

14<sup>th</sup> November 2024

Agenda Item No. 4

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## Fife Coast & Countryside Trust Performance Report

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Report by: Jeremy Harris, FCCT CEO

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Wards Affected: All

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### Purpose

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To present the annual performance report for Fife Coast and Countryside Trust (FCCT) for 2023/24

### Recommendation(s)

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Members are asked to:

- (1) Note the contents of the report and the progress made by FCCT in 2023/24 and;
- (2) Note the effective delivery of Fife Council priorities through FCCT activity.

### Resource Implications

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Increased demand on Fife's outdoors requires sustained investment if the benefits of high-quality accessible outdoor spaces are to be realised and Fife is to continue to provide well-managed sites to the benefit of local communities and visitors alike.

### Legal & Risk Implications

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There are risk implications pertaining to the provision of service, and delivery of targets in alignment with the Council's obligation to improve local services and local outcomes whilst demonstrating best value..

### Impact Assessment

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An EqIA is not required because the report does not propose a change or revision to existing policies and practices.

### Consultation

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None required.

## 1.0 Background

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- 1.1 FCCT has been asked to submit high level covering reports to accompany our published annual report. Please refer to the [PUBLISHED ANNUAL REPORT](#) for further detail including a summary of audited financial statements for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024
- 1.2 FCCT audited accounts are available [here](#)

## 2.0 Report Summary

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### 2.1 FCCT Structure

- 2.1.1 FCCT is an organisation of between 50 and 60 people (accounting for seasonal fluctuations) committed to our mission of connecting people with the wonderful natural environment that is to be found in the Kingdom of Fife.

The organisation is comprised of four parts, each with closely related but distinct functions. Each of FCCT's Departments have identified their own purpose derived from the approach they take to achieving FCCT's Mission and Vision. These are as follows:

- 2.1.2 *Conservation and Engagement*

Nature has intrinsic value, and we recognise the benefits of spending time in outdoor spaces. We want to restore healthy ecosystems and believe that a closer connection between humans and nature supports our wellbeing. A deeper understanding of, and appreciation for, the natural world is key to our shared future.

- 2.1.3 *Development*

We believe that supporting the transition to regenerative systems that benefit nature, people, and the economy will allow us to tackle environmental and social crises at the local and regional level. Through this work, we will provide sustainable and resilient funding to FCCT.

- 2.1.4 *Operations*

We believe that the effective delivery of all practical aspects of site management is fundamental to supporting responsible access. We know that well-managed and maintained sites offer social, environmental, and economic benefits that promote the connection between environment and people.

- 2.1.5 *Support Services*

Support Services makes the work of all at FCCT as effective and fulfilling as possible while pursuing the highest standards in all functions for which we are responsible. We strive to fully support all who wish to join us in achieving our mission. By implementing well-designed processes, we will remove barriers to achieving our goals and ensure that all FCCT's activity is founded on the best available information.

### 2.2 Summary of select outputs

- 2.2.1 Through these four departments, FCCT achieves a huge amount across a wide set of priorities and work areas. This includes:

- A litter maintenance service 7 days per week, 52 weeks of the year across more than 70 sites that include the Fife Pilgrim Way, the Fife Coastal Path, and 13 of Scotland's Beach Award winning beaches along 140 miles of Fife coastline.
- Management of 15 award-winning toilet blocks in countryside locations that are open for more hours than previous years.
- Regular maintenance and management of vegetation and infrastructure at more than 70 sites and many miles of path including the Fife Coastal Path and Fife Pilgrim Way making use of in-house skills that include grass cutting, pruning, tree work, path upgrades, countryside furniture installation, and an ongoing replacement program of steps, signage, beach infrastructure, drainage, and much more.
- Implementing sustainable car park management at 12 car parks in coastal and inland countryside locations.
- Supporting sustainable access to Fife's landscapes while carefully balancing conservation priorities, supporting public engagement, and delivering programmatic education sessions.
- Developing and implementing site management plans for designated areas including Local Nature Reserves (LNR's), Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI's), Special Protection Areas (SPA's), Special Areas of Conservation (SAC's), and wetlands of international importance designated under the Ramsar Convention (RAMSAR's).
- Making use of in-house project management skills and experience to deliver projects of various kinds that align with our organisational purpose and take us closer to achieving our Mission and Vision.

## 2.3 Full report

A link to the full report produced by Fife Coast and Countryside Trust can be found here: [Annual Report](#)

## 3.0 Conclusions

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- 3.1 In line with the Statutory Performance Indicator of the Local Government Act 1992, FCCT plays an important role in supporting the Local Authority to engaged with, responded to, and help empower its communities, including those who require greater support through our care of Fife's outdoors as a valuable resource that is accessible to all regardless of social or economic status.
- 3.2 This cover note, in conjunction with the published annual report and audited accounts provides information that demonstrates a commitment to best value through the transparent reporting of activity undertaken by FCCT on behalf of Fife Council.
- 3.3 FCCT remains committed to delivering the highest possible service with the resources available and taking an entrepreneurial approach to bridging the gap between available funding from the Local Authority and increasing demand on services. We will continue to advocate for greater investment in Fife's outdoors by the Local Authority and others and are fully convinced of the great benefits available to individuals and communities in doing so.

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