

BAILLIES *of* BENNACHIE

A VOICE FOR THE HILL

The Baillies of Bennachie
Scottish Charity Number: SC047231

Trustees' Report and Financial Statements

for the year ended

31st December 2024

The Bailies of Bennachie
Trustees' Report on the Financial Statements
for the year ended 31st December 2024

The trustees present their annual report and financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31st December 2024. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in Note 1 to the accounts and comply with the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005, the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006, and Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standards applicable to the UK and Republic of Ireland established on 16th July 2014.

Objectives and Activities

Charitable purposes

Our purposes, as recorded in the constitution, are:

1. To preserve the amenity of the hill commonly called "Bennachie" and its environs in Aberdeenshire
2. To help maintain and improve public footpaths and rights of way on Bennachie
3. To encourage the creation and preservation of features of natural, cultural or public interest
4. To study and record the natural and cultural history
5. To encourage and stimulate public interest in and care for Bennachie, its beauty, history, character and surroundings and to discourage litter and vandalism
6. To pursue these objectives by means of meeting, both indoors and out, exhibitions, lectures, conferences, publications and publicity and by promoting relevant schemes of a charitable nature, and by co-operating with others having similar aims
7. To facilitate and support the dissemination of information relating to Bennachie and its surroundings
8. Any other purposes and activities that further the aims of the organisation.

Summary of main activities and achievements

It is always hard to believe that twelve months have elapsed since our last report to you. And it is a joy to share our many successes with you.

We are now a few years out from COVID and Storm Arwen. It now offers us a bit of distance to see back to those days when it took extraordinary effort by the board of the day to hold the Bailies together through online meetings and at a time when we could not undertake our traditional outdoor activities. We thank that board for keeping us going. As you will now see, the wind is refilling our sails.

This time last year, we were still enjoying the afterglow of our 50th anniversary celebrations and the variety of things we undertook in that celebration. The year was capped off by receiving the RSPB Nature of Scotland Community Initiative Award. This was especially gratifying as it was the result of a public vote.

2024 has been a more traditional year, if such a thing exists, but that has not meant business as usual. In every part of our charity, we are undertaking new activities and projects that align to our motto, i.e. to provide a 'Voice for the Hill', and tap into the ideas and energies of our members, volunteers, support team and trustees. In some areas we are in uncharted waters for the first time in our history.

Again, our year was capped off by the receipt of an award; this time the Kings Award for Voluntary Service (KAVS), coined as the MBE for charities. Again, we are very grateful for this recognition at a UK wide level.

We welcomed two new trustees this year, David Caney and Graeme Ralph. We wish them every success in helping the charity achieve their ambitious goals for 2025 and beyond. It is timely to reflect on how the roles and priorities of trustees changes over time. Every day the board is presented with new challenges and opportunities, some that could not have been anticipated even 3 or 4 years ago. We need to steer through these issues and continue to make competent decisions to promote our aims that are relevant for our time and circumstances. It will ever be thus and, if anything, that is what attracts a person to be a trustee.

The Bailies of Bennachie
Trustees' Report on the Financial Statements (continued)
for the year ended 31st December 2024

None of our achievements would be possible without the unflagging dedication from our trustees, volunteers and support team and we are indebted to their hard work. Here are some highlights of our achievements in 2024:

- A volunteer's morning in January to thank and recognise volunteers from all of our teams, and share with them some of the successes that they contributed to.
- A full and productive series of work parties (totalling more than 1,100hrs on the hill) under our Outdoor Coordinator, including several 3rd party work parties hosted by us.
- Development of our electric work parties, whose team members have been trained in the use of our new suite of battery-operated power tools.
- Procurement and deployment of a defibrillator for use by parties on the hill.
- Our first *Field For Wildlife* planting (not as successful as we had hoped but not for lack of trying).
- Another successful archaeological dig by our Bennachie landscape projects group (BLPG).
- The preparation of the Colony Management Plan.
- Revised Colony trail leaflet and revised signposts.
- Commencing the deployment of information boxes at key sites on the hill – Cairn Couttie and Shepherd's Lodge so far.
- Started planning for a major path repair / reinstatement.
- Several successful walks by the wildlife group.
- The development of a draft environmental strategy for the hill.
- Closer ties with local charities such as the Garioch Heritage Centre.
- Significant progress of the digitisation of our paper archive into our bespoke website – digitalbennachie.org.
- A big push on updating our membership records to ensure alignment with our current legislative obligations.
- Release of the latest revision of our governance, including improvements to our event management planning and execution.
- Selected a supplier to build a new and modern website in 2025 to attract our lifeblood, new members and volunteers.

Bailies Future Activities

We are in the process of planning environmental projects, working closely with landowners for the benefit of the hill. We will continue to explore the history of the hill and maintaining existing colony sites for future generations and provide information.

We have a number of projects in the pipeline including:

- Implementing a major path repair / reinstatement
- Completion of our membership revalidation
- Full realisation of the benefits of work parties through a Hill Management Plan, using battery operated power tools that commenced in 2024
- Our annual archaeological dig and implementation of our Colony Management Plan

We are on a journey which, for the foreseeable future, is never ending and which will need to be continually adapted and adjusted to the pressures around us. The speed and direction of travel will be determined by the trustees at that time, using our history as guidance but dealing with the risks and opportunities that their world presents them.

The Bailies of Bennachie
Trustees' Report on the Financial Statements (continued)
for the year ended 31st December 2024

Financial Review and Reserves Policy

It is our policy to keep healthy reserves so that we are in a position to help fund activities and major projects in relation to Bennachie. Each year the trustees consider whether the reserves remain sufficient to give this possibility and in general we aim to limit spending on annually recurring items excluding investment manager fees to roughly the level of income from dividends, bank interest, membership subscriptions and other sources of income.

Our income for the year was £72,057 which includes dividend income of £53,197 and bank interest of £9,843. In 2023 our income was £71,068 which included dividend income of £51,115 and bank interest of £12,903.

Expenditure increased in 2024 to £119,776 compared to £81,140 in 2023. This increase in expenditure was mainly due to costs in relation to work party support including the purchase of electric power tools and associated training, together with significant costs to revalidate our membership records and archive our historic records. Partly offsetting this was the 50th anniversary costs that were incurred in the prior year.

The net movement in funds for the year was a reduction of £8,270 and year end funds amounted to £2,311,973 all of which was unrestricted. The net movement in funds for the year ended 31st December 2023 was an increase of £56,671 and year end 31st December 2023 total funds were £2,320,243, all being unrestricted.

Investment Policy and performance

The overall objective is to hold investments to generate income and provide capital growth in the medium to long term. The investment managers, Rathbones are instructed to maximise the return of the investments, consistent with an acceptable level of risk as agreed by the trustees. The trustees meet Rathbones at least annually to review performance of the investments. The charity operates an ethical investment policy which prohibits shareholding in armaments, tobacco and pornography.

The portfolio ended the year with a market value of £2,070,329 which includes a net gain on investments over the year of £39,449. The trustees recognise that the stock market continues to be volatile and that gains or losses in one year may be cancelled out by losses or gains the next year. As noted above, the overall objective is to generate income and provide long term capital growth and discussions with the investment managers are focused on this objective. During the year investment income of £53,197 was reinvested. The performance of the investments is reviewed on an annual basis by the trustees and compared against various benchmarks.

Principal risks and uncertainties

The principal risks and uncertainties facing the charity, and the plans and strategies to manage them are as follows:

- Recession or downturn in the economy that impacts our investments. The charity has strong financial reserves and has appointed investment advisors to manage our investments.
- Pressure on our activities due to insufficient trustees with the appropriate skills. This is being addressed and we have successfully recruited new trustees in the last 12 months.

The Bailies of Bennachie
Trustees' Report on the Financial Statements (continued)
for the year ended 31st December 2024

Recruitment, training and appointment of Trustees

Trustees are appointed for a yearly term at each AGM. There can be between 4 and 18 trustees and the current number is 9. The appointment of chairperson, vice chairperson, treasurer and secretary from the trustees takes place at the first trustee board meeting after the AGM. Induction training led by the chairperson is undertaken for all new trustees.

Trustees' expenses

Trustees do not receive remuneration and are all volunteers. Expenses can be paid out against receipted costs incurred on behalf of the Bailies. In addition an allowance of £100 per annum can be claimed to cover the use of personal computer and printer on charity business

Reference and administrative information

Trustees:

The trustees who served during the year and up to the date of signature of the financial statements were:

David Caney	(appointed 4th January 2024)
David Bale	
Lorna Bell	
Alex Doig	
Alan Henderson	(Treasurer)
Willie Linklater	(Secretary)
Graeme Ralph	(appointed 16th August 2024)
Peter Stock	(Chairperson)
Allan Will	(Vice Chairperson)

The trustee below resigned during the year:

Jim Herbert	(resigned 8th January 2024)
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Principal Office: c/o Garioch Heritage Centre, Loco Works Road, Inverurie, AB51 4FY

Bankers: Virgin Bank, 26 West High Street, Inverurie, AB51 3SL

Independent Examiners: James Milne & Co, Chartered Accountants, 5 High Street, Inverurie, AB51 3QA

Investment advisors: Rathbone Investment Management Ltd, Port of Liverpool Building, Pier Road, Liverpool L3 1NW

Charities reference: SC047231

The Bailies of Bennachie
Trustees' Report on the Financial Statements (continued)
for the year ended 31st December 2024

Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities

The trustees are responsible for preparing the trustees' annual report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom generally accepted accounting practice (UK GAAP)).

The law applicable to charities in Scotland requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of its incoming resources and application of resources of the charity for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- Observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- Make judgments and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- State whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in business.

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities and Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Disclosure of information to independent examiners

So far as each trustee is concerned:

- i. There is no relevant information of which the charity's independent examiners are unaware, and
- ii. The trustees have taken all steps which they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant information and to establish that the independent examiners have that information.

On behalf of the trustees



Peter Stock
Chairperson

25th February 2025

**Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of
The Bailies of Bennachie**

I report on the financial statements of The Bailies of Bennachie for the year ended 31st December 2024 as set out on pages 7 to 13

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The charity trustees are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements in accordance with the terms of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006. The trustees consider that the audit requirements of Regulation 10(1) (a) to (c) of the 2006 Accounts Regulations does not apply. It is my responsibility to examine the financial statements 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 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 respects 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 Regulation, and
 - b. To prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with Regulation 8 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.



David Minett
CA
Partner
James Milne & Co
5 High Street
Inverurie
AB51 3QA

26.2.25

The Bailies of Bennachie
Statement of Financial Activities
for the year ended 31st December 2024

	2024	2023
	£	£
Income from:		
Membership and subscriptions	736	535
Donations	2,998	1,014
Gross trading income	5,283	4,829
Grants	-	672
Bank interest	9,843	12,903
Dividend income	53,197	51,115
Total income	<u>72,057</u>	<u>71,068</u>
Expenditure on:		
Gross trading payments	2,796	2,771
Insurance	927	631
Governance costs	11,760	10,037
Payments relating directly to Charitable activities	40,353	11,740
Equipment	11,572	4,690
Bennachie archaeological digs	12,581	8,248
Co-ordination support	23,603	11,640
Investment manager fees	14,703	13,728
Costs in relation to 50th anniversary	-	14,804
Donations, special awards and trustee expenses	1,481	2,851
Total expenditure	<u>119,776</u>	<u>81,140</u>
Net (expenditure)/income	(47,719)	(10,072)
Net gains/(losses) on investments	<u>39,449</u>	<u>66,833</u>
Net movement in funds	(8,270)	56,761
Fund balances brought forward	<u>2,320,243</u>	<u>2,263,482</u>
Fund balances at 31st December	<u><u>2,311,973</u></u>	<u><u>2,320,243</u></u>

All funds are unrestricted

The notes on pages 10 to 13 form an integral part of these financial statements.

The Bailies of Bennachie
Balance Sheet
at 31st December 2024

	Note	2024		2023	
		£	£	£	£
Fixed assets					
Investments	3		2,070,329		1,992,386
Tangible assets	4		864		-
Current assets					
Debtors	5	245		342	
Cash at bank and in hand	6	246,548		329,448	
		246,793		329,790	
Creditors - amounts falling due within one year	7	(6,013)		(1,933)	
Net current assets			240,780		327,857
Total assets less current liabilities			2,311,973		2,320,243
Funds of the charity	9				
Unrestricted funds			2,311,973		2,320,243
Total charity funds			2,311,973		2,320,243

Approved by the Trustees on 25th February 2025



Alan Henderson
Trustee

The notes on pages 10 to 13 form an integral part of these financial statements.

The Bailies of Bennachie
Statement of Cashflows
for the year ended 31st December 2024

	2024 £	2023 £
Cash flows from operating activities		
Net cash (used)/generated from operations	(81,820)	(55,511)
Cash flows from investing activities		
Investment income	53,197	51,115
Investment manager fees	(14,703)	(13,728)
Proceeds from sale of investments	347,483	297,347
Movement in investment cash account	23,921	62,370
Purchase of tangible fixed assets	(1,080)	-
Purchase of investments	(409,898)	(397,104)
Net cash used in investing activities	(1,080)	-
Net (decrease)/increase in cash and cash equivalents	(82,900)	(55,511)
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year	329,448	384,959
Cash and cash equivalents at end of year	246,548	329,448

Notes to statement of cash flow

Reconciliation of net cash provided by/(used in) operating activities

	2024 £	2023 £
Net movement in funds per statement of financial activities	(8,270)	56,761
Investment income	(53,197)	(51,115)
Depreciation of tangible assets	216	-
Investment manager fees	14,703	13,728
(Gains)/losses on investments	(39,449)	(66,833)
Decrease/(Increase) in debtors	97	441
(Decrease)/Increase to creditors	4,080	(8,493)
Net cash (used)/generated from operations	(81,820)	(55,511)

The notes on pages 10 to 13 form an integral part of these financial statements.

The Bailies of Bennachie
Notes to the Financial Statements
for the year ended 31st December 2024

1. Accounting policies

Accounting convention

The financial statements are prepared under the historical cost convention as modified to include certain financial instruments at fair value. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice Accounting and Reporting by Charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102).

The charity constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS 102.

Going concern

At the time of approving the financial statements, the trustees have a reasonable expectation that the charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for at least the next twelve months. Thus the trustees continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in preparing the financial statements and have not identified any material uncertainties regarding the ability of the charity to continue.

Recognition of Income including Legacies

These are included in the Statement of Financial Activities when the charity becomes entitled to the resources and it is more likely than not that the trustees will receive the resources and the monetary value can be measured with sufficient reliability. Legacies are included in the Statement of Financial Activities when receipt is probable, that is, when there has been grant of probate, the executors have established that there are sufficient assets in the estate and any conditions attached to the legacy are either within the control of the charity or have been met.

Income from interest and dividends

This is included in the accounts when receipt is probable and the amount receivable can be measured reliably.

Investment gains and losses

This includes any realised or unrealised gains or losses on the sale of investments and any gains or loss resulting from revaluing investments to market value at the end of the year.

Liability recognition

Liabilities are recognised where it is more likely than not that there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to pay out resources and the amount of the obligation can be measured with reasonable certainty.

Governance and Support Costs

Support costs have been allocated between governance costs and other support. Governance costs comprise all costs involving public accountability of the charity and its compliance with regulation and good practice.

The Bailies of Bennachie
Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)
for the year ended 31st December 2024

1. **Accounting policies (continued)**

Creditors

The charity has creditors which are measured at settlement amounts less any trade discounts.

Basic financial instruments

The charity accounts for basic financial instruments on initial recognition as per paragraph FRS 102. Subsequent measurement is as per paragraphs 11.14 to 11.20. FRS102.

Tangible fixed assets for use by charity

These are valued at cost and capitalised if they retain in ownership of the charity, can be used for more than one year, and cost at least £1,000.

Heritage assets

The charity has heritage assets in the form of books which are non-monetary assets with historic and environmental qualities that are held and maintained principally for their contribution to knowledge and culture. These assets have been gifted to the charity in earlier years and no value is reflected in the financial statements.

Investments

Fixed asset investments in quoted shares, traded bonds and similar investments are valued initially at cost and subsequently at fair value (their market value) at the year end.

Debtors

Debtors are measured on initial recognition at settlement amount after any trade discounts given by the charity. Subsequently, they are measured at the cash or other consideration expected to be received.

Cash and equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash in hand and deposits held at call with banks.

The Bailies of Bennachie
Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)
for the year ended 31st December 2024

2. Details of certain items of expenditure

	2024	2023
	£	£
Independent examiner's fees	600	600
Audit fee	-	(900)
Depreciation	216	-
	<u>816</u>	<u>(300)</u>

The credit to the audit fee in 2023 relates to the actual costs for the 2022 audit being less than accrued

3. Investments

	Cash in portfolio	Listed Investments	Total
	£	£	£
Carrying fair value at 31st December 2022	151,748	1,736,418	1,888,166
Additions	-	397,104	397,104
Disposals	(99,757)	(297,347)	(397,104)
Dividend income reinvested	51,115	-	51,115
Investment manager fees	(13,728)	-	(13,728)
Valuation changes	-	66,833	66,833
Carrying fair value at 31st December 2023	<u>89,378</u>	<u>1,903,008</u>	<u>1,992,386</u>
Carrying fair value at 31st December 2023	89,378	1,903,008	1,992,386
Additions	-	409,898	409,898
Disposals	(62,415)	(347,483)	(409,898)
Dividend income reinvested	53,197	-	53,197
Investment manager fees	(14,703)	-	(14,703)
Valuation changes	-	39,449	39,449
Carrying fair value at 31st December 2024	<u>65,457</u>	<u>2,004,872</u>	<u>2,070,329</u>

All the investments are listed on the stock exchange in the United Kingdom, Europe or the United States and the valuation is based on the quoted prices on 31st December 2024.

4. Tangible assets

A defibrillator was purchased during the year at a cost of £1,080, depreciation of £216 was charged resulting in a carry amount at 31st December 2024 of £864. This is the only item of equipment that qualifies as a tangible asset in either 2023 or 2024.

5. Debtors

	2024	2023
	£	£
Trade debtors	<u>245</u>	<u>342</u>

The Bailies of Bennachie
Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)
for the year ended 31st December 2024

6. Cash at bank and in hand

	2024	2023
	£	£
Short term deposits	185,448	108,061
Cash at bank	61,100	221,387
	<u>246,548</u>	<u>329,448</u>

7. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2024	2023
	£	£
Trade creditors	3,413	1,333
Accruals	2,600	600
	<u>6,013</u>	<u>1,933</u>

8. Trustees' expenses

Trustees are not paid. Expenses were reimbursed to six trustees (2023: five trustees) for fulfilling their duties as follows:

	2024	2023
	£	£
Type of expense		
Allowance for use of personal computer	500	500
Travel, accommodation and other expenses	956	1,399
	<u>1,456</u>	<u>1,899</u>

In 2023 gifts with a total amount of £702, were made to five former trustees who retired during that year to recognise their hard work and dedication to the charity over many years. There were no such payments in 2024.

9. Unrestricted funds

	2024	2023
	£	£
At 1st January	2,320,243	2,263,482
(Deficit) / Surplus for year	<u>(8,270)</u>	<u>56,761</u>
At 31st December	<u>2,311,973</u>	<u>2,320,243</u>