

### THE VISION

We will create and manage a circular trail for visitors and locals alike, with sections suitable for users of all ages and abilities, to enjoy the wildlife, beauty and historical interest Speet Gill has to offer.

With special thanks to the hard work of Solway Rural Initiative's Environmental Task Force (New Deal), Mr G. Wright, the artists and all involved in the workshops; contractors and volunteers who have helped the project become a reality.

Thanks to grants from Local Heritage Initiative (a partnership of Heritage Lottery Fund, Nationwide Building Society and Countryside Agency); Cumbria Waste Management, Wigton Town Council, Allerdale Arts, Hadfield Trust and Cumbria Community Foundation, which enabled this project to be completed.

### ROUTE INFORMATION

In Wigton main street, take the road signed 'Swimming Pool' and park at the Baths car park.

*Route:* Start the trail opposite the car park next to the bridge.

*Distance:* 1k approx.

*Grade:* Surfaced path, some incline.

This leaflet is one of a series produced by Solway Rural Initiative

The initiative offers a new mechanism for dealing with the problems of rural development and countryside management.

In consultation with all interested parties, Solway Rural Initiative manage the Solway Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

For further information about Solway Rural Initiative's Funding or constitution, please contact:



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## Rustic Art

# THE SPEET GILL Wood Carvings

*A guide to the carvings on the Speet Gill Trail*

Information

Two artists were commissioned by Solway Rural Initiative to produce pieces of wood sculpture to enhance the trail, with images derived from the history and wildlife of Speet Gill.



## FIONA HUDSON

Fiona is an artist working and living in the Eden area. She works in various ways, on her own personal work, public commissions such as signs or seats, and runs art workshops.



Working in a barn in her back garden, Fiona carved two oak waymarker posts using a chain saw for rough cuts and mallets and gouges for finer work.

Oak is robust and durable, and can endure poor weather. Even though it may crack, she finds that it has a character which expresses childrens' drawings in a unique manner.

When you come across the posts with their vigorous and vivid imagery, we hope that you will both smile and reflect on Wigton's rich past.



## ALISTER NEVILLE

Alister attended Caldew School in Dalston, and then trained at Carlisle Art College. He now lives near Brampton and works around Cumbria on art projects with schoolchildren or making seats, carved animals, totem poles and sculptures from wood.

*" I make seats from the timber I find in the woods, and make them in the woods. Their designs are influenced by the timber I find and the space where the seat will go. I look for ideas around me, organic shapes and forms, animals and plants that live nearby. Images which I carve are in a folk art or rustic tradition. In my seats, I wish not only to provide an interesting feature, but a place to stop and think about where you are".*

The seat and way markers are placed at points along the trail, and are unique to Speet Gill and the Local Community.

It is hoped that everyone using the trail will enjoy and care for the skill and craftsmanship that has gone into these works of art.

## THE WORKSHOPS

For Fiona, the work for Speet Gill began with a day spent in Thomlinson Junior School, Wigton. Year 7 children did drawings based on the natural environment of the Gill and Wigton's industrial and agricultural past.

Fiona and the pupils looked at the various mills that were in existence, and working life one to three hundred years ago. At the end of the day, a sheaf full of drawings alive with spirit and character were used by Fiona to design a plan based on their combination.

Alister made the seat in Speet Gill with the help of groups from Wigton Youth Station, 'Chrysalis' Day Centre, and Millennium Volunteers.

It was carved with mallets, gouges and a lot of energy. The timber is from a diseased Scots Pine that was cut down beside the new bridge in the Gill.



The seat, like the tree, will be a transitory thing and will eventually rot and decay, but in so doing it provides a home for insects and a food source for birds in the continuing life cycle of the woods.