



Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of Crieff Community Trust
Thursday 12 June 2025, 18.30 held on Zoom

Directors: Ailsa Campbell (AC, Chair), Brian McVey (BM, Vice Chair), Ann Ross (AR), James Anderson (JA), Ian Christie (IC), Jane White (JW Secretary and Treasurer),

Full members: Lennie Richardson (LR), Dawn Griesbach, Sally Leger, Hamish Campbell, Amy Kirk, Richard White, Karen Christie

Also present: Gareth Ruddock, Chris Sanderson (DTAS), Baillie Rhona Brock, Andrew Harvey, Maddie Smallwood, James Gardener (PKC), Donna Brooks

1. Welcome and introductions

- BM opened and chaired the meeting.

2. Apologies: Joy Flett (JF), Gareth Ruddock

3. Approval of 2024 AGM Minutes

- The minutes of 2024 AGM were approved by BM and seconded by AC.

4. Report from the Chair – Ailsa Campbell’s Chair report was in the form of a presentation, which began with a general overview of a year of challenge, purpose and progress:

The past year had brought significant change, along with opportunities to reflect on Crieff Community Trust’s progress and future direction. There are many ways in which CCT continues to support Crieff, through practical projects like paths and community spaces, and through behind-the-scenes coordination, governance and advocacy that often goes unseen but is vital to the town’s future. Thanks were expressed to everyone who has supported the Trust this year and a warm welcome offered to new volunteers, partners and trustees who share CCT’s vision for a thriving Crieff.

CCT faced significant changes, including the loss of our CEO and the formal transfer of the Drummond Arms, however the Trust remained focused on delivering for Crieff, serving as a whole-town organisation, with a remit that spans heritage, greenspace, enterprise and community regeneration. CCT has stayed true to the mission and values and taken decisions based on what is best for the town, even when those decisions were difficult.

Highlights of CCT’s achievements, both through our core projects and by supporting wider community efforts include:

- strong progress on two major path projects, the Oakbank to MacRosty Park Link Path and the Crieff to Comrie core path.
- Turretbank Wood continues to be a valued green space, with ongoing care led by trustee Jim Anderson, who surveys and arranges professional maintenance of the trees, responds to storm damage, maintains the path and leads the annual blitz on the Himalayan Balsam.
- the safe and responsible handover of the Drummond Arms to Perth & Kinross Council
- coworking space, Can Do Crieff, running as a self-sustaining asset that enables people to work locally and provides valuable income for the Trust and Strathearn Arts as our landlord.

- supported a number of community-led projects and took on significant responsibility to help make those happen. For the Murray Fountain, Sculpture Trail and Santa's Post Office, CCT liaised with funders, completed funding applications and final reports, managed the grant income and supplier payments, coordinated contractors and community groups and supported local consultation and delivery. CCT is proud that it could offer that kind of practical, trusted support when asked.

Individual projects:

Drummond Arms Transition

The Drummond Arms has been one of CCT's longest and most complex projects. The goal throughout was to act in the best interests of the town, to remove risk, and to push for regeneration, despite very difficult conditions.

After years of ownership limbo, CCT secured the title in 2019 through its subsidiary Drummond Arms Regeneration Limited (DARL) who managed the asset responsibly until arranging its transfer to Perth & Kinross Council in January, who are now moving ahead with its demolition.

DARL took forward this work at considerable effort, and with a great deal of scrutiny. It is important to note that 86% of all project income was spent on direct, on-the-ground activity, with the remainder covering essential professional services.

The Council has now formally acknowledged that everything CCT and DARL did was in the best interests of the community and that they have learned from this experience how better to work with community groups in the future.

Formal thanks and recognition expressed for the work of Ian Christie and Lucile Black, who served as DARL directors throughout, and John Warrender, whose guidance on governance and risk was invaluable.

Another important, though less visible, result of our work was a policy shift by the Crown Estate. Back in 2017, when the title went to the Queen's and Lord Treasurer's Remembrancer, CCT tried every avenue to secure it. Despite CCT's best efforts, the title was returned to the negligent owner, which blocked progress and added years of delay and significant cost to the process of eventually securing the title. However, when the office became the King's and Lord Treasurer's Remembrancer (KLTR in 2022), a new 'Ownerless Property Transfer Scheme' (OPTS) was established to stop cases like Crieff, where a community is trying to take action and ownership, and the existing owner has failed in their responsibilities. This new scheme proposes to transfer ownerless property to community groups, rather than selling it or donating it to charity. Crieff's case contributed directly to that change. That is something to be proud of. CCT didn't just act locally, it helped shape better practice nationally through the KLTR, and influenced how PKC approaches and supports community groups facing complex regeneration challenges.

Can Do Crieff

Can Do Crieff continues to be a self-sustaining source of revenue for the Trust, operated entirely by board volunteers Alisa Campbell and Jane White, with no paid staff.

This year it generated over £4,500 in unrestricted profit, while covering its own costs, including £10,800 in annual rent paid to Strathearn Arts. CCT's goal is to ultimately match this amount in profit for CCT's unrestricted funds.

Usage has remained consistent and diverse, with a healthy balance of 24/7 users, 10-day users and 5-day users. There is also steady demand for single-day bookings and occasional meeting room hires.

Can Do offers affordable workspace that supports local enterprise and contributes to town centre's vibrancy, by bringing people into Crieff who would otherwise be working from home or commuting elsewhere.

CCT is now reviewing future plans to expand its use and impact, while ensuring it continues to strengthen both Crieff's economy and CCT's financial resilience.

Paths & Turretbank Wood

This has been a year of steady progress in our work to improve access to Crieff's outdoor spaces.

The Oakbank to Macrosty Park link path via Lady Mary's Walk has secured planning permission and £42,000 in confirmed funding, with decisions on further major applications expected soon. We are currently consulting the community on the preferred surfacing material to ensure the path is both sustainable and sensitive to its surroundings.

On the Crieff to Comrie route, feasibility work has resumed, with support from PKC. CCT is working closely with a number of key stakeholders, including landowners along the proposed route, Comrie Community Council and Comrie Development Trust, to explore how the path could come forward in a way that benefits both communities.

Meanwhile, the Voluntary Path Group has continued to work with the local Countryside Ranger on regular "path parties", including maintenance on the River Earn path from Crieff Cemetery to Sauchie Park, the Knock and trails near Bennybeg.

In Turretbank Wood, CCT continues to lead the stewardship of this much-loved community woodland. Our volunteer team has carried out regular maintenance of the path and trees, addressed storm damage, and worked to control the invasive Himalayan Balsam. Improvements to drainage, signage and seating are also underway, helping make the site more welcoming and resilient.

As with many CCT projects, this work is carried out quietly and consistently behind the scenes. It is a reflection of our long-term commitment to caring for the places that matter most to the people of Crieff. CCT extends heartfelt thanks to Jim Anderson, who leads this work on behalf of the Trust, and to Dawn Griesbach for her tireless support.

Building Shared Vision and Collaborative Working

Another significant strand of CCT work this year was helping to bring groups together to align efforts for Crieff's regeneration.

At the request of the Scottish Government Regeneration Team, who were receiving competing funding bids from two different Crieff organisations, and with PKC also seeking a clearer picture of how local projects connected, CCT stepped in to provide structure and coordination. CCT organised a Town Team and led the process of mapping and aligning the big capital projects. The result was an ambitious joined-up Crieff Capital Projects Alignment Plan, identifying the 10 main capital projects and how they also delivered the community's priorities in the current Community Action Plan as well as delivering the Scottish Government's priorities set out in numerous policies. The plan was well received, even being used by Campion Homes in their social media to promote Crieff as a vibrant place to live with a lot going on.

CCT also helped establish a Regeneration Group and once it became clear that others wanted to take the next phase forward, stepped back, confident that strong foundations had been laid. CCT continues to be open to collaboration with any group that shares the focus on the town and its people. CCT will continue to collaborate with other local groups, supporting shared priorities and ensuring that CCT efforts complement rather than duplicate others.

The Trust remains committed to nurturing Crieff's strong social capital, the relationships, trust and goodwill that underpin everything positive that happens in our town.

5. Treasurer's Report – Jane White

Crieff Community Trust is now in its twelfth year of operation. This financial year has seen the Trust continue to improve its financial base, although the funding environment remains challenging, especially for core funding and the areas of project activity in which the Trust operates.

Can Do Crieff (CDC) coworking space, the main source of revenue for the Trust, continued to operate at a profit. £17,088 of fees were paid by CDC members over the year. After deducting the cost of rent (£10,800) paid to Strathearn Arts and other costs associated with running the space Can Do Crieff generated £4,762 of profit for the Trust's unrestricted funds. It is hoped that this revenue will continue to grow in the coming financial year.

An independent project consultant was employed to assist the Trust with the Drummond Arms regeneration project. His salary was paid from VAT claims received by Drummond Arms Regeneration Ltd (DARL). DARL is in the process of being wound up. Some further costs will be incurred and any funds left will be transferred into unrestricted funds.

Another part-time independent consultant continued as the Trust's development manager until November 2024 and a new part time consultant was recruited in March. This role was funded partly by PKC, the Gannochy Trust and an anonymous Crieff Trust. Funding needs to be secured to continue this important role in 2025/26.

CCT received town regeneration funding of £80,000, from an anonymous Crieff Trust and PKC, which we are managing on behalf of the Crieff Regeneration Group until they become a fully constituted charity in 2025/26.

£16,406 was received from Dior following their fashion show at Drummond Castle to improve the appearance of Crieff by renewing the marketing banners which are now in place along the main thoroughfares in the town and particularly at the entrances from Perth and Stirling. Some invoices associated with this project had not been received by the year end and will be paid from this funding in 2025/26.

Seed money was also granted by an anonymous Crieff Trust to investigate the idea of a Crieff sculpture trail. A successful event in James Square in August produced two wood sculptures which will be erected early 2025/26.

The Ian Findlay Path Fund having previously paid for the design of a new link path at Turretbank Wood and planning permission having been granted, work began to fundraise to construct the path. Funds of £1,000 each were secured from the Mushroom Trust and the Barrack Trust, with a further £40,000 promised if sufficient funding for the project becomes available. We expect to hear confirmation of whether or not we will receive significant construction awards from NCN and ATIF funding by the end of June 2025.

Having worked in previous years with PKC and other community groups to raise funds to regenerate James Square and the Murray fountain, further grants were secured from Historic Environment Scotland (HES) and Perth and Kinross Heritage Trust. The refurbished fountain and the square were officially opened in August 2024. The last half of HES funding is being drawn down now and then payment of all funding raised towards the fountain will revert to PKC who financed the whole project.

Unrestricted funds being carried forward as reserves to the next financial year are more healthy than last year, at £19,751 and the Trust will continue to work to improve these reserves.

6. Election of Directors -

AC retired and was reelected. Proposed by AR and seconded by IC. JA retired and was reelected. Proposed by BM and seconded by IC. LR was elected. Proposed by AC and seconded by JA. No other people put themselves forward for election. JW will be retiring from the board at the end of August 2025 but was reelected till then by AC and BM.

7. Strengthening for the Future

CCT continues to recruit new trustees with the knowledge, expertise and networks to support CCT's work and future direction and is actively seeking new trustees who can bring fresh energy.

A part-time Development Officer has joined us, funded by the Gannochy Trust and is hoping to employ some admin support for a few hours a week.

CCT is reviewing and refreshing its strategy and risk framework. The focus remains on building a resilient organisation that can continue to deliver for Crieff. Specifically over the next year:

Delivering our two path projects: Oakbank Link Path (through TBW to Lady Mary's Walk) and Crieff to Comrie

Developing Can Do Crieff to support more people, helping more locals work in town, attracting remote workers to Crieff and strengthening CCT's income base.

CCT remains committed, as a whole-town organisation, to caring for the places that matter to Crieff, including local paths, green spaces, historic buildings and shared community spaces. CCT will continue to support the wider community, create the conditions for new opportunities and work with care, integrity and determination to serve the town as a whole.

8 Thanks

AC thanked our funders: Scottish Government, PKC, the Gannochy Trust in particular are partners and the wider Crieff community for their support. Also CCT pro bono lawyer Sandra Rankine, website wizard Kona McPhee and project worker Stephen Oswald for all their hard work on the trust's behalf.

AC gave special thanks to Jane White, who is stepping down as Secretary and Treasurer in August, saying: "Since joining the board in 2019, Jane has been the motor behind the Trust, keeping everything running with calm competence, sharp insight and tireless dedication. She took to the role like a duck to water, and quickly became the person who held things together through some of our most difficult moments while quietly dealing with her own. She will be hugely missed, not only for all she did behind the scenes, but for the integrity and quiet strength she brought to everything we did. Jane, we are so grateful to you. You will be deeply missed."

11. Questions/ Comments arising-

Rhona Brock thanked the board for their hard work and asked to be put in touch with the CCT development officer. She asked if anyone else had stood for election as a trustee apart from Lennie Richardson, who has been elected. No one did.

12. Any other competent business - none

The annual report will be available online and sent to members once the accounts are finalised.