

# LINK Members' Bulletin September 2009

LINK News | Focus | Consultations | Events and Seminars |  
Diary | Publications |

## LINK NEWS

**New Members:** Following Board and membership approval we are pleased to welcome **Living Streets** to LINK's membership. During September we will be undertaking an induction and introducing Living Streets to you all. Also we have had enquiries from other organisations possibly interested in joining us too, and we will be in touch with you if these develop into applications.

**SOAs:** The LINK-commissioned paper on key SOAs issues and indicators is in draft, and will probably publish it in October. The LINK SOAs steering group met recently with SNH and SSN to explore opportunities to influence the process. SOAs are on our agenda for the ministerial meeting in September. A meeting with CoSLA is planned. The new menu of indicators will be produced by the Improvement Service in October. If you would like to be part of the LINK steering group please contact **Jen**.

**Health, wellbeing and environment:** LINK is due to meet again with SNH for a follow-up discussion to that held in March. For this we will want to complete the 'mapping' of how members may currently cover these or linked issues. Discussion this summer with Paths for All, BTCV and others explored how LINK members might add value to work already afoot which links these agendas and a meeting with PAHA (Physical Activity and Health Alliance) is in the pipeline.

**Healthy Environment Network:** LINK has the opportunity to be active on HEN but lacks a rep in the wake of Ian McCall's departure from RA Scotland. If you would be interested in loosely representing the environment agenda at HEN meetings, please contact **Adean**.

**WNE Bill:** a LINK submission to the consultation pulled together from components agreed at LINK's July workshop and subsequently submitted by the Biodiversity, Deer and Landscape taskforces, was submitted to Scottish Government last week. It is broadly supportive of many of the proposals. Delivery of WNE legislation in terms of resources and robustness of approach (e.g. on invasive species, statutory deer management) is on the agenda for the ministerial meeting in September. Details from Susan.

**Sustainable Land Use Workshop:** The purpose of the LINK workshop on 22 September at the LINK Perth office for taskforce members and Main Reps is to inform a paper pulling together LINK views on what a strategy on sustainable land use should cover, and how. If you haven't signed up, and want to attend, please contact **Jen** soon.

**Sustainable Tourism Booklet:** LINK is contributing a modest £500 to a booklet being prepared by the Sustainable Tourism Partnership on which LINK Hon Fellow, Bob Aitken represents LINK. It is being published by Wiley in the 'Dummies' series.

---

**JNCC:** Vacancy for two independent committee members. Closing date is 14 September. More details from the **Defra website**.

---

**LINK Parliamentary News:**

**Training Day:** Feedback from members attending the Advocacy Training Day at the end of July was positive and the suggestion for a Media Training Day next year is being explored.

**Political Strategy Report:** this is being reviewed for the next Parliamentary Forum meeting in September before going to the LINK Board at the end of October.

**LINK Manifesto:** our election asks are being drafted - so far we have received feedback from about 10 members, and we are now looking for worked examples from taskforces and members, and we are aiming to have it finalised by the end of the year. It is hoped it will be a rolling manifesto which can be added to and revised on an on-going basis as the political scene unfolds next year.

**LINK Legislation Tracker:** our one-page summary of the progress of various bills through Parliament, as at 25 August 2009.

[<< Back to Top](#)

---

## Member Focus

### John Muir Trust

The last few months have been fairly busy for the John Muir Trust, dealing with amongst many other things high-profile planning applications, including



Viking Energy in Shetland and the proposed super-resort at Dall Estate by Loch Rannoch, Perthshire. We also saw the publication of the report from the Public Local Inquiry into the proposed Muaitheabhal wind farm in the Western Isles.

The most significant recent development was the Public Local Inquiry Report, which concluded that the **Muaitheabhal** wind farm "...would compromise the objectives of designation ... and its overall integrity" and "...have significant adverse effects on the qualities for which the NSA [National Scenic Area] has been designated."

While the Trust welcomes the Reporter's findings, we are disappointed that the Scottish Government has failed to make a decision on the original application. This has allowed the developers, Beinn Mhor Power, to make significant changes to the proposal under an amendment to the application, rather than as a new application. At present, the Trust is closely considering the economic and environmental impacts of this amendment and we will be making an appropriate response.

The **Viking Energy** proposal for a massive wind farm on mainland Shetland is simply staggering – the size and scale of the development would mean that, if approved, an island with a population of only 23,000 people would be home to Europe's largest onshore wind farm (150-turbines and 530 megawatt capacity); larger even than the newly-opened Whitelee wind farm in East Renfrewshire.

We objected to this application on the grounds that the proposal is disproportionate to the size of the island, could result in significant carbon emissions from peat and blanket bogs during construction and operation, would have severe impacts on the landscape and could impact the local economy, especially tourism.

We want people to get outdoors to discover local biodiversity, enjoy wild and remote places and become more aware of the benefits and value they possess. That's not easy to achieve when there are turbines visible within a 15-kilometre radius of a wind farm.

Both Muaitheabhal and Shetland highlight the fact that we can't expect to build our way out of climate change at any cost. The Trust believes that a national, coherent energy strategy, which includes elements of spatial planning, is essential to prevent development in unsuitable locations and to stop developers from circumventing the intention of the planning system by claiming national imperative overrides local environmental concerns.

Often local groups concerned about a major planning application struggle to get national media attention. The Trust and local community groups were anxious that the proposed 'playground for the rich' at **Dall Estate**, Loch Rannoch had the potential to 'fly under the radar', meaning that its visual and landscape impact, which includes a high steel and concrete structure in the loch itself, would be largely overlooked.

As an organisation, the John Muir Trust is happy to work with local community groups, where appropriate, to help them to raise the profile of their concerns and put them in touch with others who can provide more specific advice or support. Similarly, we are happy to provide support, advice or guidance to other organisations where we can and as time allows. So we are pleased that a wide variety of different organisations and people have joined together in opposition to the resort, given the environmental and ecological concerns surrounding the development site, and that this has been given extensive coverage in the national media. It has certainly raised the profile and understanding of the importance of Arctic Charr.

[<< Back to Top](#)

---

## Consultations

Sign up to [seConsult](#), the Scottish Government weekly email alert service to tell you of new consultations and provides brief descriptions and web links.

### In addition to the Scottish Government consultations

**Forestry Commission consultation on Code of Good Practice for Forest Carbon Projects** Details from [www.forestry.gov.uk/carboncode](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/carboncode)

**14 September**

[<<Back to top](#)

## Events and Seminars

**11 September**  
Dynamic Earth,  
Edinburgh.

Small farmers: backbone of rural development or barrier to efficiency?  
28-30 September  
Keynote address by Roseanna Cunningham MSP, Minister for the Environment. This event is supported by the European Commission DG Agriculture and Rural Development, Highland & Islands Enterprise and Cairngorm National Park. Click here for more details.

**17-18 September** SNH **The Changing Nature of Scotland**. Changes in important ecosystems will be discussed by specialists and business representatives.

Perth Concert Hall The programme is online at [www.eventsforce.net](http://www.eventsforce.net) and [register](#) here too.

<b>25 September</b>	First Scottish Rural Gathering - a networking event for the people who live and work in rural Scotland.
SCVO	See <a href="http://www.ruralgateway.org.uk">www.ruralgateway.org.uk</a> for details
Perth Racecourse	
<b>1 October, Edinburgh</b>	Two seminars to present the new report commissioned by the Carnegie Trust, 'Climate Change and resource scarcity: a guide for non-environmental groups' by Tony Kendle of the Eden Project.
<b>2 October, Inverness</b>	
SCVO and Carnegie Trust	It is hoped to raise the debate about the social challenges presented by climate change, the implications these will have, and the need for organisations across civil society to respond.
	For more details and to register, see <a href="http://www.scvo.org.uk">www.scvo.org.uk</a>
<b>6 October</b>	<b>Social Return on Investment of Green Space (SROI)</b>
Greenspace Scotland	Briefing and sharing practice event.
Tolbooth, Stirling	The day will brief delegates on SROI work currently going on in the greenspace sector and share the learning from those studies. The practical workshop will explore the techniques of the SROI approach.
	<b>More information from Greenspace Scotland.</b>
<b>29 October</b>	The SSN Annual conference will be chaired by Professor Jan Bebbington, Vice-Chair of the Sustainable Development Commission.
<b>Sustainable Scotland Network Annual Conference</b>	It will explore the implications and opportunities of the Scottish Government policy and legislative drivers for Scottish local authorities in the period to 2020.
Dynamic Earth, Edinburgh	For further information and to register online, visit <a href="http://www.sustainable-scotland.net/conference2009/">http://www.sustainable-scotland.net/conference2009/</a>
<b>20 January 2010</b>	
SCVO Edinburgh	<b>Tackling Climate Change in your organisation.</b> One day training course.
	<b>More Details</b> on SCVO website.

## 2009

**September 22** LINK Workshop-Principles for a sustainable land use strategy.  
Venue TBC

**October 22** Board meeting, am. Board and Convenors/Members Networking pm.

**November 19-20** LINK Annual Congress and Forward Planning, Dunblane

**December 16** Festive Evening Reception, St Augustine's Church, Edinburgh.

## 2010

**21 January** Board meeting, am. Board and Members Networking pm.

**22 April** Board meeting, am. Board and Members Networking pm.

**22 June** Board meeting, am. Board and Members Networking pm. AGM early eve.

**21 October** Board meeting, am. Board and Members Networking pm.

**18-19 November** LINK Annual Congress and Forward Planning

**15 December** Festive Evening Reception, St Augustine's Church, Edinburgh.

## Publications



### A Games Legacy for Scotland

Scottish Government Report of the Legacy Plan for the XXth Commonwealth Games in Scotland 2014, launched in Glasgow September 2009.



**JNCC Annual Report 2008-09.** Gives details of their joint work on a wide range of issues including sustainability, global impacts, and marine mapping.



### Highland and Islands Enterprise Summer Review 2009

Gives a focus on sustainable economic growth, social enterprise and energy.