

Annual Report and Accounts

1 April 2012—31 March 2013

Lothians Conservation Volunteers

Lothians Conservation Volunteers (LCV) is a charitable unincorporated association run entirely by volunteers that has been doing practical nature conservation in and around the Lothians since 1970. LCV is governed by a constitution that was last changed in July 2000 and which states that the purpose of the group is to 'do work of a practical nature to further wildlife and countryside conservation in the Lothians and elsewhere.'

The group works every Sunday and some Saturdays on activities that vary according to the season. We work for a range of clients, including conservation bodies, local councils, and other managers of land with conservation value. We pride ourselves on being able to provide skilled and committed volunteers.

LCV is affiliated to BTCV Scotland and the Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations, and is recognised by the Inland Revenue as a Scottish charity (SC020384).

On 31 March 2013 LCV had 106 members who had been on task during the year.



Supported by grant aid from Scottish Natural Heritage

LCV Supporters

LCV would like to thank all those listed below whose financial support made our work possible during the year.

Organisations

Scottish Natural Heritage Scottish Wildlife Trust Lothians Members Centre The Royal Bank of Scotland Group Community Cashback Award Sinclair Knight Merz

We are also grateful to the City of Edinburgh Council for providing us with land for our tree nursery.

Administrative information

Trustees

LCV's trustees are elected at the Annual General Meeting in May. They serve for one year, and may then stand for re-election.

Co-ordinator Louisa Martin
Task Organiser Matt McCabe

Treasurer David Monaghan

Newsletter Editor Sarah McConachie

Transport Secretary Debbie Tribak Social Organiser Helen Jones

Logistics Ian Dickson (until 9 April 2013)

Fundraising Simon Bonsall

Publicity Martin Brownjohn Minibus William McSporran

Tree Nursery Tony Irving

Tools Officer Mark Herron (until 12 February 2013), Trevor Paterson thereafter

Membership Secretary Nicola Robson
Training Officer Peter Gilbert
Webmaster David Nutter

Contact details

Post: Louisa Martin, Co-ordinator, 4/4 Kinghorn Place, Edinburgh, EH6 4BN

Web: www.lcv.org.uk

E-mail: enquiries@lcv.org.uk

Bankers

Bank of Scotland, 300 Lawnmarket, Edinburgh EH1 2PH

Committee report

The Trustees present their report and financial statements for the year ending 31 March 2013.

Review of the year

Work carried out

In the year to the end of March 2013, LCV ran 65 tasks for 15 different clients at 22 different sites and did 750 days of voluntary work (2012: 716, 2011: 684, 2010: 621) for conservation projects in Scotland. We had an average of 11.5 volunteers on each task (2012: 11.4, 2011: 10.2, 2010: 10.8). Scottish Wildlife Trust and Midlothian Council were our two biggest clients, with 140 and 129 of our total workdays respectively (2012: 140, 163). Our summer and New Year residential tasks this year were at Scone Palace.

Client	Site	Date	Work	Workdays
Scottish Wildlife Trust	Addiewell Bing	15/07/12	Tree weeding / bracken bashing	11
		12/08/12	Tree weeding and path clearing	12
		25/11/12	Felling and brash clearance	10
		09/12/12	Clearing brash	7
		17/03/13	Tree planting	12
	Bawsinch	17/06/12	Pathwork and tree weeding	15
		15/09/12	Birch pulling from reed bed	7
		21/10/12	Dogwood clearance	12
			Dogwood clearance	10
			Dogwood clearance and ditch work	10
			Vegetation management	12
			Pathwork/pond management	ç
	Red Moss	16/09/12	Birch pulling from bog	13
Scottish Wildlife Trust	Total			140
Midlothian Council	Gore Glen		Broom bashing	9
	Roslin Glen		! Meadow, path & drainage work	12
			Tree felling	10
			Tree planting and clearing saplings	8
			Woodland, path & drainage work	11
			Drainage work and felling	11
			Drainage and woodland work	10
	W : C . D 1		Path and woodland work	11
	Vogrie Country Park		Raking off sweet reed grass	11
			Meadow raking	13
			Tree planting Rhodi bashing and burning	10 13
Midlothian Council Total		27,01,10		129
Mansfield Estates	Scone Palace	28/07/12	Rhodi bashing	38
Walloffera Estates	Scorie i didec		Rhodi bashing	42
Mansfield Estates Total			Tutour bushing	80
West Lothian Council		12 /05 /12	Path work inc. drainage & beardwalk	12
West Lourian Council	Beecraigs Country Park		Path work inc. drainage & boardwalk Boardwalk and cross drains	7
			Pond and woodland management	6
			! Pathwork	8
			! Mountain bike trail and boardwalk	10
			Path and drainage work	5
			! Pathwork	7
			Pathwork	13
		, ,	Path and drainage work	11
West Lothian Council T	otal	, ,	0	79
East Lothian Council	Aberlady Bay	23/09/12	Sea buckthorn clearance	11
East Estimin Council	11001thay Day		Sea buckthorn clearance	11
	North Berwick Law		Cutting and clearing gorse	13
	Pencraig Wood		Path realignment	12
	Yellowcraigs		Piri-piri burr control	7
	O-		Piri-piri burr control	9
	otal		*	63

Client	Site	Date Work	Workdays
Ulrich Loening	Ormiston Wood	22/04/12 Clearing log jams and removing ivy	16
		11/11/12 Rhodi bashing	12
		23/12/12 Rhodi bashing	12
		17/02/13 Rhodi & woodland management	11
		24/03/13 Woodland Management	12
Ulrich Loening Total			63
David Long	Spottiswoode	08/04/12 Tree planting	16
		18/11/12 Birch thinning and rhodi bashing	15
		16/12/12 Birch thinning and rhodi bashing	15
		13/01/13 Tidying and burning brash	10
David Long Total			56
The Life Science Trust	Pishwanton	01/04/12 Fencing and willow planting	10
		20/05/12 Fencing and dung management	9
		24/06/12 Pathwork, tree care, ragwort control	7
		30/09/12 Tree weeding	8
		27/10/12 Tree weeding, construction	6
The Life Science Trust T			40
Scottish Natural Heritage	Taynish NNR	08/09/12 Meadow raking	20
Scottish Natural Heritag	e Total		20
Simon Lockwood	Alness	04/05/12 Fence work and tree tubing	18
Simon Lockwood Total			18
Friends of Craiglockhart	Easter Craiglockhart Hill	10/06/12 Pondwork and meadow raking	ç
Nature Trail		14/10/12 Pondwork and meadow raking	8
Friends of Craiglockhart	Nature Trail Total		17
Lothians Conservation	Brock Wood (SWT)	16/02/13 Tree felling training	7
Volunteers		09/03/13 Tree felling training	8
Lothians Conservation V	olunteers Total		15
Wooplaw Com. Wdlnd	Wooplaw Wood	26/08/12 Various site / path management tasks	11
Wooplaw Community W	oodland Total		11
Friends of Leadburn	Leadburn Community	08/07/12 Clearing conifer and rowan regen from	10
Community Woodland	Woodland	raised bog	
Friends of Leadburn Cor	nmunity Woodland Total		10
Echline Community	Echline Community	03/11/12 Pruning branches and burning brash	ç
Woodland	Woodland		
Echline Community Woo	odland Total		9
Grand Total			750

Minibus

LCV runs a minibus that is used to transport tools and volunteers to the work sites. The minibus is used exclusively for the purposes of the group, and this year it was driven 3,408 miles (2012: 3,399) on task. The minibus is vital for our operation: it allows us to welcome volunteers who do not have their own transport, and gives us the means to transport bulky tools safely. We plan to replace this bus with a new one in 2019.

Tool store and garage

LCV owns a wide variety of tools. One of the strengths of the group is that we can provide the client with volunteers who are fully equipped for the task. This year has seen a continued investment in new tools and safety equipment to ensure that our volunteers have everything they need to do an excellent job. We also carried out repairs to the communal access track leading to our buildings. The cost of this was recovered from other users of this track. We have not made any other significant investments in our buildings this year.

Training

LCV aims to provide the training volunteers need to undertake tasks safely and in a skilled fashion. During the year we have carried out two tree felling training courses enabling 15 volunteers to gain enhanced skills in safe felling techniques. These courses were funded by Sinclair Knight Merz. One volunteer completed D1 minibus training. This training was mainly funded by Sinclair Knight Merz, with the balance from LCV.

Publicity and volunteer recruitment

A total of 64 new volunteers (2012: 71) came on their first task with us during the year. Anecdotal evidence suggests that the majority of new volunteers find out about LCV from our website, which during the year received 7,587 unique visitors with 861 in March 2013 alone. In the previous year we recorded 9,844 visits to the site but the launch of a new website and change in the method of collecting the figures mean that these numbers are not directly comparable. We also attract a significant number of volunteers from the Edinburgh Volunteer Centre, by word of mouth and by our attendance at local volunteer fairs.

Volunteer retention

Of the 64 new volunteers who came out in the past year 20 returned for a subsequent task. This number is close to the long term average for the past eight years which is 22. Eight came out on at least four tasks suggesting that they are becoming established within the group. This is equal to the long term average.

A new volunteer survey was launched during the year to collect feedback from volunteers after their first task. 24 new volunteers were offered the chance to respond to this, and two did so, a response rate of 8% The two responses received were positive but the sample size is too small to allow any conclusions to be drawn.

Volunteer development

LCV had 16 active task leaders and drivers in the last year, with 12 active task leaders and eight active drivers (some volunteers do both). The long term average is 13 active leaders (1995/96 to 2012/13) and 10 active drivers (2004/05 to 2012/13). However, excluding task leaders and drivers whose contribution was to one task only (who therefore do not have much impact on the workload shared by the most active contributors) the 2012/13 figures were 11 and eight in comparison to long term averages of nine and nine. We are therefore above the long term average for task leaders, and close to it for drivers.

LCV prefers to avoid asking the same individual to lead or drive more than one task a month. The number of tasks undertaken by each leader and driver is shown in the following table. Though the spread of responsibility is quite good overall, in the last year three individuals have exceeded the 12 task level. LCV would therefore still like to recruit more leaders and drivers, especially drivers.

	Leading	Driving	Either
12 or more tasks	0	2	3
8 to 11 tasks	5	3	7
4 to 7 tasks	3	2	3
1 to 3 tasks	3	1	3
Total	12	8	16

Tree nursery

LCV runs a tree nursery in which we grow native trees of known provenance. Our Tree Nursery Manager plans the planting in the nursery in consultation with our clients to enable us to provide trees that they require. Being able to provide quality trees of known provenance is important for tree planting projects.

It can take up to four years to grow a tree from seed to a size that is suitable for planting on a reserve, and the tree nursery thus represents a considerable investment of volunteer time. We are grateful to the City of Edinburgh Council for providing us with a site for our tree nursery.

Conclusion

It has been, as always, a busy year for the group with our total volunteer days at their highest ever total. We have again run a wide variety of tasks to maintain the enthusiasm of both long-standing and new volunteers, and our residential tasks have been popular and well-attended. Recruitment of leaders, drivers and new committee members continues to be our biggest challenge in the year ahead as well as retaining new volunteers. The committee will continue to plan ahead to ensure that there is a supply of volunteers willing to take on senior roles in the group as they become vacant by identifying likely candidates at an early stage.

Financial Review

Our underlying operations continue to generate the surpluses we need to keep LCV in good financial health.

This year has seen a surplus of £2,399 (2012: £1,620 deficit). This is made up of a surplus on unrestricted funds of £1,838 and a surplus on restricted funds of £561. Funds employed stand at £66,555 (2012: £66,628) of which £21,272 (2012: £24,083) are restricted.

Income from tasks rose this year to £4,827 (2012: £4,114), reflecting the higher number of workdays this year compared to previous years. Our grant income remained broadly at normal levels this year (£1,805), after the successful fund-raising for a new minibus in 2010 (2012: £1,316, 2011: £2,250, 2010: £24,150, 2009: £1,150). The grant from SNH was smaller this year because phasing of the payments means that some of the grant has moved into the next financial year. This decrease in receipts from SNH is balanced by substantial support from Sinclair Knight Merz.

Our fund-raising activities this year resulted in a surplus of £404 (2012: £215 deficit). Ceilidhs have historically proved very effective fund-raising tools for us, but we will abandon them if we see a trend for declining profits continue.

We lost £465 to a failed supplier this year. We booked and paid for a D1 training course, but the training provider went into administration before the course was delivered. There are allegations of fraud, and we have provided full details of our transactions with the supplier to the local Trading Standards office, who are investigating. We do not foresee that any of the payment will be returned. We covered this loss from our own resources.

Subscription income was £40 this year (2012: £37, 2011: £82, 2010: £117, 2009: £113). Paid subscription offers no benefits to our members beyond the newsletter, and the price of subscription is very close to the cost of production of the newsletter. The trend over the past few years has been for this income to fall. We expect that it will continue to fall in future years as we move increasingly towards electronic delivery of our newsletter, and this does not worry us.

On the expenditure side, we have continued to minimise our day-to-day running costs wherever possible. We use our income from clients to cover only the running costs for which it is difficult to obtain grant funding, and this means that we can keep our costs to our clients as low as possible.

Insurance is our biggest expense, and costs have doubled in seven years. We continue to monitor the market for insurance, and change providers as necessary to obtain the best possible price. This year's insurance bill is, however, skewed by the timing of payments. It includes two sets of van insurance (£875 at the start and £800 at the end of the year) but does not include £248 for tools and buildings that was paid shortly after the end of the financial year. On a 'like-for-like' basis, our insurance costs this year are broadly flat, due to the falling cost of insuring the minibus as it ages.

In 2010 the trustees reviewed the group's designated funds to give clarity about the group's future financial planning. Following this review, the group now has the following funds:

- Minibus replacement fund. This will part-fund the replacement of our minibus, which
 we expect to take place in 2019. By then, we aim to have built the fund up to cover a
 significant part of the cost of new minibus. Experience shows that it is much easier for
 us to raise grant funding for a new bus if we contribute a substantial fund of our own.
- **Minibus maintenance fund.** This provides a reserve for large repair bills for the minibus, which we would expect to incur towards the end of its life.
- **Water rates fund.** Following the installation of a tap in our garage, this provides a reserve to cover the water rates we may now be obliged to pay.

At year end, designated funds stood at £22,408 in total.

Risk management and reserves

The LCV Trustees carry out a regular review of the risks facing the group and of the impact, probability and possible mitigation of each risk.

LCV has a system of financial controls. These controls aim to give us reasonable (but not total) safeguards for our assets from unauthorised disposal or use. In the light of this year's experience with a failed supplier, we have reviewed our approach to committing large amounts of money to riskier suppliers. Where possible we now use a volunteer's personal credit card to make large payments to riskier suppliers, as this provides a measure of protection in the event that the supplier fails to deliver the service.

Our investment policy has concentrated on maintaining the value of our saving by investing in low-risk interest-bearing deposit accounts.

LCV maintains financial reserves to enable us to recover from the loss of a major client or donor while still meeting commitments to our clients and volunteers. At most our task programme extends four months into the future, so we aim to retain general fund reserves representing around one third of our annual income in the range £3,000-£4,000. We review this policy annually. At the year end our unrestricted reserves stood at £3,840 (2012 £4,503).

Our reserves are at the upper end of our target range. The trustees are unwilling to waste the remaining excess in our reserves, and continue to subject to robust scrutiny any proposals to spend it. At present, and in the absence of specific spending objectives for it, we plan to reduce this surplus by absorbing (rather than passing on to clients) the rapidly increasing costs of operating our minibus.

Independent Examiner

We are grateful to Julia Loveland for carrying out an independent examination of our annual accounts this year.

Approved by the Trustees and signed on their behalf.

Louisa Martin, Co-ordinator.

7 May 2013

Independent Examiner's report

I report on the accounts of the charity for the year ended 31st March 2013, set out on pages 10 to 13.

Respective responsibilities of Trustees and Examiner

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the terms of the *Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) 2005 Act* and the *Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006*. The charity trustees consider that the audit requirement of Regulation 10(1) (a) to (c) of the Accounts Regulations does not apply. It is my responsibility to examine the accounts as required under section 44(1) (c) of the Act and to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of Independent Examiner's statement

My examination is carried out in accordance with Regulation 11 of the *Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006.* An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeks explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the accounts.

Independent Examiner's statement

In the course of my examination, no matter has come to my attention

- 1. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:
 - to keep accounting records in accordance with Section 44(1) (a) of the 2005 Act and Regulation 4 of the 2006 Accounts Regulations, and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with Regulation 9 of the 2006 Accounts Regulations

have not been met, or

2. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Julia Loveland ACA Independent Examiner. 33 Briarbank Terrace, Edinburgh 20 October 2013

Statement of receipts and payments

For the year ended 31 March 2013

		Restricted	Unrestricted	E / 12012	E / 10010
		funds	funds	Total 2013	Total 2012
Receipts	Note	£	£	£	£
Donations	2	170	1,546	1,716	1,652
Legacies		-	-	-	-
Grants	3	1,055	750	1,805	1,316
Receipts from fund-raising activities		-	2,558	2,558	132
Gross trading receipts		-	4,827	4,827	4,114
Income from investments other than la	nd				
and buildings		-	159	159	-
Rent from land and buildings		-	-	-	-
Receipts from other charitable activities	3	-	-	-	-
Proceeds from social events			47	47	60
Total receipts		1,225	9,887	11,112	7,274
Payments					
Expenses for fund-raising activities		-	2,154	2,154	347
Gross trading payments		-	-	-	-
Investment management costs		-	-	-	-
Payments relating directly to charitable	e 4				
activities		664	5,895	6,559	8,547
Grants and donations		-	-	=	-
Governance costs		-	-	-	-
Independent examination		-	-	-	-
Preparation of annual accounts		-	_	-	-
Legal costs		_	_	<u>-</u>	
Total payments		664	8,049	8,713	8,894
Net receipts/(payments) Transfers to/(from) funds		561	1,838	2,399	(1,620)
Surplus /(deficit) for year	_	561	1,838	2,399	(1,620)
	_				

Statement of balances

At 31 March 2013

No	funds	,	Total 2013 £	Total 2012 £
Cash funds				
Cash and bank balances at start of year	(540)	24,411	23,871	25,491
Surplus/(Deficit) for year	561	1,838	2,399	(1,620)
Cash and bank balances at end of year	21	26,249	26,270	23,871
National Savings Investment Account	-	- <u>-</u>	23,769	21,610
Bank of Scotland Treasurer's Account			2,501	2,261
	-	-	26,270	23,871
Other assets				
Minibus 5	6 17,305	;	17,305	19,777
Buildings	4,846	18,133	22,979	22,979
Tools	<u>-</u>	. 1	1	1
Total other assets at end of year	22,151	18,134	40,285	42,757
Total assets at end of year	22,172	44,383	66,555	66,628

LCV has no other investments or assets.

Liabilities

There are no material future commitments.

Approved by the Trustees on 7 May 2013 and signed on their behalf by

David Monaghan, Treasurer.

Notes to the financial statements

At 31 March 2013

1. Accounting policies

These accounts have been prepared on the Receipts and Payments basis in accordance with the Charities & Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended).

Income and expenditure

All items are recognised in the year received or paid.

Depreciation

The receipts and payments accounts do not show depreciation. However, the value of our minibus is reduced each year on a 'straight line' basis to reflect the fact that the van will have negligible value by the time it is 10 years old.

2. Donations received

	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total 2013	Total 2012
	£	£	£	£
SWT Lothians Members Centre	1,000	-	1,000	1,000
Anonymous donation	240	-	240	340
RBS Community Cashback Award	250	-	250	250
Subscriptions	40	-	40	37
Other donations under £50	16	170	186	25
	1,546	170	1,716	1,652

3. Grants received

	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total 2013	Total 2012
	£	£	£	£
Scottish Natural Heritage	750	-	750	1,250
Sinclair Knight Merz		1,055	1055	66
	750	1,055	1,805	1,316

The grants from Sinclair Knight Merz are for D1 training and MiDAS training. The unrestricted grant from Scottish Natural Heritage is for general running costs.

4. Payments relating directly to charitable activities

	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total 2013	Total 2012
	£	£	£	£
Publicity	661	-	661	543
Buildings expenses	-	-	-	2,193
Vehicle expenses	1,976	-	1,976	1,551
Volunteer training	248	515	763	1,812
Tools and equipment	223	-	223	401
Insurance	1,971	-	1,971	1,742
Administration	274	-	274	203
Lost to bankrupt supplier	465	-	465	-
Sundry expenses	77	149	226	102
	5,895	664	6,559	8,547

Publicity is classified as a charitable activity because it is supplied in an educational manner: it is targeted at beneficiaries or others who can use the information to further LCV's objectives, it is information that the recipient can act upon in an informed manner to further LCV's objectives and it is related to LCV's objectives. *Lost to bankrupt supplier* is money paid to a training company that went into administration before delivering the training we had paid for.

5. Fixed assets

	Minibus	Buildings	Tools	Total 2013	Total 2012
	£	£	£	£	£
Value at 1 April 2012	19,777	22,979	1	42,757	45,229
Surplus (deficit) for year	(2,472)	-	-	(2,472)	(2,472)
Value at 31 March 2013	17,305	22,979	1	40,285	42,757

6. Restricted funds

	Minibus	Training	Toolstore L	ane repair	Total 2013	Total 2012
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Balance at 1 April 2012	19,777	(540)	4,846	-	24,083	27,925
Surplus (deficit) for year	(2,472)	540	-	21	(1,911)	(3,842)
Balance at 31 March 2013	17,305	-	4,846	21	22,172	24,083

Minibus and *Tool store:* Grants and donations to purchase these fixed assets. *Training:* Grants for training courses. *Lane repair:* Unspent balance of donations from local householders for repairs to communal lane adjoining our garage.

7 Designated funds

Minibus	Minibus			
replacement	maintenance V	Nater rates		
fund	fund	fund	Total 2013	Total 2012
£	£	£	£	£
12,643	5,000	2,265	19,908	18,308
-	-	-	-	-
2,500	-	-	2,500	1,600
15,143	5,000	2,265	22,408	19,908
	replacement fund £ 12,643 - 2,500	replacement maintenance l fund fund £ £ 12,643 5,000 2,500 -	replacement maintenance Water rates fund fund fund £ £ £ 12,643 5,000 2,265 2,500	replacement maintenance Water rates fund fund fund Total 2013 £ £ £ £ 12,643 5,000 2,265 19,908 - - - - 2,500 - - 2,500

The *Minibus replacement fund* is provision for replacement of our minibus in 2019.

8. General funds

	Total 2013	Total 2012
	£	£
Balance at 1 April 2012	22,636	24,486
Surplus (deficit) for year	1,838	(250)
Transfer from (to) designated funds	(2,500)	(1,600)
Balance at 31 March 2013	21,974	22,636

9. Analysis of assets between funds

	Restricted	Designated	General		
	funds	funds	funds	Total 2013	Total 2012
	£	£	£	£	£
Fixed assets	22,151	-	18,134	40,285	42,757
Current assets	21	22,408	3,840	26,269	23,871
	22,172	22,408	21,974	66,554	66,628

10. Trustees remuneration and expenses

The members of the LCV Committee and persons connected to them did not receive any remuneration in 2013 (2012: nil) nor were they reimbursed for expenses incurred in the performance of their duties as trustees. LCV has no employees.

11. Taxation

LCV is recognised by the Inland Revenue as a charity for taxation purposes. We believe that no liability to corporation tax will arise on the results of the year.