

BITOU COMMUNITY FOUNDATION TRUST

England & Wales · Charity number 1172847

Details

Other names	THE BITOU TRUST
Status	Registered
Legal form	Trust
Registered	2017-05-03
Register	View on the Charity Commission register

Contact

Address	30 Kings Lane Windlesham Surrey GU20 6JQ
Phone	07444382270
Email	tamzin@ractliffe.com
Website	www.bitoutrust.org

Activities

Objects: THE ORGANISATION IS ESTABLISHED TO MAKE GRANTS TO NON FOR PROFIT ORGANISATIONS IN FURTHERANCE OF THE FOLLOWING ECLUSIVELY CHARITABLE PURPOSES FOR THE BENEFIT OF PEOPLE LIVING IN THE BITOU REGION OF THE WESTERN CAPE OF SOUTH AFRCIA:A) THE RELIEF OF SICKNESS AND PRESERVATION OF HEALTH.B) THE RELIEF OF POVERTY AND FINANCIAL HARDSHIP.C) THE ADVANCEMENT OF EDUCATION.D) THE PRESERVATION, PROTECTION AND CONSERVATION OF THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT.E) THE PROMOTION OF SUSTAINABLE MEANS OF ACHIEVING ECONOMIC GROWTH AND REGENERATION. (SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT MEANS "DEVELOPMENT THAT MEETS THE NEEDS OF THE PRESENT WITHOUT COMPROMISING THE ABILITY OF FUTURE GENERATIONS TO MET THEIR OWN NEEDS").F) SUCH OTHER CHARITABLE PURPOSES FOR THE PUBLIC BENEFIT AS ARE EXCLUSIVELY CHARITABLE ACCORDING TO THE LAWS OF ENGLAND AND WALES AS THE TRUSTEES MAY FROM TIME TO TIME DETERMINE.

Activities: The Bitou Trust is dedicated to assisting disadvantaged communities and advancing sustainable development and conservation within the Bitou region of the Western Cape Province of South Africa. Situated in the heart of the UNESCO Garden Route Biosphere Reserve, the Bitou municipal area covers 992 square kms within one of the most diverse biodiversity hot spots on the planet.

Classification

- **How:** Makes Grants To Organisations, Provides Services
- **What:** General Charitable Purposes, The Advancement Of Health Or Saving Of Lives, Disability, The Prevention Or Relief Of Poverty, Environment/conservation/heritage, Economic/community Development/employment
- **Who:** Children/young People, Elderly/old People, People With Disabilities, People Of A Particular Ethnic Or Racial Origin, Other Charities Or Voluntary Bodies, Other Defined Groups

Geography

- South Africa
- Throughout England And Wales

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-03-31	£343,589	£332,085	-	-
2024-03-31	£271,827	£264,395	-	-
2023-03-31	£254,000	£282,900	-	-
2022-03-31	£1,500	£670	-	-
2020-12-31	£1,800	£255	-	-

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
ANNABELLE CONYNGHAM	Chair	2016-09-30
JANE TAYLOR		2017-04-27
Morkel Pienaar		2024-01-31
PHILIPPA VAUGHAN		2017-04-27
Philippa Mary Sauvenier		2024-01-30

Accounts



the Bitou Community Foundation Trust
(also known as the Bitou Trust)

Report and Financial Statements
For the year ended 31 March 2025
Charity No. 1172847

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

As Chairman of the Bitou Community Foundation Trust, my first priority is to acknowledge and thank the Board Members – both of the Bitou Trust and of our beneficiaries organisations - for their dedication and commitment throughout this last financial year. This was so ably assisted by the teams at PlettAid, led by CEO Sister Cecily van Heerden and the administrative team, Russel Braun and Rae Gilbert and at RCCPE led by Kei Heyns. My grateful thanks to you all.



It was with great sadness that we said goodbye to Chris von Christierson, from the Board of Trustees at the Bitou Trust and to Gavin Ward, Treasurer at PlettAid Foundation. Chris was a founding member of the Robberg Coastal Corridor Protected Environment and a most loyal and generous supporter of the Bitou Trust. Gavin kept a beady eye and tight rein on finances. We are delighted to welcome Martin Wilshire as the new Treasurer of PlettAid Foundation and look forward to working with him in the coming years.

In both South Africa and the United Kingdom, we have continued to hold diverse fundraising events which have been of huge importance to our work. However, as most know, the funding climate has become increasingly difficult in all parts of the world, and it is increasingly difficult to find most especially corporate support.

As a registered charity in the UK, the Bitou Trust continues to work well as a vehicle for overseas donations through Charities Aid Foundation. We remain committed to transparency, accountability, and the prudent management of every rand entrusted to us. With your partnership, we can not only maintain but strengthen the care and comfort we provide to countless individuals and families

We have therefore (re)launched our [“Be a Bitou GEM” campaign](#) and are reaching out to our supporters with a heartfelt appeal to join our community of monthly contributors, or, if you already give monthly (thank you to all those who do), please help us by share our mission with friends, family, and colleagues who may be inspired to become part of this vital effort. Every new regular donor brings us one step closer to achieving financial stability and expanding our reach to those in greatest need.

My grateful thanks to all our donors who have supported the Trust during the last year. Your support – both financial and non-financial in nature, is greatly appreciated.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading 'A. Conyngham'. The script is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized 'A' and a long, sweeping tail on the 'm'.

Lady Conyngham (Chair)

FROM THE CEO OF THE PLETTAID FOUNDATION: CECILY VAN HEERDEN

"Great things are done by a series of small things brought together." - Vincent van Gogh.

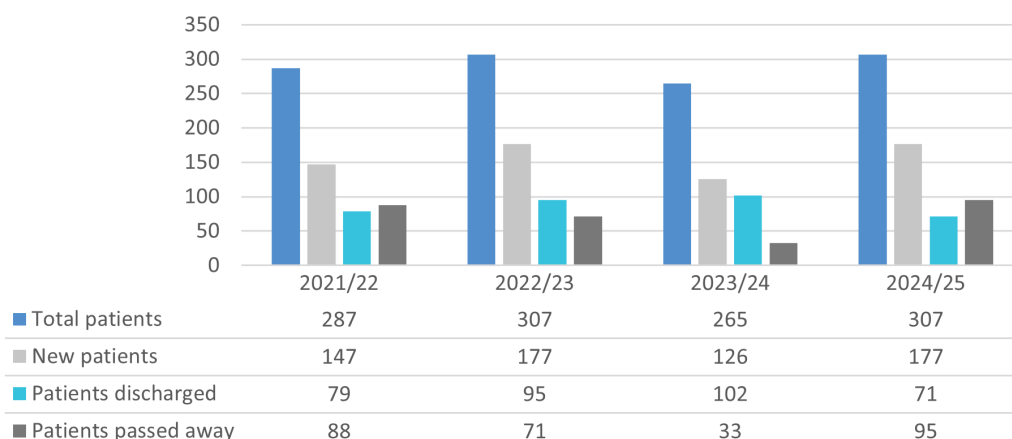


As I reflect on the past year, I am filled with immense pride and gratitude for the work we have accomplished together at the PlettAid Foundation. In a time of continued social and economic uncertainty, our team has remained steadfast in its mission to improve the quality of life, promote health and wellness literacy, and uphold dignity at the end of life through compassionate, patient-centred care for the greater Bitou community.

Strengthening Our Core Services

Hospice Plett, our flagship programme, continued to deliver dignified, holistic palliative care to patients and their families. This year, we supported over 307 individuals through home-based palliative care by providing patients and their families with psychosocial support, pain and symptom management, and bereavement counselling. Our dedicated team ensured that our patients and their families did not face their serious illness or, at times, the end of life, alone.

HOSPICE PLETT PROGRAMME



The Hospice Plett team members include Srs. Marlene, Charlotte, Nobonke, palliative care community health workers Marie, Anthea, Clara, Fikiswa, Phindi, and Robyn, clinical therapist Celeste, social auxiliary worker Michael, our dedicated emotional support volunteers Dee, Bobby, and Mike, as well as Drs. Jerry Riemer and Joe Skowno, who also volunteer their time. This team carried out 6738 home visits to 307 patients and their loved ones, performing over 29458 interventions ranging from pain and symptom management, medication management, counselling, helping patients and families adapt to their illness or, in some cases, the dying process, social welfare support, and bereavement support.

We welcomed Sr. Nobonke Lilian Sibinda to the team in August 2024, and her energy and passion for providing excellent healthcare, even in the poorest resource settings, have brought fresh perspectives and drive to the Palliative Care team. Nobonke is completing her Palliative Care training in November 2025.

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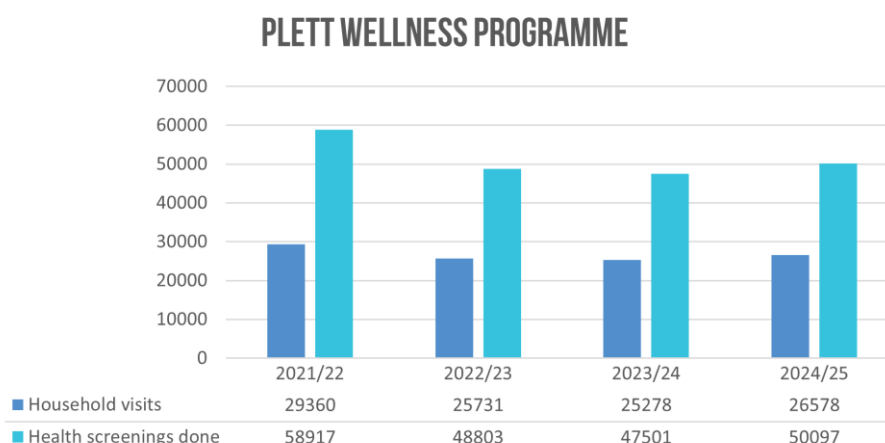
We are grateful for the support of Sr Bev du Preez, who chose to really enjoy retirement, spending more of her time travelling and camping, but who still supports the palliative care team as a locum when needed. Bev's network of contacts and knowledge of the primary health care system is an ever-eye-opening treasure trove.

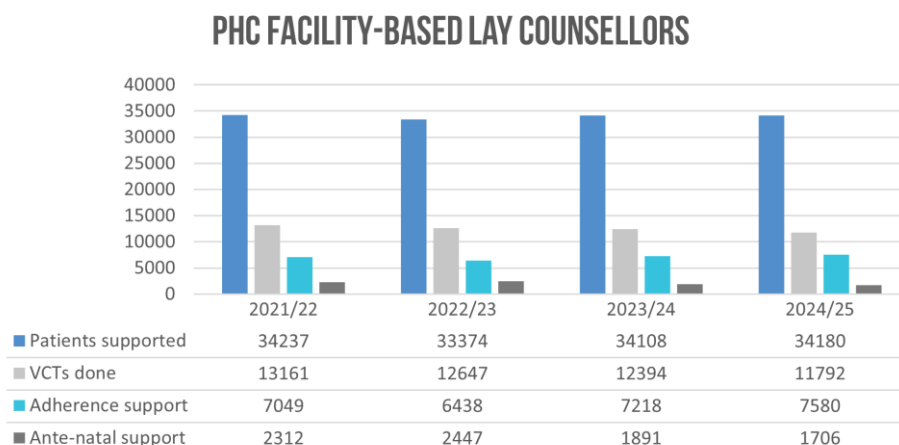
Our care of patients across the 'border' into the Eastern Cape, as far as Storms River, also increased this year and we've had to take a serious look at the admission criteria for patients in this area as the cost of care per patient escalates dramatically with the added distance that needed to be covered, and the toll gate fees.

The home- and community-based model of care can only be done if we have access to vehicles..... Bitou spans 997km². The fleet of 6 vehicles drove an average of 955km/month/vehicle this year. They are all older than 10 years (3 older than 15years!) except for the Nissan bakkie purchased in 2021. The maintenance cost for such an old fleet is quite significant. We have reached out to the Bitou community for reasonably priced, secondhand vehicles.

Plett Wellness, our second programme, aims to improve the overall health and wellness of our community by improving health literacy, health screening and early identification of illnesses, and referral to appropriate health care services to ensure treatment. Our teams extended screening, education and referral services to thousands of residents, many of whom face barriers to accessing formal healthcare. From chronic disease management to HIV/TB testing and maternal health support, we remained a trusted and accessible point of care.

This programme, which is partially funded by the Department of Health and co-ordinated by Sr. Dorett Herbst, comprises 30 community health workers and 10 lay counsellors. This team did over 26000 visits to households throughout the various communities in Bitou, performing over 50000 health and wellness screenings and referring 2647 community members for further support at appropriate health care facilities. Furthermore, clients were counselled about treatment adherence and the use of chronic medication including those for HIV, hypertension, diabetes, TB, asthma, epilepsy, etc.





Sr Sepiso Silumesi joined the Plett Wellness team for 4 months from Sept to Dec 2024 and enabled the team to develop a more comprehensive mobile wellness programme. A professional nurse, lay-counsellor and 2 community health workers support businesses in Bitou with employee wellness programmes, and ensure that small, insular communities, like Forest View, Kransbos, or Covie, have access to basic health care services. This small team performed 2692 HIV tests, supported 584 women with family planning at their places of work, performed 1096 health screenings, and referred 86 community members to related health services.

Community Engagement and Partnerships

We deepened our partnerships with local government, NGOs, and community leaders to amplify our impact, and our involvement with the establishment of the Bitou Social Development Forum (BSDF) continues.

Notably, our partnership with the Ben and Evelyn Lipshitz Trust enabled us to expand our 1st 1000 Days project. Collaborating with Carol Surya (counselling psychologist), Knysna Education Trust, FAMSA and ECD centres in Plett, 40 community health workers and 179 community members, completed 3-day parenting workshops, offered in 6 of the Bitou communities.

This followed skills development workshops in early childhood development and, with the groundwork laid, the aim over the next 3 years, is to equip the community health workers with practical, culturally appropriate, easy to transfer, knowledge and communication skills for use during routine household visits in township settings, to promote positive parenting and early childhood development (ECD), and to improve school readiness of children.

Financial Stewardship and Sustainability

We are grateful for the continued support of our donors, funders, and partners. During this past year, we were blessed with 2 particularly extraordinary donations from the Cancer Care Sisters and David Matthews, which carried us through quite a rough financial patch.

We are also grateful for the community-driven initiatives like the Open Homes event brought to us by Jenny Jardine and Nadia Horley, and several birthday celebrants who asked for donations to Hospice instead of gifts.

The budget for the 2024/25 year was R 7 872 299. Funding the work of the PlettAid Foundation remains a top priority for the Board of Directors and management team. Whilst the Hospice Plett Programme is fully dependent on donations and our fundraising efforts, the Plett Wellness Programme is 90% funded by the Department of Health.

Bitou Trust

The Hospice Charity Shop has gone from strength to strength since its inception in 2018. Wilma Ungerer, our Charity Shop Manager, and her dedicated team managed to turn over just over 1 million rand in 2024/25, adding more than R600 000 to our coffers, after costs.

Through careful financial stewardship, we maintained a balanced budget while investing in staff development, infrastructure, and service delivery. We also launched new fundraising initiatives, including community events and digital campaigns, to diversify our income streams.

Our dedicated admin support team, Russel, Rae, Carla, and Jamie, quietly and efficiently ensure that our clinical team can continue caring for the Bitou community. This team's unwavering commitment, attention to detail, and behind-the-scenes excellence have been the backbone of our operations this past year. Whether coordinating schedules, managing records, supporting our clinical teams, or simply keeping the wheels turning smoothly, their work has made a profound impact on the lives we serve.

They are often the first point of contact for our patients and families, and their kindness and professionalism set the tone for the compassionate care we strive to provide. Their efforts may not always be visible, but they are deeply valued and absolutely essential.

Governance

Our dedicated Board of Directors, led by Annabelle Conyngham, continue their unwavering support, strategic guidance, and steadfast commitment to our mission.

Their leadership has been instrumental in navigating the complexities of community healthcare and ensuring that our services remain responsive, compassionate, and impactful. Their dedication to governance, oversight, and advocacy has empowered us to grow, innovate thoughtfully, and serve our community with integrity. Whether through their time, expertise, or thoughtful decision-making, they helped shape a Foundation that truly makes a difference in the lives of those we care for.

Gavin Ward stepped down as treasurer in March 2025 and we welcomed Martin Wilshire to take up the reins.

Goodbye to some and welcome to others

Sr Dorett Herbst bid us farewell at the end of March after 6 years of leading and coordinating the Plett Wellness Programme and Jamie Swarts (data capturer and clinical admin assistant) moved on to expand her horizons, also at the end of March.

We welcomed Lynne Jonck in June 2025 to take up the position of clinical admin assistant and data capturer and Sr Tokoza Makubalo in July 2025, to take up the position of Plett Wellness coordinator.

A Heartfelt Thank You

To our staff, volunteers, board members, partners, and community - Thank you.

In the words of Phil Jackson, the famous American basketball player and coach: "The strength of the team is each individual member. The strength of each member is the team."

Your dedication, resilience, and belief in our mission make everything we do possible. Together, we are building a healthier, more compassionate Bitou.

Cecily van Heerden
CEO PlettAID

FROM THE CONSERVATION MANAGER OF THE ROBBERG COASTAL CORRIDOR: KEI HEYNS

"In every walk with nature, one receives far more than he seeks." - John Muir



The past year has been transformational for the Robberg Coastal Corridor Protected Environment, as we have evolved from a conservation initiative into a living model of integrated stewardship that weaves together ecological protection, cultural restoration, and community empowerment.

Strengthening Operational Capacity

Our operational capacity has been significantly strengthened through the appointment of Jane Lourens as Administrative Manager. Her expertise in regenerative systems design, deep ecology, and impact project management has brought essential coordination to our expanding work. Working closely with the Core Committee, Jane serves as the coordinating centre for communications, compliance, stakeholder liaison, and financial tracking—ensuring that conservation, cultural, and community initiatives function cohesively. This foundational step provides the continuity, accountability, and organisational resilience necessary for long-term success.

Regenerative Tourism and the Inqua Trail

The Inqua Trail continues to serve as the corridor's flagship offering, now enhanced by a series of specialty hikes that transform conservation into lived experience. Our beautifully curated two-day, one-night wilderness immersion, guided by Dr Jan De Vynck, blends ecology, archaeology, mindfulness, and culinary artistry in a living journey through the Robberg Coastal Corridor. Participants explore the Cradle of Human Culture through the lens of deep time and landscape intimacy, with highlights including site visits to Oumatjie Cave, mindfulness practices, and an Origins of Taste menu co-created with Peter Tempelhoff of FYN Restaurant. This offering exemplifies our vision of regenerative tourism—rooted in place, guided with expertise, and designed to awaken a felt-sense of belonging and reverence for the land.

Building on this success, we are developing an expanded series of thematic and specialty hikes with our team of expert guides: Blue Mindfulness (water-connected contemplative practice), Exploring Tracks and Tracking (animal communication through signs and signals), Biomimicry Life's Principles (discovering nature's deep patterns for resilience and success), and Naturally Conscious Journeys (integrating nature's wisdom for personal transformation). These experiences serve both visitors and locals seeking meaningful encounters with nature, story, and self.

Cultural Restoration and Community Partnership

Cultural restoration has taken centre stage with the landmark Earth Elders Project visit from 27-31 October 2025. This transformational four-day gathering brought together local elders, municipal representatives, Earth Elders delegates, and members of the RCCPE community for storytelling, ancestral ceremony, strategic dialogue, and cultural exchange. Key elements included a ritual walk to Tiergat Cave, dialogues with Kranshoek elders, a meeting with the Mayor of Bitou Municipality, and joint filming sessions for both RCCPE and Earth Elders documentaries. The event honoured the Corridor's heritage as part of the Cradle of Human Culture whilst exploring new pathways for collaboration, reciprocity, and governance that reflect both ancestral knowledge and contemporary ecological needs.

Bitou Trust

As part of our ongoing efforts to foster local partnerships, we hosted a guided walk to Nelson Bay Cave with representatives from the Plettenberg Bay Tourism Office. This immersive experience allowed the Tourism team to engage directly with the cultural, ecological, and geological richness of the site, whilst learning about the broader vision of the Inqua Trail and its role within the protected corridor. The walk deepened mutual understanding, strengthened regional collaboration, and opened pathways for future tourism-aligned initiatives.

Conservation in Action

Our conservation efforts remain robust and science-led. Active alien clearing continues with the targeted application of biocontrol fungus (*Colletotrichum acutatum*) to manage invasive Hakea populations across the Robberg Coastal Corridor. This host-specific fungal agent spreads only within a 2-metre radius from infected Hakea plants, offering a safe, ecologically sensitive solution aligned with integrated land management. RCCPE stewards implemented this intervention with a call for community participation to help identify further infestation sites, contributing meaningfully to the broader goal of restoring ecosystem health, relieving pressure on fynbos biodiversity, and rebalancing the natural landscape.

Trail maintenance has been enhanced through our Guides' Day Out initiative along the Amphitheatre leg of the Inqua Trail. In a spirit of camaraderie and custodianship, our expert team of local guides actively participated in light trail maintenance whilst sharing knowledge, stories, and practices with one another. Members of the administrative team, Mary Jane and Jane, also joined the hike to experience this majestic section of the trail firsthand and witness the importance of the guiding work. The day culminated with a well-deserved braai at Robberg Nature Reserve, featuring freshly harvested oysters from Kei and Morkel's famous mussel pot—a celebratory feast that reflected the nourishment possible when people and place come together.

Building Capacity for the Future

We have partnered with the Grow Learn Earn (GLE) Programme to launch a Work-Integrated Ranger Training Year for 2026. This collaboration will provide youth from the local Kranshoek community with hands-on conservation experience within the Robberg Coastal Corridor. Two trainee rangers will be mentored through a structured year-long syllabus encompassing trail maintenance, ecological monitoring, field reporting, and leadership development. The programme integrates both technical and soft skills—from alien clearing and trail design to environmental storytelling and community engagement—preparing participants for careers in conservation, eco-tourism, and environmental education. Through this partnership, RCCPE is not only nurturing future custodians of the Corridor but also contributing to local livelihoods and long-term socio-ecological resilience in the Garden Route region. The initiative exemplifies our commitment to cultivating human capacity as an integral part of ecosystem restoration.

Communications and Outreach

RCCPE has made significant strides in formalising and activating its communications and marketing strategy. We are developing a clear engagement funnel and targeted messaging approach that supports our broader goals of conservation awareness, advocacy, community building, and financial resilience. We're working towards a segmented audience framework to guide storytelling efforts, with themes grounded in the Cradle of Human Culture, biodiversity conservation, and local stewardship.

Tangible steps are underway, including the launch of a bi-monthly newsletter. Several campaign concepts have been conceptualised, such as Walk with the Ancestors and a Custodian Club to deepen relational engagement. Digital and print assets are being prepared, alongside the commissioning of a short film centred on the Inqua Trail. These steps mark a maturing of RCCPE's public identity and the laying of strong foundations for scalable, values-aligned communication.

Bitou Trust

Looking Ahead: The Cradle of Culture Festival

As part of our commitment to regenerative, community-centred initiatives, RCCPE has been actively envisioning the inaugural Cradle of Culture Festival, planned as a three-day celebration of nature, heritage, and shared futures. The festival is being co-designed with local stakeholders and will include nature-based workshops, cultural performances, local storytelling, indigenous foods, and intergenerational dialogue. We are in early-stage, very promising discussions with Greenpop—a respected environmental organisation known for their uplifting reforestation festivals and creative environmental activism—to explore potential collaboration. This marks a significant stride in our strategic vision to position the Corridor not only as a biodiversity haven, but also as a cradle of collective identity, ecological stewardship, and cultural renewal.

A Living Corridor of Connection

As we reflect on this season of action, momentum is building. The RCCPE is becoming not only a protected area on a map, but a magnetic field of connection—drawing together stewards, elders, youth, and visitors into a shared story of belonging. Through grounded action and visionary planning, we are shaping the Corridor into both a sanctuary of biodiversity and a cradle of cultural renewal.

We extend deep gratitude to the Bitou Trust for their unwavering support, which makes this transformative work possible. Together, we are building towards a living corridor of connection.

Kei Heyns

Conservation Manager, RCCPE

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

The trustees present their report with the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2025. The trustees have adopted the provisions of the Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard for Smaller Entities (the FRSSE) (effective 1 January 2015).

Reference and Administration

Charity Name

The name of the charity is the Bitou Community Foundation Trust, also known as The Bitou Trust.

Charity Number

1172847

Trustees

Lady Annabelle Conyngham (Chair)
Chris von Christierson (resigned 31 March 2025)
Philippa Vaughan
Jane Taylor
Morkel Pienaar
Philippa Mary Sauvenier

Programme Manager

Tamzin Ractliffe

Principal Office

30 Kings Lane Windlesham Surrey GU20 6JQ

Independent Examiner

Tiffany Purves, FCA CA(SA): Director of About Finance Limited, 9 Danesfield, Ripley, Surrey GU23 6LS.
Tel: +44 1483 223371

Bankers

CAF Bank Limited, 25 Kings Hill Ave, Kings Hill, West Malling ME19 4TA Tel: +44 3000 123 000

Structure, Governance, and management.

Governing Document

The Bitou Community Foundation Trust, also known as The Bitou Trust ('The Trust') was established as a registered UK Charity (Charity Number 1172847) constituted under a Trust Deed dated 26th December 2016 and registered with the Charity Commission in April 2017.

The Trust sought to provide a vehicle through which caring and interested citizens could provide financial support to the need for healthcare, community development and environmental conservation to uplift the impoverished communities and protect the unique natural biodiversity in the Bitou region of the Western Cape. It was established with an initial gift from the Founding Trustees and actively fundraises in the UK and Europe to support sustainable development, health & wellbeing, and environmental conservation in the Bitou region of the Western Cape of South Africa.

Our efforts are focused on registered public benefit organisations working in the Eden District of the Bitou region of the Western Cape including the communities of Storms River, Wittedrif and Plettenberg Bay in the east and Harkerville in the west. This is an area of some 123km in length and one of the world's biodiversity

Bitou Trust

hotspots. The Bitou region is urgently in need of more sustainable development practices. The communities of Bitou have shown rapid growth of a predominantly poor population with migrants largely coming from the even poorer communities of the Eastern Cape.

Poor living conditions as well as inferior nutrition exacerbate poor health, are placing significant strain on the community which is under resourced in clinics and care facilities. At the same time, rapid development is having a significantly damaging effect on the environment and biodiversity of the region. A clear programme of environmental conservation most especially of the indigenous fynbos is essential for the unique and pristine coastline and the surrounding lands making up the Robberg Coastal Corridor.

Purpose

We support the development and conservation of a vibrant culture of care, making us a region of strong, interconnected communities providing palliative care for the people and conservation for the places of Bitou.

Our primary purpose is to provide palliative care to the people and places of Bitou. Palliative care is holistic care and relief for the poor, the sick, the young and the aged facing life-limiting illnesses and loss in their families. We also provide care, conservation, and protection for the places of Bitou. This natural environment is a biodiversity hotspot that is being harmed by rapid development and destruction of the flora, fauna and natural ecosystems that are of immense natural beauty and that provide important ecosystem services.

Recruitment and appointment of Trustees

The Deed provides for a minimum of three trustees. All trustees give of their time freely and no trustee remuneration is paid. Trustees are required to disclose all relevant interests and register them with the Trust Manager and, in accordance with the Trust's policy, to withdraw from decisions where a conflict of interest arises.

The trustees will consider new trustee appointments recruited for their knowledge, empathy and experience of the charity and its mission and to ensure the skills and composition of the trustee body and succession planning is optimised. Under the provisions of the Deed of Trust, any trustee may propose a willing and eligible candidate. New trustees may be sought by open advertisement or through dialogue with prospective interested parties who respect the ethos and commitment of the Trust and its charitable objectives.

Induction and training of new trustees

There is no formal induction process. However, a pre-appointment presentation introduces the objects and activities to potential Trustees and literature is made available to outline and clarify the work of the Trust. All Trustees are introduced to the responsibilities and duties of a trustee and the expectation the Charity has of them. All trustees have considerable experience either as trustees or as company directors.

Related parties

The Trust currently has two South African beneficiaries viz. PlettAid Foundation and The Robberg Coastal Corridor Protected Environment. Both are supported by the fundraising activities of the Bitou Trust in the UK.

Risk management

The trustees have a duty to identify and review the risks to which the charity is exposed and to ensure appropriate controls are in place to provide reasonable assurance against fraud and error. The Trustees recognise that exchange rate fluctuations may result in funds raised and/or transferred to South Africa may be different to those anticipated and/or budgeted for. The trustees have reviewed this risk and established a policy to manage this risk which retains the focus on the public benefit derived from our funding of the work of our beneficiaries and reports accordingly to the donors committed to the work.

Objectives and activities for the public benefit

The primary purpose of the Trust is to support the care and wellbeing of the Bitou region, its environment and all its people. We will support organisations, programmes and initiatives that deliver support services, education and training, capacity development and related activities that together promote and increase the likelihood of success of efforts to establish sustainable livelihoods, promote health, wellbeing, community capacity building (including adaptive capacity to climate risks) and social inclusion, and that ensure the environment of the region can continue to support the people, flora and fauna in a way that will sustain the region for the future.

Our initial support has focused on the work of the PlettAid Foundation and the Robber Coastal Corridor Protected Environment. However, we remain open to partnerships that will consolidate, expand, and add value to leverage the efficiencies of our actions and of the benefits on the communities we serve.

The Trust meets its objectives through a programme of fundraising, strategic partnership and programme research and advocacy where appropriate. During the period under review, the Trust has renewed its efforts to rebuild and reconnect with its donors outside of South Africa which were impacted by the Covid pandemic and the challenges faced by South Africa since then. We believe this will support our efforts to support the expansion and ongoing service delivery of the Bitou Trust's beneficiaries in the country.

Strategic priorities

At an annual year-end meeting of the trustees, the trustees agree the broad strategy and areas of activity for the Trust including consideration of grant seeking, programmatic activity, and fundraising performance. The day-to-day administration of fundraising and grant making activities, and the processing and handling of applications is delegated to the Trust Manager, a volunteer working in the sector in the UK.

Financial review

Total grants received in the year ended March 2025 amounted to £343,589 (2024: £271,827). This includes grants of £6,723 received in the UK (2024: £2,706) and grants of £336,866, received in South Africa (2024: £269,121). The Trustees have determined that £5,000 will be remitted at year end for beneficiary organisations for the period leaving research of £1,562 in the UK excluding anticipated Gift Aid reimbursements (2024: £4,583).

Reserves policy

The Bitou Community Foundation Trust is a vehicle focused on raising funds to support its South African beneficiaries. Its support team are all volunteers which means that only nominal reserves are required. Thus, it is the Trust's policy to remit funds to beneficiaries in each year in which they are generated to support the work of beneficiaries in that year. Reserves maintained will only seek to be sufficient for ongoing maintenance of the Trust and its regulatory and fiduciary obligations.

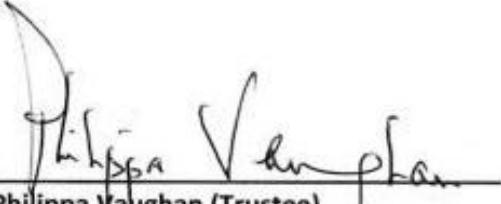
Principal funding sources

Donor support from the UK has been instrumental in supporting programmatic activity in both the UK and South Africa and the trustees are grateful for the support of donors, including those participating in The Funding Network, who have responded positively to its mission and objectives, and enabled it to make important progress during this first year of activity.

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This report has been prepared in accordance with the Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard for Smaller Entities (the FRSSE) (effective 1 January 2015).

Approved by order of the Board of Trustees on 30 September 2025 and signed on its behalf by:


Philippa Vaughan (Trustee)

Jane Taylor (Trustee)

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

	2025 £	2024 £
INCOMING RESOURCES		
Voluntary Income:		
Unrestricted funds	£ 5,123	£ 2,706
Restricted funds	£ 1,600	
TOTAL INCOMING RESOURCES	£ 6,723	£ 2,706
RESOURCES EXPENDED		
<i>Costs of generating funds</i>		
Operating costs	£ 4,744	£ 1,135
<i>Charitable activities</i>	£ -	£ 3,000
TOTAL RESOURCES EXPENDED	£ 4,744	£ 4,135
Net incoming resources	£ 1,979	£ -1,429
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS		
Funds brought forward	£ 4,583	£ 6,012
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD	£6,562	£ 4,583

BALANCE SHEET AT 31 MARCH 2025

	Note	2025	2024
CURRENT ASSETS			
Cash at bank and in hand		£ 6,562	£ 4,583
NET CURRENT ASSETS		£ 6,562	£ 4,583

FUNDS

	Note		
Unrestricted funds		£ 4,962	£ 4,583
Restricted funds		£ 1,600	£ -
TOTAL FUNDS		£ 6,562	£ 4,583

Trustees' responsibilities in relation to the financial statements

The trustees acknowledge that they are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards. The law applicable to charities in England and Wales 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 the 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 of the Charities SORP
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent.
- State whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to do so.

The trustees are responsible for keeping accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy the financial position of the charity and enable them to ascertain to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011 and the provisions of the trust deed. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities. The trustees are responsible for the integrity of the charity and financial information included on the charity's website.

The Charity is entitled to exemption from audit under Section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act).

Approved by resolution of the board of trustees on 30 September 2025 and signed on its behalf by:


 Philippa Vaughan (Trustee)


 Jane Taylor (Trustee)

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

Accounting Policies

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard for Smaller Entities (FRSSE) (effective January 2015) and the requirements of the Statement of Recommended Practice, Accounting and Reporting by Charities.

Incoming resources

All incoming resources are included on the Statement of Financial Activities when the charity is legally entitled to the income, and the amount can be quantified with reasonable accuracy.

Donated services and facilities are included at the value to the charity where this can be quantified. The value of the services provided by volunteers has not been included in the accounts.

Resources expended.

Expenditure is recognised on an accruals basis as a liability is incurred.

Charitable expenditure comprises those costs incurred by the charity in the delivery of its activities and services for its beneficiaries. It includes both costs that can be allocated directly to such activities and those costs of an indirect nature necessary to support them.

Governance costs include those costs associated with meeting the constitutional and statutory requirements of the charity and costs linked to the strategic management of the charity.

Grants offered subject to conditions which have not been met at the year-end date are noted as a commitment but not accrued as expenditure.

Charitable activities

This relates to grants given either to the Trust's beneficiaries in South Africa or to its partnership beneficiaries according to the intentions and specifications of the donors to specific charitable activities.

Taxation

The charity is exempt from tax on its charitable activities.

Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds

These can be used in accordance with the charitable objectives at the discretion of the trustees.

Designated funds

Designated funds are unrestricted funds earmarked for specific objectives or a particular project and can be utilised at the discretion of the trustees to further the objectives of the project concerned. More specifically, funds for operating costs represent a founding grant to support the operational costs associated with ensuring that the Bitou Trust can establish itself well to further its mission and the mission of its beneficiary partner organisations.

Restricted funds

Restricted funds can only be used for particular restricted purposes within the objects of the charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular focused, and therefore restricted, purpose.

Bitou Trust

Costs of generating voluntary income

During the period, no costs were incurred as the Programme Manager worked on a voluntary basis. Costs were limited to banking fees only.

No trustees' remuneration was paid nor was any other benefit paid to trustees for the year ended 31 March 2025.

Related party disclosures

All of the activities referred to in the Trustees' Report relate to activities conducted by the PlettAid Foundation or the Robberg Coastal Corridor Protected Environment NPO, beneficiaries of the Bitou Trust in South Africa. Both the PlettAid Foundation and the Robberg Coastal Corridor Protected Environment raise further funding locally and their financials for the period are appended for available on our website.

The Trustees have taken the decision to also present the consolidated accounts for the Bitou Trust and the PlettAid Foundation to reflect a more correct indication of the work. Most especially, the Trust is responsible for connecting many donors directly to beneficiary organisations and this consolidated account thus presents a more accurate reflection of what the efforts of these beneficiaries are achieving. The consolidated accounts are based on the independently inspected UK accounts and the South African audited financials as presented to the Board by Mazars Chartered Accountants.

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

I report on the accounts for the Trust for the year ended 31 March 2025, which are set out on pages 11 to 14.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act) Section 144(2) and that an independent examination is required.

It is my responsibility:

- to examine the accounts under Section 145 of the 2011 Act.
- to follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission under Section 145(5) of the 2011 Act; and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of the independent examiner's report

My examination was conducted in accordance with the general Directions given by the Charity Commission. 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 seeking explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedure undertaken to not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view,' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statements below.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

(1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that, in any material respect, the requirements:

(a) to keep accounting records in accordance with Section 130 of the 2011 Act; and

(b) to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the 2011 Act,

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.



Tiffany Purves FCA CA (SA)

Director, About Finance Limited

9 Danesfield, Ripley, Surrey GU23 6LS

Date: 30 September 2025

APPENDIX

THE BITOU TRUST (UK) and PLETTAID FOUNDATION (SA)

**CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
(Presented in GBP)
For the year ended 31 March 2025**

The reports and statements set out below comprise the consolidated financial statements of the Bitou Trust UK and PlettAid Foundation (South Africa) based on these accounts for the Trust and the audited financial statements of the latter as prepared by Mazars and signed by Trustees of the PlettAid Foundation on 30th July 2025.

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Contents:	Page
Statement of Financial Position	2
Statement of Comprehensive Income	3

Bitou Trust

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS OF 31 MARCH 2025

	2025 GBP	2024 GBP	2023 GBP
ASSETS			
Non-current assets	9,960	11,624	13,956
Fixed Assets	9,960	11,624	13,956
Net Current assets	61,492	48,259	42,514
Cash and equivalents	68,340	54,145	47,189
Accounts receivable	4,279	465	773
Creditors / Amounts falling due within one year	(11,127)	(6,351)	(5,448)
Total assets	71,452	59,883	56,470
CAPITAL AND LIABILITIES			
Trust Capital	71,452	59,883	58,660
Restricted Revenue Funds	64,890	55,300	50,458
Unrestricted Revenue Funds	6,562	4,583	6,012
Total capital and liabilities	71,452	59,883	56,470

**STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

	2025 GBP	2024 GBP	2023 GBP
INCOMING RESOURCES			
Grant Funding	325,381	270,839	251,496
Grant Funding	325,381	270,839	251,496
Donations	18,208	988	2,529
Donations – restricted			0
Donations - unrestricted	18,208	988	2,529
Total income	343,589	271,827	254,025
RESOURCES EXPENDED			
Charitable activities			
PlettAid Foundation	327,341	263,260	282,788
Support costs			
Accounting & Audit Fees	650	700	-
Media and marketing	4,034	350	72
Bank charges	60	85	
Total costs	332,085	264,395	282,860
Net (outgoing)/incoming resources	11,504	7,432	(28,835)
Income tax	-	-	-
Net incoming resources	11,504	7,432	(28,835)
Total funds brought forward	59,883	56,470	97,173
Reinstatement of Funds for FX movement	65	(4,019)	(11,868)
Total funds carried forward	71,452	59,883	56,470

Accounts



the Bitou Community Foundation Trust
(also known as the Bitou Trust)

Report and Financial Statements
For the year ended 31 March 2024
Charity No. 1172847

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

As Chairman of the Bitou Community Foundation Trust, I am deeply moved to present our annual report for the year ended March 2024. This has been a year of remarkable resilience and growth for our beneficiaries, despite the ongoing challenges faced by South Africa and the communities we serve.

The PlettAid Foundation has demonstrated extraordinary commitment in expanding their reach and impact. Their Hospice Plett team conducted over 8,750 visits to a record 307 patients, performing more than 35,000 interventions. The appointment of a Senior Social Worker in February 2024 has already strengthened their psycho-social support services, with plans to develop holistic support structures for vulnerable and orphaned children of patients.

The Plett Wellness team's dedication is equally inspiring, with their community health workers conducting 25,000 household visits and performing over 47,500 health screenings. Their work in the 1st 1000 Days project, supported by the Lipschitz Trust, has evolved into a comprehensive approach to early childhood development, incorporating both child and parent support.

Our environmental conservation efforts through the Robberg Coastal Corridor Protected Environment have achieved significant milestones. The successful CapeNature protected area audit and subsequent Biodiversity Stewardship Award validate their approach to conservation. The Inqua Trail continues to demonstrate how conservation, education, and community engagement can work in harmony.

I am particularly encouraged by the establishment of the Bitou Social Development Forum, which represents a significant step toward our long-held vision of collaborative community care. This initiative promises to strengthen the network of organizations working to uplift and support vulnerable members of our community.

As we look ahead, we remain committed to our dual mission of providing palliative care to both the people and places of Bitou. The challenges we face - from healthcare access to environmental preservation - require sustained dedication and support. I am deeply grateful to our donors, whose generosity makes our work possible, and to our remarkable teams on the ground whose dedication brings our mission to life.

To all our supporters, thank you for walking this path with us. Together, we are building a more resilient and caring Bitou community.



A Conyngham
Lady Conyngham (Chair)

FROM THE CEO OF THE PLETTAID FOUNDATION: CECILY VAN HEERDEN

Though a tough, financially precarious year marked by serious staff shortages, the PlettAid team made a significant difference in the lives of the Bitou community. The sheer number of community members supported by Community Health Workers, nurses, social workers, volunteer emotional supporters, and lay counsellors speaks volumes.



Our Hospice Plett team - comprising three sisters, seven home-based carers, a social auxiliary worker, and three emotional support volunteers - conducted 8,751 visits to 307 patients, performing over 35,184 interventions. These included pain and symptom management, medication oversight, counselling, social welfare support, illness adjustment assistance, and bereavement support.

Hospice Plett has grown in stature and reach, becoming the organization of choice for private general practitioners and public health services seeking Home-based Palliative Care in Bitou. The Hospice team operated without a social worker for 10 months until February 2024, when Celéste Pires joined as Senior Social Worker. Her immediate impact highlighted previously unaddressed social issues, strengthened partner networks, and enhanced psychological support for patients and families. The Social Workers will focus on vulnerable and/or orphaned children (OVCs) of patients this year, developing a holistic support structure for OVCs in our Hospice Plett programme, inclusive of education, bereavement, and basic life-skills support.

The Plett Wellness team, led by two sisters with 29 community health workers and 2 lay counsellors, conducted over 25,000 household visits throughout Bitou communities, performing 47,501 health screenings and referring 1,771 community members to appropriate healthcare facilities. Additionally, 13,021 clients received adherence counselling for chronic conditions including HIV, hypertension, diabetes, TB, asthma, and epilepsy. This program aims to enhance community health through improved health literacy, early illness detection, and proper healthcare access.

Nine lay counsellors support the Plett Wellness Team across Primary Health Care clinics throughout Bitou, providing adherence support, HIV and TB screening through voluntary counselling and testing, and antenatal support for expectant mothers.

A Lipschitz Trust grant enabled our expansion of the 1st 1000 days project from May 2023. This Plett Wellness initiative takes a holistic view of child development from conception to age three. We partnered with Knysna Education Trust to train 40 CHWs and lay counsellors on child development, educating parents on play-to-learn, book-sharing, and promoting healthy childhood development. The project incorporates parenting workshops to foster healthy parenting skills. Mental health awareness underlies community wellness, prompting community dialogues about mental illness recognition, stigma reduction, and access to care.

Bitou Trust

Our vision of unified Bitou service organizations began materializing in early 2023/24 through the Bitou Social Development Forum (BSDF), established through Bitou Municipality's Herman Nieuwoudt and various NPOs. The BSDF aims to:

1. Strengthen organizations addressing health, welfare, and social development.
2. Facilitate effective networking and information sharing.
3. Raise funds supporting BSDF and member goals.

The PlettAid Foundation remains committed to harnessing the collective strength of Bitou organizations serving vulnerable communities.

Funding remains a top priority for our Board and management. While the Department of Health funds 95% of the Plett Wellness Programme, Hospice Plett depends entirely on fundraising. Our Hospice Charity shop, our primary fundraising initiative since 2018, continues to thrive under Sharon Bright's leadership, generating almost R1.2 million in 2023/24 and contributing approximately R650,000 after expenses.

We are so incredibly grateful for the ongoing support of the Bitou Trust.

Thank you
Cecily van Heerden.

POSTSCRIPT: We are delighted to share that the Sister Cecily van Heerden, CEO of the PlettAid Foundation, has recently been asked to accept a nomination as Chairman of the Western Cape Palliative Care Association (previously HPCA). This is a great accolade of which we are all, justifiably, proud. We believe it will continue to build the network of care providers who engage with the PlettAid Foundation, ensuring a more effective inter-agency approach to ensuring continuity of care across domains.

FROM THE CONSERVATION MANAGER OF THE ROBBERG COASTAL CORRIDOR: KEI HEYNS



The year to March 2024 has been marked by exciting conservation triumphs and scientific discoveries for the Robberg Coastal Corridor Protected Environment (RCCPE). Our team's dedication was recognised at the highest levels as we both successfully passed the rigorous CapeNature protected area audit in November and subsequently received the prestigious CapeNature Biodiversity Stewardship Award for the best stewardship site on the Eastern Landscape. Kei Heyns, Conservation Manager at RCCPE, reflected, "These accolades reflect the tireless work of our team and partners. They validate our approach to conservation and inspire us to push even further in our efforts."

The corridor's flagship Inqua Trail has experienced a significant increase in awareness and interest. This guided hiking experience is more than just a scenic walk; it's a crucial component of the RCCPE's conservation strategy. "Every step on the Inqua Trail is a step towards conservation," explains Nicola Ash, marketing manager for the trail. "Hikers are directly contributing to the protection of one of South Africa's most critical biodiversity hotspots."

The trail, which traverses 18 km of pristine coastline, offers visitors a unique blend of ecological immersion and educational experience. In 2024, the trail introduced specialised programs like the "Spirit of the Wild," focusing on personal transformation and mindfulness exercises whilst in nature. It continues to be an important site of scientific discovery with researchers uncovering pristine Middle Stone Age open-air sites and rock art that sheds new light on the region's archaeological significance. "These findings are rewriting our understanding of early human activity in the area," said Dr. Jan de Vynck, a leading researcher involved in the discoveries.

Wildlife Monitoring systems, now installed across the corridor, have also yielded exciting discoveries. Camera traps have captured images of elusive species, including aardvark and leopard, previously thought to be rare in the area. "These sightings are crucial for understanding the true biodiversity of the corridor," Heyns explained. "They influence our conservation strategies and highlight the importance of protecting these habitats."

During the year we intensified our efforts in community outreach, holding regular stakeholder meetings and expanding educational programs. Plans are also underway to incorporate new properties into the protected area, with an updated management plan in development. "Our success is deeply rooted in community support," Heyns emphasized. "As we grow, we're committed to ensuring local stakeholders remain at the heart of our conservation efforts."

Despite these successes, the RCCPE team remains vigilant in addressing environmental threats from inappropriate development and conducting regular alien vegetation clearing. As the Robberg Coastal Corridor Protected Environment moves into its next phase of growth, it stands for the power of

Bitou Trust

dedicated conservation efforts. Its blend of ecological preservation, scientific research and sustainable tourism hopes to set a standard for protected areas in the region and beyond.

The work of the RCCPE extends far beyond the Inqua Trail. The protected environment serves as the last remaining ecological lifeline for many endangered plant and animal species. Its efforts focus on several key areas:

1. **Habitat Preservation:** The team works tirelessly to maintain the integrity of the coastal ecosystem, which includes fynbos – part of the world's smallest and most vulnerable floral kingdom.
2. **Alien Vegetation Clearing:** Regular clearing operations combat invasive species that threaten native flora. In the past year, the team has cleared over 175 hectares across various properties.
3. **Wildlife Monitoring:** A comprehensive camera trap system has revealed the presence of elusive species like aardvark and leopard, informing and influencing conservation strategies.
4. **Archaeological Preservation:** The corridor is home to significant paleontological and archaeological sites, including Middle Stone Age open-air sites and rock art.
5. **Development Watchdog:** The RCCPE team actively comments on and objects to inappropriate developments that could threaten the ecological balance of the area.

Dr. Morkel Pienaar, Chairman of the RCCPE, explains the broader significance of their work: "The Robberg Coastal Corridor is not just about protecting a beautiful piece of coastline. It's about preserving a complex ecological network that supports countless species and provides invaluable ecosystem services."

The importance of this work extends beyond local conservation. As climate change continues to threaten biodiversity worldwide, protected areas like the RCCPE serve as crucial refuges and living laboratories for understanding and mitigating these impacts.

"Every hectare we protect, every species we save, contributes to the global effort to maintain biodiversity," Heyns adds. "The Inqua Trail and our broader conservation work are intertwined – they represent our commitment to protecting this paradise for future generations."

As the RCCPE looks to the future, plans are underway to expand the protected area and incorporate new properties. This growth will further strengthen the ecological corridor, enhancing its ability to support diverse flora and fauna. As visitors hike through this stunning landscape, they're not just witnessing nature – they're actively participating in its preservation.

I extend my deepest gratitude to the Bitou Trust for their ongoing support. Together, we are making a difference.

Kei Heyns

Conservation Manager, RCCPE

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

The trustees present their report with the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2024. The trustees have adopted the provisions of the Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard for Smaller Entities (the FRSSE) (effective 1 January 2015).

Reference and Administration

Charity Name

The name of the charity is the Bitou Community Foundation Trust, also known as The Bitou Trust.

Charity Number

1172847

Trustees

Lady Annabelle Conyngham (Chair)

Chris von Christierson

Philippa Vaughan

Jane Taylor

Morkel Pienaar (appointed 31 January 2024)

Philippa Mary Sauvenier (appointed 30 January 2024)

Programme Manager

Tamzin Ractliffe

Principal Office

30 Kings Lane Windlesham Surrey GU20 6JQ

Independent Examiner

Tiffany Purves, FCA CA(SA): Director of About Finance Limited, 9 Danesfield, Ripley, Surrey GU23 6LS.

Tel: +44 1483 223371

Bankers

CAF Bank Limited, 25 Kings Hill Ave, Kings Hill, West Malling ME19 4TA Tel: +44 3000 123 000

Structure, Governance, and management.

Governing Document

The Bitou Community Foundation Trust, also known as The Bitou Trust ('The Trust') was established as a registered UK Charity (Charity Number 1172847) constituted under a Trust Deed dated 26th December 2016 and registered with the Charity Commission in April 2017.

The Trust sought to provide a vehicle through which caring and interested citizens could provide financial support to the need for healthcare, community development and environmental conservation to uplift the impoverished communities and protect the unique natural biodiversity in the Bitou region of the Western Cape. It was established with an initial gift from the Founding Trustees and actively fundraises in the UK and Europe to support sustainable development, health & wellbeing, and environmental conservation in the Bitou region of the Western Cape of South Africa.

Our efforts are focused on registered public benefit organisations working in the Eden District of the Bitou region of the Western Cape including the communities of Storms River, Wittedrif and Plettenberg Bay in the east and Harkerville in the west. This is an area of some 123km in length and one of the world's biodiversity

Bitou Trust

hotspots. The Bitou region is urgently in need of more sustainable development practices. The communities of Bitou have shown rapid growth of a predominantly poor population with migrants largely coming from the even poorer communities of the Eastern Cape.

Poor living conditions as well as inferior nutrition exacerbate poor health, are placing significant strain on the community which is under resourced in clinics and care facilities. At the same time, rapid development is having a significantly damaging effect on the environment and biodiversity of the region. A clear programme of environmental conservation most especially of the indigenous fynbos is essential for the unique and pristine coastline and the surrounding lands making up the Robberg Coastal Corridor.

Purpose

We support the development and conservation of a vibrant culture of care, making us a region of strong, interconnected communities providing palliative care for the people and conservation for the places of Bitou.

Our primary purpose is to provide palliative care to the people and places of Bitou. Palliative care is holistic care and relief for the poor, the sick, the young and the aged facing life-limiting illnesses and loss in their families. We also provide care, conservation, and protection for the places of Bitou. This natural environment is a biodiversity hotspot that is being harmed by rapid development and destruction of the flora, fauna and natural ecosystems that are of immense natural beauty and that provide important ecosystem services.

Recruitment and appointment of Trustees

The Deed provides for a minimum of three trustees. All trustees give of their time freely and no trustee remuneration is paid. Trustees are required to disclose all relevant interests and register them with the Trust Manager and, in accordance with the Trust's policy, to withdraw from decisions where a conflict of interest arises. Trustees are appointed for a period of five years after which time they may put themselves forward for re-appointment.

The trustees will consider new trustee appointments recruited for their knowledge, empathy and experience of the charity and its mission and to ensure the skills and composition of the trustee body and succession planning is optimised. Under the provisions of the Deed of Trust, any trustee may propose a willing and eligible candidate. New trustees may be sought by open advertisement or through dialogue with prospective interested parties who respect the ethos and commitment of the Trust and its charitable objectives.

Induction and training of new trustees

There is no formal induction process. However, a pre-appointment presentation introduces the objects and activities to potential Trustees and literature is made available to outline and clarify the work of the Trust. All Trustees are introduced to the responsibilities and duties of a trustee and the expectation the Charity has of them. All trustees have considerable experience either as trustees or as company directors.

Related parties

The Trust currently has two South African beneficiaries viz. PlettAid Foundation and The Robberg Coastal Corridor Protected Environment. Both are supported by the fundraising activities of the Bitou Trust in the UK.

Risk management

The trustees have a duty to identify and review the risks to which the charity is exposed and to ensure appropriate controls are in place to provide reasonable assurance against fraud and error. The Trustees recognise that exchange rate fluctuations may result in funds raised and/or transferred to South Africa may be different to those anticipated and/or budgeted for. The trustees have reviewed this risk and established a policy to manage this risk which retains the focus on the public benefit derived from our funding of the work of our beneficiaries and reports accordingly to the donors committed to the work.

Objectives and activities for the public benefit

The primary purpose of the Trust is to support the care and wellbeing of the Bitou region, its environment and all its people. We will support organisations, programmes and initiatives that deliver support services, education and training, capacity development and related activities that together promote and increase the

Bitou Trust

likelihood of success of efforts to establish sustainable livelihoods, promote health, wellbeing, community capacity building (including adaptive capacity to climate risks) and social inclusion, and that ensure the environment of the region can continue to support the people, flora and fauna in a way that will sustain the region for the future.

Our initial support has focused on the work of the PlettAid Foundation and the Robber Coastal Corridor Protected Environment. However, we remain open to partnerships that will consolidate, expand, and add value to leverage the efficiencies of our actions and of the benefits on the communities we serve.

The Trust meets its objectives through a programme of fundraising, strategic partnership and programme research and advocacy where appropriate. During the period under review, the Trust has renewed its efforts to rebuild and reconnect with its donors outside of South Africa which were impacted by the Covid pandemic and the challenges faced by South Africa since then. We believe this will support our efforts to support the expansion and ongoing service delivery of the Bitou Trust's beneficiaries in the country.

Strategic priorities

At an annual year-end meeting of the trustees, the trustees agree the broad strategy and areas of activity for the Trust including consideration of grant seeking, programmatic activity, and fundraising performance. The day-to-day administration of fundraising and grant making activities, and the processing and handling of applications is delegated to the Trust Manager, a volunteer working in the sector in the UK.

Financial review

Total grants received in the year ended March 2024 amounted to £270,568 (2023: £253,355). This includes grants of £2,706 received in the UK (2022: £2,529) and grants of R6415,963, received in South Africa ((2023: ZAR 5,518,244). No monies were remitted to beneficiary organisations in the period. At the end of the year there were cash reserves in the UK of £4,583 (2023: £6,012).

Reserves policy

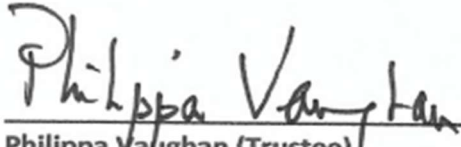
The Bitou Community Foundation Trust is a vehicle focused on raising funds to support its South African beneficiaries. Its support team are all volunteers which means that only nominal reserves are required. Thus, it is the Trust's policy to remit funds to beneficiaries in each year in which they are generated to support the work of beneficiaries in that year. Reserves maintained will only seek to be sufficient for ongoing maintenance of the Trust and its regulatory and fiduciary obligations.

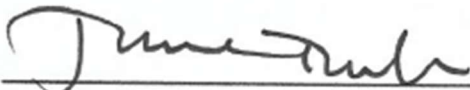
Principal funding sources

Donor support from the UK has been instrumental in supporting programmatic activity in both the UK and South Africa and the trustees are grateful for the support of donors, including those participating in The Funding Network, who have responded positively to its mission and objectives, and enabled it to make important progress during this first year of activity.

This report has been prepared in accordance with the Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard for Smaller Entities (the FRSSE) (effective 1 January 2015).

Approved by order of the Board of Trustees on 30 November 2024 and signed on its behalf by:


Philippa Vaughan (Trustee)


Jane Taylor (Trustee)

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

	2024 £	2023 £
INCOMING RESOURCES		
Voluntary Income:		
Unrestricted funds	2,706	2,529
Restricted funds	-	-
TOTAL INCOMING RESOURCES	£ 2,706	£ 2,529
RESOURCES EXPENDED		
<i>Costs of generating funds</i>		
Operating costs	1,135	72
<i>Charitable activities</i>	3,000-	-
TOTAL RESOURCES EXPENDED	£ 4,135	£ 72
Net incoming resources	-1,429	2,457
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS		
Funds brought forward	6,012	3,555
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD	£ 4,583	£ 3,555

BALANCE SHEET AT 31 MARCH 2024

	Note	2024	2023
CURRENT ASSETS			
Cash at bank and in hand		£ 4,583	£ 6,012
NET CURRENT ASSETS		£ 4,583	£ 6,012

FUNDS

	Note		
Unrestricted funds		£ 4,583	£ 6,012
Restricted funds		-	-
TOTAL FUNDS		£ 4,583	£ 6,012

Trustees' responsibilities in relation to the financial statements

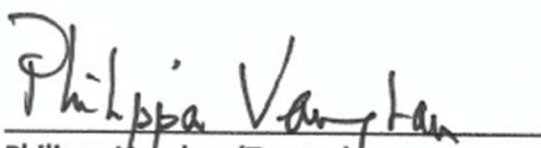
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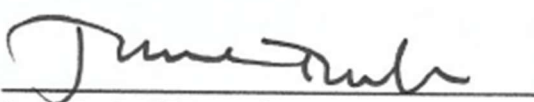
- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently.
- Observe the methods and principles of the Charities SORP
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent.
- State whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any departures disclosed and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

The trustees are responsible for keeping accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy the financial position of the charity and enable them to ascertain to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011 and the provisions of the trust deed. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities. The trustees are responsible for the integrity of the charity and financial information included on the charity's website.

The Charity is entitled to exemption from audit under Section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act).

Approved by resolution of the board of trustees on 30 November 2024 and signed on its behalf by:


Philippa Vaughan (Trustee)


Jane Taylor (Trustee)

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Accounting Policies

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard for Smaller Entities (FRSSE) (effective January 2015) and the requirements of the Statement of Recommended Practice, Accounting and Reporting by Charities.

Incoming resources

All incoming resources are included on the Statement of Financial Activities when the charity is legally entitled to the income, and the amount can be quantified with reasonable accuracy.

Donated services and facilities are included at the value to the charity where this can be quantified. The value of the services provided by volunteers has not been included in the accounts.

Resources expended.

Expenditure is recognised on an accruals basis as a liability is incurred.

Charitable expenditure comprises those costs incurred by the charity in the delivery of its activities and services for its beneficiaries. It includes both costs that can be allocated directly to such activities and those costs of an indirect nature necessary to support them.

Governance costs include those costs associated with meeting the constitutional and statutory requirements of the charity and costs linked to the strategic management of the charity.

Grants offered subject to conditions which have not been met at the year-end date are noted as a commitment but not accrued as expenditure.

Charitable activities

This relates to grants given either to the Trust's beneficiaries in South Africa or to its partnership beneficiaries according to the intentions and specifications of the donors to specific charitable activities.

Taxation

The charity is exempt from tax on its charitable activities.

Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds

These can be used in accordance with the charitable objectives at the discretion of the trustees.

Designated funds

Designated funds are unrestricted funds earmarked for specific objectives or a particular project and can be utilised at the discretion of the trustees to further the objectives of the project concerned. More specifically, funds for operating costs represent a founding grant to support the operational costs associated with ensuring that the Bitou Trust can establish itself well to further its mission and the mission of its beneficiary partner organisations.

Restricted funds

Restricted funds can only be used for particular restricted purposes within the objects of the charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular focused, and therefore restricted, purpose.

Costs of generating voluntary income

During the period, no costs were incurred as the Programme Manager worked on a voluntary basis. Costs were limited to banking fees only.

No trustees' remuneration was paid nor was any other benefit paid to trustees for the year ended 31 March 2024.

Related party disclosures

All of the activities referred to in the Trustees' Report relate to activities conducted by the PlettAid Foundation or the Robberg Coastal Corridor Protected Environment NPO, beneficiaries of the Bitou Trust in South Africa. Both the PlettAid Foundation and the Robberg Coastal Corridor Protected Environment raise further funding locally and their financials for the period are appended for available on our website.

The Trustees have taken the decision to also present the consolidated accounts for the Bitou Trust and the PlettAid Foundation to reflect a more correct indication of the work. Most especially, the Trust is responsible for connecting many donors directly to beneficiary organisations and this consolidated account thus presents a more accurate reflection of what the efforts of these beneficiaries are achieving. The consolidated accounts are based on the independently inspected UK accounts and the South African audited financials as presented to the Board by Mazars Chartered Accountants.

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

I report on the accounts for the Trust for the year ended 31 March 2024, which are set out on pages 11 to 14.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act) Section 144(2) and that an independent examination is required.

It is my responsibility:

- to examine the accounts under Section 145 of the 2011 Act.
- to follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission under Section 145(5) of the 2011 Act; and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of the independent examiner's report

My examination was conducted in accordance with the general Directions given by the Charity Commission. 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 seeking explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedure undertaken to not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view,' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statements below.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

(1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that, in any material respect, the requirements:

(a) to keep accounting records in accordance with Section 130 of the 2011 Act; and

(b) to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the 2011 Act,

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.



Tiffany Purves FCA CA (SA)

Director, About Finance Limited

9 Danesfield, Ripley, Surrey GU23 6LS

Date: 30 November 2024

APPENDIX

THE BITOU TRUST (UK) and PLETTAID FOUNDATION (SA)

CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
(Presented in GBP)
For the year ended 31 March 2024

The reports and statements set out below comprise the consolidated financial statements of the Bitou Trust UK and PlettAid Foundation (South Africa) based on these accounts for the Trust and the audited financial statements of the latter as prepared by Mazars and signed by Trustees of the PlettAid Foundation on 5th July 2024.

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Statement of Comprehensive Income	3

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
as of 31 MARCH 2024

	2024 GBP	2023 GBP	2022 GBP
ASSETS			
Non-current assets	11,624	13,956	14,716
Fixed Assets	11,624	13,956	14,716
Net Current assets	48,259	42,514	82,457
Cash and equivalents	54,145	47,189	91,905
Accounts receivable	465	773	1,472
Creditors / Amounts falling due within one year	(6,351)	(5,448)	(10,921)
Total assets	59,883	56,470	97,173
CAPITAL AND LIABILITIES			
Trust Capital	59,883	58,660	123,429
Restricted Revenue Funds	55,300	50,458	93,618
Unrestricted Revenue Funds	4,583	6,012	3,555
Total capital and liabilities	59,883	56,470	97,173

STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

	2024 GBP	2023 GBP	2022 GBP
INCOMING RESOURCES			
Grant Funding	270,839	251,496	323,703
Grant Funding	270,839	251,496	323,703
Donations	988	2,529	1,500
Donations – restricted			0
Donations - unrestricted	988	2,529	1,500
Total income	271,827	254,025	325,203
RESOURCES EXPENDED			
Charitable activities			
PlettAid Foundation	263,260	282,788	296,317
Support costs			
Accounting & Audit Fees	-	-	550
Bank charges	1,135	72	120
Other			
Total costs	264,395	282,860	296,987
Net (outgoing)/incoming resources	7,432	(28,835)	28,216
Income tax	-	-	-
Net incoming resources	7,432	(28,835)	28,216
Total funds brought forward	56,470	97,173	65,012
Reinstatement of Funds for FX movement	(4,019)	(11,868)	3,945
Total funds carried forward	59,883	56,470	97,173