

<p>5.2</p> <p>5.3</p>	<p>Ref 11.8: Neil Sinclair added that the 2nd Forres Boys Brigade Company have assumed similar responsibility for the section of the DW between Mannachie Avenue and the Dallas Dhu Distillery.</p> <p>The DWA Secretary and Work Party Coordinator (Pete Mitchell) reported that a barrier was erected across the track bed by the Squirrel Neuk Bridge during the 14/01/17 work party. This will encourage DW users to follow the way markers and leave the railway track bed at this point instead of continuing into the muddy cutting. Action closed.</p> <p>Ref 10.4: Pete Mitchell reported that a steel grate was installed over the inlet to the drainage pipe at Auchearn during the 08/04/17 work party. This has successfully prevented leaves entering the pipe and blocking it. Action closed.</p>	
<p>6</p> <p>6.1</p>	<p><u>Chairman's Annual Report</u></p> <p>Neil Sinclair read out the following report:</p> <p>Good evening again and now I would like to take this opportunity to present the Chairman's Report for the year ending 2017. It has been pointed out to me, on more than one occasion, that actually the report that I present covers the Associations activities for the period November 16 up to November 17 and this is out of kilter with the financial report that our Treasurer, Paul, will present shortly. I have presented our activities previously up to last November so all I can really do now is carry on with this time scale.</p> <p>Last year I started off the Annual Report by mentioning a Chinese philosopher and there is a bit of a theme here as I feel a bit like Chairman Xi, the general secretary of the Communist Party. He recently held the party congress and he laid out plans for the future and this year the main thrust of our work takes the form of 'plans for the future'.</p> <p>New fencing at Logie and a new ramp at Squirrelneuk to name but two. These new projects, like any, take considerable planning and organising long before a shovel gets dirty and although some problems still require ironing out, I would like to thank Malcolm and Trevor for their excellent work so far.</p> <p>Having good contacts is very important and can save a lot of research and planning time. Our links with Sustrans/SHN/and COAT (now called The Outdoor Access Trust for Scotland) are worth their weight in gold. Again I would like to thank our members for maintaining these important links and it is good to know that local and National organisations want to link with us.</p> <p>We have had a successful year in terms of donations, a new trailer and a 'whacker' plate and several monetary donations throughout the year all are a sign that we are doing something right. Unfortunately our last bid to the Berryburn Wind farm trust was unsuccessful so the wood chipper will have to wait a little longer.</p>	

In the summer about 120 walkers enjoyed our bi annual Ghost Train Walk and this along with other events which were part of the Moray Walking Festival all go to raising our profile. A big thank you to all who helped make these events so successful. On our Ghost Train Walk this year we were given considerable support from an organisation called COTAG, Community Off Road Transport Action Group and this gave us support in an area that I have thought we were perhaps 'a bit thin on the ground'. A big thank you goes to them. They have already said they want to be involved with us again.

The Scouts and the BB have become more involved with the DWA this year and this is an area I would like to see developed in the future. Getting 'young blood' involved with us is vitally important. We are all getting 'a bit longer in the tooth'.

So to draw a close to my report I would like to thank Paul for his tireless and mindful efforts at keeping us on the straight and narrow and at peace with our accountant. To thank Pete for his tireless work co-ordinating the work parties. To Trevor for his fastidious note and minute keeping. (Bill Budge said once how he really enjoys reading the minutes because he knows how accurate they are) and finally a big thank you to all volunteers who have made this year another successful year for the DWA.

It has been a year for making plans for the future, may be not for the next 5 years as Chairman Xi would like but we are almost ready for great things to come.

Thank you.

7 Treasurer's Annual Report

7.1 The DWA Treasurer (Paul Barron) read out the following report:

As a SCIO the members are required to consider our annual accounts for the financial year 16/17. Accordingly copies of the Trustees Annual Report incorporating our annual accounts starting on P5 have been circulated to all Trustees and further copies have been distributed around the room for consideration by our members. These annual Payment and Receipt accounts have been examined by our accountant Gordon Scott, CA and he is satisfied that our accounting records comply with the necessary legislation and regulations.

DWA Finances Key Points

Total Annual Income for 16/17 was £90667. This included a £85000 restricted grant from Sustrans to complete construction work to upgrade the Lynmore Bypass section of the Dava Way and commence feasibility study work on further improvements along the Dava Way. Income receipts for fundraising activities during 16/17 were advance donations of £480 for the June 17 Ghost Train Walk and participation in the Moray Walking Festival with income receipts of £737.

Other significant income receipts included individual donations of £3,943 with £1443 in cash and an in kind donation of £2500 from an anonymous benefactor who donated a new trailer. Under our Gross Trading heading, sales of DW Companion Guide Books produced an income of £461 and cloth badges raised £45. The other significant change in income was no recovery of Gift Aid from HMRC but this will be claimed during the 17/18 financial year.

During the financial year the number of individuals that give regular donations to the DWA reduced to 7, but this still provided us with a continued steady income stream and if any others are like minded to financially assist the DWA in this way, we would really welcome this help from other benefactors.

Total Expenditure over the financial year amounted to £85949. This expenditure included most significantly £83409 on the work to improve the Dava Way at the Lynmore bypass, covering payments from COAT to contractors on site and COAT supervision costs. A total sum of £1827 was spent on general day to day work to maintain the Dava Way including, purchase of materials, purchase of small tools and maintenance of equipment, fuel, etc. Other significant payment items did not in this financial year include public liability insurance as payment for this missed the end of financial year by a matter of days, due to an invoicing error. Trustee's expenses totalled £620. Other expenditure included within expenses for fundraising activities were £50 on Ghost Train Walk 2017 and £571 on Moray Walking Festival expenses especially minibus hire. Overall participation in the MWF added just £166 to DWA funds, but this event helps to promote the wider Moray area as a walking destination thus meeting one of the main DWA charitable purposes.

The DWA purchased a new plate compactor at a value of £872 although in 17/18 this will be substantially reimbursed through a £800 grant from the Berryburn Community Fund. With this new asset investment in a plate compactor and the in kind donation of a trailer, the 16/17 book value of our fixed assets after depreciation has increased marginally from £4300 to £4680. In accordance with our accounting policy all these assets will continue to depreciate in value at 20% per annum.

At the comparative year ends 15/16 and 16/17 our General fund bank balance decreased marginally from £4258 to £4013 and there remained a £1670 balance in the restricted funds within the Sustrans Lynmore grant. The trustees consider that this amount is still appropriate to allow them to continue to support the charitable activities of the DWA in the foreseeable future.

As this General Fund bank balance is limited the Treasurer recommends that the prudent decision of the AGM of the Dava Way Association seven years ago to always maintain a minimum operating bank balance of £1000, should be sustained.

7.2	<p>Paul Barron explained that the Minimum Operating Balance (MOB) of £1000 is the amount currently required to cover the statutory liabilities and essential operating costs of the DWA for a maximum of three years, primarily the public liability insurance premium. Paul Barron proposed that the MOB remains at £1000. Agreed unanimously.</p>	
7.3	<p>Howard Davenport asked if the £85,000 funding from Sustrans was a one-off. Paul Barron replied that this was the case but he hopes that the DWA will receive additional funding from Sustrans in the future.</p> <p>Paul Barron added that restricted funds are accounted for against the specific project/purchase for which the funding was provided. Carrying forward the surplus from the Sustrans funding for the Lynmore Bypass into the next financial year caused a bit of a headache as there must be written authority from Sustrans to explain its inclusion in the annual accounts.</p> <p>The DWA Projects Manager (Malcolm Campbell) reported that Sustrans have already provided some additional funding in the current financial year to enable the DWA to remove landslips, progress drainage improvements and erect fencing.</p>	
8	<p><u>Consideration of the Trustees Annual Report:</u></p> <p>Neil Sinclair quoted clause 29.2 of the DWA constitution, “The business of each AMM must include ... consideration of the annual accounts of the organisation”. The Trustees Annual Report was read and accepted without change.</p> <p>Proposed: Malcolm Campbell Seconded: Pete Mitchell</p>	
9	<p><u>Review of Health and Safety</u></p> <p>9.1 Trevor Thornley reported that the appropriate research to support the review of the DWA Health and Safety System has been carried out. The next stage involves completing risk assessments, COSHH assessments and compiling method statements where required. Trevor Thornley had concluded that his level of experience in Health and Safety was not adequate to complete these tasks and engaging a Health and Safety consultant was considered. At that point it was discovered that Doug Hartley has the appropriate training and experience. Trevor Thornley will shortly hand over his research to Doug Harley so that he can progress the review.</p> <p>9.2 Neil Sinclair stated that all DWA volunteers receive the relevant training. Operators of power tools such as the trimmers, rough cutter and chainsaws receive LANTRA approved training. Nominated volunteers receive first aid training; there is always a first aid kit and at least one trained volunteer per work party group. Personal protective equipment is issued as appropriate.</p> <p>9.3 Neil Sinclair asked if anyone present had any health and safety related issues that they would like to raise. No issues were raised.</p>	

<p>10</p> <p>10.1</p> <p>10.2</p>	<p><u>Review of Membership Fee Amount</u></p> <p>Paul Barron brought to the attention of those present the requirement for an annual membership subscription under clause 16 of the DWA Constitution. The DWA members have previously voted that there should be no subscription amount payable, with members left to decide individually if they wish to donate.</p> <p>Alex Ross stated his view that there was no overriding need for a membership fee.</p> <p>Wilson Metcalfe suggested that the small amount that would be raised from the collection of a membership fee did not justify the administrative burden required to collect it.</p> <p>Paul Barron proposed that the annual membership subscription amount payable should remain nil. Agreed unanimously.</p> <p>Paul Barron added that individual/monthly donations are always welcome.</p>	
<p>11</p> <p>11.1</p> <p>11.1.1</p>	<p><u>AOCB</u></p> <p><u>DWA Projects</u></p> <p>Malcolm Campbell provided an overview of the completed and ongoing DWA projects.</p> <p>Projects Funded by Sustrans</p> <p>At the last AMM it was reported that Sustrans provided a total of £125,000 to complete the Lynmore Bypass project. This comprised rerouting and upgrading of the path surface, drainage improvements and landscaping, the construction of two new bridges and the installation of several self-closing gates. An electronic counter was also installed at a cost of £3,000 to monitor use of the bypass by walkers and cyclists. Sustrans representative Neill Malone officially opened the bypass on 04/05/17.</p> <p>Sustrans provided an additional £20,000 to fund an end-to-end survey of the DW by the Cairngorms Outdoor Access Trust (COAT), now known as the Outdoor Access Trust for Scotland (OATS); to identify the works required to upgrade the route to full Sustrans cycle route standard (see page 23 of the Sustrans Handbook for Cyclefriendly Design). The survey was completed at an actual cost of £8,000 and Sustrans agreed that the underspend should be spent on other DWA projects, namely fencing at Muir Of Logie, the removal of three landslips and drainage improvements at the Bantrach Cutting, Heatherbells Cutting and a major ditch north of the Balvair Crossing.</p> <p>The landslip removals and drainage improvements have progressed well and should be completed shortly. Logie Estates have offered to refund 50% of the cost of the drainage improvements north of Balvair Crossing as the improvements there also benefit the estate.</p>	

Unfortunately, there have been some problems with the fencing project, though lessons have been learned. It turned out that the contractor providing the lowest quote had not included the removal of the existing fencing and undergrowth along the fence line. The contractor agreed that he would install the fencing at the price quoted, provided that the DWA removed the old fencing and undergrowth. The DWA completed the work required but the contractor then stated that there had been further cost increases for materials and equipment hire. It was decided that the DWA could not absorb the increase and that an alternative solution should be sought. Malcolm Campbell has spoken to Alec Laing of Logie Estates and suggested that the DWA provide £6,000 of funding for the estate fencing contractor to complete the required works.

Greg McAulay asked by how much the contractor had increased his quote. Malcolm Campbell confirmed an increase of over £1,000.

Doug Hartley asked how much the estate fencing contractor would charge. Pete Mitchell stated that he was told by the estate manager that their fencing contractor charged £5 per metre, though the cost of strainer posts, gates, etc would be calculated separately.

Pete Mitchell added that, as the original railway fencing was practically non-existent along the affected section, the DWA were only installing new fencing, not repairing existing fencing. The DWA would not be held responsible for repairing or replacing existing fencing that happens to run adjacent to the route of the DW.

11.1.2 **Projects Funded by SNH**

A grant of £8,000 has been obtained from Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) to improve accessibility by replacing the worn steps adjacent to the Squirrel Neuk Bridge with a ramp. This work was agreed with Altyre Estates some time ago, pending the availability of suitable funding, and included the felling of two mature trees. The owner of the estate has now decided that he wishes the mature trees retained.

Options for changing the ramp resign around the trees have been discussed with the estate manager Ed Dunbar, but such changes will increase the complexity and cost of ramp construction. The possibility of rerouting the DW along the cutting to the north of the bridge is another option under consideration.

Neil Sinclair and Greg McAulay pointed out that in the early days of the DWA, when options for routing the DW through Altyre Estates were being looked at, SNH were against the cutting route due to the proximity of protected species.

11.2 Dava Way App Replacement

Pete Mitchell reported that the Dava Way App no longer works on the current versions of the Android and iOS operating systems. Neil Sinclair added that the cost quoted by the developers, Canary Dwarf, for fixing the app was considered uneconomic as they could give no guarantee

that the app would not stop working again following future operating system upgrades

Trevor Thornley demonstrated a new version of the app that he is developing based on the [ESRI StoryMap](#) software. This software uses simple templates to build the applications, much like those used to write blogs, and it is provided free as part of the mapping software suite already in use by the DWA. The only downside to an app produced this way is that it cannot be used offline. However, Pete Mitchell pointed out that 4G coverage is now available on many sections of the DW.

11.3 Source of Oak for Fingerposts

Greg McAulay reported that he is currently carrying out repairs to the finger post removed from Dallas Dhu and is experiencing some difficulty in sourcing the required amount and quality of oak. He asked if anyone present knew of a suitable source. There were a number of suggestions, all of which had already been tried.

11.4 Satisfaction With Direction of DWA

Paul Barron reminded those present that the AMM provides them with an opportunity to influence DWA decision making. He asked if the membership are happy with the direction in which the DWA Board of Trustees are taking things.

The Dava Way Association was formed with the aim of establishing a walking and cycling path along the abandoned railway line between Grantown-On-Spey and Forres. With the adoption of the DW as a core path, and in line with initiatives such as the [National Walking and Cycling Network](#) (NWCN), this aim has been expanded to provide a dry-shod, multi-use path.

There was universal approval for the direction in which the DWA is currently going. Wilson Metcalfe stated that he has already led several outings along the DW on sections accessible to users on disabled scooters and increasing the accessible sections should be considered.

11.5 Potential Upgrade of Moray Way

Malcolm Campbell reported that he is a member of a Moray Council steering group looking at the feasibility of upgrading the entire Moray Way to full Sustrans cycle route standard. A contractor has been employed to survey the route and compile a report similar to that produced for the end-to-end upgrade of the DW by Murray Swapp of COAT.

11.6 Whacker Plate Sharing

Neil Sinclair asked those present to inform him of local organisations that could make use of the DWA whacker plate, purchased with funding from the [Berry Burn Community Fund](#). Demonstrating inter-organisation use may help with future equipment bids, such as a chipper.

11.7	<p><u>Loan of Moray Council Equipment</u></p>	
	<p>Doug Hartley asked if it would be possible to loan Moray Council equipment for DWA maintenance tasks. Trevor Thornley stated that he made this suggestion to Moray Council some time ago and the idea was rejected. The need for training and insurance cover, health and safety requirements and the possibility of litigation have made it nigh on impossible, even for those DWA volunteers who are also Moray Council employees.</p>	
11.8	<p><u>Circular Routes</u></p>	
	<p>Howard Davenport asked if there had been any progress towards establishing circular routes linked to the DW; see Item 11.1 in previous minutes. Norman Thomson reported that the Scottish Rights of Way & Access Society (ScotWays) are negotiating with land owners with the aim of signposting and promoting the short section of Old Military Road running parallel to the Dava Way from the A939 to the A940 and the Via Regia.</p> <p>Pete Mitchell added that Logie Estates are looking at establishing a path between the DW and Logie Steading, via Longley and Moss Of Logie.</p>	
11.9	<p><u>Forres Station Heritage</u></p>	
	<p>Michael J Sutherland asked if the DWA had managed to obtain any heritage artefacts during the demolition of the old Forres Station. Pete Mitchell reported that he receives emails about items coming up for disposal but none have been from Forres; Doug Hartley originally made contact with the disposal company with the intention of obtaining a suitable signal stanchion for installation at Dunphail.</p> <p>Wilson Metcalfe reported that the model for the new station is now in the Tolbooth. Norman Thomson reported that the DWA display boards from the old Forres Station are also in the Tolbooth as there is not enough space in the new station to display them. Wilson Metcalfe suggested that a new information board would be useful, located outside the station entrance and showing local information and walking/cycling routes.</p>	
12	<p><u>Date of the Next Meeting</u></p>	
	<p>Neil Sinclair proposed that the next AMM should be held on Tuesday 6th November 2018. Agreed unanimously.</p>	
13	<p><u>Resignation and Election/Re-election of Board Members</u></p>	
	<p>All the DWA board members retired from office and offered themselves for re-election. Neil Sinclair asked if any other DWA members would like to stand for election – there were no takers. The following members were duly re-elected as board members:</p> <p>Doug Hartley, Malcolm Campbell, Neil Sinclair, Norman Thomson, Paul Barron, Pete Mitchell, Robbie Roberts, Trevor Thornley</p>	

Meeting Closed: 21:20

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Neil Sinclair', written in a cursive style.

Neil Sinclair
Chairman
Dava Way Association