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# Trustees' Annual Report 2019



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# 1 Board and Trustees

The board is comprised of three trustees and four board members and includes fundraising and accounting experts, trail builders, cycling industry figures, spanning a wide range of age and experience, all representing the mountain bike riding community of the Tweed Valley.

The Board has met five times since December 2018, focussing predominantly on putting in place the necessary structures for a partnership agreement with Forestry Land Scotland and developing working practices for trail projects. The Tweed Valley Trails Association (TVTA) aims to set a positive example for other local community group to engage with land managers and responsibly manage their own local trail networks.



## 2 Accounts - review of finances



PCC riders donate £200 raised from the cake stall at the annual Stage Race

### 2018 Filed Accounts

The second financial year of the TVTA saw significant increase in income. Whereas only £56.97 of income was recorded in 2017, 2018 saw this rise to £7,773.65 of donations in the accounting year.

Individual donations in the 2018 financial year totalled £167.05 and unconditional donations from Dirt School, DMBinS, IMBA and Valley Girls added a total of £2,039. The Enduro World Series contributed a further £4,000 of restricted cash funds, bolstered in 2019 to £10,000, specifically ring-fenced to pay for major trail upgrades on the Caberston (Golfie) multi-use path / climb to the reservoir, ready to spend once project planning and approvals are finalised (see 2020 Goals).

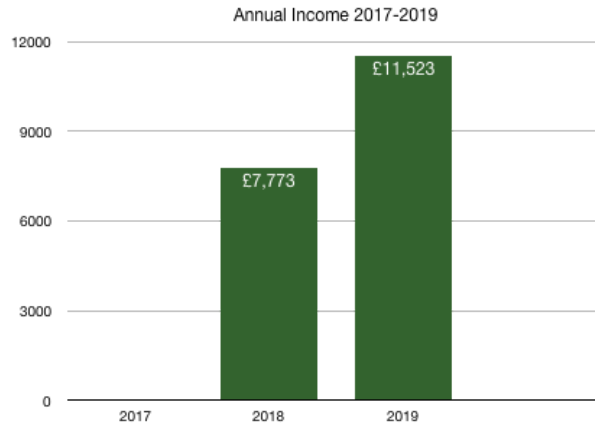
### 2017 - 2019 Finances to date

#### Overall financial picture

With a fast first three years of activity, the TVTA currently (Dec 7, 2019) sits on a cash balance of £15,264.21, with £10,000 of that sum restricted towards the cost of the upgrades to the multi-use path and climbing trail at Caberston / Golfie (see table below). That leaves the TVTA with a current cash operating budget of £5,264.21 (Dec 7, 2019).

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### Cash Donors Over £100

Donor	Cash Amount	Financial Year	Notes
Enduro World Series	£10,000	2018-2019	Restricted for Caberston multi-use path/climb trail upgrade
Specialized Trail Days Festival	£2,936	2019	Unrestricted donation
DMBinS, LEADER, Scottish Enterprise*	£2,455	2018-2019	Insurance, training, operational costs, tools
Dirt School	£2,380	2018-2019	Unrestricted donation
IMBA	£438	2018	Trail Heroes Award
FNY Collective	£434	2018	Unrestricted donation FNY Hunt event
Peebles CC	£200	2019	Kids Stage Race cake sales donation
Go Where	£150	2019	Unrestricted donation

*\*Backed up with an additional circa £9,500 paid for at source and not recorded on TVTA balance sheet*

### Donations under £100

Aside from larger donations, the TVTA has received and is grateful for a number of other donations from businesses and individuals under £100 which we rely upon for keeping going with day-to-day Costs. We thank everyone for their generosity over our first three years and that all donors for helping us carry out our work looking after our trails.

Donations under £100 from 2017 to 2019 total £710.94

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# **A huge thank you to all of our generous donors from 2017-2019**

Enduro World Series, Specialized Bicycles, DMBinS, Dirt School, FNY Collective, IMBA, Peebles Cycling Club, Go Where, Marc Crowley, Krysia Dremza, Ewan Sandison, Cleikum Mill, Andrew Duncan Hay, Happy Cog, Swift Trails, Chris Conway, Anthony Compton, Robert Slaney, Fraser Dunn, Gavin Will

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## 3 Trail Projects & Volunteer Work

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# 2019 in numbers

**7** Organised Dig Days

**180** individual dig sessions

**1,555** volunteer hours contributed to the TVTA activity in 2019

**Trails adopted:** New York New York, Final Fling, Community Service



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The initial selection of adopted trails in Caberston included New York, Final Fling and Community Service and one climb (the proposed multi use path, detailed below). These were selected for our first operational year in order to establish good working practices across different trail levels and varying needs of repair. The intention is now to continually grow the trail portfolio looked after by the TVTA as works on each set of trails are completed.

The first round of trail work was deliberately focused on comparatively easier trail grades in order to provide a good predictable introduction to a generally challenging area for riding and supply maintenance and volunteer labour on some of the areas highest traffic trails where it is most needed.

There have been a series of seven public dig days run throughout the year on the selected trails since permission was granted to begin operations in June. These days have been publicised via mailing lists and social channels and have been very well attended with requests from volunteers to participate generally outstripping maximum operational capacity on the hill.

In order to facilitate these digs to the required standards, a series of processes has been established and refined throughout the year.

- Pre dig inspections by CTC qualified volunteers defining worksites and daily goals to provide clear guidance to on the day leader.
- Field note system (pre and post dig) in place to permanently record all work done on trails and communicate work brief to volunteers during the session.
- Online risk assessments created to allow standardised process for leaders to perform on the day risk assessments for each dig.
- Method of work statements defining working practices and equipment usage.
- Checklist and on / off the hill procedures.
- Volunteers CTC trained in volunteer management and first aid qualified.
- Growing amount of tools and equipment purchased by the TVTA from donation monies

Capped for 2019 at 20 volunteers per day (this year while processes are established) 7 public dig days and 1 pilot session with John Ireland and Andy Wardman from FLS in 2018 were run. In total, 145 people attended dig sessions in 2019.

The bulk of these days have focused on the substantial re-build of New York New York, a long low angle trail in previously very poor repair, which even as works are ongoing has already become one of the most popular trails to ride in the area with a huge upsurge in traffic observed. The other trails (Final Fling, Community Service) are under works now and are expected to be 'finished' by early spring 2020 at which point they will be moved into an inspection list and maintained as needed.

The intention is now to apply for and add a second set of trails to our working portfolio in summer 2020 gradually expanding our adopted network at a sustainable rate.

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## 4 Working with Forestry



Memorandum of Understanding.

The TVTA has engaged with Forestry Land Scotland (FLS) to agree a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) which set the terms of a base agreement and working structure for trail projects to take place within. This was agreed and signed off by TVTA and FLS on 26 June 2019. As the primary land manager of the forests containing the majority of the 'wild trails' locally, achieving this agreement with FLS has enabled the TVTA to begin work on the ground in earnest on FLS managed land this year.

FLS Contact Group

A Contact Liaison Group has been agreed between the TVTA and FLS to meet quarterly in order to assess progress, define new projects and continue to revise and progress the working relationship between the two groups.

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The first meeting was held on 30 September, attended by a representation from both bodies. FLS (John Ireland, Craig Millar, Tim Oliver and Katie Jarvis) / TVTA (Aneela McKenna, Neil Carnegie, Krysia Smith, Gordon Smith and Marc Crowley). This initial meeting was primarily used by FLS to review TVTA working practices and documentation on the dig-days undertaken so far to be sure that adequate procedures and risk controls have been put in place and that digs are producing work of a good standard.

From a TVTA perspective the goal was to show good working practices and present planning options and a study for a machine built multi use path proposed to improve and replace the badly damaged right of way linking the high point of the Caberston forest with the upper moorland above the reservoir. These plans currently sit with FLS with approval/timescale and structure for work to begin expected to be communicated in the near future. Funds for the proposed project are already in place (see section 2) and ring fenced to be released as soon as FLS go ahead is given.



Sections of the multi-use path proposed for upgrading at Caberston

Proposed project plan included overleaf.

**TVTA Goffie Trails**  
**Water Tank Path**

**Map 3. Pathworks Option 1**  
**Revision 10** ..... 25.08.2019

Option 1 comments.....

- Re-build existing track as multi-user access path. Re-route where necc to improve drainage and to ease the gradient of steep sections.

● Section detail ...

- ① Re-shape banking above turning area to create new, easy gradient ramp for pathway. Fill, landscape and tidy existing ramp.  
Section distance: 80m. Pathway width: 2m
- ② Scrape, fill & shape existing track to form a solid path base with a 3-5% outslope. Surface with imported stone mix. Fill and landscape edges.  
Section distance: 225m. Pathway width: 2m
- ③ Fell crop to open up new links to forwarder track & open hill. Remove stumps along new path line. Scrape, fill & shape to form a solid path base with a 3-5% outslope. Surface with imported stone mix. Fill and landscape edges.  
Section distance: 125m. Pathway width: 2m
- ④ Cut new easy gradient track from tree line to corner of water tank. Scrape, fill & shape new track to form a solid path base with a 3-5% outslope. Surface with imported stone mix. Fill and landscape edges.  
Section distance: 150m. Pathway width: 2m
- ⑤ Scrape, fill & shape existing single track to form a solid path base with a 3-5% outslope. Surface with imported stone mix. Fill and landscape edges.  
Section distance: 65m. Pathway width: 2m

Total length of new path : 645m

Base material : Bucket riddled as-dug from trackside scrapes or pits.

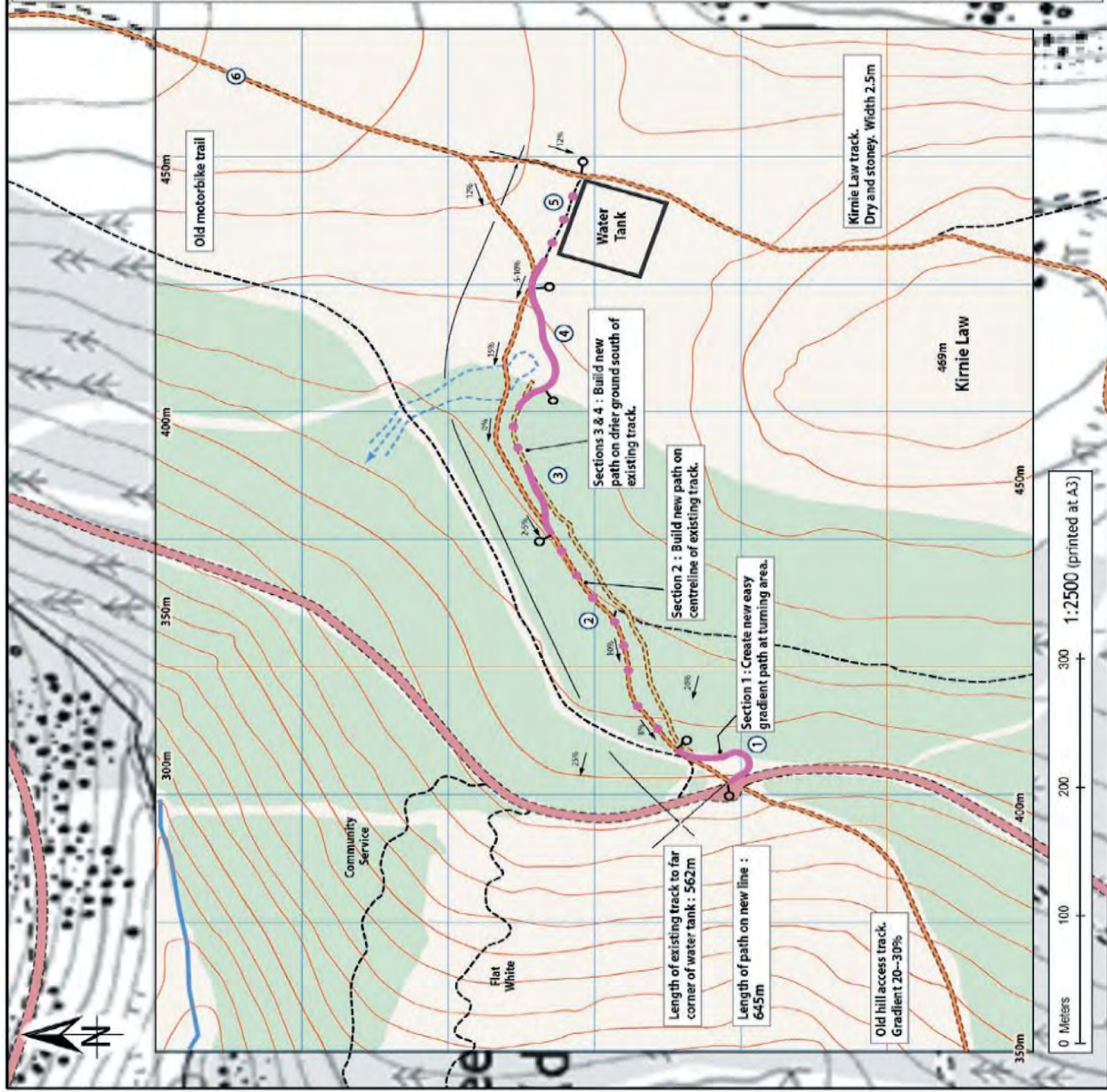
Surfacing mix : 65 tonnes (50m deep) imported from existing forest quarry or local quarry.

- ⑥ Scrape & fill (with bucket riddled as-dig material) any dips or soft spots on existing ridge track. Shape to 3-5% outslope. Cut ditched run-off lines to take surface water well away from the track edges.

Mapping Key :-

- Tarmac Road
- Informal Trail
- Forest Road
- Section end points
- Hill Track
- Stream
- Forest Ride
- Drainage ditch / wet ground

Mapping reproduced with the permission of Ordnance Survey Ltd. © Crown copyright and database rights 2018. OS 100056393



## Training and Development

To support the trail sessions, DMBINS provided funding for an additional eight trail inspectors and volunteer coordinators in 2019. They attended and passed qualification in November 2017 and October 2018 hosted by Cycling UK. By holding *Volunteer Trail Repair Coordinator* and *Safe Practice Trail Checking* qualifications, the TVTA are ready to begin organising work groups and operating to the best standards once land manager agreements are in place. The courses were funded by DMBinS via their Tweed Valley Coordinator.

All participants have signed up on the agreement that they will provide the TVTA with 4-6 dig day sessions either supporting or co leading with another more experienced trail inspector.

Newly qualified inspectors in 2019 are:

Allan Doyle, Kerry Duncan, Eric Robinson, Colena Cotter, Emma Wadee, Nic Jenkins and Alan McConnell.

*19 TVTA Members are now qualified in Volunteer Trail repair Coordinators and hold Trail Checking Awards*



## 5 Support of Events

In addition to working on TVTA project trail, board members and volunteers assisted with several other trail engagement projects throughout 2018.

- Specialized Trail Days Festival / Soil Searching Dig. Partnered with the trailfaries to help deliver the public dig session on Falla Brae during the Festival.
- Take Care of your Trails Day. Partnered with Glentress trail fairies to work on the Cresta Run at the famous Innerleithen downhill trails for the national day.
- Love my trails day. Womens trail engagement day / dig session run by the FNY collective and FLS, building a new section of the glentress red route (Super G).



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## 6 Communications

### Social Media

TVTA has active accounts on Facebook and Instagram (TVTrails) and uses these as a tool to educate the community in TVTA developments as they happen. There is a growing community of supporters through our social media channels and email registration.

- Instagram - 1328 followers
- Facebook - 1172 followers
- Registration - 145

### Website

Website continues to be updated by board member Cat Topham to host information and updates of news as it occurs. Link here: <https://tweedvalleytrails.org/>

### Media

When the FLS MOU was agreed, a press release was issued jointly by the TVTA and FLS - this received exceptionally wide coverage with local community groups, and local and national press sharing the positive news,

Wide Open Mag ran an issue on co chairs Neil Carnegie and Chris Ball. They were interviewed on the work the charity is doing to engage with the FLS and the wider community.



## 7 TVTA Goal Review

For 2019 the TVTA set the goal of practical action, having formalised the charity in 2017.

### **2019 Goal One:**

Finalise FLS Memorandum of Understanding

**Achieved**

### **2019 Goal Two:**

Identify first trail projects

**Achieved**

### **2019 Goal Three:**

Engage the local Community

**Achieved**

### **2019 Goal Four:**

Get tools into the dirt

**Achieved**

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Our 2020 goals

Launch a Membership plan to increase and formalise our community support

Work with land managers to create a long term strategy for the trails of the Tweed Valley

Deliver our first major contracted trail development (Caberston multi-use path/climb)

Increase the number of trails under our stewardship

Engage with other forest user groups and trail users and open discussions on frictionless shared trail use and care

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## And a Thankyou

And finally, this great year for the Tweed Valley trails would not have been possible without every person whose come out to dig with us, provided advice, understood our ideas, given us donations and put in voluntary time. Without our community, and without your support, no mattocks would ever have made it into the dirt. Here's to another great year in 2020.

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