

PROTECTING RURAL  
LANDSCAPES  
for future generations

PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE  
DEVELOPMENT  
in rural Scotland

RAISING AWARENESS  
landscape - people - economy

# ANNUAL REVIEW

THE ASSOCIATION FOR THE PROTECTION OF RURAL SCOTLAND 2016  
[www.aprs.scot](http://www.aprs.scot)



Environment Secretary  
Richard Lochhead and  
international expert Clarissa  
Morawski speaking at APRS  
Parliamentary Briefing

## HIGHLIGHTS OF 2016

- The huge growth in support for our Have You Got The Bottle? campaign.
- Hosting the Global Deposit Summit for 70 campaigners from across the world.
- Securing manifesto commitments to more National Parks from four of the five political parties.
- Supporting enthusiastic National Parks campaigns in the Borders and Galloway.
- Completing the transformation of our corporate identity with a new website.
- Celebrating our 90th Anniversary with our friends the National Trust for Scotland.



APRS

# Have You Got The Bottle? Campaign

Our Have You Got The Bottle? Campaign urges the Scottish Government to introduce a deposit return system (DRS) for glass, metal and plastic drinks containers, in order to reduce litter, boost recycling rates and tackle climate change.

The Campaign had a highly successful first full year, led by Campaign Director Betsy Reed and volunteer Jenni Hume. Support grew to 42 partner organisations representing over 300,000 people, including brewers, cafes, recyclers, restaurants, shops and universities as well as environmental and recreational organisations. We met Cabinet Secretary for Environment Richard Lochhead MSP in January and held a lunchtime Parliamentary Briefing in January and an evening Parliamentary Reception in December. The Scottish Parliament's Environment Committee set up a dedicated sub-group to look into DRS. Aberdeenshire Council and

Midlothian Council both voted unanimously to support the introduction of DRS and to write to the Scottish Government accordingly.

We organised a two-day site visit to see DRS in action in Oslo for a group of partners and other colleagues. We were invited to participate in the Scottish Government's DRS stakeholder group and submitted a substantial document of evidence in support of our case. We published dedicated briefings for small businesses and local authorities and a Top Ten Facts document to publicise our case on our campaign website: [www.haveyoutothebottle.org.uk](http://www.haveyoutothebottle.org.uk). We hosted a two-day Global Deposit Summit in Edinburgh for around 70 DRS campaigners from across the world, including delivering welcome speeches, a campaign presentation and associated social events. We attended the SNP Conference, generating many contacts and much interest from delegates, and we presented a DRS workshop at the Community Resources Network Scotland conference. The campaign generated extensive media coverage over the year, and as the year ended both Sky News and the Daily Mail were gearing up to run full-scale high-profile campaigns supporting DRS.



Have You Got The Bottle? stall at the Scottish Parliament

## APRS Green Belts Alliance

Our APRS Green Belts Alliance launched in 2015 promotes the value of Scotland's 11 Green Belts and co-ordinates the activities of community-based Green Belt action groups across Scotland.

We sourced a limited amount of funding to commission polling into public attitudes to Green Belts, and drafted potential questions for use in this. Further development of the Alliance depends on securing dedicated funding for its work, so we drafted a detailed Project Proposal to submit to potential funders. We gave a presentation to Scone Community Council, which is concerned about proposed 700-house development in Perth Green Belt, and spoke at a public meeting in St Andrews about the multiple threats to its Green Belt. We contacted other local groups across Scotland, including in Midlothian, North Lanarkshire and Stirling to encourage their participation in the Alliance.

## Town & Country Planning

We aim to encourage genuinely sustainable development in rural Scotland, including advising our members and other people on how to respond to proposals which affect their local landscapes.

We submitted an objection to the proposed ship-to-ship oil transfers in the Cromarty Firth. We advised APRS members regarding a proposed fish farm in Argyll and Bute and the management of a quarry in Orkney. We publicly supported the excellent *Dirleton Expects* document published by the Dirleton Village Association in East Lothian, and objected to a housing development proposal in that village. We advised members of the public on how best to ensure high environmental standards at a replacement road bridge in Perth and Kinross, and on how best to oppose a proposed sand and gravel quarry in Argyll and Bute and a proposed new distillery in Islay.

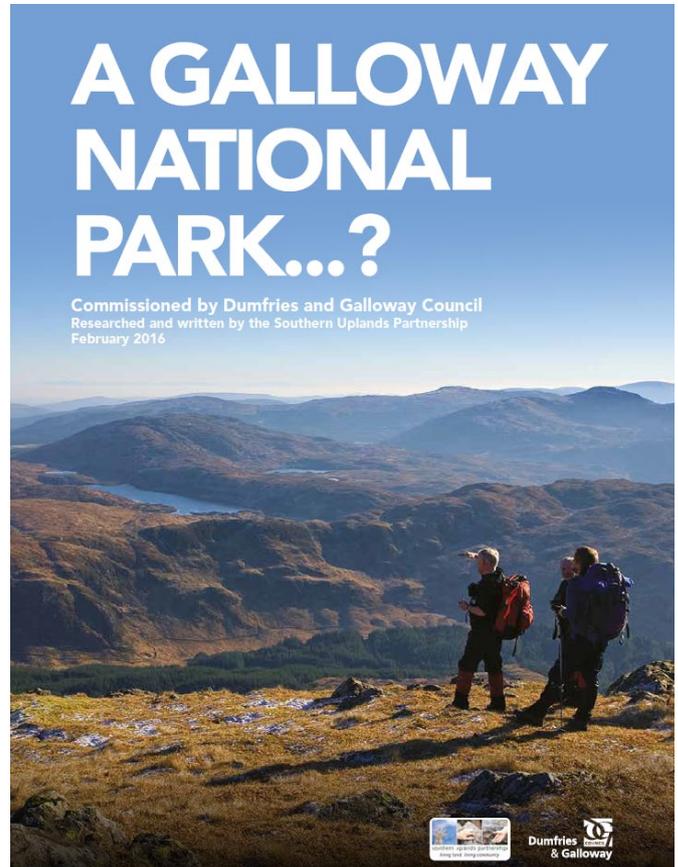
# Scottish National Parks Strategy Project

Our joint project with the Scottish Campaign for National Parks (SCNP) calls for a strategy for a network of National Parks across Scotland, including at least one coastal and marine National Park.

We secured commitments to more National Parks from four of the five political parties represented in the Scottish Parliament in their manifestos for the May 2016 elections, so a majority of MSPs (65 of 129) now represent parties which support more National Parks. We planned a three-day Exhibition and two-hour evening Reception to take place in the Scottish Parliament in January 2017. We secured a significant media partner in the Scots Magazine, which printed a series of articles and supportive editorials about our campaign. We printed our four topic reports on Socio-Economic Benefits, Governance Models, Tourism Benefits and Volunteering and distributed them widely. BBC Scotland's Landward TV programme aired a 5-minute item on the case for a Galloway National Park and the Campaign for National Parks (which covers the English and Welsh National Parks) published a blog about our campaign on its website and a news item in its magazine.

Lively local campaigns emerged during the year in the Borders and Galloway. We supported the Borders National Park campaign group, including helping to plan a major stakeholder event in Jedburgh attended by more than 130 local people. We commented on the brief for the Borders campaign's proposed feasibility study and advised on potential consultants to carry it out. We supported the formation of the new Galloway National Park Association, and publicised Dumfries & Galloway Council's *A Galloway National Park ...?* feasibility study. We visited Harris and Lewis to press the case for a

National Park in Harris, meeting Comhairle nan Eilean Siar (Western Isles Council) Councillors and officials in Stornoway and Harris Development Ltd in Tarbert. We prepared draft Potential National Park Profiles for the Cheviots, Galloway and Lochaber areas and drew up initial boundary options for all seven potential National Parks. We submitted responses to draft Local Development Plans for Highland, Dumfries & Galloway and the Western Isles, calling on them to support our proposals for National Parks in their areas.



## Governance & Management

APRS is governed by an Executive Committee of seven Trustees, and benefits from several dedicated volunteers and a 22-strong advisory Council.

We celebrated our 90th Anniversary through an illustrated lecture about the origins of APRS and the National Trust for Scotland (NTS) held at NTS Central Office in Edinburgh. We held our AGM at Sanquhar following a site visit to the Crawick Multiverse, a major land restoration and public art project. After 25 years based in Gladstone's Land, we moved to new office premises in Hunter Square, where we continue to share premises with Scottish Environment LINK. In September we held a successful Members' Day in the form of a cruise along the Union Canal from Ratho and a presentation by our Council Member Duncan Campbell, who leads our Green Belts Alliance.

We were very sorry to hear in December of the passing of Elizabeth Bramley, APRS Director from 1993 – 1998. Elizabeth is still remembered by many APRS members and former colleagues as a well-regarded and highly dedicated campaigner, particularly for the successful role she played in defeating the proposed Lingarabay superquarry on Harris both before and during the long-running Public Inquiry.

Warm thanks are due to our volunteers Joan Geddes (planning), Betty Hudson (*Rural Scotland* newsletter and e-bulletin), Jenni Hume (Have You Got The Bottle? campaign) Walter Simpson (Honorary Treasurer), Nikki Sinclair (APRS Green Belts Alliance), Karol Swanson (planning) and Eleanor Young (website and office administration).

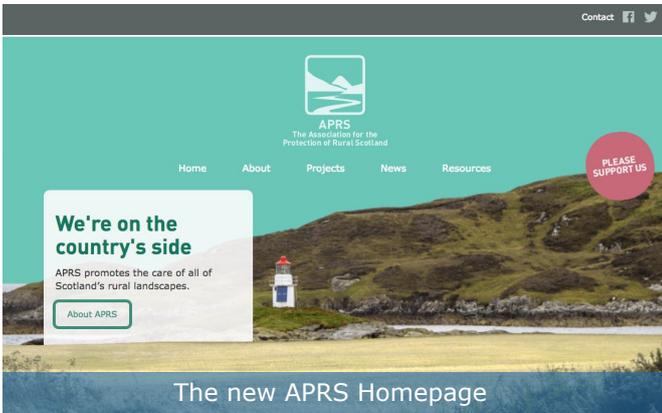
## Policy Development & Advocacy

We seek to protect and enhance Scotland's rural landscapes for future generations and to promote effective planning and landscape protection systems in Scotland, through active involvement in national policy development and advocacy.

We continued to make an active contribution to ongoing discussions about land reform and land use strategy in Scotland, particularly in the context of the extensive current debates prompted by the UK's decision to leave the European Union. We promoted the value of Scotland's rural landscapes by contributing to the development of the new Land Rights and Responsibilities Statement under the Land Reform Act 2016, by commenting on the current review of Scotland's town and country planning system, and through chairing Scottish Environment LINK's working groups on land use and landscape.

## Communications & Partnership

We aim to raise awareness of the importance of Scotland's landscapes to its people and economy, through working in partnership with individuals, other charities, local authorities, government and public bodies and through publicising our work to our members and beyond.



We launched a new APRS website: [www.aprs.scot](http://www.aprs.scot), completed rolling out our new corporate identity across all of our publications and mailed three issues of our Rural Scotland members' newsletter. We publicised all of our campaigns and other activities on our website and social media channels.

## Fundraising & Membership

We rely on generous support from charitable trusts, private companies and our members to carry out our work.

Donations received during the year included substantial anonymous contributions towards both our Have You Got The Bottle? campaign and our National Parks Project, £5,000 from Susan H Guy's Charitable Trust, £1,000 from AEH Salvesen's Charitable Trust and £750 from the Sylvia Aitken Charitable Trust, as well as many smaller donations. Many APRS members also made greatly-appreciated contributions towards our funds.

## Plans for 2017

In the forthcoming year we plan to:

- Raise funds for the APRS Green Belts Alliance to promote the value of Scotland's Green Belts and support local groups in their work
- Expand our capacity to support our members and others with advice on dealing with development proposals which affect their local landscapes
- Actively promote the importance of Scotland's rural landscapes as national policy debates take place around land reform, land use and rural policy, in the context of negotiations over the UK's departure from the EU
- Drive forward our Have You Got The Bottle? campaign through Parliamentary initiatives, more business partners and substantially increased media coverage
- Substantially increase the profile of our National Parks campaign through a Parliamentary Exhibition and Reception and continue to support local campaigns
- Hold our AGM in North Lanarkshire to raise awareness of the threats to the Green Belt in that area

**APRS is the charity which promotes the care of all of Scotland's rural landscapes.**

We aim to:

- protect and enhance Scotland's rural landscapes for future generations
- promote effective planning and landscape protection systems in Scotland
- encourage genuinely sustainable development in rural Scotland
- raise awareness of the importance of Scotland's landscapes to its people and economy
- promote the activity of land managers who care for Scotland's landscapes

**John Mayhew** | Director | March 2017

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