

## **The Scottish Wild Land Group**

A Registered Scottish Charity SC004014

### **Report and Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2022**

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### **Campaigning for Scotland's Wild Land**

#### **Subsequent Events**

With effect from 31 May 2022, all the assets and undertaking of the Scottish Wild Land Group were assigned to a newly formed Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation, the **Scottish Wild Land Group SCIO**, registered number SC051654.

Subsequently, with the consent of the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator, the Scottish Wild Land Group has been wound up and removed from the Register.

Contact details remain unchanged.

**The Scottish Wild Land Group was a Scottish Registered Charity, number SC004014.**

**As approved unanimously by the members at the Annual General Meeting held on 4 December 2021, with effect from 31 May 2022 all the assets, liabilities and undertaking of the Scottish Wild Land Group were assigned to a new Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation, the Scottish Wild Land Group SCIO, charity number SC051654. With the approval of the Scottish Charity Regulator, the Scottish Wild Land Group was subsequently wound up, and removed from the Register.**

**The Scottish Wild Land Group SCIO is a membership body, which welcomes new members who support Scotland's wild land.**

# **Scottish Wild Land Group**

## **Report and Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2022**

### **Charity Trustees**

General control and management of the Scottish Wild Land Group, and since 1 June 2022 of the Scottish Wild Land Group SCIO, resides with the Steering Committee, the members of which are therefore the “Charity Trustees” for the purposes of The Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005. They are elected annually by the members in general meeting.

During the year to 31 March 2022, the Steering Committee comprised:

Jonathan Binny – Convenor, appointed Trustee May 2021

Tim Ambrose – Treasurer

Grant Cornwallis – Membership Secretary

Dr Pete Ewing

Dr James Fenton – Editor Wild Land News

Jane Meek – resigned July 2021

Andrew Painting – resigned May 2021

Peter Willimott - resigned March 2022

### **Constitution**

The Scottish Wild Land Group was an independent unincorporated association, and a Scottish Registered Charity, number SC004014 . Its purpose and constitution were set out in a written document, a copy of which may be obtained from the Treasurer.

The Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator approved the Constitution of the Scottish Wild Land Group SCIO and admitted this body to the Scottish Charity Register on 22 March 2022, with Charity number SC051654. The Constitution may be found on the Charity’s website, or from the Treasurer on request. The purposes of the Scottish Wild Land Group SCIO, as set out in its Constitution, are virtually identical to those of the former body.

The Group is a member of Scottish Environment LINK, an umbrella organisation for Scottish environmental and conservation charities.

### **Recruitment of Charity Trustees**

The trustees of the Scottish Wild Land Group, and now the Scottish Wild Land Group SCIO, comprise the Steering Committee which manages the activities of the Group. The Committee welcomes communication from members and the public. The Steering Committee is elected by members at the Annual General Meeting, to which all members are invited, and welcomes nominations to join the Committee.

### **The purposes and public benefit of the Scottish Wild Land Group**

The Group’s purposes are to promote the conservation of wild land in Scotland, and to promote public awareness of problems facing Scotland’s wild land, including man-made developments and reductions in biodiversity. It aims to promote and encourage the implementation of good planning policies and to co-operate with other bodies to achieve these objects.

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The Group is a campaigning body, which aims to protect and preserve Scotland's wild land. It publishes Wild Land News, a magazine sent free to members and to politicians and other decision makers to highlight issues threatening Scotland's wild land, and to generate discussion and educate the public on land conservation matters. The Group encourages sound effective planning policies to protect and enhance wild land and supports those local communities that nurture good land management.

Its activities carry a clear public benefit, aiming to preserve Scotland's wild land for future generations to enjoy and appreciate.

#### **Main activities and achievements during the year to 31 March 2022**

Over the past year SWLG has submitted a number of objections to what we consider to be inappropriate developments affecting wild land areas. As always it is hard to know how effective these are because we will be contributing alongside others. It is the weight of objections that will succeed and therefore all contributions are valuable. What we do need is for people to alert us to such developments because, despite asking, we are not on any Government distribution lists.

We have also responded to a number of consultations including the Onshore Wind Policy Statement Refresh 2021: Consultation Draft which preceded the Scotland 2045: National Planning Framework Draft Consultation. National Planning Framework 4, when published, will determine how wild land is treated within the planning system. Whilst wild land was included within the consultation document there is no guarantee that it will appear in the final document so it was important for the Scottish Government to realise how much support there is for wild land.

Activities were still adversely affected by the Covid19 pandemic, which prevented travel and personal meetings for much of the year, but many of the activities of the Group were able to continue, with Committee meetings and the AGM held virtually on-line by Zoom, and much use of telephones and e-mails.

A major Report on the State of Wild Land in Scotland was produced, as set out below.

#### **Wild Land News**

James Fenton, the Editor, produced issue no 99 of Wild Land News, and led the production of a substantial Report on the State of Wild Land in the Scottish Highlands, which were circulated around the members and other interested parties.

WLN 99, Summer 2021, included a personal report by Tom Cuthbert of the damage, despoilation and destruction caused by the hydro power schemes in Glen Etive which he encountered on a day climbing Ben Starav, and a report on the horribly prominent bull-dozed track leading up from Glen Feshie on to the Moine Mhor on the western Cairngorms Plateau by David Jarman. With the enlightened ownership of the Feshie Estate, there may be promising signs of action on this track in the future.

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### **The State of Wild Land in the Scottish Highlands:**

During the year, the Group commissioned two experts in the field of wild land to produce a report on the state of wild land in Scotland. The work was supported by the Scottish Mountaineering Trust and the Cairngorms Campaign, and the Group thanks both organisations for contributing to the costs.

The report concluded that the overall rate of loss appears to be increasing as the scale of development has also increased. Current developments that pose the greatest threat are energy generation and associated infrastructure (hydro-electric schemes and wind farms), plantation forest expansion and hill track construction, the latter often associated with estate management. This long-term attrition of wild land is not helped by the fact that there has been a lack of consistency by planning authorities in the way they have handled its protection from new developments.

The report was published in March 2022 in time to feed into the public consultation on the Scottish Government's draft National Planning Framework 4, and is available both as a hard copy from SWLG or as a downloadable file from the Group's website.

Report name: Wildland Research & Ian Kelly Planning Consultancy (2022). The State of Wild Land in the Scottish Highlands. Scottish Wild Land Group, 140 pages, A4 colour.

### **SWLG Website**

The website is our main means to keep members up to date with current matters, campaigns, petitions, and when we have needed to encourage our members to take action such as writing to their MSP. It includes an archive of past issues of Wild Land News, and details of recent objections and our responses to many planning applications in wild land areas.

### **Membership and participation in Scottish Environment LINK**

SWLG has been an active member of the Scottish Environment LINK network of environmental and bio-diversity charities and NGOs for many years. The SWLG participated in LINK's "Fight for Scotland's Nature" campaign, and was a leading proponent, as in previous years, in LINK's advocacy of bringing all bulldozed Hill Tracks into the planning system, with proper approval required for all additions and extensions.

### **Financial Review and Policy on Reserves**

During the year the Group's expenditure exceeded its income by £2,867, (2021, surplus £5,188), leaving unrestricted reserves at 31 March 2022 of £20,342 (2021, £23,209). The principal reason for the deficit was the exceptional expenditure on commissioning, producing and distributing the report on the State of Wild Land in the Scottish Highlands, which cost £18,545, before contributions from the Cairngorms Campaign of £6,000 and the Scottish Mountaineering Trust of £5,000. This report should serve as a valuable and lasting source of information on the extent and impact of human influences on Scotland's wild land.

The Group aims to retain reserves around the level of one year's gross income, to ensure adequate funds to meet day to day expenses, and a sufficient level of continuity. At present, funds exceed

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this level, which is welcome as it enables the Group to embark upon larger projects. All funds are available for the general purposes of the Group.

For and on behalf of the Steering Committee,

Jonathan Binny, Convenor  
11 October 2022

Tim Ambrose, Treasurer

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**Report of the Independent Examiner to the Trustees of the Scottish Wild Land Group**

I report on the Accounts of the Scottish Wild Land Group for the year ended 31 March 2022 in accordance with the terms of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005, “the Act”, and the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 – “the Regulations”. The Trustees consider that the audit requirement of Regulation 10(1)(d) does not apply.

**Respective responsibilities of Trustees and Independent Examiner**

As the trustees of the Charity, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. It is my responsibility under S 44(1)(c) of the Act to examine these accounts, and to report whether particular matters have come to my attention.

**Basis of Independent Examiner’s Report**

My examination is carried out in accordance with Regulation 11, and includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity, and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeks explanations from the trustees concerning such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.

**Independent Examiner’s statement**

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:-

(1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements to keep accounting records in accordance with Section 44 of the Act and Regulation 4; and to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records; and to comply with the accounting requirements of the Act and Regulation 9, have not been met; or,

(2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Martin RW George, ACA

20 October 2022

Baruch, Fort Road, Lavernock, Penarth. CF64 5UL

# The Scottish Wild Land Group

## Report and Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2022

### Statement of Income and Expenditure

	Year ended 31 March 2022	Year ended 31 March 2021
	£	£
<b>INCOME</b>		
Membership subscriptions and donations	3,775	4,530
Gift Aid reclaimed (2021 - 5 years)	1,490	2,982
Special donations	2,215	-
Advertising in Wild Land News	<u>92</u>	<u>92</u>
<b>Total Income</b>	<b><u>7,572</u></b>	<b><u>7,604</u></b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>		
<b>Expenditure on charitable activities</b>		
Printing Wild Land News - 1 (2) issues	442	1,122
State of Wild Land in the Scottish Highlands Report	18,545	
Less: from Cairngorms Campaign	(6,000)	
from Scottish Mountaineering Trust	(5,000)	
Postage - WLN and general	280	829
Stationery and Website costs	1,970	262
<b>Donations relating to charitable activities</b>		
Scottish Environment LINK subscription	190	180
<b>Governance and administration expenses</b>		
AGM and meeting expenses	0	0
PayPal and Bank charges	<u>12</u>	<u>23</u>
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b><u>10,439</u></b>	<b><u>2,416</u></b>
<b>(Deficit)/Surplus of Income over Expenditure</b>	<b><u>(2,867)</u></b>	<b><u>5,188</u></b>

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**STATEMENT OF BALANCES AT 31 MARCH 2022  
and 2021**

	<b>31 March 2022</b>	<b>31 March 2021</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Opening Unrestricted Group Funds	23,209	18,021
(Deficit)/Surplus for the year	<u>(2,867)</u>	<u>5,188</u>
<b>Unrestricted Group funds at the year end</b>	<b><u>20,342</u></b>	<b><u>23,209</u></b>

**Represented by balances at the year end**

RBS Current Account	15,051	22,775
PayPal account	170	434
Receivables	5,367	275
Less: Liabilities and Accruals	<u>(246)</u>	<u>(275)</u>
	<b><u>20,342</u></b>	<b><u>23,209</u></b>

Approved by the trustees and signed on their behalf by  
JMT Ambrose MA FCA CTA(Fellow) - Treasurer

11 October 2022

# **Scottish Wild Land Group**

## **Report and Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2022**

### **Notes to the Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2022**

#### **Basis of preparation of the Accounts**

The accounts comprise an Income and Expenditure Account, recording receipts and payments including receivables and accruals, and a Statement of Balances at the year end, in accordance with the requirements of The Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006, “the Regulations”.

#### **Subsequent Events**

With effect from 31 May 2022, all the assets, liabilities and undertaking of the Group were assigned to a newly formed Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation with virtually identical purposes, the Scottish Wild Land Group SCIO, number SC051654. This transfer was accounted as a Merger, and will be reflected in the Accounts of the Scottish Wild Land Group SCIO for the year to 31 March 2023.

#### **Accounts – Independent Examination**

As the Group had gross income less than £100,000 pa, it has prepared this statement of account in accordance with the provisions of Regulation 9. As required by Regulation 11, the trustees have appointed an independent examiner to examine the accounts, and to report to them. His report is attached.

#### **Unrestricted General Funds**

The Group’s funds are held without restriction, to be applied for the general purposes of the Group.

#### **Charity Trustees**

No remuneration or other benefit was paid or provided to any of the trustees. Direct out of pocket expenses, such as postage or stationery costs incurred on the Group’s activities, were reimbursed. There were no transactions between the Group and the trustees or any persons connected with them.

The Independent Examiner received no remuneration for his services to the Group. The Group is extremely grateful to the Independent Examiner for his work and report.