

MOURNE HERITAGE TRUST



Annual Report & Accounts

APRIL 2003 - MARCH 2004

Company Information



Directors

Dr A Mitchell – Chair
Ms I Hood – Vice Chair
H O'Neill – Company Secretary
J Saunders – Treasurer
G Douglas
W Burns
S Doyle
W Martin
P Kelly
J McGrillen
Mrs I Adair
D Patterson
B Davey
Ms R Chestnut
R Annett - *resigned September 2003*
Ms M Killen
I Hanna
S McCarthy
Mrs J O'Hare
Mrs C O'Boyle
Mrs J Whatmough
D Thompson

Secretary

H O'Neill – Company Secretary

Company Number

NI 32946

Auditors

McClure Watters
Thomas House
14-16 James Street South
Belfast
BT2 7GA

Business Address

87 Central Promenade
Newcastle
Co Down
BT33 0HH

Bankers

Bank of Ireland Ltd
19 Greencastle Street
Kilkeel
Co Down
BT34 4BH

Solicitors

McBurney & Co
5 Church Square
Banbridge
Co Down



When I sat down this year to write my annual report I thought it would be interesting to read through all the previous reports since the Trust was formed in 1997. That really brought home to me our enduring achievements over the years and also, that it had been

achieved by a small relatively under resourced organisation. We can all be proud of the results but, as yet, we are still only tinkering around the edges of what is the real challenge. That is to manage one of the most important community environmental resources in Northern Ireland.

The potential resource value of the Mourne Environment is now recognised to surpass those of agriculture and fishing combined. It will eventually, if managed appropriately, replace the communities' economic dependency on those particular industries. A broad based economy built on the area's environmental and cultural assets combined with the traditional industries will cushion the threatening economic aspect of the changes to the Common Agricultural Policy and Fishery Directives of the EU. The withdrawal of production support is not the only threat to the sustainability of small farms. In marginal areas, such as the Mournes, where productivity is already low, this will become much worse because of the EU legislation on ground Water Quality and in particular the Nitrates / Phosphates Directive. It will mean that production levels on Mourne Farms may fall even further. Although the changes in the short term will reduce the sustainability of the agricultural asset in the long term it will enhance the value of the environmental asset.

Dr A W Mitchell, MBE, Chairman

The whole aspect of Territorial / Custodial Agriculture becomes a reality in order to maintain the quality of the environment, landscape and biodiversity. Surely such a custodial approach in itself should attract some form of natural asset support payment and I'm sure that such support would receive widespread approval across the board.

Under the PEACE II programme of the EU and in particular the Natural Resource Rural Tourism Initiative, this year has been frenetic for the Mourne Heritage Trust. With the insistence of Brussels of their N+2 ruling, DARD requested that we commit all our funding prior to the end of June 2004. This has put tremendous pressure on the human resources of the Trust. My thanks to all members of the Staff, Board and in particular the sub groups who rose to the challenge.

Many of the projects have added to the infrastructure and amenities of the area. I hope that the communities notice and appreciate what we have achieved and are attempting to achieve for them. I would ask them to tolerant in the face of the changes that are about to overtake us all. We are not responsible for them but we are trying to mitigate such changes by sensitive management. However to mitigate such levels of change we require new levels of management, investment into and involvement of the communities of Mourne. I truly believe that we can achieve all of these through the new structures and levels of funding which would be achieved through the declaration of a National Park Celtic Model in Mourne. I am delighted that, at last, there appears to be through the creation of the Working Group, progress towards the research and community consultation demanded by such a process.



A view from Slievenaman



The Mourne Heritage Trust has now been operating for almost seven years, since its establishment in June 1997. Each year since then, as Chief Executive, I have seen the work of the Trust expand and change, and this year has been no exception. Some areas of work have been

completed and have given way to new priorities, whilst other existing activities seem to grow year on year.

This year saw the initiation of the Mourne Biodiversity Action Programme, and the employment of our first Biodiversity Officer. This initiative is an emerging priority, and given the importance of Mourne's natural heritage, is set to expand in the coming years.

Sustainable Tourism has provided the Trust with both significant challenges and significant success throughout the year. The NRRTI programme has swung into action, with our first project at Ballylough Fishery completed and launched by February 2004. In August 2003 the Mourne and Slieve Croob AONB was awarded the EU Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected areas, the first area in the UK or Ireland to achieve the award. This award is a testimony to the close working relationship enjoyed between the Trust, our central and local government partners, tourism businesses and the local community.

February 2004 saw the completion of Rock Cottage, the first property to be completed under the Mourne

Homesteads scheme. It has been a great achievement to reach this point in what has been such an innovative programme. As we move forward with the next phase we are aware that many challenges lie ahead. However, with the interest already generated in the re-use of traditional buildings and in traditional building skills, we feel that the impact of the programme will be worth the pioneering effort.

Another key achievement for the year has been the development of our new website, www.mourne-live.com. This website will act as a vehicle for disseminating information and for exchange of information between the Trust and those with access to the web and an interest in Mourne.

During the year the Trust developed a new Operational Plan. This will guide the Trust's activities to March 2007, by which time, due to the emerging National Park debate, the future shape of management of Mourne will be much clearer. As dialogue on the potential Mourne National Park is set to begin, the Trust is ready to play its part. We will lend the experience we have gained in the past seven years to help inform the process for the benefit of Mourne and its communities.

There have been some changes at staff and Board level in the past year, and with the prospect of enhanced core funding resources for the next three years, the Trust is confident that it has the right team in place to deliver on its plans. We look forward to sharing many new achievements with our partners and those who live in and visit Mourne and Slieve Croob.



Tony Gates, Chief Executive



The landscape of Slieve Croob

Natural Environment Enhancement and Protection



BIODIVERSITY ACTION PROGRAMME UNDERWAY

A key addition to the Trusts work during the year was the commencement of our Biodiversity Action Programme that will set out the aims and priorities for protecting and conserving wildlife within the AONB. A total of £92,259 project funding was secured from DOE Environment and Heritage Service, Water Service, Down District Council and Banbridge District Council to allow the Trust to employ a Biodiversity Officer over three years to develop a Biodiversity Strategy. In achieving this funding the Trust was the first organisation within Northern Ireland to begin work on a biodiversity project for a clearly defined landscape area.

£1000 was secured from DOE Environment and Heritage Service for a public Consultation Day entitled 'Wake Up to Wildlife'. Work also started on sourcing information on the types and locations of important species and habitats within the area that may form a priority for action during the project.

The Trust is looking forward to the development of this programme over the next three years. It will undoubtedly form the cornerstone of all of our future activities in natural environment enhancement and protection and will focus the efforts of our volunteer team on new and exiting projects that bring additional benefits to the area.



Foxgloves



Farmed landscape

In January 2004 we welcomed our Area Ranger, Catherine McAleenan as our new Biodiversity Officer and opened a new suite of offices in the Gate Lodge at the Silent Valley in partnership Water Service. These offices now provide a base not only for the Biodiversity Officer, but also our new Area Ranger, David Farnan, and act as an ideal location for training activities on nature conservation issues.

The first task on the Biodiversity project was to raise awareness of the issues and to find out what local people value most about wildlife and nature within their area. In order to achieve this, an additional

OVERVIEW OF OPERATIONS

RANGER SERVICE

The Trust has continued, through its Ranger Service, to undertake environmental monitoring function reporting damage on sites of nature conservation value to relevant enforcement agencies. Environmental monitoring was undertaken on upland erosion, land reclamation, grazing pressures and coastal erosion due to sand and gravel extraction. The Ranger service also continued to respond to 62 public enquiries and complaints on issues such as illegal

dumping, abandoned cars, litter, fires and vandalism. Inspections were carried out on all Trust maintained facilities and 11 Tourist Information Points were maintained throughout the AONB. The Ranger Service was supported with £10,000 from the Esmée Fairbairn Trust to meet operational costs.

MOURNE CONSERVATION VOLUNTEERS

The Trusts volunteering programme continued throughout the year with support on environmental monitoring from our 13 Guardians of Green Space. Mourne Conservation Volunteers devoted a total of 246 days work on projects such as:

- Seed collection and maintenance of the Trusts tree nursery, growing native trees for planting in wild-life gardens and at visitor sites throughout the area
- Inspection of the Mourne Wall



Inspection of the Mourne wall carried out by Mourne Conservation Volunteers

- Maintenance of paths in protected areas
- Creating wildlife gardens for local schools
- Construction of bird boxes

In addition the volunteers were provided with training in hedge laying skills, navigation, development of tree nurseries and wildflower identification.

The Trust continued to help bridge the gap between landowners and government agencies, providing opportunities for the Farmers Liaison Group to meet to discuss issues such as the potential impact of a National Park. A visit to Mourne was hosted for a group of Wicklow farmers as part of the ongoing Mourne Wicklow Exchange Programme.

Key Outputs 2003/04

- 246 days were devoted by the Mourne Conservation Volunteers and Volunteer Ranger Service.
- Development of a wildlife garden in Annalong Primary School and Brackenagh West Primary School.
- Installation of bird boxes in 15 schools with the help of Princes Trust Volunteers.
- Environmental awareness programme undertaken in 20 schools with over 400 children.
- Presentation to 7 local community groups on the work of Mourne Heritage Trust Ranger Service.
- Organisation of exchange visit by Wicklow Farmers to the Mournes
- On-going development of the Mourne Farmers Liaison Group with 60 members registered.

Visitor Services and Visitor Management



VOLUNTEER RANGERS MAKE A DIFFERENCE

During the year the Trust took the opportunity presented by £5000 funding from the Lottery 'Awards for All' programme to develop a Volunteer Ranger Programme with the aim of strengthening visitor management services throughout the AONB. Of the seven Volunteer Rangers recruited, four undertook a three-day Walking Group Leader training course at the Tollymore Mountain Centre. The brave volunteers were put through their paces in cold but sunny February weather learning a variety of skills such as map reading, navigation, weather analysis, route planning, emergency evacuation and survival techniques. In the process they also became familiar with some of the key walking routes throughout the

Mournes and had an opportunity to evaluate some of the risks and opportunities for recreational walkers in the area.

The Volunteer Rangers also saw the publication of a Mourne Volunteer Ranger Handbook. This is a practical publication giving key advice on how to deal with situations that can arise during a Rangers working day. With their new skills, volunteer ranger uniform and armed with their handbook the Volunteer Rangers signed up for a variety of tasks including acting as walk assistants for the Trusts walks programme, surveying breaches in the Mourne Wall and acting as leaders on nature conservation activities.



Volunteer Rangers receive their new Rangers manual.

In the incoming year the Trust hopes to secure additional funding to enable additional volunteer rangers to be recruited and trained. The Trust also hopes to expand the role of the team to enable implementation of the visitor monitoring project, undertake monitoring of erosion in the uplands, provide additional advice to visitors, expand the walks programme and enable the Trust to accommodate additional volunteer activities for those with disabilities.

● OVERVIEW OF OPERATIONS

COUNTRYSIDE MANAGEMENT SERVICE

Throughout the year the Trust continued its maintenance of key visitor facilities and public rights of way. However, it became evident that the two-person countryside team was stretched to capacity trying to keep up with the work of litter collection, site maintenance and grass cutting. In response bids were forwarded to our funding partners for additional resources to allow expansion of this team and further development of our work on new visitor sites being developed throughout the area. We hope these resources will be secured in the incoming year.

The implementation of the Newcastle Challenge Trail continued with directional posts being installed along most of its 20km route around Newcastle and Castlewellan. A summer walks programme was offered with a total of 10 walks being scheduled for a variety of routes throughout the Mourne mountains and Slieve Croob catering for a range of abilities.

NEW PROJECTS

The Trust has been successful in sourcing and obtaining the following project funding to enhance this work:

- £50,000 of NRRTI funding to enable a 3 year Visitor Monitoring project to be undertaken within the AONB. This will obtain information on visitor numbers and visitor satisfaction with the area and facilities/activities on offer.
- £35,896 of NRRTI funding for the implementation of a nature trail within the Silent Valley.
- £7,000 of NRRTI funding for the production of a Mourne AONB visitor information leaflet.

- £47,400 of NRRTI funding for the development of a three year programme of walks, talks and cycling activities within the AONB.
- £7,463 from DOE Environment and Heritage Service for the expansion of the current range of AONB fact sheets.

These projects will commence implementation in the coming year.

Key Outputs 2003/04

- Maintenance of 16 car parks and visitor sites including litter clearance, grass cutting, graffiti removal and essential maintenance of site furniture e.g. picnic tables and bins. Of these sites 6 are in Newry and Mourne District Council area, 5 in Down District Council area and 5 in Banbridge District Council area.
- Maintenance of 46 stiles throughout the mountain areas of the AONB including timber treatment and replacement of non-slip surfacing.
- Maintenance of 43 public rights of way and green lanes including removal of obstructions, hedge cutting and strimming of grass verges. Of these paths 31 are in Down district, 11 are in Banbridge and 1 is in Newry and Mourne.
- Maintenance of 7 cycle routes with a total of 182 directional plates on wooden posts. Essential maintenance includes keeping posts free of vegetation, graffiti removal, replacing lost or broken plates and posts. Of these routes 4 are located within Newry and Mourne district, 1 in Down District and the remaining 2 are between Down and Banbridge Districts.
- Maintenance of 64 interpretative panels including graffiti removal and essential repairs / weatherproofing of stands.
- Installation of waymarked posts for the Newcastle Challenge Trail.
- Delivery of 10 walks during the summer walks programme.
- Maintenance of 11 Tourist Information Points.



Walkers at Binnian Lough - one of a range of walks led by Volunteer Rangers.



NRRTI Leaflet for the Mourne and Slieve Croob area.

NRRTI MOVES INTO ACTION

The NRRT programme was formally launched by Minister Ian Pearson on the 27th March 2003, and this date marked the beginning of a busy period of programme marketing and project assessment. The staff team engaged in a detailed marketing campaign to raise awareness of the programme and this included the operation of satellite offices in Warrenpoint and Rathfriland. The provision of this service ensured enhanced accessibility to information for applicants across the 3 District Council areas.

The first assessment meeting took place on the 23rd June 2003. Assessment meetings continued on a monthly basis and by the end of March 2004, a total of 43 projects had been approved for funding, representing a total commitment of £ 1,203,000.

The pressures from the EU to commit and spend Peace II funding became very evident at the beginning of 2004, when it was announced that there was the potential that the NRRTI budgets could be cut. Staff worked effortlessly to ensure that there was ample evidence to demonstrate the need and demand for the total NRRTI budget and outlined how they would set about ensuring that the partnership could achieve full commitment by the target date of end of June 2004.

A lot of hard work lies ahead to ensure that the partnership meets its targets against commitment and spend. Some projects are nearing completion and the true economic and social benefits of this funding initiative should soon be visible to all.

PRESTIGIOUS EUROPEAN TOURISM CHARTER

On Saturday 30 August 2003, the Mourne and Slieve Croob area was awarded the prestigious "European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas".

The European Charter which is a practical tool for ensuring that tourism development in Europe's protected areas takes place in a sustainable manner, was presented to the



Chairman of the Trust, Dr Arthur Mitchell, MBE, at a ceremony in Stryn, Norway.

Through the award of the Charter, the Trust has demonstrated it is co-operating to a high level with local stakeholders and tourism partners to address strategic tourism issues. The Charter brings with it a five-year commitment to further that co-operation and to continue to strive for excellence in the development of tourism in Mourne and Slieve Croob. Since its creation seventeen protected areas in seven European countries have been awarded the Charter.

FIRST NRRTI PROJECT COMPLETES AT BALLYLOUGH FISHERY

Situated on the A25 between Castlewellaan and Clough, with a panoramic view of the Mourne, Ballylough Fishery provides an excellent facility for fly fishing. Castlewellaan & Annsborough Angling Club, which was established in 1973, has been managing the fishery at Ballylough since 1981, and the club maintains a hatchery at Ballylough which ensures that the lake is always well stocked with both rainbow and brown trout.

The club has recently improved facilities and accessibility at the lake through the Mourne NRRT programme. The improved facilities, whilst improving the angling experience for everyone, particularly help anglers with disabilities as it includes the re-surfacing of a length of laneway, the provision of two parking bays located adjacent to the fishing stands and a further three disabled fishing stands, making available seven disabled stands in total. Included in the project is the production of a leaflet to assist in the marketing of the facility. With a total project cost of almost £21,000, the Mourne Heritage Trust's contribution of £15,593 represented a grant of 75%.



Representatives at launch of Ballylough Fishery project

"The members of our angling club are delighted with the final result and would like to thank the funding organisations and Mourne Heritage Trust for their support through the PEACE II, Natural Resource Rural Tourism Initiative . . . Angling is a true cross-community activity which holds no political, religious or other bounds and we are delighted that our proposal not only fits the local sustainable tourism strategy but also the EU PEACE II Programme criteria."

Mr Philip Harrison, Chairman of Castlewellaan and Annsborough Angling Club



Italian Sustainable Tourism Study Visit

Key Outputs 2003/04

- Training day held for all staff, sub-group and board members in May 2003
- Satellite offices in operation during May and June 2003
- EU Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas Awarded (August 2003)
- Italian Sustainable Tourism Study Visit (November 2003)
- NRRTi Business Plan – Reviewed (February 2004)
- 10 assessment meetings held during the period June 2003 – March 2004
- 43 projects approved for funding
- Launch of Ballylough project (February 2004)
- Tourism Business Green Accreditation Scheme Initiated

Built and Cultural Heritage



TRADITIONAL SKILLS TRAINING UNDERPINS BUILT HERITAGE

The 'Mourne Homesteads' initiative, the only scheme of its kind in Ireland, continues to be the key project within the built heritage programme administered by the Trust. There are two strands to the Mourne Homesteads project: the restoration and renovation of up to 9 vernacular dwellings within the Mourne Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and an Education and Training Programme.

The Education and Training programme in traditional skills is integral to the building project and runs parallel to it. To date the courses have been an outstanding success with 180 participants from a wide variety of professions and interests having attended.

The Trust had become aware of the increasing loss of those skilled in and familiar with the materials, repair, and construction of traditional buildings. In response to this challenge Mourne Heritage Trust, with the aid of funding received from the Heritage Lottery Fund, Co-Operation Ireland and Dúchas, launched the Education Programme in May 2003 at Narrowwater Castle Lime Service, Warrenpoint.

Up to the end of March 2004, the Trust had arranged 16 day long courses in traditional skills. The programme has covered a broad range of traditional skills with courses taught by skilled professionals on thatching, stone masonry, hedge laying, dry stone walling, lime and carpentry, along with general introduction

courses aimed at homeowners on the practicalities of vernacular building restoration. The homeowners course has been particularly well attended by homeowners within the Mourne AONB and it is hoped that this course will have gone some way to developing a more positive response to our vernacular heritage.



Thatching course at Parke's Castle, Co. Leitrim

FIRST HOMESTEAD SUCCESSFULLY RESTORED

The first traditional building restored under the Mourne Homesteads scheme has been returned to

its original owners, the Rice Family of Altnadue, near Castlewellan. The 'Pilot project' of the building programme, the restoration and extension of a traditional two-roomed Mourne cottage (Rock Cottage) began in April 2003 and was largely completed by February 2004.

The restoration has fully restored the two-roomed cottage in line with best conservation practice and has added a three-bedroom extension to provide a modern family home.

"We really wanted to keep Rock cottage but were unsure that it could ever be lived in again. The Mourne Heritage Trust convinced us that it could and we are really delighted with the result"

John Rice, Owner, Rock Cottage

The Mourne Homesteads Programme is demonstrating that old dwellings can be reused to modern standards without compromising their vernacular character and it aims to change public opinions towards sustainability and reuse of the remaining 900 vernacular buildings in Mourne, rather than demolition and replacement.



The newly restored Rock Cottage
photo courtesy of NIHE



John Craven and Tony Gates outside Ronan's Cottage near Hilltown during filming of the BBC 'Countryfile' programme.

Key Outputs 2003/04

- Restoration completed at Mourne Homesteads Pilot Project, Rock Cottage, a traditional two-roomed Mourne cottage.
- 16 courses completed on traditional skills with 180 participants:
 - Lime and Stone (3 courses) 39 participants
 - Introduction to Stone Masonry (2 courses) 17 participants
 - Two-day Lime (2 courses) 18 participants
 - Lime and Carpentry (2 courses) 20 participants
 - Hedge Laying (1 course) 9 participants
 - Homeowners (2 courses) 22 participants
 - Dry Stone Walling (2 courses) 28 participants
 - Introduction to thatch and thatching (2 courses) 26 participants
- Cross border travelling exhibition on vernacular buildings and traditional skills has visited 15 venues in Northern Ireland & the border counties.

Creating Awareness and Promoting Understanding



AONB GOES ON-LINE

At the beginning of 2004, the Trust developed a new website for Mourne and Slieve Croob, www.mournelive.com, with the help of grant aid from the NRTTI programme. The site was designed by Newry based ITS New Media, and provides a range of information on the work of the Trust, information and fact sheets on the AONB, as well as an interactive map, virtual tours and a real time webcam. In addition the web site is to be provided in three other languages.

NETWORKING AND CO-ORDINATION

During the year the Trust has hosted a number of study visits to Mourne by local, regional and national groups in order to share experiences and best practice. Trust staff and Trustees also undertook a number of information meeting and presentations in order to inform the wider public of the work of the Trust and management issues within the AONB.



Visit by Bangor University (Wales) to Fofany water treatment project.

Key Outputs 2003/04

- AONB website www.mournelive.com created
- Continued provision of AONB information point from Trust Offices in Newcastle
- Continued servicing of 8 visitor information points across the AONB
- 5 television and radio programmes / articles completed on AONB issues
- Over 50 MHT/AONB related articles appeared in local and regional press and professional journals
- 8 study visits to Mourne hosted for a variety of groups including CNCC, Friends of Mourne, Core Funders, Wicklow Farmers Group and Bangor University (Wales).
- Presentation given to over 20 groups and bodies and at key conferences in relation to AONB management
- The Trust continued to provide a key consultation and policy input on a wide range of issues including; new Fofany Water Treatment Plant, NITB Strategic Framework, CITB modern apprenticeships, planning policy statements and key planning applications within the AONB
- The Trust continued to actively contribute to a variety of network and partnerships including; Europarc Network, Mourne Activity Breaks, Banbridge LSP and Leader +.

Trust Management



NEW PLAN TO GUIDE OPERATIONS UP TO 2007

During the year the Trust prepared a new Operational Plan. The Operational Plan 2004 – 2007 sets out the programme activities which MHT aims to undertake during the period 1st April 2004 to 31st March 2007. The Plan was approved by the Board of Trustees of the Mourne Heritage Trust on 25th February 2004 and has also been formally agreed with each of the Trusts core funders, namely, DoE Environment and Heritage Service, the Northern Ireland Tourist Board, Banbridge District Council, Down District Council and Newry and Mourne District Council. The Trust will structure its human and financial resources towards the delivery of the Plan.

The Operational Plan was also developed in consultation with local communities and key groups and individual with an interest in the Mourne and Slieve Croob area and the work of the Trust. On 14th January 2004 a consultation workshop was held at the Slieve Croob Inn, Seeconnell. This event was attended by over 80 participants and was a key

event in helping shape the Operational Plan.

The plan sets out core and priority activities across seven key performance areas, namely:

1. Protection and enhancement of the natural environment.
2. Visitor management and visitor services.
3. Built and cultural heritage.
4. Sustainable tourism.
5. Creating awareness and promoting understanding.
6. Rural and community regeneration.
7. Strategic management and co-ordination.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The Board of Trustees held 11 meetings and the Executive Committee met on 3 occasions during the year. The Trust's sixth Annual General Meeting was held on 24th September 2003.

CORE FUNDING

The Trust received the following core funding for the year 2003 - 2004.

| | |
|---------------------|------------------|
| EHS | £ 107,601 |
| Banbridge DC | £ 17,040 |
| Down DC | £ 27,200 |
| Newry and Mourne DC | £ 24,000 |
| NITB | £ 24,630 |
| Total | £ 200,471 |

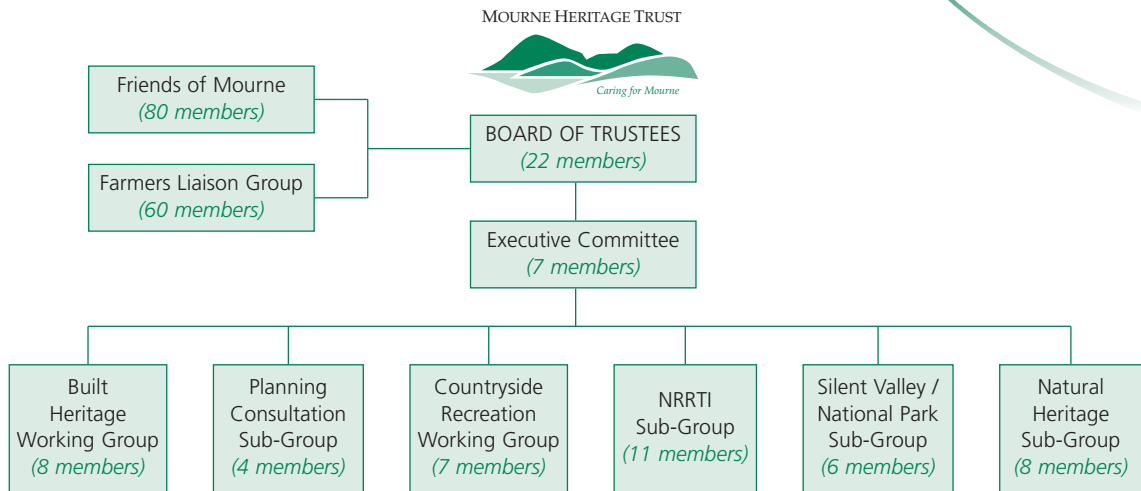
STAFFING

There have been a number of staff changes during the year.

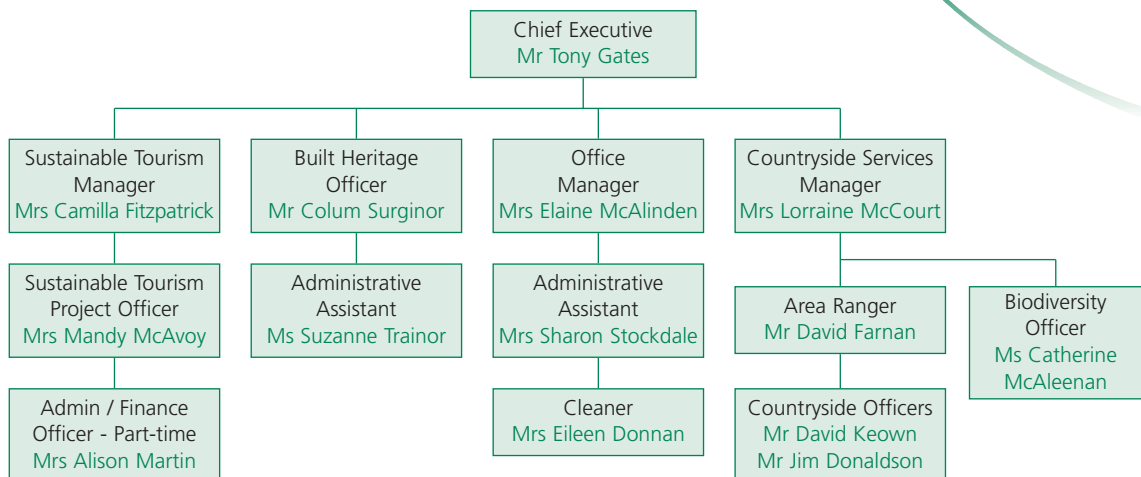
In May 2003 Ms Suzanne Trainor joined the Built Heritage team as Administrative /Finance Officer. In June 2003, Mr Colum Surginor took up the post of Built Heritage Officer, on secondment from the Northern Ireland Housing Executive. In September 2003, Mr Paul Mc Dowell left the Trust after six years as our Countryside Services Manager. Mrs Lorraine Mc Court joined the Trust, from the Heritage Lottery Fund, as Countryside Services Manager in November 2003.

In January 2004, Catherine Mc Aleenan, Area Ranger, took up the newly created post of Biodiversity Officer, and in March 2004 Mr David Farnan joined the Trust from the Conservation Volunteers Northern Ireland to take up the post of Area Ranger.

Company & Committee Structure as at March 2004



Staff Structure as at March 2004





Directors' Report

The Directors present their report and financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2004.

Principal Activities and Review of the Business

The principal activity of the company continued to be that of the protection, conservation and enhancement of the environment, historic buildings and cultural heritage of the Mourne and Slieve Croob area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, for the benefit of the general public.

Results

The results for the year are set out on page 12.

Fixed Assets

The significant changes in fixed assets during the year are explained in note 8 to the financial statements.

Directors

The following directors have held office since 1 April 2003:

Dr A Mitchell – *Chair*

Ms I Hood – *Vice Chair*

H O'Neill – *Company Secretary*

J Saunders – *Treasurer*

G Douglas

W Burns

S Doyle

W Martin

P Kelly

J McGrillen

Mrs I Adair

D Patterson

B Davey

Mrs R Chestnutt

Ms M Killen

I Hanna

S McCarthy

Mrs J O'Hare

Mrs C O'Boyle

Mrs J Whatmough

D Thompson

R Annett - *resigned September 2003*

Directors' Interests

The company is a company limited by guarantee and so has no share capital.

Auditors

In accordance with Article 393 of the Companies (Northern Ireland) Order 1986, a resolution proposing that McClure Watters be reappointed as auditors of the company will be put to the Annual General Meeting on 22 September 2004.

Directors' Responsibilities

Company law requires the directors to prepare Financial Statements for each financial year, which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the company and of the profit and loss of the company for that period. In preparing those Financial Statements, the directors are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- Prepare the Financial Statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the company will continue in business.

The directors are responsible for keeping proper accounting records, which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the company and to enable them to ensure that the Financial Statements comply with the Companies (Northern Ireland) Order 1986. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

By order of the Board

Director
25 August 2004

Auditors' Report

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2004

We have audited the financial statements on pages 12 to 16 which have been prepared under the historical cost convention and the accounting policies set out therein.

This report is made solely to the Trust's members, as a body, in accordance with Article 243 of the Companies (Northern Ireland) Order 1986. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the Trust's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the Trust and Trust's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Respective responsibilities of Directors and Auditors

As described in the statement of directors' responsibilities on page 1 the Trust's directors are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards.

Our responsibility is to audit the financial statements in accordance with relevant legal and regulatory requirements and United Kingdom Auditing Standards.

We report to you our opinion as to whether the financial statements give a true and fair view and are properly prepared in accordance with the Companies (Northern Ireland) Order 1986. We also report to you if, in our opinion, the Directors' Report is not consistent with the financial statements, if the company has not kept proper accounting records, if we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit, or if information specified by law regarding directors' remuneration and transactions with the company is not disclosed.

We read the Directors' Report and consider the implications for our report if we become aware of any apparent misstatements within it. Our responsibilities do not extend to any other information.

Basis of opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Auditing Standards issued by the Auditing Practices Board. An audit includes examination, on a test basis, of evidence relevant to the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. It also includes an assessment of the significant estimates and judgements made by the Trustees in the preparation of the financial statements, and of whether the accounting policies are appropriate to the Trust's circumstances, consistently applied and adequately disclosed.

We planned and performed our audit so as to obtain all the information and explanations which we considered necessary in order to provide us with sufficient evidence to give reasonable assurance that the financial statements are free from material misstatement whether caused by fraud or other irregularity or error. In forming our opinion we also evaluated the overall adequacy of the presentation of information in the financial statements.

Opinion

In our opinion, the financial statements give a true and fair view of the state of the company's affairs as at 31 March 2004, and of its surplus for the year then ended and have been properly prepared in accordance with the provisions of the Companies (Northern Ireland) Order 1986.

McClure Watters
Chartered Accountants
& Registered Auditors

Thomas House, 14-16 James Street South, Belfast BT2 7GA
25 August 2004

Statement of Financial Activities

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2004

| | Notes | Restricted Funds £ | Unrestricted Funds £ | Total 2004 £ | Total 2003 £ |
|---|-------|--------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Incoming Resources | | | | | |
| Grants and donations | | - | 201,314 | 201,314 | 195,118 |
| Sales Income | | - | 904 | 904 | 368 |
| Sundry Income | | - | 3,041 | 3,041 | 687 |
| Friends of Mourne | | - | 1,720 | 1,720 | 760 |
| Ranger Service | | 11,212 | - | 11,212 | 15,490 |
| Mourne Wall | | - | - | - | 73,021 |
| Interpretative Strategy | | 5,704 | - | 5,704 | - |
| TCCF | | 66,091 | - | 66,091 | - |
| NRRTI | | 68,130 | - | 68,130 | - |
| ANOB Website | | 25,000 | - | 25,000 | - |
| Italian Study Visit | | 2,054 | - | 2,054 | - |
| Biodiversity Programme | | 10,086 | - | 10,086 | - |
| EU Charter Application | | 10,000 | - | 10,000 | - |
| Silent Valley Nature Trail | | 35,896 | - | 35,896 | - |
| Visitor Monitoring | | 13,000 | - | 13,000 | - |
| Pilot Green Accreditation | | 10,000 | - | 10,000 | - |
| Built Heritage | | 206,167 | - | 206,167 | 73,674 |
| Interest | | - | 46 | 46 | 45 |
| Total Incoming Resources | | 463,340 | 207,025 | 670,365 | 359,163 |
| Resources Expended | | | | | |
| Direct Charitable expenditure | 2.1 | 438,994 | 26,044 | 465,038 | 156,469 |
| Fund raising and Publicity | 2.2 | - | 3,526 | 3,526 | 16,246 |
| Management and administration of the charity | 2.3 | - | 169,073 | 169,073 | 190,109 |
| Total Resources Expended | | 438,994 | 198,643 | 637,637 | 362,824 |
| Net Movement in Funds | | 24,346 | 8,382 | 32,728 | (3,661) |
| Balance brought forward at 1 April 2003 | | 27,505 | 10,961 | 38,466 | 42,127 |
| Balance brought forward at 31 March 2004 | | 51,851 | 19,343 | 71,194 | 38,466 |

Income and Expenditure Account

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2004

| | Notes | 2004 £ | 2003 £ |
|--|-----------|---------------|----------------|
| INCOME | 3 | 670,319 | 359,118 |
| Project and administrative expenses | | (636,662) | (361,184) |
| Operating surplus/(deficit) | 4 | 33,657 | (2,066) |
| Other interest receivable and similar income | 5 | 46 | 45 |
| Interest payable and similar charges | 6 | (975) | (1,640) |
| Surplus/(Deficit) for the year | 13 | 32,728 | (3,661) |

The income and expenditure account has been prepared on the basis that all operations are continuing operations. There are no recognised gains or losses other than those passing through the income and expenditure account. The notes on pages 13 to 16 form part of the financial statements.

Balance Sheet

AS AT 31 MARCH 2004

| | Notes | £ | 2004 £ | £ | 2003 £ |
|---|-------|---------|-----------|----------|-----------|
| FIXED ASSETS | | | | | |
| Tangible assets | 7 | | 63,079 | | 66,751 |
| CURRENT ASSETS | | | | | |
| Stock | 8 | 2,468 | | 872 | |
| Debtors & Prepayments | 9 | 12,724 | | 2,559 | |
| Cash at bank and in hand | | 12,313 | | 100 | |
| | | | 27,505 | 3,531 | |
| Creditors: amounts falling due within one year | 10 | (3,444) | | (13,914) | |
| Net current assets / (liabilities) | | | 24,061 | | (10,383) |
| Total assets less current liabilities | | | 87,140 | | 56,368 |
| Accruals and deferred income | 11 | | (15,946) | | (17,902) |
| | | | 71,194 | | 38,466 |
| Capital Reserves | | | | | |
| Revaluation Reserve | 13 | | 11,630 | | 11,630 |
| General Funds | 13 | | 59,564 | | 26,836 |
| | 14 | | 71,194 | | 38,466 |

These financial statements were approved by the Board on 25 August 2004


Chairman


Director

The notes on pages 13 to 16 form part of the financial statements.

Notes to the Financial Statements

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2004

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

1.1 Accounting convention

The financial statements are prepared under the historical cost convention modified to include the revaluation of freehold land and buildings.

The company has taken advantage of the exemption in Financial Reporting Standard No.1 from the requirement to produce a cashflow statement on the grounds that it is a small company.

1.2 Turnover

Turnover represents grants and donations from the government and other bodies, and sundry income from certain activities undertaken by the company.

1.3 Tangible fixed assets and depreciation

Tangible fixed assets other than freehold land are stated at cost or valuation less depreciation. Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write off the cost or valuation, less estimated residual value,

of each asset over its expected useful life, as follows:

Land and Buildings Freehold

- 5% per annum on a straight line basis

Plant and Machinery

- 15% per annum on a reducing balance basis

Fixtures, fittings and equipment

- 15% per annum on a reducing balance basis

Motor Vehicles

- 25% per annum on a reducing balance basis

1.4 Stock

Stock is valued at the lower of cost and net realisable value.

1.5 Pensions

The pension costs charged in the financial statements represent the contributions payable by the company during the year in accordance with FRS17.

1.6 Government Grants

Grants are credited to deferred revenue. Grants towards capital expenditure are released to the profit and loss account over the expected useful life of the assets. Grants towards revenue expenditure are released to the profit and loss account as the related expenditure is incurred.

Notes to the Financial Statements

2. Notes to the Statement of Financial Activities

| | Restricted Funds £ | Unrestricted Funds £ | Total 2004 £ | Total 2003 £ |
|---|--------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| 2.1 Direct Charitable Expenditure | | | | |
| Staff costs | 79,053 | 26,044 | 105,097 | 61,391 |
| Ranger | 10,494 | - | 10,494 | 2,889 |
| TCCF | 38,864 | - | 38,864 | 10,158 |
| NRRTI | 36,618 | - | 36,618 | 27,649 |
| Built Heritage | 239,089 | - | 239,089 | 52,510 |
| ANOB Website | 17,439 | - | 17,439 | - |
| Italian Study Visit | 10,100 | - | 10,100 | - |
| Bio-Diveristy Officer | 7,337 | - | 7,337 | - |
| Sundry | - | - | - | 1,872 |
| | <u>438,994</u> | <u>26,044</u> | <u>465,038</u> | <u>156,469</u> |
| 2.2 Fundraising & Publicity | | | | |
| Advertising & Publications | - | 3,526 | 3,526 | 13,689 |
| Hospitality | - | - | - | 2,557 |
| | <u>-</u> | <u>3,526</u> | <u>3,526</u> | <u>16,246</u> |
| 2.3 Management & Administration of the Charity | | | | |
| Staff costs | - | 103,784 | 103,784 | 126,711 |
| Motor and travel expenses | - | 6,628 | 6,628 | 6,622 |
| Professional fees | - | 10,863 | 10,863 | 5,171 |
| Insurance | - | 3,040 | 3,040 | 3,504 |
| Rentals | - | 3,180 | 3,180 | 7,965 |
| Office Supplies | - | 2,173 | 2,173 | - |
| Training and Workshops | - | 2,136 | 2,136 | - |
| Postage, Telephone & Electricity | - | 10,647 | 10,647 | 14,524 |
| Vehicle Exps, Equipment & tools | - | 15,423 | 15,423 | 14,600 |
| Interest payable | - | 975 | 975 | 1,640 |
| Other costs | - | 556 | 556 | 1,402 |
| Depreciation | - | 9,668 | 9,668 | 7,970 |
| | <u>-</u> | <u>169,073</u> | <u>169,073</u> | <u>190,109</u> |

3. Income

The major source of core operating income is grants received from DOE. Other sources of core operating income include support grants from NITB, Newry and Mourne District Council, Banbridge District Council and Down District Council. Project funding is received from Community Fund, Pilgrim Trust, Heritage Lottery Fund, DARD, Rural Development Council, N.I. Housing Executive, Co-operation Ireland and Esmee Fairburn Trust.

| | 2004 £ | 2003 £ |
|--|---------------|--------------|
| 4. Operating Surplus/(Deficit) | | |
| Operating surplus/(deficit) is stated after charging: | | |
| Loss/(Profit) on disposal of fixed assets | | - |
| Depreciation of tangible assets | 9,668 | 7,970 |
| Auditors' remuneration | 1,704 | 1,700 |
| | <u>11,372</u> | <u>9,670</u> |
| 5. Other Interest Receivable and Similar Income | | |
| Bank interest | 46 | 45 |
| | <u>46</u> | <u>45</u> |
| 6. Interest Payable and Similar Charges | | |
| Bank interest | 975 | 1,640 |
| | <u>975</u> | <u>1,640</u> |

Notes to the Financial Statements

| 7. Tangible Fixed Assets | Land & Buildings Freehold | Plant & Machinery | Fixtures, Fittings & Equipment | Motor Vehicles | Total |
|---|---------------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------|----------------|
| | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| Cost or Valuation | | | | | |
| At 1 April 2003 | 24,357 | 27,110 | 36,742 | 14,688 | 102,897 |
| Additions | - | - | 5,996 | - | 5,996 |
| Disposals | - | - | - | - | - |
| At 31 March 2004 | <u>24,357</u> | <u>27,110</u> | <u>42,738</u> | <u>14,688</u> | <u>108,893</u> |
| Depreciation | | | | | |
| At 1 April 2003 | 3,700 | 6,887 | 17,236 | 8,323 | 36,146 |
| On Disposals | - | - | - | - | - |
| Charge for the year | 1,218 | 3,033 | 3,825 | 1,592 | 9,668 |
| At 31 March 2004 | <u>4,918</u> | <u>9,920</u> | <u>21,061</u> | <u>9,915</u> | <u>45,814</u> |
| Net Book Value | | | | | |
| At 31 March 2004 | <u>19,439</u> | <u>17,190</u> | <u>21,677</u> | <u>4,773</u> | <u>63,079</u> |
| At 31 March 2003 | <u>20,657</u> | <u>20,223</u> | <u>19,506</u> | <u>6,365</u> | <u>66,751</u> |
| 8. Stocks | | 2004 | 2003 | | |
| | | £ | £ | | |
| Finished goods and goods for resale | | <u>2,468</u> | <u>872</u> | | |
| 9. Debtors | | 2004 | 2003 | | |
| | | £ | £ | | |
| Other debtors | | 10,008 | - | | |
| Prepayments and accrued income | | 2,716 | 2,559 | | |
| | | <u>12,724</u> | <u>2,559</u> | | |
| 10. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year | | 2004 | 2003 | | |
| | | £ | £ | | |
| Bank loans and overdrafts | | - | 4,565 | | |
| Trade creditors | | 1,494 | 3,311 | | |
| Taxes and social security costs | | - | 4,338 | | |
| Accruals and deferred income | | 1,950 | 1,700 | | |
| | | <u>3,444</u> | <u>13,914</u> | | |
| 11. Accruals and deferred income | | 2004 | 2003 | | |
| | | £ | £ | | |
| Balance at 1 April 2003 | | 17,902 | 9,528 | | |
| Grants received in the year | | - | 9,061 | | |
| Amortisation in the year | | (1,956) | (687) | | |
| Balance at 31 March 2004 | | <u>15,946</u> | <u>17,902</u> | | |

Notes to the Financial Statements

12. Pension Costs

The company operates a defined contribution pension scheme. The pension cost charge represents contributions payable by the company to the fund and amounted to £17,631 (2003 - £14,201).

| 13. Statement of movements on funds | Revaluation Reserve Account £ | Income & Expenditure £ |
|---|--|------------------------------|
| Balance at 1 April 2003 | 11,630 | 26,836 |
| Retained surplus/(deficit) for the year | - | 32,728 |
| Balance at 31 March 2004 | <u>11,630</u> | <u>59,564</u> |

| 14. Reconciliation of movements in funds | 2004 £ | 2003 £ |
|---|---------------|----------------|
| Surplus/(Deficit) for the financial year - Restricted | 24,346 | (2,695) |
| Surplus/(Deficit) for the financial year - Unrestricted | 8,382 | (966) |
| Surplus/(Deficit) for the financial year | <u>32,728</u> | <u>(3,661)</u> |
| Opening Funds - Restricted | 27,505 | 30,200 |
| Opening Funds - Unrestricted | 10,961 | 11,927 |
| | <u>38,466</u> | <u>42,127</u> |
| | <u>71,194</u> | <u>38,466</u> |
| Closing Funds - Restricted | 51,851 | 27,505 |
| Closing Funds - Unrestricted | 19,343 | 10,961 |
| Closing Funds | <u>71,194</u> | <u>38,466</u> |

15. Contingent Liabilities

The company has a liability to refund grant monies received by it should it fail to comply with the relevant conditions as set out in the letter of offer.

| 16. Employees | 2004 | 2003 |
|--|----------------|----------------|
| Number of Employees | | |
| The average monthly number of employees (including directors) during the year was: | Number | Number |
| Permanent Staff | 13 | 10 |
| N.I. Housing Executive Seconded Staff | 1 | - |
| | <u>14</u> | <u>10</u> |
| Employment Costs | £ | £ |
| Wages & Salaries | 191,250 | 173,901 |
| Other Pension costs | 17,631 | 14,201 |
| | <u>208,881</u> | <u>188,102</u> |



Mission statement:

*'to sustain and enhance the environment,
rural regeneration, cultural heritage and
visitor opportunities of the Mourne and
Slieve Croob Area of Outstanding Natural
Beauty and contribute to the well-being of
Mourne's communities'*



MOURNE HERITAGE TRUST

is funded by:



Our activities are also supported by:



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