



MESSAGE FROM GEORGE STEVENSON - Preses, Sons of the Rock Society

WELCOME to the Society's seventh newsletter. We hope that you enjoy reading it and learning about our progress during 2017. We warmly encourage contributions and feedback from our members.

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I am most grateful to fellow Trustees and members of the Society for their support during my second year of office.

I am delighted to report on another very productive year for the Society. Once again, the Trustees and Secretary have been actively networking with care sector charities and community groups who work most closely with those in crisis. This has enabled grants totaling over £6,800 to be awarded to those in most need within the Stirling and Falkirk Council areas. We know that small amounts of money from the Sons of the Rock can make a big difference to people facing serious poverty, often linked with disability. This will be very apparent from the list of grants to Individuals shown below.

The past year has seen increasing media coverage and public debate on the role of food banks and the impact of changes in the new Universal Credit on those who depend most heavily on welfare benefits. During 2017, the Society has further strengthened its

working partnerships with front-line charities and local authority agencies closely involved in delivering social care services in the Forth Valley area. Our plans for adapting the Sons of the Rock grants programme in 2018 for clients of Start Up Stirling, covered below, mark a significant step forward in the way we operate as a grant making organization.

This year's AGM will make specific provision for an important discussion with members about the future trading identity of the 'Sons of the Rock' charity. The Trustees are convinced that the pressing need to upgrade our website, in order to make best use of online communications, provides a major opportunity to make our name fit for purpose in branding what we do for the benefit of the wider community across the Stirling and Falkirk areas. We have explained our thinking in a briefing document 'Rationale for Change'. This will provide the focus for the AGM discussion and will be sent to all members in advance of the Meeting.

The Society continues to move forward. Please spread the word, and continue to support our work!

Annual Gathering - AGM and Lecture: Auld Hansel Monday, 15 January 2018 at 7pm.

The Stirling campus building of Forth Valley College (beside the M9 next to junction 10) is once again the venue for our Annual Gathering, comprising our AGM and Lecture followed by a two-course meal in the Gallery Restaurant.

We are delighted that **Angus Annan FRSA** will be speaking on 'The Life and Times of the University of Stirling'. This comes at the end of a year of 50th Anniversary celebrations of a major institution in Scottish academic life and further education, with which individual members of the Society have close associations. Angus lives at Blairlogie and has known the University for almost its entire lifespan. As its former Associate Director for Information Services, he has developed the University's IT and media services, and has worked for other universities in the UK and abroad. His interests include the provision of high speed broadband for rural communities and in youth work.

Members Event – ‘Behind the Scenes in The Great Trossachs Forest’ at Loch Katrine, 5th June 2017.

A group of 30 members and friends greatly enjoyed a visit to the Woodland Trust’s Gateway Centre at Brig o’ Turk followed by a boat trip on the steamship ‘Lady of the Lake’. Sue Morris, the Project Officer for the Great Trossachs Forest, gave an admirable introductory talk explaining the background and development of the current 50-year project to promote the environmental and cultural heritage of this historic area covering 16,000 hectares surrounding Loch Katrine. The afternoon concluded with tea at the Pier café restaurant.



Grants Summary 2016-17 – how we have supported people in crisis.

We awarded **£6,853** in grants in the year, as summarized below, all made to **individual** applicants:

- **£385 to NS, £150 to VP, £100 to AMcF, £369 to KB, and £400 to WY**, all clients of **Shelter Scotland, Stirling** to cover essential travel costs and to meet clothing and household needs linked to improvements in their living accommodation.
- **£100 to BA, £336 to AP, and £324 to PB**, all clients of **Home-Start Stirling and Home-Start Falkirk West**, for the purchase of essential winter clothing, child safety and bedding items and the provision of new internal doors for three young families experiencing poor living conditions.
- **£150 to IB**, a client of **The Action Group, Falkirk**, for essential travel costs to obtain a new passport and take up a new job.
- **£255 to TN and £546 to TC**, supported by **Stirling Council Social Work** department, for the installation of a new MECS alarm telephone and new internal doors in their living accommodation.
- **£200 to NG**, supported by **Action in Mind**, to pay for a Christmas Break holiday.
- **£260 to OI**, supported by **Cornton Baptist Church**, to purchase a new cooker and microwave oven.
- **£200 to GG**, supported by **Falkirk Council Disability Officer**, towards the cost of upgrading private driveway access.
- **£200 to CR** towards the cost of equipment for attending an international Scout camp in Switzerland.
- **£300 to SH and £300 to JS**, clients of **Council on Disability Stirling**, for the purchase of a new orthopaedic mattress and a new standing frame.
- **£200 to DC**, supported by **Big Noise Raploch** towards the cost of essential clothing for participating in an Operation Wallacea expedition to Mexico.
- **£150 each to JC, JV and LS, and £600 to IJ**, all clients of **Stirling Council Advice Services**, for the purchase of clothing and shoes and the cost of redecorating living accommodation.
- **£1,028 to AR**, supported by **Central Scotland Racial Equality Council** for the purchase and installation of carpets and flooring in the family’s new accommodation.

Start Up Stirling – a new partnership in the making.

Start Up Stirling, which now runs three food banks in Stirling from its new depot in Springkerse – see photo - is widely supported by local supermarkets, churches and colleges. In 2018 we plan to pilot a ring-fenced Sons of the Rock programme which will enable SUS to provide emergency help for individual clients moving away from food bank dependency, especially in rural areas.

