



The Flow Country Partnership

**Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation
No. SC053100**

Annual Report & Financial Statements

For the Year Ended 28th February 2025

Trustees' Annual Report

For the Year Ended 28th February 2025

The Trustees have pleasure in presenting their report together with the financial statements and the independent examiner's report for the year ended 28th February 2025.

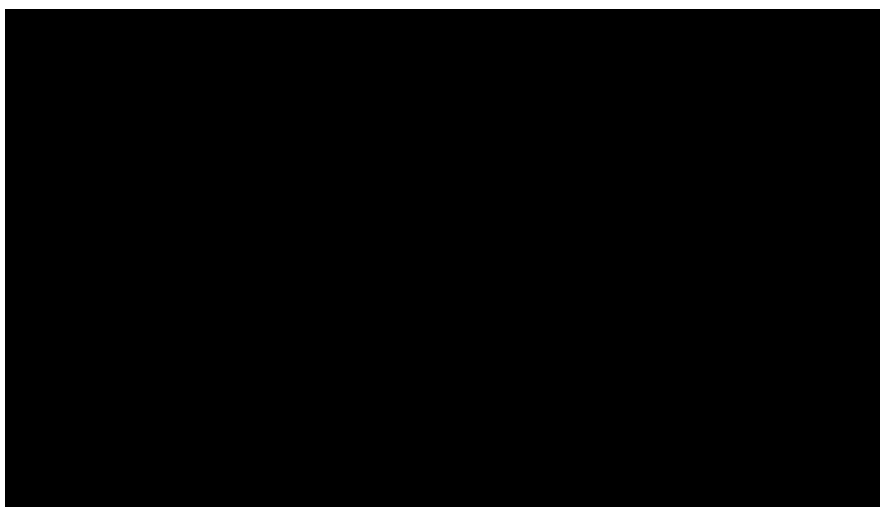
Reference & Administrative Information

Charity Name

The Flow Country Partnership

Charity No

SC053100



Structure Governance & Management

Constitution

The Charity is a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO). It is governed by its constitution which was granted charitable status by OSCR on 1st February 2024.

Appointment of Trustees

The Trustees are elected by members at the Annual General Meeting. There will be a maximum of 12 Trustees and a minimum of 3. Trustees can remain in position for a maximum of six years (except the Chair who can serve for 9 years), they are not eligible for election again until a further year has elapsed.

Management

The Trustees of The Flow Country Partnership are responsible for providing strategic direction and ensuring effective governance. The day-to-day operations and management are overseen by the Management Committee.

Objectives & Activities

Charitable Purposes

The organisation's purposes are to promote the protection, conservation, and enhancement, for the benefit of the public, of the area within the Counties of Caithness and Sutherland,



known as The Flow Country, on account of its outstanding peatland ecosystems and biodiversity, and in particular (but without limitation) to undertake the following:

- a) the advancement of environmental protection or improvement, by promotion and implementation of sustainable land management that maintains and enhances the habitats and species, and (but not limited to) carrying out and supporting the objectives set out in the Management Strategy for the Peatlands of Caithness and Sutherland.
- b) the advancement of education, by education of the public in respect of the area's significance and values, including its special wildlife, carbon store, landscape character, water environment, historical and cultural values, and through promotion of the value of the area as an exemplar and inspiration for others working on peatland management and restoration.
- c) the advancement of citizenship or community development, within the area and its communities by promotion of sustainable development of communities and the economy, based on The Flow Country's outstanding natural values.

Main Activities

The Flow Country Partnership has established workstreams that cover the core activities of the charity. Each workstream reports on progress to the Management Committee on a fortnightly basis, enabling rapid progress against the core objectives, with key decisions escalated to the board of Trustees.

During 2024-25 the workstreams covered:

Green Finance Initiative

The workstream was tasked with the delivery of the Facilitating Investment Readiness for Nature Based Solutions (FIRNS) funded project *Flow Country Green Finance Initiative*. This included developing and delivering Peatland ACTION and Peatland CODE applications for 2 of the 3 projects sites (Achentoul, Armadale), including mapping, field-based ground truthing, liaison with landowners and other relevant stakeholders (e.g. Peatland ACTION officer), overseeing the tendering process and the project delivery on the ground. It also involved scoping out and developing the third project (Borgie Common Grazings) and a pipeline of future projects beyond FIRNS.

World Heritage Site

The workstream was tasked with providing IUCN with all required supplementary information ahead of their final recommendation, representing the property at key events, attending the inscription ceremony, developing the management plan post-inscription and liaising with other workstreams to manage communication, funding, staffing and forward planning.

Investment and Flow Country Restoration Limited (FCRL)

The workstream was tasked with leading on discussion with prospective investors, identifying bridging finance options and developing the relevant and appropriate financial model for different investments portfolio, managing the FCRL operations in relation to restoration on the ground (e.g. payment to contractors). This workstreams works closely with the Green Finance Initiative workstream.

Communications

The workstream was tasked with leading on all external facing communication including press, media, social media, public engagement and outreach. This also included a revamp of the [website](#) to reflect the UNESCO World Heritage Site inscription. The workstream works closely with all other workstreams and with key external partners and agencies.

Fundraising

The workstream was tasked with mapping priority, needs (staffing, resources) and costs, identifying suitable calls for funding and sponsorship opportunities and initiating discussions with funders and prospective sponsors. This also included securing funding to deliver specific activities and engaging in the early stages of application process (e.g. Expression of Interest). This workstream works closely with the Green Finance Initiative, World Heritage Site and Investment workstreams.

Administration

The workstream was tasked with enabling The Flow Country Partnership to function, for example by supporting bank account creation, HMRC registration, creating sharepoint workspace, organising email addresses, note-taking during management meetings. The workstreams works closely with all workstreams.

Achievements & Performance

March 2024:

Successfully completed and submitted the response to the IUCN's request for supplementary information by the World Heritage Site workstream team. Submission was completed on time, ensuring continued progress in the nomination process. The 40-page document included:

- A global comparison of the bird assemblages and Sphagna in the Flow Country.
- A comprehensive list of all recorded species in the Flow Country World Heritage Site property and their Global Red List status.
- Additional maps and details on protection inside and outside the boundary.

April 2024:

Represented the Flow Country at a high-profile UNESCO event in Paris, strengthening international engagement and visibility.

May – June 2024:

Successfully completed the Peatland ACTION and Peatland CODE application and tendering process, securing necessary approvals for restoration work.

July 2024:

The Flow Country is officially inscribed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site under Criterion (ix) 46th session of the World Heritage Committee held in New Delhi. The nomination dossier was commended for its high quality, with no recommendations issued - a rare achievement in World Heritage Site designations.

The Flow Country becomes the first and only peatland globally to receive this prestigious recognition.

Hosted a historic visit from His Majesty the King, who met with Trustees, staff and the local community at Forsinard Flows National Nature Reserve, including the official unveiling of the UNESCO World Heritage Site plaque.

Secured funding for two pilot restoration sites: Achentoul and Armadale, enabling critical peatland restoration work.

August 2024:

Restoration work begins at the Armadale pilot site, marking the start of the first major restoration effort post-UNESCO designation.

September 2024:

Successfully launched the first edition of a short peatland restoration course for contractors, held at Forsinard. The training included classroom and field-based elements and trained a cohort of seven participants in peatland restoration principles, techniques, project management, mapping, tendering, monitoring, and engaging with external agencies. The course also included an optional local course to secure an ATV driving ticket, enhancing practical skills for fieldwork.

October 2024:

Restoration work begins at the Achentoul pilot site while the first phase of restoration is completed at Armadale.

Submitted an Expression of Interest to the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) for future funding opportunities.

November 2024:

The Flow Country Partnership wins the prestigious Nature of Scotland's Award 2024 for Nature and Climate Action, recognising excellence in conservation and climate resilience efforts.

Trustee [REDACTED] secured a small grant to support a series of community events for the World Heritage Site and the Green Finance Initiative, fostering local engagement and education on peatland conservation.

December 2024:

Hosted a successful demonstration day at the Armadale pilot site for local landowners, showcasing restoration techniques and benefits.

Organised a community-focused event at Lyth Arts Centre to launch the World Heritage Site, featuring a screening of the film When Fish Begin to Crawl.

January – February 2025:

Celebrated The Flow Country's UNESCO inscription with the world-first orchestral performance of When Fish Begin to Crawl featuring the Royal Scottish National Orchestra, at Eden Court, Inverness and Glasgow Royal Concert Hall - selling out both venues!

Financial Review

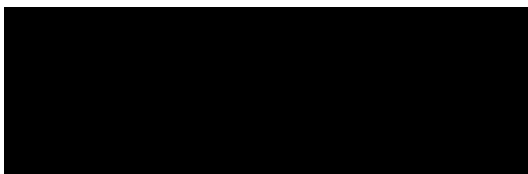
Prior to the establishment of the Charity, partner organisations including NatureScot, RSPB Scotland, North Highland Initiative, The Highland Council, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, and the University of the Highlands and Islands Environmental Research Institute hosted the projects by employing staff, funding events, and covering other costs. This in-kind support will continue until February

2026, allowing the Charity time to develop its own income stream and transition to using its own bank account.

North Highland Initiative acted as the grant holder for The Facility for Investment Ready Nature in Scotland (FIRNS), a grant that enabled the Flow Country Green Finance Initiative to proceed and fund two key roles: Peatland Restoration Officer and Project Officer. Additionally, The Highland Council hosts the World Heritage Site Project Coordinator.

This in-kind support will continue until February 2026, allowing the Charity time to develop its own income stream and transition to using its own bank account.

Approved by the Trustees on 11 March 2025 and signed on their behalf by:



Chair

Independent Examiner's Report

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of The Flow Country Partnership report on the accounts of the charity for the year ended 28th February 2025 which are set out on the following pages.

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) Act 2005 and the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006. 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 Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeks explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.

Independent Examiner's Statement

In the course of my examination, no matter has come to my attention

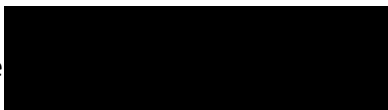
1. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:

- to keep accounting records in accordance with Section 44(1) (a) of the 2005 Act and Regulation 4 of the 2006 Accounts Regulations, and
- to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with Regulation 9 of the 2006 Accounts Regulations

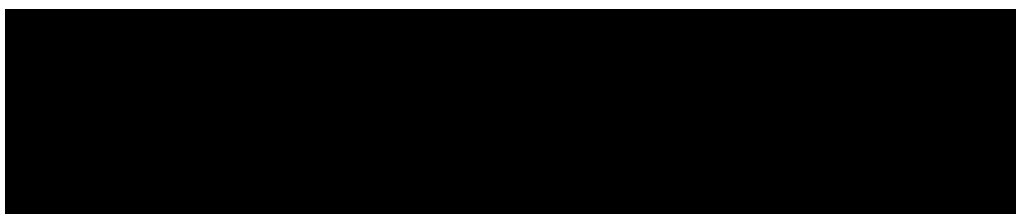
have not been met, or

2. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signature



Date: 12 March 2025



The Flow Country Partnership
Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation - No. SC053100



Statement of Receipts and Payments

For the Year Ended 28th February 2025

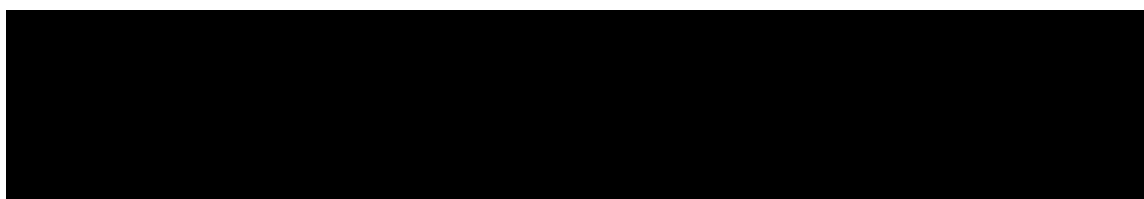
There has been no direct income or expenditure. All costs have been met in-kind by the original steering committee organisations. The charity now has its own bank account and will start to undertake its own financial activity as it transitions into the fully operational charity.

Statement of Balances – As at 28th February 2025

Bank and cash in hand	2024
Opening balances:-	0
Surplus /(deficit) for year	0
Closing balances:-	0
Unity Trust Bank Account	0

Please see pervious statement in the Trustee Annual Review financial section.

Approved by the Trustees on 11th March 2025 and signed on their behalf by:-



CHAIR

TREASURER



Notes to the Accounts – For the Year Ended 28 February 2025

1. Reserves

All funds are unrestricted.

2. Trustee Remuneration and Expenses

No trustees received any remuneration or reimbursement of expenses in the year.

3. Basis of Accounting

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