# North West Highlands UNESCO Global Geopark Business Plan 2017-18

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   United Nations Sustainable Goals for Development
2  Strategy Documents
3  Articles of Association
4  2015 Business Plan
1. Executive Summary

The North West Highlands UNESCO Global Geopark (NWHG) is located North West Scotland. At over 2000km², it covers a substantial part of Sutherland and the Coigach area of Wester Ross. These areas are recognised as one of the most sparsely-populated in northern Europe.

NWHG was formed in 2004 by gaining official accreditation to become Scotland’s first European Geopark. It aims to develop geotourism, promote Earth-science education and catalogue and conserve the rich geodiversity of the area. In 2015 the North West Highlands Geopark became the North West Highlands UNESCO Global Geopark. This status brings recognition and acknowledgment by the United Nations that the region contains internationally significant geological heritage, rich local culture and unique landscapes.

The North West Highlands UNESCO Global Geopark is special for a number of reasons:

*Unimaginable age* - Lewisian Gneiss in the area is 3,000 million years old, which means that the rocks you see along the coastline are the oldest rocks in Britain and some of the oldest on the planet.

*Incredible complexity* - the impacts of the Moine Thrust have created a very complicated geological legacy which puzzled and fascinated geologists for centuries and is the birth place of modern mountain building theory.

*World class scenery* - this complex geology has created stunning landscapes where each rock type produces its own unique and evocative habitats.

*Important scientific discoveries* - since the 19th century the area designated as the Global Geopark Network has been a key site for geological research and discovery.

The Geopark is not unlike the Natural History Museum in London, where the vaults with the specimens are important but it’s the dinosaurs that bring folk in. Similarly, whilst the Geopark remains an important and informative resource for geologists and other academic visitors to the region, the Geopark team also understands the need to develop a captivating, child-friendly image in order to engage families and other visitors and entice them north to visit this wonderful landscape and explore all it has to offer.
Income for the NWHG currently comes from core Scottish Government grants; funding for specific projects and the licensing of the Rock Stop visitor centre. There is income from tours, festivals, events and merchandise. However, much of the income brought into the area by these activities is for service providers and entrepreneurs in the NWHG. The NWHG is developing further income streams but must secure long term core funding.

The NWHG charity has secured core funding until March 2017 and project funding until 2019. It is currently in the process of applying for additional funding and sponsorship to ensure it can continue operating and retain its UNESCO Global Geopark status beyond this date. At this critical juncture the NWHG has requested an annual contribution of £70,000 from the Scottish Government. This amounts to 1p per head of population in Scotland per annum. This represents excellent value for a UNESCO designation in Scotland and a place on the United Nations world map. In comparison, in 2016 the Cairngorm National Park Authority (CNPA) was given £7.3m by the Scottish government, which equates to £1.37 from every person in Scotland. We are asking for less than 1% of CNPA grant in the Geopark.

NWHG aims to retain UNESCO Global Geopark status for Scotland; we aim to promote Scotland’s best geo-tourism attractions and provide activities and unique, healthy outdoor experiences. The market is international and so we can always bring new people and money into the area to help local communities develop and grow.

Early in 2016 the NWHG Ltd was established as a charity. A separate trading entity was incorporated to progress the Rock Stop visitor centre concept across the region in partnership with communities.

1.1 Introduction

North West Highlands Geopark was formed in 2004 by gaining official accreditation to become Scotland’s first European Geopark. These areas have internationally significant geological features and rich cultural heritage. Although world renowned, the Grand Canyon could not be a Geopark because there are no people in it. Our Geopark aims to empower local communities and support them to develop cohesive partnerships with the common goal of promoting the area’s geological stories.
In 2012 the NWHG became a Social Enterprise. Local community councils expressed willingness to manage the organisation, mitigating uncertainty arising from a lack of municipal financial support. The Geopark board is comprised of 12 members, seven of which represent the statutory community councils within the Geopark, meaning that the wider community has a majority influence via the local democratic system. In 2013, the NWHG board administered two years of financial support from the Scottish Government. This allowed the recruitment of two FTE core staff to organise communities and activities to achieve UNESCO Global Geopark status for Scotland in 2015. Staff carried out community consultations and visitor surveys and produced a business plan in conjunction with the Social Enterprise academy and Business Gateway. They then implemented the business plan, working closely with the local community to develop sustainable economic and tourism strategies which complement the character of the area. Key achievements include the Rock Stop visitor Centre, 80 events including the inaugural Climbing Festival and Earth Science week, an Earth Science exhibition, landscape interpretation brochures and interpretations shelters (Geopods). In addition, staff secured project funding from the Northern Periphery and Arctic Program and Heritage Lottery Fund. Several more partnership funding applications are in the pipeline but these are dependent on core staff being in place.
Our Vision
Explore Deep Time
Evoke a Sense of Place
Encourage Stewardship.

Our Mission
To be a successful social enterprise that develops Scotland’s best geo-tourism attractions and activities with raw outdoor experiences. This will bring people and money into the area to help entrepreneurial communities develop and grow.

Our Values
- We make decisions that protect the heritage of the landscape and its people to the best of our knowledge.
- We promote a sense of place, pride in people and nature that encourages enterprise in partnership with the natural environment.
- We seek to ensure security for businesses, education and jobs throughout the Geopark that will enable families to put down roots through long term employment opportunities.
- We will measure the difference we make by facilitating projects that are valued by the people who live within the Geopark.
- We will support local people, enterprise, education and culture aiming to engage everyone with the potential success of the Geopark can bring to the area.
- We will remain open and straight forward in our dealings for the common good.
- Difficult decisions will be faced with the belief that what we do, we do because it is the right thing to do.
1.2 Objectives of the Geopark

**Business Objectives**

Ensure long-term financial stability of the NWHG

Secure Governmental financial support for core staffing (minimum two FTE)

Develop income streams to match fund projects

Use the UNESCO status to promote Scotland and specifically the North West Highlands to visitors nationally and internationally.

**Environmental Objectives**

Promote conservation of our Earth & cultural and habitats

Promote sensitive interpretation of our geological heritage.

Encourage responsible consumption

Protect our Peatlands as Carbon Sinks

**Social Objectives**

Decent work and economic growth

Reduce inequalities

Sustainable communities

Work with local entrepreneurs to realise the full potential of our landscape.

Contribute to child and youth development and adult lifelong learning

Contribute actively to Health and Wellbeing of residents and visitors.
1.3 UNESCO Global Geopark Status

UNESCO Global Geopark (UGG) status is an a-political banner to welcome visitors and to unite businesses and NGOs. It is an internationally recognised marque which indicates quality and prominence.

UGGs are established through a bottom-up process involving all relevant local and regional stakeholders and authorities in the area (e.g. partnership between landowners, community groups, tourism providers, local people and organisations). Retention of UGG status requires continual commitment by the local communities, strong local partnerships with long-term public and political support, and the development of a comprehensive strategy that will meet all the communities’ goals while showcasing and protecting the area’s geological heritage.

In 2015 North West Highlands Geopark achieved UGG status following the successful implementation of its 2013-2016 development plan. The previous two years saw the employment of two FTE staff, engagement with the European Geoparks Network, including the formation of funding partnerships (for example the Scottish Geoparks Partnership, the United Kingdom Committee for UNESCO Global Geoparks and European Geoparks Coastal Thematic Group), and a strategy to become a more visible, involved community organisation benefitting local businesses and families.

Unlike other UNESCO designations, UGGs are subject to a vigorous best practice audit every four years (revalidation). This process is continuous, with UGGs expected to keep records of their activity from day one of a successful revalidation. Revalidation focuses on the development of social, economic and environmental strategies and on the security of core staffing. The existence of the board and staff are a necessity for the revalidation process due in 2019 to be successful.

UNESCO status provides the opportunity to become part of an exclusive group of Geoparks through the European (EGN) and Global Geopark Networks (GGN). While all Geoparks share common goals to foster sustainable economic development, education and conservation, they are all set up, governed and funded by different means for example in the same way as the Scottish Government funds National Parks.
1.4 Message from the Scottish Geoparks Partnership

In August 2016 at the 35th International Geological Congress in Cape Town, South Africa a working group of scientists unanimously recognised a new Epoch in our planet’s history – The Anthropocene, meaning ‘Age of Humans’. This new era is characterised by a change in trajectory for the Earth system of which we are all part, one in which humanity has become so prevalent and powerful that we are now globally affecting the geological record. With this new age comes great responsibility and the recognition that our actions now affect the success or failure of the very systems which have supported us.

The Scottish Geoparks Partnership is aware that two of our key functions, education and conservation, are not revenue generating. However, a key objective of Geoparks is conservation of geodiversity and this is only achievable if future generations are taught to understand and respect the landscape. UNESCO Global Geoparks expect to see increased visitor numbers in the future and so we are uniquely placed to reach a wide demographic with this message.

In 2015, the Scottish Geoparks Partnership gained NPAP support to implement aspects of the education program. In 2016 the NWHG added to this as project lead on a Soil Fertility Project, an aspect of the Heritage Lottery Funded Coigach Assynt Living Landscape Partnership. In addition, it has now successfully delivered two Earth Science Week festivals with more than 300 participants.

Figure 5: Augmented reality sandbox at the NWHG Rock Stop exhibition
2 Business Structure

From 2017 the NWHG will be comprised of two separate entities which work closely together and are managed by a board of directors who sit on one or more subgroups responsible for finance, fundraising, administration and staff, communities, and revalidation. The board subgroups oversee the operation of the two entities, staffed by three paid staff members (2 FTE) who together manage the day-to-day operation of the NWHG (Figure 6).

North West Highlands UNESCO Global Geopark Management Structure

![Management structure diagram]

2.1 Definitions

The parent company North West Highlands Geopark Limited
NWHG. A company limited in Scotland by guarantee and a registered charity. This entity is responsible for business administration, enterprise and fundraising. It delivers on strategic aims through projects and activities and develops and maintains interpretation, signage, a range of educational materials, exhibits and memberships.

The subsidiary trading arm NWHG (Trading) Limited
NWHGT. A social enterprise set up as a community interest company wholly owned by the NWHG, based at the Rock Stop. It will begin operating in 2017 with a focus on Geotours, festivals and merchandise.
Legal and Policy Issues

All profits made by NWHGT will be donated to NWHG for operation and continual improvement of the UGG.

The NWHG has mapped its strategies for education, sustainable regional economic development, sustainable tourism and conservation to help deliver the Scottish Government’s National Outcomes and the United Nations Sustainable Goals for Development. In order to have sufficient finances to match fund these aspects of our educational program the Scottish Government will be asked to commit to geoeducation and invest in the NWHG core staff team. In return we will contribute to 12 of the Scottish Government’s sixteen national outcomes with particular reference to Outcome 2: We realise our full economic potential with more and better employment opportunities for our people Outcome 3: We are better educated, more skilled and more successful, renowned for our research and innovation, Outcome 6: We live longer, healthier lives.

Figure 7: The United Nations Sustainable Goals for Development
2.2 Stakeholders

The NWHG is unique in its origins as a grassroots community organisation as well as a UNESCO designated region of international scientific and cultural importance. Therefore, it is critical that we stay aligned with community groups, individuals and national and regional bodies. The stakeholders in no particular order include:

| Accommodation providers |
| Advertisers and sponsors |
| Community councils |
| Community Development Companies |
| Community organisations such as the Coigach & Assynt Living Landscape partnership and Historic Assynt |
| European Geoparks Network |
| Fishermen and crofters, food and drink establishments/providers and tourist businesses |
| Global Geoparks Network |
| Highland Council |
| NHS highland |
| Schools |
| Scottish Geoparks Partnership |
| Scottish Government |
| Scottish Natural Heritage |
| UK Committee for UNESCO Global Geoparks |
| UK National Commission for UNESCO |
| UNESCO |

Table 1: NWHG Stakeholders
3 Funding and Income

Apart from Scottish Government core funding, income is generated from grants, funding for specific projects, micro-funding schemes (merchandise, interpretation, memberships), the Rock Stop licence agreement and events.

3.1 Core Funding

The NWHG has secured core funding from the Scottish Government until March 2017. Towards the end of 2016 the NWHG put in a formal request to the Scottish Government for an annual contribution of £70,000. The funding will be used to support two FTE core staff whose priorities are to retain UNESCO Global Geopark status demanded by the communities, deliver projects, implement this business plan and general administration.

Long-term core funding from Government is an essential requirement in this sparsely populated area. The contribution of sparsely populated areas to Scottish revenue is substantial and unrecognised. The North West Highlands are stewards of Carbon Sinks in the form of Peatlands and Geo- and Bio-diversity in the form of Wildlands. These are resources that do not produce community benefit as they by definition rebuff planning applications for renewable energy initiatives which produce community benefit funds in other areas. Without core funding for staff the NWHG cannot take part in partnerships for project funding, manage and deliver projects or run other initiatives like events, festivals and tourism infrastructure.

Core staffing will ensure that the NWHG can help the communities in the Geopark realise their full economic potential and support entrepreneurs through product and service enhancement and raising the profile and quality tourism offer for the area. This will ensure that families have more resilient incomes and can enjoy the freedom to settle or remain in the North West Highlands, with the option of allowing their children to grow up in this area, enjoying the landscape and promoting healthy lifestyles.

A full outline of how the NWHG contributes to the Scottish Government’s Nation Outcomes and the United Nations Sustainable Goals for Development is supplied in appendix 1.
The continued operation of the North West Highlands Geopark will directly contribute to the delivery of several Scottish Government outcomes

- We realise our full economic potential with more and better employment opportunities for our people.
- Our children have the best start in life and are ready to succeed.
- We live longer, healthier lives.
- We live in well-designed, sustainable places where we are able to access the amenities and services we need.
- We have strong, resilient and supportive communities where people take responsibility for their own actions and how they affect others.
- We value and enjoy our built and natural environment and protect it and enhance it for future generations.

3.2 Grants

The NWHG has secured a small amount of grant money from corporate sponsors and trusts (SSE and the Petroleum Exploration Society of Great Britain (PESGB)) for 2017. This income stream will help meet business requirements (meeting room fees, travel costs for guest speakers etc.) and will be directed at match-funding EU program projects and national and regional partnership projects.

Core staff and directors will continue to maintain and develop new relationships with potential private and third-sector sponsors.

3.3 Project Funding

The NWHG has a first class record of delivering fully, all projects according to the funders requirements. Until 2019 funding has been secured from the EU Northern Peripheries and Arctic Program (NPAP), as a member of the Scottish Geoparks Partnership, Heritage Lottery Fund & University of Stirling as part of the Coigach & Assynt Living Landscape partnership. These projects will deliver a range of outcomes.
internationally and locally. However, core staffing costs are not eligible for project funding.

A further three applications have been submitted for funds from the Northern Peripheries and Arctic Program (NPAP), LEADER and the European Maritime and Fishers Fund (EMFF). The NPAP funding is a partnership led by the Lapland University of Applied Sciences, Finland. It is a preparatory Tourism Safety Project, upgrading existing infrastructure to meet the requirements of visitors to the North West Highlands with additional needs or young families. The LEADER funding is a NWHG specific project and will be matched with SSE monies and pay for three specific projects: developing an autumn Geo-festival located across west Sutherland, establishing a membership scheme for Geopark businesses and improving visitor infrastructure. EMFF is a trans-national partnership application lead by Magma Geopark, Norway to develop Nautical tourism in the region, provide interpretation, signage and activities. The Scottish Partners will be NWHG, Visit Scotland and the Scottish Wildlife Trust.

3.4 Micro Funding Schemes
Micro-funding schemes were piloted during 2014-16. Those which proved most successful were merchandise sales and so these will be developed further in 2017 (see below, section 6.1). In addition to this, the NWHG will publish updated Pebble Routes (driving-based landscape interpretation) and a 200-page guidebook and offer these for sale during 2017. Geopods installed in 2017 will be offered to private companies for sponsorship in return for signage (see below, section 5.4). As a new NWHG website is developed in 2017-18 advertising opportunities will be explored as part of this.

3.5 The Rock Stop
In spring 2015 the NWHG became the first Geopark in Scotland to have a dedicated Earth Science visitor facility. The ‘Rock Stop’ takes advantage of the decommissioned primary school at Unapool (Figure 8) and provides a tourist hub for the region and a state-of-the-art interactive Earth-science exhibition, gift shop and café.

The shop at the Rock Stop sells a variety of products and publications related to the local area and NWHG merchandise. The shop also sells art and crafts from local artisans with the additional aim of encouraging visitors to visit their studios during their travels in the Geopark.
The income from the Rock Stop comes from three main streams: licence agreement, merchandise and donations.

![Figure 8: The Rock Stop visitor centre](image)

**Licence Agreement**

The Rock Stop Café and shop has been licenced to a local entrepreneur for 2017. The Classroom Café as it will be known has signed an agreement to cover 50% of the rent, 75% of the utilities and 100% of the council waste charges. This will provide a contribution of £2798 to the running costs of the Rock Stop.

**Merchandise**

The best-selling or most asked for items which will be offered for sale in 2017:

- Fleeces
- T-shirts – Geodetective and rock themed
- Hat/Buff/Beanies
- Small souvenirs for coach parties
- Books covering local walks
- Maps and map cases
- Car window stickers
- Embroidered badges

Sales of these products in 2017 is projected to return a profit of £1700.

**Donations**

A donation box will be installed in the exhibition for the start of the 2017 season. A lecture series will begin in February 2017.
3.6 Events

The NWHG piloted a range of events in 2015. These included climbing, kayaking, hill-walking and geological tours on foot and by bus. There were week-long, weekend and day events. The biggest were the Lochinver Climbing Festival, the Geo-links festival and two, week-long geological tours. A detailed report is available on events in 2015 but the significant impact this had was to demonstrate that the cost of events outstripped the income the generated in the first year. To minimise risk, the events program was scaled back for 2016 and 2017. However, the local community felt the climbing festival should continue to run and offered to keep it going until such a time as the NWHG can take them over.

Geotours

Due to their popularity there are three Geotours planned for 2017, one of which is already fully-booked. During the first 3 years of Geotour operation there have been between 6 and 10 full week members on each tour, with a breakeven point at 5/6 members. Each tour can make a profit for the Geopark of up to £1500.

Geo-Adventures and Climbing Festival

Of the four main providers of outdoor activities in the Geopark and gateway (Highland Adventures, Ridgeway, Nor’west sea-kayaking and Hamlet Mountaineering) three are now trained Geo-ambassadors and are running events in 2017 to explore the geology of the area. These businesses use the NWHG logo, providing mutual benefits raising the profile of the NWHG. Hamlet Mountaineering took over the operations of the Climbing Festival in 2016 and is willing to partner with the NWHG in 2017 to expand the event.

Earth Science Week

This event might more appropriately fit within Project Funding or Grants as it’s very successful implementation in 2015 and 2016 was thanks to grants from the Quaternary Research Association, Geological Society London and the Highland Council.

Figure 9: NWHG Geologist Pete Harrison leading a group up Stronchrubie a major limestone outcrop in Assynt showing evidence of Mountain building 400 million years ago
4 The Market

4.1 Current situation
The NWHG has developed Marketing and Sustainable Tourism Strategies in response to our specialist market knowledge, recommendations of our 2015 revalidation report and the self-evaluation documents due for completion prior to the UNESCO revalidation mission in 2019.

The tourism landscape has changed significantly since early 2015 when our original marketing plan was compiled using professionally compiled statistics from GTS (Global Tourism Solutions) and Market Sphere. The global political situation has impacted on international tourism. This has been positive for Scotland as it is perceived as a safe destination and the cost of visiting has reduced due to the strength of the Euro against Sterling. The North Coast 500 initiative has also contributed in 2016, drawing more visitors to the North of Scotland.

Identification of the type of visitor we want to reach and convince to choose the NWHG over any other destination relies on the strength of our Geotourism offer.

GEOTOURISM

We define Geotourism as tourism that sustains or enhances the distinctive geographical character of a place—its environment, heritage, aesthetics, culture, and the well-being of its residents.

Geology is the foundation of landscape, biodiversity and human culture. Therefore, all visitors who want to travel to the North West Highlands for its landscape, wildlife or culture do so because of the unique geology.

This applies directly (adventure activities, scientific exploration, nature/wildlife watching etc.) and indirectly (appreciating the scenery from the car or culture).

In identifying potential visitors to the area the NWHG capitalises on the strength of its unique landscape, rich cultural heritage and the opportunities to see wildlife considered rare in other parts of the world.
The following table (Table 2) demonstrates the working premise adopted by the NWHG in profiling visitors.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Visitor type</th>
<th>Initial draw to Geopark</th>
<th>Additional benefits to visitor</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adventure traveller</td>
<td>Mountaineering</td>
<td>Education and conservation</td>
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<td>Rock climbing</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Sea-kayaking/Canoeing</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Diving</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Physical challenges</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Cycling</td>
<td>Immersion in local culture such as crofting, Gaelic music and language</td>
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<td>Walking and running</td>
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<td>Wilderness experiences</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Caving</td>
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<td>Families</td>
<td>Family-friendly activities and events</td>
<td>Physical activity, fresh air and exercise</td>
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<td>Engaging hands-on displays</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Outdoor activities</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Inclement weather options</td>
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<td>Road trippers/self-drivers</td>
<td>Spectacular scenery</td>
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<td>World-renowned road-trip</td>
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<td>Exploring a new region</td>
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<td>Nature-lovers, bird-watchers, photographers</td>
<td>Outdoor activities</td>
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<td>Wildlife</td>
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<td>Sporting enthusiast</td>
<td>Hunting and fishing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Geologists and other scientists (professional, student, amateur)</td>
<td>Education and conservation</td>
<td>Immersion in local culture</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Physical activity and exercise</td>
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</table>

Table 2: Visitor profiling
We plan to carry out research in 2017/18 to evaluate this profile as part of the Infrastructure and Product development project (dependent on LEADER funding). The officer responsible for delivering this project will update community and visitor surveys, and measure market trends and growth potential. It is critical that NWHG keeps up to date with the potential tourist market and determines how best to grow and satisfy the needs of that market without detrimentally affecting the landscape and sense of wilderness. With respect to local communities, the NWHG was given a mandate to carry out activities following community consultation in 2014 but this must be updated to ensure we are meeting their needs in the present economic environment.

We recognise that we must meet visitor expectations through infrastructure, services and high quality interpretation. We also recognise that we must take measures to define areas suitable for tourism development and for protection and research. We are readying ourselves and encouraging local businesses to take full advantage of the Scottish Government’s developments in Broad Band service provision.

We aim not only to increase numbers and broaden the range of visitors but to extend the current tourism season and to facilitate interaction with the local area, landscape, culture and people during their visits. We will target adventure tourists, families, road trippers, sporting enthusiasts and geo-enthusiasts and improve communications between communities and the UGG. To create a strong identity, we must build the NWHG’s profile internally as well as externally to our target markets.

4.2 Market Segments

NWHG has three target markets:

*Visiting tourists* – attractions, tours, holidays and membership.

*Businesses* – advertising and sponsorship opportunities.

*Local residents* – attractions, tours, courses and membership.

4.2.1 Visiting Tourists

The largest market in terms of potential client numbers and reach is the visiting tourist. This is where the majority of the advertising effort needs to be placed and success in this area will pay dividends throughout the Geopark for both business and community partners. Visitors are classed as either domestic or international tourists.
4.2.2 Domestic

The potential size of this market is driven by the success of the Geopark and partners in providing products and services that people want to buy or buy into. We have developed merchandise, interpretation, tours and events specifically for this market segment with great success. The Rock Route is an example of a popular domestic tourism attraction with traffic numbers consistently quadrupling during the summer months at Laxford Bridge (Highland Council Traffic Flow data 2013-2016). Anecdotally, motorcycle clubs particularly buy into the Rock Route as a concept and it has been consistently picked up by the media as one of the best driving routes in the world\(^1\). The idea of a driving route as a tourism draw has recently been capitalised upon by the North Coast 500 Limited. The company have invested heavily in media relations and may have been a significant factor in the increase of domestic visitors in 2016. The North Coast 500 polled a sample of those completing the route in 2016 and recorded 85% of these were domestic tourists. The NWHG welcomes the ‘NC500’ and recognises its achievements in marketing the North of Scotland as a whole. The NWHG and NC500 are working together to capture visitors’ attention and tempt them to slow down and explore the NWHG in more depth.

4.2.3 International

As discussed earlier, international tourists form a significant minority of visitors to the Geopark and have the largest growth potential. Estimated at 15% in 2014 this percentage was shown to have remained constant in the 2016 survey carried out by the North Coast 500. The strength of the € against the £ and the perception of Scotland as a ‘safe tourism’ destination should be seen as an opportunity to really drive forward international tourism initiatives. The growth of this market segment will be largely down to international profile raising activities, creating a welcoming environment for

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www.morebikes.co.uk/1018/10-european-roads-you-must-ride-on-your-motorcycle/ (2013)
international visitors (eg multi-lingual interpretation) and meeting expectations (high quality tourism, natural and culture environments).

4.2.4 Businesses
The largest potential private market in terms of revenue for the Geopark is through business-to-business sales of advertising and sponsorship. It is difficult to quantify the size of this market since funding for landscape based community organisations such as the Geopark is considered a non-conventional approach. An initial portfolio of advertising and sponsorship products valued at £25,000 was offered to the oil and gas industry in 2015. Unfortunately, this coincided with an industry downturn which meant that companies no longer had the resources to allocate to sponsorship. Between 2015 and 2016 visitor numbers were too few and the season too short for other corporate sponsors and advertisers to be interested. However, with the renewed interest in the North West Highlands as a driving route destination we have identified the car manufacturing industry as a potential opening. Particularly electric vehicle (EV) manufacturers as the recent installation of EV charging points in NWHG communities offers the opportunity to travel easily by EV. This opportunity also offers a good fit with our Carbon Clever and Climate Change obligations. The NC500 research identified that of the 800 groups surveyed in 2016, 8 of these completed the route by EV.

4.2.5 Local residents
Local residents are not seen as a prime source of revenue for the Geopark as the area is very sparsely populated and on average disposable incomes are low relative to other parts of Scotland. However local communities may be able to use government grants and other funding to buy services from the Geopark team. Local residents and their businesses are identified as the most important asset we have in terms of promoting the North West Highlands Geopark to visitors and so we aim to create a strong ambassadors scheme.

4.3 Products and Services
Income from sales and service provision has increased since 2014 (when we began to receive Scottish Government support) but only by a small margin. We worked tirelessly in 2015 to create corporate income streams but realistically the best return on our work came from traditional project funding from EU and UK programs.

We will continue to work to increase the amount of cash income through offering sponsorship opportunities (including memberships) but we have streamlined our service
provision (for example outsourcing geo-adventures) and refined our products (merchandise, exhibition and interpretation) to those customers want to buy.

We aim for the Geopark to become an attractive sponsorship opportunity while simultaneously encouraging sustainable Geotourism. As awareness of the “North West Highlands UNESCO Global Geopark” increases, we will balance increased visitor numbers with active engagement and stewardship of the surrounding environment.

5 Advertising and Promoting the Geopark

5.1 Domestic promotion

In 2015 and 2016 the North West Highlands Geopark purchased advertising in Inverness Airport, BBC Country File Magazine, Visit Scotland North Highlands Guide, Highland Council Ranger Walks Booklet, Wester Ross Visitor and all the local newspapers. The estimated reach of these efforts is difficult to quantify as guidebooks tend to be circulated among accommodation providers and visitor centres and re-used. However, the footfall in Inverness airport was 189,835, print readership of BBC country file magazine is 234,000 and the North Highlands guide is estimated by Visit Scotland to reach in excess of 800,000 tourists.

We implement a Social Media strategy set out by our Social Media analyst in 2015 designed to boost domestic as well as international engagement. Our Facebook posts regularly reach 1000 people but can hit as many as 7,000 individuals. Videos are viewed on average 800 times.

In September 2016 the NWHG featured heavily in a Channel 4 TV documentary aired at 8pm on a Saturday. Channel 4 regularly get 10% of the 59 million TV viewers in the UK.
2017 will be critical for building upon this new momentum and so we will prioritise staff time to building relationships with press contacts through Social Media, particularly Twitter.

We will establish a good working relationship with the North Coast 500 to maximise the value of the NWHG brand as connected to UNESCO status and our international networks to the group and in return benefit from their proven track record in marketing and PR. The North Coast 500 have already given the NWHG free business membership and have been working closely with us advertising our events and mentioning us on the Facebook page (31,000 followers).

5.2 International promotion

We will work with Visit Scotland, Visit England, Visit Britain, the UK Committee for UNESCO Global Geoparks and the UNESCO national commission to deliver targeted international advertising. We are working closely with the UK National Commission for UNESCO to establish ways in which Geoparks can maximise their impact on the international market.

We have established a presence on Visit Scotland’s website and improved our own website. We recognise the need to create a multi-lingual website and will investigate this as a promotional priority. The European Geoparks Network produces an annual promotional magazine. This is distributed across 33 countries via UNESCO Global Geoparks distribution trees. EGN magazines tend to be targeted at National and Regional government employees, visitor centres, stakeholders and visitors but most importantly to tourist information centres and at international tourism markets such as FITUR Madrid and ITB Berlin.

Figure 12: Our colleagues with the EGN stand at FITUR Tourism Fair in 2014 in Madrid

2 https://www.visitscotland.com/info/see-do/north-west-highlands-geopark-p1115131
5.3 Business promotion

In 2014 the Geopark exhibited at the Petroleum Exploration Technology Exhibition (PeTEX) upstream oil industry conference in London to test interest in sponsorship of the Geopark with great success securing its first oil industry funding from Nexen within days as a direct result of attendance.

The PETEX conference again proved to be an excellent event for the Geopark in 2016 providing ongoing networking with professionals in the geoscience sector and some direct marketing of our Geotours and merchandise. The primary goal for exhibiting in 2016 was to continue to develop relationships with a wide range of oil and gas companies with a view to securing financial support either as donations, sponsorship or advertising. Although the oil industry downturn has impacted on our aspirations for industry sponsorship, we have identified that oil company employees with an affinity for the region would be interested in individual sponsorship opportunities through a corporate membership scheme. We will continue to maintain relationships with the oil industry as we can offer carbon off-setting and improved public perception through setting up links and opportunities through the Peatland Partnership.

Following the success of promoting the region as one of the best driving routes in the world we have identified the Automotive industry as the focus for 2017. Events planned for this year which we have identified to attend are the Automechanika Birmingham\(^3\) and SMMT connected\(^4\).

As already discussed above, Electric Vehicle manufacturers have been identified as a good fit with our sustainable economic development and conservation strategies. We would look to partner with and seek sponsorship from an EV manufacturer. To make contacts in this industry we would attend the electric and hybrid vehicle technology expo (Europe)\(^5\).

We have identified two further sectors for corporate sponsorship; alternative energy and communications. Alternative energy is a strong growth sector in the Highlands, with Scotland leading the charge in EU carbon cutting targets. This sector enjoys high public

\(^3\) [https://www.smmt.co.uk/events/automechanika-birmingham/](https://www.smmt.co.uk/events/automechanika-birmingham/)

\(^4\) [https://www.smmt.co.uk/events/connected/](https://www.smmt.co.uk/events/connected/) We plan to attend in 2018

\(^5\) [http://www.evtechexpo.eu/exhibit/](http://www.evtechexpo.eu/exhibit/)
interest and their goals are strongly aligned with our own. Communications companies do not have a good press in the Highlands but information hungry tourists will be drawn to our Geopod network (see section 5.4) which is utilises areas of strong cell phone signal, therefore communications companies have a pathway to improving their reputation by signposting their businesses through Geopod sponsorship.

5.4 Profile raising events

As noted above (section 3.6) many events piloted in 2015/16 did not contribute to the NWHG as profitable income streams. However, these have positively impacted the profile of the NWHG, creating visibility to residents, tourists and the press and so it is important to continue these activities. Promotion of events via distribution of materials to third parties is one of the best tools available to the NWHG, posters and press releases are much more likely to be taken up if they are advertising something specific.

Knockan Crag Deep Time walks

Regular weekly walks during the summer are advertised on our website and in the local press. These are often then picked up by regional and national events listings. We will work in 2017/18 to ensure these are promoted widely, giving us a strong presence throughout the summer months.

Geo-Festival

The 2015 and 16 climbing festivals have engaged almost 1000 Facebook members with a further 3-4 thousand regularly viewing posts in the lead-in. BBC Alba televised the 2015 festival on their evening news programme. Posters carrying the NWHG logo were distributed in 2015 and 2016 (Figure 13) to all major indoor climbing centres in the UK. The potential for a broader-based festival to increase reach and become a profitable income source in the future will be investigated during 2017.

Figure 13: Posters distributed to promote the Climbing Festival in 2016
Earth Science Week

The NWHG has reached every school pupil living within its boundary (105) and in turn their families through Earth Science Week (ESW) activities. In addition, ESW provides life-long learning opportunities for residents and visitors as well as engaging activities for visiting families. We have reached a further 200 people this way. ESW attracted funding from the Quaternary Research Association for an advertisement on Inverness buses in 2016 (Figure 14), reaching commuters and travellers in the biggest population centre of the Highlands for a full month.

5.5 Communications

Prior to the start of the season in 2014 an audit of the NWHG website was performed and a first pass of improvements made to allow for posting of news items, uploading of information and an improved tablet/phone-friendly interface. The website is monitored and updated regularly however there remains further work to be done.

The NWHG issues a quarterly e-newsletter to approximately 450 members and friends. This is a low-cost way of promoting the NWHG and its projects to an ever-growing audience.

Both Facebook and to a lesser extent Twitter are used to communicate and engage with the general public. During 2015 funding was secured, in conjunction with Lochaber and Shetland Geoparks, for a graduate placement specialising in social media and online marketing. As a result of this the NWHG now follows a tailored Social Media strategy.
6 Products, attractions and sales

A portfolio of products for sale to the general public has been developed based on our experience in 2015/16:

6.1 Products

Based on sales in 2015/16 the following products have been selected for re-order in 2017. There is a surplus of NWHG lapel badges which can be added to these.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Product</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Retail</th>
<th>Profit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Books</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>2700</td>
<td>700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T-shirts</td>
<td>1000</td>
<td>1200</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fleeces</td>
<td>2500</td>
<td>3000</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hats/Buffs</td>
<td>1000</td>
<td>1200</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hi-viz jackets</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hard Hats</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lapel badges</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Totals</strong></td>
<td><strong>£7000</strong></td>
<td><strong>£8701</strong></td>
<td><strong>£1800</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: Merchandise 2017

In addition, and because we have secured funding via the Drifting Apart project, we will author and publish a Souvenir area guidebook and new Pebble Route brochures. Pebble Routes will retail at £5 for a pack of 6 and we will print 5000 units. The Guidebook will retail at £11.99 and we will print 1000 units. Costs incurred will include match funding responsibilities and commission on sales when retailing through partners. Profits will be directed into re-printing costs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Product</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Retail</th>
<th>Profit</th>
<th>2017/18</th>
<th>2018/19</th>
<th>2019/20</th>
<th>REPRINT</th>
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<tr>
<td>Pebble Routes</td>
<td>5000</td>
<td>25000</td>
<td>20000</td>
<td>2500</td>
<td>2500</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
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<td>11990</td>
<td>2040</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>500</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Totals</strong></td>
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<td><strong>£25000</strong></td>
<td><strong>£20000</strong></td>
<td><strong>£10000</strong></td>
<td><strong>£11020</strong></td>
<td><strong>£1020</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4: Sales and income projection for Pebble Routes/Guidebook

6.2 Attractions

Rock Stop Exhibition

Footfall to the Rock Stop was recorded as 4850 in 2015 and was estimated to approach 8000 during 2016 (based on café sales). If every person who visited the Rock Stop gave a £1 donation this would make the building sustainable. We will install a donations box in the Exhibition with a minimum suggested donation of £1. This will be upgraded to
a contactless card payment option during the 2017 season. This could generate up to £8000 for the NWHG in 2017 but it is hard to predict as it is dependent on the philanthropic nature of visitors. Therefore, a conservative projection of £4000 is given for 2017/18.

Using our knowledge and experience from our pilot phase of the Rock Stop we have created an effective model for Visitor Information service delivery in the NWHG. We will explore ways to roll this out with support from Visit Scotland, HIE and community organisations. Sites identified as lacking service provision are Lochinver, Durness, Kinlochbervie and Achiltibuie. The Scourie Community Development Company are currently working on resourcing a purpose-built Geoheritage centre which will act as the hub for the whole area.

Geotours (residential)

Due to their popularity there are three Geotours planned for 2017, one of which is already fully-booked. Tickets cost £210 (including early bird discount) and capacity is 12 participants. Geotours cost £1600 (leader and travel) so they will generate £2760 profit in 2017.

Geopods and Pebble Routes

An issue common among many UGGs is lack of branding and identity in the field. NWHG has devised an innovative way to overcome this issue, combining physical notices and interpretation with online data delivery.

The first of these Geopods was installed in 2015 at Rhiconich, between Durness and Scourie on the NC500. The Geopod is an all-weather interpretation delivery site constructed of whole larch logs to blend into the landscape yet provide an element of shelter.
The Geopod includes local geo-interpretation, local community information and general NWHG information with QR-codes to enable easily delivery of additional documentation to smart phones and tablets.

Following the success of the pilot Geopod, the NWHG will install two more Geopods in 2017, and a further nine by 2020. Eventually there will be a network of 12 Geopods in the NWHG, 2 in each of the 6 community council areas with safe parking and good cellular network coverage. It is intended to roll these out in three phases with timing dependent on success and funding.

6.3 Memberships

The NWHG is a membership body, all residents within its boundaries are entitled to membership of the organisation as per its articles. The membership scheme discussed here is a paid donation service in return for goods and services at the discretion of the NWHG and is separate from the voting membership.

Individual

For £10 per year individuals can support the activities of the NWHG. This will entitle them to free entry to lectures and Knockan Crag walks.

Family

For £25 per year two adults and their children can obtain the above.

Corporate

We envisage this tier to appeal to professional Earth Scientists. For £500 per year, individuals are entitled to free entry to lectures and Knockan Crag walks, plus a place on a Geotour of the climbing festival. There will be an annual bespoke collectable Geopark pin badge for all corporate members and a frame print of their favourite Geo-site from our LGAP to remind them that they are supporting vital conservation work in the North West Highlands.
Advanced

This tier is designed for companies and organisations who wish to support our work. For an annual contribution of £2000 their logo will appear on all our promotional materials and at the Rock Stop for the year their membership is valid. They will be entitled to use of NWHG logo and the words Supporter of the North West Highlands UNESCO Global Geopark (but strictly not the UNESCO temple logo) on all of their promotional materials. We will carefully vet organisations who wish to partner with us in this way to protect our brand and our integrity as a UGG.

6.3.1 Targets for Advanced Membership

Businesses likely to be interested in advertising and sponsoring the Geopark fall into 4 broad categories:

**Primary focus 1:** Automotive - car manufacturer, particularly electric vehicles

**Primary focus 2:** Oil Companies/oil company employees

**Secondary focus 1:** Alternative Energy Companies

**Secondary focus 2:** Communications Companies

6.3.2 Sponsorship opportunities

We can offer the following opportunities for business sponsors:

- Geopod Signage (The “Your name here” Geopod), QR code on Geopod links to company website via NWHG landing page. £4000 each.
- Rock stop – signage, promotional material, advertising and press releases. Via advanced membership scheme.
- Exhibition – 3D Cave to allow visualisation of the BGS Assynt Model £2,500
- Exhibition – Mountain building machine (Figure 18) £1500
- Exhibition – Augmented Reality Sandbox £1500
- Geo-Tours - promotional material, advertising and press releases. Via advanced membership scheme.
- Geo-Festival - signage, souvenirs, promotional material, advertising and press releases. Via advanced membership scheme.
6.4 Targets for Funding

The Geopark will continue to seek and secure ongoing funding from a number of conventional sources for community based social enterprises, including:

- Scottish Government
- Highland LEADER
- Highlands and Islands Enterprise
- Scottish Sea Farms
- European Maritime and Fisheries Fund
- Northern Peripheries and Arctic Program
- Coastal Communities Fund
- Events Scotland
- Heritage Lottery Fund
- Charitable arms and private trusts connected to the Geopark
- The Coigach Community Development Company community benefit fund

Table 5: Conventional funding sources targeted by NWHG
7 Financing the NWHG

7.1 Current situation

The NWHG has secured core funding until April 2017 and project funding until September 2019. It is currently in the process of applying for additional funding and has appealed to the Scottish Government to ensure it can continue operating and retain its UNESCO Global Geopark status beyond this date. This section gives the income and expenditure projections for the financial years 2017/18 to 2019/20.

7.2 Sales projections/targets

7.2.1 Memberships

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<thead>
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<th></th>
<th>2017/18</th>
<th>2018/19</th>
<th>2019/20</th>
</tr>
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<td>price</td>
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<tr>
<td>individual</td>
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<td>20</td>
<td>£200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>family</td>
<td>£25</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>£750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>corporate</td>
<td>£500</td>
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<td>£1,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>advanced</td>
<td>£2,000</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Totals</strong></td>
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<td>53</td>
<td><strong>£3,950</strong></td>
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</table>

Table 6: Membership projections to 2020

7.2.1 Products & services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2017/18</th>
<th>2018/19</th>
<th>2019/20</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cost</td>
<td>Retail</td>
<td>Profit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merchandise</td>
<td>7000</td>
<td>8701</td>
<td>1701</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pebble Routes</td>
<td>2500</td>
<td>12500</td>
<td>6000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guide book</td>
<td>9950</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>9950**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geopod advertising</td>
<td>3000</td>
<td>4000</td>
<td>1000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Geotours</td>
<td>4800</td>
<td>7560</td>
<td>2760</td>
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<tr>
<td>Geofestival</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Totals</strong></td>
<td>27250</td>
<td>32761</td>
<td>3760</td>
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Table 7: Product sales projection 2017-20 *Cost of update and re-print added to usual retail costs ** we will aim to underwrite this with a grant
Full income/expenditure projections 2017 – 2020

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Government funding</td>
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<td>grants</td>
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<td>Festivals</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Income from Rock Stop*</td>
<td>£3,000</td>
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<td>£11,796</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>£95,000</strong></td>
<td><strong>£143,185</strong></td>
<td><strong>£162,846</strong></td>
<td><strong>£177,885</strong></td>
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</table>

Table 8: Income including projection to 2020 *includes retail

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<tr>
<td>Interpretation and</td>
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<td>£8,000</td>
<td>£8,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>maintenance</td>
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<td>tax</td>
<td>£12,000</td>
<td>£12,000</td>
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<td>£14,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>£8,000</td>
<td>£10,000</td>
<td>£10,000</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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<td><strong>£140,201</strong></td>
<td><strong>£155,700</strong></td>
<td><strong>£174,400</strong></td>
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</table>

Table 9: Expenditure including projection to 2020
7.3 Intended Marketing, Promotional and Finance outcomes for 2017-2019

| The Scottish Government is 100% behind the North West Highland UNESCO Global Geopark (Core funding secured) |
| Everyone who lives in the NWHG knows they live in a UGG and what it is |
| A strong local network of NWHG ambassadors |
| Improved communication between communities and NWHG |
| International promotion of the UGG in partnership with the Scottish and UK Geoparks, Tourist Boards and UNESCO |
| A tiered membership scheme |
| Attractive sponsorship opportunities |
| An industry partner |
| Better monitoring of marketing related statistics |
| Greater exposure through indirect advertising |
| Better international exposure |
| International visitors feel more welcome |
| Exposure at visitor hubs |
| Run activities for a broad audience to include disabled visitors |
| Geopark is promoted as an all-weather destination |

*Table 10: Outcomes of the NWHG promotion and marketing strategy 2017*
8 Operational Plan 2017-18

The NWHG operational plan is comprised of critical activities related to UGG status, commercial activities and operations related to secured funding but also predicted activities related to projects which are in the pipeline.

8.1 2015-16 Review

Since 2014, the North West Highlands Geopark has:

- Initiated micro-funding schemes in the form of merchandising
- Introduced a suite of geo-tours, festivals and events
- Developed and executed a Geotourism-themed advertising campaign
- Featured on prime-time television as part of Channel 4 documentary “Walking through time”
- Acquired a premises and installed a visitor centre with a shop, café, exhibition and interactive exhibits
- Evaluated potential for development of a purpose-built Geo-Centre
- Installed the first Geo-pod roadside interpretation and planned installation of more
- Devised, planned and delivered promotional events locally and nationally
- Secured patron, scientist and television presenter Dallas Campbell (Figure 19).
- Acquired project funding and donations from various sources

![Figure 19: The NWHG celebrity patron, Dallas Campbell.](image)
8.2 Project plans and milestones

In the period between January 2017 and December 2018, the NWHG and NWHGT will build upon the foundation of work achieved in 2015/2016. This will include:

- Community and visitor surveys to update our data and quantify anecdotal information (Depended on LEADER)
- Implementation of Conservation, Sustainable Regional Economic, Sustainable Geo-tourism, Interpretation and Income Strategies (Core activities)
- Instigation of a Business Members’ Club to provide support and information to local businesses, entrepreneurs and tourism providers (LEADER & EMFF)
- Initiate more micro-funding schemes in the form of memberships and expanded merchandising (NWHGT)
- Run a full program of geo-tours, festivals and events (Core activities and LEADER)
- Design, market and sell a range of sponsorship opportunities (NWHGT)
- Review and improve the visitor centre and access to geosites (NPAP and NWHGT)
- Improve signage infrastructure on roads and harbours (LEADER & EMFF)

The NWHG operational plan for 2017 is underpinned by a number of milestone events. As well as these milestone events, the NWHG will continue to follow its Action Plan and strategies for Education, Conservation, Interpretation, Sustainable Tourism and Sustainable Economic Development.
Figure 20: Operational plan 2017

North West Highlands UNESCO Global Geopark Business Plan 2017-18

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9 Critical Risks

9.1 Core Funding
The NWHG must guarantee core funding from March 2017 to avoid entering another ‘care and maintenance’ period. In addition to the financial support of the Scottish Government, the NWHG team is continually applying for other sources of funding, seeking donations and working towards increased revenue generation. However, it is difficult to predict how much income can be earned through these means.

9.2 Personnel
A successful organisation is dependent on retaining high-quality staff. It is essential the NWHG retains the experience and expertise of staff into the future as one of the main challenges of the past has been losing skills and experience as funding dried up. The best way to retain staff is to secure long-term funding to enable them to set down roots and plan for the future.

9.3 Revalidation
In 2019 NWHG will be audited by a revalidation team from UNESCO and the Global Geopark Network. Unlike World Heritage Site status, Global Geopark status for an area and its organisation is regularly reviewed against a set of UNESCO approved guidelines. Following a caution (Yellow Card) in 2013 because of the lack of staff, the NWHG entered into a two-year grace-period during which it gained funding for core announced by First Minister Alex Salmond. This allowed staff to implement a considerable improvement program and achieve a ‘green card’ in 2015. The Geopark is now following an action plan to ensure a further ‘Green Card’ in 2019.

9.4 Project Funding
If the NWHG project applications to EMFF, NPAP, LEADER and others are unsuccessful then the core staff will continue to pursue other partnerships and funding avenues. Project plans simply will not be implemented if funding is not in place.

9.5 Revenue
Long-term core funding from Government is an essential requirement. In addition to core-funding for staff the NWHG must pursue income streams from private corporate sponsorship, advertising and memberships. Without these the NWHG’s ability to match fund project funding and its ability to promote and advertise the region will be impacted.