Leadhills Heritage Trust

Leadhills Miners' Library

15 Main Street, Leadhills ML12 6XP

Chair's Report 2025-26

New members

In order to boost the number of volunteers, in October 2025 Lord Hopetoun hosted an open afternoon in the Hopetoun Arms. This was attended by Lord Hopetoun, trustees, committee members and volunteers. It resulted in the recruitment of six new volunteers. A seventh joined us at the Library booth at the estate open day the following week.

Each volunteer was kept in touch with the Library during the close season. Many attended the Winter Talks and joined experienced volunteers for training and shifts when the Library opened for the season in May 2026.

By the end of the season four of them had joined the committee; two as Chair and Secretary.

There is scope for more input here, as the Reading Society's *Articles and Laws* suggest that the Committee comprise of Chair, Vice-Chair, Clerk, Treasurer and six committee members.

The number of new volunteers and volunteering hours offered has increased considerably during 2026, which is very encouraging for the future.

The Treasurer has set up a WhatsApp group for volunteers which is boosting contact between volunteers.

Winter Talks

The three Winter Talks were well attended and raised good money for Library funds. The topics were STV's local documentaries *Weir's Way*, the Susanna mine, and Vermont & Leadhills. One talk did not take place due to adverse weather on the day, and will be re-arranged for the next series instead.

Propeller Blade gift

In September 2025 the Library received a request from the pilot's family to patriate the Library's WW2 propeller blade to the war memorial in his home town in Canada. After making enquiries following national guidelines, this request was able to be met by the trustees and committee, and the blade was carried to Canada in April 2026. A ceremony was held in August 2026 in Meaford, Ontario to celebrate the propeller blade's arrival.

Library income

In 2026 £1000 and £250 was donated to the Library by the Flower Show and the Hopetoun Lodge respectively. These helped cover the library's immediate costs. As 2026 progressed members of the committee undertook several fundraising events which generated more

significant income. Another member made progress on identifying sources of funding for current needs and future projects, which has become an ongoing process.

Extension plans

The Library has £30,000 in private funding for building the extension. The plans to make this a reality have been picked up again, with new discussions around management, research and expertise required. Renewed architectural input and MGS engagement has been sought. Hopefully this project progresses in 2027.

Conservation audit study

There is an opportunity for the Library to have a conservation study of its collection done by the Association of Independent Museums (AIM). Two committee members are applying for this to happen. This will help to protect the collection, and aid the application for the extension to the building.

Library garden

The garden area behind the Library is being renewed. The Library's storage shed was cleared out with trustee Richard Gillanders taking control of all Library artefacts contained within. Volunteers started clearing the overgrown area. Discussion has begun on future use of the space.

James Stirling talk

Committee member Annie Buddle kindly gave a talk on James Stirling on behalf of the Library at the Wanlockhead 270 day in Edinburgh in June 2026. She may adapt this to be a future Winter Talk.

Chair's resignation

On 27th September 2026, last day of the season, the Chair resigned from his post. He is moving across country to be nearer family. New post holders are now in place.

Cameron Halfpenny

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Chair, Leadhills Reading Society,

Leadhills Miners' Library,

Leadhills

15th September 2026