

Stirling Gaelic Choir

SGC//CGS

Còisir Ghàidhlig Shruighlea

Trustees' Report and Financial Statements
Year ended 31st January 2026

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Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31st January 2026

Status of Charity and Governing Document

Stirling Gaelic Choir (SGC) was formed in 1948 and is governed by Constitution. SGC is a registered Scottish Charity (No. SCO32700) and is registered with HM Revenue and Customs under Charities reference number CR51139.

Office Bearers and Trustees

Megan McFadzean (President)
Elke Lambers (Vice President)
Amanda Aikman (Secretary)
Carron Vaughan (Treasurer)
Ian McAlister (Committee member)
Lorna Hamilton (Committee member)
Joan Rennie (Committee member)
Maureen Meredith (Committee member)
Neil Mackenzie (Committee member)
Mary McIntyre (Committee member)

Trustees are nominated by choir members and are appointed at the AGM, by election if necessary. The maximum period of service in the designated role on the management committee is three years.

Aims

The charitable purpose of Stirling Gaelic Choir is to educate the public in the art of choral music and the Gaelic language through the presentation of concerts and other related activities.

Summary of Activities and Achievements February 2025-January 2026

February	Gaelic Society ceilidh World Gaelic Week	Stirling Stirling
March	Perform in Perth Stirling 900 concert	Perth Stirling
April		
May	Ceilidh Dance	Stirling
June	Aberfeldy Mod	Aberfeldy
July		
August	Highland Games	Stirling
September	Annual Concert	Dunblane
October	Royal National Mod	Fort William
November		
December	Gaelic Society ceilidh	Perth
January		

Reflection on 2025

Achievements

The year started on an uncertain note with another change of Conductor, this time after only a year, but we knew we had a strong candidate in Laura Gormley and she started with us in the March. Under Laura's Conductorship, we have had a successful year and have continued to increase our membership numbers.

We were invited to sing and dance at a great New Year's Dance in Dunblane hosted by the local An Comunn branch attended by many from the local Gaelic community. At the end of February/start of March for the annual Seachdain na Gàidhlig (SnG) we held an open rehearsal and took part in the Stirling Gaelic Community Day in Bridge of Allan.

On 10th March, in our previous Conductor's final competitive event as our Conductor, we took part in Perform in Perth in Perth Concert Hall where we won both competitions and were awarded the Kinnaird Cup for our songs and were honoured to receive the Ian and Frances McCann Memorial Trophy for our Puirt.

To round off a busy March, we took part in a big Stirling 900 event in Stirling Castle, led for the first time by our new Conductor along with our previous Conductor. A very enjoyable evening, which helped raise our profile with a non-Gaelic audience, though with some logistical challenges.

May began with a successful family ceilidh dance in Bridge of Allan where the step dancers who had held a workshop at the SnG community day were the interval highlight.

In June we made our annual trip to Aberfeldy to take part in the local Mod, where we placed in the Puirt and where we gave a good account of ourselves with our other Mod songs even though it was still early days in their learning.

At an enjoyable day out at Stirling Highland Games in August we sang three sets to a local and international audience. The following week we held a very useful Saturday workshop to help us make further progress with our Mod competition pieces and to spend some social time together; important with a new Conductor and new members.

Our Annual Concert in September was once again very successful to the extent that we had to bring in extra seats. We were joined again by Dunblane High School, two past members of that choir now singing with us. Variety was provided by members' songs and with music and song provided by Conductor Laura and friends.

The concert was a very good rehearsal for our National Mod performances in Fort William, where, although we didn't place, we felt good about our performances and very much enjoyed spending time together getting to know each other. It was also a very good way to network with other choirs and to raise our profile.

Another aspect of the choir's objectives is community work and one of our members has arranged several visits to care homes through the year. These bring in some funds, but more importantly they bring joy along with a bit of Gaelic to our audiences, some of whom are originally from the Highlands and Islands.

Membership has continued to grow throughout the year, in comparison, 29 members sang at the 2024 National Mod, this year we went with 39 members and more members joined between October and January. Our increased social media presence run by our President has contributed to raising awareness of the choir and some members travel a fair distance to join us each week.

Challenges

Having had some challenging financial circumstances during and following the pandemic shutdown and with members retiring, it is pleasing that, through increased membership and the opportunity to hold fundraising events, we remain in the overall good position of the previous year and hope to build on this.

The main challenge has been the change of Conductor so soon after the previous change, but all choir members rose to that challenge and unanimously voted to appoint our new Conductor after a successful trial session. The year has been one of us getting to know each other and for our Conductor to learn our repertoire and lead us through new songs.

Having mentioned the increased membership under achievements, there has also been the challenge of integrating new members and making sure that they feel part of the much-extended choir family. The reduction in the average age of members has also brought a new dynamic.

Finance

The Annual Accounts show the Current Account had a healthy surplus over the year 1st February 2025 - 31st January 2026. In large part this was due to an increased number of members paying subscriptions, which also increased the Gift Aid income. Further contribution came from income from teas, uniform payments and earnings from members completing the PRAEG survey. Fundraising has also been well-supported by members at each of our events. However, the income from our major recurrent fund-raising events decreased slightly, in part due to additional expenses which the Committee had approved, and also from lower public attendance at the ceilidh dance.

Donations have continued to be generous; in particular one donation of £2000 was specified to defray Royal National Mod accommodation expenses, which allowed the Committee to subsidise the members' accommodation to a reasonable level even with a considerably increased number attending. This support ensured all members were included, regardless of their circumstances. The Choir funds also covered the meals on the day of competition, which provided both effective coherence of the group and ensured a positive team-building experience, very important with so many new members. An impromptu performance in the lunchtime café led to social media acknowledgement. Accompanying friends and family were not subsidised but were welcomed along.

The Reserve Account benefitted from £188.64 of interest. The Restricted Fund which is held there for the (newly re-formed) Stirling Junior Gaelic Choir has periodically

refunded their expenses which had been paid from our Current Account. Their expenses have been offset to a small extent by the Juniors now paying a weekly subscription, and by any donations to them, being paid into our account. This arrangement is temporary, with plans underway to formalise the Junior choir as a separate organisation with their own account.

The Choir's Current account with the Bank of Scotland and the Reserves Savings account with Skipton Building Society have stayed with those organisations. The Choir Secretary and Treasurer along with another Committee member are authorised users for both for security/resilience and monitoring of the finances. Monthly reports were given to the Committee detailing income and payments. The Annual Accounts were found satisfactory by the External Examiner, following scrutiny of bank transactions and statements and receipts for expenses.

Future development

With an increased membership our new Conductor hopes to be able to expand our repertoire and to increase our ability to extend our reach within the local community and to have more members taking part in local and national competitions and also to generate income from singing at external commercial events. A stable financial position increases our ability to fund more outreach activity and to offer a reduced membership fee to our members who are still studying or who are claiming welfare benefits.

Finally

Our aim is to be an inclusive and sociable choir and we also seek to maintain a high standard of skill and performance. We are proud to bring an insight into Gaelic culture to our audiences, and the enjoyment of singing together is of personal and social benefit to our members. Therefore, in the coming year we will continue our efforts to strengthen our connections with the Stirling cultural and arts community, to stimulate interest in Gaelic music and language, and to help maintain a viable and lively Stirling Gaelic Choir.

On behalf of the Trustees

*Megan McFadzean
President*

*Carron Vaughan
Treasurer*

Dated: 30th September 2026