

Solway Firth Partnership / Solway Coast AONB

Joint Solway Conference 2023

SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES

Dr Tori Herridge, evolutionary biologist at the University of Sheffield, mammoth expert and broadcaster

Tori is not only a researcher, addressing big evolutionary and environmental questions; but is also the co-founder of TrowelBlazers, an organisation dedicated to telling the stories of pioneering women in palaeontology, geology and archaeology, and addressing gender disparity in these fields today; the co-founder and joint Editor-in-Chief of the first #openaccess scientific journal for the Quaternary Sciences: Open Quaternary; she makes TV programmes such as Bone Detectives, Britain at Low Tide, Ice Age: Return of the Mammoth, and Radio and Podcasts including Hoax for Radio 4, and the Natural History Museum's flagship podcasts Our Broken Planet and Wild Crimes.

Susannah Bleakley, Our Future Coast

Lover of maps. Geologist. Outdoor enthusiast. Former CEO of Morecambe Bay Partnership. Champion for community involvement. Through Our Future Coast is deeply engaged in testing new ways of delivering coastal, nature-based solutions for more sustainable coastal flood risk management. Founding trustee of Curlew Recovery South Lakes.

Liam Templeton, Amphibian & Reptile Conservation

Liam works for Amphibian & Reptile Conservation as the Species on the Edge Project Officer for the Solway. Born and raised in Dumfries, Liam studied Zoology at Glasgow University before completing a master's degree in Environmental Communication at the University's Crichton Campus. Since then, Liam has been involved in various socially engaged projects exploring issues such as cultural democracy, food insecurity and transport inequity. Liam is particularly interested in the role of art and creative media in communicating issues of climate and biodiversity loss.

Mark Graham, Grampus Heritage & Training Ltd

Mark is Project Manager at Grampus Heritage and Training Ltd. In addition to international work, Mark has managed several community fieldwork projects in Cumbria including the 4-year 'Discovering Derwentio' Roman project at Papcastle and has coordinated numerous walkover surveys, geophysical surveys and excavations related to the monastic landscape of Holme Cultram at Abbeytown.

Georgie Evans, DEFRA

Georgie Evans is a senior policy adviser in the Defra Highly Protected Marine Area team, mainly focussing on management and designation of sites.

Conor Hinchcliffe, Natural England

Conor Hinchcliffe is a marine Lead Adviser in Natural England's Cumbria Area Team, working on marine nature conservation and marine protected areas from the Solway Firth to Morecambe Bay.

Emilia Suggitt, DEFRA

Emilia Suggitt is a policy adviser in the Defra Highly Protected Marine Area Team, supporting work across the team including site designation and management.

Anne Saunders, Scottish Government, Marine Litter and Contaminants Policy Manager

Anne is a graduate of the University of Aberdeen, and has worked for 20 years in conservation, in particular on marine conservation issues. This has included work on seabirds in the UK as well as in the UK Overseas Territories of the Falkland Islands and South Georgia, and on marine litter and contaminants both in NGOs and in Scottish Government.

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Anna Wilson, University of Glasgow

Anna works in the University of Glasgow's School of Education. She leads the Waste Stories project (funded by the Leverhulme Trust), which uses fiction to change people's relationships with waste. The Plastic Age Reimagined is a participatory workshop that builds on work with SFP and the Scottish Islands Federation Marine Litter Working Group.

Deb Muscat, Consultant with the Solway Coast AONB

Deb has worked in the charitable sector for over 30 years. Most recently with the Cumbria Biodiversity Data Centre, where she was involved in the Local Nature Recovery Strategy pilot. Deb is now working as a consultant and is also a Director of the Ass. Of Local Environmental Records Centres. She has a lifelong interest in nature conservation and has recently turned her attention away from botany to beetles.

Karen Morley, Dumfries & Galloway Council

Karen has over 30 years' experience in the environment sector working firstly as a Landscape Architect and latterly in countryside management, specialising in major project development. Karen is a Countryside Development Officer for Dumfries and Galloway Council where she has worked for the past 14 years.

Heather Sewell, Cumbria Tourism

Heather is Cumbria Tourism's PR & Communications Manager. She had had a wide-ranging career in journalism, PR and comms, and has worked on a number of key sustainable transport campaigns including 'GoLakes Travel' and the current 'Go Car Free' marketing initiative.

Alex Mackintosh, Cumbria Tourism

Alex Mackintosh is a Content Executive at Cumbria Tourism, providing support to businesses across the county. She specialises in social media and content management, creating engaging copy and managing visitor facing social media channels; as well as working on sustainable travel campaigns to encourage responsible visitor behaviours.

Nic Coombey, Solway Firth Partnership

As a Landscape Architect for over 30 years, Nic has increasingly specialised in the management of heritage projects in Dumfries and Galloway. Delivering coastal projects for Solway Firth Partnership he is working on a variety of projects from exploring the constraints and opportunities of delivering 200 miles of cleaner coast to promoting a community science scheme recording the rich diversity of seaweeds growing on the shore.

Grant Course, Seascope Fisheries

Grant's career in fisheries began as a cockle fisherman during summer vacation from university before becoming a seagoing observer for Seafish Industry Authority in 1993. He has worked for several government affiliated departments over the last 30 years, including Seafish, Cefas, and the Marine Management Organisation (MMO) with a career spanning both Science and Compliance. In 2014 Grant started his own research company, SeaScope Fisheries Research, with Guy Pasco, and specialises in bycatch reduction projects and utilising EM technology as the main monitoring tool in these projects.

Mike Edwards, RWE Robin Rigg Wind Farm

With a background in industry across chemical process and electrical generation, Mike is an experienced engineer with extensive knowledge in the construction, commissioning and operation of large power generation projects in the UK.

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As General Manager of the RWE Robin Rigg Wind Farm Mike directs a team of specialists in all aspects of a 174MW offshore wind farms activities, including safety, operations, maintenance and commercial performance.

David Gibson, Senior Countryside Officer, Cumberland Council

Since graduating David has worked over the last 25 years in countryside management, both in Cumbria and Yorkshire. During this time, he has gained a wide variety of experience in the practical delivery of countryside management projects ranging from national trail work, access development projects, multi user routes and the general duty of the maintenance of the rights of way network. Since 2009 David has been working in partnership with Natural England in the delivery of the King Charles III England Coast Path, a new national trail around the coast of England. This has involved developing over 200km of new access to the coast of Cumbria while upgrading the current rights of way access to the coast.

Cllr Anthony Markley, Chair Solway Coast AONB and SFP Board Member

Tony worked as a haulage contractor and coach operation for 39 years. He served as a Councillor for both Cumbria County Council, holding Highways and Economy portfolios, and Allerdale Borough Council, holding Tourism and Leisure portfolio, for over 20 years. He also served as Councillor on Silloth Town Council for 30 years and chaired the North Western Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority (NWIFCA) for a number of years. He is currently a Councillor with Cumberland Council, Chairs the Solway Coast AONB and is an SFP Board Member.

Rupert Shaw MBE MA, Convenor, SFP

Farming on the Borgue Peninsula, Rupert feels entwined with the Solway and its future and is a strong advocate for sustainable and ethical coastal enterprise. Apart from strong familial and geographic connections to the Sea he has indulged his passion for the marine environment, through activities as diverse as an austral winter in the Antarctic, photo tagging bottlenose dolphins off California and this year, attendance at SAMS Oban's Seaweed Academy. An SFP trustee since 2016 and Convenor since 2021.

