Annual Trustees Report 2026



TVTA Annual Report 2026 Index

Section		Page
1.	Chair's Report	3
2.	Financial Report & Annual Accounts	6
3.	Organisation Structure & Governance	8
4.	Review of the Year	9
5.	Looking Forward	10
6.	Our Thanks to all who support / volunteer / help the TVTA	10
	Appendix 1 - Financial Statements	12

S.1 Chair's Report

AGM 2025/26 – Annual Summary

The 2025/26 period has been another significant year for the Tweed Valley Trails Association (TVTA), with continued progress in trail maintenance, sustainable trail management, partnership working and community engagement.

Our focus throughout the year has remained firmly on TVTA's core purpose: protecting, maintaining and improving the Tweed Valley's mountain bike trail network, while building stronger relationships between the riding community, land managers, local businesses and other stakeholders.

Trail Maintenance and Contractor Programme

One of our biggest achievements has been the continued development of the TVTA Trail Maintenance Initiative.

Originally launched as a six-month pilot, the programme enables our professional trail contractors to dedicate two days each week to maintaining and improving the Tweed Valley trail network. Thanks to the support of our members, donors, local businesses and wider community, the initiative proved successful enough to be extended for a further year.

During the year, Evan McConnell joined the trail crew, continuing the work previously undertaken by Wes and working alongside Shay. Evan had already been involved in trail work in the valley, including work with Shay on the UCI Downhill trails, before becoming part of the ongoing TVTA maintenance programme.

This contractor-led maintenance complements, rather than replaces, the vital contribution made by TVTA volunteers. Our regular volunteer Dig Days have continued throughout the year, giving the riding community the opportunity to play a direct role in looking after the trails.

Our ambition is to continue developing this model and, subject to sustainable funding, explore opportunities to expand the contractor programme beyond the current two days per week.

Lower Wolves and Caberston

A major milestone during the period was the completion and opening of Lower Wolves at Caberston.

The project demonstrated what can be achieved through collaboration between TVTA, Forestry and Land Scotland, the riding community and local business supporters. Public reporting also highlighted support for the project from local businesses including Tweed Valley Bikes, Ride Innerleithen and Tempest Brewery.

Lower Wolves opened in July 2025 and went on to receive significant recognition, including winning an award following its nomination during the year.

The project provides an important example of TVTA's approach: working constructively with land managers and partners to create and maintain high-quality trails through an agreed and sustainable process.

Partnership with Forestry and Land Scotland

TVTA continued to strengthen its working relationship with Forestry and Land Scotland (FLS).

Alongside ongoing discussions and lobbying around the future of the trail network, practical partnership working delivered tangible results. Public statements from FLS in early 2026 highlighted several successes achieved through joint working, including the completion of Lower Wolves, and efficient clearance of storm damage.

These successes demonstrate the value of having an active trail association capable of representing riders while working constructively with land managers.

The year also reinforced the importance of developing a longer-term Sustainable Trails Plan for the Tweed Valley. TVTA continues to advocate for a clear, responsible and agreed framework through which existing trails can be managed and future trail development can take place.

Trail Projects and Development

Work continued across a number of strategically important trail projects.

Priorities included progressing the adoption of additional trails at Caberston, developing plans for the Flat White reroute and working towards the reopening of Nae Spleens (now open).

Alongside individual trail projects, TVTA has continued to focus on the bigger picture: creating a trail network that is sustainable, maintainable and capable of supporting the Tweed Valley's position as one of the UK's leading mountain biking destinations.

This includes ongoing dialogue with land managers and trail associations, as well as contributing to wider conversations around how Scotland's community-led mountain bike trail networks should be managed.

Innovation and the 5G Trail Project

Progress has continued around the proposed 5G trail technology project and associated data gathering.

The wider Trail Lab initiative secured proof-of-concept funding support from the Scotland 5G Centre, with plans for digital technology testing in collaboration with Edinburgh Napier University.

TVTA's 2025/26 strategy includes continuing to pursue the necessary approvals for the 5G project and engaging with Edinburgh Napier University on data gathering.

This work has the potential to improve understanding of trail usage and provide better evidence to support future maintenance, investment and trail-management decisions.

Events and Trail Preparation

TVTA continued to support major mountain bike events taking place in the Tweed Valley.

This included trail preparation and maintenance associated with the Scottish Enduro Series (SES 2nd year) and Trans Caledonia, with a focus on both pre-event preparation and post-event trail restoration.

Supporting events in this way helps ensure that the valley can continue to host high-quality racing while recognising that increased event traffic creates additional demands on the trail network.

Dialogue with Trans Caledonia and other event organisers has continued as part of our effort to develop a collaborative and sustainable approach to event use of the trails.

Advocacy, Dialogue and Representation

A considerable amount of work this year has taken place behind the scenes.

TVTA has continued dialogue with Forestry and Land Scotland, trail associations, event organisers and other stakeholders, advocating for the needs of the Tweed Valley trail network and the community that uses it.

This has included work around FLS lobbying and engagement, trail association meetings and ongoing conversations with key individuals and organisations connected to mountain biking in the valley.

TVTA has also contributed to and supported wider media and storytelling opportunities, including dialogue and collaborations.

Together, these opportunities help raise awareness of the work required to sustain the Tweed Valley's trails and ensure that the story of the people and community behind the network continues to be told.

Awards and Recognition

It has been particularly encouraging to see the work of TVTA, its trails and members of the wider Tweed Valley community recognised during the year.

Across the period, four award nominations highlighted different aspects of the work happening within the valley:

- Erik – MTB Ambassador of the Year
- Lower Wolves – award winner
- Shay – Trail Advocate recognition
- TVTA – Trail Association of the Year

Regardless of the final results, this level of recognition reflects the collective efforts of our contractors, volunteers, board members, supporters, partner organisations and the wider riding community.

The recognition received by Lower Wolves in particular demonstrates that collaborative, community-led trail development can deliver projects that are valued both locally and nationally.

Strengthening the Organisation

Alongside trail work, we have continued working to strengthen TVTA itself.

Bringing new board members into the organisation remains an important priority, helping broaden the skills, experience and capacity available to the charity.

We have also continued developing relationships with local businesses and exploring new marketing initiatives designed to increase business support.

The businesses that benefit from the Tweed Valley's reputation as a mountain biking destination have an important role to play in sustaining the trail network. Building a broader and more consistent base of business support will therefore remain a priority.

Posters, membership promotion, collaborations and other awareness initiatives will form part of this work.

Our short AGM will focus the following key areas:

- Overview: Erik Smolenski, our Chair will provide an overview of the TVTA activity over the last year.
- Finances: Our Treasurer, Ed Shoote, will present our Financial Report and Accounts, for approval.
- TVTA Board & Structure: Fred Bell, our Secretary, will summarise this and lead us through the annual election of Board members.
- Supporters Scheme: Fred will summarise how the numbers look.
- Trail maintenance activity: We will provide an update on progress in this area and on how our relationship with Forestry & Land Services Scotland has been working.

- Our go-forward Strategy: We will summarise how we are taking the TVTA through 2026/27.

The TVTA's charitable purpose is to maintain and improve the mountain bike trail network in the highly regarded mountain bike destination - the Tweed Valley. In terms of our charitable status, we have 3 primary aims:

- TVTA aims to be a vital and positive link between the local mountain biking community and the various organisations managing the forests and facilities in the region.
- The group aims to enhance the experience of mountain bikers in the valley and visitors to the area by making the trails safe, enjoyable, and sustainable into the future.
- Maintaining safe, marked and maintained bike trails and multiuser paths that are important recreational facilities for experiencing the outdoors and promoting physical activity and a healthy lifestyle, which in turn improves the conditions of all of our lives.

S.2 Financial Report and annual accounts (Ed)

The TVTA financial year reported here runs from 1st March 2025 to 28th February 2026. Strong support from donors saw income go up by £4,878 and with a full year of paid contractors and other projects this saw a deficit of £1,483 and this deficit slightly reduced our reserves balance to £84,018.

Payments (£30,356)
This financial year saw the following payments made;

- Dig day expenses on tools, PPE and snacks added up to £3,523
- Full year of Trail Maintenance Contractors £22,165
- Trail mapping software to manage workflow on volunteer days and contractors £1,076
- Insurance £487
- Updated signage £121

Costs related to fundraising include the website, promotional items and all bank and card transaction fees at a total cost of £2,982

The trail coordinator role in partnership with Scottish Cycling/DMBinS was originally secured through the UK Government Community Renewal funding and this role entered its final year helping the charity. No TVTA funds were spent this year to support this role's work for the TVTA, but a small contribution will be made by the TVTA in 2025/26 as some match funding was required by the funder.

Receipts (£28,872)

Two specific sponsorship donations and a third sponsor was recognised as supporting the new lower wolves trail build's contractor time;

- Ride Innerleithen £1,500
- Tweed Valley Bikes £1,500
- Tempest Brewing were recognised as sponsor for strong ongoing support and donations over the years. Including £250 from the buy a pint scheme where they match the Traquair Arms contribution for every pint sold.

The Scottish Enduro Series SES ensured racing came to the area and the event and riders donated £1,570 unrestricted to the TVTA.

This financial year donations totalled £27,892 (£23,014 FY24/25). The bulk of these donations come from our loyal supporters who donate to the group each year. Most donations were via the website totalling £20,160 (up slightly on 24/25 £19,057)

The larger donations over £150 are shared below and the largest ones over £1000 are also noted above. A reclaim for gift aid was made for £2,912.

Reserve Balances

Our deficit for the year 2025/26 was £1,483. Including the year-end PayPal and bank balances, the Tweed Valley Trails Association has funds of £84,018 just marginally down from £85,502 in the previous financial year. It should be noted that within this the TVTA holds a total of £3,437 of restricted funds for use for the Thinking Box group.

The TVTA has sufficient reserves to cover the current operating costs for 2.8 years, however if this were stripped back to the very minimum core operational costs there is cover for around 15 years. The current main cost is contractor time and there is no legally binding contractual commitment for the charity. The number of days of contractor time will continue to be carefully managed to ensure a sufficient reserve is maintained.

Donations and Grants Over £150 between 1st March 2025 and 28th February 2026

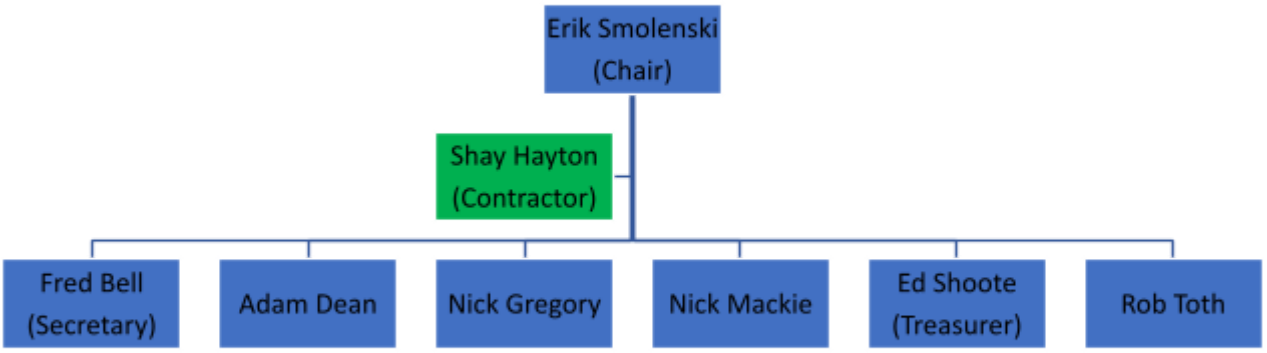
	Unrestricted donation
	to nearest £
SES	**1570**
Ride innerleithen	**1500**
Tweed Valley Bikes	**1500**
G Wilson	**156**
G Harper	**178**
Cleikum Mill	**180**
Glentress Hotel	**240**
A Thompson	**180**
D Revel	**180**
D Corbett	**375**
Traquair Arms Hotel	**200**
We Ride.co.uk	**180**
J Bullen	**180**
M Stachowiak	**180**
S Murdoch	**180**

I Sherratt	**180**
W Sharman	**240**

S.3 Organisation structure & governance

Structure chart

At the end of our Financial Year (28/2/26) the TVTA Board comprised seven members set up as shown in the following structure chart:



We welcomed Adam Dean, Nick Mackie and Rob Toth onto the Board in February but said goodbye to Matilde Garcia who stepped down at the beginning of the year; we thank Matilde for her contributions to the TVTA.

Marc Crowley, our DMBinS / TVTA Trail Co-ordinator, stood down from that role in early 2026 on taking up a full-time position with FLS Scotland. We appreciate all he has contributed to the TVTA since its inception in 2017 and look forward to working with him in his new role. Discussions are ongoing as to how/ if that position will be dealt with going forward.

Shay Hayton, our lead trail maintenance contractor has a standing invite to Board meetings and has attended regularly. Wes Fife, our other contractor left for new adventures in 2025; we appreciate all his hard work and wish him well.

Our Trail Committee (a sub-group to the Board) has not sat over this last year; it will be reconvened when the Board believes it can add value and impetus to our trail development and maintenance activity.

Board meetings

The Board met monthly during 2025 and 2026. Meetings covered a wide range of topics including progress on Dig Days, our partnership with Forestry and Land Scotland, our Supporters Scheme, the progress made by our paid contractors and the work done by our DMBinS/TVTA Trail Co-ordinator. All meetings were formally minuted.

Under the revised TVTA Constitution (see below), all Board members and Trustees will continue to retire from their Board duties at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) but can, if they wish, stand for re-election.

All Board members are volunteers and take no payment for their contribution to the TVTA.

Board elections will be held at the AGM.

TVTA Constitution

When formed in 2017, the TVTA adopted a standard format Constitution in line with existing guidance of the time. That guidance was led by the Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations (SCVO) with expert legal input. Since then, there have been changes in charity law, most recently in 2025 and the SCVO worked with Burness Paull LLP legal firm to produce an updated standard Constitution for use by Scottish charities. (It is also an expectation from the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR) that all charities periodically review and update their constitutions to ensure they meet current best practice.)

As such, we have undertaken a full review of the TVTA Constitution. While it was considered that there were no changes required that would materially affect how the TVTA operates, the main effect of the refresh has been to tighten up various areas including governance, conflicts of interest, recording of decisions and financial controls. The revised Constitution was reviewed by the Board in February 2026 and has been formally adopted. The TVTA Board remains committed to ensuring that our formal structures meet recognised good practice.

S.4 Review of the year

Volunteering & Contractor activity

Over the year we managed to run 15 volunteer days with around 200 attendees working hard on the hills to maintain and improve our trails.

Our paid contractors, Wes and Shay, worked 130 days between them, broadly on a 2 days per week basis for 30 weeks across the year. During this, they also supported event preparation

Supporters update/ overview

As at our year end we had 325 Supporters generating over £9500 per annum in revenue, all of which is used directly to support our trail activity. Supporter numbers are up from around 300 at the same time last year and on a positive note, we have also seen a significant uptick in rider donations over the year, partly driven by our increased social media activity; one-off rider donations totalled over £7500. Further information on large donations is covered in the Finance Report (S.2).

We really appreciate all the financial support we received from both individuals and corporates who contribute so generously to our work.

S.5 Looking Forward

Looking Ahead – 2026 Strategy

Building on the progress made during 2025/26, our priorities for the coming period are to:

- Draft and submit a Sustainable Trails Plan for the Tweed Valley – now complete and submitted to FLS / open for community engagement.
- Progress the adoption of two additional Caberston trails.
- Gain approval for the 5G project.
- Community Service rebuild.
- Megatrack safeguarding.
- Reopen Nae Spleens. (now open)
- Continue contractor-led trail maintenance at two days per week, with a review of potential programme expansion in July 2026.
- Continue the monthly volunteer Dig Day programme.
- Increase local business support through targeted marketing and engagement initiatives.
- Support and complete pre- and post-event trail maintenance for the Scottish Enduro Series and Trans Caledonia.
- Engage with Edinburgh Napier University on data gathering associated with the 5G project.
- Continue strengthening relationships with Forestry and Land Scotland, trail associations and other key stakeholders.
- Recruit and integrate new board members to strengthen TVTA's governance and organisational capacity.

S.6 Thanks to all who support / volunteer/ help the TVTA

The TVTA exists for the riding community and is run and co-ordinated by riders - we really appreciate the huge amount of time and effort that our volunteers contribute. Trails maintenance work has increased again and we couldn't have achieved this without the hard work of all our trail builders, diggers and volunteers - so to you all, whether you are 'Regulars, 'Occasionals' or 'One-offs' we say a huge thanks; your efforts have been central to us being able to maintain and enhance our trail network.

We'd like to recognise our Dig Leaders who make it happen and also to Shay and Wes, our trail maintenance contractors who put so much time, energy and enthusiasm into keeping our trials in good condition.

Equally, to all those who have supported us financially, whether personal and business - we simply could not have achieved what we have without your generous contributions, thanks.

With your continuing support we aim to expand and build on our work for the benefit of all who ride our trails.

Appendix 1 - Financial Statements

i) Statement of Income & Expenditure

APPENDIX 2

Enter charity name below

Enter SC No. below

47179

OSCR Scottish Charity Regulator

Receipts and payments accounts

For the period from: Day 01 Month March Year 2025 to Day 28 Month Feb Year 2026

Section A Statement of receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Expendable endowment funds to nearest £	Permanent endowment funds to nearest £	Total funds current period to nearest £	Total funds last period to nearest £
A1 Receipts						
Donations	27,892				27,892	23,014
Legacies					-	
Grants					-	
Receipts from fundraising activities					-	
Gross trading receipts					-	
Income from investments other than land and buildings	980				980	1,169
Rents from land & buildings					-	
Gross receipts from other charitable activities					-	
					-	
A1 Sub total	28,872	-	-	-	28,872	24,183
A2 Receipts from asset & investment sales						
Proceeds from sale of fixed assets					-	
Proceeds from sale of investments					-	
A2 Sub total	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	28,872	-	-	-	28,872	24,183
A3 Payments						
Expenses for fundraising activities	2,982				2,982	2,502
Gross trading payments					-	
Investment management costs					-	
Payments relating directly to charitable activities	27,373				27,373	8,202
Grants and donations					-	
Governance costs:					-	
Audit / independent examination					-	
Preparation of annual accounts					-	
Legal costs					-	
Other					-	
					-	
A3 Sub total	30,368	-	-	-	30,368	10,704
A4 Payments relating to asset and investment movements						
Purchases of fixed assets					-	
Purchase of investments					-	
A4 Sub total	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total payments	30,368	-	-	-	30,368	10,704
Net receipts / (payments)	(1,483)	-	-	-	(1,483)	13,479
A5 Transfers to / (from) funds					-	
Surplus / (deficit) for year	(1,483)	-	-	-	(1,483)	13,479

ii) Statement of Balances, covering:

APPENDIX 2

47,179

Section B Statement of balances

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Expendable endowment funds to nearest £	Permanent endowment funds to nearest £	Total current period to nearest £	Total last period to nearest £
B1 Cash funds	Cash and bank balances at start of year	82,064	3,437			85,501	72,023
	Surplus / (deficit) shown on receipts and payments account	(1,483)				(1,483)	13,479
						-	
						-	
	Cash and bank balances at end of year	80,581	3,437	-	-	84,018	85,502
	(Agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))	-	-	-	-	-	-

	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Market valuation to nearest £	Last year to nearest £
B2 Investments				
		Total	-	-

	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (if available) to nearest £	Current value (if available) to nearest £	Last year to nearest £
B3 Other assets					
		Total	-	-	-

	Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due to nearest £	Last year to nearest £
B4 Liabilities				
		Total	-	-

	Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (estimate) to nearest £	Last year to nearest £
B5 Contingent liabilities				
		Total	-	-

Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees	Signature*	Print Name	Date of approval

** Please note - OSCR will accept digital or typed signatures*

***NOTE**: Statement of Balances should be split into restricted and unrestricted funds*