



**venturetrust**

**Reflections**  
ANNUAL REVIEW 2016-17

## CEO's introduction

**We believe that change is possible... that change is necessary and we also believe that no one should be left behind.**

This year we are delighted to have supported more people into education, training, volunteering or employment. Of course, it is the individual stories of current and former participants which give us the energy and motivation to do what we do - to celebrate every step forward, however small, as a personal journey of development to unlock potential, to rebuild relationships, move on to work and contribute positively.

Enhancing our contribution to community justice in Scotland remains a priority focus and there is much to do to address the harm caused by offending. By tackling the underlying causes of offending and working collaboratively with partners at local and national levels we aim to support those most in need of our intensive programme of personal development.

The investment of Impetus-PEF represents a significant endorsement of our work to date. In 2017-18, we will move ahead with refining our programmes to achieve better outcomes for the people we support and we have ambitious plans to enable more people to overcome a cycle of disadvantage and adversity.

The wilderness, as a space for intensive learning and development remains at the heart of our approach and we are encouraged by the evidence of the profound changes for individuals completing all three phases of our programmes. We are grateful to be partnering with and supported by some fantastic organisations with a shared commitment to change and a future full of potential.

I do hope you enjoy this short review of 2016-17 and an insight into our plans for the year ahead.



Amelia Morgan, CEO of Venture Trust





## Chair's remarks

The Board of Trustees value the commitment and dedication of staff in working with vulnerable people living in challenging situations and supporting them to make positive life changes. The importance of the work being done by staff is illustrated in the very positive feedback we regularly receive from those who have been through our programme. In addition the continued efforts to secure funding and support for our work is to be applauded particularly since raising the required funding is challenging in the current financial climate. The work we have undertaken with both military service leavers and women in the criminal justice system has been very well received. However, we are concerned that future funding is uncertain and hope in the next year to sustain these effective and impactful strands of work.

Amelia Morgan CEO brings a drive and enthusiasm that gives us confidence about the future direction of the charity.

The next year also brings the opportunity, through our partnership work with Impetus-PEF, to refine our programmes to ensure we offer vulnerable individuals the best possible chance to move forward positively and particularly to move into employment, training, education or meaningful voluntary work that opens up long term benefit for the future. To them and our wider network of partners and supporters I offer my thanks for the collaborative work we have undertaken to give individuals that opportunity to realise their potential.

## Trustees' statement

These summarised financial statements incorporate all the operations of Venture Trust, and are intended to give the reader an assessment of the overall financial position but are not the statutory accounts. This information is taken from the audited financial accounts, upon which the auditors' opinion was unqualified. The full report and accounts were approved by the trustees on 29 August 2017 and have been submitted to the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator, the Registrar of Companies, and the Charity Commission. A copy is freely available from Venture Trust's website, on request from the Venture Trust office, or on the Charity Commission's website.

Signed on behalf of the Board



Mairi Brackenridge, Chair of the Board of Trustees

For more information please visit [www.venturetrust.org.uk/finance](http://www.venturetrust.org.uk/finance)

“

And I have never felt more motivated, determined and proud of the person I am now. I never really thought that something like this could change somebody - but just goes to show.

”

Living Wild participant

## This year we said we would:

### Support military veterans

This year marked the first full year of Venture Trust's Positive Futures programme for individuals who have left the armed forces and have struggled with the transition to civilian life.

The programme is intended to enable individuals to unlock or re-deploy the confidence, motivation and range of vital life-skills they need to move forward positively in civilian life. Since the programme launch in late 2015-16, 106 veterans have received support, following referrals by 35 different agencies across 23 of Scotland's 32 local authority areas. Those referred faced issues such as unemployment, offending histories, mental health concerns, history of alcohol issues and unstable living situations. This confirms Venture Trust is reaching those most in need.

More than 20 veterans have already progressed into employment, education, training or voluntary work, including three taking up paid traineeships within Venture Trust. Interim findings from external evaluation work suggest that the programme is achieving "profound and long lasting" impacts.

A group of about ten people, including men and women, are sitting on a rocky riverbank around a small campfire. They are dressed in outdoor gear like jackets and hats. The background shows a river and some trees. The image is partially obscured by a large black graphic element on the right side of the page.

“ I'd like to say thank you to the Venture Trust team for the changes I have been able to make in my life. The Positive Futures course reminded me of what I am capable of, what I need to do to get back to that way of being and the enjoyment I need to take out of life. I had a great time, learned a lot and made some good friends. My “four walls syndrome” is becoming a thing of the past and my life is improving every day.”

Positive Futures participant

## This year we said we would:

### Expand our employability, training and internship provision

We achieved a major breakthrough in enhancing our employability support to disadvantaged and socially excluded individuals in Scotland, by securing a major new 3-year grant funding commitment from CashBack for Communities (monies generated from the proceeds of crime). We also scaled up delivery of employability sessions to enhance participants' opportunities to progress towards training, education, volunteering or employment. This work included delivery of the Reaching Higher pre-employability programme for care experienced young people; the Venture Together programme delivered and sponsored with our key partner Barclays; an increased volume of Speak Up group work sessions and hosting a range of paid traineeships. Despite the challenging economic climate, we were able to increase the number of participants overcoming multiple barriers to achieve positive destinations in employment, education, training or volunteering during the year - a total of 298 individuals.

### Invest in our staff

During 2016-17, learning and development activities saw investment in an organisation-wide staff gathering and three field and outreach team gatherings focused on creating opportunities for collaboration, sharing ideas, engagement and feedback. Highlights from a range of learning and development opportunities in 2016-17 included; a two day workshop on Neurolinguistic Programming for our wilderness journey teams; introduction to PTSD training for outreach teams to support their work with veterans on our Positive Futures programme; an intensive Reality Therapy/Choice Theory programme for all wilderness journey teams and a number of outreach colleagues; and delivering introductory courses on Child Protection and Reality Therapy/Choice Theory for our support teams. Further investment from Impetus-PEF will help us build the systems and approaches necessary to thrive in an increasingly complex operating landscape. Continued commitment to developing SQA provision for participants has also seen two newly appointed and qualified SQA Assessors, and three previously trained Assessors achieving their verification approval. Achievements of 7 volunteer opportunities during the year - totalling more than 500 hours, and including 2 Saltire Awards being completed - were particularly rewarding.

“It's provided a stepping stone, before I was stuck, I wasn't ready to get a job but I'd tried other programmes and nothing had worked. It was the best decision I've made, I wanted to get away from the people who had been a negative influence and it helped me to do that.”

Venture Together participant



### Expand and fine tune the provision of our social enterprise

Our social enterprise, Venture Mòr, achieved progress with increasingly positive results. Working in partnership with the Applecross Trust, extensive work was done to the exterior of Hartfield House along with upgrading the access road. Hartfield House Hostel recorded significant growth in guest numbers, reflecting its location in Applecross and the huge success of the North Coast 500, the increasingly popular touring route in Scotland's northwest. The profile of Venture Mòr, and by extension Applecross, as a destination was raised via social media, targeted marketing and PR activities. We successfully launched an intensive wilderness therapy programme aimed at teens from across the UK struggling with emotions and life circumstances. The first 3-week programme was delivered in March 2017 and with continued profile raising, we are hoping to deliver a series of programmes in 2017-18.





## Looking ahead, in 2017-18, we aim to:

### **Enhance our capability**

Venture Trust is seeking to improve its impact, effectiveness and the underpinning organisational infrastructure required to do so. A refined model of programme delivery for Venture Trust participants in the 16-30 age range will be developed seeking to maximise the potential of Venture Trust's approach and expertise to support those most in need towards education, training or employment outcomes. The refined programme will be underpinned by a performance management framework and investment in organisational capability to design, collect and analyse evidence to inform programme design to focus on 'what works' for people. This represents a significant transition for Venture Trust and is an exciting development to enhance long-term impact for people experiencing disadvantage and struggling with adversity in Scotland.

### **Sustain and enhance provision for veterans**

Given the extremely positive initial results and findings to date with the Positive Futures programme, we want to ensure Venture Trust can reach veterans and military service leavers struggling with the transition to civilian life. Operationally, the focus remains on building links and relationships with partner organisations who work with veterans and these will be key for referrals and a collaborative approach to providing ongoing support as individuals reconnect with local services. Investment in peer mentor training and facilitating one-to-one and peer group support mentoring is intended to offer an opportunity for individuals to support others and find new meaning through volunteering. There will be a significant focus upon aiding the research and evaluation team to document the programme's impact, plus ongoing profile raising to enhance the programme's reach.



“ I had to go through the job application and the job interview. I wouldn't have been able to do that before the Venture Trust Positive Futures programme. Less than a year ago you couldn't get me out of the front door without a crowbar. ”

Positive Futures participant

## Be a leader in community justice provision

Strategically, as the new community justice landscape develops, our ambition is to ensure that Venture Trust continues to demonstrate impact in effecting positive change for those involved in offending. Venture Trust will actively engage with national and targeted community planning partnership structures seeking to collaborate to design and deliver services which are effective in tackling the underlying causes of offending. The positive and sustained impact for men and women completing the Living Wild and Next Steps programmes, highlights the contribution these programmes can make as part of a coherent range of local services for communities in reducing reoffending and the harm caused by offending. In 2017-18, the operational focus will be to ensure strong links and relationships with a variety of female offender projects that will continue under the new Community Justice arrangements. Venture Trust is committed to its work across Scotland in supporting individuals to move away from offending.

“ We have been working in partnership with Venture Trust since early 2014. Many of our service users have completed the Next Steps programme: all of them have multiple physical and mental health issues. They also have low self-esteem, are socially isolated, living in dire poverty with poor diet and nutrition and have never been out of Glasgow... Without exception, every woman returned from the programme glowing, motivated and inspired. The programme served not just as a trip away: the fresh air, the personal challenges, the healthy eating, learning new skills, developing social skills, socialising, exercising, sleeping well, being drug and alcohol free - all aspects gave our women a different perspective on how their lives could change for the better.”

Next Steps referrer





### Expand our employability, training and internship provision

During 2017-18, a number of priorities have been identified for incubating new employability services and modules that are appropriate to the needs of those seeking to overcome multiple challenges in their lives. We will look to co-develop and deliver employability opportunities to enable individuals to experience work through volunteering and placements as part of their progression including those in the land-based, tourism and rural skills and being active outdoors sectors. In September 2017, the launch of the new “CashBack Change Cycle” project will offer young people a range of work-based experiences in workshop and outdoor settings, vocational skills and relevant qualifications, as well as deepening key transferable skills that are essential in all work environments. We will introduce additional SQA accredited qualifications to enable individuals to acquire new skills and demonstrate achievement. Venture Trust launched a Sustainable Growth Agreement with the Scottish Environment Protection Agency at the end of May. This represents an excellent opportunity for us to partner with an organisation committed to socio-economic and environmentally sustainable growth for Scotland.

### Develop new business

Venture Trust will be devoting time and resources towards the relationships, profile and funding required for delivery in future years. The focus remains on building and investing in sustained partnerships with statutory, third and private sector organisations to deliver needs-led, person-centred support, responsive to local demand against a backdrop of a changing policy and commissioning landscape in Scotland. We will further diversify funding streams, particularly through corporate engagement and attracting individual giving. There will be a strengthening of partnerships with local authorities in order to influence future provision and policy which affects the people we support e.g. sustaining accommodation, uptake and use of local services and early intervention for those at risk of entering the criminal justice system. Operationally, Venture Trust will also put greater emphasis on enhancing relationships with Scottish and UK Social Housing Associations, seeking to be in a position to deliver provision for individuals struggling to secure or sustain suitable accommodation.

“ We are committed to tackling inequality and projects such as Cashback Change Cycle will offer our most disadvantaged young people the opportunity to get involved in positive activities which will raise their attainment, ambition and aspiration.”

Cabinet Secretary for Justice  
Michael Matheson

## Expand and fine tune the provision of our social enterprise

Venture Mòr enters a year of consolidation, building on developments during 2016-17. Hartfield House continues to be busy and we aim to improve facilities for cyclists and grow the wedding, small meeting and retreat market. Marketing efforts will be targeted towards attracting more groups to the hostel, increasing the length of visitors' stay and capitalising on the North Coast 500 by providing appropriate services and links with the local community. Plans are at an advanced stage to roll out the now fully developed Wilderness Therapy programme whilst seeking new business and partnership opportunities. Presenting as the leading Wilderness Therapy model in the UK, Venture Mòr will trial a clinical assessment tool to support evidence gathering and build on the success of our pilot programmes.

“ Amazing. We were also on motorbikes, so the ride up and over the single track mountain pass was absolutely jaw dropping. The hostel is really close to the loch and to a nice looking pub. We were too tired to go wandering, but the bunk beds were cosy and I certainly slept very well.”

Hartfield House Hostel guest

“ The aims of the charity that are running Hartfield House are to be applauded.”

Hartfield House Hostel guest



“

Every woman my staff has referred has really enjoyed the course and got a lot out of it. One has gone onto the peer mentoring course. We see a real change in women's confidence and resilience. I don't know of anything else that provides this - so there would be a real gap if it wasn't there.

”

Referrer

## CASE STUDY

### Learning to trust again - An Inspiring Young Futures journey with Venture Trust

David\* was 15 when he found himself on the street. He left home and moved to Oban to escape the emotional and physical abuse he had suffered at the hands of his family since childhood. He soon became homeless and was unable to complete his school exams.

In 2016, David moved to Glasgow. Still homeless and facing a high risk of social isolation, the teenager was referred to Venture Trust by Phoenix Peer Mentor Service.

Working with a Venture Trust outreach worker David opened up about his past experiences that led him to the harsh Glasgow streets without family or friends to support him. He explained he found it difficult to build relationships and trust people, but that he had an interest in the outdoors. The physical activity helped with his depression. He was told about the Inspiring Young Futures (IYF) programme which included an eight day wilderness journey. The programme is funded by The Big Lottery Fund, Inspiring Scotland and several other organisations.

Ahead of the wilderness journey, David met weekly with his outreach worker to discuss his short and long-term goals. These included securing his own accommodation, to be more confident, to act quickly on problems instead of letting them build up and to increase his fitness levels.

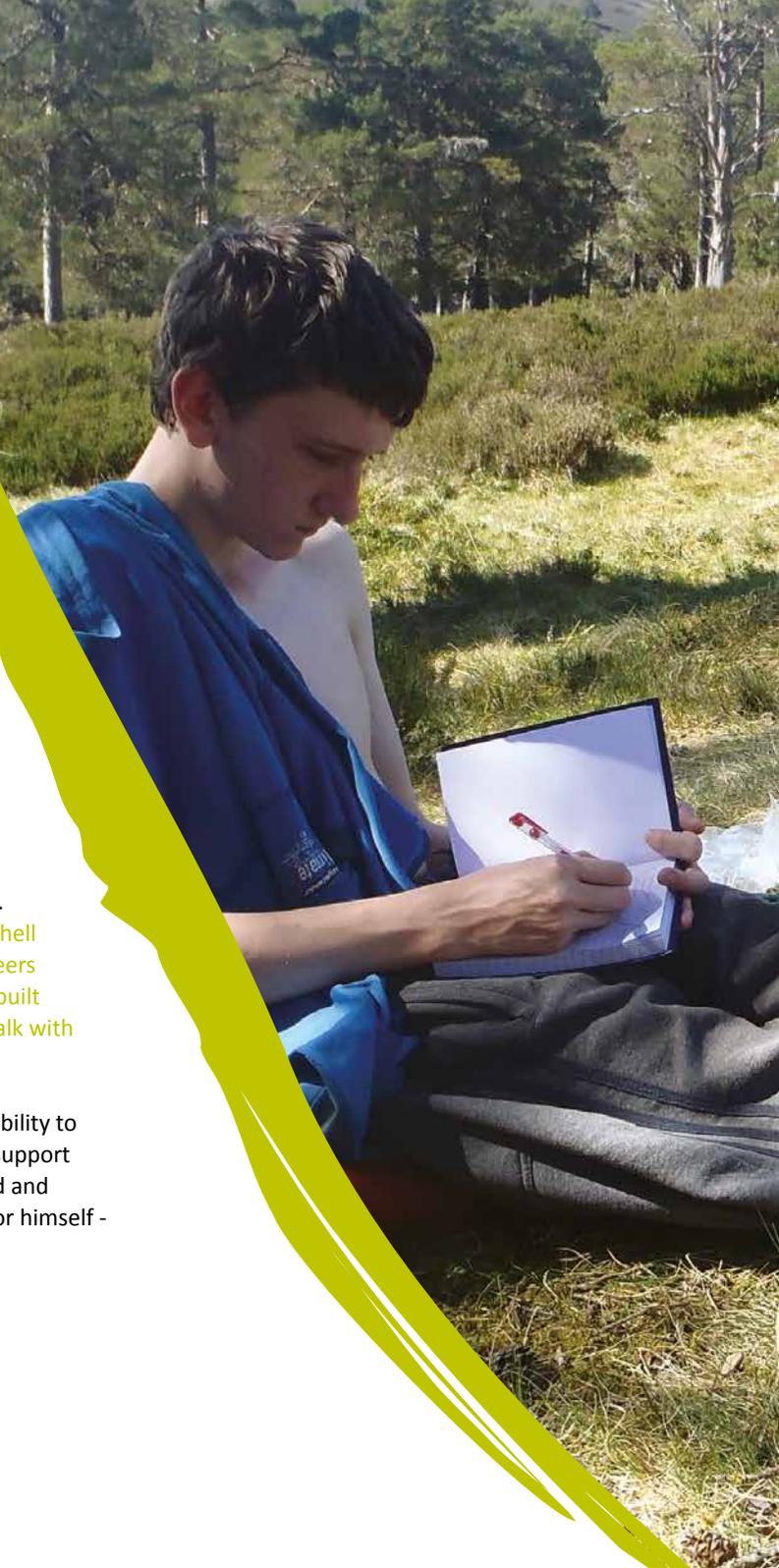
Two weeks before leaving for the wilderness journey, David secured his own tenancy through Glasgow Housing Association. He planned to move into the property when he returned from the journey. It was hard for him to believe things were finally beginning to look up.

*“Things are going good but I’m waiting on something bad happening as nothing has ever been this good and I haven’t experienced people supporting me.”*

David rose to the challenges on the wilderness phase of the IYF programme. His development trainer was extremely positive describing the progress David made.

*“As the course went on he seemed to come out of his shell and open up in what was a safe space for him where peers and friends were encouraging and supporting him. He built some good friendships and will hopefully continue to talk with these people about the positive experience shared.”*

David excelled during the tasks and demonstrated his ability to learn new skills quickly, and showed his willingness to support others in the group who were struggling. He challenged and broke one of his own rules that he had previously set for himself - ‘not to trust anyone’.



\* Name changed



On the journey David began placing faith in his peers and his confidence grew. He also worked with his development trainer to accept praise and positive feedback. These were things he'd previously struggled to do.

After returning from his journey David was looking ahead.  
*"I feel highly motivated and in good spirits - wilderness gave me time away to think about my future".*

The main focus was to move into his own accommodation. However, with very few belongings - an inflatable mattress (without a pump), a pillow and a single quilt it was not straight forward. Continued support from Venture Trust and the housing association led to an offer of a home starter pack, which included bedding, pots, pans and cutlery. Following a meeting with Job Centre Plus, David was also supported to apply for a community care grant for white goods and carpets.

To avoid slipping back into a life of isolation after the wilderness journey David and his outreach worker considered his options. Focusing on his love of the outdoors, David was offered a one day per week placement for one year with Venture Scotland.

This was the stepping stone to take on the challenge of employability courses to help David progress into employment in the future. He gained a place on Venture Trust's Venture Together employability course. The course covered IT sessions, CV writing, budgeting skills, interview skills, self-presentation and mock interviews. He was also introduced to the Venture Trust CashBack Change Cycle programme.

The hard work has paid off. Venture Scotland has offered to train David to become a volunteer on their courses.

David said he could see the difference in his confidence now.  
*"I speak more openly about problems and don't let them build up anymore. I can't believe how much my life has changed since the beginning of the year. I can't thank Venture Trust enough for the support they have given me. I now find it easier to trust people and build positive relationships."*

*"I feel highly motivated and in good spirits - wilderness gave me time away to think about my future".*

## Fundraising and Finance

### What we've raised

- Our income in 2016-17 was £2,661,397.
- The majority of our income comes from grants, with 44% (2016: 42%) from statutory bodies and 50% (2016: 50%) from the National Lottery, trusts and foundations.
- For 2017-18 we anticipate Venture Mòr contributing more significantly, and we will continue working towards diversifying and stabilising our funding base by widening our network of supporters and voluntary donations.

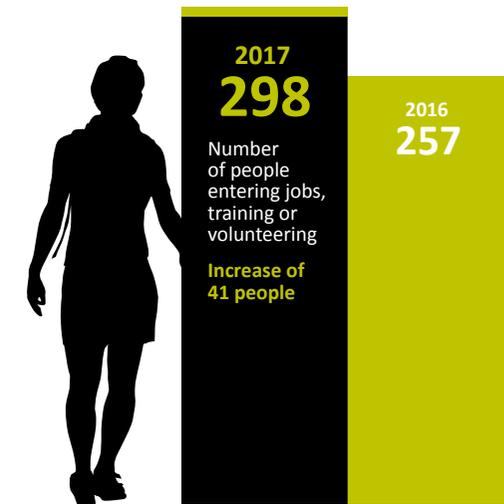
### What we've spent it on

- We spent £1,072,281 on our outreach and community activities plus a further £1,214,479 on the delivery of personal development journeys in the wilderness.
- Continuing our commitment to reducing our costs, we reduced expenditure on travel, vehicle costs and occupancy by being more energy efficient, achieving savings on property rent and reviewing suppliers to maximise value for money.

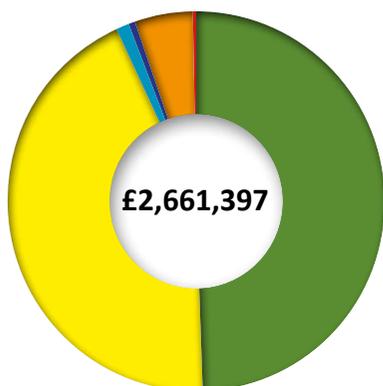
### Our overall financial position

- Net outgoing resources for the year amounted to £16,850 (2016: incoming resources of £64,416). This includes a deficit on capital restricted funds of £22,918 (2016: surplus of £26,224) and a surplus on unrestricted funds of £6,068 (2016: £38,192). Unrestricted reserves increased to £188,626.

## Our year in figures

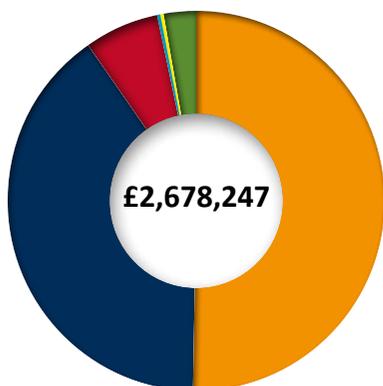


## Income 2017



- Trufts, foundations & lottery
- Statutory grants
- Donations
- Training & events
- Venture Mòr
- Interest

## Expenditure 2017



- Outreach & community support
- Wilderness journeys
- Coastal Communities
- Fundraising
- Governance
- Venture Mòr

## Financial figures 2017

Income	2017	2016
Trufts, foundations & lottery	£1,320,572	£1,259,597
Statutory grants	£1,160,161	£1,053,182
Donations	£30,042	£24,756
Training & events, other income	£16,691	£29,817
Venture Mòr Ltd trading income	£133,788	£139,614
Interest	£143	£166
<b>Total</b>	<b>£2,661,397</b>	<b>£2,507,132</b>

Expenditure	2017	2016
Outreach & community support	£1,352,374	£1,177,631
Wilderness journeys	£1,066,187	£977,002
Social enterprise related costs	£172,625	£215,693
Fundraising	£7,682	£12,345
Governance	£10,067	£9,875
Venture Mòr Ltd trading costs	£69,312	£50,170
<b>Total</b>	<b>£2,678,247</b>	<b>£2,442,716</b>

A photograph of four cyclists in a field, overlaid with a green tint. They are wearing helmets and jackets, and are standing next to their bicycles. The background shows a wide, open field under a bright sky.

“ It’s provided a stepping stone, before I was stuck, I wasn’t ready to get a job but I’d tried other programmes and nothing had worked. It was the best decision I’ve made, I wanted to get away from the people who had been a negative influence and it helped me to do that. ”

Venture Together participant



## Our Supporters

Continued long-term support from Inspiring Scotland, the Scottish Government, and the Big Lottery Fund remains fundamental in enabling us to deliver effective programmes and achieving positive impact. The Heritage Lottery Fund, Forces in Mind Trust and Armed Forces Covenant Fund have been key supporters in developing new programmes, whilst the Lottery's Coastal Communities Fund has helped us grow our social enterprise activities.

We have received vital support from trusts and foundations including Impetus-PEF, Comic Relief, The Souter Charitable Trust, The Dulverton Trust, The Gannochy Trust, Porticus UK, The Robertson Trust, Rank Foundation, The Volant Trust, Aberbrothock Skea Trust, Agnes Hunter Trust, Baily Thomas Charitable Fund, BBC Children In Need, D'Oyly Carte Charitable Trust, Dr Guthrie's Association, Edinburgh Airport Community Board, Goldsmiths' Company Charity, Heathrow Community Fund, Hedley Foundation, Imlay Foundation, Joseph Rank Trust, JTH Charitable Trust, Lady Eda Jardine Charitable Trust, Leeds Building Society Charitable Foundation, Leng Charitable Trust, Maidenwell Charitable Trust, Mears Foundation, Mrs J T Isles-Denny's Charitable Trust, N Smith Charitable Settlement, Ponton House Trust, R J Larg Family Trust, Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo, Tay Charitable Trust, Tennant Southpark Charitable Trust, The Nancie Massey Charitable Trust, Tillyloss Trust, Wessex Youth Trust, WF Southall Trust and the Whirlwind Charitable Trust.

Statutory and other partners including Edinburgh, Glasgow and West Lothian Councils, Community Justice Authorities, Skills Development Scotland (Employability Fund), Youthlink Scotland, being part of the Shine Public Social Partnership and SCVO's Community Jobs Scotland scheme have made vital contributions to our work.

We have been delighted that more companies chose to support us this year, and special thanks go to Barclays Wealth, McCrea Financial Services, State Street/Business in the Community Scotland, BVCA, Deloitte, Heineken, Sainsbury's, and Craigie's Farm, for their donations, events, and in-kind support.

Sincere thanks to every single one of our individual supporters including those who have swum, run, and pedalled to raise money for us - you are vital to the work we do.



# venturetrust

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The Venture Trust is a registered charity in Scotland (SC038932) and in England & Wales (285891)

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