

GGN/EGN - Geopark Annual Report 2019

1. GEOPARK IDENTITY

Geopark name, country, regional Network: Shetland UNESCO Global Geopark, United Kingdom (Scotland), European Geoparks Network

Year of inscription / Year of the last revalidation: 2009 / 2019

2. GEOPARK FIGURES

Number of Geopark staff: 16 FTE staff, including 5 with qualifications in geosciences.

Number of visitors: Approx. 130,000 (including cruise-ship passengers). Over 100,000 visitors to our key attractions (Shetland Museum and Archives, Sumburgh Head, Old Scatness Broch, Crofthouse Museum).

Number of Geopark events: A number of annual events are held by Shetland Amenity Trust (managing body of Shetland UGGp), including Shetland Nature Festival (incorporating European Geoparks Week), Shetland Boat Week and Shetland Wool Week. Various other heritage-themed events were held throughout 2019, including lectures, courses and open days.

Number of school classes realize Geopark educational programmes: 1750 school pupils visited our heritage sites or were visited at school by our team.

Number of Geopark press release: 54

3. GEOPARK ACTIVITIES

Major achievements in 2019

- Received a green card following revalidation in July 2019
- Approximately 3500 visitors participated in our three major festivals: Shetland Nature Festival (incorporating European Geoparks Week), Shetland Wool Week and Shetland Boat Week.
- Da Voar Redd Up (our annual beach and roadside clean up) took place in April/May. Over 4500 volunteers (over 20% of our population) took part, clearing up 65 tonnes of rubbish.
- 100 hectares of peatland restoration work was undertaken, equivalent to saving 2000 tonnes of carbon emissions.

Contribution towards GGN - Networking and participation

- 2 delegates attended the 43rd EGN Coordination Committee meeting in Swabian Alb UNESCO Global Geopark, March 2018, as well as the 44th EGN Coordination Committee meeting and the 15th European Conference on UNESCO Global Geoparks in Sierra Norte de Sevilla UGGp.
- 1 delegate attended the UK Committee for UNESCO Global Geoparks meeting in May

2018.

- Took on responsibility for the collation of Mother Earth Day 2020 events for the EGN.

Management and Financial Status

- Finalised the restructure of the Geopark and completed a new management plan. The work of Shetland Amenity Trust is funded primarily by Shetland Charitable Trust and Shetland Islands Council.

Geoconservation

- We continue to manage a successful peatland restoration programme. Through funding from Scottish Natural Heritage's Peatland Action Fund, Shetland Amenity Trust employs a Peatlands Project Officer, and in 2019 undertook restoration projects benefitting more than 100 hectares of blanket bog.
- Installed new on-site interpretation at a vulnerable geosite for Devonian fossils. The interpretation draws attention to the importance of the site as an educational resource, as well as its protected status.

Sustainable tourism (Geotourism)

- We have delivered training on various aspects of Shetland's heritage to local tour guides and members of the public.
- Provided geological interpretation to local tour operators to enhance their tourism offer.

Strategic partnership

- We work with a large number of partners through all of our work, including Heritage Centres, community groups, educational institutions and other organisations.
- In 2019, we created a Geopark partnership scheme, offering benefits to businesses and community groups that help us to achieve our strategic objectives and/or support the UN sustainable development goals, through their own work. At the end of 2019 we had 17 Geopark partners.
- With partners at Portsmouth University, we produced an updated Geological map of Shetland, incorporating the latest research.

Promotional activities

- We have given numerous interviews to local news outlets and written 54 press releases about our work. We have a number of active social media pages.

4. CONTACTS

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