

FCWT BOARD OF TRUSTEES



Meeting held via Teams
7.30pm 27th October 2025

MINUTES & ACTION POINTS

Item	Minute	Action
1	<p>Present: Donald Wright (chair, treasurer), Gisela MacFarquhar (minutes), Steve Hull, Gareth Whymant, Wilson Rennie, Paul Kendall, David MacFarquhar, Graham Shewan</p> <p>Apologies: David Binney</p>	
2	<p>Minutes of 29th September 2025</p> <p>Matters arising.</p> <p>Re. Tree safety report. DW stated that the format of the tree safety report is now set up in excel. The report has not yet been completed. The minutes were proposed by GS, seconded by DW.</p> <p>Storm damage. GS reported 4 trees (poplar) down across path in Sanquhar. GM confirmed that contractor removed them.</p> <p>Actions arising from previous Minutes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overhanging branches from oak at Woodside Park. GM stated that it has been agreed with the contractor that the oak tree will be felled at the time when the Woodend felling is taking place. • Bench at bike jump. DW contacted Benromach to request donation towards a new bench. No response from Benromach. On-going. • Information boards. DW to search for stickers with up-to-date information to be attached to boards. On-going. • Mannachie Rise felling. DW reported that he has informed Altyre Estates of the felling at Mannachie Rise and requested a response as to what should happen to the trees which are on Altyre property. – No response. 	<p>DW/GW</p> <p>DW</p> <p>DW</p> <p>DW</p>
3	<p>Correspondence.</p> <p>WEB</p> <p>4/10/25 Anne Brown, Mannachie, storm brought the top part of a large tree into garden breaking gate, a bit of fence and an internal wall. Requesting to send someone to remove the tree and review how to take forward the damage. GM responded having instructed contractor to remove tree.</p> <p>Email</p> <p>22/10/25 Shirley Luxon, found dead red squirrel beside bin at entrance to Sanquhar woods at Woodend, reported it in to the SSRS.</p> <p>22/10/25 Stephany Arroyo Arce, the Northeast Eradication Coordinator for Saving Scotland's Red Squirrels (SSRS). Their aim is to protect Scotland's core red populations through a strategic control and monitoring of invasive-native grey squirrels. They have been supporting the training of two detection dogs and their handler. These dogs are specifically trained to</p>	

	<p>locate grey squirrel dreys and droppings. The dogs use a passive indication method, meaning they will not physically engage with the grey squirrels. They are now entering the next stage of their training, during which the dogs need to be deployed in the field to complete their final months of training and are seeking suitable locations where their deployment can contribute both to their development and to the collection of valuable data for our programme. 5 unconfirmed sightings in Forres region. Asking for permission to deploy the dogs in this area.</p> <p>GM responded giving permission.</p> <p>Facebook messenger 19/10/25 Michelle Christie in Messenger regarding tree issues at 13 & 15 Mannachie Terrace - not our area. DW sent response.</p>	
4	<p>Muiry and Newforres.</p> <p>WR reported storm damaged birch in Muiry and Newforres woods. GM to ask contractor to make them safe.</p>	GM
5	<p>Sanquhar Wood.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. SH Work Party Report. 25/10/25 - Removed Sitka and Laurel seedlings. 3 Volunteers. 2. GM Sanquhar Work Party Report. 1/11/25 – Continued clearing bike jumps. 3 volunteers. 3. Planned Felling & Residence Interface. Felling GM arranged on site meeting with Sam Moore, Tom Moore and GS on 14/10 to discuss felling plans. Mr & Mrs Hilditch joined the meeting at Woodend. Mr Hilditch had previously expressed concern about the need to fell all of the mature Western Hemlock in that area. Mr Moore explained that if a partial felling or thinning was carried out then replanting would be unsuccessful while Western Hemlock and beech are left standing in the vicinity. Mr&Mrs Hilditch accepted this. It was also agreed that several beech which grow close to Mr Hilditch’s garden would be felled, while other beech behind that area will be thinned. Regarding the area behind Mannachie, Messrs Moore explained that here, too, it would be more advantageous if the whole area is felled as originally planned. They explained that limiting the operation to removing the trees nearest neighbouring properties and thinning in the remaining area, would leave the trees left standing exposed to strong winds and we would be faced with repeated wind damage in future. For the Trust this would not be a cost-effective solution as the removal of storm damage is costly. However, if all trees are felled now the Trust will make some profit. If a thinning had been carried out some years back these trees would now be stronger and would be able to stand up better to strong winds. The removal of trees near properties has to be carried out with care and is therefore also costly. Any income from the sale of such trees is likely to barely cover the cost of removing them. The board agreed to carry out the felling as advised by the contractor. Messrs Moore confirmed that they will commence with the felling as soon as we are ready. <p>4. Bike Track Maintenance.</p>	

	<p>GS reported that he has contacted Chris Redmond, the Chairman of the Tarland Development Group who run the Tarland Trails. They have trained staff who check and maintain the tracks, ie cutting back branches and keeping the tracks intact.</p> <p>DW will contact Paul Masson who originally built our the bike tracks.</p> <p>5. Coffin Field Maintenance. PK will research options for sowing wildflowers.</p> <p>6. Laurel and Rhododendron treatment. No up-date from contractor.</p> <p>7. Gorse cutting on south track. As yet unresolved. DW to contact contractor.</p>	<p>DW PK</p> <p>DW</p>
DW5	<p>Communications.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GM reported that felling notices have been put up in areas close to where the felling will be taking place, and the Friends of the Dava Way have been informed about the felling plan. • Information about the felling project have been published on facebook and website. • A report about the felling has been sent to Forres Gazette for publication. 	
7	<p>Finance.</p> <p>Total Current Account £ 3,746.93</p> <p>In</p> <p>4 membership payments £48.00</p> <p>Out</p> <p>6/10/25 D. Wright, bird box material £134.79</p> <p>8/10/25 Zurich Insurance £743.12</p> <p>27/10/25 HN Media, Forres Gazette AGM notice £20.00</p> <p>Total in Savings Account £10,029.97</p>	
8	<p>Membership.</p> <p>4 membership payments received.</p> <p>Payments up-to-date.</p>	
9	<p>AOB.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Volunteer risk assessment. PK listed a number of additional points. GM will include these. 2. DW to prepare annual review – pending. 3. DW reported that Companies House requires additional information about trustees. To be addressed after the AGM. 4. AGM. DW to finalise Finance Report. GM to email AGM document to members. 	<p>GM DW DW</p> <p>DW GM</p>
.10	<p>Date of next meeting. 24th November 2025 by Microsoft Teams.</p> <p>AGM. 13th November 2025 by Microsoft Teams.</p>	