

Scottish Pilgrim Routes Forum

Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation - SC045212

Report and Accounts for the year ending 31st July 2020



Reference and administrative information

Scottish Incorporated Charitable Organisation SC045212

Principal address	23 King Street Doune Perthshire FK16 6DN
Website	www.sprf.org.uk
Patron	Lord David Wilson of Tillyorn KT GCMG
Charity Trustees	Rev Prof David Atkinson Rev Dr Ian Boa <i>(resigned 2 October 2020)</i> Prof Ian Bradley Rev Alex Currie Dr Brian Fraser <i>(elected 2 October 2020)</i> John Graham John Henderson Sylvia Jenks Fiona Mitchell <i>(elected 2 October 2020)</i> Very Rev Dr Sheilagh Kesting DSG
Officers	Chair: Very Rev Dr Sheilagh Kesting DSG Secretary: Nicholas Cooke Treasurer: John Henderson
Bankers	Royal Bank of Scotland St. Dunstons High Street Melrose TD6 9PF
Independent Examiner	Alastair O'Neil MCIBS 4 The Stables Buccleuch Chase St Boswells TD6 0HE

Annual Report of the Trustees.

Introduction

The Trustees are pleased to present the Report and Accounts of the Scottish Pilgrim Routes Forum (SPRF) for the period 1st August 2019 to 31st July 2020 .

SPRF was constituted as a SCIO in 2014, having originally been established in May 2012 as a network of organisations and individuals committed to the development of off-road pilgrimage travel across Scotland. The Forum provides a practical, coordinated approach to establishing dedicated pilgrim routes for walkers and, where possible, cyclists and horse riders. Local ownership of this process is a core principle of the Forum. We enable member-led project partnerships to define and establish new routes, working with other local partners and providing information via our website. As a Forum, we celebrate Scotland's rich Christian pilgrimage heritage and we endorse the Scottish Government's National Cycling & Walking Network action plan to promote a physically healthier society and develop more sustainable rural communities.

The Report and Accounts below present a summary of our financial and general activities during the accounting period above.

Activities and achievements

The Board of Trustees met on four occasions during this period. Apart from matters of finance which are dealt with below, the Trustees oversaw the planning of the successful Scottish Pilgrimage Gathering and AGM held at Girvan in October 2019. Sadly, the spring Forum due to be held at Bothwell in April was cancelled due to the Covid-19 pandemic restrictions.

However, the pace of the Forum's work has not relented, and the level of community engagement generated has been heartening. Pilgrim routes have continued to multiply. Our updated 2019 leaflet shows 6 established routes and 7 additional ones at various stages of development, each one supported by a local Steering Group. The Northern Pilgrims' Way Group was established as an independent SCIO following a successful SPRF workshop in Tain in April last year and is undertaking an ambitious project to create a route from Tain to Kirkwall linking the historic medieval shrines of St Duthac and St Magnus. Steering Groups for two other routes, the Forth to Farne Way and the Whithorn Way, are planning to publish official guide-books, and new work is also in hand on these and other routes in relation to way-marking - all significant developments in opening up routes to public use.

The Board has begun to think how people could be invited to mark the end of their outdoor pilgrimage: some simple ceremony that would vary from place to place, anything from a simple prayer service to the opportunity to light a candle or some other such 'moment' that distinguishes the nature of pilgrimage from merely long-distance walking. This puts our work today in touch with the medieval practice of pilgrimage, the sense of going to a place of spiritual significance with a sense of purpose: to seek the welfare of body and mind in a place that the late George MacLeod might have called 'a thin place', a place where the ordinary and the numinous, the spiritual, seem very close.

At the 2020 AGM we recorded Rev Ian Boa's resignation as a Trustee and were very pleased to welcome Fiona Mitchell and Brian Fraser as new elected Trustees following their nomination by Pluscarden Abbey in Morayshire and Scotland's Churches Trust respectively. In Fiona's case, this puts right a missing link with the Roman Catholic Church that we have wanted to rectify in our Board membership.

SPRF has strengthened the role of its member-consultants under an agreement with Sarah Kettles, a heritage conservation consultant who previously worked on the development of the Fife Pilgrim

Way. Sarah will be helping us with submission of grant applications to key external funding bodies, beginning with an online SPRF membership survey, and we are grateful to all who have responded. With Sarah's help, we plan to provide more support to the work of local Steering Group while also increasing our capacity to engage constructively with Scottish Government and public sector bodies in our shared agenda of opening up local opportunities for physical and spiritual well-being and health to many more local communities.

Following agreement of a new policy, a major milestone has been reached in the inception of the Scottish Pilgrim Ways accreditation scheme which establishes three levels of operating standards, Bronze, Silver and Gold. These define the level of information and physical infrastructure that someone using one of the new Scottish Pilgrim Ways might expect to find on any accredited route. The policy document was approved by Trustees following lengthy deliberation and consultation and the scheme will be promoted via a new Scottish Pilgrim Way registered trademark incorporating the SPRF logo. The policy document has been circulated to members for comment, leading to a revision of the SPRF logo to include the Northern Isles. The policy document will be circulated to Scottish Government and other public sector bodies, and we plan to launch the accreditation scheme publicly in summer 2021 with the awarding of the first SPW certificates. We hope that the new accreditation standards will be a source of encouragement to all Steering Groups in providing recognised benchmarks for the practical development and public recognition of their essential work. The new standards will also prove a useful tool in securing new funding for the improvement of all new and existing SPW accredited routes. Quinquennial reviews of all accredited routes will be carried out by SPRF with Steering Groups to ensure that standards once achieved are also maintained.

Another significant development in this past year relates to mainland Europe. Last year we reported that SPRF had received an invitation to attend the annual 'Pilger Messe' symposium in Hamburg, a one-day gathering of some 4,000 pilgrimage-related people and organisations from across Scandinavia and Germany hosted by the Lutheran Church. We were delighted that in February our Secretary, with the financial support of the Scottish Episcopal Church, was able to attend and speak; one of our Trustees, Professor Ian Bradley, also attended and preached at the Sunday service. This was a key opportunity to showcase the pilgrimage scene in Scotland to a European audience, which generated much interest in Scottish pilgrim routes and the work of SPRF which we are keen to maintain in future.

Last year, we also reported that the reformed churches in Germany were planning an international pilgrimage arriving in north east England to walk up the east coast of Scotland to Edinburgh and across to Glasgow, arriving in time for the COP26 International Climate Change Conference. We now know that COP 26 has had to be postponed until next year but, if plans still go ahead, we hope to engage with this pilgrimage at some point on their chosen route, potentially on the Forth to Farne Way. This adds a new dimension to the concept of pilgrimage travel since the German group is following the initiative of the World Council of Churches from 2013 to promote a 'Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace' to challenge all forms of violence and injustice as inter-related global issues – a difficult concept to translate in many languages but one that has embedded itself in the life of the German churches.

Closer to home, we have also welcomed recent contact with our universities. One of our members, Dr Marion Bowman, Senior Lecturer in Religious Studies at the Open University, has co-edited the latest edition of the academic journal 'Numen - An International Review of the History of Religions' for which she has written a major article entitled *Rehabilitating Pilgrimage in Scotland: Heritage, Protestant Pilgrimage and Caledonian Caminos* which relates well to the work of SPRF. We are also in contact with Dr Sally Foster and colleagues in the Heritage & Conservation Team at Stirling University and initial discussions suggest real scope to develop future partnership research projects

with SPRF around pilgrimage and pilgrim routes in the early Christian period of Scottish history. These are still exploratory, but they point to the possibility of another exciting development in our ability to increase the profile of pilgrim routes across Scotland and make a positive impact on our local communities.

There are mixed messages to report on the involvement of the Churches in the development of pilgrim routes. Most of the mainstream denominations are facing severe financial shortages and a reduction in the numbers of clergy and closure of church buildings, which means that despite positive official statements related to the development of pilgrimage, finding resources at a strategic level to make this a reality is increasingly difficult. However, it is also clear that the energy and imagination to take forward the continued development of our new Scottish Pilgrim Ways lies in local church congregations, in partnership with their own communities, and here we already see some exciting developments – the recent progress of the Faith in Cowal project in Argyll is a case in point.

Put positively, this convinces us that SPRF's focus on supporting local Steering Groups must remain our primary purpose, so that they in turn can unlock the potential and energy that exist in towns and villages, including their church congregations, along the growing network of routes. It is heartening to note the Scottish Episcopal Church has designated 2021-22 as a 'Season of Pilgrimage' led by its College of Bishops and there are clear signs this historic initiative will help break new ground in terms of local church engagement, helping to put the spotlight on particular routes and offering new ways of making Christian pilgrimage accessible to all in a suitably Covid-friendly way.

We are fortunate to have so many willing volunteers giving their time to Steering Groups, overseeing the development of each pilgrim route through what can at times be a painfully slow and frustrating process. Once again, we have been indebted to John Henderson and Nick Cooke for giving them support and advice as required.

The Trustees remain fully committed to the work of the Forum and once again our thanks go to John for his dedicated administration of the charity's finances and website and to Nick, our Secretary, on a wide range of operational and governance issues. Our sincere thanks also go to all Forum members for their support, commitment and dedication over the past year.

Finance

Membership subscriptions and donations remain the sole source of unrestricted income and are used to meet the cost of Forum meetings and incidental travel and other expenses incurred by the Forum's Officers. Donations received and spent in this period in support of activities relating to the Fife Pilgrim Way, Forth to Farne Way, Whithorn Way and Kentigern Way pilgrim routes have been deemed to be restricted income.

Reserves

Restricted reserves can only be spent on specific pilgrim route activities, as noted above. Unrestricted reserves cover any activity relevant to the general operation of the Forum. It is our policy to maintain a reasonable level of unrestricted reserves to protect against potential downturns in the Forum's income or unforeseen significant costs, so that the Forum can maintain its activities for a reasonable period.

Investments

SPRF holds no investments.

Structure, governance and management

SPRF is constituted as a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation registered with OSCR. Its management team comprises the Board of Charity Trustees working with the Secretary. Charity Trustees are elected by the members of the Forum at the Annual General Meeting and usually serve for a term of 3 years, with the option of serving a second term before retirement. All Trustees are given an induction pack outlining their roles and responsibilities. The Secretary updates members of the Board on relevant changes in legislation and guidance on charities governance issued by OSCR.

Trustees' responsibilities

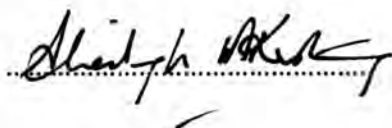
The Trustees are responsible for managing and safeguarding the assets of the charity and are also responsible for keeping proper accounting records and ensuring that the accounts are prepared in accordance with the terms of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006. The Trustees regularly consider the risks faced by SPRF and ensure that appropriate risk management procedures are in place to mitigate those risks.

Overview

The Trustees thank all Forum members for their interest in, and commitment to, the development of pilgrim walking routes in Scotland and we look forward to this continuing in the year ahead.

On behalf of the Trustees

Sheilagh Kesting



Chair

19th November 2020

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of the Scottish Pilgrim Routes Forum SCIO

I report on the accounts of the charity for the period 1 August 2019 to 31 July 2020, which are set out on pages 7 and 8 with accompanying notes.

Respective responsibilities of trustee and examiner

The charity's Trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the terms of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006.

The charity Trustees consider that the audit requirement of Regulation 10(1)(d) of the Accounts Regulations does not apply. It is my responsibility to examine the accounts as required under section 44(1)(c) of the Act and to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's statement

My examination is carried out in accordance with Regulation 11 of the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts and seeks explanations from the Trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.

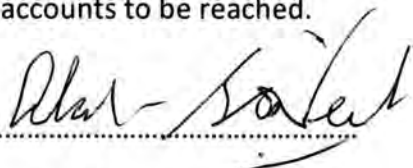
Independent examiner's statement

In the course of my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

1. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:
 - a. to keep accounting records in accordance with section 44(1)(a) of the 2005 Act and Regulation 4 of the 2006 Accounts Regulations, and
 - b. to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with Regulation 9 of the 2006 Accounts Regulations,

have not been met, or

2. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.


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20 November 2020

Independent Examiner

Alastair O'Neil MCIBS
4 The Stables
Buccleuch Chase
St Boswells
TD6 0H

Receipts and Payments account for year ending 31st July 2020

All amounts in £	Notes	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total Funds	2019
Receipts					
Membership fees		2,257		2,257	2,535
<u>Less: pre-paid</u>		<u>(40)</u>		<u>(40)</u>	<u>(163)</u>
		2,217		2,217	2,372
Forum Meetings income		433		433	1,190
Refund		0		0	60
Donations and Gift Aid		1,120		1,120	896
Grants – Fife Pilgrim Way			900	900	2,550
Donations – Whithorn Way			146	146	294
Grants – Forth to Farne Way			4,360	4,360	20
Donations – Kentigern Way			1,283	1,283	0
Total receipts		3,770	6,689	10,459	7,382
Payments					
Payments relating to charitable activities	2.	3,710	2,083	5,793	7,064
Governance costs	4.	360		360	409
Total Payments		4,070	2,083	6,153	7,473
Surplus / (Deficit) for year		(300)	4,606	4,306	(91)

Statement of balances as at 31st July 2020

Cash at Bank and in hand	Notes	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total Funds	2019
Balance at 1 st August 2019		3,900	876	4,776	4,704
Surplus/(deficit) for period		(300)	4,606	4,306	(91)
Pre-paid membership		40		40	163
Total Cash Funds at 31st July 2020		3,640	5,482	9,122	4,776
Represented by					
Fund Balances at 31st July 2020	1.	3,640	5,482	9,122	4,776

Signed on behalf of the Trustees:

Sheilagh Kesting 
Chair

John Henderson 
Treasurer

Notes to Accounts

1. Accounting policies

Basis of preparation

The accounts have been prepared on a receipts and payment basis. They consist of a summary of all monies received and paid via the bank and in cash during the financial year, along with a statement of balances. No adjustments have been made for any income due but not received, nor for any expenses incurred but not yet paid at the year-end.

Restricted funds

The Restricted fund covers all receipts of funds provided for specific purposes and all corresponding payments. During the year, these transactions related to grants and donations received from other parties for expenditure on specific pilgrim route projects. The balances of the restricted funds at 31st July 2020 were:

	£	£
Fife Pilgrim Way	65	
Three Saints Way	20	
Whithorn Way	464	
Forth to Farne Way	4,729	
Kentigern Way	<u>204</u>	<u>5,482</u>

2. Payments relating to charitable activities

	£	£
Unrestricted		
Forum Meetings expenses	395	
Promotion and development costs	1,078	
Insurances	125	
Secretarial and administrative support	1,813	
Miscellaneous	<u>299</u>	<u>3,710</u>

Restricted

Fife Pilgrim Way project	900	
Whithorn Way project	103	
Forth to Farne Way project	0	
Kentigern Way	<u>1,080</u>	<u>2,083</u>

3. Remuneration and expenses paid to Trustees

None of the Trustees received any remuneration relating to their position as Trustees.

4. Governance Costs

Trustees meetings expenses	£360
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