

**Providing education and
career pathways across all
rural related businesses**



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Chairmans Report

It has been another year of continued positive progress for the organisation with the team delivering for young people and employers across Scotland and returning the trust placed in the organisation by our funding partners.

The core work of the organisation, focused around our Pathways To Rural Work (P2RW) programme continues to evolve and expand. Listening and responding to feedback from schools and employers, we are planning for the introduction of a Train-Work-Qualify project as part of the senior school transition phase of P2RW. This will offer training tickets in 4th, 5th and 6th Year in order that pupils leave school with relevant ticketed training making them more employable. The P2RW programme is progressing with more focus into work placements and transition to work. Due to current demand from employers across Rural Scotland for more employable young people, the need for CLS to accelerate this through our P2RW programme became very apparent.

I would also like to draw attention to the latest progress with the CLS ADHD Rural Connect project. Following a successful application to NHS Tayside Charitable Foundation, CLS have been awarded funding which will allow the organisation to employ a dedicated Coordinator resource for this project. This is a major step forward for this important project and our thanks to the Foundation for this crucial support.

As word spreads of the successful work of CLS, other regions in Scotland are coming forward wanting to be involved. This is excellent news, but as a relatively small charity such expansion has to be carefully considered. We are currently considering expansion into three new areas – Borders, Moray and South West Scotland.

On behalf of the Trustees I would like to thank our Chief Executive Ian Robertson and his team for another excellent year. The organisation's continued success and expansion is down to them. I would also like to thank my fellow Trustees for all their time and input over the last twelve months. Lastly I would like to thank the diverse range of organisations, agencies and individuals we work with, your input, support and partnership is, as always, much appreciated.

I hope you enjoy reading the Annual Report and find it informative and useful

Douglas McAdam *Chairman*

PATHWAYS TO RURAL WORK

Throughout this successful year, we continue to deliver a growing Pathways to Rural Work programme, we highlighted its importance with the Scottish Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs, Land Reform and Islands when she visited one of our events in Angus. Across our work areas, we have made fantastic progress over the last year: work areas, we have made fantastic progress over the last year:



TAYSIDE

In the Tayside region, 25 planned sessions were delivered, across a variety of age ranges and schools; with over 949 young people of secondary age having direct interactions with project staff. These varied from sessions where



the young people were learning about different rural skills and undertaking activities, to awareness sessions, to events focused solely on careers and guiding young people to courses and roles to which they could apply to. CLS has also been involved in careers events throughout Tayside targeting young people who are looking at their next step into further education, apprenticeships and possible job roles, which reached over 1550 young people during the year.

We have provided specific career support and guidance of different pathways at various school and college career events throughout the region. This had particular impact at events like the Dundee Apprenticeship Fair where we spoke both with school students to help inform their choices on next steps and with college students who were keen to look at the move from college course into work with the pre-apprenticeships, apprenticeships and job roles we could advise them were available at that point. We also worked with those who were looking at a career change, discussing transferable skills which could be utilised in a new environment. At several careers' events, CLS represented the only link young people had to exploring careers and courses into work in rural environments. This highlights the need for our work with secondary schools to help young people find future roles that they may not have considered.

Although not our target audience, we have responded to requests from some local primary schools and worked with Royal Highland Education Trust (RHET)

to highlight and bring more diverse rural skills and roles to sessions with them, working with 208 students over the year. We have also collaborated with primary schools on units focused on the topic of "The World of Work" ensuring that younger students have an awareness of the breadth of opportunities available to them.

Our continued presence and work across the sector has resulted in a growing reputation with local councils, schools and Developing the Young Workforce to seek work placement opportunities, apprenticeships and progression routes for the young people in Tayside.

Over the report period, work in this region was supported by; The Gannochy Trust, Northwood Charitable Trust, Lethendy Charitable Trust, The Royal Company of Archers, and Hugh Fraser Foundation.



NORTH-WEST

Across the period in question, the NW Co-ordinator has built up a contact network between all schools in the area, along with a wide range of local businesses, estates, and nature reserves.

During the year, the regional co-ordinator facilitated 20 events for school pupils ranging in age from Primary 7 to 6th Year at secondary school. This has directly involved 5 high schools and several primary schools with a range of estates and a number of local businesses helping to deliver. These events ranged from a morning visit to a full day out for the



young people and included several career fairs with 2 focussing on rural careers. There are now plans for one rural and one renewables day with at least 4 of the high schools in the area.

One event was a visit to Inverewe Garden and Estates, as part of the National Trust for Scotland, they are one of the largest local employers in Wester. Pupils from S3 upwards were taken around a selection of workstations where staff demonstrated what requirements and outputs are attached to each station – this included planting from seed, forestry care, equipment usage and maintenance, customer services, and retail.

Activities are geared towards development and understanding of practical skills and appreciation of the many and varied skills required by the modern rural industry, with a long-term aim of creating work experience that evolves into actual work opportunities in any of the above.

Over the report period, work in this region was supported by; North Highland Initiative and Westminster Foundation.



CAIRNGORMS

It has been another successful year for Pathways to Rural Work in the Cairngorms, with over 700 young people benefitting from 13 events organised and attended by the regional co-ordinator.

Building on awareness-based work delivered in previous years, this year's focus was to support young people's transition from school to work.

A highlight of the year was a practical Future of Rural event at Alvie and Dalraddy estates attended by S4 pupils, and informative Post School Pathways evening for senior pupils and parents, in which industry representatives shared career, career pathway and skills information as well as current opportunities in rural industries.

Responding to the gaps in skill development opportunities, we facilitated delivery of the first National Progression Award (NPA) in Angling and the Aquatic Environment at SCQF level 3 for 5 local young people at Castle Grant, River Spey.

During the year we continued to nurture partnership working and support other education initiatives including the Scottish Association of Geography Teachers annual conference and Estates that Educate.

Over the report period, work in this region was supported by; The Cairngorms National Park Authority, Community Led Vision Funding, and The Privy Purse.



P2RW WORK WITH NEURO DIVERSE YOUNG PEOPLE

A focus for 2023 - 24 has been to source funding to employ a coordinator to develop the ADHD Rural Connect project and continue on from the successful pilot over the past two years. A successful application to the NHS Tayside Charitable Foundation has allowed us to advertise to fill a three day a week post, beginning in the autumn of 2024.

The new programme will cover soft skills and employability skills development; rural skills events; business recruitment, training and support; work experience and transition into work. We will continue to work with Perth Grammar School and Perth & Kinross ADHD Support going forward and have built a partnership with Moore House Group and their Butterstone school campus.

The ADHD Rural Connect steering group continued to meet on a regular basis and added two new key partners in the Moore House group and Perth Autism Support. There were less sessions this year due to lack of funding and a focus on sourcing more sustainable and significant funds to continue the programme from autumn 2024.

Over the report period, work on this project was supported by; personal donations, Mathew Trust, and Forteviot Trust.

P2RW HAWKHILL

During this year we have been working with Scottish Land and Estates, Hawkhill Community Centre, The Conversation Volunteers (TCV), and Forth Valley College on a new model of Pathways to Rural Work working through the community centre rather than directly with schools. We have met with local businesses, agencies and Stirling and Clackmannanshire Councils to engage them with the project. Hawkhill Community Centre have been developing their outdoor site to provide a starting point for rural skill awareness and are now fundraising to employ a coordinator to drive the initiative.

RVA

The Rural Volunteer Award is an integral part of achieving the outcomes of CLS and support offered to rural businesses. Providing rural business employees with the skills and training to work in a safe and positive way with young people and protect themselves and the young people in their care. Without trained staff and volunteers, it will be difficult to engage large numbers of new recruits to the benefits of participating, training and working in the rural environment. Throughout this year work has been focused on developing a strategy to fund the development, marketing and delivery of the course to a wider audience through creating a lead role to drive the initiative. Discussions to improve the course standard through Lantra are ongoing and the lead role will help to progress this work.

DEVELOPING CAREER-LONG PROFESSIONAL LEARNING (CLPL)

The training of educators remains a key element of our work and continues to evolve providing relevant information to provide teachers and other educators with the knowledge and confidence to deliver accurate and up to date education relating to participation, training and careers in the countryside and outdoor environment. The course can now be delivered online, face to face, residentially or as a combination the above to suit all organisations.



SUCCESSES FROM P2RW

"The Future of Rural careers event was absolutely unique and I have never seen anything like it before! The setting was simply magnificent and pupils got a sense of how the estate operates on a daily basis whilst finding out about the world of forestry, G2 Outdoors, deer management, peatlands, farming and many other jobs and careers. Our pupils were a credit to our school and certainly came away from the day feeling well informed about this exciting job sector. Thank you to all the staff for giving up time to speak to our pupils, Alvie Estate for kindly hosting, and to Countryside Learning Scotland's Bryony Dowson, and Debbie Khadi, our DYW Coordinator for organising the event - great job!" - **Depute Head Teacher, Kingussie High School on our Future of Rural Careers Event**

FUNDING –

Our fund raising efforts remain an absolutely vital part of our activity in order that as an organisation we can continue to develop, grow and deliver our outcomes. Many of our funders are repeat and multiyear funders and this speaks volumes. We would like to thank all of our funders and supporters, without you CLS would not be able to deliver for young people across Scotland.

DONATE



WANT TO GET INVOLVED?

This year we featured in several publications including local newspapers in each of our regions and an article in the Primary Geography journal along with our NPA course featuring on STV. Stay in touch with our latest news through our growing social media channels. You can get involved and support what we do by contacting: ian@countrysidelearningscotland.org

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES (INCORPORATING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024

Note	Restricted funds 2024 £	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Total funds 2024 £	Total funds 2023 £
Income from:				
Donations and legacies	3 133,740	51,606	185,346	155,794
Other trading activities	4 -	13,850	13,850	19,995
Total income	133,740	65,456	199,196	175,789
Expenditure on:				
Event administration	4,557	13,889	18,446	24,459
Charitable activities	5 111,997	30,637	142,634	127,622
Total expenditure	116,554	44,526	161,080	152,081
Net income	17,186	20,930	38,116	23,708
Transfers between funds	12 311	(311)	-	-
Net movement in funds	17,497	20,619	38,116	23,708
Reconciliation of funds:				
Total funds brought forward	155,876	27,633	183,509	159,801
Net movement in funds	17,497	20,619	38,116	23,708
Total funds carried forward	173,373	48,252	221,625	183,509

The Statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

Our full Trustees' Report and Financial Statements can be found at: www.countrysidelearningscotland.org.uk/newsletters-and-annual-reports
All funds carried forward are committed to our current and ongoing project areas.

TARGETS FOR 2024-2025 PERIOD

- ✓ Continue to promote the Pathways to Rural Work programme across Scotland to engage new regions and additional secondary schools in the progressive pathway.
- ✓ Deliver a residential National Progression Award (NPA) in Angling and the aquatic environment for pupils in the central highlands.
- ✓ Deliver the practical element of the Practitioner Career Long Professional Learning course to teaching staff across within the Borders Region.
- ✓ Raise funds to deliver more Rural Volunteer Award courses across Scotland
- ✓ Deliver rural related career awareness events in school and at rural locations for schools across the P2RW regions.
- ✓ Develop a programme of rural training courses for senior school pupils and school leavers across all P2RW areas
- ✓ Support local businesses in becoming compliant with work placements and apprenticeships
- ✓ Raise funds to expand the charity through better communications and creation of an operations manager post.
- ✓ Facilitate pupils transition into work through marketing of rural related career resources and partnership working.

AWARDS

There has been a steady increase in our social media posts and reach, enabled by our CLS coordinators communicating their fantastic work in the regions. We produced new leaflets this year to encourage employers to support work placements and apprenticeships in the regions we operate in. We have also been shortlisted as a finalist for the award category 'Supporting All Young People, Inclusion and Equality' by Developing the Young Workforce.

Countryside Learning Scotland Battleby House, Redgorton, Perth, PH1 3EW

Countryside Learning Scotland is a Charitable Company limited by Guarantee

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Trustees: Doug McAdam (Chairperson), Alister Aitkenhead, Ralland Browne, Jane Campbell Morrison, Jim Drysdale, Nicola Simpson, Craig Somerville, & Mary Thomson

If you would like any further knowledge about the work of Countryside Learning Scotland, please contact us:

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