



~verture

2024/25 Annual Report and Accounts

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Charity Registration Number SC022375
Company Number SC149513

Welcome from Verture's Chair and CEO

Chair's welcome message

At Verture, we believe that adapting to climate change can transform communities for the better. From storms to extreme flooding and forest fires, climate impacts are here and worsening. But our response can build resilience, fairness and hope.

While many responding to climate change continue the vital work to reach Net Zero, we are proud to be the climate resilience charity, working across Scotland and the rest of the UK towards a resilient and fair future for all.



This landmark year marked a significant transition for our organisation. We celebrated 30 years of impact under the Sniffer name, reflecting on our legacy before launching our new identity as Verture. It was a fitting moment to recognise Ruth Wolstenholme's outstanding contribution as Managing Director over many years and extend our thanks for her leadership and development of the charity. My fellow trustees and I led an open and rigorous recruitment process, and I am delighted to welcome Jo Kerr as Verture's first CEO. Jo joined us in December 2024, bringing vital experience in social justice that strengthens our commitment to equity in climate resilience.

Partnerships remain foundational to our impact. Whether continuing to deliver Adaptation Scotland for Scottish Government, founding Climate Ready Tayside with local authority partners or convening our annual Flood Resilience Conference – climate resilience demands deep collaboration. Thank you to our partners and supporters who continue to demonstrate such a positive, constructive and collaborative approach across complex challenges.

I am grateful to our current and former trustees for their collaborative approach over 2024/25 and also to the staff of Verture who have brought their expertise, efforts and energy to enable positive impacts through their work. We are looking forward to completing our current strategic plan in 2025/26 and launching our new strategic plan in April 2026.

Alison Macdonald, Verture's Chair



CEO's welcome message

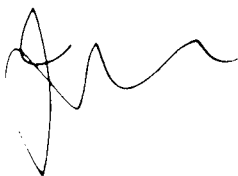
I joined Venture as CEO at a pivotal moment – celebrating 30 years of impact whilst launching our new identity as the climate resilience charity. It's an honour to lead work that is so relevant to this moment.

My background is in social justice and anti-poverty – vital foundations for climate resilience. Climate impacts hit hardest those already marginalised by poverty and inequality. Our commitment to equity isn't optional, it's essential. Over the past year, we've worked with communities in Glasgow's Easterhouse and The Gorbals to plan a new park, plant trees and empower local change. These communities face multiple challenges, yet their tenacity and vision for a better future inspire everything we do.

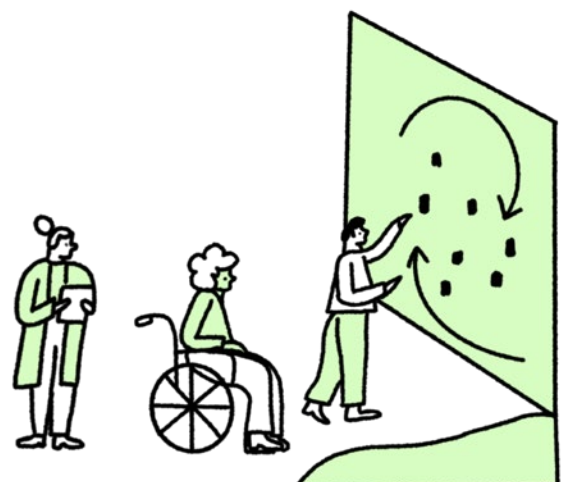
The scientist John Holdren said: "We basically have three choices: mitigation, adaptation and suffering. We're going to do some of each. The question is what the mix is going to be." At Venture, we work to shift that balance – acknowledging the realism of climate science and real-world impacts, whilst believing we can create a better world. As Rebecca Solnit writes, "To hope is to give yourself to the future – and that commitment to the future is what makes the present inhabitable."

Our staff team embodies this hope through action. Before joining, I was consistently told that Venture's greatest strength is its people – I now see this truth every day. The care colleagues bring to communities, the courage to try new approaches, the creativity in problem-solving, and the support they offer each other make this challenging work sustainable and joyful. I'm particularly grateful to Ruth Wolstenholme, not only for an exceptional handover, but for years of leadership that positioned Venture so well for this next chapter.

As our new strategy for 2026-31 takes shape, the Venture team and I are looking ahead with greater focus and determination. We're clear about our role: working with communities, regions and national partners to make climate resilience both practical and fair. We don't want to look back on this time with regrets about what we could have tried.



Jo Kerr, Venture's CEO





**“We basically have three choices:
mitigation, adaptation and suffering.
We’re going to do some of each. The
question is what the mix is going to be.”**

Dr John P. Holdren

Who we are

Venture: the climate resilience charity

Our vision: A resilient and fair future for all.

Our purpose: We create a better world in a changing climate by taking action together.

Our charitable objects – from our Articles of Association: In particular, the Company is established for the purpose of addressing environmental change and its impacts, contributing to environmental improvement and the advancement of education and knowledge in relation thereto, for public benefit, including well-being and quality of life.

Our values

- **Courageous:** we are brave in our decision making and lean into challenge.
- **Creative:** we work with creativity and imagination.
- **Caring:** we care for ourselves, our team, our work and our world.
- **Fair:** we centre justice and equity in everything we do.

Hope infuses all our values: we believe a better world is possible and prioritise effective action to achieve it.



Our approach

Climate change brings complex challenges that no one can solve alone. We use the power of collaboration to bring together local knowledge, scientific evidence and policy expertise.

Through genuine partnerships with communities, government, businesses and public bodies, we facilitate change processes that address the root causes of climate vulnerability. We co-create visions of a resilient and fair future for all and work together to make them real.

We're bold and creative in our methods. We centre lived experience, challenge power imbalances, and use creative practice to unlock new possibilities. Fairness and justice are embedded in everything we do.

Our timeline

1990s: Our focus was on the promotion of scientific research in air, water, waste and the environment, and identifying shared needs for tools and action.

2000s: We had a thematic approach to environmental protection and were addressing climate change impacts.

2010s: We focussed on being knowledge brokers for a resilient Scotland, moving away from commissioning research. We worked across many sectors and policy areas, and increasingly with communities.

2020s: Our vision is of a resilient and fair future for all. We are equipping and empowering climate ready leaders and delivering climate ready place-based partnerships. Our new strategy launches in April 2026.

Objectives and activities

Our 2023-26 strategy sets out three ambitions:

- 1 Leaders of all types, from across society, are empowered and equipped to lead transformation toward a fair and flourishing future for all.
2. More places across Scotland will be better able to flourish in a fair way in our changing climate.
3. Individuals, organisations and communities better understand and are equipped to transform and able to flourish in a fair way in our changing climate.

The changes we want to bring about are:

- Collaboration and innovation for systems change.
- A conducive policy environment for transformation at local, regional and national level.
- New forms of governance, leadership and finance addressing climate change.
- A social movement for change brought about through champions, pioneers and networks.

Our activities are:

- Climate Ready Leadership: Adaptation Scotland (delivery of Scottish Government's flagship adaptation programme), Flood Resilience and Coastal Adaptation (including the annual Flood Resilience Conference), Maximising UK Adaptation to Climate Change Hub (Scotland spoke), Becoming Climate Resilient Training
- Climate Ready Placemaking: Working across multiple Regional Adaptation Partnerships (Climate Ready Clyde, Climate Ready South East Scotland, Climate Ready Tayside, Highland Adapts)
- Climate Ready Innovation: Creative Climate Futures (bringing together community climate resilience and creative practice in two Glasgow neighbourhoods)

How we measure success: We track key quantitative metrics such as the number of people and organisations engaging with our programmes, and positive feedback scores on our delivery. We carry out qualitative evaluations, including outcome harvesting approaches to understand whether we are on track to achieve our strategic ambitions over time. Both quantitative and qualitative reflections are included in this report.

Our new strategy and theory of change will launch in April 2026.

Highlights of 2024/25

Our year in numbers

622

people attended the
2025 Flood Resilience
Conference

82.5%

excellence rating by
participants of the Flood
Resilience Conference

28

Local Authorities
worked with

65

public bodies supported
through the Public Sector Climate
Adaptation Network

960

people and organisations trained,
including 550 people undertaking our
Becoming Climate Resilient training

5

partnerships with Climate Ready Regions
(Climate Ready Clyde, Climate Ready
South East Scotland, Climate Ready
Tayside, Climate Hebrides, Highland Adapts)

3

light touch support to others
(Argyll and Bute, Forth
and Edinburgh)

90%

satisfaction
score for our
training

163

organisations
worked with
in total

1

regional partnership
launched
(Climate Ready Tayside)

950

stories added to the
Climate Ready South
East Scotland Story Map

35

community
organisations
worked with

18

Climate
Hubs engaged

Celebrating 30 years of impact

In November 2024, we marked our 30th anniversary with an event at Dynamic Earth in Edinburgh, bringing together trustees, staff, partners and friends from across three decades of work.

Since our founding in 1994 as SNIFFER (Scotland and Northern Ireland Forum for Environmental Research), our role has evolved significantly. We shifted from research managers producing insights, to knowledge brokers actively sharing learning, to catalysts and changemakers focused on achieving real-world impact.

Our approach to collaboration has transformed too – from efficiency-focused partnerships to genuine co-creation, sharing insights and visions of climate-ready futures with communities, businesses and the public sector.

The knowledge we hold has changed. Early work focused on science and technical solutions. Now we centre lived experience, creative practice, and community voices. We're addressing transformation – challenging power imbalances, strengthening governance, and tackling the root causes of climate vulnerability.

Through all this evolution, one constant remains: trust. We've stayed at the forefront of climate adaptation, pioneering new approaches whilst maintaining the confidence of partners who share our goals.

Becoming Verture

After thirty years as Sniffer, we launched our new identity in 2024. Since 1994, we've evolved from the Scotland and Northern Ireland Forum for Environmental Research to a charity working towards a resilient and fair future for all in a changing climate. Our name no longer captured who we are or what we do.

Working with creative consultancy Friendship and digital agency heritech, we developed our new name, brand and website to reflect our collaborative, action-oriented approach.

Verture is a Scots word meaning “the knot or joint in a straw nearest the ground, from which the lowest leaves spring”. This reflects our work creating connections and new growth for a better tomorrow. It also combines “vert” – evoking green forests – with “future”, emphasising our impact and ambition.

This rebrand supports our goal to reach new audiences and deliver greater impact. The climate crisis hits hardest those already marginalised, and as Verture, we're better positioned to spark the collaboration and creativity needed for a fairer, more resilient future.

You can explore our new identity at **[verture.org.uk](https://www.verture.org.uk)**

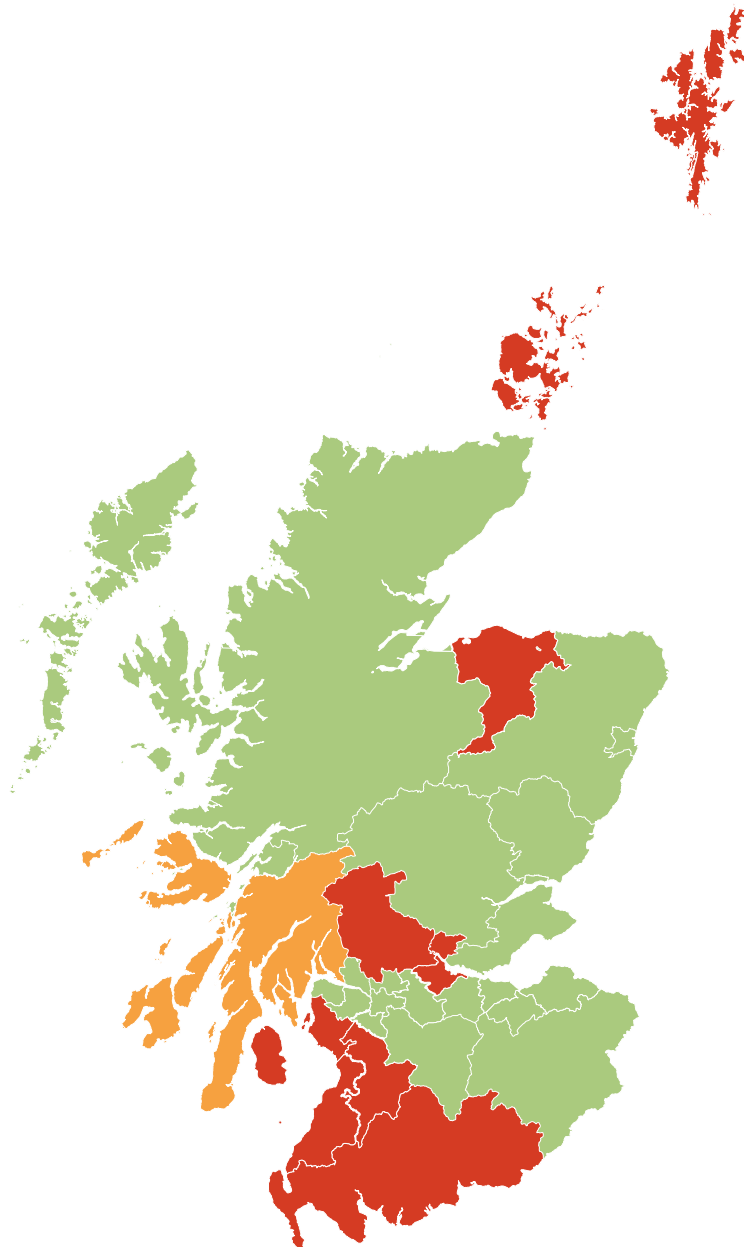




**“Partnerships remain foundational
to our impact ... climate resilience
demands deep collaboration.”**

Stage of development of Climate Adaptation Partnerships

- Partnership Developed / Advanced
- Partnership Initiating
- Partnership not yet developed



Impact stories

Everyone has the right to live gloriously: Creative Climate Futures

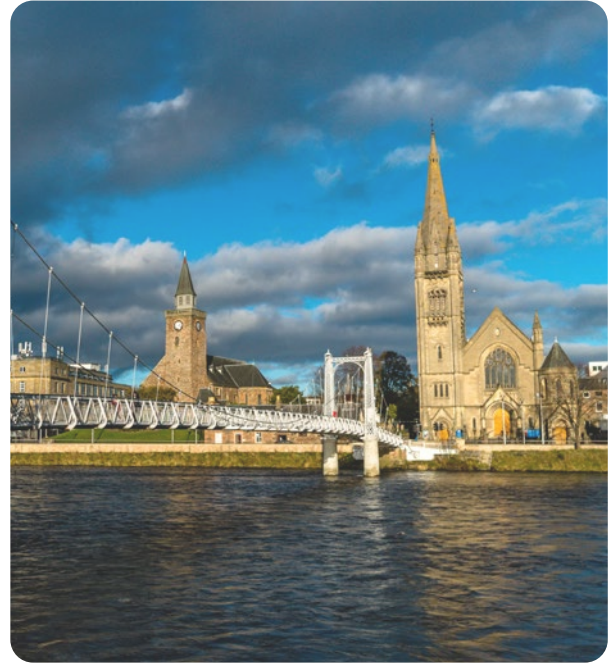
Communities in Glasgow's Gorbals and Easterhouse face multiple challenges – increasing climate impacts like flooding and extreme heat, limited green space, and in some cases, people don't have enough money to live on. Residents felt powerless to imagine, let alone create a different future for their neighbourhoods.

Through Creative Climate Futures, Venture worked with local groups using collaborative, creative approaches to climate resilience. We embedded artists like Rebecca Fraser to help people think differently about their futures, creating space for hope and imagination alongside practical action. Sessions focused on climate justice, ensuring those most affected by climate change could shape responses.

The impact has been transformative. In Easterhouse, the work catalysed a multi-million-pound regeneration of local green space, now moving into detailed design. In the Gorbals, new community gardens, walking routes, and creative initiatives are taking root – each one community-led and climate-focused.

"It's been so exciting seeing local people join the dots between their daily lives and climate change – turning what could be fearful into hope for the future."

Rebecca Fraser, embedded artist



Making climate resilience accessible: Gaelic translation centres inclusion

Bringing climate adaptation to Scotland's Gaelic-speaking communities

Gaelic-speaking communities across Scotland's Highlands and Islands face significant climate risks, yet climate adaptation resources were only available in English. This created barriers—not just linguistic, but cultural—preventing meaningful engagement with climate resilience planning in rural and island communities where Gaelic remains a living language.

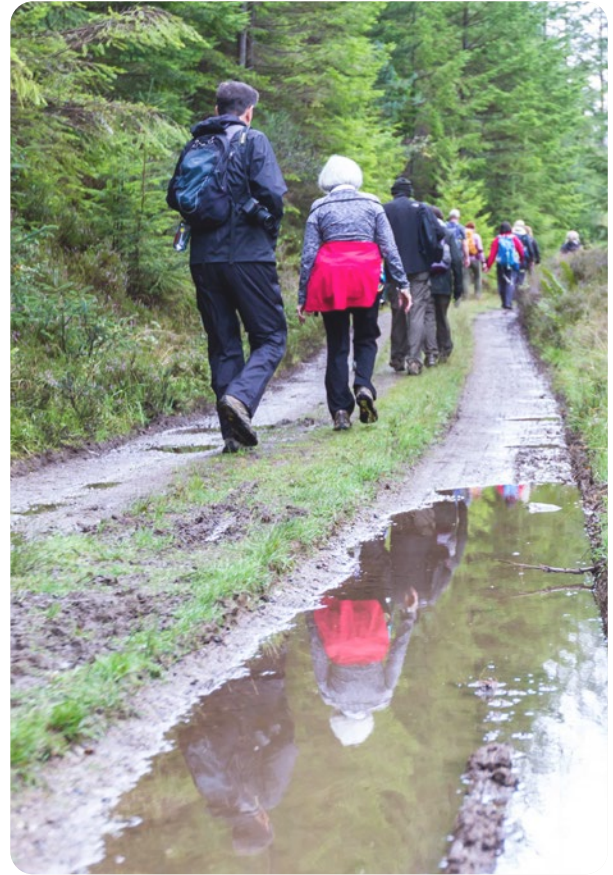
In 2024, Venture worked with Argyll and Bute Climate Action Network and translator Ross Christie to create the first Gaelic version of the Community Climate

Adaptation Routemap. The translation required careful navigation of terminology—creating new vocabulary where none existed, whilst ensuring accessibility for community use rather than academic complexity.

Launched at the Royal National Mòd in Oban in October 2024, the Gaelic Routemap signals to Gaelic speakers that climate adaptation is for them. Beyond symbolic inclusion, it opens pathways for communities to engage with climate resilience in culturally appropriate ways, drawing on traditional knowledge embedded in Gaelic language and place names about historical landscapes and environmental change.

“Seeing something unrelated to Gaelic arts translated shows we exist, and we’re worthy of engaging with contemporary issues. It treats Gaelic as an equal communicative partner in a modern nation.”

Ross Christie, translator



Highland Adapts: Building Scotland’s regional climate resilience

Strengthening Scotland’s place-based partnership model

In April 2024, Highland Adapts transitioned to Venture as its enabling organisation, marking a significant evolution for Scotland’s second regional climate resilience partnership. Since 2019, Highland Adapts has brought together nine partners – including the Highland Council, NHS Highland, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, and Highlands and Islands Climate Hub – to coordinate climate adaptation across the vast Highland region.

This year, Venture completed a comprehensive evaluation of the partnership, examining what makes place-based climate collaboration effective. The evaluation revealed Highland Adapts’



strength as a convening force: creating space for knowledge exchange, enabling collaborations that “would not have happened” otherwise, and building trust across sectors. It also identified clear recommendations for the partnership’s next phase, including strengthening governance, expanding business sector engagement, and developing sustainable funding models.

The evaluation findings are now shaping Highland Adapts’ 2025-30 strategy, ensuring the partnership can build on five years of foundations to deliver greater regional climate resilience.

“Without Highland Adapts, we wouldn’t be anywhere near having sophisticated conversations about climate resilience. The ability to co-design what comes next with partners adds huge value.”

Keith Masson, Chair, Highland Adapts



From climate novice to confident practitioner: SSEN’s adaptation journey

Amy Lavisher had recently started working in climate risk at Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks when she realised the challenge ahead.

Understanding climate projections, adaptation pathways, and resilience planning felt overwhelming for someone new to the field. Her organisation needed to develop regional climate resilience strategies, but Amy wasn’t sure where to start.

Amy attended Venture’s Becoming Climate Resilient training, which provided both foundational knowledge and practical tools for use in a wide range of contexts.

Recognising the value of the training, Amy worked with Venture to develop a tailored training offer for SSEN’s energy distribution context. The training explored climate trends, adaptation approaches, and stakeholder engagement strategies through a mix of presentations and group discussion, as well as an executive briefing for over 100 staff across the business.

Amy and her colleagues gained confidence in climate adaptation concepts and identified new stakeholders – regional climate adaptation partnerships – that SSEN needed to engage. She’s now using resources from the training to design and deliver SSEN’s own regional climate resilience workshops, cascading learning across the organisation.

“The training really boosted my understanding. Venture tailored it to our business which made it meaningful and actionable.”

Amy Lavisher, SSEN

Preparing England's NHS for climate change: national framework launched

Climate change poses severe risks to healthcare delivery heatwaves, extreme weather, disrupted supply chains, and increased pressure on services. Without adaptation, England could face 10,000 excess heat-related deaths annually by 2050. Yet NHS organisations lacked a practical framework to assess their climate resilience and plan coordinated responses.

Building on Venture's award-winning Climate Adaptation Capability Framework developed for Adaptation Scotland, we worked with Greener NHS regions across northern England and Sustainability West Midlands to adapt the approach for NHS contexts. Through co-production with frontline NHS professionals, we developed

a framework with 43 practical tasks mapped against maturity levels, guidance for integrating adaptation into Green Plans, and bespoke training programmes.

Launched in 2024/25 as official NHS England guidance, the framework is now driving change across the country. Over 80 NHS staff have completed in-depth training, and more than 350 senior leaders have participated in webinars, building capacity for climate adaptation throughout England's health system.

"This work began in the North and is now formally approved as guidance for NHS organisations across the country. That brings us tremendous pride."

**Neil Cartwright, Greener NHS
North East and Yorkshire**



Our finances

Income grew to £1,491,910 this year. However, we are reporting a deficit of £138,390 for 2024/25. £81,492 of this is an accounting adjustment rather than actual overspend. The underlying operational deficit is £56,898.

Our deficit was due to three main factors:

- Accounting adjustment (£81,492): Charity accounting rules (SORP FRS 102) meant our reported surplus was excessive in 2023/24. This year's accounts correct that timing difference, making our deficit appear larger.

- Investment in our rebrand: We invested in launching Verture, including our new name, visual identity and website.
- Project delivery costs: Resourcing challenges towards the year-end led to higher than anticipated costs on some projects.

The underlying operational deficit reflects real investment in our rebrand and some project delivery challenges. We have taken this learning on board and are forecasting a balanced budget with a small surplus for 2025/26.



Our income sources

As in previous years, our income comes from three main sources:

- Project grants for delivering charitable activities
- Management fees for service contracts, typically from public sector partners
- Knowledge exchange income from research, public bodies and commercial clients

We are working to secure core funding which would allow us to develop new projects that are not currently financially viable under our project-by-project model.

Reserves policy and going concern

It is the opinion of the trustees that the cash reserves available are sufficient to meet the running costs of the charitable company. They aim to retain sufficient reserves in the form of cash to allow the charitable company to carry out its objectives. The trustees have considered both the results for the year and the forecast for the next 12 months and are satisfied that Verture has adequate unrestricted reserves of £74,737 (other reserves balances being Restricted at £Nil (2023/24 £81,492); Designated at £Nil (2023/24 £20,000), and sufficiently high bank deposits, to continue delivering its objectives. We therefore believe it is appropriate to adopt the going concern basis in preparing these financial statements. This belief is conditional upon continuing to secure sustained funding for the financial year 2026/27 by March 2026.



Our people

“People are surprised that we’re such a small team with such massive impact.” That observation from one of our Project Lead’s Alex Cameron-Smith captures something essential about Venture’s 18 staff – we punch above our weight.

Our team brings together a diverse range of skills and backgrounds. Based across Scotland and working flexibly between offices, communities and home, we’re united by more than expertise. When asked to describe our culture, the team said: intelligent, compassionate, energetic, supportive, driven, genuine, fun.

We have an appetite to push boundaries but ensure our vision and the needs of our partners, is our focus. Our open culture enables honest conversations about challenges and encourages us to question established approaches. We don’t just talk about fairness – we walk the talk, constantly examining whether our work lives up to our values.

“The Venture team’s strength comes from working together not just with others, but with each other. We’re a close-knit team with a big heart and an even bigger impact. We’re passionate about what we do, committed to our purpose, and genuinely care for one another, which helps us create something bigger than our size.”

Bridesdale Kanu-Okoro,
Business Support Manager



Ruth Wolstenholme (who moved from Managing Director, to Project Lead in December 2024) notes that we’re “at the forefront, with a finger on the pulse of what’s happening in government, society and research – we’re listened to and respected.” That trust, built over 30 years, is something we steward carefully.

Our Board of six Trustees provides strategic guidance and governance, bringing expertise from across multiple sectors.

“Being on the board of Venture is a privilege. I value the small part I play in such an innovative and respected organisation. I enjoy considering the opportunities and risks that lie ahead. I have learnt a lot from being on the board, having been involved in the recruitment of a new CEO, a rebrand, financial scrutiny and supporting culture and wellbeing.”

Richard Dryburgh, Trustee

Looking ahead

While 2025/26 marks the final year of our current strategy, it's also a year of ambitious action and bold questioning.

A highlight will be progressing the Scotland spoke of the Maximising UK Adaptation to Climate Change (MACC) hub. This programme examines the levers of change for UK adaptation and advances transformative climate strategies. Too often, climate adaptation focuses on technical fixes whilst ignoring the deeper social and economic shifts needed. This is adaptation as a catalyst for a better society, not just technical fixes for extreme weather events.

Alongside this, we'll continue delivering programmes that make climate resilience real: supporting practitioners through our flood resilience work and national conference, equipping organisations

through our Becoming Climate Resilient training, strengthening communities through the final year of Creative Climate Futures, and delivering Adaptation Scotland for Scottish Government through to 2027.

Throughout 2025/26, we're also engaging widely to develop our strategy for 2026-31. We're asking fundamental questions: What should a truly resilient and fair Scotland look like? Who is missing from climate conversations? What transformational changes are needed, not just incremental adaptations? Your voices will shape our direction.

The climate crisis demands collaboration. If you're working towards a fairer, more resilient future, let's talk about what we could achieve together. We look forward to launching our new strategy in April 2026 – and to the work to come.



Thank you!

Everything Venture does is in collaboration with others towards a resilient and fair future for all. We couldn't have had this impact without our amazing partners and supporters:

Adaptation Scotland: The Scottish Government Adaptation Policy Team, the Adaptation Scotland Programme Board and Policy Forum, members of the Public Sector Climate Adaptation Network, members of the Climate Ready Infrastructure Scotland Forum, Paul Watkiss Associates, the Enterprise Agencies, Climate Action Hubs, and all those we have worked closely with across Scotland.

Flood Resilience Conference 2025 sponsors: Flood Re, AtkinsRealis, AECOM, CPE Consultancy, Network Rail, Balfour Beatty. Funding from Scottish Government.

Flood Resilience Conference 2025 steering group: David Faichney and Sadiyah Rehman (Scottish Government), Heather Forbes (SEPA), Grant Vanson (Scottish Water), Kirsty MacRae (Scottish Flood Forum), John Wright (Mott MacDonald), Peter Robinson (AECOM), Will Burnish (Moray Council), and Susan Veitch (The Highland Council).

MACC Hub partners: Kings College London, University of Glasgow, Northern Ireland Environment Link, Queens University Belfast, Severn Estuary Partnership, Cardiff University, Brunell University, Newcastle University, University of East Anglia, Oxford University, Sustainability West Midlands, London Climate Ready Partnership, Stockholm Environment Institute, Future Generation Commission for Wales, Climate Outreach.

Other project partners: Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations (SCVO), SCCAN, Small99, James Hutton Institute, Culture for Climate Scotland

Funders: Scottish Government, DEFRA, UKRI, NatureScot, Greener NHS North West, Greener NHS North East & Yorkshire, SCVO, UK Shared Prosperity Fund

Regional Adaptation Partnerships: Climate Ready Clyde, Climate Hebrides, Climate Ready South East Scotland, Climate Ready Tayside, Highland Adapts and the many partners within each region

Office space: Agile City – Civic House, University of Edinburgh – Edinburgh Climate Change Institute.

Suppliers: Friendhood, Hertech, LBD Creative, Red Harbour Events, Waterman Group, Paul Watkiss Associates, Blue Sky Catering, Dynamic Earth, Parveen's Canteen.

Trustees: Alison Macdonald (Chair), Anne-Marte Bergseng, Ian Morgan, Richard Dryburgh, Rachel Freeman, Sophie Beier, Will Humpington



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