



Celebrating 90 years of youth hostelling in Scotland Annual Report and Financial Statements 2021 - 22

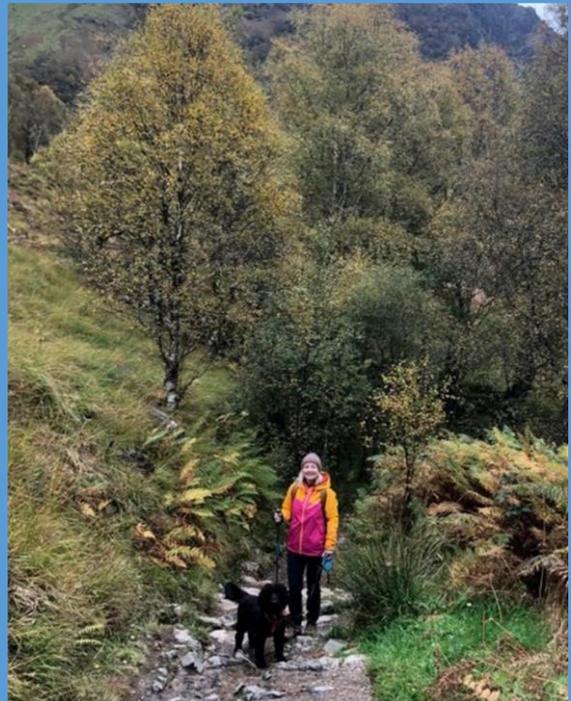




- | | |
|----|--|
| 1. | 1. Our Torridon Youth Hostel picked up Gold in TGO Magazine's prestigious reader awards with Loch Ossian winning Silver. |
| 2. | 2. Our dog friendly 'WoofHostels' are proving very popular with guests. |
| 3. | 3. Our 'What would Mary do?' campaign with the Adventure Syndicate enjoyed widespread coverage in the media and the video has now enjoyed +15K views on YouTube. |
| 4. | 4. Our new accommodation POD has proved a popular addition at our Glencoe Youth Hostel. |
| 5. | 5. The new self-catering kitchen has enhanced the guest experience and improved the 'Green' credentials of our Pitlochry Youth Hostel. |



MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR



It has been an honour to be Chair of the Board of Trustees in our 90th Anniversary year. Despite the ongoing financial and operational challenges due to the pandemic, we were determined to continue the development of the organisation and also to mark such an amazing milestone in our history. You can read more about this later in the report.

I retire in September 2022 having been a Trustee for 9 years, the last 3 as Chair of the Board of Trustees. I want to thank members for all your support in this challenging period. Also to thank the Chief Executive and all the Hostelling Scotland team for the incredible work that goes into running the network and delivering exceptional customer care. Finally, thanks to my fellow Board members for all their contributions in leading the strategic direction of Hostelling Scotland.

I wish Hostelling Scotland all the very best in the future, knowing I am leaving it in very safe hands.

Sally Mayer, Chair

Governance and Strategic Aims

Principal Charitable Objective

The principal charitable objective of SYHA is ‘the advancement of education, for the public benefit, by helping all, but especially young people, to experience and appreciate the Scottish countryside, environment, natural heritage and places of historic and cultural interest in Scotland, and through the promotion of their health, recreation and education, particularly by providing low cost accommodation for them on their travels’.

Trustees and Directors

The Board, who are the Charity Trustees and Directors of the Company, received no remuneration for their services.

Those who served as Board members during the year were:

| | | | Current Term |
|---------------------------|------------|-----------|---------------------|
| Sally Mayer | Chair | (2019-22) | Appointed 15.06.19 |
| Martin Ambrose (co-opted) | Vice Chair | (2021-22) | Appointed 04.09.21 |
| Claire McCorquodale | Vice Chair | (2020-23) | Appointed 05.09.20 |
| Michael Anderson | | (2019-22) | Appointed 15.06.19 |
| Sophie Bell | | (2021-24) | Appointed 04.09.21 |
| Duncan Craig | | (2020-23) | Appointed 05.09.20 |
| Donald Martin | | (2021-24) | Appointed 04.09.21 |
| Paul Randall | | (2019-22) | Appointed 15.06.19 |
| Jennifer Ruddick | | (2020-23) | Appointed 05.09.20 |
| Josephine Smith | | (2018-21) | Retired 04.09.21 |
| Robert Swinfen | | (2021-24) | Appointed 04.09.21 |
| Michael West | | (2018-21) | Retired 04.09.21 |

Executive Management

Chief Executive & Company Secretary: Margo S Paterson

Director of Operations & Deputy Chief Executive: Sabine Mackenzie

Director of Property and Health & Safety: Audrey Greenwood

Registered Office:

7 Glebe Crescent
Stirling
FK8 2JA

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Facsimile: 01786 891333
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Website: hostellingscotland.org.uk

The Trustees and Directors in March 2018 agreed the following 7 key strategic aims in their adopted 2018 - 2021 Growth Strategy:

- 1. Delivering Excellence**
to our members, guests and stakeholders
- 2. Developing our People**
by nurturing our employee family so they in turn will deliver exceptional service
- 3. Enhancing our Properties**
to a standard of comfort and facilities that meet the needs of our guests
- 4. Innovating new Systems**
to attract new members and guests and to be able to respond quickly to their needs
- 5. Working with Young People**
supporting and promoting youth engagement and providing accessibility to Scotland for all
- 6. Engaging Membership**
ensuring members feel valued through regular communication
- 7. Securing the Future**
remaining relevant and ensuring our longevity to achieve the vision and charitable objectives of the organisation.

Due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic starting from March 2020, the key aims as outlined in the Growth Strategy were used as the basis of the 2021-22 Strategic Objectives and will continue to be the guiding principles for the 2022-23 Strategic Objectives prior to the formation of a new strategy to commence in 2023.

Outcome of Strategic Aims 2021-22

Through determination, hard work, dedication and a focus on the future, we have achieved the following strategic aims outcomes despite the exceptional circumstances brought about by the Covid pandemic and ongoing challenges left in its wake.

Strategic Aim 1:

Delivering Excellence

Development of our existing customer journey processes to ensure the delivery of continued positive and seamless guest experiences at all touchpoints and across all channels.

This was achieved by:

1. Enhancing pre-arrival guest experience with the development of automated pre-arrival communications. - Achieved with all guests receiving direct communications after booking with further hostel specific information being sent a few days prior to arrival.
2. Ensuring a COVID safe hostel environment, service delivery and catering offering – Achieved with all guests being ensured a secure environment and hostel experience supported by Hostelling Scotland’s Enhanced Cleanliness Promise.



3. Delivering a social media strategy with KPI’s across all channels (FB, LinkedIn, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, and Pinterest) – Achieved for all active social media channels with our strongest platforms performing very well. Facebook reach has grown by over 200% to 213,335 in 2021. The use of paid advertising has helped drive this reaching an additional 70K people. Whilst Facebook remains our largest channel, Instagram is our fastest growing with 565 additional followers over the course of the year. The impact that social media is having on engagement is also reflected in the increase in traffic from a younger demographic to our website.

4. Running marketing awareness campaigns designed to promote hostel products services and raise the profile of Hostelling Scotland - Achieved through the delivery of four campaigns; Lifetime Membership offer for all babies born in the month of February 2021, Annual Lifetime Membership promotion price of £90.00 in the 90th Anniversary year, re-creating Mary Harvie’s epic bike trip from 1936 and commencement of the Dog Friendly ‘WoofHostelling’ Campaign.



5. Increasing the use of influencers to communicate the Hostelling Scotland story to greater audiences – Achieved through the Bike Packing Adventure and additional press trips promoting our WoofHostelling initiative.



'Absolutely great stay. Loved it! Clean rooms, great beds and super location. Will return soon.

Guest review: Edinburgh Central

Strategic Aim 2: Developing our People

Create a culture of wellbeing at work through the development of a positive working environment, development of retention plans, ongoing training and revised recruitment strategies.

This was achieved by:

1. Providing training courses to support performance development – Achieved utilising local and national funding opportunities as well as investing in our Hostel and Duty Managers with training on first aid and licencing laws.
2. Reviewing of existing employee benefits and conditions, making recommendations for 2022 – Achieved through conducting a competitor pay review and package analysis and submitting recommendations for change which subsequently have been approved.
3. Improving current recruitment, selection and appointment processes – Achieved through review of existing processes and implementing changes to the advertisements, we highlighted the employee benefits when working for Hostelling Scotland in particular focusing on flexible work practices, and being able to travel around a network including provision of live-in accommodation in key locations.
4. Reviewing flexible working practices, communications and promotion of a positive working environment – Achieved through implementation of monthly communications across the network along with weekly central management team and Head Office meetings. Flexible working further enhanced by introduction of Working From Home for employees where practical. This was further supported by the completion of Mental Health and Well-being training for all employees.

Strategic Aim 3: Enhancing our Properties

With asset protection in mind, support the development of a sustainable and well-functioning hostel network, ensuring employees, guests and visitors can expect and experience a high standard of accommodation and working environment.

This was achieved by:

1. Identification, timely completion and co-ordinated management of all necessary works (within budget) that meet quality standards and achieve VisitScotland quality assurance grading – Achieved and will continue to be progressed with all reactive maintenance matters acted upon within the agreed time frame. In addition further works relating to guest facing upgrading works have been undertaken.



2. Providing safe environments and working practices for our employees and guests – Achieved and continues to be progressed. Throughout the Coronavirus pandemic, the hostel network work practices followed Scottish Government COVID-19 safer workplace guidance for the tourism and hospitality sector, including procedures for staff and customer safety. COVID-19 risk assessments continue to be conducted and regularly reviewed with any additional required steps to meet existing health and safety requirements actioned immediately. Continual consultation with the workforce is in place to help reduce risk further for everyone.

I have stopped at Inverness hostel many times over the years. The staff cannot have been the same over that period but someone seems to have the knack to find people who are welcoming and friendly.

Guest review: Inverness Youth Hostel

Strategic Aim 4:

Innovating New Systems

Roll out of system upgrades to improve the booking journey, overall online experience, increase guest engagement and support productivity.

This was achieved by:

1. Developing and streamlining automated processes and reporting functions – Achieved through the introduction of automated emails for guests pre-arrival and enhancements to membership renewals to give more opportunities for members to renew their membership. Further adaptations in progress to the integrated room plans thus reducing the time and resources needed to control forward reservations in our systems.
2. Improving the functionality and effectiveness of the website – Achieved through updates to hostel availability, exclusive private here; Rent a Hostel (RaH) online and page navigation.
3. Development of Sector & Destination Fund project – Achieved with enhancements to our website, online booking system and guest communications. Our exclusive use or RaH webpages and booking system have been updated to allow bookings to be made directly from the website. We have updated all hostel pages on our website to include a real time calendar giving a 12 month overview of availability and the ability to select a date and book directly online. We have also updated our campaigns system to allow promotions to be created that can be exclusively for members.



What is Rent a Hostel?

From group bookings to weekend breaks with close family and friends, many of our youth hostels are available for exclusive private rental and offer the perfect solution for a fantastic staycation.



Strategic Aim 5:

Working with Young People

Re-establishment of Explorers Programmes and volunteering opportunities for 2022.

This was achieved by:

1. Engagement of a fundraising consultant to source appropriate funding – achieved early 2021
2. Through funding, the appointment of a Youth & Volunteer Engagement Manager – postponed due to COVID restraints.
3. Re-introduction and development of key delivery partners – achieved with Respitality and Scotspirit.

Strategic Aim 6:

Engaging Membership

To retain existing and attract a diverse range of new members to the organisation through regular engagement and development of a membership that meets their requirements.

This was progressed by:

1. Developing Lifetime membership offer – Achieved - 623 Lifetime Membership sold across the year (an increase of +240% on the previous year)



2. Reviving the membership review and presenting recommendations for implementation in 2022 - in progress with recommendations to membership category changes and pricing approved in December 2021 and implemented in January 2022 which will act as a foundation to progress with the membership review which is linked to increasing membership and attracting a younger audience.

The hostelling experience transcends generations and brings people together. Age is irrelevant when you share a love for travel and the outdoors.

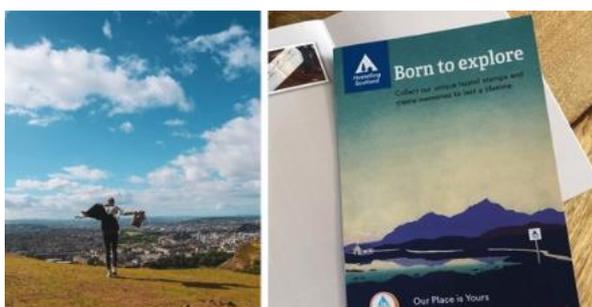
Kay Gillespie, Award Winning Travel Influencer

Strategic Aim 7: Securing the Future

Protect the long term sustainability of the organisation.

This was achieved:

1. Through robust operational financial management and planning – Achieved, with financial outcome for 2021-22 ahead of budget and cashflow position better than forecast.
2. Negotiation and securing funding from the Government, bank and sale of asset – Achieved with securing awards from various government funding initiatives; Aberdeen Youth Hostel is still on the market and discussions are ongoing with bankers regarding terming CBILS borrowing and any further funding requirement.
3. Development of the 2022-2025 Sustainable Strategy – Underway; proposal to extend the current strategy during this year of emergence, with a new strategy period starting 2023.
4. Establishment of a governance succession planning framework – Achieved with the call for nominations specifying key skills required and Chair and Vice-Chair elects from September 2022 having been selected.



As Chief Executive of this wonderful organisation, I'm very proud of all the hard work and dedication shown by our teams.

2021 may have been another difficult year for hostelling but it also proved to be a fantastic year of 90th anniversary celebrations!

We started the year by welcoming over 150 new-born lifetime members to our hostelling family and brought it to a close by recreating an epic 500 mile cycle journey completed by one of our members in 1936. Along the way we've welcomed more WoofHosteller's to our network than ever before. Torridon Youth Hostel picked up Gold in TGO Magazine's prestigious readership awards with Loch Ossian winning Silver and whilst Covid restrictions had an unfortunate impact on our charitable youth programmes, we were delighted to have been able to continue our support of 'Respite Scotland', providing much needed breaks for unpaid carers.

As we look towards our centenary, we're looking forward to helping more and more people connect with the great outdoors and enjoy many fantastic adventures.

Margo Paterson, Chief Executive

The Board of Trustees approved the following Values, Mission, Vision and Strategic Objectives for 2022-23:

Our Values:

1. We promote our charitable objectives by being open to all.
2. We work together with pride and integrity to get things done.
3. We are committed to operating in an environmentally sustainable way.
4. We actively promote and take equality, diversity and inclusion into account in everything that we do.
5. We pledge to give back and provide young people and families, who otherwise wouldn't have the opportunity, the chance to experience Scotland and develop their skills for life, learning and work.
6. We empower our teams by providing a fair work environment with meaningful opportunities for advancement.
7. We work proactively in partnership with local communities, authorities and agencies.

Our Mission:

Inspire all, especially young people to experience Scotland through the provision of great value and welcoming hostelling accommodation.

Our Vision:

Staying true to our values, we offer the best hostelling experience throughout Scotland for everyone.

Strategic Objectives 2022-23

1. Emerging from the pandemic

We will:

- Build the financial health of the organisation to ensure sufficient funds are available for future years to come.
- Relaunch Volunteer and Youth Engagement Programmes working with key partners to deliver on our social tourism commitment
- Rebuild a resilient workforce with focus on employee satisfaction and retention
- Develop a future strategy for the organisation from 2023 to 2026

2. Customer Service Delivery

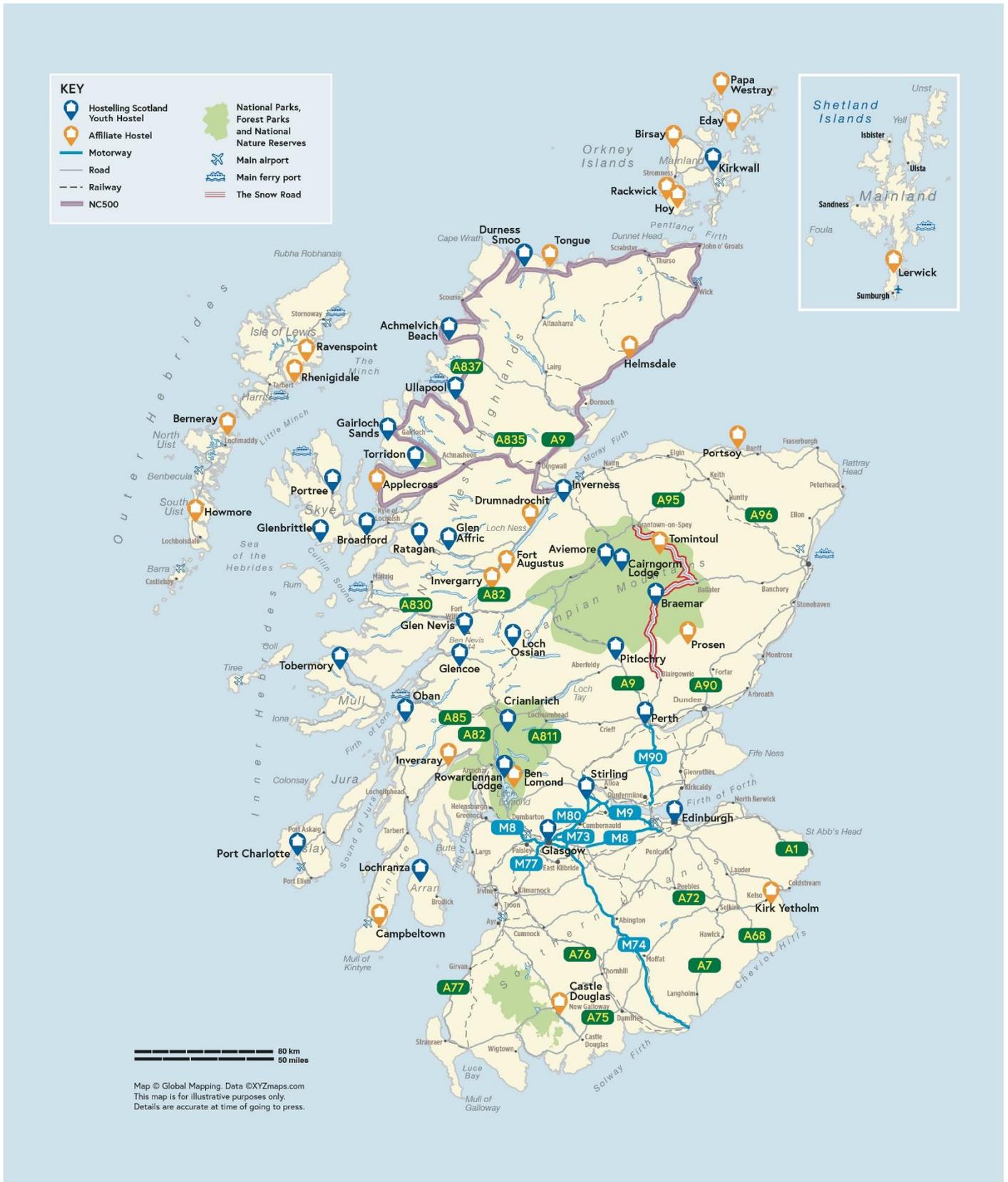
We will:

- Upgrade our facilities and services to provide the optimal customer experience and this will be reflected in our guest reviews and ratings
- Re-commence capital project investment in the network

Where to stay?

From cities to islands, beaches to hills and mountains and all points in between, there's no better way to explore and discover Scotland -

#GoHostelling



Review of Activities

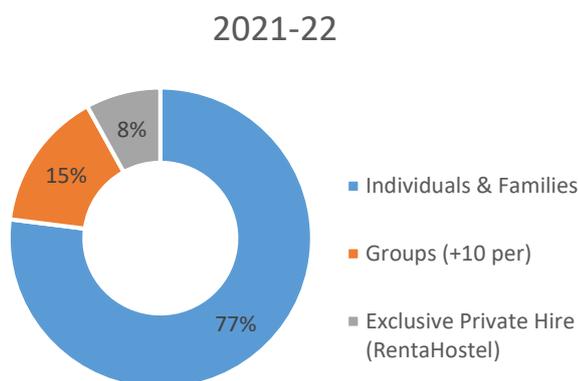
Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic

We operated 19 hostels from May until the end of October 2021 when we closed the seasonal hostels leaving 9 hostels fully open throughout the remainder of the financial year with RentaHostel available in other hostels. As a result, we welcomed 113,205 overnight guests (2021: 36,246) during the year, an increase of 212% on the previous year.

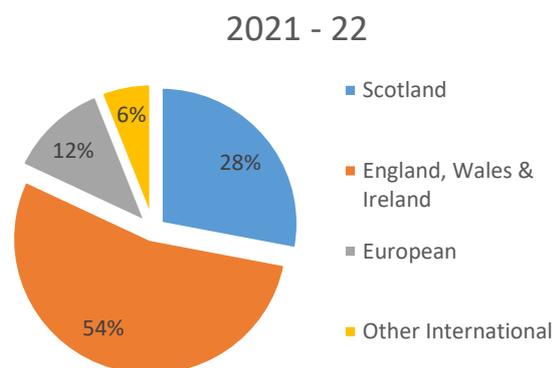
Operational income increased by £2,491,258, (£3,540,267 v £1,049,009), a 237% increase on 2020-21. We carefully managed costs and were also fortunate to receive funding from the Strategic Framework Business Fund and Visit Scotland administered funds: COVID-19 Business Support and Continuity Fund, Sector & Destination Operational & Market Readiness Fund and Destination and Sector Marketing Fund. This helped us to retain cash at bank throughout the year and into 2022, without having to take any further assistance from external lenders.

Hostelling Guests

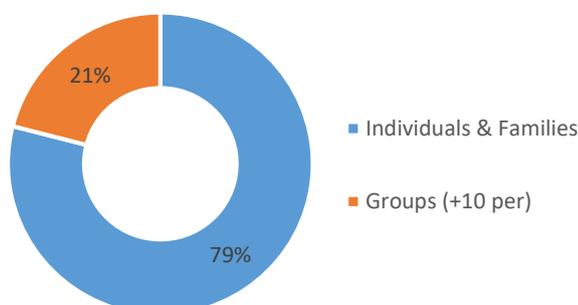
Guest profiles were:



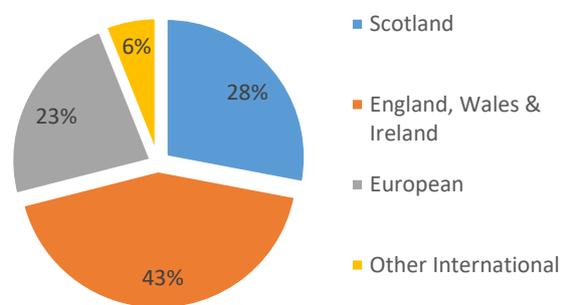
Guest nationalities were:



2020 -21



2020 -21



Membership

Membership increased to 10,985 (2021: 9,778) mainly due to the uptake of our 90th Anniversary £90 Lifetime membership offer and the introduction of the 'Gift of a Lifetime Membership' to all babies born in the month of February 2021 which generated 150 new members.

Working with young people:

Youth Engagement

To reach those most in need we will continue to develop partnerships with key organisations, utilising our diverse range of youth hostels in our network to provide memorable positive hostelling experiences for children, young people, families and leaders across Scotland.

Explorer Fund

Eleven groups were able to enjoy their funded Explorer trips during the year to 31st January 2021, these having been postponed as a result of lockdown in 2020. All remaining group trips scheduled to benefit from funding in 2020 have been moved to 2022.

The Polar Academy

We were delighted to support the 2021 expedition by providing accommodation at Inverness Youth Hostel.



Respitivity

We continued our partnership working throughout 2021-22, offering 10 much needed short breaks for carers in late 2021 and early 2022.



Volunteers

Our volunteer programme once again had to be put on hold due to the continuing overseas travellers' restrictions and our shortage of resource to manage the programme. We hope to restart this programme in 2022/23.

Hostelling People:

Employees

During the coronavirus pandemic, Hostelling Scotland continued to access the Government's Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS), in order to protect jobs wherever possible, until the end of September 2021 when the scheme closed.



At the beginning of 2021-22, we had 18 employees placed on furlough, with the majority of them returning to work as we re-opened our network. By the time the scheme closed in September 2021, we had 2 employee who were on flexible furlough, subsequently returning to work from October 2021.

Despite the impact of the pandemic, Hostelling Scotland secured training funding under the 2021 Flexible Workforce Development Fund (FWDF), which allowed our employees to access training, primarily focusing on their health, safety and wellbeing. Courses included IOSH Fire Safety, IOSH Managing Safely, Mental Health Champion and Mental Health Awareness, with attendance of 63 trainees in total.

We also continued to provide internal training to prepare for the 2021 re-opening of hostels, including refresher courses to ensure employees were well informed, trained and prepared on COVID-19 compliant policies, procedures and practices.

Hostelling Operations:

55% of all bookings in the year (2021: 69%) were generated through Reservations, at the hostels and on our website, with 45% (2021: 31%) being generated through third party booking engines.

On a basis of 1,851 reviews, Hostelling Scotland Guest Reviews scored 91% for overall stay, with guests scoring the following for the individual parts of their hostelling experience:

| | |
|-------------|-----|
| Good Value | 88% |
| Atmosphere | 88% |
| Cleanliness | 93% |
| Comfort | 87% |
| Facilities | 84% |
| Check-in | 95% |
| Service | 91% |
| Location | 97% |

Hostelling Scotland Guest recommendation score was 95%.



VisitScotland Quality Assurance (QA): 2019 Gradings were carried forward due to the COVID-19 pandemic:

| | Hostels 2021/22 | Network % | Hostels 2020/21 | Network % |
|------------------------|-----------------|-------------|-----------------|-------------|
| 4-5 Star | 17 | 52% | 17 | 52% |
| 3 Star | 11 | 33% | 11 | 33% |
| 1-2 Star | 4 | 12% | 4 | 12% |
| Awaiting Accreditation | 1 | 3% | 1 | 3% |
| Total Hostels | 33 | 100% | 33 | 100% |



Green Tourism: We continue to take steps to increase energy efficiency, reduce carbon footprint through hostel refurbishment and promotion of sustainable projects to reduce negative environmental impacts. We work with the independent environmentally qualified assessors of Green Tourism to reassure members and guests that we care about sustainability and are working hard to make a difference. Green Tourism rating is valid for three years.

| | Hostels 2021/22 | Network % | Hostels 2020/21 | Network % |
|------------------------|-----------------|-------------|-----------------|-------------|
| Gold | 11 | 33% | 11 | 33% |
| Silver | 18 | 55% | 18 | 55% |
| Bronze | 1 | 3% | 1 | 3% |
| Awaiting Accreditation | 3 | 9% | 3 | 9% |
| Total Hostels | 33 | 100% | 33 | 100% |

OPERATING LOCALLY BUT THINKING GLOBALLY!

Hostelling Scotland is committed to ensuring that our activities complement and support the natural environment we operate within.

- WATER USAGE:** DUAL-FLUSH TOILETS HELP REDUCE OUR WATER USAGE.
- ENERGY EFFICIENT LED LIGHTING:** THE INTRODUCTION OF ENERGY EFFICIENT LED LIGHTING ACROSS THE NETWORK.
- LOCAL AND SCOTTISH SUPPLIERS:** WHERE POSSIBLE, WE NOW SERVE FOOD SOURCED FROM LOCAL AND SCOTTISH SUPPLIERS.
- REPLACING GAS COOKERS:** REPLACING GAS COOKERS IN OUR SELF-CATERING KITCHENS WITH FULLY ELECTRIC HOBS AND OVENS ACTIVELY REDUCES OUR USE OF FOSSIL FUELS.
- HYDROELECTRIC SUPPLY:** CONNECTION OF LOCH OSSIAN TO A HYDROELECTRIC SUPPLY SUPPLEMENTED WITH PHOTOVOLTAIC POWER.
- WIND TURBINE:** RENEWAL OF THE PHOTOVOLTAIC SYSTEM TO IMPROVE ITS EFFICIENCY AT GLEN AFFRIC TO WORK IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE WIND TURBINE.
- BIKE STORAGE FACILITIES:** WE'RE CONSCIOUS OF THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT SURROUNDING OUR HOSTELS AND OUR TEAMS WORK WITH PARTNERS AND LOCAL COMMUNITIES TO SUPPORT THESE NATURAL HABITATS.
- ECO-FRIENDLY CLEANING PRODUCTS:** WE'VE INTRODUCED ECO-FRIENDLY CLEANING PRODUCTS TO ALL 33 OF OUR HOSTELS.
- IMPROVING THE INSULATION:** IMPROVING THE INSULATION ACROSS THE NETWORK REDUCING UNNECESSARY HEAT LOSS.
- ENERGY EFFICIENT BOILERS:** INEFFICIENT AND OLD BOILERS ARE BEING REPLACED WITH ENERGY EFFICIENT BOILERS.
- HEAT RECOVERY SYSTEMS:** INTRODUCING HEAT RECOVERY SYSTEMS TO VARIOUS HOSTELS WHICH INCREASES THE ENERGY EFFICIENCY.



One of the best hostels in the UK!
The setting is stunning and you are always sure of a warm welcome.
A very special place!

Guest Review: Loch Ossian Youth Hostel

Hostelling Property

£566,373 was re-invested into the network during the year. £118,147 was expended on capital, the major element of this being works on shower rooms and toilets. The balance was invested into various projects throughout the network including floor covering replacements, wet room refurbishments, employee accommodation upgrades, kitchen upgrades and protective screens and sanitiser stations. £344,031 was expended on routine youth hostel maintenance and equipment and costs relating to statutory compliance and health and safety. £48,022 was spent on furniture and equipment across the network, with the remaining £56,173 spent on upgrading the organisation's information technology infrastructure and system enhancements.



Refurbishment of the kitchen, dining room and lounges at Pitlochry YH.



The completed upgrade to the washroom facilities and lounge areas at our Cairngorm Lodge YH.

Hostelling International



Since our formation in 1931, we have taken an active part in the activities of Hostelling International (HI) which co-ordinates over 70 national Youth Hostel Associations across the world, averaging over 30 million overnights per annum. HI provides our members access to over 4,000 youth hostels worldwide.

We meet regularly with British and Irish Youth Hostelling Associations and other European national associations to discuss matters of mutual benefit and cooperation.

We are pleased to continue our Affiliate Hostel programme with independent, trust and community accommodation providers. We promote hostels in the western and northern isles belonging to the Gatliff Hebridean Hostels Trust and Orkney and Shetland Councils along with all other Affiliate Hostels throughout the country. We also continue to collaborate with the Cairngorm Business Partnership to promote and develop the hostelling ethos within the Cairngorms National Park.



Beneray hostel in North Uist



Kirk Yetholm, nr. Kelso is looking forward to celebrating 80 years of hostelling in 2022

Successes of 2021-22: A Year of Resilience!

2021-22 was a year of resilience which tested us, yet also brought many positives:

- Our people achieved a great deal through hard work and dedication with each and every employee contributing to a productive and successful year.
- We learned to work differently and more efficiently through the development of online systems, improved communication channels and adapting services and facilities.
- We still, despite the waves of virus, welcomed 113,205 overnights and we were proud that through hard work, determination and pride in what we do, continued to deliver the best hostelling experience, achieving 91% guest satisfaction.
- We were proactive in our engagement and have grown our following with a younger demographic. This trend has been seen in both our social and website analytics.

All in all despite the challenges we faced, we moved forward and have been fortunate to be able to celebrate many key successes, the impact of which often ran across a number of months, as set out in the following pages:



February 2021

- We celebrated 90 years of hostelling in Scotland with a yearlong offer on “Lifetime Membership” of only £90.00, generating an increase of +240% on Lifetime Membership sales across the year.



- Launched the “Gift of a Lifetime Membership” to all babies born in the month of February resulting in the signing up of 150 future hostellers and generating coverage in the Scotsman and Herald Newspapers (on our birthday), a commissioned article in the Scotsman Magazine (again on our birthday), coverage in The P&J, Inverness and Dundee Courier, Oban & Lochaber Times, Scottish Field and a number of regional publications.



- We were awarded £50K Sector & Destination Operational & Market Readiness fund to help us develop our website and membership system.
- Despite the network being closed, we ‘kept the light on’ through our social channels and newsletters and received many positive messages of support.

March 2021

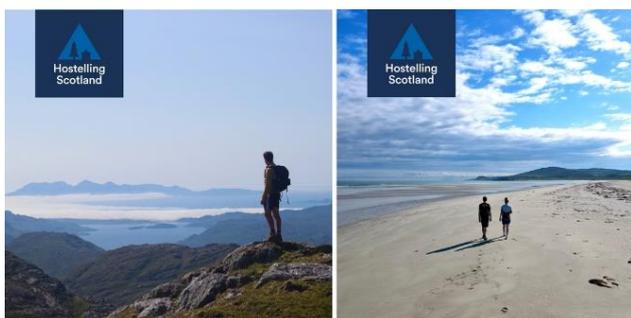
- Virtual attendance and participation at VisitScotland’s three-day Scotland Reconnect 2021 event linking with groups and trade clients from all over the UK and international with a view to maintaining and securing future business relations.
- We focussed on inspiring future travel and promoting the benefits of the great outdoors – a tangible aspect of Hostelling which proved popular with our core audience and helped us grow our following.

April 2021

- Re-opening of Tourism and Hospitality on the 26th April which enabled hostels to be available for booking on a Rent-A-Hostel basis and Edinburgh Central coffee shop to open its doors to customers.



- Five Hostelling Scotland employees successfully completed a 10-week Hospitality and Tourism Leadership, Management and Supervisory Training programme which was funded by the Scottish Government, delivered by HIT Scotland and the Scottish Tourism Alliance (STA).
- Upgrade completed of the three core physical servers that host the virtual server network over which all Hostelling Scotland systems run on including CRS, Finance and website.
- We planned for the partial re-opening of the network, offering travel inspiration with a particular focus on our more rural locations - favourites with our core audience of outdoor enthusiasts and seen by many who had not previously chosen hostelling as a safer, more desirable option for a break in the UK.



May 2021

- Re-opened 19 hostels on a room only basis on 28th May 2021 with widespread coverage in the Scotsman, Press & Journal, The National, and Sunday Post along with an interview on BBC Radio Scotland on Saturday, 29th May 2021.



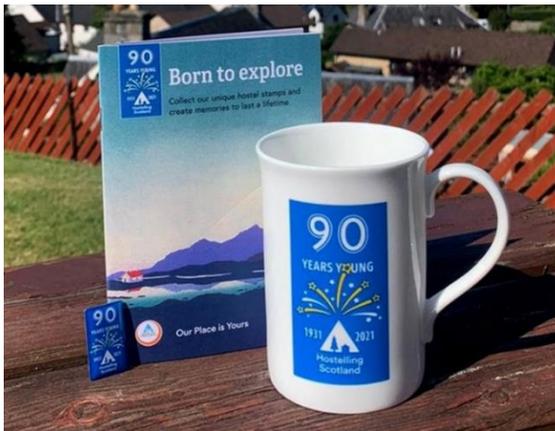
- Early completion of Pitlochry Youth Hostel works following flood damage.

And what did our guests say:

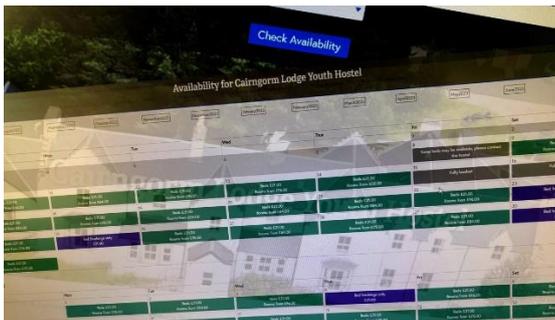
"Fantastic service from start to finish. The team looked after us even serving breakfast to us all. Great hostel location, an easy 5 minute walk to the ferry terminal and Ullapool itself"

June 2021

- Release of our Special Edition 90th Anniversary passport along with our Hostelling Scotland Anniversary mug and celebratory pin badge.



- Launch of the Rent-a-Hostel online booking platform as part of our VisitScotland Destination funded project
- Improvements to the website to provide a real time hostel calendar on each hostel page which includes all accommodation options available along with the ability to book directly from the calendar via our online booking system.



- Welcomed, as part of our youth engagement activities, The Polar Academy 2021 expedition at Inverness Youth Hostel during their Scottish expedition.



And what did our guests say:

“We loved our 3 night stay at Torridon Youth Hostel despite the COVID restrictions. The staff were very helpful and informative and their enthusiasm for such a lovely place was infectious. We enjoyed the nearby Coire Mhic Fhearchair walk and Beinn Eighe mountain trail plus strolls around Kinlochewe and the hostel surroundings. Sitting outside with the amazing views with beer and local gin makes a holiday despite the midges trying to spoil our fun”

July 2021

- Hosteller Handbook published on our website and shared with members through our digital comms.



And what did our guests say:

“The hosts at Port Charlotte Youth Hostel kept the hostel very clean. I really appreciate the drying room they had set up. The hosts were very nice and tried to address each person's needs. They served a wonderful breakfast and it was much appreciated. They always smiled when they greet you in the morning by name”

August 2021

- Successful migration to a new payment gateway solution to process all online and automated payments processed by Hostelling Scotland.
- We completed rollout of a new chip & pin solution throughout the hostel network to process all customer-present payments.
- We welcomed the return of the ScotSpirit Holiday Voucher Scheme for low income families supporting some of the most vulnerable within our communities who deserve a much needed hostelling break.



- Partnership engagement continues with Respality through the offer of 10 breaks for unpaid carers and their families and with the CEO delivering presentations to service delivery providers about Hostelling.

- We focused on our Glencoe ensuite camping pod and through working with influencer Kay Gillespie's (Chaotic Scot's) shared what "Podlife" is all about.



And what did our guests say:

'We stayed in the POD just outside Glencoe Youth hostel and it was amazing. It's perfect with an en-suite bathroom, great view and peace and quiet. Bliss!'

September 2021

- The membership voted for changes to the Articles of Association which included amendments to add flexibility for member participation in general meetings.
- Proxy AGM held for the second year and production of online Annual Report
- We welcomed two new Trustees, Donald Martin and Robert Swinfen
- The CEO (virtually) attended the Hostelling International CEO conference
- We successfully secured £18K VisitScotland marketing funding specifically focused on WoofHostelling supporting an increasingly popular market



- Popular 'Dog Friendly' travel influencer Sam Grant and the Wee White Dug, enjoyed a summer staycation in our Pitlochry and Cairngorm Lodge Youth Hostels. The sun came out for her trip and the trip generated significant reach, promoting WoofHostelling with a highly engaged, dog loving audience.

- We developed a new working partnership with aerial drone photographer, hillwalker and 'Munro Bagger', Megan Moss to capture new and inspiring photographic and video content of our hostels and the areas in which they sit.



- We installed two new firewalls into our network improving our cyber resiliency.

And what did our guests say:

“Friendly welcome from the chap on reception at Glasgow Youth Hostel. This fantastic property is deceptively big with an amazing staircase, what a place! Our room was spacious, clean and looked out over Kelvingrove Park. A great base to explore the West End. Honestly, what more do you need?”

October 2021

- Bike packing Adventure with Lee Craige and the Adventure Syndicate where we re-created the 500 mile cycle trip taken by Mary Harvie and her 2 sisters in 1936 at the age of 17yrs (featured in our anniversary handbook) resulting in widespread coverage in The Scotsman, Herald, Metro, Evening Times and Scottish Field as well as a number of regional titles.

[Watch the video!](#)



- Torridon and Loch Ossian Hostels shortlisted in the TGO Magazine Awards and our press release celebrating this was picked up and covered by Scottish Field and a number of regional titles.

And what did our guests say:

“Cairngorm Lodge is a brilliant hostel in the most fantastic location. Bedrooms and toilet/shower facilities have been upgraded to a great standard. Apart from huge dining areas there are three spacious lounge areas for socialising. A drying room that is second to none”

November 2021

- COP26 hailed as a success generating significant revenue for Edinburgh, Glasgow and Stirling YH's.
- Hostelling Scotland's partnership with Young Scot is confirmed for 2022 with both organisations working together to promote each other.



- Improved the navigation on the main hostel information pages of the Hostelling Scotland website by including section navigation within the header of each hostel page.

- We celebrated the reopening of self-catering kitchens and social spaces.
- Enhancement to bookable rates with the introduction of Bed and Breakfast packages available for guests to book online.
- Improvements to the system used to contact members to remind them that their membership will soon expire and to give members multiple opportunities to renew.
- The return of an “in-person” Board meeting at Stirling Youth Hostel

December 2021

- Torriddon Youth Hostel won Gold and Loch Ossian Youth Hostel won Silver in the hostel or bunkhouse of the year category in The Great Outdoors Readers Awards 2021.

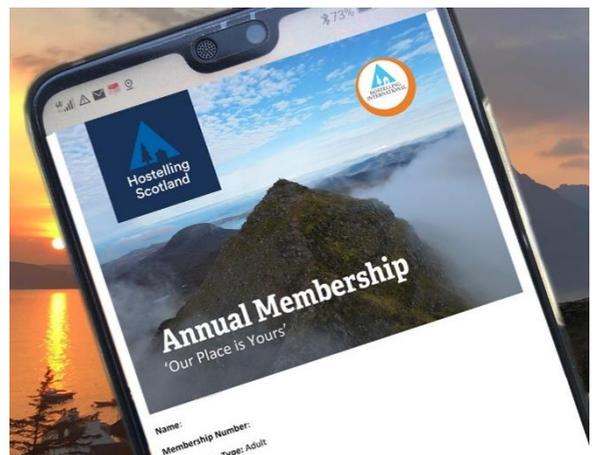


And what did our guests say:

“Just to say we had a wonderful time in Oban Youth Hostel. The hostel was spotless with lovely views over the bay and nice rooms and communal areas. Lovely staff. The winter festival was on so lots to see and do. Even the journey bus there train back as no bus on a Sunday offered spectacular scenery. The whole break was just perfect and done us all the world of good. Think I might join as definite a great experience”

January 2022

- Launched revised membership, simplifying our categories and promoting adoption of digital membership in line with aspirations for more sustainable tourism.



And what did our guests say:

Lifetime Membership: “I did this. One of the best decisions I have made for me and my family this year”

Annual Activities Summary

2021/22 was a busy year of celebrations, challenges and hope for the future.

Whilst celebrating our 90th Anniversary, we were challenged with a further period of lockdown at the start of the year but were encouraged by strong forward bookings ahead of 19 of our hostels reopening in May 2021. Social spaces continued to be closed, with kitchens and lounges re-opening towards the end of the year. Our priority is at all times to look after our people, guests and visitors and create the best hostelling experience. During 2021 we continued to provide confidence to our guests of our cleanliness, check in procedure and service and this was reflected in our guest review scores.

It has been wonderful to welcome back hostellers and we are delighted to also see 'new hostellers' who have either come back to us after many years or enjoyed their first experience of hostelling.

Our commitment to social tourism and our work with young people and families continued through the delivery of postponed Explorer Fund breaks from 2020 and partnership working with Respatiality and VisitScotland Scotspirit where we offered much needed short breaks. We were also delighted to provide accommodation to the Polar Academy on their expedition in Scotland.

Financially we were supported by grants in the year and this provided us with additional cash flow which, along with the generated cash surplus in the year, has allowed us to plan for 2022 and ensure we are a financial going concern. The Board of Trustees made the difficult decision in the year to place Aberdeen Youth Hostel on the market following a period of poor demand pre pandemic. The sale of this property will allow Hostelling Scotland to create a capital fund for re-investment in the network.

Social media channels were a key source of engagement throughout the year and we also continued to communicate with our members and followers through regular e-mail and newsletter updates. We had great interest and coverage of the 'What would Mary do?' epic bike ride recreating Mary Harvie's adventures from 1936 as documented in her diary. We also launched our Woofhostelling campaign, supported by funding administered by Visit Scotland.

We have highlighted earlier in the report our successes in the year and we are proud of Torridon and Loch Ossian Youth Hostels winning Gold and Silver TGO Awards.

We are extremely grateful to all individuals, trusts, funders and corporate organisations that have supported our charitable objectives during the year - to our own people, for their hard work and dedication as employees and contributions as volunteers, to our members and guests for their custom, support and patience during these challenging times, and to those who have provided financial support by gift or waiver.

Our recovery post COVID-19 will take a number of years to achieve and we will continue to work with colleagues in hospitality and specifically the hostelling sector to consult with Scottish Government. As part of an international youth hostelling family, we are missing our international employees and are delighted to see the gradual return of our international visitors and groups.

2022-23 is our Year of Emergence post pandemic and our strategic objectives focus on two key areas: Emerging from the pandemic and Customer Service Delivery. The Board of Trustees have produced updated Values, Vision and Mission as noted earlier in the report and these principles will form the basis of the new strategy for 2023-26.

We continue to achieve our charitable objectives through our financial management, investment in properties and drive to deliver customer excellence to guests along with our development of and commitment to social tourism and youth programmes.

The Board of Trustees and Directors is committed to rebuilding surplus to invest back into the Youth Hostelling network as we recover from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, ensuring our long-term future. Since 1931 it has been our mission to make more of Scotland more accessible to more people. This remains core to everything we do and we will continue to work hard to provide quality experiences for all.



Gongs For Torridon And Loch Ossian Youth Hostels In TGO Awards

AN ARTICLE BY JOHN TRAYNOR



THE SCOTSMAN Paws for thought

There are 17 dog-friendly 'WoofHostels' run by Hostelling Scotland, which let four and two legged visitors enjoy the best of the country. Here, **Fiona Russell**, recounts her adventures with her whippet **Wispera** on a trip to Ullapool

Walking a mostly well-trodden trail on the west coast mountain of Canisp, I delight in the autumnal sights and sounds. A low but bright sun glows on the

Much closer to me, my whippet, **Wispera**, trots happily along, also enjoying the wild terrain. She is off the lead and perkily doing her own thing. I am content that there is no temptation of sheep for her to chase and I believe I've picked the right time

and lots of attention from the hostel staff. This always goes down well with a people-loving whippet. She has also made use of a "paws for water" station and there are dog treats on offer. The Ullapool Youth Hostel has

Hostelling Scotland

Lifetime Membership only £90



Ruddy cheeks, rucksacks and castle dorms: Youth hostel group reaches 90

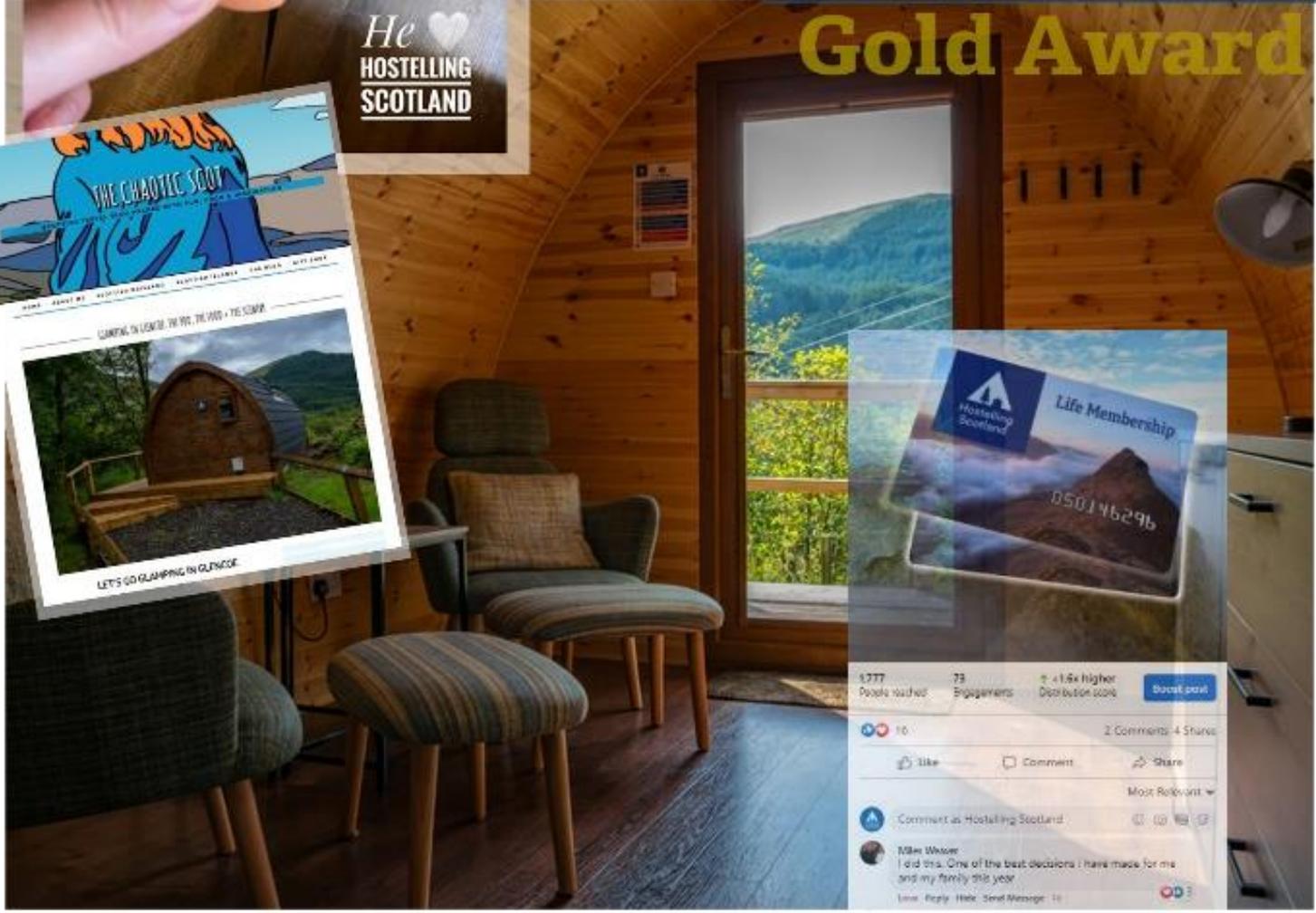
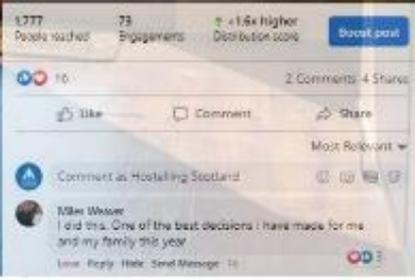


He **HOSTELLING SCOTLAND**



The Great Outdoors AWARDS 2021

Gold Award



Group Statement of Financial Activities

(incorporating the Group Income and expenditure account) For the year ended 31 January 2022.

Independent Auditor's Statement on the Summarised Financial Statements to the Members of Scottish Youth Hostels Association

We have examined the summarised financial statements of Scottish Youth Hostels Association for the year ended 31 January 2022. This statement, including the opinion has been prepared for and only for the charity's members and trustees as a body and for no other purpose. We do not, in giving this opinion accept or assume responsibility for any other purpose or to any other person to whom this statement is shown or into whose hands it may come, save where expressly agreed by our prior consent in writing.

Respective responsibilities of Trustees and auditor

The Trustees are responsible for preparing the summarised report and financial statements in accordance with applicable United Kingdom law and the recommendations of the Charities SORP. Our responsibility is to express an opinion on the consistency of the summarised financial statements within the Annual Review with the full annual financial statements and trustees report. Our procedures, which were conducted with regard to Bulletin 2008/3 which was issued by the Auditing Practices Board.

Opinion

In our opinion the summarised financial statements are consistent with the full annual financial statements and the trustees report of the Scottish Youth Hostels Association for the year ended 31 January 2022.

Henderson Loggie LLP

Chartered Accountants
Statutory Auditor
11-15 Thistle Street
Edinburgh
EH7 5EQ

| | Total funds 2022 £ | Total funds 2021 £ |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Income from: | | |
| <i>Donations and legacies</i> | 206,665 | 882,242 |
| <i>Grants receivable</i> | 909,441 | 718,068 |
| Charitable activities - Operating Youth Hostels | 3,092,168 | 814,900 |
| Other trading activities | | |
| Commercial Income from SYHA (Trading) Ltd | 170,044 | 154,766 |
| Membership subscriptions | 278,055 | 79,343 |
| Investments – bank interest | 300 | 9,158 |
| Other Income – insurance receipt | - | 1,000,000 |
| | <hr/> | <hr/> |
| Total income | 4,656,673 | 3,658,477 |
| | <hr/> | <hr/> |
| Expenditure on: | | |
| Raising funds | | |
| SYHA (Trading) Ltd expenditure | 140,857 | 128,026 |
| Membership costs | 39,155 | 38,988 |
| Charitable activities - Operating Youth Hostels | 4,624,339 | 4,271,863 |
| | <hr/> | <hr/> |
| Total expenditure | 4,804,351 | 4,438,877 |
| | <hr/> | <hr/> |
| Net (expenditure)/income | (147,678) | (780,400) |
| Transfers between funds | - | - |
| Net movement in funds | (147,678) | (780,400) |
| Reconciliation of funds | | |
| Total funds brought forward | 12,804,916 | 13,585,316 |
| | <hr/> | <hr/> |
| Total funds carried forward | 12,657,238 | 12,804,916 |
| | <hr/> <hr/> | <hr/> <hr/> |

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year. All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities

Balance Sheet

At 31 January 2022

| | Group 2022 £ | Group 2021 £ |
|--|--------------------|--------------------|
| Fixed assets | | |
| Tangible assets | 15,153,194 | 16,255,262 |
| Investments | - | - |
| | <hr/> | <hr/> |
| | 15,153,194 | 16,255,262 |
| | <hr/> | <hr/> |
| Current assets | | |
| Stocks | 20,108 | 15,908 |
| Debtors | 702,112 | 1,926,330 |
| Cash at bank and in hand | 3,736,805 | 1,931,798 |
| Assets held for sale | 650,174 | - |
| | <hr/> | <hr/> |
| | 5,109,199 | 3,874,036 |
| | <hr/> | <hr/> |
| Creditors: amounts falling due within one year | (2,715,988) | (1,764,551) |
| | <hr/> | <hr/> |
| Net current assets | 2,393,211 | 2,109,485 |
| | <hr/> | <hr/> |
| Total assets less current liabilities | 17,546,405 | 18,364,747 |
| | <hr/> | <hr/> |
| Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year | (4,889,167) | (5,559,831) |
| | <hr/> | <hr/> |
| Net assets | 12,657,238 | 12,804,916 |
| | <hr/> | <hr/> |
| Funds | | |
| Restricted Funds | 1,053,724 | 901,256 |
| Unrestricted general funds | 11,603,514 | 11,903,660 |
| | <hr/> | <hr/> |
| Total charity funds | 12,657,238 | 12,804,916 |
| | <hr/> | <hr/> |

Hostelling Finance

Total operational income was £4,656,673 (2021: £3,658,477) a 27.2% increase of £998,196 on prior year (2021: £5,154,139 decrease). Total resources expended was £4,804,351 (2021: £4,438,877), an 8.2% increase of £365,474 (2021: £3,618,690 decrease). The resulting deficit of expenditure over income was £147,678 in the year after all costs including depreciation (2021: deficit £780,400).

SYHA (Trading) Ltd. a wholly owned subsidiary trading company generated, in its twelfth year of trading, incoming resources of £170,044 (2021: £154,766), with resources expended of £140,857 (2021: £128,026) providing a net profit of £29,187 (2021: £26,740), a sum which has been gifted to the parent company.

SYHA gratefully received general donations and legacies of £16,948 (2021: £79,943) along with restricted donations and legacies totalling £189,717 (2021: £802,299).

The following expenditure was made from these restricted funds in the year;

Social Inclusion:

£18,221 (2021: £3,642) was expended on social inclusion youth programmes

VisitScotland Funding:

£19,028 was expended on marketing (£10,453) and IT (£8,575) in the year

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Trustees on 9th June 2022 and signed on their behalf by:

Sally Mayer Director
Martin Ambrose Director

Note to the Summarised Financial Statements

The summarised financial statements are taken from the audited financial statements of Scottish Youth Hostels Association for the year ended 31 January 2022. The auditor's opinion on those financial statements was unqualified. The summarised financial statements may not contain enough information for a full understanding of Scottish Youth Hostels Association's affairs and members are invited to read them in conjunction with the audited financial statements of the charitable company. Copies of the full annual accounts can be obtained from The Chief Executive, SYHA, 7 Glebe Crescent, Stirling, FK8 2JA.



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Scottish Youth Hostels Association (also known as SYHA or Hostelling Scotland) is a registered Scottish charity No.SC013138 and a company limited by guarantee, registered in Scotland, No. SC310841. Registered Office 7 Glebe Crescent, Stirling, FK8 2JA.

