

# JOHN MUIR WAY

## MARKETING & BUSINESS ENGAGEMENT

### APPLICANT

Green Action Trust

[www.johnmuirway.org](http://www.johnmuirway.org)

### TOTAL PROJECT COST

£111,399

**£30,078**  
(27%)

**Tyne Esk**  
**LEADER**

**£81,321**  
(73%)

**Partner LAGs/  
Local Authorities**

### PROJECT AIMS

- Promote the John Muir Way as a key tourism asset linked to the area's natural and cultural heritage.
- Achieve a greater share of the market for walking and cycling tourism and recreation.
- By attracting visitors, create opportunities for business growth and development.
- By increasing tourism, contribute to stronger and more sustainable local economies and improved facilities for visitors and communities.

### PROJECT DETAIL

The John Muir Way runs from Helensburgh to Dunbar and traverses the heartland of Scotland. The route is one of Scotland's Great Trails, suitable for walking and cycling. It is well served by public transport and can be completed end-to-end, in shorter sections or day trips.

Prior to this project, no targeting marketing of the John Muir Way had been undertaken, nor engagement with businesses. A route website had been created in 2014 but many of the listings for accommodation/services were out of date. There was a need to engage businesses, improve digital promotion and drive up visitor numbers, and from this the LEADER project was conceived; a co-operation project across five LEADER areas. It aimed to fund a two-year post – a John Muir Way Marketing and Business Engagement Officer with related budget to develop and deliver a marketing plan to increase user numbers and engage businesses in promoting the route.

### RESULTS

The John Muir Way project was very successful, and despite set-backs with Covid delivered on its aims. Initial research included a business survey to identify appetite for collaboration. A marketing strategy was developed comprising a John Muir Way passport as a means of business engagement, targeted social media promotion, creation of new digital content (video/imagery) and website enhancements. Visibility and engagement on social media increased vastly as did traffic to the website, and a visitor survey is underway to measure the impact on use (although halted at Covid lockdown). The project continues in an extended form to develop sustainable marketing/management of the route and support Covid recovery.



### LESSONS LEARNED

*"The project has been essential to build momentum in promoting the John Muir Way. While awareness of the route has increased among walkers, cyclists and businesses, there is still a long way to go, and activity needs to continue. Prioritising outputs that serve both businesses and route users has delivered greatest impact, such as the route passport scheme."*