Snowdonia Slate Trail

Annual Report
For year ending 5 April 2022
(with further information up to October 2022)

Presented at the AGM held on 29 October 2022

Snowdonia Slate Trail Trust
Registered Charity Number 1182188

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2021-2022 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**

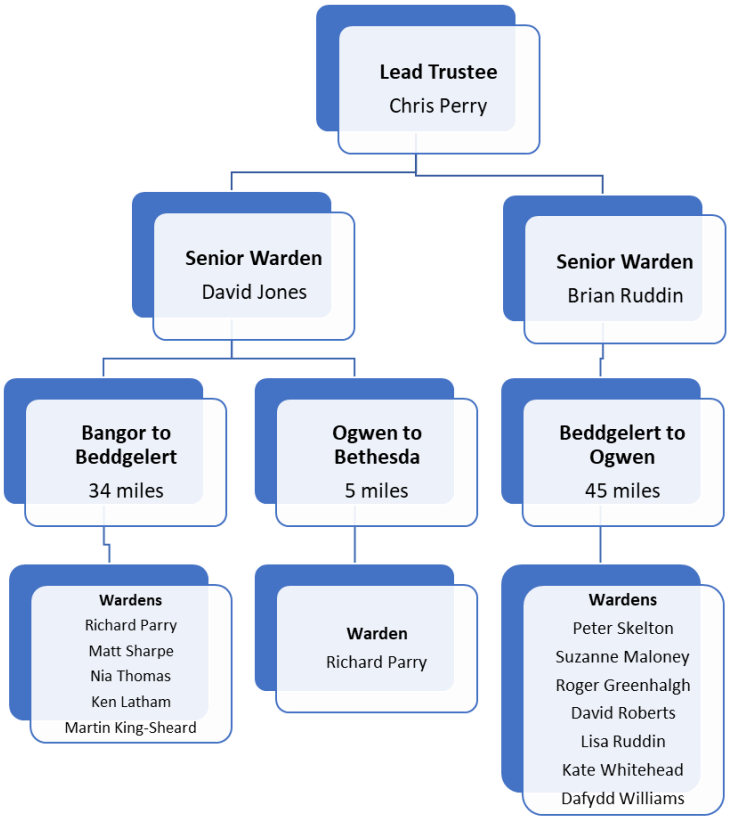
Details of Wardens and representatives as at 5 April 2021

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 6 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 2021-22 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 fourth year and has seen us raise no grants of £6250 for projects. 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 29th October 2022

Treasurer's Report

The financial report appended to this document covers the financial year 2021-22.

In that year, we raised £6250 through five grants for the end features project and for setting up the new website. Minor donations and medal sales raised £596. Income from book sales is, in fact, a donation from Aled. The £1019 income attracted gift aid of £379. The calendar made a loss of £67 and has been abandoned for the future.

Main expenditure was on equipment for wardens (£176), the old and new website (£4753), maintenance (£398), postage (£230) and insurance (£164). This brought our available funds to £11530, of which £416 was unrestricted, while the rest was allocated to the end features, further improvements, and to website maintenance.

Since the end of the last financial year and as at 30 September 2022, about £240 has been received, mostly in donations and medal sales, while the major expenditure has been £1900 on the end features.

Amazon Smile had contributed £5 to date, while Easyfundraising.com shows about £77 owing to us.

Aled Owen

Treasurer

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Maintenance Report

We now have two senior wardens and 12 wardens. Two, Martin King-Sheard and Dafydd Williams are very recent recruits and will be reporting over the next year. The following reports show the work typically carried out by our much appreciated wardens. David`s suggestion of yellow post tops has been commented on very positively by walkers.

During the past year, my main achievement has been to place yellow caps on marker posts along two of the remoter sections of the Trail I oversee (Gwaen Gynfi moor [x8], & between the 'Rock Garden' & Y Fron [x14]).

David Jones – Senior Warden

All road signs cleaned in Betws y Coed

Ogwen Cottage – Capel Curig

6 Roundels added along the route

National Trust Foot stile requiring attention

Large accumulation of water before bridge – walkers climbing fence to avoid. Needs infilling.

Road sign on Tryfan side of A5 is slightly loose. Will replace on next visit.

All older roundels on this section will need replacing next year.

Capel Curig – Ty Hyll

Overall, the path was in good condition with very little cutting back needed. I noted there has been a little path restoration in places shortly after the first bridge.

4 missing roundels/screws replaced.

Lining of footpath exposed.

Replacement post needed as original was rotten and had been moved from original location. Secured as best as possible – will return with replacement post. Shrubbery cut back.

Lisa Ruddin - Warden

November 2021- walked Llanberis to Rhyd Ddu with no issues. Several faded or broken roundels replaced and two added at crossroads before the boggy section on approach to the farm before the descent. Retraced the same section with no problems on return.

March 2022. Rhyd Ddu- Beddgelert including Aberglaslyn stretch to town. No works required, path in excellent condition with all markers present. Rubbish collected filled two bags and some logs moved away from path.

May 2022- Beddgelert- Rhyd Ddu. Again no problems to report. Bushes growing well put path clearly visible and safe to navigate. No markers missing.

September 2022- Rhyd Ddu toward Llanberis but stopped before descent into town and returned the same route. No buses this day so avoided the hilly tarmac section. No problems to report. Path is beautiful up here, nice to see the seasons changing.

I've walked various other sections around Betws and Dolwydellan at various points this year also with no problems noted. April, August and September. Nettles and bracken chopped back in a few places but nothing detrimental to the trails beauty or my enjoyment of it.

Matt Sharpe

The girls and I have been out and about between Tanygrisiau and Llan Ffestiniog on some beautiful days. Signage between Blaenau Ffestiniog and Afon Teigl has been improved but still needs a couple of posts placing in strategic positions. The bracken has taken a bashing! Pleased to say that, outside of the towns, litter has been minimal on the Trail.

Looking forward to some beautiful frosty walks.

Kate, Jemima and Cecily Whitehead

Rich Parry is a recent recruit and covers Bangor to Bethesda. He has been involved in replacing roadsigns with our new strengthened signs.

Rich Parry

Throughout 2022, Nia and Noel have kept close watch on sections from Waunfawr to Nantlle, ensuring that they are traversable and clearly marked. This has been through a longer full inspection before the summer, with another planned for autumn, and through shorter walks of different parts of the trail. On these walks, it has been heartening to see how many individuals are supporting the path through its usage. A particular favourite of the pair has been a pair of mountain bikers, who had just finished the (rather steep!) ascent from Waunfawr and were catching their breath before continuing on to Y Fron.

Over the summer, local businesses thrived along the trail. Special mention goes to Canolfan Y Fron, a community led enterprise which has numerous activities such as yoga classes and carboot sales. Further along the trail, Poblado Coffee had their second annual summer of Saturday sessions, commencing with a 5k jog around Dorothea Quarry and its sights and ending with a musica performance. Not forgetting the locally roasted coffees available! Truly something for everyone on this section in 2022.

Nia Williams

Earlier in the year I tackled the insertion or replacement of a small number of waymarking roundels at obtuse or unclear points on the route, in situations where it was quite difficult to identify suitable substrate on which to mount them.

A useful technique for vertical slate surfaces proved to be to drill out a set of three small pilot holes, mount the roundel initially with an outdoor/waterproof mastic applied to the rear and also into the pilot holes, then insert a set of short galvanised roofing nails into the holes

I've returned to these points regularly throughout the season, and can confirm that all of them are still holding in place well.

Litter hasn't been a problem at any point along the route. However, I've still had cause to do the occasional litter-pick at each of these two car parks. I soon learned the patterns! Tanygrisiau, for example, gets its share of overnight van-campers, (hence food wrappers and nappies) and is a popular local dog-walk (hence poo bags)

Roger Greenhough (Part of a more comprehensive report to the Trustees)

It's been a very strange year with one thing or another, I managed to get admitted to hospital and ended up being diagnosed with long Covid. This really knocked the wind out of my sails and I was not managing to get out as much as I would have liked. Despite this I managed to walk my Rhyd Ddu to Beddgelert section several times and to be honest it was mostly in a good state, the odd fix of a post here and there and asking the SNPA to replace/mend a signpost near the old packhorse bridge, I'm still waiting!

All of the roundels are in good condition.

The Nantlle section I only managed to complete twice. There is a lot of tree removal work going on and the section from the roadside (B4418) at Nantlle through the farm is an ongoing quagmire and a broken stile at Drws y Coed was reported to the park authority too.

I hope to get back on this section in the coming month, or I might wait till the ground is frozen!

Some damage has occurred to the roundels at the Dorothea Slate Quarries, and this is an ongoing issue, vandalism from the roundels being used as targets by the local youths apparently. It's difficult to see any way of avoiding this, I'll keep replacing them, one of us will get fed up with it in the end!

It is a great help that we now have a new Warden, Martin, joining us on this section too.One thing to note and this is not on my 'patch' is that the Dinorwig Lodge tearoom has ceased trading as a café.

Ken Latham

Betws y Coed to Ugly House done. No issues identified.

Dai Roberts

Having only started being a Warden on this section since June and knee trouble, i've only been able to walk the whole route once at the start of last month, there was nothing to report then only dense bracken coming up from Cwm farm towards the waterfall, by now it should be coming to the end of its life.

I've walked down to Cymerau falls from Llan Ffestiniog a few times and again nothing major to report on that. The new signage on Bont Newydd has been very useful, and as mentioned on the what's app group the dense bracken on the side of the river by Bont Newydd has meant that the path has deviated towards the middle of the field.

I'm hoping to be able to walk the section a more over the coming winter now and keep an eye out on any problems.

Diolch yn fawr

Dafydd Morgan

We love being wardens for the trail. It's great getting outdoors in the fresh air to start with but also the fact that whilst we're out checking the markers (roundels) we're helping a bigger wider community enjoy the trail, keeping them safer so they don't get lost, reporting back any issues we can't deal with instantly. Above all its meeting people; something about being outside walking, everyone is super friendly and want to chat - love our patch too.

Suzanne and Shaun Maloney

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Education Report

Talks and seminars

Aled recently took part in a Podcast for Snowdonia National Park to be distributed in November.
No talks have happened although one to Edinburgh Ramblers is scheduled in November.

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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. I think once the present supply is exhausted, we will need to decide whether they are worth continuing.

Facebook, Twitter and Instagram

Our Facebook page has some 3800 followers and serves to share information about the Trail as well as Trail walkers` experiences and photos. Both Instagram and Twitter have around 1200 followers each. Dorothy has arranged a Tic Toc account.

Aled Owen and Dorothy Howarth

Guidebook

Sales of the guidebook have exceeded expectations with well over 3000 sold. A new edition was published in early 2022. Sales through the website will have generated about £5200 for path maintenance and development to date.

Aled Owen

Passport and medals

We’re into the fourth 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
May 2021 to Oct 2021	19 medals	£340.50
Oct 2021 to Oct 2022	24 medals	£184
TOTAL	62 medals	£702

This year we've had the highest number of medals yet. However, compared to last year, which only ran six months from May to October due to Covid, the number's gone down. Double last year's medal total would have been 38. The donations alongside the medal cost are far lower than last year as well, although some people were very generous then.

The question is, does it matter? Are we happy with this medal and donation rate, or is there something we could do to increase it? The website says walkers can give a donation towards trail maintenance if they wish. Maybe the passport needs to be brought onto the home page. Maybe we could get comments about the thrill of getting a medal from the children who have completed, for the website. Maybe we could think of school visits to promote it.

Joan Cutting

Website

The website continues to be used for downloading maps and instructions. The new website was up and running on time and is working well. It is easy for us to update.The "Shop" page which is working well.

Aled Owen

T-shirts

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.

Aled Owen

Calendars

Calendars made a loss of £67 so the trustees have decided not to produce one for next year.

Aled Owen

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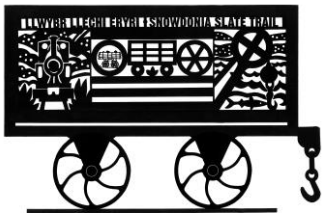
Projects Report

Path Improvements above Llan Ffestiniog.

This project has been completed. There are a few stones remaining alongside the path but they will soon be covered by the bracken.

Start and end features

After the initial hitch, we decided to change approach and commission two bespoke benches, designed by Yvonne Amor and Justin Taylor of Penmachno at a cost of £5-6000. All funds are in place and we have, with Mieko`s help, negotiated with Gwynedd Council to place a concrete base at Porth Penrhyn. It is hoped that the



benches will be installed in November.

Other News

Jemima and Cecily raised over £1000 for Llanberis Mountain Rescue and OVMRO this year by walking the trail. Earlier this month, that achievement was recognised by Scouts Cymru at the National AGM in Llandrindod Wells with a big Well Done in Community Impact Award.

Kate Whitehead

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
Snowdonia Society
The Ramblers
Ashley Foundation
Rehau, Blaenau Ffestiniog

and
our wardens.

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