

Reconnect SCIO
Trustees' Annual Report

April 2023 – October 2024

Charity contact information

RECONNECT
Evolving Cultural Heritage

Reconnect SCIO

Scottish Charity Number: SC048076

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Reconnect Regal Theatre

Charity Trustees

Name all of your charity trustees for the period, and the date they left if they were not in post for the whole year

1. Peter Sneddon
2. Christopher Wilkinson
3. Steven Coulson
4. Clara Hill

Objectives and activities

- **Our charitable purpose**

Reconnect are here to preserve and if needed restore historical buildings and landscapes, to provide sustainability for them and to teach the reconnection arts. Our tag line is evolving cultural heritage. In short this means we are all about taking the culturally or historically significant locations and providing sustainability for them financially but engaging or teaching the reconnection arts. The reconnection arts include music, theatre, art, writing, crafting, personal development and some complimentary therapies.

- **What we do**

Reconnect SCIO runs a community theatre in Bathgate in a Grade B-listed building called the Regal Theatre. Originally a cinema built in 1938, the Regal is the last of five buildings of the same style still standing and was constructed in the Art Deco style. The building has undergone much change but is now a 230-seat theatre with fewer halls for group and community activity. The venue went into liquidation in 2017, and Reconnect SCIO was awarded the lease in March 2018 to preserve this fine art deco building and create a sustainable venue for the community.



Who we help (Key goals)

- Making the arts accessible to every member of the community
- Promoting well-being and creating a space for social connection
- Improve the quality of life by bringing greater joy to participants' lives

Structure, governance and management

Reconnect SCIO is governed by a constitution.

Reconnect SCIO is a registered charity established on 18 January 2018. The charity's main objective is to advance the arts, heritage and culture. The organisation is governed by a Board of Trustees, whose members are elected in accordance with the charity's governing documents. Notably, one-third of the Directors/Trustees retire annually by rotation and are eligible for re-election. The Board convenes at least four times a year. The Trustees do not receive any monetary compensation for their services. However, the charity does reimburse reasonable expenses incurred by board members attending meetings. Moreover, Reconnect Theatres is committed to covering costs associated with any additional needs, such as access services for prospective and current board members. The current Board of Trustees comprises four members, two men and two women, bringing a wealth of expertise in various areas, including business, strategic management, and finance management. The Board consists of a Chair, Treasurer, and Secretary, each playing a crucial role in the organisation's strategic direction and financial stewardship. The charity's day-to-day operations are overseen by the Creative Director and Executive Producer, who serves as the organisation's operational leader.

Achievements and performance (March 2022 – April 2023)

Thanks to a generous grant from Scotland on tour Reconnect delivered a number of shows to bring audience back to venues and get artists back out and earning.

Thanks to a generous grant from the Voluntary Sector Gateway we delivered the following actions:

- Offered 500 free tickets to charities, local community groups and families in need for a number of professional performances at the Reconnect Regal Theatre in 2023/24.
- Delivered a weekly dance workshop for older people of all abilities at the Reconnect Regal Theatre, Bathgate. The workshop was delivered with the collaboration of Generation Arts and West Lothian 50+ Network and was led by a locally based dance teacher.

Thanks to a generous grant (May 2022, full details below) from the Corra Foundation, we organised and delivered the following arts programme with creative activities for families with children under five years old:

- A weekly pilot creative play/drama project from May 2022 - January 2023 for 0-5 year-olds and their parents/guardians in partnership with Home Start West Lothian. The weekly programme introduced local families facing financial hardship to the concept of creative play. The sessions were led by Jude Williams, a creative practitioner specialising in creating theatre shows and delivering creative workshops for under 5s. The feedback was highly encouraging and highlighted the need for long-term creative education for families with young children. Number of participants: 50 people.
- Free tickets to the Regal Theatre's professional children's theatre shows to families who struggled to afford the tickets. The participating shows were: Little Top (for under 2-year-olds - 30th May 2022), Spike (for 3-5-year-olds, 2nd - 3rd June 2022), I Spy

with My Little Eye (3 - 8-year-olds, 11th October 2022) and the Regal Theatre's in-house family Pantomime Production The Wizard of Oz across December 2022. Number of tickets allocated: 450 tickets.

- Site Visit to the Regal Theatre for local nurseries. The children could play with props, sit behind the technical booth and stand on the theatre's main stage! Number of participants: 20 people.
- Purchase equipment and materials for a series of in-house drama sessions scheduled to run in autumn 2023

Thanks to the grant from the open fund Reconnect delivered the following arts activities £15,575 (March 2023)

- Hired internal producer to manage artistic development and incoming touring fund shows and inhouse projects
- Delivered a youth project in primary schools
- Delivered a youth project in secondary schools
- Delivered an early years project in house
- Delivered adult workshops
- Developed the charity's professional standing

Thanks to the grant from The community choices fund (WLC) reconnect made the following changes to Howden park centre

- Created a separate entrance and toilet for the Arts studios
- Created new gallery hanging space with the new wall to separate the gallery and studio
- Allowed discreet access to SPACE 3 through the revised entrance
- Created greater access to the arts spaces for community groups to access these without requiring the over provision of inhouse staff, resulting in greater autonomy for the group

Trusts and Foundations

- Voluntary Sector Gateway Mental Health Grant £10,000 (March 2022)
- Corra Foundation Shift the Power Grant £ 11,250 (May 2022)
- Scotland on tour £6156 (2022/2023)
- Creative Scotland Open fund £15,575 (March 2023)
- Community choices (WLC) £23,500 January 2024

New Projects

EdFringe 2023

We took three shows to the fringe in Edinburgh for the first time the main achievements were

- Principle sponsor of Hill Street Theatre,
- we won the Bright Spark award for best ensemble for our version of "The Grandfathers"
- Ripper received great attendance and reviews and will be back at the fringe in 2024

EDFringe 2024

Our second year at the fringe we took 2 shows These were an extended version of Ripper and a new play called DOPED.

Howden Park Centre Livingston

HPC is an arts centre developed from an older theatre in 2009 by West Lothian Council and funded in part at the time by the Arts Council, it has a 296 seat auditorium a cafe, gallery, art studios, meeting rooms and 3 additional spaces as well as a car park and outdoor seating and grounds, located in the grounds of Howden Park and originally the stables for Howden House.

After being threatened with closure by WLL we bid to take over operations for a seven-month period and where successful, on 1st September we took over operations and TUPE'd the staff. The seven-month contract came with a grant of £140,000 to be paid in instalments and some retained by the council for expenses still under contract to them.

After the seven-month period Reconnect where successful in securing stewardship of the venue from April 2023 and now have an operational lease until 2035

Financial review

Statement of the charity's policy on reserves

The charity now operates a fund of £90,000 to cover staff wages for a 3 month period

As per the terms of our new agreement with WLC we will be creating a sinking fund for the Howden Park centre from surplus of trading should there be any, The charity continues to have a reserve for the creation of new projects build from surplus of primary trading this fund is currently at £115,000

Details of any deficit

Nil.

Future plans

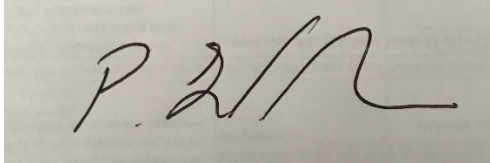
Our strategic goals for the next five years

- Over the next five years, Reconnect SCIO will focus on achieving the following outcomes: establish a diverse, environmentally sustainable programme

- Prioritise professional development, community engagement, and strategic local partnerships.
- Produce mid-scale popular programming: We aim to challenge preconceptions between commercial and artistic types of work, offering diverse and engaging content to cater to a wide audience while maintaining artistic integrity.
- Look to set up new organisations to deliver sustainable futures for other community assets and organisations.
- Create a touring program and continue to develop our professional and youth theatre projects
- Develop partnerships with new Local authorities to implement our model of sustainable arts delivery and provide clear futures for arts venues

Declaration

Signed on behalf of the charity trustees:

A rectangular image showing a handwritten signature in black ink on a light-colored background. The signature appears to be 'P. Sneddon' written in a cursive style.

Print name Peter Sneddon

Designation Project Director

Date 08/12/2023