

Scottish Pilgrim Routes Forum SCIO

Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation - SC045212

Report and Accounts for the year ending 31st July 2025

Charity Trustees
Very Rev Dr Martin Fair
Prof Adam Cunningham
Nicholas Cook
Rev John Curwell
Felicity Burrows
Wendy Lloyd
David Macdonald
Fiona Mitchell
Keith Reynolds

Officers
Secretary: Felicity Burrows
Infinite Chair: Nicholas Cook



Independent Examiner
Elizabeth Walker FCA
18 Motay Park
Motay Street
Dunn
FC18 8DJ

Reference and administrative information

Scottish Incorporated Charitable Organisation SC045212

Principal address 9 Hillside Crescent
Selkirk
TD7 4AY

Website www.sprf.org.uk

Charity Trustees

Felicity Burrows	<i>(elected 27th September 2025)</i>
Rev John Carswell	<i>(resigned 30th May 2025)</i>
Nicholas Cooke	<i>(elected 27th September 2025)</i>
Prof Adam Cumming	
Very Rev Dr Martin Fair	<i>(resigned 11th November 2025)</i>
Wendy Lloyd	
David Macdonald	
Fiona Mitchell	
Keith Reynolds	

Officers

Interim Chair: Nicholas Cooke
Secretary: Felicity Burrows
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 2024 to 31st July 2025.

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 Groups 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 thanks to our outgoing Chair, Very Rev Dr Martin Fair who was unable to preside over our 2025 AGM and subsequently decided to resign as Chair and Trustee following his relocation to Bermuda last autumn. Martin was a very effective leader of our meetings during his term of office, and we wish him well in his new Church of Scotland ministry. Since the end of this reporting year, the Board agreed to appoint Nick Cooke as Interim Chair for up to a year following his retirement as Secretary and election as Trustee at the 2025 AGM.

Two very successful national meetings took place during the year. In October 2024, we held our Pilgrimage Gathering and Annual General Meeting at Ceres Church, Fife. This included a 4 mile walk along a scenic section of the **Fife Pilgrim Way** in ideal weather conditions and an indoor meeting with interesting talks and wide-ranging discussions. The following April, the spring meeting of the Forum was held at the Chanonry building next door to Dunkeld Cathedral Church. This was marked by some excellent presentations and discussions among members focused on plans to establish a new braid of the **Three Saints Way** to take pilgrims via Dunkeld and Scone, both places of major spiritual significance to Scotland's early mediaeval heritage.

Both meetings were very well attended, 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 Nick Cooke as the winner of the 2025 John Henderson Award, in recognition of his close personal involvement over the previous 12 years as Secretary in the establishment of nine of the current eleven pilgrim routes recognized by SPRF. Nick received the Award trophy and cheque at the 2025 Pilgrimage Gathering, held at Prestonkirk, East Linton when he expressed his appreciation of receiving the Award established in memory of a close professional colleague and friend.

A total of five out of 11 pilgrim routes currently recognized by SPRF have now become accredited Scottish Pilgrim Ways™, with three others expressing an intention to follow suit. During the year, SPRF Trustees approved the assessment of the **Kentigern Way** which was subsequently approved as a Bronze standard route, to be marked by a public presentation of its accreditation certificate. We record our congratulations to Bill Jack and the other members of the Steering Group on this achievement.

Following the extensive upgrade carried out in 2024, the SPRF website continues to be a valuable online resource. To complement this, the Board has now approved a plan for increased regular use of our social media pages on Facebook and Instagram to widen our online audience.

The year saw a change of personnel in the **Fife Pilgrim Pastorate** for which the SPRF Secretary continued to provide administrative support to the Steering Group, which represents an ecumenical partnership of stakeholder churches. Following the resignation of Rev Duncan Weaver, the Steering Group appointed Rev Simon Hessett as Pilgrim Pastor who took up post in July and has continued to engage with a wide range of local congregations and individual pilgrims along the Fife Pilgrim Way. His close working relationship with the Fife Coast & Countryside Trust has helped to maintain the project's social media profile and the expansion of an increasingly popular 'pilgrim passport' scheme along the Fife Pilgrim Way. As the first ever Pilgrim Pastorate 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.

Three recurring issues have remained prominent during the year: 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. In addition, links with European pilgrim route networks, especially in Scandinavia and Ireland, have become increasingly important. The SPRF Board has recognized that these and other challenges and opportunities should be addressed strategically via a new 5 – year SPRF development funding strategy and narrative, including the proposed recruitment of professional personnel. We will take forward this key piece of work in the coming year with the help of a consultant working with the Trustees and Steering Groups.

Our 85 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 subscription renewals this year, plus members' strong attendances at national meetings and their willingness to share experience and knowledge with others. The overall number of members is steadily growing 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 charity's Trustees have given freely of their time and expertise, and we are indebted to them all for the knowledge they bring to our Board meeting discussions and their commitment to strengthening the role of SPRF. We pay particular tribute to John Carswell and Martin as retiring Trustees for their personal contribution to SPRF.

I am delighted to confirm that Felicity Burrows agreed to take over as my successor in the role of Secretary and Trustee with effect from the 2025 AGM. She brings a strong personal interest in outdoor pilgrimage and relevant administrative experience while working previously in the Church of Scotland national office.

Finance

Membership subscriptions and donations increased as 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 Pilgrimage Gathering at Ceres and the Bothwell Forum meeting. There was an Unrestricted funds surplus for the year of £685 and a Restricted funds deficit of £176.

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 rose to £11,078.

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.

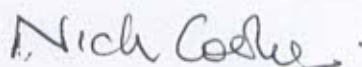
Trustees' responsibilities

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



Nick Cooke FRSA
Interim Chair

13th April 2026

**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 2025, 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 NORAY PARK
NORAY ST
DUNDEE
FK16 6DS

Date: 10/10/25



NICK COOKE FRSA
INDEPENDENT EXAMINER

Notes to Accounts for Year Ending 31st July 2025
SPRF Receipts and Payments for Year Ending 31st July 2025

All amounts in £	Notes	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total Funds	2024
Receipts					
Membership fees		3270	-	3270	3230
Reimbursement - Secretarial expenses		2392	-	2392	2303
Forum Meetings		745	-	745	815
Donations		1063	140	1203	132
Gift Aid Reclaimed		419	-	419	
Bank Interest		71	-	71	
Membership Routes Allocation			130	130	90
Total Receipts		7960	270	8230	6570
Payments					
Charitable Activities	2	7155	446	7601	9139
Governance costs	5	120	-	120	120
Total Payments		7275	446	7721	9259
Surplus/Deficit for year		685	-176	509	-2689

Statement of Balances at 31st July 2025

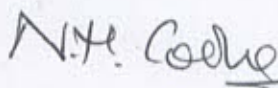
Cash at bank and in hand

Bank Balance 1st Aug 2024		4945	5624	10569	13258
Surplus/Deficit for Year		685	-176	509	-2689
Total Cash Funds at 31st July 2025		5630	5448	11078	10569

Represented By

Fund Balances at 31st July 2025	4	5630	5448	11078	10569
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Signed on behalf of the Trustees:





Nick Cooke, Chair

Keith Reynolds, Treasurer

Date 13/4/26

Notes to Accounts for Year Ending 31st July 2025

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	606	
Domain Expenses	116	
Secretarial and administrative support	1,720	
Reimbursed Secretarial expenses	2,392	
Website Expenses	1,225	
Leaflets	600	
Scotland's Churches Trust	60	
Confraternity of St James	60	
Membership Routes Allocation	130	
Events Insurance	242	
Sundries	<u>4</u>	<u>7,155</u>
Restricted		
Kentigern Way	30	
Whithorn Way	30	
Forth to Farne	161	
John Henderson Award	<u>225</u>	<u>446</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 2025 were:

	£	£
Fife Pilgrim Way	115	
Three Saints Way	35	
Whithorn Way	94	
Forth to Farne Way	1,517	
Kentigern Way	239	
St Cuthberts Way	25	
St Magnus Way	20	
John Henderson Award	<u>3,403</u>	<u>5,448</u>

5. Governance Costs

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