

JOHN O' GROATS TRAIL

Coastal walking route from
Inverness to John o' Groats



News vol. 10 no. 4: Merry Trailsmas



A note from the chair

As I look back on the year 2024, I truly have so much to be thankful for.

Laura arrived in June full of energy and with a great set of skills to help build the trail. Ken helped us complete a funding package for the

number of walkers on the trail in 2024 from all over the world, and we continued to make improvements to help even more people walk next year. Please come join us, help us,

I continue to have a fantastic group of trustees, volunteers, wardens, employees and landowners helping and guiding me and working together to build one of the world's top trails.

All that effort and talent has made its mark as we again set a record

As always... Happy Trails!

Jay Wilson, Chair

PS. Thank you ever so much Santa for lending me your hat to keep my wee bald head warm whilst out on your favourite trail! (Doesn't quite reach the North Pole!) ;-)

👟 Welcome Aboard Frank 👟



We are delighted to welcome a new trustee to the John o' Groats Trail - Frank Stephen!

Some of you will know this 'weel-kent' face who has worked in farms and crofts across the north of Scotland for nearly 60 years!

And some may recall seeing Frank traverse the trail for [Alzheimer Scotland](#), in his epic [Frank's Walk for Alzheimer Scotland](#). The John o' Groats Trail was Frank's first ever long-distance Trail (but not his last!) and we were delighted to have Frank join us as an ambassador for the Trail, and as a trustee.

"I am a retired vet who did a lot of walking in my teenage years mainly in the Cairngorms. After 56 years I again took up walking and did a very successful sponsored walk of the John o' Groats Trail. As my first long distance trail I thought it was a great experience - it is important that it is developed as it avoids people having to walk on the A9. I am fully behind something which encourages responsible access to the countryside!"

📷 - Alan Hendry

👟 Walkers Report 👟

🌍 Loth Bridge Update 🌍



Left to right: Chris Rogerson of CRC, our own Laura Gray, and Frank McCulloch of Arvikaconsult

Chris, Laura and Frank hunt through the undergrowth for the perfect location for the Loth Burn Bridge on a site visit a few weeks ago. Be very quiet, a bridge might appear there soon. Some of you may remember in a previous newsletter Ken braving the cold Loth waters to demonstrate the struggles walkers face. This time it was Laura and Jay's turn to plunge their not-quite-high-enough wellies into the icy

We are delighted to share that we have secured the funding to proceed - not only our biggest project but our biggest bridge to date! The bridge has been ordered, and will arrive on site flat pack (IKEA style), ready for CRC to install. We hope to have the bridge ready to go for spring walkers, meaning some drier feet all round!

This would not be possible without our funders:

- ★ You, the fantastic public who donated to the 'The Big Give'
- ★ Peoples Postcode Lottery
- ★ North Highland Initiative
- ★ SSE Sustainable Development
- ★ SSE Gordon Bush
- ★ Gordon and Ena Baxter Foundation
- ★ Kilbraur Wind Farm Community Benefit Trust

And of course, our super engineer Frank McCulloch of Arvika Consult.

All of this infrastructure building takes time and effort - but also... money.

So, donations towards Trail infrastructure improvements are very much welcome - if you can spare a few pennies, then please donate towards trail improvements on the link below:

[DONATE TO THE TRAIL](#)

North Coast Trail Update



🥳 We need you! 🥳

Since we received back the survey of the North Coast we have started to reach back out to the communities, and now have a good idea of how the route is going to look. As we head into 2025 we hope to start marking out the trail as the route is agreed, and for this to happen we need a group of enthusiastic volunteers.

Volunteering of the trail can be as easy as lending us an hour of your time occasionally to help put up markers, or some good old bracken bashing when we get into the warmer weather- it is very therapeutic! You don't need to have previous experience, and equipment can be provided, all we ask is for you to bring along some good chat and enthusiasm.

The John o'Groats Trail would not be what it is today without the fantastic group of volunteers who have been at the heart of the organisation, so if you would like to be part of the development of the North Coast and help to shape its future please get in touch with lauramanager@jogt.org.uk.

🎁 Gifts For The Keen Walker 🎁

♥ Give The Gift of Membership For The Year ♥

Christmas is just around the corner and we've got plenty of options for the Hiker in your life!

Perhaps your friend or loved one walked the trail? If so they will know and appreciate all the work that goes into making this experience possible. Memberships are crucial to the survival and sustainability of the Trail. It allows us to demonstrate support for the Trail to funders - and so it means our applications for larger pots of money are stronger! Your £10 a year can help us access £10,000! Just click on the link below.

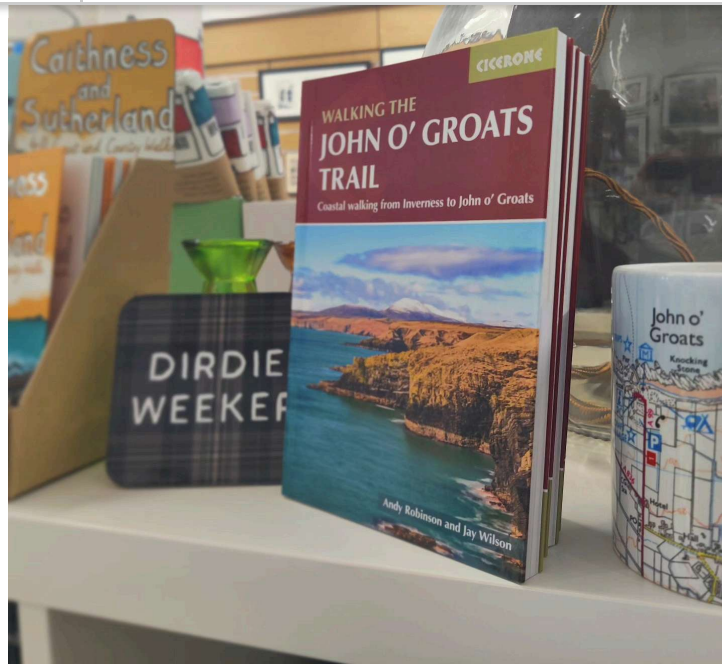
Join as a member! Just visit our [Membership Page](#) and join for only £10 a year!



👕 Give the Gift of Style 👕

Our recently released line of t-shirts, designed exclusively for the trail by local designers, would be a great gift for someone who has completed the trail, has the ambition to, or even just enjoys what the coast has to offer. Walk 150 miles of smiles in style. Click below to see our range of designs available.

[View Our Range of Merchandise](#)



■ Give the Gift of a Great Walking Experience ■

Our detailed guide to the John o'Groats Trail would be a super gift for anyone looking to take on the challenge, or even for the local who wishes to explore their own coastline. The walk is broken down into manageable sections, with helpful advice and tips for along the way. A must have for any walker! Click below for more information.

[Buy Guidebook](#)



★ Give the Gift to Celebrate the Achievement ★

by the Trail Manager and Trail Founder Jay Wilson, this is a great way to celebrate a wonderful achievement, and help support the John o' Groats Trail. Click Below for more information or email us on walk@jogt.org.uk .

Buy Your Certificate

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