

Scottish Pilgrim Routes Forum SCIO

Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation - SC045212

Report and Accounts for the year ending 31st July 2024



Reference and administrative information

Scottish Incorporated Charitable Organisation SC045212

Principal address 23 King Street
Doune
Perthshire
FK16 6DN

Website www.sprf.org.uk

Charity Trustees Rev John Carswell *(elected 27th September 2024)*
Prof Adam Cumming
Very Rev Dr Martin Fair
Sylvia Jenks *(retired 27th September 2024)*
Wendy Lloyd
David Macdonald *(elected 27th September 2024)*
Fiona Mitchell
Keith Reynolds

Officers **Chair:** Very Rev Dr Martin Fair
Secretary: Nicholas Cooke
Treasurer: Keith Reynolds

Bankers Co-operative Bank
P.O. Box 101
1 Balloon Street
Manchester
M60 4EP

Independent Examiner Elizabeth Wallace FCA
16 Moray Park
Moray Street
Doune
FK16 6DJ

Annual Report of the Trustees.

Introduction

The Trustees are pleased to present the Report and Accounts of the Scottish Pilgrim Routes Forum SCIO (SPRF) for the period 1st August 2023 to 31st July 2024.

SPRF was constituted as a charity in 2014, having originally been established in May 2012 as a national 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 local Steering Group to define and establish new routes, working with other local partners and providing information through a variety of media. SPRF is not a religious organization but we celebrate Scotland's rich Christian pilgrimage heritage alongside the Scottish Government's National Cycling & Walking Network action plan and other policies to promote physical and mental wellbeing and develop more sustainable communities.

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

Activities and achievements

We record our sincere thanks to Lord David Wilson of Tillyorn KT GCMG for his services to SPRF as our Patron over the past seven years. He has participated in a number of special events in that time, notably at the official launches of the Forth to Farne Way and Fife Pilgrim Way routes.

Two very successful national meetings took place during the year. In October 2023, we held our Pilgrimage Gathering and Annual General Meeting at The Peedie Kirk in Kirkwall, Orkney, which fully justified our decision to meet on the Northern Isles for the first time and make this a 3-day event. This included a 5 mile walk along a scenic section of the **St Magnus Way** in rapidly changeable weather conditions, an indoor meeting with interesting talks and wide-ranging discussions, and a guided tour of Kirkwall Cathedral culminating in the presentation of the Scottish Pilgrim Way™ Gold accreditation certificate to the Trustees of Orkney Pilgrimage for their outstanding work on the St Magnus Way over several years. For some participants, the optional visit to Shapinsay island by ferry in beautiful weather on the final day was the final highlight of a memorable weekend.

The following April, the spring meeting of the Forum was held in the excellent venue of the Grace Church in Bothwell, Lanarkshire on the route of the recently established **Kentigern Way**. Again, this was marked by some excellent presentations and discussions among members. Both meetings were very well attended supported and it was particularly pleasing that we could also offer virtual attendance online, thanks to technical wi-fi support provided by our hosts' volunteers.

The Trustees were delighted to announce Sylvia Jenks as the winner of the 2024 John Henderson Award, in recognition of her pioneering work in inspiring and leading the establishment of the Whithorn Way pilgrim route and organization of other Scottish pilgrimage walks over the past 10 years. We were delighted that Sylvia could receive the Award trophy and cheque in person at the 2024 Pilgrimage Gathering, held in Ceres, Fife, when she expressed her thanks to all who had helped to put the Whithorn Way on the map.

A total of four out of 11 pilgrim routes recognized by SPRF have now become accredited Scottish Pilgrim Ways™ and two more routes are currently seeking this status. During the year, SPRF Trustees completed their review of the accreditation standards and policy based on the practical

lessons learnt through the assessment process. The updated policy document has now been publicized via the SPRF website and on social media.

A highlight of the year was the launch of the newly upgraded SPRF website at the Bothwell meeting. This followed the comprehensive rewriting of all existing website content and images under a 4-month contract with Extremis Publishing based in Stirling. We have much appreciated the level of engagement with SPRF by Tom and Julie Christie of Extremis over the past year, including the contacts they have made with our pilgrim routes Steering Groups and organization members in the course of carrying out this important piece of work. The end result now is a much-improved SPRF online presence, including the addition of a member's area on the website, use of Facebook and Instagram social media pages, and the regular use of video and podcast material to put across our work in a far more accessible manner.

An excellent new website for the Forth to Farne Way was also completed with design and technical input from G1gabyte UK working in partnership with members of the Steering Group and using grant funding from the BeGreen renewable energy trust in Dunbar, East Lothian held by SPRF for this purpose.

Another highly significant development has been the further progress of the **Fife Pilgrim Pastorate** under continuing financial support from the Church of Scotland Fife Presbytery and other stakeholder churches. During this second year of activities, Rev Duncan Weaver has reached out to a wide range of local groups across Fife and to individual pilgrims using the Fife Pilgrim Way, including organizing and leading the first 5 day 'Walking in the Kingdom' pilgrimage of the entire route in May. Duncan's strong commitment to outdoor pilgrimage has enabled him to co-author a new Fife Pilgrim Way walking guide published by Rucksack Readers in May. His close working relationship with the Fife Coast & Countryside Trust has also helped to boost his own social media profile and future plans such as the introduction of a 'pilgrim passport' scheme for the route. The FPP Steering Group, which is serviced by SPRF, has continued to meet regularly and plays a key role in supporting all aspects of Duncan's work. As the first ever Pilgrim Pastor appointed in the UK, this is now attracting attention from the **St Cuthbert's Way** and other Scottish pilgrim routes and also among the Lutheran Churches across northern Europe, as we know from our attendance at the annual 2-day 'Pilger Messe' event held in St Jakobi Hauptkirche, Hamburg in February.

Three recurring themes of SPRF's work which have become more prominent during the year are the long-term sustainability of our volunteer Steering Groups, the acute lack of budget hostel accommodation for walkers on pilgrim routes, and the opportunity to re-purpose local church buildings that are no longer places of worship as part of the infrastructure of these routes. All three will continue to influence our discussions in the year ahead, and all pose significant challenges and opportunities. We continue to hold important discussions with our current and potential Steering Groups about strengthening their governance, operations and promotional resources, the latter including their own websites. It is encouraging to see more churches of all denominations becoming involved as Forum members.

Our 80 or so Organization and Individual members remain the mainstay of the charity, both financially and in many other ways, and we greatly appreciate the very high level of members' subscription renewals this year, plus their strong attendances at national meetings and willingness to share experience and knowledge with others. The overall number of members is steadily increasing once again, with most Individuals now opting to use Gift Aid and some also allocating part of their subscription to a pilgrim route Steering Group of their choice. The new A5 flyer published by SPRF this year is designed to increase the number of Individual members and donors. My fellow Trustees have given freely of their time and expertise, and we are indebted to them for the knowledge they bring to our Board meetings and their commitment to strengthening the role of SPRF. We pay particular tribute to Sylvia Jenks as a retiring Trustee for her personal contribution and we warmly welcome Rev John Carswell and David Macdonald as new Trustees.

During the year, our indefatigable Secretary Nick Cooke intimated his intention to retire from that position. Over the past 12 years Nick has played a highly influential role in shaping SPRF into what it is today, and he will work closely with the Board in implementing a robust succession strategy that will sustain all that the organization has achieved in that time and put in place a new development strategy.

Finance

Membership subscriptions and donations remain the main sources of unrestricted income, which is used predominantly to meet the cost of travel and other expenses incurred by the Officers and Trustees. Booking fees income and donations met the cost of the Orkney Pilgrimage Gathering and the Bothwell Forum meeting. There was an Unrestricted funds deficit for the year of £1,598 and a Restricted funds deficit of £1,091, reflecting the investment in the new websites noted above.

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. It is pleasing to note that total reserve funds at the year-end stood at £10,569.

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

Very Revd Dr Martin Fair
Chair



29th November 2024

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

I report on the accounts of the charity for the year ended 31st July 2024, which are set out on page with accompanying notes on page

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 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 such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required by an audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the accounts.

Independent examiners 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 Account 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.



Elizabeth Wallace BA

Address:

16 MORAY PARK
MORAY ST
DOUNE FK16 6DJ

Date: 17/11/24

SPRF Receipts and Payments for Year Ending 31st July 2024

All amounts in £	Notes	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total Funds	2023
Receipts					
Membership Fees	6	3230	-	3230	2655
Reimbursement Secretarial Exps		2303	-	2303	1544
Forum Meetings Inc		815	-	815	601
Donations		132	-	132	189
Gift Aid on J H Award Donations	7			0	1008
Sundries			-	0	25
Membership Routes Allocation			90	90	
Total Receipts		6480	90	6570	6022
Payments					
Payments relating to					
Charitable Activities	2	7958	1181	9139	4803
Governance costs	5	120	-	120	120
Total Payments		8078	1181	9259	4923
Surplus/Deficit for year		-1598	-1091	-2689	1099

Statement of Balances as at 31st July 2024

Cash at bank and in hand

Bank Balance 1st Aug 2023		6543	6715	13258	12159
Surplus/Deficit for Year		-1598	-1091	-2689	1099
Total Cash Funds at 31st July 2024		4945	5624	10569	13258

Represented By

Fund Balances at 31st July 2024	4	4945	5624	10569	13258
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Signed on behalf of the Trustees:



Very Revd Dr Martin Fair, Chair

Keith Reynolds, Treasurer

Date

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 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.

2. Payments relating to charitable activities

Unrestricted	£	£
Forum Meetings expenses	787	
Web domain expenses	249	
Secretariat and administrative support	1,069	
Reimbursed Secretarial expenses	2,303	
Website expenses	3,098	
Scotland's Churches Trust membership	60	
Confraternity of St James membership	60	
Membership – pilgrim routes allocation	90	
Events Insurance	<u>242</u>	<u>7,958</u>
Restricted		
Kentigern Way	30	
Whithorn Way	280	
Forth to Farne Way	646	
John Henderson Award	<u>225</u>	<u>1,181</u>

3. Remuneration and expenses paid to Trustees

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

4. Restricted Funds

The Restricted Funds cover all receipts of funds provided for specific purposes and all corresponding payments. The balances of the Restricted Funds at 31st July 2024 were:

	£	£
Fife Pilgrim Way	85	
Three Saints Way	30	
Whithorn Way	114	
Forth to Farne Way	1,648	
Kentigern Way	99	
St Cuthbert's Way	10	
St Magnus Way	10	
John Henderson Award	<u>3,628</u>	<u>5,624</u>

5. Governance Costs

Costs relate to the Independent Financial Examiner fee for preparation of annual Accounts to 31st July 2024.

6. Membership Fees

£105 of the total figure received was for the 2024/25 financial year.

7. Gift Aid

£419 relating to donations over the last four years, not included in these accounts, was received on 27th Aug 2024.