DINGWALL MUSEUM SCIO

Scottish Charity Number SCIO SC053119

Annual Report and Financial Statements

For The Year Ended 31st March 2026

DINGWALL MUSEUM SCIO

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Dingwall Museum SCIO

Trustees' Annual Report

For the Year ended 31st March 2026

The trustees have pleasure in presenting their report together with the financial statements for the year ended 31st March 2026.

Reference and Administrative Information

Charity Name	Dingwall Museum
Charity Number	SC053119
Address	65 High Street, Dingwall IV15 9RY

Structure, Governance and Management Constitution

The Charity is a Scottish Charitable Organisation (a SCIO). It was registered in its current legal form on 13th February 2024. The Charity was previously an unincorporated association but changed its legal form to a SCIO.
The business of the museum moved from Trust to SCIO on that date (when the SCIO started), the assets and collection moved across on 19th November 2024. It has a single tier structure and as such the trustees are the members of the Charity.

Appointment of trustees

Robert Moore resigned as Trustee and Treasurer on 15th July 2025.

Objectives and Activities

Charitable purposes The Trust has three main objectives:

The advancement of education

The museum will provide educational opportunities - meetings, study groups, and access to archive material, in the local community.

The advancement of community development

The museum is committed to providing a resource - the building and its artefacts that will enhance the local sense of place and heritage.

The advancement of the arts and heritage

The museum aims to advance the local community understanding of heritage through its educational activities, its permanent displays, and occasional exhibitions.

Chair's Report for 2025/26

Summary

We had a successful year with increased footfall and greatly increased outreach activities. Our Collections Officer Rachael Thomas now comes to us two days a month, her increased time with us paid by a single donor, who contributes significantly to our activities. Our cataloguing proceeds apace with significant numbers of collection items accessioned and entered into Axiell.

The downside has been the Highland Council closing Eagle House to us from the end of September 2025 due to doubts about the stability of the building as a whole. We therefore closed the shop and moved its contents to other parts of the complex. We then began to look for other places to use should Eagle House remain closed for any length of time.

Our volunteers at all levels are active in greeting the visitors at our reception desk, in tidying, auditing and recording our collection, and in designing and running our many displays and outreach events. We exist because of our volunteer membership and match in effectiveness much larger organisations.

Governance

From Trust to SCIO

Dingwall Museum Trust in its present form was constituted in 1991. In order to move to a more modern charitable structure, a SCIO (Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation) was started in February 2024. For almost two years the two organisations ran in parallel, with the finance, management and collection of the Museum gradually moving from Trust to SCIO. The last meeting of Dingwall Museum Trust was in November 2025 at which time it voted to close itself down. OSCR (The Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator) acknowledged the end of the Trust in June 2026. The Museum's governance is now entirely in the hands of the SCIO.

Robert Moore, our previous Treasurer of many years' standing, resigned from the SCIO in July 2025. His long contribution to the Museum was gratefully acknowledged and a small gift presented.

Saffron Wittka-Jezewski attended SCIO meetings as a Youth Advisor.

The Trustees of the SCIO during the year were:

Name	Initials	Trustee from…	Notes
Elizabeth Campbell	EC	13th February 2024	
Betty Erskine	BE	13th February 2024	
Nigel Greenwood	NG	13th February 2024	Dingwall CC Rep.
Frank Hallett	FH	13th February 2024	
Sue Hamilton	SH	13th February 2024	
Susan Kruse	SK	13th February 2024	
Anne MacInnes	AMI	13th February 2024	Secretary
George MacIvor	GM	13th February 2024	
J.R. (Ian) Macleod	JRM1	13th February 2024	Previous Chair
Pat Macleod	PM	13th February 2024	
Jonathan McColl	JRM2	13th February 2024	Chair
Robert Moore	RM	13th February 2024 – 15th July	Previous Treasurer
Margaret Paterson	MP	13th February 2024	Highland Council
Roland Spencer-Jones	RSJ	13th February 2024	Treasurer
Brian Wojtunik	BW	13th February 2024	

Changes to the Constitution were proposed and accepted at the AGM on 18th November 2025, relating to:

- Defining a Community of Membership
- How to wind up the SCIO should the worst happen.

Policies

New policies were approved during the year covering Safeguarding, Secure handling of Disclosure Information, Making a Referral to Disclosure Scotland and Collections Development. The Health and Safety policy is currently under review. Thanks to Robin Lingard for overseeing much of this policy development.

Through MHH we were informed about a scheme which will provide PVG checks through Disclosure Scotland for anyone likely to be working with children and vulnerable adults. Eight volunteers took part in this, and four others have undertaken the additional Highland Council programme.

Accreditation

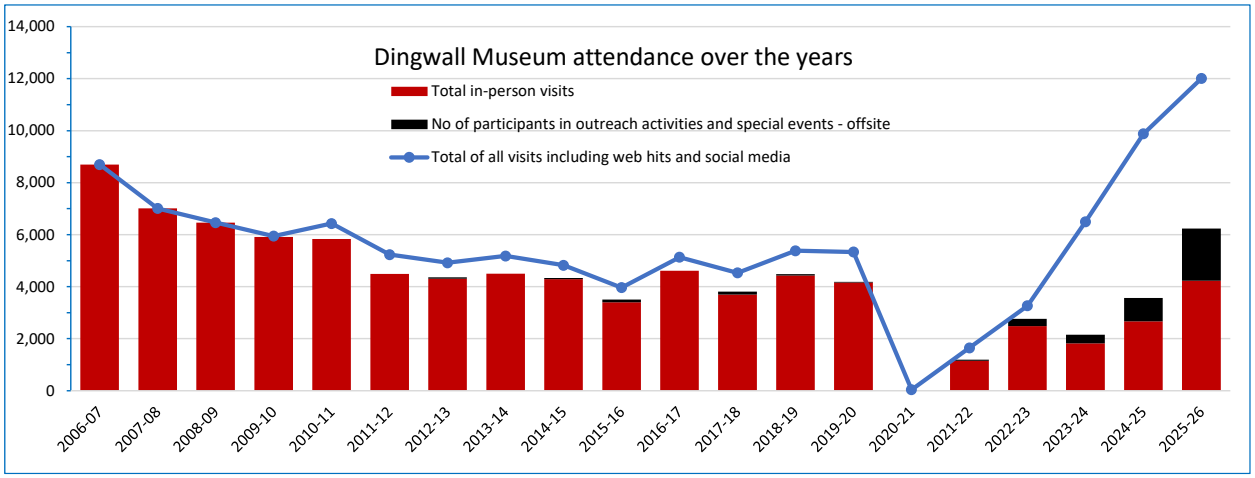
We need to renew our accreditation, which gives us access to professional advice and enables us to apply for significant grants and other assistance. Our next Accreditation is due in September 2027. We will be formally advised to prepare for this in September 2026. Museum Galleries Scotland requires us to have an Accreditation Mentor to advise us. Rachael Thomas, our Collections Officer, has agreed to be take on this role.

SPI Figures Report – the Museum's footfall

These statistical performance indicators (SPI) are reported quarterly to the Highland Council and (from them) to Museums Galleries Scotland.

This year's footfall of 4227 matches the average pre-Covid figures, but because of the amazing outreach work of roadshows, school visits and workshops that added over two thousand more attenders, our total footfall is the highest since 2008! We count social media hits now, and these add thousands more virtual hits, mostly achieved through Beth Campbell's management of our social media presence and the new design of our website www.dingwallmuseum.com. The visitor numbers to the Museum have also been increased through window displays and not least a sign-board that states we are free to enter! This year we have also introduced a consistent labelling design that will gradually be extended to all displays.

Dingwall Museum 2025-2026		Q1. 1st Apr - 30th Jun	Q2. 1st Jul - 30th Sep	Q3. 1st Oct - 31st Dec	Q4. 1st Jan - 31st Mar	2025-26
Enquiries						
	Enquiries relating to research and collections	97	63	16	27	**203**
Events & Outreach Activities						
	No of participants in outreach activities and special events - onsite	174	201	17	92	**484**
	No of participants in outreach activities and special events - offsite	132	573	687	616	**2008**
Online Collection Engagement						
	Museum Website					**0**
	Collection Management System					**0**
	Social Media	1934	1254	1055	1330	**5573**
	Image Hosting (Fliker, Pintrest)					**0**
	Video Hosting (Vimeo, YouTube, Tiktok)					**0**
	Podcasts					**0**
	Third Party Websites (ArtUK, Spotify etc)					**0**
Physical Visits						
	No visits that were in person	1626	2089	20	8	**3743**
	Total in-person Visits	1800	2290	37	100	**4227**
	Total of all visits including web hits and social media	3963	4180	1795	2073	**12011**



Outreach

Our increased visitor numbers reflect the interest our many outreach events have generated.

The monthly Book Group (RSJ) and Picture Detectives (SK), both held in Dingwall Library, continue to be popular, with regular attendance at each, of 8-15 people. Also in the Library is a display case arranged by SK, the contents of which we change every month.

Andrew Newton led two walks down the High Street for the school, and more school projects are planned. The Dingwall Gaelic Nursery, the Dingwall Primary P7 class and Academy students came to see around the Museum. Susan Kruse led another (for adults) looking at the shops of the High Street

PM and BE continue with their successful Reminiscences Meetings in local groups and care homes, with visits to Fodderty Care Home, The Dementia Centre, Redwoods Nursing Home, N. Kessock WI, and Fourways Club in Cromarty. The interaction and object handling sessions are appreciated by the groups and some have asked them back.

The Museum attended and had a stand at the Highland Heritage Day at Dingwall Academy in March, which was very successful.

The Community Roadshows organised by Gordon Sleight, RSJ and SK have been very popular, attracting a lot of local interest at venues in Contin, Muir of Ord, Strathpeffer, Evanton, Marybank, Culbokie and Conon Bridge. The meetings encouraged a lot of discussion, exchange of memories, and some donations.

We held a series of heritage workshops in the Sandy Macrae Room, run by Andrew Newton and assisted by AMI (*Vikings*, *Picts* and *Games and Toys*) and SK (*Researching old maps*, and *Using the HER*). We also ran Open Doors Day, Maths Week talks and displays by Andrew Newton and Saffron Wittka-Jezewski.

Our new leaflets were handed out to other Museums and to local hotels and B&Bs.

We had popular stalls at the Dingwall Gala in June, Feil Maree in September, and at the Academy Christmas Fair in December.

JRM2 gave a short talk by our display stand at the Highland Archaeology Festival, and local-history lectures to the Inverness Forum, Dingwall and Cromarty History Societies and Strathpeffer Primary.

SK organised a weekly visit by several Dingwall Academy S6 pupils providing work experience for them. They were primarily cataloguing and photographing during the summer. Andrew Newton with AMI ran their 800 project across all classes in Dingwall Primary.

The discovery of a collection of old parchment writs in the Museum initiated an attempt to read them, in order to transcribe them. John Barrett of Elgin, an archivist and palaeography expert, ran a course in palaeography for the Museum. Open to the public, it ran over six weeks in August 2025 in the Highland Archive. With fifteen participants, this proved very popular.

IT - website and social media

We are very grateful to Beth Campbell, currently a PhD student in London, for regularly providing at least two Facebook posts each week. These are attracting between 5000 and 10,000 “views” each time. Scotrail made a video about visiting Dingwall which we shared on our Facebook page, also widely viewed.

The website was moved to a new platform – www.dingwallmuseum.com replacing www.dingwallmuseum.info, and was updated during the winter months by RSJ, using Wix software. It is an attractive online presence attracting renewed interest in the Museum.

The Buildings, especially Eagle House

The Museum has been using the ground floor of Eagle House since the 1984 reorganisation of the Town House. It has been our entrance, our shop, and a display area for two significant monuments.

For much of the last two years we have been in regular contact with Highland Council about the possibility of the Museum moving into the two top floors of Eagle House. We were investigating buying the building through a Community Asset Transfer process.

However, in autumn 2025 we were informed that Eagle House is structurally unstable and that we would have to vacate the ground floor. This major setback to the life of the Museum meant that we closed the season slightly earlier than we otherwise would have done. With the loss of the only museum toilet in Eagle House, we were instead granted access to the two toilets leased by Highlife Highland on the first floor of the Town House.

As we started the 2026 visitor season, it appears that the Eagle House situation is likely to continue for some time. We plan to open the Museum through the Town House front doors.

Unseen in the background, acknowledgement must be given to BW for much of the maintenance work in the museum, and SH for her care for the garden which has looked lovely all season.

The Lease

In the 50 years life of the Museum there have been two leases for the use of our buildings (Town House and Eagle House). An original 50-year 1975 lease (1st May 1975) was superseded by a 25-year lease in 1984 (3rd July). As that second lease expired in 2009, RSJ has spearheaded negotiations with both landowners (Highland Council for Eagle House, Common Good Fund for Town House) to draw up a new lease. Those negotiations continue.

Volunteers and Volunteering

Volunteer development

All new volunteers are given an introduction and induction with AMI, and appropriate paperwork completed. The training of all desk volunteers was undertaken before opening for the new season in April.

In June a group of a dozen volunteers visited Urquhart Castle to look at how other organisations operate. This was organised by Saffron and there was no charge for our entrance.

In October, after the museum closed for the season, more than twenty volunteers were conducted around Castle Leod by JRM2, a big thank you to all for their efforts.

Volunteer activities

We thank SH for coordinating the desk volunteers who welcome visitors. Towards the end of the year in question, SK volunteered to coordinate the behind-the-scenes volunteers who work on Mondays and Tuesdays, when the Museum is closed, to accession and photograph the entire collection. New volunteers joined for both reception and back-office tasks during the year. These included:

- a retired tourist guide
- two who can do photography of the artefacts as we catalogue them
- a seamstress who will work on our textile collection

- two bringing expertise in online and social media work
- some students and young professionals.

The Saltire Awards

The Saltire Awards are given to young volunteers aged between 12 and 25 as a recognition of work and achievement. They can be added to their CV. The Museum is now registered with Saltire Awards. Awards have been given to Beth Campbell, Saffron Wittka-Jezewski, Matthew Fraser and Maks Mazon, honouring the work they have done for the Museum.

The Collection

Rachael Thomas, our Collections Officer, now comes in for two Mondays a month—paid for by a generous donation from one of our benefactors. The audit of the collection continues under her guidance. She works with the volunteers coming in each week, Mondays and Tuesdays. We have done a huge amount of accessioning work but there is still a lot more to do.

The audit has flagged up many items that do not fit our collecting policy. These have been offered to other museums where appropriate, or sold where unaccepted elsewhere and provenance is unknown. If sold, the receipts are ring-fenced for the collection.

Other developments concerning the collection within the year:

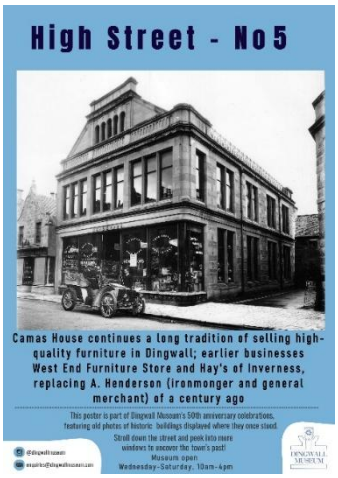
- BW erected two new boards for short-term displays in the upper hall.
- SK applied to Treasure Trove for a mediaeval posy ring and the Windhill excavation assemblage; both now received and are to be displayed next year.
- A new display case has been bought which now shows a fine collection of mediaeval and later artefacts.
- A new timeline display has been created in the Kitchen/Smiddy room.
- RSJ has been liaising with the Meikle family concerning the future of the numerous items representing “The Meikle Collection” should the Museum be wound up. An agreement was signed by three parties: the family, Highlander Museum at Fort George and Dingwall Museum.
- We were funded by MGS to review and develop signage and interpretation in the Museum. Helen Smith was appointed to take us through this and run a stimulating workshop, with Freya Samuel handling the Graphic Design.

Shop Update

The shop design was changed over the winter, moving the old Tower clock to the foyer and the Lemlair font to beside the front window. New units were installed to improve sales. It looked smart and fresh with several complimentary comments made. Lynn Winpenny’s crafts are selling well. There are now Dingwall Museum tote bags for sale and new postcards. Sales are up on last year especially books.

50th Anniversary, 1975-2025

2025 was the Museum’s 50th anniversary. To celebrate this a number of activities, exhibitions and outings was held. These included:



- A detailed collection of information about the history of the High Street, describing the shops and how they have changed over time. This fed into a series of folders, kept available in the museum foyer. The template poster designed by Beth Campbell has been used for individual shop histories, and is now placed in many of the shops down the High Street.
- The Yarn Bombers did fresh toppers for the bollards in front of the Museum
- Local groups organised by Jo Newton made the splendid wall hanging now proudly displayed in the Hall foyer.
- A display board showing the *History of the Museum* researched by one of our volunteers, Saffron Wittka-Jezewski

- A display by the Primary P7 pupils who later won a gold award for Heritage Heroes.
- A display: 'What was happening in Dingwall 50 years ago?' was created by Forbes Munro.
- The series of Outreach meetings to our catchment area villages described earlier

Dingwall 800

2026 represents the 800th anniversary of the first Dingwall charter, ie Dingwall is 800 years old this year. The Museum is one of the organisations in 2025 involved in designing and running the Dingwall 800 project events to celebrate this. The Dingwall 800 launch occurred in February 2026 with a video presentation about the town, projected against the Town House tower.

Money was offered for special events. The Museum applied for funding for a Children's Trail through the Museum. This project was undertaken by an external consultant Helen Smith with Fin Macrae as the designer. AMI visited Primary school classes with examples of trails to get some feedback. A YAC visit was organised by SK with Helen in attendance and we were visited by P3/4 for more feedback.

Our opening exhibition was about the 1226 Charter, curated by JRM2.

Jonathan McColl

Chair, Dingwall Museum

Dingwall Museum SCIO

Financial Review

For the year ended 31st March 2026

Our income has increased in this financial year, and our outgoings have decreased, resulting in a closing bank balance £13,482 more than year start.

Our main source of regular funding is a grant of £6272 from Highland Council, which has remained unchanged for many years. During the year we were successful in attracting additional grants from museum-related funders, more private donations, more shop sales and income from auction sales of unaccessioned items.This has been associated with a slight reduction in our expenses.

Charity's policy on reserves

The regular annual costs of charitable activities are carefully monitored to ensure that the available funds cover approximately two years of average expenses.

Our financial future

Dingwall Museum, like many museums in the Highlands, is run entirely by volunteers with no employees. However, during the year we have contracted with a self employed Collections Officer, Rachel Thomas for two or more days per month.This has been paid for by the MGS grant and regular donations from an individual benefactor.

Our regular assured income - Highland Council grant, donations and shop sales - is approximately £10,000. Our regular outgoings have been reviewed in the past year and savings made on changing insurers, changing telephone providers etc. With a closing balance of >£30,000 the finances of the museum seem secure.

Basis of Accounting

These accounts have been prepared on the Receipts and Payments basis in accordance with the Charities & Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended).

The Museum’s insurance policy includes Trustee Indemnity Insurance for all its trustees. No other remuneration was paid to the trustees or any connected persons during the year.

Dingwall Museum SCIO

Financial Review(cont)

Nature & Purpose of Funds

Unrestricted funds are those that may be used at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of the objectives of the charity. The trustees maintain a single unrestricted fund for the day-to-day running of the museum.

Restricted funds may only be used for specific purposes. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for specific purposes. During the year the charity received several payments representing funds restricted for specific purposes :

- Museums Galleries Scotland Community Engagement: £ 2698
- Microgrant Interpretation & Display :£1875
- Microgrant Contactless Donation Machine : £455
- Highland Council Ward Discretionary Fund, Security enhancement: £700
- Museums Heritage Highland, Collections Officer: £352
- Dingwall 800 Fund, Creation of children's Trail: £2000
- Dingwall & Seaforth Common Good Fund, Security Cameras : £800
- Sale of unaccessioned Collection Items : £1897

Restricted funds are tabulated as part of the Statement of Balances.

Related party transactions

The Museum's insurance policy includes Trustee Indemnity Insurance for all its trustees.
No other remuneration was paid to the trustees or any connected persons during the year.

Dingwall Museum SCIO

Independent Examiners Report to the Trustees of Dingwall Museum

I report on the accounts of the charity for the year ended 31st March 2026 which are set out on pages 11 to 13

Respective Responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the terms of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended). The charity trustees consider that the audit requirement of Regulation 10(l)(d) of the 2006 Accounts Regulations does not apply. It is my responsibility to examine the accounts as required under section 44(l)(c) of th 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 2006 Accounts Regulations. 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.

Independent examiner's statement

In the course of my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

Which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:

- to keep accounting records in accordance with Section 44(l)(a) of the 2005 Act and Regulation 4 of the 2006 Accounting Regulations
- to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with Regulation 9 of the 2006 Accounts Regulations

have not been met.

Signed: 

Dated: 20/10/26

Name: M J Macnab BSc FCCA
Address: Tulloch Street, Dingwall, Ross-shire, IV15 9JY

Dingwall Museum SCIO

Statement of Receipts and Payments for the year ended 31st March 2026

	Note	Total Funds £ 2026	Total Funds £ 2025
Receipts			
Grants	4	18802	16219
Donations		3254	3010
Shop Sales		2820	1638
Sale of Artefacts		1897	1790
Sale of Furniture		-	250
Courses		350	-
Gift Aid		-	1337
Bank Interest		190	25
Refunds		1338	-
Total Receipts		**28651**	**24269**
Unrestricted		17874	12634
Restricted		10777	11635
		28651	**24269**
Payments			
Costs of Charitable Activities	5	12986	20589
Shop Purchases		1209	1434
Purchase of Equipment		976	4483
Total Payments		**15171**	**26506**
Unrestricted		11854	10727
Restricted		3317	15779
		15171	**26506**
Surplus/(Deficit) for the year		**13480**	**-2237**
Unrestricted		6020	1907
Restricted		7460	-4144
		13480	**-2237**

Dingwall Museum SCIO

Restricted & Unrestricted Funds

Statement of Balances - As at 31st March 2026

	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	Total 2026 £
Opening cash at Bank	**1087**	**16375**	**17462**
Surplus for the year	7460	6020	13480
Transfers	-1745	1745	-
Closing cash at Bank	**6802**	**24140**	**30942**

Statement of Balances - As at 31st March 2025

	Restricted	Unrestricte	Total 2025
Opening cash at bank	**5231**	**14468**	**19699**
(Deficit)/Surplus for the year	-4144	1907	-2237
Closing cash at Bank	**1087**	**16375**	**17462**

Restricted Funds	As at 31/03/2025	Transfer £	Income £	Expenditure £	As At 31/03/2026 £
MGSCommunity Engagement	-2698	-	2698	-	-
MGS Interpretation & Display	-	-	1875	-897	978
MGS Contactless Donation Machi	-	-	455	-455	-
MHH Youth Involvement	-	-	**352**	-	**352**
Common Good Fund	-	-	800	-	800
Ward Discretionary Fund	-	-	700	-	700
Dingwall 800	-	-	2000	-	2000
Collection Items	2040	-	1897	-1307	2630
Nick Hide	1745	-1745	-	-	-
	1087	**-1745**	**10777**	**-2659**	**7460**

Dingwall Museum SCIO

Notes to the accounts - for the year ended 31st March 2026

1 - Basis of accounting

These accounts have been prepared on the Receipts and Payments basis in accordance with the Charities & Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and The Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006(as amended).

2 - Nature and purpose of funds

Unrestricted Funds are those that may be used at the discretion of the Trustees furtherance of the objectives of the charity. The Trustees maintain a single unrestricted fund for the day to day running of the Charity.

Restricted funds may only be used for specific purposes. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for specific purposes.

3 - Related party transactions

The Museum's insurance policy includes Trustee Indemnity Insurance for all its trustees. No other remuneration was paid to the trustees or any other connected persons during the year. (2024 Nil).

4 - Grants received	**2026**	**2025**
	£	**£**
Highland Council	6272	6272
Museums Galleries Scotland	5028	6995
N Hide	3350	1000
Glen Wyvis	-	1600
Others	4152	352
	18802	**16219**

5 - Cost of charitable activities	**2026**	**2025**
	£	**£**
Insurance	726	1392
Printing & Stationery	253	525
Telephone	488	783
Store Rental	-	567
Computer/IT	807	1060
Subscriptions	2707	4684
Repairs	1868	1105
Security	479	726
Misc admin costs	3746	924
Collections Officer	1912	7877
Expenses wrt Collection	-	946
	12986	**£20,589**