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Mount Stuart Trust

Land Ownership and Management Plan

January 2026

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1. Landholding

This should set out the name of the estate or landholding or provide some details about the land held, in line with information that would be published in the Land Register

Mount Stuart Trust,
Mount Stuart,
Isle of Bute,
Argyll & Bute,
PA20 9LR

2. Land Register Title Number(s)

Include title numbers from the Land Register if known.

TBC

3. Area

Note the area of the land and specify the units used (e.g. acres or hectares)

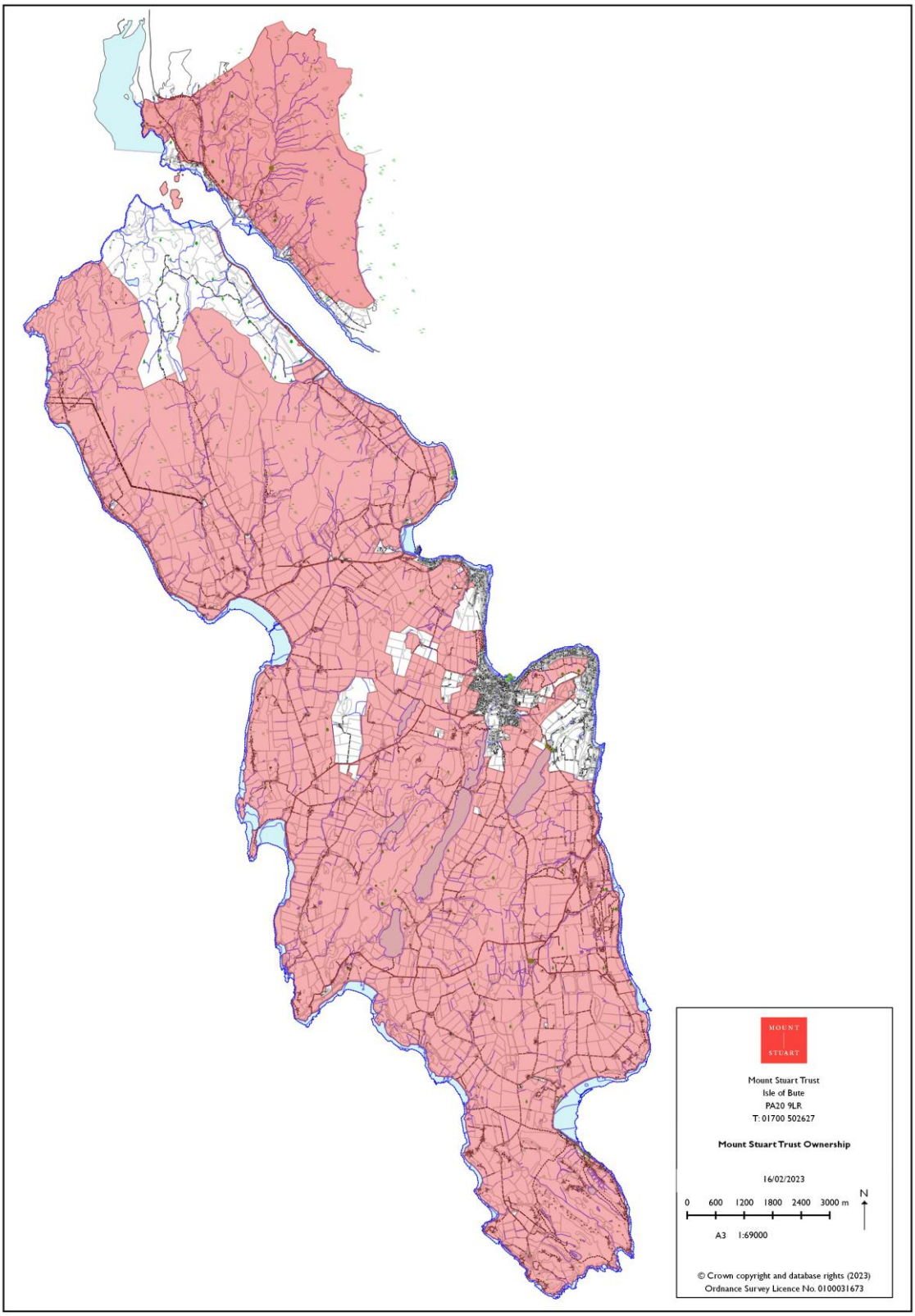
All Mount Stuart Trust (MST) land comprises of the following (in acres):

AREA OF LAND	**ACRES**
Land on Isle of Bute	27,130
Land on Cowal Peninsula	3,604
TOTAL	**30,734**

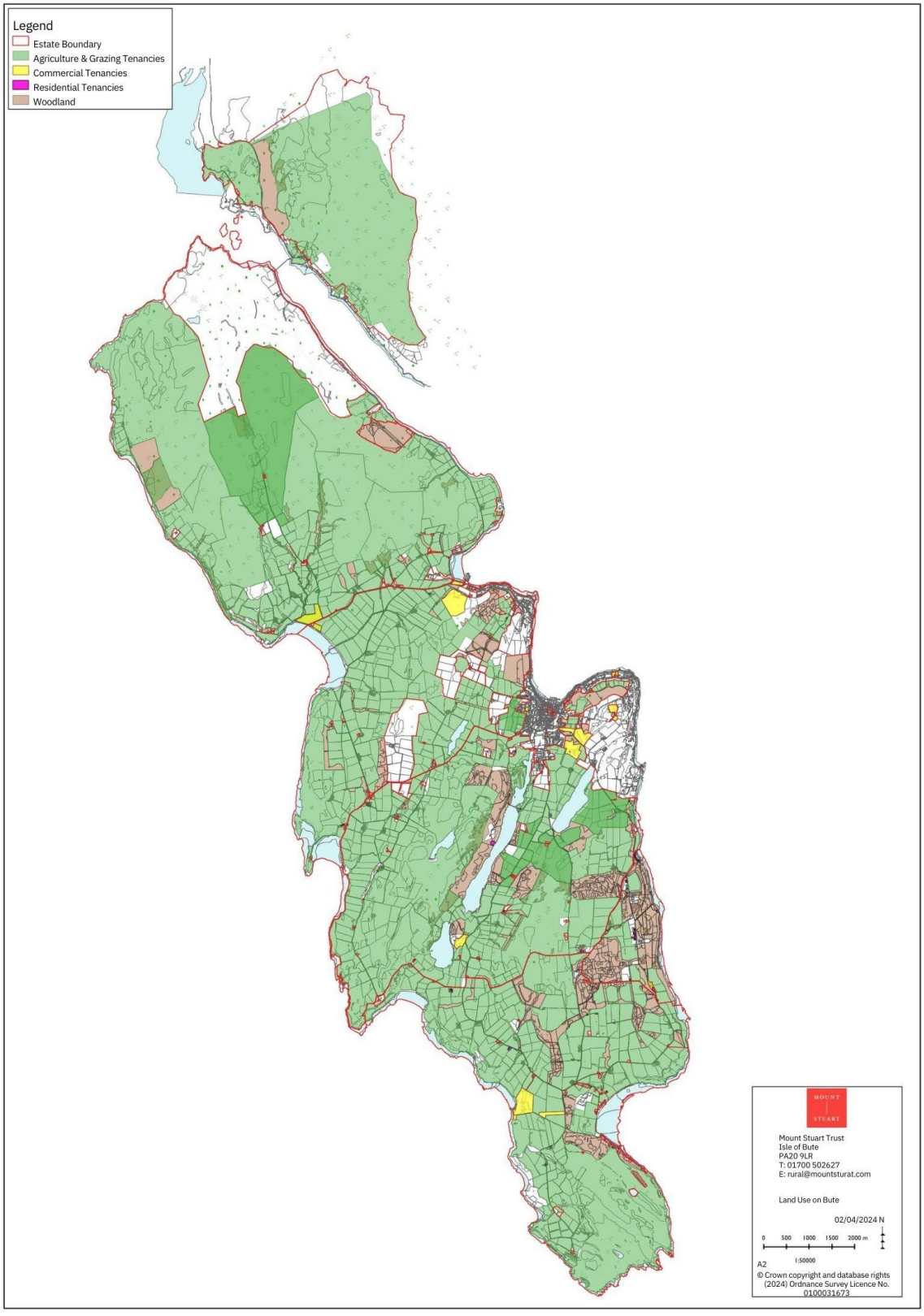
(Table 1: Area of MST Land in acres)

This area includes woodland, farmland, lochs, foreshore and amenity land (e.g. golf courses).

The total area of the Isle of Bute is approximately 31,293 acres. Therefore MST land on Bute accounts for 87% of the total area.



(Map 1: Mount Stuart Trust land on the Isle of Bute & Cowal Peninsula)



(Map 2: Mount Stuart Trust land on the Isle of Bute & Cowal Peninsula by land use)

4. Location

Include information about the general location of the land

The Isle of Bute is an island in the Firth of Clyde, Scotland. Bute is approximately 90 minutes from Glasgow by road or rail, including a 35 minute ferry crossing from Wemyss Bay to Rothesay. Alternatively another ferry runs from Colintraive to Rhubodach, taking less than 5 minutes.

The land on the Cowal Peninsula is close to the ferry terminal at Colintraive.



(Map 2: Isle of Bute & Glasgow)

5. Landowner

It should be made clear who the landowner(s) is/are and what the status of the landowner(s) is/are (e.g. company, partnership, Trust, charity)

Mount Stuart Trust was founded in 1989 by John Crichton Stuart, 6th Marquess of Bute (1933-1993), with the aim of entrusting the historic Mount Stuart house together with the land and resources previously comprising the Bute Estate to a charitable Trust.

The Mount Stuart Trust is managed by a board of independent Trustees, which works to facilitate public interest, understanding and appreciation of the arts, architecture and the rural environment.

The Mount Stuart Trust is a charity managing and maintaining a series of assets across the Isle of Bute, including Mount Stuart House and gardens, 36 farms, 100 residential properties, 1447 hectares acres of woodland and approximately 21 commercial properties, including golf courses, bowling greens, fishing and gaming leases.

The charity's objectives are rooted in creating prosperity for the Island of Bute as a whole, the charity owns 87% of the island, however only 16% of this is directly managed by the Charity, the remainder represents partnerships – often long term regulated agricultural tenancies – with individuals and businesses that help our rural communities continue to grow and thrive.

The Trust is committed to conservation, environmental sustainability, innovation, public access, and education within our practical means and financial sustainability. Mount Stuart House and gardens have been open to the public since 1995. Mount Stuart Trust is a charity whose aims, and objectives, are outlined in the Memorandum and Articles of Association. Please visit the MST website for further information.

MST's Scottish registered charity number is SC009584 and the Trustees are as follows:

Chair:	Sophie Crichton Stuart
Trustees:	Stephen Jenkins Anthony Crichton Stuart (sabbatical) Samantha Embury Luke Syson Flora Crichton Stuart Raoul Curtis-Machin Isobel Cockburn Bil Bilson John Dickson John (Jack) Bute Julie Christie

6. Those with significant influence in or control over land

Details should be provided setting out anyone with significant influence in or control over the land other than the landowner, in line with information which is to be detailed in the Register of Persons holding a Controlled Interest in Land.

- MST Head of Rural Operations – Katie Warden
- MST Head of Visitor Operations - Donna Chisholm
- MST Head of Buildings and Facilities – Chris Pescod
- Agricultural & Forestry Consultants - Stanley Wright
- 99% of MST's farmland and 83% of MST's land is in agricultural tenancies. There are 36 long-term agricultural tenants:

AGRICULTURAL LAND	ACRES	(%)
Farm Tenancies	24,775	99%

(Table 2: Agricultural Land Tenancies)

7. Overall purpose of management

This should outline the main aim of managing the land. Why do you own the land? What are your main priorities?

MST's main aim of managing the land:

- Sustainable conservation and regeneration of the rural environment, farming and woodland
- Develop and support a thriving and diverse rural sector with a commitment to biodiversity
- Multi-faceted arts and education programme, including in the rural sector.
- Community engagement to make informed decision about the future of the land.
- Public benefit by awarding long term tenancies for agricultural land.
- Deliver net zero in line with government guidance by 2045 by monitoring MST's carbon impact.

8. Overview of management

This section should set out how the land is managed, including the main activities (economic, social and environmental). It should summarise:

- *how different types/areas of land will be managed or developed;*
- *key stakeholders involved in the management of the land, who are not named elsewhere in the summary; and*
- *any significant changes planned in the near future.*

MST land is defined by the following types of usage:

Land Type	Acres	%
Agriculture	24,775	81%
Woodland	3,384	11%
MST House and Gardens	416	1%
Other	2,159	7%
TOTAL	**30,734**	

(Table 3: MST Land by Usage)

"Other" includes:
3 x Tenanted Golf Courses
All roads
Foreshore
Lochs
1 x Air Field
Building Curtilage
The foreshore is not included in the area.

AGRICULTURAL MANAGEMENT

MST agriculture is broken down into the following types of farming:

FARMING TYPE	ACRES
Beef & Sheep	20,161
Dairy	4,479
Horse grazing	135
Grand Total	**24,775**

(Table 4: MST Land by Farming Type)

"Future Lets" are farms which have recently come back in-hand and plan to be re-let on long term tenancies.

Between 2020 – 2022, MST has re-let four farms to four new farming families on 20 year MLDTs. The period of the lease gives the opportunity to invest in the land, soil and infrastructure of the farm and make a life and positive impact to the island.

Some farmland is better consolidated with neighbouring farmers. Between 2020 – 2023 , MST agreed 8 MLDTs with existing farmers giving them the opportunity to expand their farming operations and enabling them to be sustainable for the future.

WOODLAND MANAGEMENT

Approximately 66% of MST's woodland is mixed broad leaf compared to the UK Forest standard of 10%. Due to the cost of exporting commercial logs off the island, MST has commercial firewood enterprise, selling firewood to residents and businesses.

A further 350 acres of new woodland is being planted in 2026 as part of the trusts commitment to combating climate change, enhancing biodiversity and diversifying the islands landscape.

DEER MANAGEMENT

Managing deer is a crucial aspect of woodland management due to the impacts they can have on the environment, trees, biodiversity, human health and safety. A link to our deer management report, April 2026 can be found here.

9. Alignment with local or national plans

If applicable, you may wish to mention how the management of the land aligns with any local or national strategic plans.

The following table compares the MST's forestry with the UK Forest Standard.

	Open ground	Mixed Broad Leaf	Diverse conifer	Primary conifer	TOTAL
Mount Stuart Trust	91 acres	952 acres	90 acres	316 acres	1448 acres
Mount Stuart Trust	6%	66%	6%	22%	100%
UK Forest Standard	10%	10%	10%	70%	100%
Difference	*-4%*	*56%*	*-4%*	*-48%*	

(Table 5: MST Woodland compared to UK Forest Standard)

Across Bute, MST has 56% more mixed broadleaf than the UK forest standard.

10. Community Engagement

Mount Stuart Trust is committed to being a good neighbour, and is proud to be an active part of the Bute community. We understand that to be successful in this; we need to work with those on Bute and maintain meaningful relationships, encouraging two-way dialogue in our everyday operations and during periods of change. The Mount Stuart Trust has launched a community engagement plan which is available to view on our website, the plan was drafted following consultation with the Island community and we welcome feedback on the activity we are undertaking.

Our Community Liaison Officer, Fiona Hardie, acts as our key point of contact for all community related matters and can be contacted on: fiona@mountstuart.com or 01700 503877.

Community Access to Land

For community groups looking to access land for local projects and initiatives we encourage you to attend our monthly discussion opportunities, the dates of which can be found on the community section of our website. Through an initial face to face conversation, our team will be able to learn more about the group's requirements and consider whether the Trust may have suitable land available for lease and/or sale.

11. Contact details

Set out the main contact details for the owners, managers or agents and any local contacts, including addresses, emails and phone numbers. You can also include any relevant website addresses.

MST contact details:

- Email: contactus@mountstuart.com
- Telephone: 01700 503 877
- Website: www.mountstuart.com

Date: January 2026

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