



ANNUAL REPORT June 2023 to 19 June 2024



Introduction

1. As a registered Scottish charity (SC032395), Beautiful Perth (BP) is required to prepare its accounts and an Annual Report of its financial activity and endeavours. This document summarises our activities during the year from June 2023 to 19 June 2024.

At the 2023 AGM, John Summers OBE announced his retirement from the post of Chairman and I was appointed to the vacated position. Shortly thereafter the organisation faced an unusual situation when four Trustees, including the Vice Chair, Treasurer, Secretary resigned. We were fortunate however to find very experienced and competent replacements with Euna Scott MBE appointed as Vice Chair and Kim MacDonald as Treasurer. The post of Secretary has still to be filled, however, Trustee Fiona Hair and myself are currently sharing the duties. The changes caused some disruption particularly as we no longer have any representation from Perth & Kinross Council on our committee. Nevertheless, I am confident that we have grown stronger as a result with all Trustees pulling in the same direction for the benefit of the organisation and all our valued volunteers, sponsors and partners.

As well as personnel issues, it is fair to say we have had to face other challenges i.e.

- a. the uncertainty surrounding the future of our base at the Rodney Garden due to the Council selling the building where our work shed is located – fortunately the new owner has proved to be very cooperative and is going to permit us to remain.
- b. In May, an arson attack to our shed, has resulted in the need for new equipment and new accommodation.
- c. Significant changes within the structure of the Community Greenspace team within Perth & Kinross Council resulted in some disruption to the levels of communications, but is being slowly resolved.

- d. Going forward, the allowance we receive from the Council budget in 2024/25 has been reduced by over 75%. This finance significantly underpins our work in public areas for the benefit of the residents and tourists, the latter of which has been greatly boosted in numbers by the opening of the new Perth Museum.

The good news, however, is that the work of the Beautiful Perth volunteers has continued at the Riverside Park to maintain and develop the Heather Collection, maintain and continue with the revamp of the Rodney Garden and maintain the Compassionate Friends Garden. Away from the Riverside Park area work has been undertaken to upgrade the flower beds along Tay Street, which the Council were no longer maintaining, and adding colour to planters at Perth's new flagship Museum. This work is in addition to the numerous other flower beds we maintain around the city as listed in last years' annual report.

My sincere thanks to our vice chair, Euna Scott MBE, her experience and knowledge has been invaluable in my first year as Chairman. Thanks also to Kim MacDonald who has brought a wealth of knowledge to the role of Treasurer. I am also indebted to Fiona Hair for filling in as secretary, ensuring our trustee meetings are properly documented.

I cannot forget the contribution made by the other Trustees whose advice and guidance has helped steer the ship through some troubled waters but have kept us on an even keel. As a hands-on Chairman, I feel it would be remiss of me not to mention the input of Tom Lowdon who it appears lives and breathes Beautiful Perth.

Finally, to all our loyal and supportive volunteers, my sincere thanks to you all for your hard work and camaraderie over what has been an extremely busy year. It is testament to all this work that people take the time to leave positive comments on our Facebook posts and comment in person when visiting the various gardens we are working on.

Out-with our own organisation, we are grateful to the input and support from Perth & Kinross Council staff, our valued sponsors and supporters who have remained loyal to Beautiful Perth throughout this time .

2. Governance

Structure, governance and management

Beautiful Perth's governing document is a Constitution, adopted in 2001 and most recently revised in 2019. The charitable objectives of Beautiful Perth are:-

- To improve the local environment and quality of life in Perth
- To enhance environmental education through environmental campaigns and projects
- To advance community development by fostering community spirit and public participation.

Our governing body is the Committee of Trustees all from differing backgrounds

bringing with them a wealth of experience. All Trustees are volunteers and no remuneration is paid. During 2023 we thanked past chairman, John Summers OBE, who stood down as a trustee having remained on the committee during the transition period. As noted earlier in this report four other Trustees resigned which resulted in Euna Scott, Allan Farmer Alison Martin and Kim McDonald being elected as Trustees.

As required by the Constitution, the Trustees monitor the financial transactions via the Treasurers monthly reports to the committee. Audited accounts will be presented as required by OSCR for scrutiny and approval.

Beautiful Perth has a set of policies and procedures in place, covering Health & Safety, Finance, The Environment, Plastics, Volunteering, Protection of Children & Vulnerable Adults, Equal Opportunities and Lone Working.

Independent Examiner

We will have a professional independent examination of our Annual Accounts prepared in the timescale required by OSCR.

Finance

Full details of the finances are presented in the accounts and Treasurer's notes. The charity is in a satisfactory position although for the year 2024/25 our allocation from Perth & Kinross Council has been reduced by over 75%. We are however fortunate to have the continued support by of a small number of generous sponsors, as listed under Annex 4 below.

New sponsors this year have been Scottish Water and CulturePKC.

3. Key Projects 23-24

Heather Collection – significant work has been undertaken to make improvements to the garden through removal and replacement of a number of plants, including tree heathers, which had either died or were passed their best. Having gained the award of a National Collection of Carnea Heathers as reported last year, work has continued to enhance the collection. Chief amongst this is propagating new plants to provide a back up should the need arise. This is particularly important aspect of the National Collection as some of the varieties we hold are no longer commercially available in the UK.

Compassionate Friends Garden – being very conscious of the significance of this space to many, Beautiful Perth continue to enhance this garden with new planting added for winter and then again for summer. We are delighted that so many people who visit the site express their appreciation.

Rodney Garden – In addition to general maintenance work our volunteers have worked extremely hard clearing out some of the overgrown and frankly neglected borders. Already some areas have been replanted adding structure and colour with the added benefit of attracting more pollinators. We are grateful also to have been supported by volunteers from the Church of the Latter Day Saints and personnel from Community Payback.

Perth Museum – This is our City’s new flagship housing the Stone of Destiny. As part of the overall project, 15 planters were sited around the building each of which contained only a single tree. With agreement from Culture Perth & Kinross the Beautiful Perth volunteers added a mix of heathers and colourful plants which has greatly enhanced the display and helped brighten the city centre.

Tay Street – as the Council could no longer support the planting and maintenance of flower beds along Tay Street, the volunteers from Beautiful Perth gained agreement to take over the beds and have added sustainable planting, improving the soil condition as part of the process. The area has a new sponsor, and we are very grateful for their financial contribution.

Wildlife support – chiefly down to the work and dedication of one of our volunteers, Lesley Johnston, a number of bird feeders and water troughs are maintained to supplement the natural food available to our feathered friends. As part of the RSPB Big Bird Watch, Lesley undertook the survey at the Rodney Garden during which Lesley recorded 17 different types of birds including the Goldcrest which is the smallest bird found in the UK
As well as looking after the bird life, Lesley also monitors for hedgehogs providing food over the year.

Meeting with Perthshire Organic Gardeners – we were delighted to welcome this group who were interested in learning about the work we do, particularly in relation to the National Heather Collection. Importantly, we have now opened lines of communication between our organisations.

Meeting with Perth and Kinross Voluntary Service The Walled Garden – This is a wonderful garden which Beautiful Perth has in the past assisted in. The intention is to re-build our relationship and to explore how we can work together for our mutual benefit.

Meeting with Depute Provost Andrew Parrott – quite early into the new structure we were fortunate enough to have a meeting with Councillor Parrott. This enabled us to explain first-hand the concerns we have over communications and support we receive from Perth & Kinross Council. The meeting was very positive and has given us a direct point of contact in the Council hierarchy should the need arise.

4. Community Engagement, Participation and Partnership Working

Partnerships are key to our success and whilst they have suffered a bit this year we continue to have close working relationships with both long-standing supporters and new partners. The intention is that the new year give us the opportunity to reinstate partnerships that have, for various reasons, been lost. Working in partnership does make a significant difference and the following list identifies some of the people and groups we would particularly like to mention as we are grateful for their input.

- Perth & Kinross Council
- CulturePKC
- The Westbank Project

- National Trust for Scotland Branklyn Gardens
- Kilmac Ltd
- NHS
- St Leonards in the Field Church
- Church of the Latter Day Saints
- Trinity Church of the Nazarenes

5. Environmental Responsibility

Local litter picks are regularly undertaken to improve the environment.

Regular feeding of birds is undertaken to attract a wide range of species to visit the gardens.

Planting is more and more focused on sustainability and attracting pollinators.

6. Local Awards

Consideration was given to apply for a **Green Flag** award for both the Heather Garden and the Compassionate Friends Garden. However, due to the impending improvements to the site entrance in 2024 it was decided it would not be appropriate to apply at this time. The site entrance improvement project will significantly enhance the beauty of the Riverside Park. It is a joint project between Perth & Kinross Council and Beautiful Perth with generous contributions from the Gannochy Trust and the Heather Society. After some delays the project is due to start in June, 2024

7. Conclusion

The year has thrown up some significant challenges but with the support and goodwill of our Trustees and our dedicated volunteers, I am confident that we are in a good position as we move forward. We have been fortunate to attract a few more volunteers over the year which has helped us in our stated aim of making Perth a beautiful place to live, work and visit. If we require any motivation then it undoubtedly comes from the many positive comments made directly to us from those who visit the gardens either routinely or whilst on holiday.

It would be remiss of me not to mention the support we receive from Perth & Kinross Council Community Greenspace. Whilst we are disappointed that the financial support we receive from the Council will be drastically reduced in 2024/25 we have built up a very positive working relationship and wish to recognise their support. This is at a time when they have been impacted by structural changes to their team and significant budget cuts in this cost of living crisis.

Given our reduced budget, the support of our sponsors will become even more critical in the coming years. Beautiful Perth will be constantly reviewing our financial capacity and the sheer volume of work for the volunteers. So to all our sponsors you have our sincere thanks, it is crucial.

I have no doubt that the year ahead will throw up it's own set of challenges, not least as we seek to build up a relationship with the new owner of the Rodney building, that said I know that I can again call on the support of my fellow Office Bearers, Trustees and volunteers. To them all I extend my sincere thanks for the continued work undertaken to improve and enhance the quality of the local

environment for local residents and visitors.

Gordon J Lindsay
Chairman
Beautiful Perth
19 June 2024

ANNEX 1 – LIST OF CHARITIES, VOLUNTARY GROUPS AND SOCIAL ENTERPRISES

Keep Scotland Beautiful
NTS Branklyn Gardens
Butterfly Conservation East Scotland
Church of the Latter Day Saints
Church of the Nazarene
Compassionate Friends Scotland
Heather Society
Oakbank Community Centre
Perthshire Organic Gardeners
Perthshire Wildlife Trust
RHS Perthshire
Take a Pride in P&K Association
The Gannochy Trust

ANNEX 2 – BUSINESSES AND AGENCIES

Ak Bell Library
Community Safety Partnership
Craigie Cross Businesses
Kilmac Ltd
Perth City Centre Management
Perth Concert Hall

ANNEX 3 – PERTH & KINROSS COUNCIL TEAMS

Community Greenspace
The Westbank Project
Dog Control
Finance
Operations
Parking Services
Roads
Street Lighting
Waste Services
Westbank Nursery

ANNEX 4 – SPONSORS

Bannerman Decorators
Culture Perth and Kinross
Earnside Energy
Holiday Inn Express Perth
Kilmac Ltd

Morris Leslie Ltd
Noahs Ark Golf Centre
Scottish Water
St Leonards In The Field Church