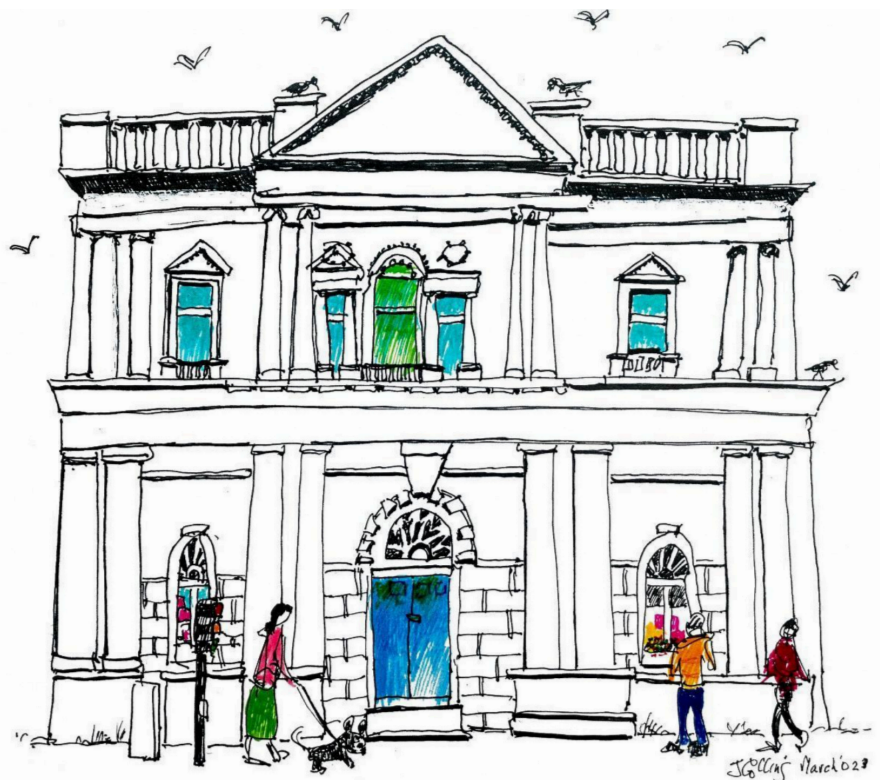


## ANNUAL REPORT

October 2022 - September 2023

### Key Achievements and Highlights

- More than 85 volunteers have worked with FACT over the last year
- 13 people were helped to get part-time or full-time work thanks to the FACT Employability Project
- A Grant was awarded by the Community Lottery Trust to start a Family Social Club in October 2023
- We now have just over 2500 Facebook followers on the FACT Facebook page and Content Interaction has increased by 392% in the last year
- The Town Hall Tales Heritage Project was completed in May 2023
- Town Hall Tales Hoolie Event was enjoyed by over 100 people
- James Collins was commissioned to draw this iconic pen and ink impression of Forres Town Hall
- This drawing has now been developed into a Greetings Cards to raise funds for Forres Town Hall



### Forres Area Community Trust (FACT)

Reg. Office: Forres Town Hall, High Street, Forres, Scotland, IV36 1PB

Tel: 01309 674388 Email: [info@forresarea.org](mailto:info@forresarea.org)

Forres Area Community Trust is a Company Limited by Guarantee,

Registered in Scotland, Company Number: SC412275,

Scottish Charity Number: SC044953



## FACT BOARD OF DIRECTORS REPORT

It has been a complex year with the moving on of several members of staff and the unexpected resignation of our last Chair. We do wish them well in their new ventures. Despite the many team changes, Highland and Islands Enterprise (HIE) has still found us to be a sound organisation. However, we aren't complacent and, along with many other charities, it has been a difficult balance between the funding we get and the services we provide.

There are so many people to thank which includes our local Funders: the Auchernack Trust, Beatrice Community Fund, the Berry Burn Community Trust, Money for Moray, tsiMORAY and the Moray Local Action Group. Also the national Funders: The Architectural Heritage Fund, Development Trusts Association Scotland, the Community Ownership Fund, the Crerar Trust, Historic Environment Scotland, National Lottery Community Fund, the People's Postcode Trust which is supported by players of the People's Postcode Lottery and the Scottish Community Landfill Fund. HIE have provided and continue to give us unrivalled support in the day to day operation of FACT. Local residents and businesses have also made notable contributions, and of course all the kind donations from our regular Forres Town Hall users. We are also very grateful to local shops for donations to many of the weekly Coffee Mornings and special thanks to Incredible Edibles, Moray Food Plus, Transition Town Forres, Tesco via the Olio Scheme and both the local Coop stores for their continued support of our Pop up Pantry.

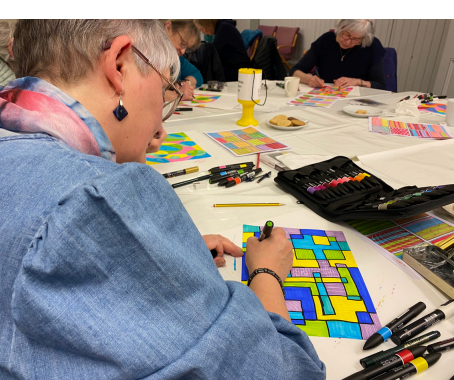
We have continued with our plans for the refurbishment of Forres Town Hall, however increasing inflation and subsequent price rises have forced us to phase the project. The Refurbishment Team meet regularly and continue to try and push things forward. We hope to achieve a major step shortly and arrange for the repairs to the roof and for the installation of the new insulation to the roof area. This alone is expected to have a positive effect on the warmth and running costs of the building. The team would like to say how much we appreciate LDN Architects for answering our seemingly unending questions.

The Board and Management will continue working with the staff and volunteers to make the Town Hall a welcoming place and an improving asset for the Community. The Board recently agreed to look at raising funds to pay our core costs. These are things like electricity, staff wages and the incidental things that every household has to purchase. The ambition is to make FACT self-financing. We hope to set up a small group of volunteers and supporters to collect ideas and to implement the best of them.

We will continue to seek funding for the many projects and services we deliver to strive in making the Forres Area a better place to live, work and visit and we hope that you enjoy reading the updates in this Annual Report.

Thank you for your continued support.

**Jim Farquharson, FACT Chair**  
on behalf of the Board of Directors



## FACT Development

Another busy year for the FACT team. We saw many staff members going off to pastures new, including our Development Manager, Debbie Herron, who worked for FACT for over 9 years.

We have moved forward steadily with the Forres Town Hall Capital Project gathering all the necessary reports together to inform the tendering process for the redevelopment works. Hopefully the first phase of the repair work will start in January 2024. It has also been a year of consolidation as funding pots that support our various activities and projects have come to the end, but we are looking at models of sustainability and increasing income to offset the operational costs.

We have also supported the bringing together of the Spirit of Community Report after an extended consultation period and this is due to be launched at the beginning of next year.

## Forres Area Community Trust

### Company Limited by Guarantee

### Statement of Financial Activities

#### (including income and expenditure account)

#### Year ended 31 March 2023

	Note	Unrestricted funds £	2023 Restricted funds £	Total funds £	2022 Total funds £
<b>Income and endowments</b>					
Donations and legacies	5	61,535	311,939	373,474	381,999
Investment income	6	32	–	32	–
<b>Total income</b>		<u>61,567</u>	<u>311,939</u>	<u>373,506</u>	<u>381,999</u>
<b>Expenditure</b>					
Expenditure on charitable activities	7,8	67,914	290,858	358,772	242,729
<b>Total expenditure</b>		<u>67,914</u>	<u>290,858</u>	<u>358,772</u>	<u>242,729</u>
<b>Net income and net movement in funds</b>		<u>(6,347)</u>	<u>21,081</u>	<u>14,734</u>	<u>139,270</u>
<b>Reconciliation of funds</b>					
Total funds brought forward		152,252	284,639	436,891	297,621
<b>Total funds carried forward</b>		<u>145,905</u>	<u>305,720</u>	<u>451,625</u>	<u>436,891</u>

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

This is only an extract from the Annual Unaudited Financial Statements prepared by Ritson's Chartered Accountants, Forres, Moray, Scotland.



### **The Cameron Project - Activities Programme**

Thanks again to the support from the tsiMORAY Health and Wellbeing Fund we have been able to continue our popular Activities Programme and extend our range of Courses. Participants have enjoyed a wide variety of Classes including Dance, Drawing, Felting, Painting, Singing, Weaving and Yoga. Over the last 12 months we have employed 19 local Craft, Digital and Fitness Tutors to deliver 337 Classes and Workshops, providing 564 hours of Activities to help 2910 participants to improve their overall wellbeing

### **The Cameron Project - Befriending Service**

The Befriending Service matches isolated people with a volunteer who can visit or contact them on a regular basis. We are also able to support individuals to help them to attend Activities which are running at the Town Hall. The Project was set up 7 years ago so we are currently reviewing the service and this year we supported 31 Befriender Clients. In 2023 we received extra funding from tsiMORAY to help reduce the waiting list and create a training package for Befrienders. We also attracted funding from the Beatrice Community Fund and Moray Local Action Group Fund to update the Forres Area Service Directory which was launched in June 2023.

### **ESF Employability Project**

This Project was funded by the European Social Fund, the Scottish Government and Moray Council and it overachieved in regard to many of its target figures in relation to supporting clients into employment. A good working relationship was established with the Moray Pathways Partnership and other organisations to ensure the best possible service was given. Over the 12 months of the Project 27 people signed up to the programme, 5 clients took up volunteer opportunities either with FACT or other organisations to build up their confidence and skills, while 13 clients found part-time or full time employment, with others participating in a variety of educational or training opportunities.

In December we organised a joint event between The Bank of Scotland, Moray Firth Credit Union and the Moray Council. The Mince Pies and Money Event provided tips, information and advice on budgeting, savings, benefits, online banking etc. We also supported three unemployed artists to make connections with Findhorn Bay Arts (FBA) and Moray Arts Centre (MAC) which enabled in two of the artists exhibiting their work at MAC in February. Training courses were also organised in conjunction with FBA to help unemployed artists to create an income stream from their art.

### **Forres Online**

FACT have continued to support those people who are digitally excluded such as older people who are new to technology and the long term unemployed through our Digital Project. In the past year, Forres Online has supported 806 people at 109 Digital Drop-in Sessions. Through our popular Drop-in Sessions, Digital Classes for those who are unemployed, Outreach Visits and IT Courses for Beginners, our Project and our Digital Champions combat loneliness and isolation, as well as improving digital skills for many in Forres and the surrounding area.

We expanded our services this year by supporting the Cameron Project Activities Programme and delivering Courses on Coding using Python, an Introduction to Social Media as well as teaching clients from the Employability Project about Canva and GDrive docs.





## Pop Up Pantry

Our Pantry has ‘popped up’ weekly in Forres Town Hall since April 2022 with support from a great team of volunteers and we now have over 335 Members. Membership is free to anyone who lives in the Forres Academy Catchment Area and is limited to 1 shop per household each week. Customers pay £2.50 and get about £8 - £10 worth of food from 5 categories each time they shop. The majority of the food is from Food Recovery or has been donated by large companies as well as Fareshare and CFine in Aberdeen, which is delivered via Moray Food Plus. We have been grateful to also receive locally grown fresh vegetables throughout the seasons from Moray Food Plus Projects as well as via Incredible Edibles and Transition Town Forres. It is great to reduce food miles and provide customers with the freshest of ingredients - some of which have been harvested on the same day that they arrive at the Pantry!

## The Town Hall Tales Project and Hoolie

Two local Consultants were engaged to bring together a Heritage Project which culminated in a celebration ‘Town Hall Hoolie’. The varied programme for the Hoolie included an informative and evocative Slide Show and Story Soundscape depicting Forres Town Hall through the years and highlighted its many uses from a meeting place to a hospital during the war to an entertainment venue.

There were also performances from the FACT Gentle Seated Exercise Group, the Forres & District Pipe Band, the Forres Royal Scottish Country Dance Society (RSCDS) and the Highland Youth Theatre which were enjoyed by 111 attendees. In addition, the audience could find out more information from Stalls which showcased local Groups and Organisations that regularly use the Town Hall such as Craft & Chatter, the FACT Art Classes, the Forres Camera Club, Forres RSCDS, the Highland Youth Theatre and the Moray Wellbeing Hub.

The Project, and particularly the Hoolie Event, were very well received with lots of positive reactions from participants and the audience alike. One particularly memorable quote: an elderly couple commented that they had not been ‘out’ to an Event for over four years who said: “This was the loveliest day out ever.”

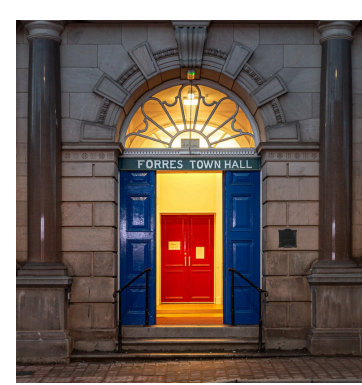
## Volunteering

The wide range of projects and activities that FACT organises to support the residents of Forres and the local area simply could not happen without the help of our wonderful volunteers! The list of help provided is endless but includes: answering the phone and welcoming visitors to the Town Hall every weekday morning; providing free digital support to Forres Online customers; helping at our events and the essential role of making refreshments at the numerous activities and Coffee Mornings that we organise; befriending the socially isolated members of our community; supporting customers at the weekly Pop Up Pantry; and the vital job of being a FACT Board Director.

The roles are varied both in terms of time commitment and the support that they provide. Our Volunteers are a diverse group of people ranging from 14 to 89 years old who all bring different skills and attributes to the roles that they take on within our organisation and they are all valued members of our friendly FACT Team who share a sense of belonging.

FACT also provides support to the wider Forres Area community by working with other charities, groups and organisations including facilitating the list of members of the Forres Volunteer Pool who support one off events such as the Firework and Bonfire Night when additional volunteers are needed. Forres is well known for its volunteering which is evident from the many organisations who work tirelessly to provide opportunities for the young, old and everyone in between, whatever their interests and passions may be.

***Thank You to ALL the Volunteers - past, present and the future .... you are AMAZING!***



**Thank you to our members, volunteers, businesses, partner organisations and funders for your tremendous support over the last year, and with particular thanks to:**

Architectural Heritage Fund  
Auchernack Trust  
Babalu  
Boots - Forres  
Beatrice Community Fund  
Berry Burn Community Fund  
Co-op Community Fund & Forres Co-op Shops  
Community Lottery Fund  
Community Ownership Fund  
Crerar Trust  
DTAS - Development Trust Association Scotland  
EB Scotland Ltd - Scottish Landfill Fund  
Film Forres  
Forres Area Forum  
Forres in Bloom  
Forres Communities Activities Association  
Forres Gazette  
Forres Health Foods  
Forres Heritage Trust  
Forres Town Hall Users Group  
Findhorn Bay Arts  
Heritage Trust Network  
Highlands and Islands Enterprise  
Impact Funding Partners & VSF  
Money for Moray  
Moray Arts Centre  
Moray Council  
Moray Firth Credit Union  
Moray Local Action Group  
Moray Pathways  
Moray Waste Busters  
Moray Wellbeing Hub  
People's Postcode Trust  
ReBOOT  
SCVO

Solo Hair Design  
Stitch It and Fix It  
Sylvan Designs  
The Bank of Scotland  
The Bike Bothy  
The Old Mill at Brodie  
The National Lottery  
tsiMORAY - Moray Communities Mental Health & Wellbeing Fund, Community Wellbeing PGM Fund

#### **FACT Staff as at September 2023**

- Agnes Fraser - Cleaner, Operations Team
- Audrey Boyd - Finance Manager
- Euan Kershaw - Digital Project Assistant
- Graham Watson - General Assistant, Operations Team & Forres Pop Pantry Assistant
- Helen Janousek - Finance & Data Officer
- Iain Watt - Cleaner, Operations Team
- Ilona Wood - Project Development Officer
- Janice Cooper - Forres Online Coordinator
- Lindsey Standring - Volunteer & Community Engagement Coordinator
- Michelle Gillibrand - Development Manager
- Nick Clark - Operations Manager
- Ruth Jeffries - Befriending Coordinator

#### **FACT Directors as at September 2023**

- Jim Farquharson - Chair
- Joanne Barry - Treasurer
- Tina Coffey - Company Secretary
- Kev Skivington
- Peter Airey
- Lorna Creswell
- Sandra Maclennan
- Susan Longmuir