Help Save Lochaber Geopark!

Paul Murton, who presents 'Grand Tours of Scotland' on the BBC, is fronting our Crowdfunding appeal

Lochaber Geopark, based in Fort William in the West Highlands, is a not-for-profit organization, a Scottish Charity, run mainly by volunteers. Our objective is to tell the story of Lochaber's exceptionally varied geology and geomorphology to some of the million+ visitors who come here every summer, and to its 20,000 inhabitants. It is a story that has played a pivotal role in the evolution of Geology as a science.

Since April 2014 we have received funding from the Scottish government on a declining scale with the understanding that we would become financially self-sufficient in 2019. We have made great strides towards self-sufficiency, mainly through retail sales in our two visitor centres, but the winters are long and cold, and rents are high.

To keep going we have launched a Crowdfunding campaign at https://www.crowdfunder.co.uk/save-lochaber-geopark

and a Membership and field-trips (Geotours) scheme on our website at www.lochabergeopark.org.uk.

Lochaber District covers 4648 km^2, includes Britain's highest mountain and has a wild western coastline of exceptional beauty. It is built of three terranes two of which are overwhelmingly represented by metamorphic rocks. Historically it has played a central role in the development of mapping and interpretation of structurally complex regions.

The Grampian terrane, South of the Great Glen, is composed of the varied Dalradian Supergroup, dramatically folded during the Grampian orogeny. Many of the type sections of the Dalradian are in Lochaber Geopark, and the metamorphic grade increases systematically from greenschist in the SW to lower amphibolite in the NE.

In the Northern Highland terrane, the lithologically less varied Moine Supergroup experienced both the Grampian and Scandian orogenies, and in places the earlier Knoydartian. Quite recently ‘Lewisianoid’ inliers have been identified in Knoydart. The two terranes were brought into place by at least 500 km of NE – SW Scandian movement along the Great Glen Fault.

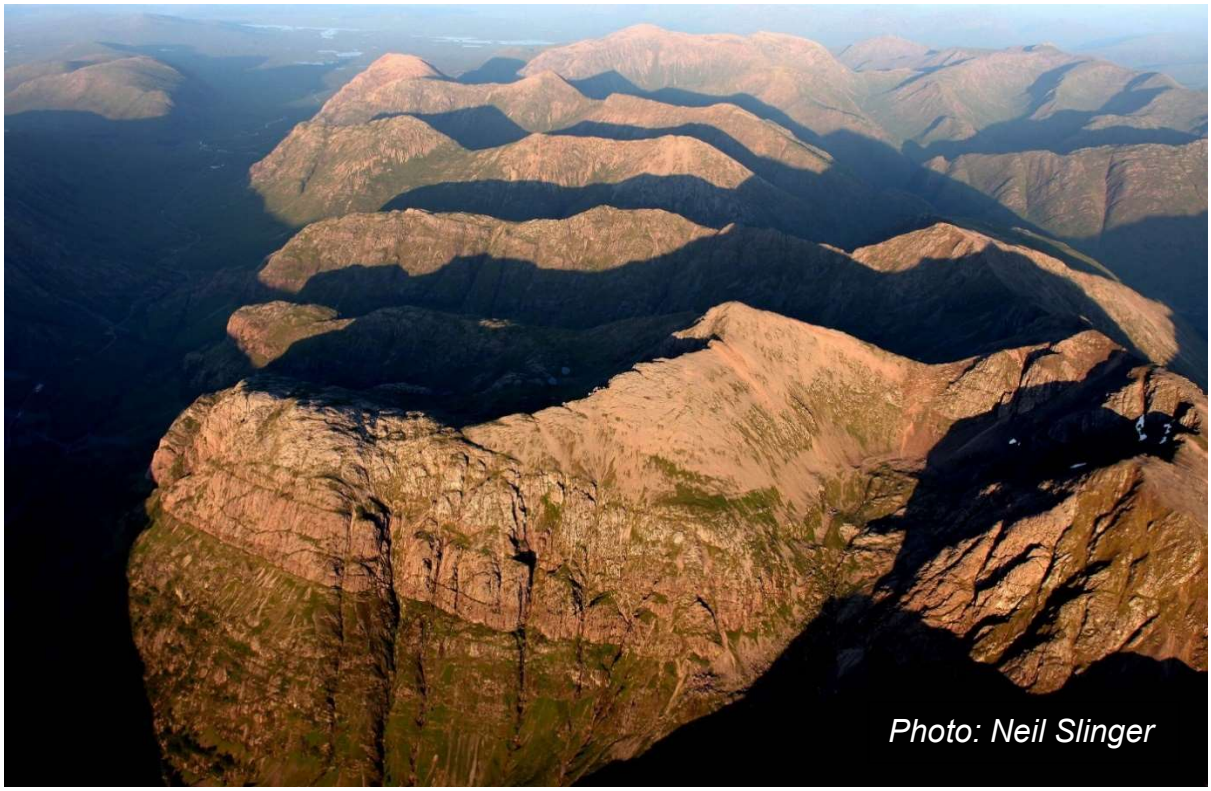
In the undeformed Hebridean terrane of the Small Isles a Torridonian sequence forms the north of Rùm. Bodies of Lewisian gneiss occur in the Marginal Border Group of the Rùm layered intrusion.

In our Fort William Visitor Centre, on our tours and through our talks we try to give a flavour of these complex things, in plain English, to visitors and local people. Promoting Geology to the general public is something we all need to do.

Please help us survive, through this Crowdfunding campaign and/or our Membership scheme. A large number of modest donations could save us from extinction!

If you work in a University please pass this on to your students. For more information on our activities please visit our website.

Prof Ian Parsons (Geopark Vice-chair and Edinburgh University)
Isla Mackay (Staff geologist)



Sunset over the corries of the Glen Coe caldera