bioregional organising is springing up all over our planet as a response to the climate and biodiversity crises with the aim of re-invigorating and restoring how we humans think about our presence on this planet and how we act.

In essence Bioregions are a new name for a very old idea as all humans understood their interdependence with nature up until a few hundred years ago!

You can find out more about the kinds of actions that exemplify Bioregioning today on our website:

Projects in Play

Growing Bioregioning
Through Community
Science

Can Tayside Become A
Climate Action
Sweetspot?

River Ericht Catchment
Restoration Initiative
and Alyth Burn
Catchment survey

Regenerative Tourism
Destination pilot with
the Ceteran
Ecomuseum

Co-designing a Digital
Twin platform for 5
Bioregions around the
world

We have a number of projects in play in addition to our Riverwoods project which are:

- looking at how communities can help monitor landscape change
- using social tipping point methodology to activate food systems transformation
- advancing Regenerative Tourism practices
- Participating in plans to build a Digital twin platform that could be used by Bioregions across the world

Blaigowrie & Rattray Development Trust



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BLAIGOWRIE & RATTRAY DEVELOPMENT TRUST

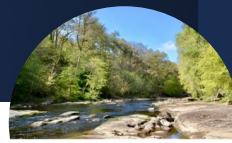
A community-led organisation that brings benefits to enhance the lives of the people of Blaigowrie and Rattray.



The Cateran Ecomuseum



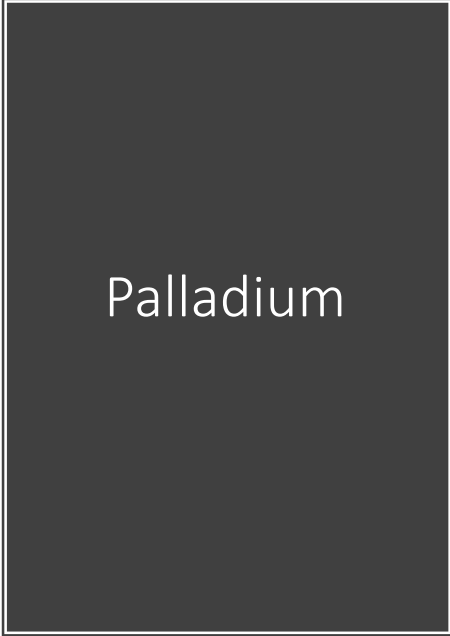
cateran
Ecomuseum



VITAL SIGNS
Pioneering a Palaeoecological understanding
of the River Ercht and its catchment



'SIDE WOULD YOU LIKE TO BE A RIVER DETECTIVE? WE'
TY SCIENTISTS & HISTORIANS TO WORK WITH US!'
'REAKING PROJECTS IN THE ECOMUSEUM TH'
'A LOCALS IN THE PAST AND HOW'
'- O FUTURE



ABOUT WHAT WE DO INSIGHTS CAREERS NEWSLETTER SIGNUP

**Climate Change:
It's Not Too Late**

Solving the climate crisis won't happen overnight, and it certainly won't happen in silos. Innovative solutions and collaborations across countries, sectors, governments, and industries must be part of the conversation if we're to succeed sustainably and equitably. We're on the edge of change, and though there's still time to address the rapidly worsening crisis, it will require an expeditious shift across all facets of our lives in global cooperation.



Mount Blair Community Development Trust

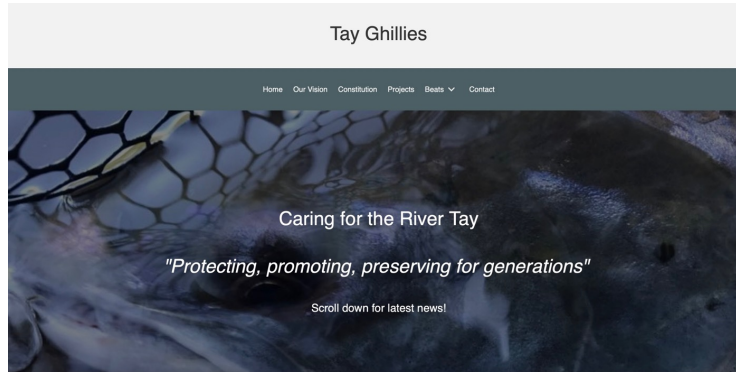
- MOUNT BLAIR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT TRUST

- MBCDT are a community anchor organisation representing the interests of the residents of our remote rural region: this starts north of Blairgowrie heading up both Strathardle towards Pitlochry and also up Glenshee to the Cairngorms National Park boundary.

- This is a crucially important strategic location for this project and we are delighted to be a partner of this exciting initiative which reflects one of the outcomes of our recently updated Community Action Plan: to advance the protection and creation of our natural wildlife habitats and ecosystems.



Tay Ghillies Association



Project Governance

Steering Group made up of
Project Partners plus x2
Landowners in the catchment



The project Governance for this first stage of work is a Steering Group made up of representatives from each of the project partners plus two landowner representatives.