

# The Bellman (SCIO) Trustees' Annual Report August 2023 - 2024



THEBELLMAN.CO.UK

## **Public Call for Return of Invercarron - TheBellman**

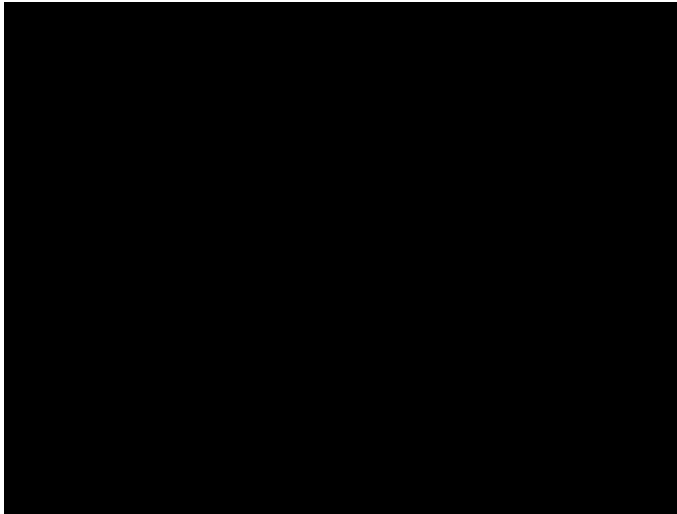
A FORUM will be formed and a strategy formulated by our community council – such are the actions emerging from a public meeting last night, where the overriding message was 'change the decision'. The meeting...

## **Charity contact information**

The Bellman (SCIO)  
Scottish Charity Number: SC050368

Website: [www.thebellman.co.uk](http://www.thebellman.co.uk)

## Charity Trustees



## Objectives and activities

Launched in July 2019, the Bellman was established as a SCIO on the 10th August 2020 for the purpose of representing local news, interests and amenities of the community in Stonehaven and promoting community development in South Aberdeenshire by providing a free **digital news website**.

The Bellman ([www.thebellman.co.uk](http://www.thebellman.co.uk)) provides information from a community perspective in the areas of:

- Town news, events and activities
- Sport, health, wellbeing & lifestyle
- Science, environmental protection and improvement
- Arts, culture, heritage and religion
- Public interest journalism, covering the activities of the Community Council, Local Authority and its elected members.

The Bellman is a free to access site that also allows the community to comment on and submit items of news and general interest. It also provides a platform for local groups and associations to promote their activities and events, to encourage participation in events and community affairs and promotes a sense of community welfare and responsibility, enhancing social connections within the community.

## **Bellman Activity Overview**

The Bellman website remains the only source of dedicated local news and community affairs in Stonehaven.

In our first year of operation site statistics demonstrated that the readership of the Bellman was already reaching beyond the population of Stonehaven (circa 12,000) and while readership isn't a specific target in itself, it is none the less encouraging that in our fourth year (as a SCIO) reader numbers continue to grow, reflecting the demand and interest for a local news service in the community.

## **Bellman Accounts - Nature & Purpose of Funds**

The Bellman's sole purpose, as described above, is to provide and maintain a local news and community service within Stonehaven.

As in previous financial years the Bellman has been able to cover its annual operating costs through grant funding, supplemented by income from local interest advertising. During the financial year reported, the Bellman:

Incurred no other expenses

Was in receipt of income from a local business grant and advertising

Did not support any other organisation via grant funding

Paid no remuneration or expenses to any of the three SCIO Trustees (or anyone connected to a charity trustee)

Recruited no staff paid or otherwise

Bellman income in 2023 - 2024 together with the funds held in our bank account was sufficient to cover our annual operating costs for the year, and leave a surplus in our bank account to be carried forward of £316.

## **Structure, governance and management**

### **Type of governing document**

The Bellman SCIO is governed under a single tier Constitution which sets out the organisation's purpose, structure and describes how it will operate. Governance is discussed as a regular agenda item at Business meetings and there were no issues arising during the period of this annual report.

### **Trustee recruitment and appointment**

The Bellman operates under the guidance and direction of three Trustees and no additional trustees were recruited during the period of this annual report. The recruitment process is at the discretion of the existing Trustees and should the organisation require additional skills or experience, any new recruitment would be discussed and agreed at a Business meeting.

External organisations are not allowed to appoint charity trustees.

## Achievements and performance

One of the primary aims of the Bellman has been to establish the site as the 'go to' trusted destination for local community news and interests.

The site stats show another year of strong growth in unique site visits which are now in excess of 15,000 a month (up from 14,000 in 2022/3).

The Bellman continues to report widely on local community news and interests in the areas of:

Community news, events and activities

Sport, health, wellbeing & lifestyle

Science, environmental protection and improvement

Arts, culture, heritage and religion

Activities of the Community Council, Local Authority and elected members

The Bellman has also encouraged community development by enabling residents to comment on and submit items of news and general interest.

## Financial review

### Statement of the charity's policy on reserves

As reported in the Use of Funds section, above, the Bellman did not generate any income from business activity during the financial year and annual operating costs were met through a mix of grants secured and advertising on the site..

At the end of the financial year, the Bellman recorded a loss of £211, which was offset by funds held in our bank account to leave a balance at the end of the financial year of £316. .

The ongoing expenditures and costs of operating the Bellman site are readily identified and stable and the trustees do not envisage any unanticipated expenditure or operating costs. The absence of any reserve funds is therefore unlikely to be critical to the continued operation of the organisation.

The business is now supplementing funding from local sources with advertising on the site.

Should the Bellman generate a modest surplus at the end of any financial year, then these funds may be retained as a reserve to meet future contingencies, should they arise. With our key financial goal each year to cover our operating costs, it would not be our aim to create substantial reserves. Our reserve policy will be reviewed from time to time to ensure that it continues to be relevant for the needs of the business.

### Details of any deficit

The Bellman was able to meet its annual operating costs through advertising, donations and grant funding.

### Donated facilities and services

No facilities or services were donated during the period of the annual report.

## Future plans

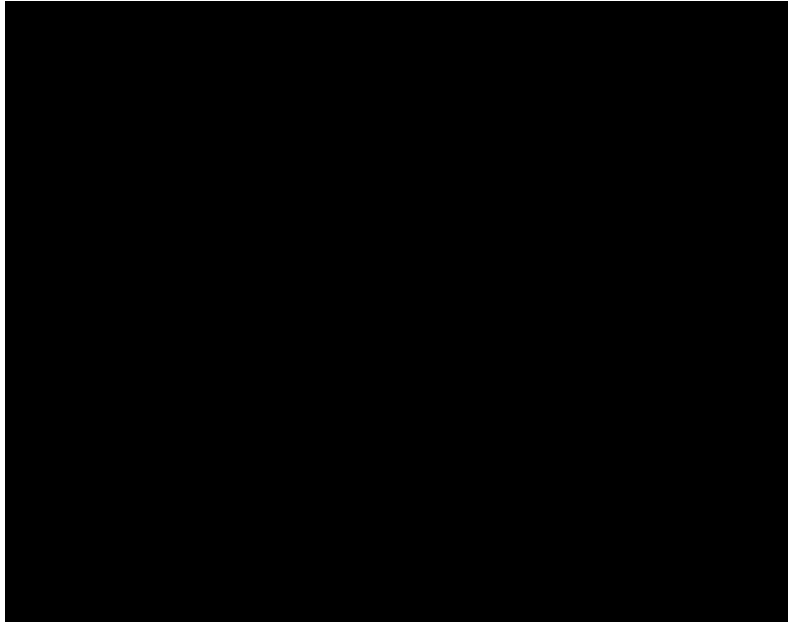
Plans for 2024/5 include:


Maintain &/or grow the Bellman readership

Encourage greater participation in the site form local sporting, social and cultural groups to share news of the events and activities

Continue to expand our network of volunteer authors

Secure funding to cover the Bellman's operating costs



	The Bellman (SCIO)										Enter SC No. below	
											SC050368	
	Receipts and payments accounts											
	For the period from	Period start date			Period end date							
	Day	Month	Year	to	Day	Month	Year					
	1st	September	2023		31st	August	2024					
Section A Statement of receipts and payments												
	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Expendable endowment funds	Permanent endowment funds	Total funds current period	Total funds last period						
	to nearest £	to nearest £	to nearest £	to nearest £	to nearest £	to nearest £						
A1 Receipts												
Donations												
Legacies												
Grants		200			200	500						
Receipts from fundraising activities												
Gross trading receipts						600						
Income from investments other than land and buildings												
Rents from land & buildings												
Gross receipts from other charitable activities												
A1 Sub total		200			200	1,100						
A2 Receipts from asset & investment sales												
Proceeds from sale of fixed assets												
Proceeds from sale of investments												
A2 Sub total												
Total receipts		200			200	1,100						
A3 Payments												
Expenses for fundraising activities												
Gross trading payments												
Investment management costs												
Payments relating directly to charitable activities		411			411	472						
Grants and donations												
Governance costs:												
Audit / independent examination												
Preparation of annual accounts												
Legal costs												
Other												
A3 Sub total		411			411	472						
A4 Payments relating to asset and investment movements												
Purchases of fixed assets						499						
Purchase of investments												
A4 Sub total						499						
Total payments	0	0			411	971						
Net receipts / (payments)		( 211)			( 211)	129						
A5 Transfers to / (from) funds												
Surplus / (deficit) for year		( 211)			( 211)	129						

		The Bellman (SCIO)				SC050368	
Section B Statement of balances							
Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Expendable endowment funds to nearest £	Permanent endowment funds to nearest £	Total current period to nearest £	Total last period to nearest £
B1 Cash funds	Cash and bank balances at start of year	-	527			527	398
	Surplus / (deficit) shown on receipts and payments account	-	( 211)			( 211)	129
						-	
						-	
	Cash and bank balances at end of year	-	316	-	-	316	527
	(Agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Details			Fund to which asset belongs		Market valuation to nearest £	Last year to nearest £
B2 Investments	None						
				Total		-	-
	Details			Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (if available) to nearest £	Current value (if available) to nearest £	Last year to nearest £
B3 Other assets	Laptop						499
				Total		-	499
	Details			Fund to which liability relates		Amount due to nearest £	Last year to nearest £
B4 Liabilities	None						
				Total		-	-
	Details			Fund to which liability relates		Amount due (estimate) to nearest £	Last year to nearest £
B5 Contingent liabilities	None						
				Total		-	-
Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees	Signature	Print Name				Date of approval	
						26 May 2025	

		The Bellman (SCIO)		SC050368
<b>Section C Notes to the Accounts</b>				
<b>C1 Nature and purpose of funds</b> <i>(may be stated on analysis of funds worksheets)</i>				
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; min-height: 100px;"> <p>The nature and purpose of funds is fully explained in the Annual Trustees Report item</p> </div>				
	Type of activity or project supported	Individual / institution	Number of grants made	£
<b>C2 Grants</b>	None			
	<b>Total</b>			
<b>C3a Trustee remuneration</b>	If no remuneration was paid during the period to any charity trustee or person connected to a trustee cross this box (otherwise complete section 3b)			<b>X</b>
	Authority under which paid			£
<b>C3b Trustee remuneration - details</b>				
<b>C4a Trustee expenses</b>	If no expenses were paid to any charity trustee during the period then cross this box (otherwise complete section 4b)			<b>X</b>
			Number of trustees	£
<b>C4b Trustee expenses - details</b>	None			
	Nature of relationship	Nature of transaction	Transaction amount (£)	Balance outstanding at period end (£)
<b>C5 Transactions with trustees and connected persons</b>			None	
<b>C6 Other information</b>	<p>See Annual Trustee Report</p>			



		The Bellman (SCIO)					SC050368
Additional analysis (1)							
Analysis of receipts and payments							
1 Donations							
	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Expendable endowment funds	Permanent endowment funds	Total current period	Total last period	
	to nearest £	to nearest £	to nearest £	to nearest £	to nearest £	to nearest £	
Total							
	-	-	-	-	-	-	
2 Grants							
	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds			Total current period	Total last period	
	to nearest £	to nearest £			to nearest £	to nearest £	
Macphie's Community Award		200			200		
Aberdeen Airport Propellor Award						500	
Craigneil Windfarm							
Total		200			200	500	
3 Gross receipts from other charitable activities							
	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Expendable endowment funds	Permanent endowment funds	Total current period	Total last period	
	to nearest £	to nearest £	to nearest £	to nearest £	to nearest £	to nearest £	
Go Fibre Advertising						600	
Total	-				-	600	
	-	-	-	-	-		reference error
4 Payments relating directly to charitable activities							
	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Expendable endowment funds	Permanent endowment funds	Total current period	Total last period	
	to nearest £	to nearest £	to nearest £	to nearest £	to nearest £	to nearest £	
Publisher's Liability Insurance		411			411		
Publisher's Liability Insurance						412	
Impress Licence						60	
Laptop purchase						499	
Total		411			411	971	

The Bellman (SCIO)					SC050368	
<b>Additional analysis (2)</b>						
<b>5 Breakdown of unrestricted funds</b>						
	Unrestricted fund 1 - enter name of fund below	Unrestricted fund 2 - enter name of fund below	Unrestricted fund 3 - enter name of fund below	Unrestricted fund 4 - enter name of fund below	Total unrestricted funds	Total unrestricted funds last period
<b>Receipts</b>						
Donations						
Legacies						
Grants						
Receipts from fundraising activities						600
Gross trading receipts						
Income from investments other than land and buildings						
Rents from land & buildings						
Gross receipts from other charitable activities						
<b>Sub total</b>	-	-	-	-		600
<b>Receipts from asset &amp; investment sales</b>						
Proceeds from sale of fixed assets						
Proceeds from sale of investments						
<b>Sub total</b>						
<b>Total receipts</b>	-				-	600
<b>Payments</b>						
Expenses for fundraising activities						
Gross trading payments						
Investment management costs						
Payments relating directly to charitable activities						472
Grants and donations						
Governance costs:						
Audit / independent examination						
Preparation of annual accounts						
Legal costs						
<b>Sub total</b>						
<b>Payments relating to asset and investment movements</b>						
Purchases of fixed assets						
Purchase of investments						
<b>Sub total</b>						
<b>Total payments</b>						
<b>Net receipts / (payments)</b>	-			-	-	128
<b>Transfers to / (from) funds</b>					-	
<b>Surplus / (deficit) for year</b>	-				-	128
<b>Nature and purpose of funds</b>						

The Bellman (SCIO)					SC050368	
<b>Additional analysis (3)</b>						
<b>6 Breakdown of restricted funds</b>						
	Restricted fund 1 - enter name of fund below	Restricted fund 2 - enter name of fund below	Restricted fund 3 - enter name of fund below	Restricted fund 4 - enter name of fund below		
					<b>Total restricted funds</b>	<b>Total restricted funds last period</b>
<b>Receipts</b>						
Donations						
Legacies						
Grants		200			200	500
Receipts from fundraising activities						
Gross trading receipts						
Income from investments other than land and buildings						
Rents from land & buildings						
Gross receipts from other charitable activities						
<b>Sub total</b>		200			200	500
					-	
<b>Receipts from asset &amp; investment sales</b>						
Proceeds from sale of fixed assets						
Proceeds from sale of investments						
<b>Sub total</b>						
<b>Total receipts</b>		200			200	500
					-	
<b>Payments</b>						
Expenses for fundraising activities						
Gross trading payments						
Investment management costs						
Payments relating directly to charitable activities		411			411	0
Grants and donations						
Governance costs:						
Audit / independent examination						
Preparation of annual accounts						
Legal costs						
<b>Sub total</b>		411			411	-
<b>Payments relating to asset and investment movements</b>						
Purchases of fixed assets						499
Purchase of investments						
<b>Sub total</b>	-	-	-	-	-	499
<b>Total payments</b>	-	411	-	-	411	499
<b>Net receipts / (payments)</b>	-	( 211)	-	-	( 211)	1
<b>Transfers to / (from) funds</b>						
					-	
<b>Surplus / (deficit) for year</b>	-	( 211)	-	-	( 211)	1
<b>Nature and purpose of funds</b>						
See Annual Trustee Return						

# APPENDIX 3



		Independent examiner's report on the accounts						v2	
Report to the trustees/members of	Registered charity number	Charity name The Bellman (SCIO)							
On the accounts of the charity for the period		SC050368							
Set out on pages		Period start date				Period end date			
		Day	Month	Year		Day	Month	Year	
		01	09	2023	to	31	08	2025	
		2						(remember to include the page numbers of additional sheets)	
Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner	The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the terms of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) 2005 Act and the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended). The charity trustees consider that the audit requirement of Regulation 10(1) (d) of the Accounts Regulations does not apply. It is my responsibility to examine the accounts as required under section 44(1) (c) of the Act and to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.								
Basis of independent examiner's statement	My examination is carried out in accordance with Regulation 11 of the 2006 Accounts Regulations. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts and seeks explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and, consequently, I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.								
Independent examiner's statement	In the course of my examination, no matter has come to my attention [other than that disclosed on the attached page*]								
	1. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to keep accounting records in accordance with section 44(1) (a) of the 2005 Act and Regulation 4 of the 2006 Accounts Regulations, and</li> <li>to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with Regulation 9 of the 2006 Accounts Regulations</li> </ul> have not been met, or								
	2. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper view of the accounts to be reached.								
Signed					Date:	26/05/2025			
Name									
Relevant professional qualification(s) or body (if any)									
Address									

\*Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply. If the words do apply, set out those matters which have come to your attention on the following page.

## APPENDIX 3

### Disclosure section

Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight material problems.

Give here brief details of  
any items that the  
examiner wishes to  
disclose