



Annual Trustees Report 2024



TVTA 2024 Annual Report Index

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S.1 Introduction

It has been another busy year for the TVTA, with our Dig Days having ramped up and the very welcome arrival of three new Board members, helping us to build momentum and plans to take us forward to our next stage of activity

We've worked hard to maintain a positive dialogue with our main landowner partner, Forestry & Land Scotland (FLS) and provide a voice for the mountain biking community in our dealings with them.

We continue to manage ten 'Golfie' based trails - 3G, Big Baw, Community Service, Feed the Pony, Final Fling, Flat White, New/Loan/Loam Wolf & New York New York. Our focus over 2023/24 has remained on trail maintenance and we haven't started any major strategic projects, although we're still committed to working with FLS and local landowners, where willing, to extend the number and range of trails under our management.

Looking forward, we believe that the TVTA has much to offer, particularly following our recent Strategy Planning workshops. The output from them should provide us with a firm basis going forward and we look forward to sharing the output from them with all our stakeholders.

Finally, we want to recognise and celebrate the hard work, enthusiasm and contribution from all our trail builders, volunteers, personal and business supporters.

Our short AGM will focus on the following key areas:

- Finances: Our Treasurer, Ed Shoote, will present our Financial Report and Accounts, outlining the very stable base from which we operate from. During these challenging times we really appreciate the financial support from both our riding and business community.
- TVTA Board & Structure: Fred Bell, our Secretary, will provide an update on this area. We will also deal with the election of Board members and advise of the work to refresh our Constitution.
- Supporters Scheme: Fred will summarise how the numbers look.
- DMBinS/TVTA Tweed Valley Trail Co-ordinator role: Marc Crowley will update us on the issues he has focused on over the last year and on how our relationship with Forestry & Land Services Scotland has been working.
- Dig Days overview: Marc Crowley will talk through the progress in this area. He will also give a short update on the early focus of our recently established Trail Committee.
- Our go-forward Strategy: We will summarise how we plan to take the TVTA forward.

S.2 Financial Report and Annual Accounts

The TVTA financial year reported here runs from 1st March 2023 to 28th February 2024. This financial year the aim was again for consolidating the finances for the next project. We were delighted to still receive so many generous donations from individuals via the supporters scheme. This was through the website using credit card donations and those with direct debits, we continued to get some donations via PayPal/Trail Forks and Benevity. The trail coordinator role in partnership with Scottish Cycling was secured by the UK Government community renewal funding. This meant less donations were spent and we saw an increase of the charity funds for projects.

This financial year donations totalled £21,071 (£28,884 FY22/23) in direct donations. This included donations from Tweedlove of £1,857. This includes £2,689 restricted funds for the Thinking Box group who are fundraising towards an adaptive bike. There were no other large donations this year. All donations over £100 are listed below and we also thank all other supporters and donors.

Expenses incurred directly related to our charitable activities totalled £2,799, the main items within this total being PPE, digging tools and insurance. Costs related to fundraising include the website and supporter hosting, purchase of clothing merchandise and card transaction fees at a total cost of £2,767.

Our surplus for the year 2023/24 was £15,506. Including the year-end PayPal and bank balances, the Tweed Valley Trails Association has funds of £72,023 up from £56,517 in the previous financial year. It should be noted that within this the TVTA holds a total of £3,437 of restricted funds for use for the Thinking Box group.

The TVTA also benefited from UK Government grant funding in partnership with DMBinS/Scottish Cycling secured again in June 2023, as part of this agreement the TVTA contributed £1,892 in match funding for the Trail coordinator role which is split between DMBinS and TVTA,

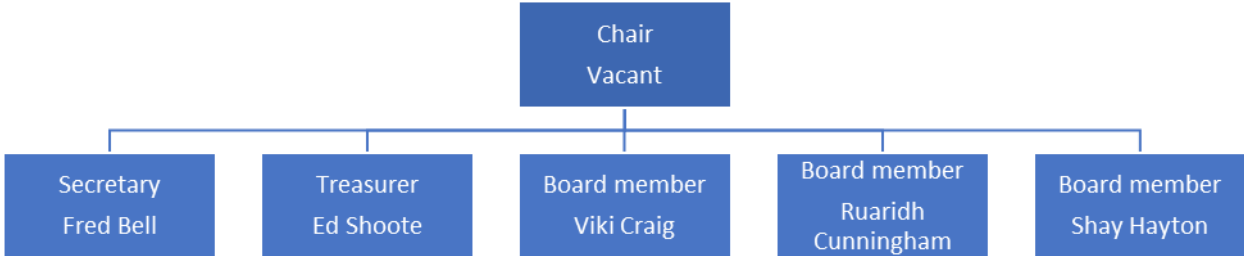
Donations and Grants Over £100 between 1st March 2023 and 28th February 2024

	Unrestricted donation	Restricted donation
	to nearest £	to nearest £
The Thinking Box Funds		2,689
Tweedlove Event Donation	1,847	
Riders Retreat/Glentress Hotel	240	
C. Cranston	360	
Cleikum mill	180	
Donations from individuals (mainly via website inc. gift aid payment)	14,768	

S.3 Organisational Structure & Governance

Structure chart

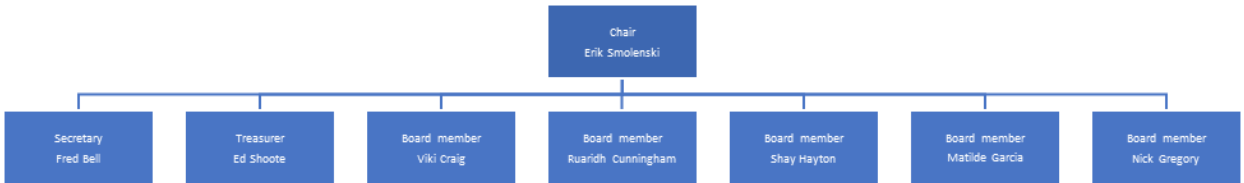
At the end of our Financial Year (28/2/24) the TVTA Board comprised seven members set up as shown in the following structure chart:



Marc Crowley (our DMBinS / TVTA Trail Co-ordinator) attends the Board with a standing invite.

During the year we lost two Board members; Paul Lindsay and Nicky Waters. We're grateful for their contribution and thank them for all their efforts during the year.

Following a successful recruitment effort the Board now (November 2024) is as below. Looking forward, we are confident of driving forward the TVTA with renewed enthusiasm.



Our new Trail Committee began meeting in 2023; its aim is to develop a more forward looking, planned approach to trail maintenance. This group has also given us the opportunity to bring in and work with a wider constituency of trail builders and riders. The Trail Committee is a sub-group of the Board. A summary of its activities to date is provided in the Review of the Year section later in this report.

Board meetings

The Board met monthly during 2023 and 2024. Meetings covered a wide range of topics including progress on Dig Days, our partnership with Forestry and Land Scotland, our Supporters Scheme and the progress being made by our DMBinS/TVTA Trail Co-ordinator role. All meetings were formally minuted. Additionally in early 2024, we held a number of focused strategy sessions - more information on them is provided in the Looking Forward section.

Under the current TVTA Constitution, all Board members and Trustees retire from their Board duties at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) but can, if they wish, stand for re-election.

Board elections will be held at the AGM.

S.4 Review of the year

Supporters' scheme update/ overview

Supporter numbers sit at around 300 currently and have done for some time; in summary, our position could be described as healthy but somewhat static. We are very grateful for our supporters continuing commitment which equates to revenue of towards £9000 pa.

The structure of the Business Supporters Scheme has now been agreed, hopefully for roll-out this year.

The strategy work mentioned in Section 6 will, we hope, also result in proposals which drive our Supporters Scheme forward.

Dig Days

During the year 65 Digs and 11 Inspections were carried out. In volunteer terms that works out at nearly 500 sessions over around 2150 hours. Dig activity focused mainly on our 10 adopted trails - 3G, Big Baw, Feed the Pony, Final Fling, Flat White (a revamp to make it more sustainable), Liver Damage (dealing with a safety issue, Lone Wolf, NYNY and Repeat Offender (another safety issue).

Other work included work on the Falla Brae track build for the 2023 Cycling World Championships XC track; work on the Innerleithen XC trail to aid FLS in reopening sections; work on Matador to aid FLS in eliminating a section of the push up being used to descend.

TVTA also hosted several private volunteer sessions for businesses and organisations in this period. We thank Scottish Water (twice!) & Edinburgh University Geosciences for their efforts.

FLS engagement

The TVTA and FLS relationship has matured and is now in a positive place.

TVTA have worked closely, through the Trail Development Coordinator, to support FLS with communication and signage regarding forest operations. In return, the TVTA, whilst not adopting any more trails, are able to submit work requests into other trails to address safety concerns or general maintenance work for the benefit of all users. We have worked with FLS to put in new sections of trail, address trail exits and work on shared use paths. The trail association model is supported both by the national team and local staff at FLS though we are limited by regional differences. Importantly, during forest activity, FLS have clearly established operational restrictions with contractors; maintaining weekend access to the forests and protecting adopted trails through the operations.

TVTA also teamed up with BASE to help reroute a section of Matador on the FLS Innerleithen DH trails.

Work with other Land Managers

The bulk of the trail network in the Tweed Valley is located on FLS managed land; however, TVTA have continued to monitor and maintain areas of previous work including the diversion around the bog on Gypsy Glen and within the Innerleithen Community Trust owned Pirn Woods.

Trail Development Coordinator Role

There has been 6 months of uncertainty of the role due to delays in continued funding streams. With the UK CRF fund ending in December 2022 Scottish Cycling and TVTA agreed to equally cover this period should funding not be found. The UK Shared Prosperity Fund application by DMBinS into Scottish Borders Council was successful and has enabled the role to continue fully funded through DMBinS until the end of February 2025. Beyond that time there are no confirmed funding streams for the role; the TVTA will then need to decide if the role delivers value to the organisation, how it contributes to the strategic goals and consider if it should be funded part-time.

The Trail Development Coordinator has been instrumental in restoring the relationship with FLS, ensuring the TVTA were supporting the needs of the FLS in their partnership, engaging with the MTB community, mitigating risk on the trail network, supporting community and business concerns, etc. Additionally, the role holder has been heavily involved in training volunteer dig leaders and directly leading 80% of the dig sessions.

Community engagement & events

CWC Track build - The TVTA worked with our volunteers; Cranked Cycle Club, Kids Innerleithen Cycle Club, Peebles Cycling Club and Peebles High School MTB Club to build the upper half of the Cycling World Champs XC course.

CWC Fringe Events - We hosted trail digging sessions where we attracted international visitors to join in. Further, we put them in touch with local businesses to enhance their visit.

Volunteers' Ride NYNY First - To reward those who give up their time to invest into the trail network, we now invite volunteers to be the first to ride a new section of trail ahead of the masses.

S.5 A massive shout out to all who support / volunteer/ help the TVTA

We're really thankful for the massive efforts made by a wide range of people who have helped the TVTA in so many ways over this last year; trails maintenance work has increased and we couldn't have achieved this without the hard work of all our trail builders, diggers and volunteers - so to you all, whether you are 'Regulars', 'Occasionals' or 'On-offs' we say a huge thanks; without you we'd only be able to maintain a very limited trail network.

Equally, to all those who have supported us financially - we simply could not have achieved what we have without your generous contributions, thanks.

S.6 Looking Forward - following our recent Strategy Planning

Over the winter months, Board members took the opportunity to work through some strategic planning. We considered three key questions:

- Where do we want to be in the future?
- Where are we now?
- How do we get where we want to be?

What quickly became clear was that our core purpose remains unchanged but our priority goal for the short to medium term is to expand our network. To do this we need to invest our time

and energy in growing our volunteer base, our dig leaders, and our relationships with stakeholders. We also need a coherent programme of work, using the expertise and voices of those in the Trail Committee.

With that in mind, we have set a number of strategic objectives:

Finance

- Increase contributions from business supporter donations and regular rider contributions.
- Increase financial support from industry and race organisations.

Internal Processes/ Infrastructure

- Increase the number of trails under our stewardship – new and existing.
- Identify a larger scale project, with a portfolio of different sized projects to create a continuous, flexible/agile pipeline that can be prioritised to meet needs.

People

- Improve riders' experience of trails.
- Develop relationships with FLS.
- Increase the board to improve diversity and expertise.
- Increase dig leader capabilities.
- Increase volunteer numbers.
- Increase digger numbers.

Communications

- Create an approach to communications that results in action e.g. increase funds, increased volunteer time, increased invitations to contribute to other forums and represent the community.

Environmental

- Reduce the environmental damage caused by trails.

Our refreshed Board has already started working on turning the plans into firm actions.

S.7 The year in pictures







Appendix - Tool & Equipment Register (March 2024 Muster)

Category	Tool	Quantity
PPE	Gloves	23
	Glasses	19
	High Vis	24
	Ear Defenders	4
	Helmets	3
Saws	Cheap Folding Saw	16
	Cheap Pruning Saw	9
	Cheap Pole Saw	2
	Quality Folding Saw	3
	Quality Pruning Saw	4
	Quality Pole Saw	1
	Katanaboy	1
	Reciprocating Saw	1
	Reciprocating Saw Battery	1
	Reciprocating Saw Charger	0
Loppers	Telescopic Ratchet Anvil Loppers	2
	Cam Bypass Loppers	4
Buckets	Flexi Buckets	13
Hoes & McLeods	Trail Hoes	12
	McLeods	8
Rakes	Rakes	3
Mattocks and Picks	Mattocks	11
	Pick	1 Head Only
	Pinch Pole	1
Spades & Shovels	Long Handle Pointed Shovel	2
	Long Handle Square Shovel	2
	Square Shovel	2
	Spade	4
Wheelbarrows	Wheelbarrows	2

Winching	Winch	1
	Lifting straps	4
	Shackles	4
	Snatch Block	1
	Rock Slings	3
Wacker Plate	Wacker Plate	1
	Fuel Can	1
	Spill Kit	1
	Loading Ramp	1
Leader Packs	Leader Packs	6
Staple Gun	Staple Gun	1
Pipes and Geomesh	450mm x 6m Twinwall Pipe	15
	2m x 50m Geomesh	3.5