



serving the community of Feughside, Aberdeenshire

Feughside Community Association [SCIO]

Trustees' Annual Report

Period From 1st May 2025 to 30th April 2026

Registered with OSCR as a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO) No. SC052558: not registered for VAT

Registered Office: Burn Of Rhoda, Strachan, Banchory. AB31 6LN

Charity Contact Information

Feughside Community Association [SCIO]
Scottish Charity Number: SC052558

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Facebook – Feughside Community Association

Website – <https://www.feughside.com>

Charity Trustees

1. David Loosley (Chair) – re-appointed 15/1/26
2. Caroline Clephan (Secretary) – re-appointed 13/2/25
3. Ross Clephan (Treasurer) – re-appointed 15/1/26
4. Christopher Caldwell – re-appointed 13/2/25
5. Michael Sanderson – appointed 13/2/25

Purposes

The charity has been formed principally to benefit the community served by Feughside Community Council in Aberdeenshire with the following purposes:

- The advancement of community development (including the advancement of rural regeneration) principally within the Community;
- The provision (or advancement of the accessibility) of recreational facilities, and/or the organisation of recreational activities, which shall be available to members of the Community and the public at large, with the object of improving the conditions of life for the Community.
- The advancement of community development through the provision and maintenance of community gardens, public areas and open spaces in order to promote people's physical and mental health and participation in community life.
- The provision of educational opportunities in the Community, increasing awareness of the environment, culture, heritage and/or history, including the improvement of the Community's knowledge of gardening and environmental protection.

But only to the extent that the above purposes are consistent with furthering the achievement of sustainable development.

Structure, Governance and Management

Type of governing document

On 15th April 2025 FCA was converted into a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO) and adopted a SCIO compliant Constitution dated 13th February 2025,

Trustee recruitment and appointment

At the Board Meeting on 11th March 2025 the following officers were elected and remain in post.

Chair – David Loosley
Secretary – Caroline Clephan
Treasurer – Ross Clephan

At the AGM on 15th January 2026 two trustees (David Loosley and Ross Clephan) retired and were re-elected unanimously.

On 22nd April 2025, the Board approved a Trustee's induction pack and code of conduct. These have not been updated since.

Membership

At end April 2026, FCA had 83 members. The secretary to the Board holds a register as required by OSCR for a SCIO.

Activities

Strachan Community Garden

Early in 2026 the Strachan Community Garden Group developed a vision for the garden. "We will provide a beautiful, natural space that is accessible, welcoming, rich in biodiversity and sustainably managed, which encourages a sense of belonging and enhances the quality of life of those who live in Strachan and Feughside."

Work has progressed on the garden, wildflower meadow and woodland,



Top Tier – the focus this year has mainly been on the top tier. This is the area which was originally a carpark for the old cement works. After consultation with the Garden Group, it was agreed that given the site is south facing and nutrient deficient that it should become a Gravel Garden in the main. A Budget Committee Grant from **Marr Area Partnership** combined with individual donations enabled the Strachan Community Garden Group to identify/design (thanks to Helen Mann and Stirling Johnson-Marshall) and purchase gabion baskets to place along the roadside in place of the overgrown cypress hedge. The baskets required some assembly but once laced, braced and placed in a prepared flattened trench (using a whacker plate and sub-base – thanks **Bruce McCombie, Neil Middleton & Scott Begg**), over 20 volunteers turned up in July to fill the gabion baskets with rocks, kindly donated for free by **JKR Quarry**. This was completed in October 2025 in time for **McCombie Builders** to deliver topsoil and compost which was shifted with a digger by **Doug Law Rural Maintenance** behind the gabions and then planted during a volunteer day in November with wildlife friendly plants (from the community) and bulbs donated by **Grampian Growers**. In addition, a native mixed hedge plus some silver birch trees have been planted around the gravel garden area to give the area some protection. At the end of February 2026, JKR Quarry delivered a half load of gabion rock and McCombie Builders a truckload of graded topsoil for the tops of the gabions. Another volunteer day run brilliantly by our garden designer Imogen Van Bergen in March saw a small amount of topsoil placed on hessian sacks and sheeps wool in the tops of the gabion wall, with succulents, sedums and creeping thymes planted to make a living wall. The final volunteer day of the year in April saw 20 volunteers shifting topsoil and compost on to the gravel garden beds marked out by the garden designer. McCombie Builders started work a few days later, turning over the beds

and preparing the ground to make the accessible paths with Burnhead gravel. In addition they carried out some remedial work to fix the steps down to the caravan, flattened and tidied the vegetable garden area and laid gravel on the car park.



Thanks to **Raemoir Garden Centre**, the Strachan Community Garden Group also carried out a wildflower seed trial in this top tier and established from this the best growing conditions for future planting schemes.

After some great detective work by Euan Shand from Scottish Water – a burst pipe was found and repaired and the site now has a (charity exempted) water supply.



Wildflower Meadow – this area has not been managed for years and so we have inherited a meadow full of brambles, dockans and other pernicious weeds. The Strachan Community Garden Group's plan is to more actively manage this area through the scything/trimming and removing of weeds and in 2025 they also organized a volunteer day to plant native wildflower seeds, seedlings and aquatic loving plants into the newly established shallow depressions/ scrapes. Local willow whips have been collected from local gardens and used to establish a hedge on the playing field boundary as well as around the scrapes to give the new seedlings and plants protection. On the 25th July 2025 our

local wildflower meadow expert, Pim van Bergen, discovered when carrying out an inventory of plants in the meadow that there were 30 more native plants than the previous year. In August, another Volunteer Day saw this area being strimmed and raked in order for the weeds to be suppressed and native wildflower seeds to have a better chance of dispersal and germination.



Riverwoods- this lovely area has proved to be a wonderful easy short walk for the community of all ages and their dogs. Mostly the woodland takes care of itself but the paths can need some upkeep (thanks Jane Pilbeam) and the trees need to be inspected for damage from storms. Thanks to Helen & Graham Mann, we now have 8 bird boxes established in the woods and the refurbished magnifying glass erected on the path by the meadow. In August 25, three Himalayan Balsam Eradication days were organized in conjunction with the **River Dee Trust**. Whilst most of the balsam was found on the banks of the river which

is not strictly speaking our land, it is clearly imperative that this pernicious weed needs to be pulled out given how quickly it is taking over on the banks of the Feugh.

In October, thanks to **Greenspace, Aberdeenshire Council**, bulbs, native daffodils and bluebells have been planted in the woods and around the side of the paths. In October 2025, the FCA organized for **NESBReC** to run a Camera Trap Workshop for the Garden Group. From the cameras that had been set up and left in the woods for 10 days, we learnt about the footfall of animals living or passing through: we saw a Kestrel, voles, shrews, field mice.

Perennial Bed – originally an area of overgrown willowherb, dockans and nettles, the Strachan Community Garden group got permission from the Council in 2021 to establish a perennial bed of flowers and fruit trees donated by **Greenspace, Aberdeenshire Council** in the Strachan Playpark. The Strachan Community Garden Group continue to manage this area, routinely weeding and watering it in drought conditions. Alliums from Greenspace were planted in Autumn 25.



In summary, 2025 has seen a phenomenal amount of time and effort put into starting the transformation process of the new community garden, meadow and woodland. The Strachan Community Garden Group have to take the credit for driving this forwards and in particular we should thank Imogen van Bergen for her vision and help in organizing 12 volunteer days and many mini volunteer days within this period.

Strachan Community Garden Volunteer Statistics 2025

- 12 volunteer days and many mini volunteer days
- 64 different community members, aged 2- 92
- At least 730 hours of volunteering (18 full time weeks)
- Gabion work took circa 350 hours
- 3500 bulbs have been planted

Other FCA Organised Events/ Workshops

- 3 Himalayan Balsam clearing (if not eradicating) volunteer sessions
- Camera Trap workshop October 25 (NESBreP)
- Birkhall Garden visit 7/7/25 – 19 people attended
- Strachan's resident snowdrop expert, Rod Begbie, invited two small groups to his garden where he gave a very interesting and informative talk on the snowdrops he has bred.
- Rod also gave a Winter Talk on Snowdrops at the village hall
- Winter Talk on Feughside Geology by Dave Foster 2/12/25
- Winter Talk on Scotland's Ancient Monuments through 3D Photogrammetry by Doug Ledingham 4/3/26

Thanks to local contractors and funders for their support:

- Raemoir Garden Centre
- JKR Quarry, Durris
- McCombie Builders
- Neil Middleton Plumbing and Scott Begg Firewood
- Greenspace, Aberdeenshire Council
- Grampian Growers
- Rebecca Stripling (Maryfield Flowers)
- Marr Area Budget Committee Grant £3,000
- The Chestnut Fund Grant £500
- NESCAN Grant £500
- Feughside Community Council (MHCBF) Grant £600
- Individual Donations from FCA members

Strachan Flower Group

The Strachan Flower group falls under the umbrella of the FCA. Their task is to manage the summer floral displays through the village. With the loss of Aberdeenshire Council funding, they are reliant on fundraising via community grants, sponsorships and donations.

- The Flower Group has 25 boxes of flowers blooming throughout the village
- Sponsors were **Neil Middleton Plumbing** and Feughside Residents
- 24 volunteers planted and watered the boxes



- Worn out tubs were replaced by volunteer Chris Saunders
- Excellent quality locally produced plants from Seed Box and volunteers
- Keenans Recycling supplied excellent compost and was probably one of the reasons that the floral display was so good this year. Thank you Chris Saunders for delivering the Strachan Flower load.
- The weather, a glorious sunny summer, meant watering ... a lot!

Ardlair Woods

A local resident kindly offered to gift Ardlair Woods up on Scolty Hill to FCA. After considerable efforts by Chris Caldwell to establish the legal position, we were unable to secure vehicle access and therefore could not accept the gift.

Feughside Website

FCA was pleased to join with Feughside Community Council, Strachan Village Hall, and the Scolty Tower Trust to create a much enhanced website for the Feughside community.

Financial Review

Accounts

Accounts for the period 1/5/25 to 30/4/26 are in Appendix 2 at the end of this report.

On 30th April 2026, the charity had £7,589.59 cash in the bank. This includes £1,379.74 held as restricted funds to support the activities of the Strachan Flowers Group and for signage at the garden.

Statement of the charity's policy on reserves

The board has agreed to retain reserves of £1,000 in order to ensure the charity remains solvent at all times and can meet unexpected emergency expenditure for health and safety, environmental protection, insurance or legal reasons.

Details of any deficit

The charity has no deficits

Donated facilities and services

After the visit to Birkhall Gardens, the charity made a donation of £100 to The King's Fund

Future Plans

Strachan Community Garden

Top Tier - monthly volunteer sessions will recommence when the weather permits. The initial focus will be on building the compost bays and redistributing the woodchip. The Community Seed to Garden initiative was launched in early March 2026 with the aim of germinating annual and perennial seeds suitable for the gravel garden involving a wider reach of the community. It is anticipated over 1,000 plants will be needed for the gravel garden and fund raising will focus on this. Plans are being developed by the Garden Group to agree a design for the vegetable garden.

Wildflower Meadow - in 2026 the focus will be on actively managing the east side of the meadow (last year's efforts to manage the whole of the meadow proved exhausting). From May, the plan is to strim and rake monthly to allow for native wildflower seed dispersal. A willow tunnel will be planted next to the east scrape to add interest for children and more wildflower seeds and seedlings will be planted around the east scrape.

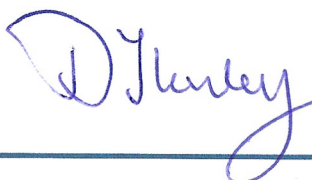
Riverwoods – the paths will continue to be maintained and inspected particularly after storms to ensure that the trees are safe. If a volunteer offers, the garden group would love to set up a few camera traps in situ to continue building up a seasonal picture of footfall living or passing through the woodlands.

Signage – the Strachan Community Garden Group will design signage to be erected on the site and will decide on where the signs should be erected, the materials they should be made out of and where they should be made.

Fundraising - the Strachan Community Garden Group will organise a fundraising open day in July with events for adults and children alike.

Declaration

Signed on behalf of the charity trustees:



Print name: D. J. LOOSLEY

Designation: CHAIR

Date: 11/7/2026

Appendix 1 FCA Asset Register

Feughside Community Association Asset Register				30/04/2026
Item	Purchase Date	Purchase Cost	Depreciation Period (years)	Book Value
Manse Croft Plot	30/09/24	£78,750.00		£70,000.00
Manse Croft Caravan			5	£6,840.52
Manse Croft Shed			5	£1,368.10
Bosch AXT25D Shredder 240V	19/12/24	£320.57	5	£233.33
Border Fork and Digging Fork	19/12/24	£70.64	10	£61.03
2 Garden Spades	19/12/24	£95.78	10	£82.75
2 Wheelbarrows	05/01/25	£134.00	10	£116.39
Husqvarna 535iFR Battery Brushcutter c/w Batteries, Charger & Helmet	07/04/25	£1,456.00	5	£1,146.66
Laminator	11/11/25	£25.99	5	£23.57