



Annual General Meeting 2023

Report by the Chairman of the Board of Trustees

This report covers the period from the 2022 AGM in November last year to November 2023

Highlights / Lowlights

- Work parties have been well attended in both Sanquhar and Muiry / Newforres.
- Trustees continued with virtual monthly meetings throughout the year.
- New housing at Knockomie and Mannachie is increasing visitor numbers.
- Increased use of the bike track and jumps.
- Paths improvement work carried out in Sanquhar.
- Final payment made for Coffin Field.

Governance

Over the year I have been ably supported by my fellow **Trustees**. We are now 8 in number. Regrettably we are still too few in numbers. You will recall that at the 2021 AGM a Special Resolution was passed to waive the requirement to retire Trustees whilst numbers are so low. We plan to continue with this change in place.

I would like to thank my fellow trustees for their continued support. We have a broad range of skills within the group which are pertinent to the business of running the Trust and much effort has been expended by all. As ever, we are on the lookout for new blood. We can have a maximum of 12 members on the Board.

Members

Membership numbers are 40 family memberships and 44 single members which is about the same as last year. We have tried to attract new members in particular from the new housing at Mannachie but with little success. We continue to encourage lapsed members to re-join by sending out reminders.

Membership subscriptions and donations are an important source of income for the Trust. Most membership subscriptions are now paid directly to our bank account. We are grateful to those of you who continue as members and to those who have made donations. We value your continued support.

Volunteers

With the exception of specialised services, the maintenance work in the Woodlands and on the Bike Track is carried out by volunteers. Their focus continues to be the clearance of non-native invasive species. Path maintenance work has been carried out in Sanquhar and a bench has been installed in the Coffin Field adjacent to the Jubilee Oak which was planted last year.

We are grateful to those who give up their time to the monthly work parties and we continue to look for new volunteers.



Events

School parties have been regular visitors both with WildThings! and with our own volunteer leaders. There are an increasing number of groups taking children, youths and adults into Sanquhar for educational and recreational purposes.

Wild Things! have been working regularly with Applegrove School pupils working for John Muir Trust Awards. They have also been running programmes for children with learning difficulties and Activity Leader training.

Gisela has hosted pupils from Anderson's Primary at Muiry Wood and Sanquhar Wood on a couple of occasions.

Orienteering Events: two events were hosted in Sanquhar.

Admin

Communications: Our website is functioning well. We are receiving correspondence from members and others through that medium and we are posting news events.

The FCWT Facebook page continues to receive lots of visitors, and we get many 'likes'. It targets a different audience from the website, and we feel that it is raising our profile and attracting new members and volunteers.

Newsletters were issued three times over the course of the year. Thanks are due to Gisela, the editor, and to Steve Hull for their contributions.

The revised Boundary Policy for Sanquhar was issued to the neighbouring residences.

Plans for the coming year:

Continue with invasive species containment.

Paths maintenance work in Sanquhar, Muiry and Newforres. Car park maintenance. Bench installations in Muiry and Sanquhar. Woodcarved feature in Sanquhar.

Financial

At Year End 31 March 2023 an operating loss of £2,375 was reported (2022 – £1,585 surplus)

The loss was due to the £6,500 final payment to Altyre Estate for the purchase of the Coffin Field.

Our current cash position is reasonably healthy with approx. £16,000 in funds. I would remind members that our income from subscriptions and donations falls some way short of our annual operating costs.

A complete set of Financial Statements have been issued to the members. Reports to Companies House and the Office of Scottish Charities Register will be made this month.

In closing, I would like to thank our trustees, members, and volunteers for their continued support.

D J Wright