

APPENDIX 1



Trustees' Annual Report for the period							
		Period start date			Period end date		
From	Day	Month	Year	To	Day	Month	Year
	01	Aug	2015		31	July	2016

Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator

Reference and administration details

Charity name	Galloway and Southern Ayrshire Biosphere Partnership
Other names charity is known by	
Registered charity number	SC044137
Charity's principal address	Kirroughtree Visitor Centre, Stronord, Newton Stewart
	Postcode DG8 7BE

Names of the charity trustees on date of approval of Trustees' Annual Report

	Trustee name	Office (if any)	Dates acted if not for whole year	Name of person (or body) entitled to appoint trustee (if any)
1	Cllr Alistair Geddes			
2	Mr Mark Gibson	Chair of Trustees		
3	Mr Peter Mason			
4	Cllr John McDowall			
5	Dr Joan Mitchell	Chair of Partnership		
6	Dr Mary-Ann Smyth			
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Reference and administration details

Names of all other charity trustees during the period, if any, (for example, those who resigned part way through the financial period)

Name	Dates acted if not for whole year

Structure, governance and management

Type of governing document The SCIO is governed in accordance with its written Constitution dated 5 July 2013. This was revised at the Annual General Meeting on 9 March 2017 and is attached.

Trustee recruitment and appointment The charity trustees are appointed from within the membership of the Partnership Board. Trustees are appointed by a simple majority voting at a Partnership Board meeting. Trustees may also be removed by a simple majority voting meeting of the Board.

Objectives and activities

Charitable purposes The advancement of education;
The advancement of citizenship or community development;
The advancement of environmental protection or improvement.

Summary of the main activities in relation to these objects

Good Governance and Partnerships:
Forming solid partnerships to deliver the Biosphere goals through active engagement of organisations and local people.

Communications and Engagement:
Establish and develop links with local communities to encourage incorporation and adoption of the Biosphere aims.

Networking and Knowledge:
Support the development of a knowledge base through research, monitoring and education and development of mechanisms to share and learn.

Enhance and Protect Natural Heritage:
Create the ability to enhance and protect the Biosphere's natural resources.

Support Sustainable Business Growth:
Encourage businesses to engage and use the Biosphere identity to add value to their products and services whilst caring the environment and local communities.

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Achievements and performance

Summary of the main achievements of the charity during the financial period

Introduction

2016 has been a year of solid achievement for Galloway and Southern Ayrshire Biosphere (GSAB), thanks to the effective team of Officers who have delivered an impressive programme of events, reports and meetings with communities and businesses.

The GSAB Partnership continues to have representation from 25 member organisations and individuals who work together to deliver the SCIO's aims. Membership is drawn from the public agencies, local authorities, businesses, community organisations and academia.

The Partnership Board has met five times since the last report to OSCR: in November 2015, March 2016, June 2016, September 2016 and December 2016. During that period the Board has discussed, supported and endorsed a range of issues and objectives that further the aims and ethos of the Galloway and Southern Ayrshire Biosphere.

The SCIO is currently supported by three part time Project Officers who are employed separately by the Southern Uplands Partnership under a three year project. Both the Chair of the SCIO and of the Partnership Board sit on the Steering Group that guides the Project Team ensuring that the Officers' work is directed towards achieving the SCIO's objectives.

A Selection of Achievements

1. The GSAB Natural Heritage Management Plan was launched at a well-attended and enthusiastic one-day workshop at the Catstrand in New Galloway in March 2016. The Natural Heritage Officers, followed this up in June with a meeting of a group of interested farmers from across the Biosphere who are providing a sounding board for ideas.
2. The Biosphere Charter now has around 70 business sign-ups in addition to 120 community groups, schools and individuals who are Proud Supporters of the Biosphere. The next stage of trade marking the Biosphere as a certification mark is now in hand with potential pilot businesses identified to test the process.
3. The GSAB ran workshops at both Dumfries and Galloway and Ayrshire Business weeks and through its presence at the Ballantrae Food Festival in June attracted a lot of interest.
4. Six short Sense of Place films were produced, with one film promoting Social Enterprise and the Biosphere shown at the World Congress of Biospheres in Lima.
5. Three trail leaflets highlighting features of biosphere interest along three river valley routes – the Doon, Cree and Ken - have been produced while biosphere interpretation panels are now in place in several locations.
6. GSAB hosted a 3-day UK Biosphere conference in Dumfries. This was the first event of its kind in the UK, was well-attended by representatives of all eight British Isles and Eire biospheres, and proved a great success.
7. The Partnership Board has responded to a number of consultations during the course of the year. These included a concerned response to a proposal for a major upgrading of the Scottish Power Energy network through the heart of the Biosphere which has since been profoundly modified. A concerned response has also been submitted to the Scottish Government's consultation on the 'Future of Forestry in Scotland' emphasising the importance of local discretion in decision-making and of maintaining a balance in land use and forest function. At a local level responses were submitted to Scottish Natural Heritage's Cairnmore NNR consultation and to East Ayrshire Minerals Main Issues Report.

Regular Work

In addition to the major initiatives outlined above, the routine work of keeping the website up-to-date, producing electronic newsletters, delivering talks to community groups, schools and businesses and liaising with partners goes on.

Partnership Board

In addition to dealing with strategic business, the Partnership Board has used the opportunity to visit sites such as Cairnsmore NNR and to hear presentations about relevant projects such as the Galloway Glens Landscape Partnership Scheme. Members contribute to the electronic newsletter and support other biosphere events while the Communications Group is a particularly useful sounding board which reports regularly at Board meetings. The agenda slot for members' proposals has been used to discuss issues such as the Biosphere's attitude to the campaign for a National Park in Galloway and Southern Ayrshire, of which it is supportive.

The Chair of the Board and the Chair of the Trustees attend Funders Group meetings and the Chair represents the organisation at UKMAB meetings.

Brief statement of the charity's policy on reserves

At the present time, there are no unfunded ongoing financial commitments and the SCIO currently does not have a formal Reserves Policy. As part of the SCIO's governance review and prudent management of its financial resources, a policy on Reserves is being drawn up.

Financial review

Details of any deficit

The SCIO has not incurred a financial deficit.

Donated facilities and services (if any)

The SCIO benefits from work undertaken by three Project Officers employed under a separate project ('Biosphere Officer Project') which is entirely funded and managed by Scottish Natural Heritage, Forestry Commission Scotland, The Southern Uplands Partnership, East Ayrshire Council, South Ayrshire Council and Dumfries and Galloway Council. This project ran from April 2014 to April 2017 and further funding has been secured to take forward from April 2017 to March 2023. The Biosphere Officer Project undertakes work to implement the SCIO's aims and objectives. The Chair of the SCIO and Partnership Board sit on the Steering Group, however the SCIO has no responsibility for financial control of the project. Office premises have been donated by Dumfries and Galloway Council, is worth £150k pa, including in-kind contributions.

Board members have donated their time attend Board meetings and Working Groups and Focus Groups to share their expertise and knowledge.

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Other optional information

Declaration

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees

Signature(s)		
Full name(s)	Dr Joan Mitchell	Mr Mark Gibson
Position (e.g. Chair)	Chair of Partnership Board	Chair of Trustees
Date	9 March 2017	9 March 2017