


# YARROWS HERITAGE – ANNUAL REPORT 2024-5

	<b>Trustees' Annual Report for the period</b>	
	From 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2024	To 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2025
Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator		

## Reference and administration details

Charity name	Yarrows Heritage SCIO	
Registered charity number	SC051565	
Charity's principal address	Thrumster House	
	Thrumster	
	Wick	
	Caithness	Postcode KW1 5TX

Names of the charity trustees on date of approval of Trustees' Annual Report.  
New or replacement Trustees are appointed by the Board of Trustees.

Trustee name	Office (if any)	Dates acted if not for whole year	Notes
1	Chair	01.04.25 – 31.03.25	
2	Treasurer	01.04.25 – 31.03.25	
3	Secretary	01.04.25 – 31.03.25	
4		01.04.25 – 31.03.25	
5		01.04.25 – 31.03.25	
6		01.04.25 – 31.03.25	
7		01.04.25 – 31.03.25	
8		03.02.25 – 31.03.25	
9		12.03.25 – 31.03.25	

## Structure, governance and management

Type of governing document	Deed of Registration, 3 <sup>rd</sup> February 2022 This acts as a constitution
Trustee recruitment and appointment	The seven members of Yarrows Heritage are also its Trustees (Level 1 SCIO) and have been in place since the start of the SCIO. No new Trustees have been appointed or resigned during the year. The charity is always open to consider application for membership from any interested party.

## Objectives and activities

### Charitable purposes

The Trust has three main objectives:

- 1) The advancement of education by arranging and supporting projects and events, formal and informal, which will enable the community local to Yarrows, and others, to learn about, and the skills to engage with, the heritage and archaeology of the Yarrows area.
- 2) The advancement of the arts, heritage, culture or science in the Yarrows area by
  - (a) undertaking and supporting relevant heritage and archaeological projects which add to the public record of our heritage, and.....
  - (b) promoting awareness and understanding of our heritage by arranging discussion sessions, exploratory walks, producing publications, and participating in public events.
- 3) The advancement of environmental protection and improvement in the Yarrows area, including managing a community woodland and enhancing its contribution to a net zero carbon environment.

## Yarrows Heritage Main Activities in the year

The year 2024-2025 has been another active and busy year for Yarrows Heritage.

For part of the last year, Yarrows Heritage has been two organisations running in parallel – the old Yarrows Heritage Trust and the new Yarrows Heritage SCIO. However in August 2024 we notified OSCR (Office of Scottish Charity Regulator) that we had closed the Trust's bank account and therefore wanted to close the Trust down. OSCR responded in September 2024 by removing Yarrows Heritage Trust from their website.

The Trustees have remained constant over the last year, with the welcome addition of [REDACTED] in February and [REDACTED] in March. The Trustees are listed at the start of this report.

### ACTIVITIES:

#### Swartigill Burn Excavation

There was no excavation at Swartigill during summer 2024. This was to allow a consolidation of the post-ex analysis of the finds from previous years' excavations and the writing of a DSR (Data Structural Report) for the 2022 and 2023 seasons. The latter was delivered to us in October 2024.

#### The Ulbster 2 Pictish Stone

This Pictish stone was discovered in St Martin's Burial Ground at Ulbster in August 2022, with Yarrows Heritage being asked to manage its removal and eventual display. The stone was removed from the burial ground in November 2022 and then taken down to Edinburgh in February 2024 for conservation by Graciela Ainsworth of Leith. The stone then came back up to the North Coast Visitor Centre in Thurso in February 2025, ready to be erected in the Centre's Stone Room. The official opening by Lord Thurso took place in June 2025.

We are grateful for the financial support of Caithness & N Sutherland Fund (£5532.60), Lybster & Tannach Fund (£5532.60), Pictish Arts Society (£500) and Historic Environment Scotland (£8000) for their grants that have allowed the conservation and then subsequent display of the stone.

#### Excavation of a vernacular building at Thurster, April 2024

This excavation followed on from the exploratory 2023 excavation, when we were looking for the lost Thurster Tower. Instead, we found the west side of a vernacular building, probably of the late C18 or early C19. This April 2024 excavation exposed the rest of the building. The excavation was conducted by community volunteers, local schoolchildren, and Yarrows Heritage Trustees working with two archaeologists [REDACTED] from AOC.

We are grateful for the financial support of Camster Fund (Foundation Scotland) and Lybster & Tannach Fund in supporting this excavation. We have received a PERD (Post Excavation Research Design) report from AOC. The costs of the post-ex analysis will be about £17000 plus Vat. We have applied for funding for this.

### **Thrumster Station**

The station building saw only occasional use over the last year. A series of monthly meetings starting in April 2025 has been initiated by [REDACTED], with help from others.

### **Community Woodland**

The spring snowdrop event in March had to be cancelled because of poor weather [REDACTED] led a daffodil event.

### **Nucleus Exhibition**

[REDACTED] provided a display for the Nucleus Archive Centre in Thurso in October 2024. The material for the display centred on the Swartigill excavations. This was funded by Tannach & District Windfarm Trust.

### **Ulbster Burial Ground Wall**

Yarrows Heritage received some funding a few years ago to repair the broken bits of the wall around the Ulbster Burial Ground. A local stonemason [REDACTED], started this work in July 2025.

### **Yarrows Heritage Strategic Plan**

YH applied for and was granted some money to develop a Yarrows Heritage Strategic Plan, using Alan Jones Associates (based in Inverness) who will conduct a community review to inform the Plan.

Finally, a huge thank you to our Trustees for the work they put in, and for turning up (either in person or online) to our 2-monthly committee meetings. And thanks to all those local windfarm organisations who have supported us, and continue to support us, financially. Without them we would struggle to find the money for our projects.

## **Future Plans**

The year ahead will include a return to the Swartigill site in August 2025. It will hopefully also include some further work on the Yarrows Trail to improve signage and also to reduce invading non-native trees.

## Financial review

### Financial Review

As the Charity has no regular income or funding, we are reliant on raising money from grant-offering organisations for specific projects. In the past the major project has been the excavation of a complex Iron Age settlement at Swartigill. In this year, we have developed two new projects – the management of a newly discovered Pictish Stone, and a community excavation of a vernacular building site – and therefore sought new funding for each of them.

### Brief statement of the charity's policy on reserves

The year started with £22,818 in the two bank accounts:

- £17,282 reserved funds (Swartigill, Thurster, Ulbster 2 Stone)
- £5,536 in un-reserved funds.
- Un-reserved funds have been augmented over the year by donations, and now stand at £6,517.

The only regular outgoing is our insurance, and the standing charge for electricity, coming to £237 in the last year. We have no financial commitments, apart from an understanding that we need to maintain the station building. Were that to need considerable expenditure, then we would raise money to cover it.

### Our financial future

Our running costs are mainly related to Thrumster Station building and the Community Woodland close by it. With electricity now in the building, there is a monthly electricity charge of approximately £20 which comes out of our reserves and is not matched by income. However, we hope to attract individuals or groups to use the building for meetings or exhibitions. This situation will be carefully monitored over the next few years.

The woodland and surrounding area requires little expenditure, merely simple annual ground maintenance, provided at no cost by local volunteers.

### Basis of accounting

These accounts have been prepared on the Receipts and Payments basis in accordance with the Charities & Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended).

### Nature and purpose of funds

Unrestricted funds are those that may be used at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of the objects of the charity. The trustees maintain a single unrestricted fund for the day-to-day running of the charity.

Restricted funds may only be used for specific purposes. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for specific purposes.

### Related party transactions

The charity's insurance policy includes Trustee Indemnity Insurance for all its trustees. No other remuneration was paid to the trustees or any connected persons during the year.

## Financial Statement

At the start of the year, two Yarrows organisations continued to run in parallel - the old Yarrows Heritage Trust (TSB bank account) and the “new” Yarrows Heritage SCIO (Bank of Scotland account). During the year, OSCR accepted the closure of the Trust, and its remaining funds were transferred to the SCIO’s bank account on 8<sup>th</sup> August 2024.

The financial statement and accounts below show the situation for both organisations, using merged accounting as recommended by OSCR: [https://www.oscr.org.uk/media/3577/v13\\_scio-accounting-guidance.pdf](https://www.oscr.org.uk/media/3577/v13_scio-accounting-guidance.pdf).

INCOME		2023-4	2024-5	EXPENSES		2023-4	2024-5
<b>Grants</b>				Insurance		241	
Pictish Arts Socy		500		Web & Media		280	72
Camster		11,280					
Tannach CC				<b>Thrumster Station</b>			
C & NS Fund			3,555	Electricity Charges		264	237
Lybster & Tannach		22,108	10,793				
				<b>Swartigill Digs</b>			
<b>Donations</b>			1,290	ORCA for 2022 Dig		31,617	
<b>From YH Trust</b>			10,843	ORCA for 2023 Dig		42,295	
				Various expenses		1,690	162
				<b>Ulbster 2 Stone</b>			16,599
				<b>Thurster Excavation</b>			14,405
				<b>Capital Expenditure</b>			
				Flags, Printing, etc		470	
<b>Total Income</b>		<b>33,888</b>	<b>26,481</b>	<b>Total Expenses</b>		<b>76,616</b>	<b>31,475</b>
				<b>Deficit for year</b>		<b>-42,728</b>	<b>-4,994</b>

<b>Bank account 01/04/2024</b>	Trust	£10,843	
	SCIO	£11,975	<b>Total £22,818</b>
<b>Bank account 31/03/2025</b>	SCIO		<b>Total £6,981</b>

Restricted & Un-restricted Funds		In bank 20240401	Income in year	Expend in year	Balance 20250331
<b>Thurster</b>	Lybster & Tannach 20240517	11,170	5,260	14,405	2,025
<b>Ulbster 2</b>	Lybster & Tannach 20240701	714	9,088	16,599	-6,797
	C & N Sutherland 20240708				0
<b>Swartigill</b>		5,398		162	5,236
	<b>Total Restricted</b>	17,282	14,348	31,166	464
	<b>Unrestricted</b>	5,536	1,290	309	6,517
	<b>Totals:</b>	22,818	15,638	31,475	6,981

## Yarrows Heritage SCIO

### Statement of Balances as at 31st March 2025

	Restricted	Unrestricted	Total
Opening cash at bank 31st March 2024	17,282	5,536	22,818
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	-16,818	981	15,837
Closing cash at bank 1st April 2025	464	6,517	6,981

### Statement of Balances as at 31st March 2024

	Restricted	Unrestricted	Total
Opening cash at bank 31st March 2023	59,096	6,690	65,786
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	-41,714	-1,255	-42,969
Closing cash at bank 1st April 2024	17,282	5,536	22,818

The trustees declare that at an Annual General Meeting of members on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2025, they have approved the trustees' report and financial statement above.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees

Signature(s)

Full name(s)

Position (e.g. Chair)

Chair of Yarrows Heritage SCIO

Date

2nd October 2025

### Independent examiner's report on the accounts

Yarrows Heritage SCIO SC051565 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024

**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) 2005 Act and the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended). 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 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, and
  - 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.