



THE HEATHER TRUST

Promoting Integrated Moorland Management

A Strategy for the Future





Muirburn on Muirshiel Moor

The Heather Trust seeks to:

(More details are contained in the sections that follow)

- 1 Restore heather coverage towards former levels;
- 2 Achieve better management of moorland, including burning where appropriate;
- 3 Promote an improved understanding of moorland and its ecosystems, based on experience and scientific research;
- 4 Increase recognition of the vital role played by landowners, farmers, sporting interests and managers of moorland; and
- 5 Generate greater understanding, amongst policy makers and the general public, of the benefits that come from the sustainable management of moorland.

Newtonrigg, Holywood, DUMFRIES DG2 0RA

Charity No: SC010204

President: Professor R H Marrs BA PhD DSc

Chairman: M C Hay MA

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FOREWORD

The Heather Trust is an independent charity dedicated to the promotion of high standards of moorland management. Working with a wide range of other organisations throughout the UK, the Trust seeks to improve moorland habitat for the benefit of wildlife, domestic stock, game and all people with an interest in moorland areas.

I Development of The Heather Trust

- 1.1 The Trust was established as *The Reconciliation Project* in 1984, to reconcile the grazing of domestic stock with the production of grouse, and initial funding came from the Heather Improvement Foundation that was established by Sir Joseph Nickerson.
- 1.2 *The Reconciliation Project* became The Heather Trust in 1993 and a wider brief was adopted. The Trust now works in all parts of the UK and has links to all the key organisations that have an interest in the UK uplands.

2 **Scope**

- 2.1 The range of our contacts includes conservation agencies and organisations, farmers, land owners, sporting interests, gamekeepers and anyone who has an interest in the uplands.
- 2.2 Our geographical range includes the whole of the UK and takes in the Republic of Ireland and the Isle of Man. We are currently working from Dartmoor to the Cairngorms and from the North York Moors to Northern Ireland.

3 **Funding**

- 3.1 Our funds are drawn from membership subscriptions, donations, income from the annual *Country Market & Sporting Sale* and fees charged for work carried out under contract.
- 3.2 We receive no core funding from any source and are proud of our independence. This independence allows us to develop good links to all sides of the upland debate. As a result, we are uniquely placed to work between potentially conflicting interests to find solutions to management issues for the benefit of the moorland areas.

To learn more about what we do, please contact the Director, Simon Thorp, or his Assistant, Alison Young



4 Working with others

4.1 We cannot hope to achieve all our objectives in isolation, and we work with:

- Our members and supporters;
- Landowners, farmers, land and sporting managers, and the organisations that represent them;
- The government agencies, national park authorities and other rural organisations;
- Researchers and Scientists working in the uplands; and
- Anyone with an interest in the upland and moorland areas of the UK.

4.2 We provide our independent input into the discussions and negotiations that develop upland and moorland policy at national, regional and local level throughout the UK and we respond to relevant consultation exercises.

4.3 Our emphasis is on creating action as we believe the key test of all policy instruments, consultations and discussions is: “Does it achieve the required results on the ground?” Sadly, all too often the answer is “no”.



Dinnet Estate, Aberdeenshire
(Kirsten Scheuerl / The Field)



The Heather Trust seeks to:

I Restore heather coverage towards former levels

Why are we doing it?	Explanation
Heather as an indicator of condition.	If heather is present on a moor in good condition it is an indication that almost all interests in that area of moorland will be satisfied.
Heather is important in its own right as the subject of a Habitat Action Plan (HAP).	Because of the importance for a range of bird animal and insect species, a HAP has been established for heather under the EU Habitats Directive.
If heather cover is declining it indicates that the management is unsustainable.	In Scotland, the rate of heather loss is estimated to be about 0.5% each year. The figures for England and Wales are similar and this is leading to a loss of this iconic plant.

How will we make progress?

Issue	More Details
Heather cover.	We will encourage the restoration of heather onto areas where it has been lost. Restoration techniques have been developed in the Peak District and they are reliable and effective on areas where this level of intervention is acceptable.
Proper Grazing management of moorland.	We will work with conservation agencies and farmers to encourage a move away from fixed stocking rates to a more flexible outcome driven approach.
Control invasive species.	Invasion of heather moorland by bracken and scrub should be restricted by management of these species. The planting of woodland should be planned to limit the loss of areas of open heather moorland.

The Heather Trust seeks to:

2 Achieve better management of moorland, including burning where appropriate

Why are we doing it?	Explanation
Maintain and improve moorland biodiversity.	Unmanaged moorland tends towards dominance by a reduced number of vegetation species. The biodiversity is reduced and there is an increasing risk to moorland vegetation from wildfire.
Maximise the economic returns to land managers from farming, sporting and other enterprises.	If greater levels of income are generated, more management work can be funded and staff / contractors employed to carry it out. There will be reduced reliance on public funds to maintain upland areas.
Promote prescribed burning of heather in accordance with a management plan that incorporates best practice.	In many areas, unmanaged heather is an unproductive, ecological desert. It has limited biodiversity value Burning of all heather is not appropriate, and no-burn areas should be identified in the burning plan.

How will we make progress?

Issue	More Details
Encourage improved standards of management.	We will offer advice to land owners to improve the management of their moorland and increase the productive capacity of it. We will seek to provide a catalyst to reverse the loss of knowledge & understanding in many areas
Identify and promote best practice muirburn / heather burning.	We will work with other organisations to develop improved guidance for muirburn / heather burning throughout the UK. We will develop opportunities to communicate and demonstrate this guidance to the managers of moorland.
Encourage dynamic management of moorland to maximise income from all sources.	Traditional management techniques are important but adaptation to current market conditions may be required. We will offer assistance with obtaining support through agri-environment schemes and other support measures.

The Heather Trust seeks to:

3 Promote an improved understanding of moorland and its eco-systems, based on experience and scientific research

Why are we doing it?	Explanation
Improve our knowledge of moorland systems.	Knowledge about moorland systems continues to develop. We are uniquely placed to work with land owners and managers, policy makers and researchers to identify knowledge gaps.
Provide a basis for making policy decisions.	Policy should be based on the best knowledge available. A lack of evidence should not be a reason for not making a decision, but the best information should be made available.
Inform land owners and managers about the potential impact of management practices on their land.	The agenda for scientific research should be driven, at least in part, by the needs of land owners and managers.

How will we make progress?

Issue	More Details
We will liaise with the Scientific community and identify areas where more research is required.	Our links are well established through Board Members and direct to research organisations throughout the country. We will make sure that knowledge gaps are identified amongst land managers as well as within the research community.
Topical issues will be identified and placed in context.	Current issues include: Heather beetle, sheep ticks, water management, erosion, heather burning, climate change, loss of sporting income & carbon management. We will maintain our links to land managers to ensure that they are aware of the practical aspects of any research.
We will communicate our ideas to members and more widely.	We will ensure effective technology and information transfer to our members, key stakeholders and beyond. We will consider organising conferences to bring together researchers and practitioners.

The Heather Trust seeks to:

4 Increase recognition of the vital role played by landowners, farmers, sporting interests and the managers of moorland

Why are we doing it?	Explanation
No change takes place without management action on the ground.	Policy decisions, meetings and conferences achieve nothing without implementation by land owners and managers.
The uplands and moorlands are a managed landscape.	There is no complete wilderness in the UK; every area has been shaped by man to a lesser or greater extent. Moorland management will influence the appearance and balance between species of flora & fauna.
Management objectives have a large impact on the appearance of the land.	Every area of land is owned by some person or organisation. The owner has a reason for ownership and this reason needs to be considered alongside the wider interests in any area of land.

How will we make progress?

Issue	More Details
We will offer an advisory service to landowners.	We will use our experience of different moorland management practices throughout the UK to advise a landowner on the most appropriate management. We will charge a fee for this, but there will be a 10% discount for Estate Members.
We will seek active involvement of land owners and managers of moorland through our work on committees and in consultations.	Exploiting our independent status, we will promote the importance of balanced land management from a neutral stance. This will include support for the high standards of management carried out by sporting interests using private funds.
We will extend our influence beyond our membership through an active programme of outreach activities.	We will continue to 'punch above our weight' as a result of working throughout the UK and our liaison with all key organisations with an interest in the UK uplands.

The Heather Trust seeks to:

5 Generate greater understanding, amongst policy makers and the general public, of the benefits that come from the sustainable management of moorland

Why are we doing it?	Explanation
There is a lack of knowledge and understanding of moorland and the management provided by farming and sporting interests.	Policy makers and members of the public do not understand the benefits that arise from the sympathetic management of moorland. The view that moorland is a wilderness is all too common.
Policy instruments need to be sympathetic to the needs of moorland and the very slow rate of change.	Moorland systems are slow to respond and the results of management change take 5 – 10 years to become fully apparent. Short term measures are not appropriate or effective.
Moorland without management would be a very different place.	If all management inputs were to be removed, moorland would degenerate and lose its diversity. Many of the features of moorland that so many enjoy would disappear.

How will we make progress?

Issue	More Details
Promote the need for a separate policy strategy to manage moorland areas.	We will identify the need for moorland to be protected and managed as a special place in its own right, and a strategy for this to be developed alongside the strategies for: conservation, field sports, forestry, water, and agriculture.
Our committee work will provide an opportunity to promote the need for coordinated strategy.	The benefits of a coordinated approach to moorland management are being demonstrated in some areas, and we will transfer the lessons learned to other parts of the UK.
We will seek opportunities to communicate directly with members of the public.	We have considerable experience at organising open days, demonstration events and workshops in the uplands. We will seek funding to continue this work as an important way of increasing the level of knowledge within communities.

CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

6 Overview

- 6.1 We are dependent on our members to give us credibility and on our Board members to guide and direct the Trust.
- 6.2 This support deserves nothing less than the highest standards of management of the Trust and this will continue to be our aim.

7 Board

- 7.1 We will maintain an effective Board with rotation of members as necessary. New members will be sought to maintain the number of Board members in the range 5 – 9.
- 7.2 The Board of Management will be kept fully informed and the Director will report to the Board at least 4 times every year. There may be additional meetings to deal with specific issues.

8 Presidents

8.1 The role of the President and up to two Vice-Presidents is important to provide the Trust with additional ambassadorial support. We will keep our Presidents up to date with the work of the Trust and seek to appoint successors of high standing in our areas of interest, as necessary.

9 Charity Law

9.1 We are governed by Scottish Charity Law and we will continue to operate the Trust in accordance with the latest regulations and guidance issued by the Office of the Scottish Charity Registrar.

MEMBERSHIP

10 Members

10.1 Our members are important to us and we will strive to provide a service that will ensure our members receive value from their membership.

10.2 We will seek new Members at every opportunity. Details of the different classes of Membership are listed on the application form at the back of this document.

- 10.3 Our principal output will be to provide an independent voice that represents our Members interests in the discussions and negotiations which we are party to.
- 10.4 This independent voice will seek to provide a common sense view of Upland issues that is linked to practical outcomes. No other organisation is able to do this on a UK wide basis.

II Members Benefits

- 11.1 Our Members will receive:
- a 10% discount from the cost of advisory visits;
 - a free source of telephone advice and information;
 - representation of their interests in the upland debate throughout the UK;
 - an invitation to the AGM, which is usually combined with an estate visit;
 - a copy of our Annual Report, including the member's supplement; and
 - a copy of the Country Market and Sporting Sale catalogue.



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APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

Please return this form with cheque or completed Standing Order.

Name _____ Type of Member (please tick)
Address _____ Annual subscription £40
_____ Estate £100
_____ Gamekeeper / Student £12
Post code _____ Life £750
Tel No _____ Life (if over 55) £500
Email _____ Husband and Wife Life £1,000

Please note that we do not pass your details on to any other organisation.

To pay by Standing Order, please complete the section below

STANDING ORDER TO :

Bank Name _____
Bank Address _____

Please pay annually to :

The Royal Bank of Scotland, 35-37 Main Street, Largs, KA30 8AF.
Sort Code 83-24-15 Account No. 00166616 - The Heather Trust

The sum of £ _____
starting on ____ / ____ /20 ____ **until further notice.**

Name of A/C to be debited : _____

Sort Code _____ Bank A/C No _____

Signature _____ / ____ /20 ____

PTO

GIFT AID

If payment is made from a personal account and you pay tax, your contributions qualify as Gift Aid and, if you sign the declaration below, the Trust can recover the tax paid. This declaration will cover future donations & subscriptions until you cancel it.

I want The Heather Trust [Scottish Charity No SC010204] to treat all donations I have made since April 2000, and all donations I make from the date of this declaration until I notify you otherwise, as Gift Aid donations. *

Signature _____ Date _____

* NOTES

1. Please notify the charity if you change your name or address while the declaration is still in force.
2. You can cancel the declaration at any time by notifying the charity - it will then not apply to donations you make on or after the date of cancellation or such later date as you specify.
3. You must pay an amount of income tax and/or capital gains tax at least equal to the tax that the charity reclaims on your donations in the tax year (*currently 28p for each £ you give*)
4. If in the future your circumstances change and you no longer pay tax on your income and capital gains tax equal to the tax that the charity reclaims, you can cancel your declaration (see note 1)
5. If you pay tax at the higher rate you can claim further tax relief in your Self-Assessment tax return.

If you are unsure whether your donations qualify for Gift Aid tax relief, ask the charity. Or you can ask your local tax office for leaflet IR 113 Gift Aid.

Please return your completed form to:
(no stamp required within the UK)

**The Heather Trust, FREEPOST SCO4233, Newtonrigg, Holywood,
Dumfries. DG2 0BR.**



Goat Fell, Isle of Arran



College Valley, Northumberland



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