

LAIKENBUIE ECOLOGY TRUST
Trustees' Annual Report
1st July 2024 - 30th June 2025

OUR STORY

The third year of running Laikenbuie as an ecological charity is characterized by stability, building on our previous work and organisation.

David and Genevieve have been here for a year and a half and have started to put their plans into action. They have attracted a number of experts, enthusiasts and dedicated volunteers to the site resulting in the achievements listed below. We feel this is a list to be very proud of and could not have been accomplished without the voluntary ecological work they do on top of the agricultural work that they were employed to do, including caring for the iron age pigs (which our visitors love to see!), checking the mink traps, planning and advertising the community events, organizing volunteering days, surveying the area for new species and recording the data, producing an ecological review and enthusing followers with their social media posts. The Trust is very fortunate to have David and Genevieve as tenants who look after the farm recompensed through a reduced rent on the farmhouse. Their work has added an outstanding quality to the Trusts's activities and objectives.

Our year in numbers!

- 1 school visit
- 1 ecological review published
- 1 county botanist surveyed our plants
- 1 continued small-scale experiment to increase biodiversity on the fen (cutting and removing vegetation with scythes in four areas and spreading on-site collected Marsh Lousewort seed in two of them)
- 2 non native mink removed
- 2 week workstay by a graduate ecologist
- 3 bee and butterfly surveys
- 3 iron age pigs arrived
- 4 km of footpaths now completed
- 6 audiomoth bird recorders deployed
- 6 formal trustee meetings held plus an AGM
- 7 bird ringing sessions
- 7 volunteer work parties engaging 17 volunteers who:
 - removed old tree tubes
 - repaired gaps in dry stone dykes
 - removed invasive cotoneaster plants
 - made leaky dams
 - fenced two seed islands for aspen
- 9 community events including:
 - dawn chorus walk with Moray Walking Festival
 - dragonfly walk with Fornighty Wildlife Group
 - solstice walk for a calm time before Christmas
- 50 members enjoy our WhatsApp group
- 825 recorded Laikenbuie species beautifully highlighted in an infographic which can be viewed on our website
- 1000 followers reached on Instagram

We have had another good year, the custodians are settled in, the visitor numbers have increased, and the finances are in a satisfactory state. We are in a good position to continue building on our core aims as an ecological Charity over the next year.

OUR TRUSTEES There have been no changes.

NAME	OFFICE	START	END
Edward Hart	Chair	01.03.2022	
Gillian Hay		01.03.2022	
James Shewan		01.03.2022	
Josephine Muskus	Treasurer	01.03.2022	
Peter Muskus	Secretary	01.03.2022	
Samuel Muskus		01.03.2022	
Tabitha Ewing		01.03.2022	06.11.2023
Rupert Lander		07.07.2024	

The trustees have been selected from people we know who have a love and connection with the land at Laikenbuie. We would expect a potential Trustee to be known to one of us for a while, they would then be interviewed, and the existing trustees would vote on whether they are invited to join us.

OUR DETAILS

GOVERNANCE Laikenbuie Ecology Trust is a SCIO, No. SC051617 registered on 1st March 2022.

ADDRESS: Laikenbuie, Grantown Road, NAIRN IV12 5QN.

EMAIL: info@LaikenbuieEcologyTrust.org.uk

INSTAGRAM: <https://www.instagram.com/laikenbuieecologytrust/>

CHARITABLE PURPOSES and OBJECTIVES

The advancement of environmental protection to manage the farm and land known as Laikenbuie as a working example of sustainable organic small scale agriculture and landscape re-wilding, operating in synergy and in the interests of enabling a diversity of natural flora and fauna.

The advancement of education to provide organised opportunities for land based learning, environmental and nature education, and health and well-being programs for schools, colleges and local community groups within a working farm environment where nature can flourish with minimal intervention. We encourage responsible access.

OUR FINANCES

Laikenbuie Ecology Trust owns 51Ha [125Ac] of land plus a farmhouse and steading. Much of this land has a high wildlife value, but is quite unproductive in an economic sense. That is why it is an ideal wildlife haven. We have reviewed possible unexpected costs, the biggest likely to be the farmhouse heating system, and have reduced our planned reserve to a fund of £18,000 based on 2023 values. Our regular annual income from the house, land and donations is likely to be a little over £20,000, plus any grants that we may receive.

Donated facilities and services. David and Genevieve spend much of their leisure time on the land and in the office following up conservation issues. One of the results of this is the Instagram page and WhatsApp group. Peter potters around doing property and machinery maintenance. A big help is provided by our local pool of 17 volunteers who attend work parties.