

Snowdonia Slate Trail



Annual Report
For year ending 5 April 2021
(with further information up to October 2021)

Presented at the AGM held on 20 November 2021

Snowdonia Slate Trail Trust
Registered Charity Number 1182188

Contents

Charity Information
Aims of the Charity
Details of Trustees and Advisors
Structure, governance and management
Financial Review
Objectives and Activities
Achievements and Performance
Responsibilities of the Committee
Secretary`s Report
Treasurer`s Report
Maintenance Report
Marketing Report
Other reports
Acknowledgements

2020-2021 Financial Statement

.....

COMPANY INFORMATION

Registered 15 February 2019

Chair Joan Cutting

Charity Number 1182188

Registered Office 1 Ddol Terrace
Cwm Penmachno
Betws y Coed
Conwy
LL24 0RP

Independent Examiner Lisa Ruddin
32 Forest Gardens
Partington
Manchester
M31 4PL

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 2020

Joan Cutting – **Chair**
Paul Bridges - **Secretary**
Aled Owen – **Treasurer**
Chris Perry – **Warden co-ordinator**
Dorothy Howarth – **Twitter account**
Mieko Yamaguchi – **Route details updates**

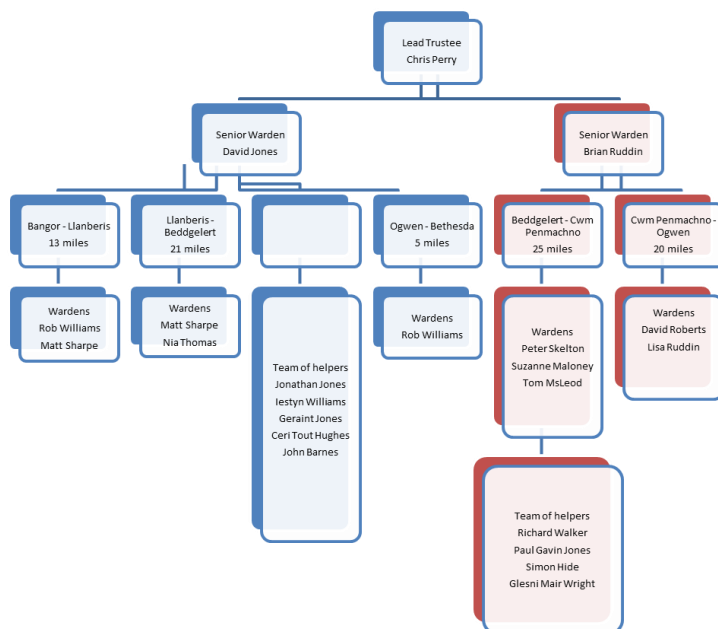
Details of Wardens and representatives as at 5 April 2020

Graham Fitch representing The Ramblers
Dan Goodwin representing Snowdonia Society
David Jones – Senior Warden
Brian Ruddin – Senior Warden

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 5 Trustees. Other people who wish to assist with the Trust do so as Wardens or volunteers.



The Board of Trustees generally meets twice a year, and occasionally at other times as necessary, and meetings are open to wardens and interested parties to attend. Due to Covid-19, the Trustees have only met virtually, and once, in the past year.

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 2020-21 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.

This is our third year and has seen us raise no grants for projects, although £3000 has been raised since 5 April 2021. The Trustees hope to continue in the same vein in the future.

Objectives and Activities

The objectives of the Charity remain in the forefront for the Trustees. Fundraising continues sustainably according to the needs of any identified projects or required maintenance of the Trail. However, the current economic situation is making it more difficult to raise funds from agencies whose budgets are under pressure.

Achievements and Performance

We are very pleased that we have managed to continue our sustainable fundraising in this difficult economic climate through grants and donations.

Responsibilities of the Committee

The Committee is required to prepare financial statements for each financial year in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice (United Kingdom Accounting Standards and applicable law). The financial statements are required by law to give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the company and of its incoming resources and application of resources of the company for that period. In preparing those financial statements the committee is required to select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently, make judgments and estimates that are reasonable and prudent, state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements and prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the company will continue in business.

The committee is responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the company and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the requirements of the Charities Act 1993 and Charities SORP 2005 and the

Charity`s constitution. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

As far as we are aware, there is no relevant information of which the Company`s independent examiner is unaware of, and we have taken all the steps that we ought to have taken as Trustees to make ourselves aware of any relevant financial information and to establish that the charity`s independent examiner is aware of that information.

The report has been prepared in accordance with the special provisions of the Charities Act 1993 applicable to small charities.

On behalf of the Trustees

Paul Bridges (Secretary)

Date 15th November 2021

Secretary`s Report

The Board of Trustees generally meets twice a year, and occasionally at other times as necessary. Annual General Meetings (AGMs) occur once a year. Last years' AGM took place 23rd November 2020, virtually over a video call due to Covid19. This year's meeting will take place November 20th 2021. All meetings have an agenda and minutes follow. All meetings are open to wardens and interested parties to attend. This report documents the activities of the organisation over the last year.

Paul Bridges

Secretary

Treasurer's Report

The financial report appended to this document covers the financial year 2020-21.

In that year, dominated by Covid-19, we had no grants, but had minor donations and income from medal sales of £181. Calendar sales brought in a profit of £123.

Main expenditure was on the path improvement project (£122), equipment for wardens (£671), end features (£1500), passports (£163) and insurance (£164). This brought our available funds to £9075, of which £3324 was unrestricted, while the rest was allocated to the end features, the footpath project and further improvements, and to website maintenance.

Since the end of the last financial year and as at 30 October 2021, about £4000 has been received, mostly in grants for the new website and end features, while the major expenditure has been £398 on plastic post tops and £750 on the new website. In addition, £2477 was paid to Creativity Jones, our webmaster over the past three years, for hosting and maintenance. This drew down our restricted funds of £2460 carried over from the original Heritage Lottery Grant

Aled Owen

Treasurer

Maintenance Report

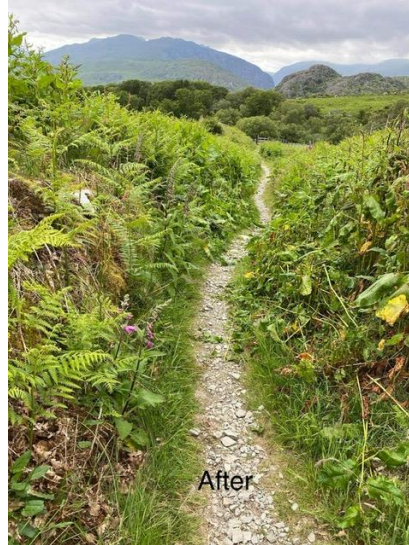
Lisa Ruddin - Warden

Here is a breakdown of the activity from the last outing on the trail from Ogwen Cottage to the Ugly House:

1 x yellow post top installed

5 x roundels replaced

- 2 x roundels introduced on to a new post
- 2 x plastic road signs replaced - green
- 2 x plastic road signs replaced - brown
- 3 x posts made secure
- 2 x exposed screws secured on wooden bridge
- 2 x overgrown undergrowth cut back for access



Peter Skelton – Warden

Slate Trail walked and re-signed from Llyn Morwynion Reservoir to the slate mine; There were 4 signs then replaced. From the slate mine to Cwm Penmachno, 3 signs were replaced.

David Jones – Senior Warden

As a volunteer warden, when time allows, I walk sections of the trail and will take notes of any situation that may affect a walkers' progress along the trail, fixing some of those issues as I go. e.g. new or replacement roundels, cutting back encroaching brambles or branches, etc. I issue a report on my return of my findings and actions, some of which may need a subsequent visit to solve or repair. I suggested yellow post tops which have been adopted.



Matt Sharpe

May 2021: Walked from Llanberis to Rhyd Ddu - no real issues to report, replaced two roundels which were faded on the ascent toward the peak. Some overgrown areas, although not infringing on the path too seriously.

October 2021: Walked from Beddgelert to Rhyd Ddu - no issues to report. All roundels correct, path in good condition, although very boggy in places. A few stiles close to the end of their useful life, but no damage causing a danger to path users yet.

Rob Williams

The last year has been different again - further stay at home messages have made it difficult for many and access to the outdoors been as important as ever. I have been one of the lucky ones as I live just a few meters from the trail, owning a dog and being a keen runner means I am on the trail nearly every day (hopefully looking to run the whole trail next year)

I cover a large section from Ogwen Cottage to Port Penrhyn, while most of the trail is on well-marked paths and is well maintained we do on occasion have the odd broken gate and styles. The most fulfilling part of volunteering however is meeting and discussing with such a wide range of people, especially with a panad at Ogwen Cottage.

I have set up a Instagram (Slate trail Warden) page to try and share photos of my trips along the trail and often get messages from people around the world asking about the trail.

Suzanne and Shaun Maloney

Shaun & I love being wardens, we enjoy getting out in the outdoors and seeing the seasons come & go. Since becoming wardens we've worn our hi-viz vest each time we've gone out and have been stopped a number of times by hikers not quite sure which direction to go, we've got into some interesting conversations with people which possibly wouldn't have happened without us wearing them. Our grandsons have joined us a few times and have also enjoyed replacing worn markers.

Looking after the markers and making sure the paths are accessible gives us a sense of pride that we are helping keep a little bit of history alive for everyone to enjoy

Education Report

Talks and seminars

None have happened due to Covid-19

Marketing Report

Brochures - Aled

Brochures are available in a number of outlets but more effort needs to be made to ensure these outlets maintain their stock

Facebook, Twitter and Instagram – Aled, Dorothy and Chris

Our Facebook page has some 3400 followers and serves to share information about the Trail as well as Trail walkers' experiences and photos. Both Instagram and Twitter have over 1100 followers each. Dorothy has arranged a Tic Toc account.

Guidebook - Aled

Sales of the guidebook have exceeded expectations with approximately 3000 sold. Sales through the website will have generated about £4500 for path maintenance and development to date.

Passport and medals –Joan

We're into the third 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	<u>£340.50</u>
TOTAL	38 medals	£518.00

The uptake this year is up from the 7 medals of last year to 18, in part because of the lifting of Covid-19 restrictions. However, despite the fact that walkers have mostly been out and about for only five months, it's been the best year so far, because of the

- Publication of the map of venues in the Passport Scheme on the SST website
- Increased promotion of the Passport Scheme on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter, carried out by SST Trust members
- Communication Sep, Oct and Nov 2020 between myself and the 16 existing venues, to raise awareness of the scheme amongst all staff, thus ensuring that the stamp and passports were readily available for walkers
- Addition of 7 new venues (thanks to suggestions from SST Trust members), with the consequent dispatch of passports and stamps Nov 2020 to March 2021, thus ensuring that, even if several venues were closed, there were enough open for walkers to obtain their 8 required stamps

The cost of medals has remained at £3.50 over the three years. The total income this year is £340.50 because many walkers have been exceedingly generous in their donations to path maintenance.

We decided against QR codes on the wall outside venues for walkers to scan as it was considered unfeasible.

*****.

Website - Aled

The website continues to be used for downloading maps and instructions.

Our webmaster is retiring at the end of 2021 and we have commissioned an upgraded website from a another provider. This site is being built and will be ready for the end of the year.

The Charity Commission has approved including the passport page and the accommodations age on our main website and we will get this done. We do now have a “Shop” page which is working well.

We have decided to omit the app as it is possible to download all route details and GPS from the website.

T-shirts - Aled

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

Calendars – Aled

Calendars made a profit of only £123 so we have decided to reduce the order to 175 this year and see how it goes. Orders are very slow at the moment.

Other

The Trail, and the work of the wardens, particularly Lisa and Brian Ruddin, will feature on Weatherman Walking in 2022.

Projects Report

Path Improvements above Llan Ffestiniog.

The Snowdonia Society has assured us that work will commence soon to complete this project, which has been delayed by the pandemic

Start and end features

The metalworker commissioned to build two slate trucks went into administration early in the pandemic and omitted to tell us of these difficulties. We have, therefore, lost the deposit of £1500 paid for materials. Aled is trying to contact him to see whether those materials are available but has had no success.

We have decided to change approach and commission two bespoke benches, designed by Yvonne Amor and Justin Taylor of Penmachno at a cost of £5-6000. We have allocated funds of £1900 already and are awaiting the outcome of a number of grant applications. Aled feels confident that we can raise the necessary amount in the next year.

Acknowledgements

National Lottery
Magnox,
CADW,
Blakemore Trust,
Snowdonia National Park CAE Fund,
The Foyle Foundation,
The Garfield Weston Foundation,
The Oakdale Trust,
Community Foundation in Wales,
HF Holidays,
Horizon,
First Hydro,
Dwr Cymru,
The Laspen Trust,
Bethesda Town Council,
Ffestiniog Town Council,
Gwynedd Council,
Conwy County Borough Council,
Snowdonia National Park
Ashley Foundation
Rehau, Blaenau Ffestiniog
and
our wardens.

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