

Over the year 2024/25, the Trust has made progress on a number of fronts covering governance, community awareness and the improvement of the Rose Garden itself.

Governance

To reflect the work being undertaken by the Charity, the Board of Trustees agreed to a change of name from Linlithgow Peace Garden SCIO to the Linlithgow Burgh Halls Gardens SCIO. Whilst originally set up to create a Peace Garden to the rear of the Burgh Halls, the focus of the work to date has been to maintain and develop the historic Rose Garden within its current form. Recognising also that there is a complementarity between the Rose Garden and the rest of the land to the rear of the Linlithgow Burgh Halls, this provides greater flexibility in the activities the charity can undertake.

Partly as a consequence of that, the Trustees have agreed a revised Constitution which is has been submitted to OSCR for approval . We expect this to be granted in the near future. In addition, we will shortly be signing a Lease for the ground and an SLA with West Lothian Council is close to agreement. Together these will provide the Trust with greater certainty over its role and should also help the Trust to apply for a wider range of funding.

In the course of the year, two Trustees (including the Chair) resigned from the Board. Unfortunately, we have not yet been able to find replacements, despite regular advertising on social media. This could create a risk to the viability of the Board in the long term and the Board will continue to seek to identify new candidates.

Finances remain healthy and the accounts have been approved by an independent Examiner. We will look to identify new sources of income to help fund capital expenditure in the Rose Garden, something which will be assisted by us holding a lease for the ground.

Community Awareness

Over the course of the year, the Trust has made more use of social media and regularly post on its Facebook page advertising its plans and activities. These posts are then shared to various other groups covering Linlithgow more broadly and gain positive reactions from viewers. We will be looking at other ways to promote our work in the forthcoming year and a website is now under construction.

The Rose Garden was given to the town of Linlithgow in 1950 meaning 2025 was its 75th anniversary. To celebrate this, the Trust organised an afternoon of musical performances by local groups which was held in the Burgh Halls (the weather prevented it being staged in the Garden itself). This proved very successful with compliments being received from many of those who attended the event.

Improvements

The Board has continued to maintain the Rose Garden with regular gardening sessions assisted by volunteers. A planting plan has been developed with the aim of ensuring a colourful garden throughout the year whilst retaining roses as its focus. New benches have been installed as required (part-funded by the Town Management Group).

To help organise working sessions in the Rose Garden, a WhatsApp group has been set up for volunteers. Together with notices on the Facebook page, this keeps volunteers up to date with plans for working in the garden.

Concluding Remarks

2025 proved to be a successful year for the Trust and thanks are given to all the Trustees and volunteers who gave their time and without whom we would not have been able to deliver what we have done. We look forward to the future with confidence.

Ken Macdonald

Chair