



Scottish
CASTLES
ASSOCIATION

For everyone who loves Scotland's castles.

SC029654

Annual Report and Accounts 2025

Scottish Castles Association

Charity Name: Scottish Castles Association

Charity Registration Number: SC029654

Contact Address: Alastair Milne
Cottown Croft
Forglen
Turriff
AB53 4JN

Patron The Rt Hon the Lord Steel of Aikwood, KT KBE PC

President Professor Richard Oram

Trustees in 2025

Dorothy Newlands of Lauriston Chair

Gabriele Kuhn Secretary (Resigned – 3 November 2025)

Norman Mackenzie Secretary (Appointed – 3 November 2025)

Alastair Milne Treasurer

Alastair Bain Membership Secretary

Robert Beaton

Alan Stuart Forbes Resigned – 12 April 2025

Simon Forder

John Hunter

Alex Maxwell Findlater Resigned – 12 April 2025

Diana Monteith

Paul Mowbray Resigned – 12 April 2025

Phill Plevey

Meg Weir

Scottish Castles Association

Independent Examiner

Alec Mackie
21 Cleveden Gardens
Glasgow
G12 0PU

Bankers

Royal Bank of Scotland
Cartsdye Avenue
Cartsburn East
Greenock
PA15 1EF

Scottish Castles Association

Trustees' Annual Report for the year ended 31 December 2025

Structure, governance and management

Governing document

The Association is administered in accordance with the terms of its Deed of Constitution.

Recruitment and appointment of Trustees

All Council members (who are the charity trustees of the Association) are elected or re-elected by the members at the Annual General Meeting, or may be appointed by the Council between Annual General Meetings in accordance with the Constitution.

Purposes

Our charitable purposes:

- To encourage, by charitable means but not otherwise, the protection, preservation, restoration, research, study and appreciation of Scottish castles, tower houses and manor houses, together with their associated furnishings, settings, gardens and designed landscapes being of merit or historic interest and situated in Scotland
- To co-operate with other bodies with similar aims
- To do anything which may be considered to be incidental or conducive to the attainment of all or any of the objects

Scottish Castles Association

Summary of the main activities and achievements of the charity

This year marks the 30th anniversary of the SCA, which was founded in 1996 and was granted charitable status in 1999. Today, with public funding for preservation and restoration shrinking dramatically, many of Scotland's castles face an uncertain future – and our SCA objectives are more relevant than ever before.

Strategic focus

Our Council has continued to implement key initiatives to ensure we meet our charitable objectives in the years ahead, encouraging the protection, preservation, restoration, research, study and appreciation of Scotland's castles.

This year we have mapped how we will build on these initiatives as we move forward: where we focus our skills and resources to make most difference, how we enlist support and how we make effective use of technology.

We defined our three areas of focus:

1. Inform and discover

- Publish original sources of castle information in our online SCA Archive, encouraging people to use the archive; contribute collections for digitisation and publication, and help create archive-related resources, e.g. to support education and community projects.
- Help castle owners, restorers, researchers, users and visitors to share their experience.
- Offer events and visits – in person and online – organised by the SCA and partner organisations.

2. Convene

- Bring together heritage professionals and castle owners and custodians to secure the best future for Scotland's castles, e.g. via conferences and other forums.

- Collaborate to promote the skills and crafts required to preserve, restore and maintain castles.

3. Engage and celebrate

- Support and celebrate contributions to our objectives through our awards and bursaries.
- Encourage communities to engage with and champion their local castles and contribute to their future.
- Be the worldwide ambassador for Scotland's castles, promoting their place in our lives today and opportunities to contribute to their future.

Our audience

We defined our potential audience as everyone who loves Scotland's castles, whatever their background, wherever they live and whatever their sphere of interest.

Key initiatives - progress

New SCA website launched to support all our charitable objectives

Our new website at scotlandscastles.org was created and launched in 2025, following a formal tendering process to select our partner for website development, hosting and maintenance. The website is a platform for all our charitable activities, showcasing our work and enlisting support through membership, partnerships, volunteering and donations. The site is designed to increase our visibility and engagement with our audience, and to improve efficiency, e.g. for membership renewals and events bookings.

SCA Online Castles Archive developed, digitally documenting c. 2000 castles

We continued to develop our Scottish Castles Association Archive in partnership with the Stirling University Archives and Special Collections department. The archive will be launched in late 2026, and will be available online to anyone in the world, free of charge, as a repository and research tool for Scottish castles. This

year we have developed the digital infrastructure and carried out a major exercise to digitise material from five collections gifted or loaned to us. The archive now features content on c.2,000 castles, including previously unseen images and texts. A further two collections have recently been gifted to us. We are planning fundraising initiatives to ensure we can sustain our digitisation programme and continue to attract new archive material.

Scotland's Castles: Use Them or Lose Them - SCA Conference and follow-on collaboration

We held our conference, Scotland's Castles: Use Them or Lose Them, in October 2025 at The Engine Shed in Stirling, with the support of Historic Environment Scotland and fellow heritage organisations. The two-day event was open to everyone with an interest in the subject – restorers, planners, historians, craftspeople, conservation professionals and castle enthusiasts. Facilitated by Built Environment Forum Scotland (BEFS), the presentations, discussions and workshops covered the major threats facing Scotland's castles - including the devastating combination of shrinking budgets and climate change - and explored how current planning process could be applied to encourage more people to restore and use Scottish castles and other historic buildings. Delegates learned about experiences in other countries and we reached consensus on practical ways to move forward. The SCA published a digest of the key points from the discussions, and we are leading development of a collective roadmap for working together to secure a useful and sustainable future for Scotland's built heritage.

SCA Journal relaunched - part of our strategy for increased communication and engagement

The first issue of our relaunched annual Journal was published in March 2026 under new editorship. It is available in digital and print form, and its revised format covers all our charitable objectives. It is part of a strategy to increase engagement and transparency with members and our broader audience through monthly newsletters and a unified approach to social media.

SCA Castles Study Tours: learning and supporting the heritage community

Our Autumn 2025 tour to Aberdeenshire, in the footsteps of our former Chair, Robert Bogdan, was well supported, as was our Spring 2025 tour of the Debatable Lands.

Approved by the Trustees and signed on their behalf:

Trustee name: Dorothy Newlands of Lauriston

Date: 21 June 2026

Scottish Castles Association

Treasurer's Financial Review

The Association remained in a sound financial position throughout 2025. Total receipts for the year amounted to £18,323, compared with £44,739 in 2024. The reduction primarily reflects the absence of the significant legacy, exceptional donations and historic Gift Aid recoveries received during the previous year. Membership subscriptions remained stable, with 144 subscriptions at the year-end compared with 145 in 2024, including two new Life Members. Membership income continues to cover the Association's core operating costs, providing a stable financial foundation for the Association's activities.

Donations received during the year totalled £2,294. The Trustees are particularly grateful to the Harryhausen Trust for its generous contribution of £1,500, together with the many members and supporters whose donations continue to assist the Association in delivering its charitable objectives. Gift Aid receipts returned to expected levels following the unusually high recoveries received in 2024, which included claims relating to earlier years.

Events generated income of £8,750 during the year. The Spring and Autumn Tours both produced modest surpluses. The Association's conference was intentionally subsidised in recognition of its importance in advancing the Association's charitable purposes. Approximately £2,000 of this subsidy was recognised within the 2025 accounts, with the balance being paid in early 2026.

Expenditure increased significantly during the year as the Association invested in strategic projects. Website expenditure totalled £11,593, including approximately £8,500 relating to the development of the new website. This investment provides an enhanced digital platform to support members, encourage volunteering and donations, and promote the Association's charitable activities. The Archive Project also continued to make substantial progress, with expenditure of £9,581 funded from reserves previously designated for that purpose.

These planned investments resulted in a deficit of £14,600 for the year. This reflects the Trustees' decision to apply previously accumulated reserves to deliver projects that directly advance the Association's charitable purposes, rather than retaining surplus funds unnecessarily. At 31 December 2025, cash balances stood at £50,195, with designated reserves supporting the continued delivery of the Archive Project, digital development and follow-up work arising from the conference. General reserves of £19,480 remained comfortably above the minimum level established by the Association's Reserves Policy.

The Trustees are satisfied that the Association's finances remain strong, with sufficient resources to meet its ongoing commitments while continuing to invest in projects that support the preservation, research, study and appreciation of Scotland's castles in accordance with the Association's charitable purposes.

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of

Scottish Castles Association

I report on the accounts of the charity for the year ended 31 December 2025 which are set out on pages 12 and 14

Respective Responsibilities of Trustee and Examiner

The Charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006.

The charity's trustees consider that the audit requirements of Regulation 10(1)(d) of the Accounts Regulations does not apply. It is my responsibility to examine the accounts under section 44(1)(c) of the Act and to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of Independent Examiner's Statement

My examination is carried out in accordance with Regulation 11 of the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeks explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.

Signed at Glasgow on 14th April 2026

A. G. Mackie

A. G. Mackie C.A. (ICAS)

*21. Clevedon Gardens.
Glasgow G12 0PL.*

Independent Examiner's Opinion

In the course of my examination of the accounts for the year ended 31 December 2025, no matter has come to my attention

1. Which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:
 - To keep accounting records in accordance with Section 44(1)(a) of the Charities and Trustee Investments (Scotland) Act 2005 and Regulation 4 of the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006, and
 - To prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with Regulation 9 of the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 have not been met, or
2. To which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Alec Mackie
21 Cleveden Gardens
Glasgow
G12 0PU

Date: 14th April 2026

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The Scottish Castles Association

Receipts and Payments Account for the year ended 31 December 2025

	Notes	2025	2024
Receipts			
Membership Subscriptions		5,400	5,170
Membership Subscriptions – GiftAid		1,004	2,920
Income from Events	2	8,750	7,015
Donations		2,294	13,419
Donations – GiftAid		168	2,811
Legacies		-	10,000
Commemorative Mug Sales		-	30
Interest		707	765
Unusual and Miscellaneous Income		-	2,609
		<u>18,323</u>	<u>44,739</u>
Payments			
Payments for charitable activities:			
Direct Costs of Events	2	10,411	6,251
Insurance		216	168
Website Costs		11,593	4,546
Secretarial and Admin Costs		106	801
Liberty Accounts		259	86
The Journal		-	1,200
Prizes and Gifts		88	80
PayPal Charges		64	61
Archive Costs		9,581	4,472
AGM Costs		331	-
Training		124	-
Donations		150	400
Gifts		-	462
		<u>32,923</u>	<u>18,527</u>
Surplus for the year		(14,600)	26,212
Funds at 1 January		64,795	38,583
Funds at 31 December 2025		<u>50,195</u>	<u>64,795</u>

for

The Scottish Castles Association

Statement of Balances as at 31 December 2025

	Notes	2025	2024
Bank and Deposits			
Balance at 1 January		64,795	38,583
(Deficit)/Surplus for the year		(14,600)	26,212
Balance at 31 December		<u>50,195</u>	<u>64,795</u>
Made up of:			
Current Account		570	944
Deposit Account		49,547	63,851
Stripe Account		78	-
		<u>50,195</u>	<u>64,795</u>
Reserves			
Archive Fund		15,397	10,508
Website, Journal & Marketing Fund		8,044	22,500
Conference and Events Fund		7,274	2,264
General Fund		19,480	29,523
Reserves		<u>50,195</u>	<u>64,795</u>

For and on behalf of the Council

Dorothy Newlands of Lauristion

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Chair

Alastair Milne

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Treasurer

Date: 14 April 2026

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The Scottish Castles Association

Notes to the Accounts as at 31 December 2025

Notes:

1. Trustees Remuneration

None of the Trustees received remuneration during the year (2024 - £Nil)

£Nil (2024 - £Nil) was paid in respect of expenses for Council Meetings.

2. Breakdown of Events

	2025		2024	
	Income	Costs	Income	Costs
Spring Tour	2,120	1,860	3,440	3,028
Picnic - 2024	-	-	150	-
Picnic - 2025	270	170	-	100
Autumn Tour	2,190	2,082	2,930	2,848
Conference	3,350	5,259	-	-
Winter Dinner – 2024	-	-	275	275
Winter Dinner – 2025	820	1,040	220	-
	<u>8,750</u>	<u>10,411</u>	<u>7,015</u>	<u>6,251</u>

Assets (Memo)

	2025	2024
Stock of Plaques (52 @ £12)	624.00	972.00
Stock of Commemorative Mugs (0 @ £3.50)	-	157.50
	<u>624.00</u>	<u>1,129.50</u>

Liabilities

None