

Culduthel Woods Group

Scottish Charity No. SC049665

Annual Report and Financial Statements

For the year ended 31 March 2026

Trustees' Annual Report for the year ended 31 March 2026

The Trustees have pleasure in presenting their report, together with the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2026.

1. Reference and Administrative Information

Charity name

Culduthel Woods Group

Charity no

SC049665

Address

Boyndie, Dores Road, Inverness, IV2 4LT

Trustees

Murray Ferguson, Chair

Caroline Phillips, Secretary

Alasdair MacDougall, Treasurer

David Chiffers

Alasdair Christie

Alasdair MacHardy

Ruaridh Philips

Roddy Dyce

Ian Bone

Irene Stacey

Morven Neil

2. Structure, Governance and Management

Constitution

The Charity is a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (a SCIO). It was registered in its current legal form on 11 October 2019. The organisation was originally formed as an unincorporated association but changed its legal status in 2019 to a SCIO. It has a single tier structure and, as such, the Trustees are members of the charity. Ordinary Members are over 16 years of age and are resident within the local community.

The constitution is available on the Group's website at <https://www.culduthelwoods.org/community-woods-group>.

Appointment of Trustees

Membership of the organisation is open to any individual who supports the aims and activities of the organisation. The Board, which normally meets on the first Tuesday of every second month, is made up of the Charity Trustees. Trustees are either elected at the Annual General Meeting by the membership or co-opted during the period by the Trustees. There must be a minimum of five and a maximum of 11 Trustees on the Board.

During the year we had 11 Trustees, as set out above.

Objectives and Activities

The purposes of the organisation, are:

- *To advance the environmental protection and improvement of Culduthel Woods, following the principles of sustainable development, by the conservation, management and enhancement of the natural habitats and the plant and animal species therein*
- *To promote education within the community about the history, management and habitats of Culduthel Woods and to enable use of the Woods by schools and other organisations for educational purposes*

- *To advance citizenship and community development by encouraging voluntary activity and recreation in, and promoting civic responsibility for, the Culduthel Woods.*

The Charitable Purposes, as set out in the Status Award Letter from OSCR are:

- *B - the advancement of education*
- *F - the advancement of citizenship or community development*
- *M - the advancement of environmental protection or improvement*

3. Activities during the year

During the year we made good progress improving the wildlife habitats of the woods and making sure the woods are a great place to visit. We held a rolling programme of volunteer events on a weekly and monthly basis. We focussed on keeping paths clear, removing non-native species (especially snowberry), addressing any tree safety hazards, building dead hedges, improving the area around the pond and tree planting.

In June 2025 we had a very successful community event – “a Family Woodland Adventure” – as part of the Inverness Walking and Wheeling Festival with over 300 people attending and with help from seven partner organisations.

In summer 2025 we undertook breeding bird surveys and an estimate of rook population. We want to continue recording information about the wildlife value of the woods.

In August and October 2025 there were two significant storms in Inverness, and we had many large trees that fell over unexpectedly. We worked with residents to clear the road and paths and make good use of the timber where possible, leaving some wood to rot for wildlife. We will need to give even greater attention to tree safety monitoring and planning in future.

In September 2025 we cut the meadow and removed the cuttings as part of an annual programme of work, assisted by local schools and youth groups. This reduces the fertility of the soil and will improve the wildlife value and appearance of the meadow in due course.

In January 2026 we undertook our largest project ever – a very significant path improvement project in the area near the Mortuary Gates, referenced in last

year's report, and for which planning approval was granted in May 2025. The work involved four elements – repairing/re-building the stones dykes that retain the earth banks; replacing the bumpy tarmac with a new smooth surface, installing a new dropped-kerb on Culduthel Avenue and providing new path signs. These works, which will make it easier for a wider range of people to access and enjoy the woods, were all completed in February 2026.

In February 2026 we organised a tree safety planning course, delivered through Ringlink Scotland, for 13 people from eight different community woods and path groups. The work was funded by Scottish Forestry and the Lochardil and Drummond Community Council. We followed up by surveying and recording hazardous trees within the woods and undertaking significant tree safety work using contractors.

The Trustees are very grateful to all our volunteers and funders for continuing to support our programme of works.

4. Financial review

During the period, the group's main source of funding was a substantial grant from the Ian Findlay Path Fund managed by Walking Scotland (formerly Paths for All Partnership), for the paths project referenced above. Supported by further contributions from The Highland Council and the Highlands and Islands Climate Hub, the budget covered the majority of the construction costs with the balance of £5,000 covered by the Group's reserves. The main contractor was Highland Surfacing Ltd.

Other expenditure comprised mainly of tree felling and tree safety works. The two storms in 2025, plus the new awareness we developed from the tree safety course, promoted a decision to keep at least £5000 in reserves to allow for any essential tree safety works. We also need to generate more income from people regularly using the woods through membership or donations. More work is also required to engage with local businesses via sponsorship or corporate membership.

The Trustees are very grateful to all our funders for continuing to support our programme of works.

5. Plans for future period

During the year ahead the Trustees have agreed to continue to deliver the general programme of work described above but also plan, in particular, to:

- undertake significant works to improve the pond,
- complete the management plan for the woods,
- improve our work on tree safety planning and recording,
- increase our funding for essential tree safety and management works
- increase the number of regular volunteers and our boost our corporate volunteer programme.

Culduthel Woods Group

August 2026

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of Culduthel Woods Group

I report on the accounts of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2026 which are set out on pages 8 to 9.

Respective responsibilities of trustees 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 the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended). The charity trustees consider that the audit requirement of Regulation 10(1) (d) of the 2006 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 2006 Accounts Regulations. 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 any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.

Independent examiner's 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:
 - to keep accounting records in accordance with Section 44(1) (a) of the 2005 Act and Regulation 4 of the 2006 Accounts Regulations;
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with Regulation 9 of the 2006 Accounts 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.



Fiona MacLennan

BACA

Ivy Croft, Heights of Brae, Strathpeffer

August 2026

Statement of Receipts and Payments for the period ended 31 March 2026

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total £	2025 £
Receipts				
Donations	450	-	450	2,230
Grants	-	51,093	51,093	27,478
Charitable activities – Sale of firewood	200	-	200	120
Sponsorship	650	-	650	-
Other Income	200	-	200	-
Total receipts	1,500	51,093	52,593	29,828
Payments				
Cost of charitable activities	6,868	53,593	60,461	30,735
Total payments	6,868	53,593	60,461	30,735
(Deficit) / Surplus for the period	(5,368)	(2,500)	(7,868)	(907)

Statement of Balances – As at 31 March 2026

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total £	2025 £
Opening cash at bank and in hand	10,545	3,290	13,835	14,742
Surplus / (Deficit) for period	(5,368)	(2,500)	(7,868)	(907)
Closing cash at bank and in hand	5,177	790	5,967	13,835

Bank and Cash Balances – As at 31 March 2026

Bank Deposit Account	5,177	790	5,967	13,835
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1. Donations

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total £	2025 £
Rotary	300	-	300	-
North Highlands / HICF	150	-	150	-
ABAN Outdoor	-	-	-	130
IRA Parent Council - Training Of Inverness Royal Academy pupils	-	-	-	600
CWA - Hosting of Conference	-	-	-	1,500
At 31 March 2026	450	-	450	2,230

2. Grants

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total £	2025 £
Walking Scotland - Paths Project	-	44,989	44,989	0
Paths For All - Paths Project	-	1,000	1,000	26,478
Highland Council - Paths Project	-	3,000	3,000	-
Scottish Forestry - Tree Survey Course	-	2,104	2,104	-
Inverness Royal Academy Endowment Trust - Paths Project	-	-	-	1,000
At 31 March 2026	-	51,093	51,093	27,478

3. Cost of Charitable Activities

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total £	2025 £
Tree felling	2,800	-	2,800	-
Paths Project - Planning permission, etc	-	-	-	26,978
Paths Project - Construction	2,511	51,489	54,000	-
H&I Climate - Training of IRA pupils	-	-	-	1,300
CWA conference	-	-	-	1,005
Training course	278	2,104	2,382	0
Signage for Woods	271	-	271	373
Insurance	274	-	274	256
Subscriptions & Donations	15	-	15	8
Miscellaneous	239	-	239	193
Tools / Woods maintenance	480	-	480	622
At 31 March 2026	6,868	53,593	60,461	30,735

#Signed on behalf of Culduthel Woods Group Trustees

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Murray Ferguson". The script is cursive and fluid, with the first name "Murray" and the last name "Ferguson" clearly distinguishable.

Office Bearer: Murray Ferguson, Chair

Date: 18 August 2026