

WATSON BIRDS REPORT FOR 2016-17

Most effort this year has been devoted to preparing and revising the funding bid to the HLF and the two one-day raptor events.

Following the unsuccessful specific bid for funding from the HLF Galloway Glens programme, we joined forces with other Dalry groups to prepare and submit a heritage application. The specific Watson Birds elements included are formalisation of the walking trail and the car trail, oral history of recollections of the Watsons and displays and orientation facilities in and around the Town Hall.

Barone was eventually sold to a locally resident couple Graham and Jean West. They have decided to develop most of the garden at Barone as a Donald Watson Memorial Garden open to the public in collaboration with the project director and the school. This far exceeds our expectations and we are very grateful to Graham and Jean for this

We held a Watson sale in Dalry Town Hall in May. There was strong interest in original paintings by Donald and a good number were sold. There was less interest in the books from the family home (which were not part of the archive material stored in the D&G Council archive in Dumfries) and these were subsequently passed onto a charitable bookseller.

A great deal of effort has been put into the preparation of two one-day events for the public with a very high-quality field of presenters focussing especially on the outcomes of recent raptor science and its implications for raptor conservation. The events were held after the end of the reporting year.

Roger Crofts