



Receipts and payments accounts

For the period from	Period start date	To	Period end date
	01-Apr-22		31-Mar-23

Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds to the nearest £	Restricted funds to the nearest £	Endowment funds to the nearest £	Total funds to the nearest £	Last year to the nearest £
A1 Receipts					
Bring forward	4,165	7,364			
Activities for generating funds (trading)- medals	56		-	56	109
Activities for generating funds (trading) - badges	13		-	13	-
Donations - medals	87			87	321
Donations - other	98	-	-	98	123
Refunded postage				-	-
Donations - T-shirt sales	99			99	45
Gift Aid				-	379
Amazon Smile/Easyfundraising	5			5	-
Calendar Sales			-	-	602
Donations - guidebook sales	73		-	73	1,019
Footpath improvements grants		1,017	-	1,017	1,017
End feature grants		153	-	153	4,250
Website grants			-	-	2,000
Sub total (Gross income for AR)	4,595	8,534	-	13,129	9,865
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).					
	-	-	-	-	
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	4,595	8,534	-	13,129	9,865
A3 Payments					
Insurance	165	-	-	165	165
Trustee expenses		-	-	-	
Sew-on Badges	183		-	183	
Badges	21				
Maintenance			-	-	575
Website	250			250	4,753
Path improvement			-	-	
Mantell Gwynedd sub	10	-	-	10	669
Postage	161		-	161	230
End features		3,400	-	3,400	
Warden Equipment		69			
Stationery	20			20	
Passport project		-	-	-	
T-shirts	161	-	-	161	-
Sub total	971	3,469	-	4,350	6,392
A4 Asset and investment purchases. (see table)					
	-	-	-	-	
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total payments	971	3,469	-	4,350	
Net of receipts/(payments)	3,624	5,065	-	8,779	
A5 Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	-	-	-	-	-
Cash funds this year end	3,624	5,065	-	8,779	-

Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B1 Cash funds	From Section A	3,624	5,065	-
				-
		-	-	-
	Total cash funds	3,624	5,065	-
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))	OK	OK	OK
		Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B2 Other monetary assets	Details			
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
B3 Investment assets	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
B5 Liabilities	Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
			-	
			-	
			-	
			-	
			-	
Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees	Signature	Print Name	Date of approval	

Snowdonia Slate Trail



Annual Report
For year ending 5 April 2023
(with further information up to November 2023)

Presented at the AGM held on 25 November 2023

Snowdonia Slate Trail Trust
Registered Charity Number 1182188

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2022-2023 Financial Statement

COMPANY INFORMATION

Registered 15 February 2019

Chair Joan Cutting

Charity Number 1182188

Registered Office 1 Hen Siop
Upper Llandwrog
Caernarfon
LL54 7RE

Independent Examiner Vacant at present

Bankers Bank of Scotland

Aims of the Charity

- 1. The advancement of education for the public benefit in the unique slate heritage and culture of Snowdonia.*
- 2. The provision of facilities for recreation or other leisure time occupation for the public at large in the interests of social welfare by monitoring, managing and enhancing the Snowdonia Slate Trail long distance footpath.*

Details of Trustees as at 5 April 2023

Joan Cutting – **Chair**

Vivienne Oxley - **Secretary**

Aled Owen – **Treasurer**

Roger Greenhalgh – **Warden co-ordinator**

Dorothy Howarth – **Twitter account**

Mieko Yamaguchi – **Route details updates**

Details of Wardens and representatives as at 5 April 2023

Graham Fitch representing The Ramblers

Dan Goodwin representing Snowdonia Society

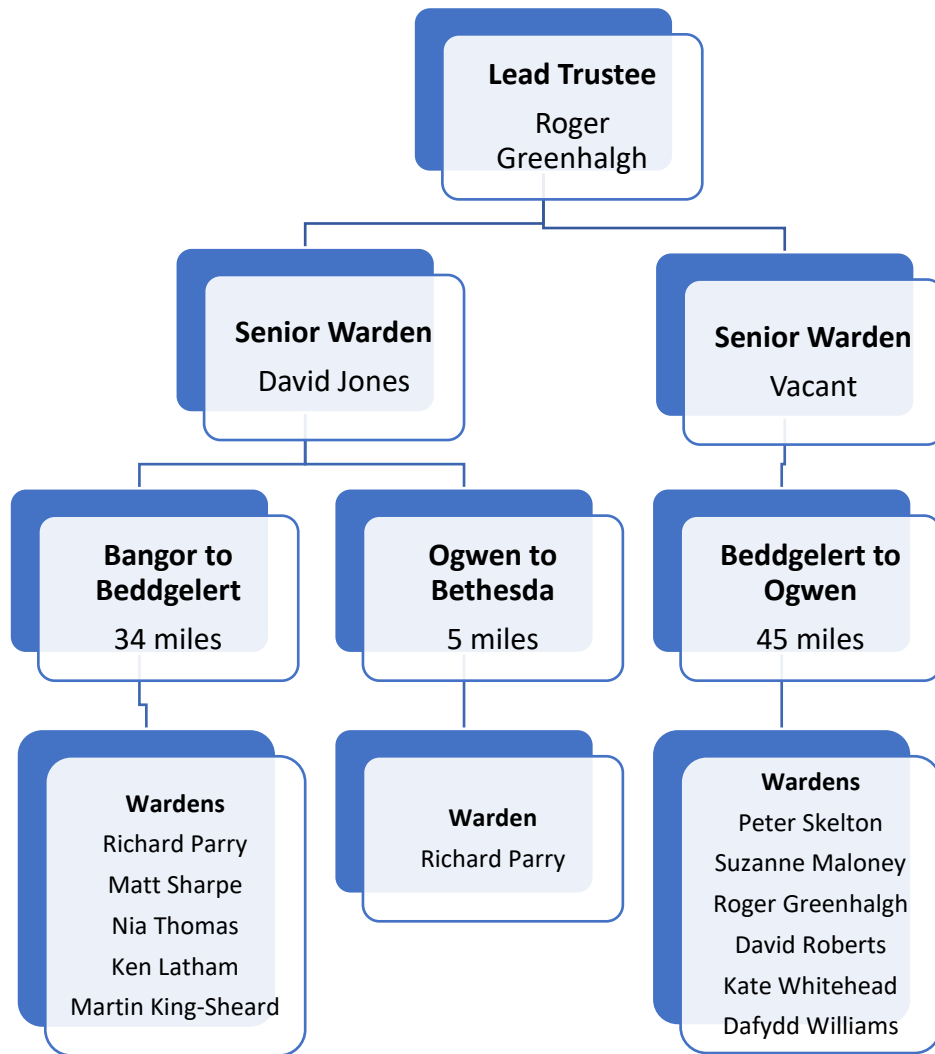
David Jones – Senior Warden

Vacancy for Senior Warden (covering Beddgelert to Ogwen)

Structure, governance and management

The governing document of the Snowdonia Slate Trail Trust is the Constitution of the Snowdonia Slate Trail Trust, a Charitable Incorporated Organisation, (Foundation Structure) as amended on 7 February 2019. Copies of this document can be inspected on request.

The Snowdonia Slate Trail Trust is managed by the Board of Trustees. At present, there are 8 Trustees. Other people who wish to assist with the Trust do so as Wardens or volunteers.



The Board of Trustees generally meets once a year, and occasionally at other times as necessary, and meetings are open to wardens and interested parties to attend. Otherwise, communication is via email or the WhatsApp group.

Induction and Training

New Trustees are given the Charities Commission “How to be a Trustee” document. Trustees are encouraged to keep up to date with charity law by private learning. This year, there have been no training events.

Risk Management

The Trustees carry out a continuous and ongoing review of policies designed to identify, manage and avert risk, both financial and operational. The Treasurer aims to report regularly on the state of the finances and reviews past performance and future needs. The Trustees act accordingly.

Financial Review

The Trust maintains a healthy bank balance and continues to monitor expenditure such that it remains sustainable. The 2022-23 account was audited, and no issues were highlighted. A full Treasurer's report is included below.

Policy on Reserves

The Snowdonia Slate Trail Trust needs reserves for the following reasons: -

- To provide sufficient working capital for its day-to-day needs
- To enable it to continue to operate in the event of a crisis.
- To enable it to cope with any reduction in its income.
- To finance and underpin growth in its activities.

Treasurer's Report

The financial report to be submitted to the Charities Commission is appended to this document covers the financial year 2022-23. The full account spreadsheet can be made available to anyone who requests it.

In that year, we raised a £1066 grant for the project to improve access above Rhosydd Quarry. Minor donations and sales of medal and badges raised £264, about half the previous year. A Just Giving appeal brought in £153 for the end features. A Gift Aid application has not been made this year but a larger application next year covering book sales, which are a donation from Aled, is expected to bring in about £600.

Main expenditure was on insurance (£164), website maintenance (£250), maintenance (£398), postage (£160), sew-on badges (£183), more T-Shirts (£161) and benches (£3400). This brought our available funds to £8696, of which £3630 was unrestricted, while the rest was allocated to the end features and further improvements.

Since the end of the last financial year and as at 30 August 2022, about £3240 has been received, of which £2690 is a donation from Aled for guidebook sales. The recent major expenditure has been £1900 on the end features and £923 on the Rhosydd gate.

Easyfundraising.com brought in £87 with about £150 due to us. Everyone is greatly encouraged to use Easyfundraising5. If all trustees and wardens, it is estimated that this would raise about £500 per year for the Trail.

Sale of goods is slow. We have ample supplies of metal and sew-on badges, as well as medals, and would not recommend expanding our range of items for sale at present.

Aled Owen
Treasurer

Maintenance Report

David Jones (Senior Warden)

Here is mainly what I got up to as a volunteer warden for the SST since our last AGM (29th October 2022).

4th Dec 2022 - Placed 3 pairs of roundels between Nantlle & the forest boundary north of Rhyd Ddu, in readiness of Cerdded Conwy Walks' planned walk along this section.

24th Dec 2022 - Visited Blaen Fferam quarry (Y Fron) to see for myself regarding someone's concern about navigating through a working quarry.

16th April 2023 - Visited Tal-y-Mignedd Isaf farm to see the situation regarding the blocked gate by the ford. Also spoke to the farmer.

7th May 2023 - Visited Gwaen Gynfi moor to do a recce. regarding the (original) missing posts.

Summer 2023 - I walked the 3 sections between Beddgelert & Llan Ffestiniog to collect trail data. As you're probably aware, the entering of data onto the LIVE map takes a long time. It took me two months to enter the data for these sections to the detail & accuracy I set myself

Prior to next AGM - Before the next upcoming AGM at the end of November, I would hopefully have made a start in collecting trail data for the next section (Llan Ffestiniog to Penmachno), which I'll probably break down into 3 sub-sections for data collecting purposes.

Ken Latham (Warden)

Rhyd Ddu to Beddgelert section

I've managed to walk this section on about a dozen occasions this year and noticed that this section of the trail is becoming very popular with walkers again after what seem to have been a couple of quiet years. The much improved Snowdon Sherpa Bus service is proving to be popular too with an hourly service running between Rhyd Ddu and Beddgelert with many walkers taking advantage of using the service for this section as a linear walk and returning to their cars at the car parks in the villages after completing the walk.

A day was spent replacing and cleaning quite a few roundels which had broken or become discoloured, one or two posts are looking a bit worse for wear and these will need some attention in the new year.

Matt Sharpe (Warden)

Section inspections carried out 2023-

Betws-Penmachno January. No issues noted, path in good condition with little vegetation. Walls, styles and fences intact. Signs remain in good condition.

Rhyd Ddu- Llanberis March. Two roundels replaced from my stock on this occasion both near the summit, with little vegetation and no damage to styles, walls or fences. Wet and boggy in parts but to be expected after weeks of inclement weather.

Rhyd Ddu- Beddgelert March. Pathways in excellent condition with limited requirement for maintenance due to limited vegetation growth. No damage to report, path drying out and remains clearly visible for its entire duration. Some roundels fading but no need to replace currently. Noted for future reference.

Beddgelert- Rhyd Ddu May. Hot walk, vegetation growth getting stronger but pathway in excellent condition. River low currently but posing no problems to walkway or signage. Styles good. No damage to walls or fences- some been replaced recently.

I've struggled to get out in the past few months, but still have every intention of checking out this gate on Mynydd Llandegai asap.

Martin King-Sheard (Warden)

I became a warden in 2022/ 23 for the section between Rhyd Ddu and Y Fron. I hiked from Blaenau Ffestiniog to Bangor via this section in 2022 and immediately fell in love the Slate Trail. It is a great privilege to be part of the team that look after the Trail and I have enjoyed walking my section during the last year.

At the time of writing this I am planning my Autumn hike with a stock of roundels at the ready! The what's app group has helped me to feel a part of the team but I look forward to meeting some of the other wardens and trustees in the coming year!

Kate Whitehead (Warden)

Tanygrisiau to Llan Ffestiniog.

Lots more roundels added to section for clearer route finding, especially around the farm just below Llan Ffestiniog.

Road signs fixed at stile crossing on main road in Blaenau over to the scrap yard.

Bracken can be huge and a problem but without landowner's permission I am loathe to chop/bash it. Still enjoying walking on many parts of the path and love sharing it with friends and family.

Dafydd Morgan Williams (Warden)

Cwt y Bugail – Llan Ffestiniog

In the last year I've walked the whole route twice and walked the route down from Llyn Morwynion down to the Pengwern Arms many times.

When I walked the whole route during February this year, I shared with the warden's group chat that a gate was missing on the kissing gate on the Migneint Road B4391, this was replaced quite promptly.

The section from Cwt y Bugail to Llyn Morwynion was very wet and boggy when I did it, to be expected! and nothing to report on that part back then, all the roundels were intact.

The Forestry Commission has been felling the forestry by Bont Newydd, the trail remained open for this duration. The wooden bridge crossing the river had a few loose handrails when I crossed it as time, I haven't been down since July to see if any repairs have been made.

I'm hoping to do the whole route again before Christmas to see if any roundels need replacing and see if everything is still in place, by then the bracken will have gone down hopefully.

Roger Greenhalgh (Warden Co-ordinator)

Trail Section Overview

Judging merely by the number of visitors encountered whilst wardening this section of the Trail, it seems to have become increasingly popular with visitors this year, especially to the Rhosydd Quarry. The walk up to Rhosydd from Tanygrisiau seems to be the most popular approach. Another routine but less popular route is for hikers from Croesor to focus on firstly ascending Cnicht then to circle round via Llyn Conglog and return to Croesor by the lower miners' track below Croesor Quarry (rather than via the Slate Trail route through the quarry head). This is just from casual periodic observation rather than from any actual headcount.

In fine weather, a particularly popular short walk is the short ascent to Llyn Cwmorthin alongside the waterfalls. In the summer, the pools here have become popular picnic spots.

The growing success of the **Go Below** (<https://www.go-below.co.uk/>) mine exploration activities at Cwmorthin also now regularly brings groups up this route (on foot), and their new underground glamping facility **Deep Sleep** (<https://www.go-below.co.uk/deep-sleep.asp>) has gained further traction. Whilst wardening at Cwmorthin I've now several times been asked by visitors where they should meet or park for this – the Go Below facility at Tanygrisiau Station Car Park isn't particularly clearly signposted at the moment.

Litter

One key function of wardening duties on this section which I undertake is to litter pick at reasonably regular intervals. It continues to be very rare indeed to encounter litter of any sort on the remoter lengths of this trail section, but the Tanygrisiau car park above Dolrhedyn Terrace is by far the exception. This car park is a regular catch-point for a variety of small-scale litter such as food packaging, drinks cans, dog poo bags and even disposable nappies. To a lesser extent this also applies for about 300 yards along the track to the Cwmorthin waterfall and up towards the Cwmorthin Quarry (alongside the other stream cascades.)

Croesor car park also occasionally accumulates small amounts of litter and sometimes discarded or forgotten hiking apparel, usually left alongside the Portaloo facility.

Off-road motor bikes

Whilst wardening this section I have occasionally encountered small groups of off-road motor-bikes using the trail. They have always been polite and respectful, and to date I have not yet witnessed any proceeding off-trail, though there is some evidence (in the form of tyre imprints) of such activity above Rhosydd Quarry towards Llyn Conglog. As yet this area hasn't apparently suffered significant erosion from this activity but I maintain a watchful eye.

It may be useful to clarify which sections of the route (if any) are permissible for passage by such vehicles. There is clearly a considerable local interest in dirt-biking, as higher up the waste heaps to the immediate east of Cwmorthin there are a couple of impromptu dirt-bike circuits clearly marked out on the upper levels, (and the tyre tracks also indicate that some dirt bikes are now occasionally ascending from here and heading cross-country along the ridge top towards Llyn Conglog.)

Wild camping

Various articles in the press and posts on social media now highlight the delights and successful experiences of wild-camping along the Slate Trail. Whilst wardening along this section I have fairly regularly encountered tents carefully and sensitively pitched in remote off-trail locations and have so far always had positive and friendly interactions with such wild-campers. To date, I have always noted their presence to be respectful of the environment and their participants to be aware of and follow the principle of “leave no trace”.

A particularly well crafted and pertinent recent post is this example of Becky Angell's blog:
<https://www.beckythetraveller.com/walking-snowdonia-slate-trail-llwybr-llechi-eryri-wild-camping/>

Waymarking & access

Many of the social media posts I have spotted are particularly positive about how well waymarked the Trail is, and it is pleasing to report that the roundels which I installed on this section during 2021/22 appear to be surviving well!

The most challenging part of this route for waymarking has arguably been the fairly barren upland section from Cwmorthin through the Rhosydd Quarry and over the *bwlch* to the Croesor Quarry. The terrain is tricky to find reliable places to affix roundels or insert marker posts. Even so, it is pleasing to report on continuing success.

Early in the year the Trust negotiated with Gwynedd Council to arrange for a contractor to install a pedestrian gateway as a replacement for the dilapidated and poorly positioned ladder stile above Rhosydd. The work was funded by the Trust, and the opportunity was also taken for the contractor to deliver a set of waymarker posts up there for future deployment

The subsequently installed and repositioned gate has been a great improvement. After a couple of months of usage, however, despite being located on higher ground, the pathway through the gate began to lodge run-off water, the footway became muddy, and so has warranted revisiting to insert some rock slabs to step on and some channel clearance to encourage drainage.

An Autumn visit with a couple of colleagues gave opportunity to achieve this, and to embed the three new waymark posts along this section. These yellow-topped posts now successfully provide a good clear line-of-sight route between the Rhosydd Quarry buildings and the defunct reservoir dam above the Croesor Quarry.

(Incidentally, away from this section, too, I was able to join a **Caru Eryri** work party to lay a series of slate paving slabs in a similarly boggy section of the trail near Llyn Morwynion.)

Also worth noting (on the Llanffestiniog-Penmachno section) may be that the cattle grid on the track at the top of Cwm Tiegl, (between Manod and Rhiw Bach) has recently been replaced with a full-width gate with inbuilt pedestrian gate, and the old cattlegrid infilled. This has hugely improved the accessibility of this short section of track.

Although my wardening focus is officially the Tanygrisiau-Croesor section, I'm a frequent walker of several of the adjoining sections, too! I regularly walk through here to visit the *Cwt y Bugail* Quarry, which lies just a short distance to the north-east of the Slate Trail.

Off-trail routes to nearby artefacts

The growing public awareness of the Slate Trail has meant that I'm often asked about how best to reach some of the closely (but not directly) adjacent slate industry artefacts that have gained attention.

For example: <https://www.llechi.cymru/index.php/slateareas/gorseddau>

On several occasions I've received feedback from such adventuring hikers that certain routes which diverge from the Slate Trail may deserve some greater prominence, and in some cases may also deserve some better waymarking. A good example would be the divergent route from Beddgelert over to Cwm Ystraddlyn, notable for the Ynys y Pandy slate mill, the Gorseddau Quarry (and its overhanging wall), the Treforys miners' village.

Other oft-queried locations include the Prince of Wales Quarry, beyond, in Cwm Pennant, and the defunct pumping engine in the Dorothea Quarry.

These sorts of outlying artefacts are now gaining greater attention through social media posts and the press. <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2018/mar/31/country-diary-a-long-abandoned-slate-quarrys-enduring-monuments>

Education Report

Talks and seminars

Aled gave a talk to Edinburgh Ramblers in November 2022 and is due to give another presentation to Edinburgh u3a Geology Group in February 2024.

Marketing Report

Brochures

Brochures are available in a number of outlets but more effort needs to be made to ensure these outlets maintain their stock. I think once the present supply is exhausted, we will need to decide whether they are worth continuing. Only Beaumaris Tourist Information Centre and Lodge Dinorwig have asked for replacements. Perhaps someone might like to take over the brochure distribution post.

Aled Owen

Facebook, Twitter and Instagram

SST are on 3 social media platforms:

- Facebook with 4,050 followers which serves to share information about the Trail as well as Trail walkers' experiences and photos.
- Instagram which is a new addition with 93 followers to date

- Twitter has 1,211 followers but we've lost access to the account

Tiktok did not suit our market, unless you have an avid walker who loves selfies, promoting a brand and music to the background.

Bilingual posts are used as this seems to draw a broader range of views, comments and an overall good response.

SST is on quite a few other walking/Snowdonia/slate groups and sharing our posts in there is slowly building up a larger follower base.

Aled Owen and Dorothy Howarth

Guidebook

Sales of the guidebook continue to exceed expectations, the guide being one of Rucksack Readers' best sellers. Sales through the website will have generated about £7000, including Gift Aid, for path maintenance and development to date.

Aled Owen

Passport Scheme

We're into the fifth year of the Passport Scheme. Here's how it's looking so far:

Aug 2018 to Nov 2019	13 medals	£105.50
Nov 2019 to Sep 2020	7 medals	£ 72.00
May 2021 to Oct 2021	19 medals	£340.50
Oct 2021 to Oct 2022	24 medals	£184.00
Oct 2022 to Sep 2023	40 medals	£261.10
TOTAL	102 medals	£1,010.00

This year we've sent the highest number of medals yet. It's even higher than last year, which was post Covid lockdown. However, this increase was due to the participation of Focused Performance (trail running holidays), which brought a group of 11. Without them, the number would have been the same. They bumped up the income, as did one very generous walker.

We have **24 venues** fully participating in the Passport Scheme. This includes five new ones:

- Poblado Coffi, Nantlle
- Trigonos, Nantlle
- Caffi'r Pafiliwn, Blaenau Ffestiniog
- Caffi Y Gorlan, Blaenau Ffestiniog
- Pitch and Hike, Capel Curig

20 June 2022, Aled started keeping a tally of the number of passport stamps per venue. The following venues had more than 20 stamps:

- Canolfan Y Fron

- Beddgelert Tourist Information Centre
- Lakeside Café, Tanygrisiau
- Y Pengwern, Llan Ffestiniog
- Pen y Bryn Stores, Llan Ffestiniog

Three venues aren't fully functioning:

- Caffi Blas y Waun, Antur Waunfawr is temporarily closed – they're re-developing.
- Lodge Dinorwig doesn't have a café any more - they do have a stamp in the bunkhouse but few people get stamps there.
- Oriel Caffi Croesor – the café is closed but there's a pop-up, the future of which is unknown.

David Jones has created an excellent interactive Google map, showing passport locations and details, and it has been uploaded to the website.

Last year I suggested that, to increase the medal and donation rate,

- The passport needs to be brought onto the home page.
 - Aled contacted the webmaster about a prominent link and learned it would cost £200-£300. The current homepage link will have to suffice.
- We could get comments about the thrill of getting a medal from the children who have completed, for the website.
 - We've put under Walkers' Stories, a page entitled Children's Tales. I've requested comments.
- We could think of school visits to promote it.
 - Action at the last meeting said we'd explore the marketing of the trail to kids in schools. Pending.

Joan Cutting

Website

The website continues to be used for downloading maps and instructions, and for sales

Aled Owen

T-shirts

We have a supply of T-shirts with our embroidered logo for sale which continues to raise a modest amount of funds. Sales are very slow.

Button badges and sew-on badges

Again, we have a supply of badges but sales are very slow.

Aled Owen

Further marketing ideas

Car stickers could prove to be a cheap, effective and accessible way to promote the SST all over the UK, available via our website. To further promote this they could be offered post free and by holding a one-off competition to win a car sticker for the best photo shared.

Dorothy Howarth

Projects Report

Path Improvements above Llan Ffestiniog

Contrary to last year's annual report, the project had not been completed. The few stones remaining alongside the path were placed along the path by volunteers from the Snowdonia Society this year and the project is truly complete. Many thanks to the Snowdonia Society for their efforts.

Start and end features

The benches are complete and one has been installed in Bethesda. The bench allocated to Porth Penrhyn remains in store pending construction of a base by Gwynedd Council's contractors, who are using the site at present. Installation is due in February 2024.

Repairs to permissive path at Conwy Falls

The steps here require repair. After much negotiation, Conwy Council has agreed to carry out those repairs. However, the work is delayed pending extension of the Permissive Path Agreement period.

Broader Community Involvement

A consortium of community groups and social enterprises in the Bethesda, Nantlle and Ffestiniog areas see the Trail as a major opportunity for sustainable tourism. They have secured funding to carry out research on opportunities and are hopeful of achieving further significant funding which can be tapped into, for example, to carry out an assessment of the Trail and the work necessary to bring it up to National Trail standard.

Aled Owen

Publication by Mark Richards

An exciting prospect for 2024 is the production of an illustrated book on the Trail by Mark Richards. Mark is a walking artist who has, hitherto, concentrated on the Lake District and the Dales. His work is reminiscent of that of Arthur Wainwright, and the production of a book on the Trail will widen even more the awareness of the Trail. Thanks to all trustees and wardens who accompanied Mark on wanders along the route.

Roger Greenhalgh

Acknowledgements

Heritage Lottery Fund
Magnox,
CADW,
Blakemore Foundation,
Snowdonia National Park CAE Fund,
The Foyle Foundation,
The Garfield Weston Foundation,
The Oakdale Trust,
Community Foundation in Wales,
HF Holidays,
Horizon,
First Hydro,
Dŵr Cymru,
The Laspen Trust,
Bethesda Town Council,
Ffestiniog Town Council,
Gwynedd Council,
Conwy County Borough Council,
Snowdonia National Park
Snowdonia Society
The Ramblers
Ashley Foundation
Rehau Plastics, Blaenau Ffestiniog,
Red Nose,
Cambrian Railways PAVD,
Mantell Gwynedd
and
our wardens.

All the above have contributed towards the success of our organisation.

