

## Feedback from school visits

Following discussion with Dumfries & Galloway Learning for Sustainability Services a programme of work was designed and subsequently refined to fit within the constraints of the nomination bid window. Almost none of the students had heard of the Biosphere. Few had heard of the Merrick and even fewer had been up it. The teachers feel covid has had a big impact on their experiences.

The groups worked with were S5 Travel and Tourism and Highers Geography at Dalbeattie High School and the whole S1- S4 cohort at Dalry High School, an S2 group at Douglas Ewart High School, 2 S3 groups at Castle Douglas High School and the S4, S5 and S6 cohorts at Doon Academy. Each involved a double lesson of 90 to 100 minutes. The comments below represent the thoughts of around 200 young people in Galloway.

After learning about the nomination process and thinking about what a National Park is and any benefits and concerns they may have, students worked in small groups to produce what they would write with respect to a nomination bid for Galloway.

“Galloway should absolutely become a National Park. A National Park would benefit wildlife greatly by giving animals a healthy habitat and allowing plants and trees to thrive, which in turn is good for our planet. More people would want to visit/live in Galloway and since it currently doesn't have a very big population this would be tremendously helpful to small business and schools”

“Why we need a National Park for Galloway

- Forest farming ruins the landscape view
- We want to contribute to stop climate change
- We want to look green on the map of Scotland”
  
- “It may make others think about the problem
- It preserves wildlife”

“It would be good to be able to go out and see some animals that have been (re)introduced to Scotland eg Beavers”

“It would be good for rewilding some animals such as Eagles and Lynx as the National Park would give them habitats. National Parks also attract tourists and possibly increase local populations.”

“A National Park is a good idea, because of the benefits to population and wildlife”

“If we get a National Park it will increase the local population so that school will have more than two people in a year. It will reduce afforestation and protect the local wildlife.”

“It would be nice to go and take in the nature and explore it and it would be cool if they reintroduced animals in this region”

“Doesn’t make a difference”

“I would like Galloway to become a National Park because it will attract tourists and other people to move into Dumfries and Galloway”

“I think if Galloway was a National Park it would attract more people to come to Galloway and potentially live here. If we had signs on the motorway saying Galloway is a National Park it would attract people.”

“Galloway should become a National Park because it would help the wildlife have more open habitat to live in and protect trees. Having another National park will encourage tourists to come to Galloway and possibly move here.”

“The reason Galloway should become a national park is because it would give older people who are currently raising the population in Scotland a place to visit and even to try to keep fit along with access to a nice place with nature.

I would really like Galloway to become a national park as it would mean new activities closer to where I would live and would also make me proud of where I live as it has enough natural beauty to have the right to be a national park.

We would really enjoy a national park being by where we live. I also believe that it would raise tourism, helping the economy to grow.”

“Galloway is a beautiful place that deserves to have a national park to attract tourists to the amazing cultural landscape. The natural beauty really attracts the eye for the stunning views and vibrant colours to go along with the iconic scenery and nature.”

“I think Galloway should have a National Park because it would bring so much more to the area compared to other places in the UK. Galloway has so much natural beauty yet it is unknown and underappreciated. A national park would give Galloway a purpose.”

“We would like Galloway to become a National Park. Some key reasons are employment – making Galloway a National Park will bring about 2,000 jobs which will benefit the local community as there has been a shortage of jobs in the past months. And Money – a National Park will bring in about 100m pounds a year. Population – the population will increase which will benefit the local communities. The tourist level will also increase”

"I think Galloway should be a National Park because not many people know where it is"

"A National Park will

- Protect Nature
- Increase the population
- People will know the place more
- Happy that people that know the place"

"Galloway should become a National Park because its population is falling or getting old. Making this place a National Park would attract people that would help support businesses and shops. Having a National Park would also help to get people employed, such as being a Ranger. It would also help the environment and climate around us. Younger people could be encouraged to get outside and exercise and do more sports like bike riding, sailing and others. It would also make the place known and maybe welcoming"

"Galloway should be a National Park because it's got great views. Also because it will make more people know we are here and bring more visitors. It would be amazing to have Galloway on the map and have people know where we are"

"A National park will help the population to grow. It will improve the surroundings (trees and flowers) and could bring in more money. The place would be better known and people would recognize it. There would be better activities (Sailing, Biking). It would make us happy if the population grew"

"I think Galloway should be a National park because we could get more jobs and live in a wealthier environment. A also want it to be a National Park so that there would be more mountain biking but I don't think we would be able to make our own trails anymore. If it did turn into a National park we could get more outdoor activities but I still do not understand how wages will go up. Newton Stewart would get more money which means we get more shops. I think we shouldn't make ebike tracks *{in the forest}* because they are a waste of money. My aunty died in the Galloway Forest so I would like to make it into a National Park to make her happy."

"I don't think Galloway should be a National Park because I do not like tourists or ebikers"

"I think a National Park would be good because it can bring jobs and help support the economy and bring tourists in to give more money and bring people in who want to help and support the agriculture and help support it."

"I think Galloway should become a National Park because it would preserve nature and its animals but also to support local business. This could allow more money going into the environment preserving it more but also reintroduce animals that were hunted out of Galloway like the Red Kite"

"Galloway should be a National park so the popularity of small shops go up and overall get money for the economy"

"I think that it is a good idea because it will bring a lot of tourism and money to the economy"

"I think that Galloway should get National park status as it will bring more knowledge and respect to the region as well as money. More jobs will be available so my parents can earn more and give us a better quality of life. This will also apply when I leave childhood myself"

"I think that Galloway National park should go ahead, but industries like forestry should be left free without new restrictions because they know what they are doing, and the environment is always at the heart of the industry. More tree are needed to combat climate change so they should be able to plant them"

"I think that a National Park would be good to bring more income, get us outside more, improve our fitness, but I'm concerned traffic and noise will increase and we might not get windfarms"

"I think a National Park would be good because local businesses will get more popularity that will draw attention to them and raise profit. Another benefit would be increased wildlife populations for local animals therefore we are all for the idea of a National Park"

"I think it is a good thing because it will benefit the environment and stop the wildland getting eaten away. It will also help the people because it is healthy to be outside"

"I think we shouldn't turn Galloway into a National park because house prices will go up for people buying house in Galloway and the forestry would be useless because it would be protected so you couldn't cut it down"

"I think it is a good idea to have Galloway become a National Park. For example local businesses will benefit from this as people like to buy local and original things. The hospitality industry will benefit as there will be an increase in tourists which will cause a lot more people that need somewhere to stay. Galloway will become more known around the UK as so many people ask you where you're from and you say Galloway and they usually have no clue where that is"

"I think it would be a good idea to have a National Park in Galloway but I also fear concerns regarding the knock on effect of it on development and agriculture. I agree that there are definitely

benefits to having a National Park and that the income would be much more if we were granted this position”

“I think that having a National park is a good idea because we will be protecting nature and it will be good for the environment”

“A National Park would mean more tourism which would mean more jobs open for people with no jobs or for young people to get jobs. This would also mean more money for the area”

“I think that it is a good idea for Galloway to become a National Park because it will increase the regions population which will bring in more money and more jobs”

“I think Galloway should be a National park because we have unique scenery and have been overlooked. I think we deserve more attention because we have some of the best scenery and wildlife in the whole of Scotland”

“We think that a National Park would be a very good addition to our area as it would bring in more tourists to the area and would also bring more jobs for people in the community. I think the most important reason for a National Park is that it brings better protection for the nature and wildlife in Galloway. This means a bloom in species populations.”

“The tourism would come to Galloway which could mean more money since if it becomes famous people at work could raise more money if tourists pay to get in. The tourist could also mean more work and that also mean it could fix unemployment and could also mean younger people could start working and elders could retire at a younger age”

“ I want to be relevant. I don't want to be irrelevant. I fancy being from a National Park. Getting Galloway on the map is a fab idea”

“I think a National Park would be a good idea because of the income”

“A National Park will give more recognition to Galloway and tourists will be attracted to the area”

“Galloway would make a great National Park as currently it has the lowest mean hourly earnings and is in a demographic time bomb. Therefore not only would this help save nature in this beautiful area it will help save the population. It will provide job opportunities and reasons to come and stay in the area. It is a very forgotten area in Scotland and this would help us be known. There would be some downsides like not being equipped currently for a lot of tourists and would increase house prices”

“The opening of a National Park would be great for the people who will forever get to enjoy the beauty of the landscapes, wildlife and fresh air”

“It would be great for the local area and create lots of opportunities”

“I think it’s a good idea as it can help our community and bring us closer to the nature around us. It will bring tourists and give us more jobs, making our community n brighter and better”

“I think a National Park could do wonders for the community as it would provide jobs and bring tourism which would highly benefit the local area”

“Galloway should become a third National Park because of the natural landscape and Nature. Galloway also has met all the requirements of a national park and if it was to become one it would bring a lot of tourism meaning our community would improve and that there would be more jobs available for those who need them. It would also mean that it would provide a safe conserved space for the surrounding nature”

“I think it isa good idea as it brings more attention to our community as well as jobs and will be beneficial to local businesses. Our landscape is beautiful and deserves recognition”

“I think Galloway should be a National Park because the scenery and the wildlife is beautiful and it is a great landmark for the community and also tourists and it would put another layer on Scottish nature and really show the beauty of Scotland”

“ I think Galloway should be a National Park as it is a place natural beauty and uniqueness. I grew up fishing around Loch Doon and walking and exploring the local glens. I have enjoyed being part of Galloway and it is a place that needs to be treasured. It may not be as famous as Glen Coe or the Cairngorms but it is just as good. Galloway is an underappreciated place and it needs to be recognised”

“ A National Park would keep the natural beauty of Galloway from being destroyed and would bring more tourists into the area. It would possibly change the way people see us (as more than a deprived area). It will give locals more opportunities”

“We would love a National Park in Galloway so that we can admire the beautiful wildlife. It will bring back memories of when we used to go bird watching. We love the wildlife so much it brings a tear to our eye – you can’t understand how much this means to our small group. This would be a dream come true”

“Ever since I came here I find people who take the beauty here for granted. They take these stunning Scottish lands as a given. I see this Park as a step forward to help people find their place in life”

“We live in a small village and everyone is tired that no one knows the place and if we got a National Park it can help the community, environment, population, Scotland’s popularity and increase the number of doctors, teachers and nurses.”

“A National Park would be a better thing to bring more awareness and maybe will give us a reason to leave our houses and do something in our free time rather than loitering”

“It creates jobs for people in the local area. It allows people to appreciate where they live. It makes people appreciate nature more having a National Park close to home rather than in the Highlands”

“I think Galloway should be a National Park because it brings opportunities and protects nature such as the Red Squirrel and the Osprey nest on Loch Doon. I think it could bring the community together, creating more opportunities for activities”

“I think a National Park would benefit Galloway as it brings jobs to an area that is deprived. It also allows us to share our landscape as well as help locals appreciate their own community more”

“It can bring more jobs and give more young people chance to work nearer to home. It would bring more nature walks and visitors”

“The beauty alone warrants National Park status”

“I would like for it to become a National Park as it will protect the beauty of the land. I think it will help the community and bring n more money for the area”

“I would like it to be a National Park because it will protect the beauty of our land”