



Machars and Cree Valley Climate Action Network MAC-CAN

Our Trustees' First Annual Report September 2022- August 2023



Contact information



MAC-CAN

Scottish Charity Number: SC051955

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Website <https://mac-can.org>

www.facebook.com/MacharsandCreeValleyCAN

We operate throughout the DG8 postcode area of Galloway.

Charity Trustees

1. Dr Scott Jones – original trustee and Chair to November 2022
2. Mary Pattison – co-founder, original trustee and Chair from November 2022
3. George Pattison – Co-founder and original trustee
4. Jennifer Hendry – original trustee and co-treasurer to October 2023
5. Fiona Prior – trustee from November 2022
6. Nicola Garmory - trustee and treasurer from November 2022
7. Rebecca Davison - trustee from November 2022



Some of those involved in MAC-CAN core group

Objectives and activities

"We were always concerned with the environment and have seen directly the decline of wildlife and change in climate in our lifetime. The group started as a result of wanting to take meaningful action at a local level to mitigate the effects of climate change."

Mary and George, MAC-CAN co-founders

Our objects (as set out in the MAC-CAN constitution)

To build a vibrant network that enables residents, community groups, businesses and nature to thrive by working together for the benefit of current and future generations living, working or visiting in the Machars and Cree Valley region of Galloway, in ways that promote health, well-being, dignity, social justice, respect and care for the environment.

Our charitable purpose

To advance climate, biodiversity and environmental protection and/or improvement through positive, local education and practical action.

Our activities

- **Potato Day:** selling Scottish seed potatoes as an annual fundraiser for Food Train, a charity supporting older people in Dumfries and Galloway
- **South Machars Crop Swaps:** events throughout the spring, summer and autumn in Whithorn, Newton Stewart, Wigtown, Carsluith, and Kirkcubbin
- **Apple Days:** during Orchard Month
- **Open Days:** which attract between 40-60 people, one at Midsummer and another in September to celebrate the anniversary of the Croft. We fire up the outdoor pizza oven (self-built by the crofters with found materials) and serve home-made food and drinks
- **Seed saving and sharing:** collaborating with Rhins Seed Library and our friends at Dumfries and Galloway Sustainable Food Partnership
- **Beach cleaning:** with Solway Firth Partnership, O N Us (Oceans Need Us) South West Scotland and Wigtown Bay Coastal Rowing Club
- **MAC-CAN Croft:** where the weekly Wednesday volunteer sessions are going from strength to strength and we have welcomed visits from a variety of other local groups
- **Clothes swaps:** started in April 2023
- **Book readings:** in Wigtown, Scotland's National Book Town, April 2023
- **Climate Conversations:** within the region and internationally with farmers groups in Kenya

All these initiatives were delivered free at point of access, using voluntary donations and a couple of small grants from local community shops which were held for us in a ring-fenced account at Machars Action in Wigtown. Much of what we achieved in the first two years was delivered by recycling, repurposing and building up a robust local gift and exchange economy.

We work closely with a growing number of local networks and organisations who share our commitment to take action to mitigate against the climate emergency:

- Galloway and Southern Ayrshire Biosphere Communities – we took part in the Climate Action Networker in Newton Stewart
- UK Centre for Ecology and Hydrology's AMPHoRA project, (Assessing Mitigation Pathways to Realise Public Health Benefits of Air Pollutant Emission Reductions from Agriculture) – investigating the effects of ammonia and nitrate pollution from agriculture
- Mind the Gap Research and Training – for internal training, international links and climate conversations
- Newton Stewart Green Fayre – an opportunity to promote what we do and get more people involved in our activities
- Dumfries and Galloway Sustainable Food Partnership, led by Abi Mordin, founder member of Propagate. MAC-CAN Croft features in their film about local community growers and small-scale regenerative farming in Dumfries and Galloway. *Rooted: Growing a Local Food Ecosystem* is being screened, alongside food discussions, in community venues across our region. We have also participated in exchange visits to other community growers in Dumfries and Galloway – facilitated by Galloway and Southern Ayrshire Biosphere and Propagate.

Who we help

"I am so pleased to be able to connect with others in my local area who share the same interests. I have met so many nice people through MAC-CAN. It has really helped me better my mental and physical health"

MAC-CAN Member

We are a small but growing grassroots charity of just over 100 members, led by volunteers from the local community. We support individuals and grassroots community organisations to set up and get involved in projects which reduce waste, promote biodiversity and improve the local environment.

Volunteers

We rely on a dedicated team of volunteers on what we used to call our 'core group', recently renamed Ops (Operations) Group – Jenna, Fiona, Gill and Lucy.

Lucy helped to set up our communications group and in the last year has managed our website and Facebook page to promote all the wonderful work being carried out around DG8 to build a strong community of climate and nature activists.

Many thanks to Chris Dosser for his technical help in setting up our communications network and to Anne Connick for sterling work in setting up members' lists and links to other organisations.

Gill leads a team of volunteers who come to work in the Croft every Wednesday and Fiona established Clothes swaps in DG8.

As a small young charity, we are very grateful for the support of more established organisations including Galloway and Southern Ayrshire Biosphere, Solway Firth Partnership, Propagate, South Machars Community Centre and Newton Stewart Initiative.

Structure, governance and management

MAC-CAN is governed by a constitution which sets out our charitable purpose and ways of working. A copy of this and other official documents can be found on our website.

Trustee recruitment and appointment

Two trustees stood down during the year due to other commitments. We were delighted to be joined by Nicola, a regular volunteer at the Croft and Rebecca, who is setting up a local community space in Port William as well as actively supporting local clothes swaps.

Operations group

A group of volunteers who run different projects which are supported by MAC-CAN meet regularly to plan and co-ordinate our activities programme. The Ops group meetings are chaired by MAC-CAN chair of trustees, Mary Pattison.

Many others played their part

In addition to trustees and operations group we should give credit to Dru Hatcher, Jon Joy, Sue Thomas, Jack Tan, Peter Buxton and Chris Dosser. Huge thanks to all of you for getting MAC-CAN off the ground. In addition, Shalla Gray created our logo, Emily Connick produced a couple of newsletters on biodiversity and along with her younger sister Gracie has produced lovely material for our visual displays.

Thank you!



Apple Day at Glenluce Primary School, October 2022. We were supported by Galloway & Southern Ayrshire UNESCO Biosphere and local woodland volunteers.



Winter work at MAC-CAN Croft, December 2022. The willow dome was constructed using materials from our onsite willow hedge.



Big beach clean at the remote Carleton shore on Luce Bay, October 2022. The beach cannot be cleaned frequently because of its inaccessibility. Working with Solway Firth Partnership is key to delivering our trickier beach cleans.



Book readings at New Chapter Books, April 2023 during Wigtown Booksellers Spring Weekend were well attended.



Our first online climate conversation with Kenyan farmers, February 2023. Thinking global, acting local!



Vertical gardening. Kenyan farmers making good use of limited water and soil resources in a deforested environment.

Achievements and performance

Established crop swaps

Many of our activities this year have been food related. Of all the climate actions that we can take one of the easiest is through our food choices – taking notice of where our food is produced, how it is processed and distributed. During the Covid lockdowns many people rediscovered an interest in gardening and, with empty supermarket shelves, looked for alternative food sources including home grown fruit and vegetables. Seed suppliers sold out quickly in early 2020 and seed saving and swapping started to happen.

We have now established seed plant and crop swaps across our local communities. As well as sharing local seed, plants and produce, these are an excellent focus for shared learning and community building.



Clothes swaps



Clothes swaps were a new initiative in April 2023, very ably organised by Fiona Prior. Alongside these there is usually a textile skills workshop and refreshments are made available. Wider issues around sustainable fashion and textiles can be discussed.

We're lucky to have a wealth of creative people in our communities to share skills and knowledge.

Involving our members

Members are the lifeblood of our charity. By participating in discussion and decision-making and in practical activities, MAC-CAN volunteers bring about positive changes in the Machars and Cree Valley by delivering our charitable purpose and shaping MAC-CAN's future.

In April we held a members' meeting where we revisited the list of ideas that was generated at the inaugural meeting and came away with a wish list. The trustees agreed to look for funding for a part-time co-ordinator to help take some of these ideas forward.

Celebrations

Our Croft open day was great fun and well attended, with home-made cakes, freshly baked pizzas from our outdoor oven and lots of chat. Likewise, our apple days and the crop swaps celebrate harvests.

Establishing a new organisation

An important focus of work during the year was getting our charity properly set up. We opened a bank account, introduced policies and procedures, applied for charitable status, developed a website and Facebook page to raise awareness of what we do by promotion on social media and at local events.

Impact

Through MAC-CAN, more people have taken action to mitigate the effects of climate change whether it be:

- Sharing surplus seed, plants and produce
 - o less waste
 - o fewer food miles
 - o shared knowledge
 - o locally sourced seed, plants, trees and wildflowers improve biodiversity
- Swapping clothes instead of buying new
 - o reduced textile waste going to landfill
 - o learned how to repair and re-purpose clothing to extend its life

"The modern fast fashion culture is wasteful and damaging to the climate. Cheap clothes need replaced more often and are often made in inhumane conditions with little regard to climate impact. Nylon and synthetic clothes don't break down and thus add to the trash in landfills and microplastics in the ocean. It is our hope that by repairing clothes we are being more sustainable."

Elizabeth, volunteer

- Making new friends with shared interests and passion for the environment

"I enjoy MAC-CAN because I get ideas from our new friends and we can trade and reuse materials that others have no further use for, including recycling ice cream tubs as feeding troughs for our pet ducks."

Chris, volunteer

"I joined MAC-CAN to meet like-minded people who also want to make a difference, and to join forces to do as much as I can to be the positive change in the world that I would like to see".

Anne, volunteer

- Engaging in healthy, outdoor activities to enhance health and well-being
- Learning new skills

"I'm learning lots and have even started growing my own tomatoes this year with the help and support of those in MAC-CAN who also support The Croft.. woop woop.... I now have lots of fruit on the tomato plants and my first tomato is almost ready to eat (June)!"

Jacqueline, volunteer at the Croft

Sharing experiences with farmers in Kenya



We love to share information and stories about activities happening in and around the area, promoting those organisations and events that best serve our community in tackling different aspects of the climate and ecological crises. Volunteers in the communications group identify relevant national and local initiatives which we promote via social media to a growing network of over 400 followers.



Harvesting local seed and produce at MAC-CAN Croft.

Financial review

This report covers the period from MAC-CAN's registration on 25/08/2022 to the end of its first full financial year on 31/08/2023 and then considers the current financial year.

Report to 31/08/2023

- 1) In July 2023, the Co-operative Bank approved our application for a Community DirectPlus account, and we were able to deposit our cash funds and the funds that Machars Action had held for us in their own account. On behalf of MAC-CAN, Nicola and Jen extend warmest thanks to Carol and Meg at Machars Action for their patience and goodwill while we wrangled the bank account into being.
- 2) We have made a good start on putting sound financial controls in place: two authorised trustee signatories are required for outbound cheques, authorised trustees hold bank cards and paying-in books, and we have created template chitties for donations received and payments made, and financial spreadsheets held on a secure cloud-based platform.
- 3) We received just over £1,700, comprising around £500 of pre-SCIO funds, £900 in new donations, and a £300 grant for the Croft from Wigtown Community Shop. We also received substantial non-monetary donations: one member purchased 12 months of hosting for the MAC-CAN website; another gave around 150 hours of work in managing our website and Facebook presence; the Crofters put in over 700 hours of work; and a friend of MAC-CAN very kindly helped us to migrate our web and email accounts to simpler platforms.
- 4) We paid out roughly £1,150, with around £930 going towards equipment and stock for the Croft, £130 for Public Liability and Employer's Liability insurance, and £85 on venue hire and printing for events.
- 5) Our surplus for the period to 31 August and, therefore, our cash balance on that date was £562.07. Of this, £302.43 is in Unrestricted Funds, £58 in Restricted Fund: Clothes Swap, and £201.64 in Restricted Fund: Croft.
- 6) Our other assets comprise roughly £1,520.00 in Croft equipment and £360.00 in miscellaneous equipment. Most of our assets are gifted, swaps or second hand and we only buy new when absolutely necessary.
- 7) We had no liabilities at the end of the financial year.

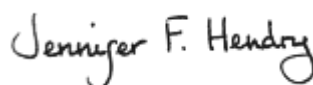
The current financial year and future plans

- a) Since financial year end, we have received a further £9,469 in funding, all of which will be included formally in the financial statements of for 31 August 2024.
- b) £150 from Newton Stewart Initiative into Restricted Fund: Croft. Again, we offer them our warmest thanks for their patience.
- c) £300 from Galloway and Southern Ayrshire Biosphere into Unrestricted Funds for hosting them at the Croft.
- d) £150 from South Machars Community Centre into restricted Funds: Clothes swaps in recognition and thanks for Fiona Prior's work on running a clothes swap at their wonderful MaD Festival 2023.

Financial work

- e) Our small-scale donors and large-scale funders entrust MAC-CAN to spend their money wisely and to account for it thoroughly. We are continuing to adapt and improve our financial governance and controls to make processes as user-friendly and compliant as possible.
- f) The long-term impacts of this will be to support our work in fulfilment of our charitable purpose and enhance our reputation

We, Nicola Garmory and Jennifer Hendry, Treasurer and former Co-Treasurer, respectively, of Machars and Cree Valley Climate Action Network, certify that this report and the accompanying financial statements and notes have been prepared by us and that they accurately reflect the financial position relating to the period 25/08/2022 to 31/08/2023.



Future plans

Climate conversations: We plan to hold climate conversations at community venues across the DG8 region, to inspire and involve more local people in taking action to address the climate emergency.

Extending our reach: There are some communities we have not yet had the opportunity to engage with, but this will be a priority over the next couple of years.

Engaging young people: Quite understandably, following disruption to schooling during Covid, it has been a challenge to engage with schools and young people. It may be easier to engage with uniformed organisations eg the Scouts and Guides associations and we are taking the first tentative steps to do so.

This is the generation that will be most affected by climate chaos and it is essential that young people are involved in planning and delivering activities that will lead to a sustainable/tolerable future. If you have younger folk (aged 12 or over) as members of your family, or organisations that you are involved with, who would be interested in joining us we would welcome them with open arms.

Linking with farmers in Kenya: With the support of the GSA Biosphere and Mind the Gap Research and Training, we held the first of our planned live virtual conferences in the field, with farmers from Kenya. We discussed the problems and opportunities we share regarding soils, sustainable organic food production and building community focus on climate resilience.

Setting priorities and measuring our impact: We have no shortage of ideas – our intention in the coming year is to decide on priorities and develop a plan for the year ahead with aims and objectives against which we can measure our impact.

Building our own resilience: We aim to get more people involved as trustees and volunteers who can help us to grow our reach and help to organise activities and events. We will look for external funding to support activities and to pay for a part-time co-ordinator.

“ Often, people think they can't do anything about climate change – or they simply don't bother – which is such a shame, and just not true. Everyone can do something positive for themselves, their communities and the environment, even if it's just picking up a piece of litter in the street, or simply reducing their meat consumption. MAC-CAN helps bring like-minded people together and is a great way of meeting others, learning new skills and finding out about local opportunities to get involved in things.”

Lucy

We really would like to see our activity groups grow, so why not come and join us?

Declaration

Signed on behalf of the charity trustees:



Print name

Mary Pattison

Designation

Chair

Date

28th April 2024