

FCWT BOARD OF TRUSTEES



Meeting held via Teams
7.30pm 29th June 2026

MINUTES & ACTION POINTS

Item	Minute	Action
1	Present: Paul Kendall, chair for this meeting (PK), Gisela MacFarquhar, minutes (GM), David MacFarquhar (DM), Graham Shewan (GS), Euan Stewart (ES), Steve Hull (SH) Apologies: David Binney (DB), Andrew McGhee, treasurer (AM), Gareth Whyment (GW), Wilson Rennie (WR)	
2	Minutes of 25th May 2026 Proposed as accurate by ES, seconded by GS. Actions arising from previous Minutes. a. Hollow on bike track near the jumps area. GW to fill the hollow area – ongoing. b. Address and QR code stickers for information boards. GS will order more suitable QR code and address stickers.	GW GS
3	Correspondence. Email 2/6/2026 Sally Will, Scottish Forestry, completed the initial assessment of Felling Permission Application and details will now be displayed on the Public Register for a period of 28 days to allow any interested party to comment. Before the permission is approved any comments received will be taken account of. If no material issues are raised in the consultation stage, the Felling Permission will be approved. 2/6/2026 Andi Sides, Scottish Forestry, asking about plans re some native species trees in the clearfelling area that may be of a height that they could threaten neighbouring property (now or in the near future). ES replied - At present we'll stick to the plan of retaining the native species. There are a few birch which are near property boundaries at the moment but don't present an imminent threat and should remain stable once the clearfelling is complete. We regularly complete a dangerous tree survey to identify anything which could reasonably pose a threat to the public or property. Should the situation change with the retained trees being deemed to pose an immediate threat to people, boundary fences or buildings, we will fell them under the exemptions granted for such operations.	

	5/6/2026 and 8/6/2026 enquiries re volunteering GM sent info and risk assessment. 11/6/2026 Andy Rockall, Community Woodlands Association, result of questionnaire. One thing that came out of the information received is that funding continues to be a significant challenge for many. As a result, CWA collaborated with Crowdfunder UK to deliver a webinar on Crowdfunding which took place last month and they can now offer member groups a free 30-minute fundraising advice call with expert Crowdfunding consultant Bertie Herrtage, himself a trustee of a small community-based project in his own community. 12/6/2026 Steve Smirthwaite, Mountain Bike Orienteering Race, have replanned the courses due to Chapelton Bridge being closed. 16/6/2026 Will Burnish, Moray Council, re agreement between MC and FCWT confirmed.	
4	Muiry and Newforres. a. Gorse cutting along paths. GS and PK will arrange to trim the paths in Newforres Wood. b. Border fence with neighbour. GM reported that payment from Finnerne Development Trust has been received and passed on to Jimmy Dean. Awaiting next phase.	GS/PK
5	Sanquhar Wood. a. SH Work Party Report. 30/5/26 Cleared bracken around planted native trees, 4 volunteers. 27/6/26 Cleared bracken around planted native trees, 2 volunteers. b. GM Work Party Report. Cut and sprayed rhododendron patch at bottom of bike track. Covered most of the area with polythene sheets as an experiment. 5 volunteers. c. Laurel and rhododendron eradication. Balfour Beatty work party. GM reported that Darren has arranged a work party of ca 10 volunteers 2nd July, 10.00 – 15.30. They will be joined by GS, DB and GM. WildThings are providing majority of tools i.e. loppers and saws. GM sent volunteer risk assessment for information and advised on clothing, ticks etc. d. Planned Felling. ES reported that Altyre Estates will carry out an assessment of the planned felling and will produce a quote. Also see emails from Sally Will and Andi Sides. e. Bench at bike jump. GM showed contractor the location for the benches. GM will ask him to use hardwood for the seat. a. Coffin field wildflower options. As the grass in the Coffin Field still growing strongly, GM suggested to mow it during the summer and remove the cuttings for another 2 years in order to further reduce the fertility. Then sow perennial wildflowers. These are easier to manage than annuals and will survive better in grass. Annuals require more attention and may require periodic re-sowing. The Board agreed. ES will make inquiries re getting the mowing done. b. Chapelton Bridge. - On site meeting with Will Burnish, Moray Council took place on	GM ES GM ES

	12th June. Also in attendance were AM, ES, GS and GM. It was established that the foundations of the bridge are sound. The wooden surface boards have suffered considerable deterioration and some decay has also been noted on the banisters. It was pointed out to Mr Burnish that the responsibility for the bridge has not been established. - Email received on 16/6/2026 from Will Burnish, Moray Council, re agreement between MC and FCWT which confirmed that FCWT is responsible for maintenance of the bridge as the document was signed by former trustee Pat Johnston. - Funding sources, sponsorship or volunteer organisations to be explored (Balfour Beatty, SSE, AJ Engineering, FCWT volunteers) - To make the bridge impassible would also be costly. Decision deferred.	Board
1	Treasurer's Report. AM May 2026 Opening bank balance £11,338.47 27th April 2026 Income Memberships and donations £30.00 Easy fundraising £0.00 Outgoing Wright's, Saw blades £19.35 CWA, subscription £40.00 Wright's, Padlock £15.99 Viking, stationery £15.54 Copy shop, letter printing £55.00 Closing bank balance £11,222.59 25th May 2026	
7	Membership. GM reported that 2 membership payments were received, none outstanding.	
8	AOB. a. Letterdrop at Mannachie. GM reported that 400 letters have been delivered to the new Mannachie area by volunteers. b. All Ability Access. See web message 1/5/2026, Sheila Crosby. The trustees stated that there are some paths in Sanquhar Wood which should be suitable for wheelchairs and prams, e.g. track from Sanquhar mains entrance. Vegetation could be removed during work parties near barriers to widen entrance space. However, paths on north side (Woodside) are not suitable for all abilities. Funding for accessible paths to be explored. c. Commemoration. See web message 17/5/2026 Stephen Amos. In principle, trustees support the idea of planting trees in commemoration of a deceased person. However, memorial plaques are not desired as we aim to keep the woods in a natural state. A group of trees could be planted in one of the areas where felling will take place later this year. Family members could be invited to participate in the planting. A certificate could be created with exact location of the trees. GM to communicate with Mr Amos.	GM GM GM

	d. Ways to make it easier for public to make a donation. - Set up a Just Giving site. AM/GM to explore. - GM will ask Wils Metcalfe to find out from Canary Dwarf if potential donors could access QR code on website. e. Purchase/hireof brush cutter. AM reported that Macgregor Industrial Supplies Inverness have brush cutters at £4k to buy or £90 to hire per day up to £180 per week – no need for maintenance, but transport cost. GS reported that hire businesses no longer hire out brush cutters as they generally come back damaged. Decision deferred.	GM GM Board
9	Date of next meeting. 31 st August, 2026 by Microsoft Teams.	