

# NW Highland Geopark



It's not just “look  
at my rock”



# What the Geopark is doing under the EGN Charter

- Community owned, directors from 7 communities (quangocrats no more)
- Major academic study area (universities and research institutions)
- Community and educational outreach activities
- Promotion of culture, heritage, landscape
- Support for sustainable economic development primarily through geological and eco-tourism



## The Business Development Brief

- Organisation of a Business Group (“towards a Chamber of Commerce”) in collaboration with Rokua Geopark, Finland
- Organisation of an annual Geoheritage Festival
- Installation of brown signs as part of a long term signage strategy
- Development of a Geofood trail in collaboration with SNH

Though not necessarily in that order!



# Geoheritage Festival

- In October, so first! October is Earth Science & Geoheritage Month (Global). UK Earth Science Week is 7<sup>th</sup> - 15<sup>th</sup> October
- Programme of guided walks, expert led, Geopark-wide
- Visiting guest speakers, not necessarily geologists
- Linking in with, and co-promoting cultural and recreational events
- Activities with local schools
- Not the best time of year for high attendance?



## Signage

- Being done equal first as grants have to be spent by February / March.
- Reasons:
  - to firm up the Rock Route brand
  - to make sure visitors actually notice the SNH information panels already installed at the roadside
  - to direct visitors onto the Pebble Routes, and to the businesses in communities not on the Rock Route
- Encourage “slow tourism” as opposed to “doing the NC500” quickly



# Sample signage





## Sample signage (2)





## Business Group development

- An idea from Rokua Geopark who are collaborating
- Numerous supporting businesses already want to take part
- Businesses will decide the direction themselves; we will facilitate. Ultimate aim is to make it self-supporting
- Include setting up Geofood Trail early on
  - to start developing something concrete right away instead of talking theory
  - because so many businesses are catering establishments, accommodation providers, producers, growers...