



OLD EDINBURGH CLUB

Trustees' Report and Accounts for the year ended 30 June 2026

Scottish Charity Number SC006177

1. Charitable purpose and constitution

The objectives of the Old Edinburgh Club (OEC) are the study and support of all aspects of the history of Edinburgh, and the promotion and encouragement of interest in Edinburgh by means of lectures, visits, publications and appropriate activities for public benefit.

The Club is constituted as a charitable unincorporated association. The constitution was last revised in September 2025.

2. Activities and achievements

Our principal activities are events (talks and visits), our annual publication, *The Book of the Old Edinburgh Club*, *The Journal for Edinburgh History*, and a range of projects including those supported by Jean Guild Grants.



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2.1 Events

2.1.1 Lectures

We continue to hold hybrid meetings, offering the choice of in-person attendance at the Augustine United Church (AUC), live streaming for viewing at home or a recording to watch later. We are very grateful to AUC for their investment in the video system that makes this possible.

Our lecture programme for 2025-26 maintained its standard and increased in popularity. The topics and speakers were:

- ❖ *Magic and Illusion in Edinburgh* by Richard Wiseman (October)
- ❖ *Chrystal Macmillan: Equal Rights for Women in Edinburgh and Beyond* by Helen Kay and Rose Pipes (November)
- ❖ *Members' Evening*, including *The Scott Monument and its Character-Statuettes* (John Amooore) (December)
- ❖ *Heriot's at 400* by Hector MacQueen (January)
- ❖ *Glebe Street and Auchenshoogle: So, what's Scottish about Scottish architecture?* by Roger Emmerson (February)
- ❖ *James Hutton, Geologist* by Ray Perman (March)

We added an extra date in April for a *Jean Guild Grants Showcase* featuring talks by James Hamilton (WS Society), John Martin (Scottish Brewing Archive Association) and Naomi Wells as well as exhibits and poster displays from other awardees.

In February, we held our first joint lecture with the Scottish History Society, featuring OEC Secretary Derrick Johnstone introducing his research, *Scots Emigrants to East New Jersey in the 1680s*.

Attendances increased to an average of 89 in the hall (+11%) and 34 online, a total live audience of 123. In addition, the edited videos, available to our members, have been watched on average 60 times, giving a total audience per lecture of 183.

2.1.2 YouTube

We have created an OEC channel on YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/@oldedinburghclub>, where we have uploaded recordings of our lectures in 2024/25 and made these publicly available. This has attracted an audience of a further 80 per event. We have also more recently added talks from 2023/24. Our policy is to provide open access to the previous season's talks each September. In all there have been 2,893 views of all recordings.

2.1.3 Visits

Member-only summer visits organised for 2026, each run twice, are:

- ❖ *Sites of Zeppelin bombing in WW1*, led by Eric Drake
- ❖ *The Hub, home of the Edinburgh International Festival*, led by Ian Shannon
- ❖ *Colonial links in Morningside Cemetery*, led by Hauke Wiebe

Unfortunately, the scheduled visits to George Heriot's School had to be postponed to the autumn because of building works.

We have collaborated with Code the Court Hotel in Parliament Square who wish to learn more about 'The Lost Close' below their accommodation, at Barrie's Close. We have provided contacts, advised on historical sources and organised two visits to provide opportunities for OEC members to explore and offer their knowledge.

As ever, we are very grateful to our presenters and hosts for preparing such fascinating talks and visits.

2.2 Book of the Old Edinburgh Club

2.2.1 BOEC Volume 21

Volume 21 of our journal, *The Book of the Old Edinburgh Club* (BOEC), was published in March 2026 and distributed to members by post. Its articles are:

- ❖ *John Elphinstone's 'Twelve Miserable Views Of Edinburgh'* by John Moore
- ❖ *A Bridge Too Far: The Colinton Bridge* by Steven Robb
- ❖ *Edinburgh's Café Royal* by Barclay Price
- ❖ *Profile of the Leaders of Wesleyan Methodism in 1911* by John W. Sawkins
- ❖ *Port Hopetoun in Art* by Graeme Cruickshank
- ❖ *'Satan's Invisible World Discovered': George Sinclair* by Ellie Whitehead (OEC Prize winner, University of Edinburgh, 2024)

2.2.2 Improving access to our BOEC archive: The Old Tolbooth records

Following our preparation of metadata to make back copies of the Book of the Old Edinburgh Club easier to access and search online, we continue to find ways of making the most of their rich content. Our latest project is to create an index of all the people who were imprisoned in the Old Tolbooth between 1657 and 1686, a tumultuous period of Edinburgh and Scottish history. This includes not only the prisoners but those who put them there plus, where given, the names of family members and associates.

We created the index from the records of the Old Tolbooth transcribed by John Fairley and published in seven volumes of the Book between 1911 and 1923 (Volumes 4 to 12), using Google's Gemini Notebook tool to lighten the task. We have collated entries by identified individual, retaining original spellings, accompanied by very brief descriptive notes using the original text, dates and links to the source articles. This allows us to preserve the authentic character of the original registers, while the addition of modernised names makes the index more accessible. We have also added codes for the main categories of individuals in the records.

We expect that this resource will be of interest not only to OEC members but also to family historians and many people curious about this significant time in Scottish history.

3. Projects

3.1 Legacy Funds overview

In 2022, we were very fortunate to receive generous legacies from Jean Butchart and Jean Ritchie Guild. (For their biographies, see Appendix 1). The OEC Council decided that we should use these funds to support research and its dissemination, make records more accessible, engage wider audiences and bring history to life. We also seek to ensure that our legacy monies bring benefits to the Club in raising our profile and growing our membership.

Our uses of these funds to date have been the Jean Guild Grants programme (3.2 below), Jean Butchart Bursaries, collaborating with the City Libraries (3.3) and improving the ability to search the Book of the Old Edinburgh Club (2.2.2), the Dean of Guild Catalogue (3.5.3), and the redesign of our website in early 2024.

We are spreading our legacy monies over time and ensuring we achieve a financial return on unallocated monies (see 7.2). We seek lasting, tangible outcomes, and will not use the legacy funds to subsidise our normal operating activities.

3.2 Jean Guild Grants

3.2.1 Jean Guild Grants overview

We have administered two rounds of the Jean Guild Grants programme with awards announced in September 2023 and March 2025. These invited proposals which involved one or more of the following activities:

- ❖ carrying out original research and sharing the findings;
- ❖ making records more accessible and promoting their use;
- ❖ pulling together existing research and knowledge to engage new audiences; or
- ❖ involving Edinburgh residents in history projects.

Applications were open to:

- ❖ local history or heritage groups and organisations;
- ❖ schools and colleges; and
- ❖ independent researchers, postgraduate students and early career researchers.

In the first two rounds we received 37 eligible applications, which were impressive in their range and quality. We assessed these rigorously against criteria including likely impact, practicality and benefits in relation to the Club's objectives. We have made 14 awards in total (eight Project Awards and six smaller-scale Research Awards), offering grants totalling £22,475. A small proportion of these funds have still to be taken up.

The Jean Guild Grant Showcase in April 2026 provided an opportunity for awardees to report on their progress in talks and poster exhibits. They were very positive about the opportunity to meet not only OEC members but also to share knowledge across their projects.

3.2.2 Jean Guild Grants evaluation

In May 2026 we completed a review the first two rounds of the Jean Guild Grants programme, considering what awardees have produced and the programme's impact and administration. We reflected on the impressive standard of applications in both rounds and on the range of positive results. We have received very positive feedback from awardees, who have appreciated not only our funding but also the liaison role performed by Council Members, acting as a sounding board and advising on promotion.

We decided to launch a third round of the grants programme at our AGM in September, to be run along similar lines to the previous rounds. We identified several ways of improving how we manage the scheme, including steps to ensure that project agreements are in place more speedily, and in overall co-ordination.

3.2.3 Round 1 awards progress and impact

Project awards (2023):

James Gillespie's High School	<i>Eachdraidh na Gàildhlig ann an Dùn Èideann (Gaelic in Edinburgh – A History)</i> (grant: £650)
This final-year school project researched how Gaelic features in Edinburgh history, as in place names and in the experiences and contributions of Gaelic speakers. Our grant funded banners summarising the findings for use in school and other exhibitions. Images were used in the Edinburgh 900 lecture series 'Gaelic in Edinburgh: past, present and future' held at the National Library for Scotland in 2025.	
Trinity Network (Jill Harrison)	<i>Reviving the Trinity Stones</i> (grant £1,050)
This project has sought to find out what happened to the stones set aside for rebuilding the medieval royal Trinity Collegiate Church, dismantled to make way for Waverley Station. We have published regular reports on project progress and have helped develop the Reviving the Trinity Stones website. Some 60 stones have now been identified. A popular exhibition was held in the Museum of Edinburgh in May/June 2026, accompanied by well-subscribed outreach activities. While the final grant has been paid, the project continues.	
Northlight Productions (Robert Sproul-Cran)	<i>Old Edinburgh Reborn</i> (grant £3,275)
This project researches and develops photorealistic images of the Parliament Square and the High Street around 1700, with findings published in a series of 18 blogs on the Old Edinburgh Reborn website and in last year's BOEC. The Scottish Courts and Tribunals Service hosted a reception in February 2026 to unveil the De Gueudeville print of the 17 th century Parliament procession (supported by our grant). There is a table-top display used at the reception and at the Jean Guild Showcase.	

Research awards (2023):

Jenny Bruce	<i>Linen Weavers in Edinburgh</i> (grant: £500)
An under-researched topic on what was once a very significant industry in the city. The research focuses on the Huguenots of Picardy village and is leading to the publication of a book. We have published a progress report on our website and Jenny has given a lecture for National Records of Scotland.	
Graeme Cruickshank	<i>Port Hopetoun, the Union Canal Basin</i> (grant: £500)
This research has drawn together what is known about Port Hopetoun, the terminus of the Union Canal between Falkirk and Edinburgh. We have published two articles in the BOEC, one on the history and the other on the associated art. We have also assisted in the production the 'Canal's End' walking guide in both leaflet and online formats.	

Dr Charlie Ellis	<i>Table Tennis in Edinburgh</i> (grant: £500)
This project has charted the sporting and social history of table tennis in Edinburgh and created an electronic archive of the Gambit Table Tennis Club records and league handbooks. Charlie has written several short articles on the research, including for the OEC website.	
Naomi Wells	<i>History of the South Bridge</i> (grant: £500)
This ongoing research investigates the design and construction of South Bridge as an early 'palace-fronted' development and purpose-built shopping street. Naomi gave a talk at the Jean Guild Showcase and has had an article published in an archaeology journal.	

3.2.4 Round 2 awards project and impact

Project awards (2025):

Signet Library	<i>John Watson's Institution (JWI) Archive</i> (grant: £800)
This project has created a digital archive of applications for entry by orphaned children to John Watson's Institution in the 1820s to 1850s. This is now part of the WS Society Heritage Portal along with case studies and a catalogue of the JWI archive. Publicity has included an article in <i>Who Do You Think You Are?</i> magazine. The OEC helped to trace the painting of Vans Hathorn, long-serving treasurer of the school, which is now on display in the Signet Library.	
Morningside Heritage Association	<i>Morningside Masons and Medieval Stones</i> (grant £1,150)
Research into the use of medieval stone fragments by 19th century masons, in collaboration with the Trinity Network project. An exhibition is planned for September 2026 in Morningside Library, along with two site visits.	
Northfield and Willowbrae Community Council	<i>Piershill Barracks information board</i> (grant £2,150)
Installation of an interpretation board at the site of Piershill Barracks, promoting interest in the history of a little-known part of Edinburgh. The content of the board has been prepared but the project is delayed awaiting planning permission.	
Scottish Brewing Archive Association	<i>Capital Brewing</i> (grant: £3,500)
Research and publication on the history of brewing in the city, featuring the stories of 40 breweries. The book is printed and awaiting distribution at the time of writing.	
Veterans Housing Scotland	<i>VHS – Celebrating 110 Years</i> (grant: £3,500)
Research and production of a booklet celebrating 110 years of the association, which was pioneering in the provision of housing and social services for veterans. This was launched at a reception in the City Chambers in November 2025.	

Research awards (2025):

Kit Baston	<i>Book borrower surgeons 1780s-1810s</i> (grant: £500)
Extension of the 'Books and Borrowing' project, transcribing book borrower records of Edinburgh surgeons around the late 18 th century. The entries have been completed and are accessible via the existing project website .	
Lisa Williams	<i>Interethnic and transnational influences on the abolition movement in Edinburgh in the early 19th century</i> (grant: £500)
Research into interethnic and transnational influences on the abolition movement in Edinburgh during the early 19 th century, particularly connections with France and the French Caribbean. This has involved conference and archive visits to Paris, Birmingham and Leicester. We have published a video introduction to the project, which is still under way.	

3.3 Collaboration with Edinburgh City Libraries

3.3.1 Edinburgh Miscellanea

We continue our involvement with the Library Service in their work to extend the digital catalogue of the manuscripts held by the Edinburgh and Scottish Collection. Our initial support took the form of a Jean Butchart Bursary which provided a part-time work experience grant for a postgraduate student and modest provision for conservation work on an 18th century manuscript. We continue to work closely with Library staff and their annual student placement to promote the project. The latest manifestation is our publicity for the cataloguing of *Edinburgh Miscellanea* from the collection of William Cowan, an early mainstay of the Old Edinburgh Club.

3.3.2 William Anderson Memorial Prize

We have been partners with the City Libraries in their revival of the William Anderson Memorial Prize. This involved a competition (open to anyone aged 18 or over) for non-fiction essays which provide fresh insights into the history and heritage of Edinburgh. Their chosen subject was to be well-researched and engagingly written on a topic linked to one of the City Council's 'Edinburgh 900' themes. We helped to publicise the Prize and three Council Members assessed the final shortlist of entries. The winner was Anna Comrie for her essay on *Ice Skating in Edinburgh*, a personal journey through Edinburgh's ice-skating heritage, from the 18th-century Edinburgh Skating Club to modern Murrayfield ice hockey. The runner-up, Jennifer Findlay, wrote about *John Knox's Grave Markers*, a chronicle of the changing locations commemorating John Knox's burial site in Parliament Square from 1868 to the present. The Prizes were awarded by the Lord Provost at a ceremony in the Central Library in May and attended by descendants of William Anderson who travelled from Canada for the presentation.

3.4 EdinPhoto

We have taken over the management of the EdinPhoto website developed by the late Peter Stubbs, making the site secure and, behind the scenes, gradually sifting through the content to remove extraneous items and improve search and usability. We have preserved the site with its 40,000 images of historical Edinburgh, though modernising the interface is a vast project given that the structure is not database-driven. Jenny Parkerson and Colin Stubbs, Peter's children are closely involved.

3.5 Other Projects

3.5.1 OEC Bibliography of Edinburgh History

We have updated the online OEC Bibliography of Edinburgh History, which serves as a starting point to explore the wealth of what's been written about the history of Edinburgh. This featured 328 entries (articles, books, book chapters and dissertations), taking the total to nearly 3,500 items.

This was the second in a series of three updates being prepared by Dr Malcolm Noble, with the next to be published in May 2027. We are very grateful to our members who have recommended content to add.

3.5.2 OEC Prize

The OEC Prize for Edinburgh History at the University of Edinburgh has been awarded to Ella Ammann-Bianciardi for her dissertation, *"At No Sacrifice of Any Good Thing": The Edinburgh Ladies' Educational Association, Women's Volunteerism, and the Construction of Scottish National Identity in the Late Nineteenth Century*. The Prize is open to postgraduate Masters students in the School of History, Classics and Archaeology or exceptionally to undergraduates with outstanding dissertations. As is our custom, we have invited Ella to contribute an article for the BOEC.

3.5.3 'Building Edinburgh': Dean of Guild Catalogue

We continue to promote the catalogue of Dean of Guild building warrants, compiled by Dr Joe Rock and funded in four phases by the OEC. This has involved photographing and transcribing the surviving records from 1700 to 1824. The catalogue, available to read or download on our website contains details of 9,012 petitions and 3,932 drawings. Dr Rock's work is proving invaluable to people researching the development of the city, the history of individual properties, the people who lived and worked there, property owners, stonemasons, architects and others. We still plan to introduce a searchable online database of the catalogue.

3.5.4 'Women in Edinburgh History' project

While the Old Edinburgh Club has contributed a great deal to the study and promotion of Edinburgh's history since its establishment, we argue that, like much historical scholarship, stories of women - their work, creativity, activism, and everyday lives - have too often been overlooked, or lost altogether.

We have been scoping 'Women in Edinburgh History' as a project dedicated to addressing this imbalance. By gathering research, writing, and public contributions, we seek to highlight the lives and legacies of women who shaped Edinburgh in ways both large and small, famous and forgotten. We are inviting blog articles with a view to creating a searchable database along with resources to spur further interest and research. We have formed a project working group involving OEC members and local historians which will begin its activities shortly.

3.5.5 Southside Graveyards Project

The Club provided a grant of £5,000 in 2016 as its contribution to the Edinburgh Southside Graveyard Project. By re-erecting headstones which had fallen or been laid flat for safety reasons, the Project improved the appearance of the cemeteries and allowed inscriptions to be read once more. It worked with the City of Edinburgh Council by providing constructive opportunities to participants on the Community Payback Programme. Over 225 headstones have been rebuilt in the Grange Cemetery and 19 foundations prepared. The project has now been closed with the transfer of the remaining funds to the Friends of Newington Cemetery, for the re-erection of two monuments in Newington Cemetery, one of which is that of art historian and critic Sir James Caw.

3.5.6 The Great Debate

We again provided a judge for the Scottish final of The Historical Association's 'The Great Debate' competition for schools. Council Member Alison Moodie was very impressed with the quality of

the presentations and we are pleased to congratulate Roddy McCluskey from James Gillespie's High School who not only won the Scottish round but the national event as well.

4. Promoting the Club

4.1 Membership

At 30 June 2026 we had 402 active memberships (281 full; 111 joint; seven overseas and three youth). These give us 513 members, of whom 147 joined during the year. Our new Gift Membership – introduced to provide a solution for the perennial challenge of finding presents for birthdays or other events - accounted for 11. The overall increase is probably an OEC record, up from last year's figure of 109 (+35%). The Club last saw numbers over 500 in 2013.

We have now shown gains in membership numbers for three of the past four years, the only dip being -4% two years ago when we increased subscription rates. We have also reversed a long-term downward trend in joint memberships.

Our website is now the most significant source of new memberships, followed closely by word of mouth then social media. These three sources account for two-thirds of the total.

Response to our Member Survey 2025

We reported last year on the findings of our Member Survey, which showed high levels of satisfaction, especially with the Book of the Old Edinburgh Club, winter lectures (in-person and online) and member communications. We have not been prepared to rest on our laurels and have responded to requests for a wider range of lectures and visits and tweaks to improve lecture quality including speaker briefings.

There was a clear desire for greater social interaction and we have sought to encourage this by introducing quizzes and running the new Jean Guild Showcase as a social event for members.

4.2 Marketing Subcommittee

We are devoting considerable energy to promoting the Club and our activities, bearing fruit in our growing numbers of new members and increased profile on social media. These efforts are led by our Marketing Subcommittee.

We seek to make ourselves approachable as Council Members, by wearing name badges and publishing pen portraits on our website. We also attend events such as Doors Open Days and the Edinburgh, East Lothian and Borders Archaeology Conference.

In addition to our website, member emails and periodic newsletters, we use social media to reach wider audiences. We continue to build press contacts and are pleased to report that an article reviewing the Jean Guild Grants programme appeared in *Scottish Local History* and one about the Trinity Stones project appeared in *Edinburgh Life* magazine.

We maintain content on the websites of the British Association for Local History (BALH), the Scottish Local History Forum (SLHF), with the latter including details of our forthcoming events and a link to purchase back copies of the BOEC. Our events are also publicised on the City Council's *Edinburgh Forever* website.

4.3 OEC website

The redesign of our [website](#) over two years ago was a major development for the Club and is helping us to grow the Club. In 2024/25 we improved the search function and readability for users with visual impairment and now, in the age of AI search, we seek to ensure that our site is as visible as possible to the likes of ChatGPT, Gemini and Claude.

For the full year to 30 June, we had 118,172 page views and 37,584 users (up 290% and 247% respectively on 2024-25). The totals represent a fivefold increase since our redesign.

The site features our events programme, content from our Jean Guilds Grants and other projects along with 'News and Views' posts. There we publish news items relating to the history of Edinburgh including book reviews and blog articles which we link to our social media promotion.

We continue to welcome contributions from within and beyond the OEC membership. Guest contributions have included Florence Petroff from the University of La Rochelle on *Competing visions of the American Revolution*, Amy Orner from the Department of Art History, Pennsylvania State University on *An American curiosity in Dr Hope's garden* and OEC member Barclay Price on *Isabella Hutchison: convert and philanthropist*. We have introduced guidelines for contributors to help in preparing content.

The two most popular posts, *Half-Hangit Maggie* (the story of Margaret Dickson) and *The Arthur's Seat Coffins*, have amassed nearly 16,000 views between them. Other posts attracting more than 1,000 views include *Edinburgh's Lincoln Monument*, *The Maiden*, *Tracing the Lochrin Burn*, *The voyage of the Henry and Francis to New Jersey*, and *Canal's End – a Walking Guide*.

Members of the Marketing Subcommittee contribute to the website, with Ford Buchanan in post as Web Manager. We have an annual website maintenance agreement with RedCitrus, our website designers, to keep the site running smoothly and securely and deal with any very technical issues that may arise.

4.4 Social media

The Club has a growing profile on social media, especially on [Facebook](#) where we now have 6,046 followers, an increase of 2,300 year-on-year (+63%).

We have 1,933 Followers on [X](#), a minuscule increase from last year which reflects how use of the platform has changed, while we have attracted 720 followers on [Bluesky](#) from scratch over two years. We have 291 followers on our [Instagram](#) account, newly relaunched, and our first followers on [Threads](#).

We have also established on our [YouTube](#) channel, now with 92 subscribers. With the agreement of previous speakers, it now hosts OEC talks from 2023-24 and 2024-25 seasons, accessible to the general public.

We post details of the Club's meetings and events along with other historical news of local interest. Our popular 'On This Day in Edinburgh History' features not only on Facebook but also in the monthly pages of the *Edinburgh Reporter*.

4.5 Promotional collaboration

We participate in the Edinburgh Local Heritage Network established by the City Council and welcome the opportunity there to build our relationships with other bodies who share our interest in Edinburgh. We continued to promote the remaining City Council's Edinburgh 900 events.

More generally, we welcome details of 'what's on' relating to Edinburgh history, which we are willing to publicise via social media and emails to members. Responses to our Member Survey show that many value this.

5. Trustees and club management

5.1 Office-bearers

Honorary office-bearers of the Club are Lord Cullen of Whitekirk, Honorary President and Iain Gordon Brown, Honorary Vice President.

The Club is managed by a Council of members, consisting of office-bearers (President, Vice President(s), Secretary, Treasurer, Programme Secretary, Membership Secretary, Editor and Publicity and Engagement Manager, Web Manager) and up to nine Ordinary Members.

The Members of Council are the trustees for the purposes of charity law. As at the date when we approved this report they were:

<i>President</i>	Steven Robb
<i>Vice President (Marketing)</i>	Alison Macdonald
<i>Vice President</i>	Andrew Boyd
<i>Treasurer</i>	Jim Gallacher
<i>Secretary</i>	Derrick Johnstone
<i>Membership Secretary</i>	Jerry Ozaniec
<i>Programme Secretary</i>	Richard Rodger
<i>Publicity and Engagement Manager</i>	vacant
<i>Editor, Book of the Old Edinburgh Club</i>	Wilson Smith
<i>Web Manager</i>	Ford Buchanan
<i>Ordinary Council Members</i>	Roger Jeffery
	Hetty Lancaster
	Alison Moodie
	Jack Nevin

Roger Jeffery was nominated at the 2025 AGM, and we co-opted Ford Buchanan and Jack Nevin in April 2025. Other Council members were in post throughout the year.

In 2025-2026 the Council met six times, with an attendance rate of 78%. Alternate meetings were held face-to-face and online. At each meeting, Council Members receive reports on Finance, Risk and Governance, Projects, Marketing and Membership, Events, The Book of Old Edinburgh Club, and other activities.

5.2 Recruitment and appointment of trustees

The trustees (Members of Council) are elected by and from the Club's membership at the Annual General Meeting. The trustees also have the power to co-opt additional trustees. The office-bearers are elected annually. The President and Vice President(s) hold office for no more than three years, other than the post of Vice President (Marketing) which is not time-limited. Ordinary Council Members are elected for three years. Past practice has been for three to retire annually by rotation. Thereafter they are ineligible for re-election as Ordinary Council Members for one year.

We have codified our induction process for new trustees to bring them up to speed. We explain their duties and give them a copy of the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR)'s Guidance for Charity Trustees amongst other briefing material.

5.3 Risk management

The trustees have assessed the major risks to which the charity is exposed and are satisfied that we have mitigation systems in place. We have instituted a Risk and Governance group who report to OEC Council meetings as necessary and who this year have carried out health and safety reviews of our lectures and summer visits. In consequence, we have set a lower cap on numbers attending visits, prepared a briefing for Council Members on their responsibilities when on visits on behalf of the Club, and now send advance notice to OEC members regarding safety on visits. We have created a risk register for our lectures and sought to resolve some outstanding questions with the Augustine United Church. We identified a need to have Council Members trained as First Aiders.

The Club has suitable insurance through our membership of the British Association for Local History. We review the level of cover each year to ensure that it meets our requirements.

Given the nature of the Club's activities, we have not needed to adopt safeguarding policies and procedures. However, we shall anticipate and deal with any situation where children or vulnerable adults are involved and potentially at risk.

We updated our privacy and data protection policy in 2022 to take account of offering member registration via our website and sharing personal information in specific circumstances, such as a financial audit.

We have a Take-Down Policy to cover any eventuality where we may be challenged over copyright, e.g., in publishing lecture videos and past volumes of the BOEC online.

5.4 Archiving OEC Council documents

We have lodged Club documents for 2024-25 with Edinburgh Central Library for archiving. This maintains their collection of OEC Annual Reports, minutes, scrapbooks, lecture programmes and volumes of the BOEC going back to 1908. These form part of the Library's Manuscript Collection (3.3 above).

6. Plans

As ever, we shall promote the study of the history of Edinburgh through events, publications and projects, and continue to raise the profile of the Club to attract and retain members. We shall publish Volume 22 of the Book of the Old Edinburgh Club and seek to exploit the past content of the Book further. There will also be a 2027 update of the Bibliography of Edinburgh History.

We are extending our lecture season to include an April 2027 date and have accepted invitations for OEC member visits to National Records of Scotland in November and the Scottish Courts and Tribunals Service in the new year.

We shall launch a third round of the Jean Guild Grants, making awards in March 2027. We also plan to organise a Jean Guild research network event, bringing together new and past awardees and others.

We will be developing the Women in Edinburgh History project and will launch a refreshed EdinPhoto website. We will develop our collaborations with the City Council while being open to other ventures.

On promotion, we will:

- ❖ partner The Lost Close (Code the Court Hotel) on Doors Open Days in September;
- ❖ release publicly recordings from our 2025-26 lecture season and develop our video presence on YouTube and our website; and
- ❖ capitalise on the value placed on streamed lectures to increase membership beyond Edinburgh.

Regarding the management of the Club, we have reviewed our policy on term limits and concluded that, given the expanded nature of Club activities and new calls on trustee skills and time, we need the option of retaining experienced Ordinary Members. Therefore we propose at our 2026 AGM that we introduce wording to allow us to offer a second, follow-on term, given satisfactory contributions and Ordinary Member willingness to continue. Other actions to improve the running of the Club include reviewing our privacy and data protection policy and having several Council Members undertake First Aid training, with one to be certificated as a First Aider.

7. Financial review

7.1 Operating income and expenditure

Our principal operating income is from subscriptions due each September. Most are paid by standing order and now again come with Gift Aid (see 7.3 below). Our largest associated expenditure is on printing and distributing the Book of the Old Edinburgh Club.

We work to the principle that receipts from charitable activities should exceed payments in relation to these.

Despite the continued absence of Gift Aid (see 7.3 below) and increased costs in publishing and distributing the Book of the Old Edinburgh Club, we have managed to double our surplus on our

charitable activities from £1,010 to £2,424 (15.7% of our charitable receipts).¹ This reflects our success in attracting new members and the decision made in 2023-24 to increase subscriptions.

7.2 Investment of legacy funds

We seek an appropriate return on our unallocated legacy monies. We operate an account with CAF Flagstone, an initiative of the Charities Aid Foundation which enables voluntary organisations to take advantage of a selection of shorter to longer term savings accounts on attractive rates of interest. This also allows us to spread our monies in more than one account such that all are covered by the Government's Financial Services Compensation Scheme for up to £120,000 in any one institution. In 2025-26, we earned interest of £9,772, up from £5,512 in 2024-25.

7.3 Gift Aid

On submitting our Gift Aid claim for 2024-25 to His Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) we were informed that we were not eligible on the grounds that the value of the benefits we provide to members substantially exceeded the limit (25%) allowed for charity subscriptions. HMRC stated that they would not seek repayment of any past Gift Aid. (The amount we received in 2023-24 was £1,857.)

We made our case to HMRC for reinstatement of our eligibility. We argued successfully that the Book of the Old Edinburgh Club should not be included in any benefits calculation as it falls under the Publications clause in the Gift Aid guidance. HMRC also accepted our proposal to make our lectures free for non-members to attend (instead of making a charge as we had been doing), subject to space being available. We now invite any non-members to make a donation towards the work of the Club although they are not obliged to do so.

We are thus able to claim Gift Aid for tax year 2026-27. We shall be contacting all members regarding consent to Gift Aid, which will be of great value in supporting the running costs of the Club.

7.4 Financial management and control

Our Financial Statement shows an overall surplus for the year of £604, calculated after the inclusion of interest in our Receipts and grants made in our Payments.

Council members receive monthly statements of our accounts, including our funds held with CAF Flagstone and a schedule showing the timing of expenditure relating to our commitments.

All payments by the Club require two office-bearers to authorise.

7.5 Forward commitments

We have committed expenditure on projects in 2026-27 of £10,244, including commitments rolled forward from 2023-24 and 2024-25. These include part-payment of Jean Guild Grants, our funding of the Dean of Guild database, and the 2027 update of the Bibliography of Edinburgh History.

¹ Grant payments fall outside the definition of operating expenditure.

7.6 Reserves

Our policy is to maintain reserves of at least £15,000. This should be sufficient to cover the costs of printing and distributing one volume of the BOEC, meeting the immediate costs of running the Club, and make an allowance for unforeseen contingencies.

7.7 Financial standing

The total funds of the Club were £161,230 at the end of the year. As we no longer hold Restricted Funds, these are our free reserves. The monies are used to further the Club's charitable activities.

Report approved by the trustees on 25 August 2026 and signed on their behalf:

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Steven M Robb', is enclosed within a thin yellow rectangular border.

Steven Robb Trustee and President, The Old Edinburgh Club

Statement of OEC Receipts and Payments, 2025-26

	2025-26	2024-25
	£	£
Receipts		
Receipts from charitable activities (Note 1)	15,401	13,697
Donations	900	993
Investment interest	9,772	5,512
Other	-	200
Total Receipts	26,073	20,402
Payments		
Grants made (Note 2)	11,738	7,788
Payments for charitable activities (Note 3)	12,977	12,687
Governance: independent examination	300	300
Governance: meeting room hire	263	287
Financial fees: Merchant service providers	191	84
Total Payments	25,469	21,146
Surplus / (Deficit)	604	(744)

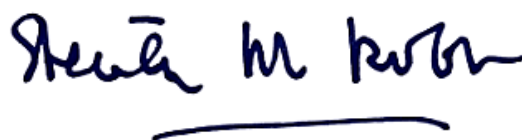
Statement of Balances

	2025-26	2024-25
	£	£
Bank & Cash Balances		
Balance at start of year	160,626	161,370
(Deficit)/surplus for year	604	(744)
Balance at end of year	161,230	160,626
<i>Comprising:</i>		
Virgin current account	13,257	22,231
Bank deposits (Note 6)	147,973	138,395
	161,230	160,626

Approved by the Council on 25 August 2026 and signed on its behalf by:



James Gallacher, Treasurer



Steven Robb, President

The notes following form an integral part of these accounts.

Notes to the accounts

1. Receipts from charitable activities

	2025-26	2024-25
	£	£
Membership subscriptions	12,665	10,650
Book of the Old Edinburgh Club: sales	625	547
Publishers Licensing Services scheme	181	916
Winter lecture entry fees	480	744
Summer visits	1,450	840
Total	15,401	13,697

2. Grants paid in 2025-26

		2025-26	2024-25
Recipient	Project/ Research	£	£
Jean Guild Grants			
Dr Kit Baston	Book borrowing surgeons (Jean Guild Grant Round 2)	500	-
Jennifer Annie Bruce	Linen Weavers in Picardy (JGG R1)	-	500
Graeme D.R. Cruickshank	Port Hopetoun (JGG R1)	-	500
James Gillespie's High School (payment to Printing.com)	'Gaelic in Edinburgh': cost of publicity banners (JGG R1)	-	523
Jill Harrison	Trinity Stones (JGG R1)	700	-
Morningside Heritage Association	Morningside masons and stones (JGG R2)		100
Northlight Productions Ltd	'Old Edinburgh Reborn': virtual photographs of 1700s Edinburgh (JGG R1)	1,435	755
Scottish Brewing Archives Association	Capital Brewing book (JGG R2)	2,656	-
Signet Library	John Watson's Institution archive (JGG R2)	800	-
Veterans Housing Scotland	Centenary+ publication (JGG R2)	3,498	-
Elizabeth Williams	Transnational influences on the slavery abolition movement (JGG R2)	500	-
Other			
Edinburgh City Libraries (RDW Book and Paper Conservation Ltd)	Manuscript Cataloguing project: payment for conservation costs	-	500
Malcolm Noble	Bibliography of Edinburgh History Updates	650	650
Amanda Ramsey	Improving BOEC Searchability (Jean Butchart Bursary)	-	4,260
Southside Graveyards project (see Note 4)	Gravestone restoration	899	-
University of Edinburgh	Old Edinburgh Club Prize	100	-
Total		11,738	7,788

3. Payments for charitable activities

	2025-26	2024-25
	£	£
Copying, postage and stationery	357	174
Book of the Old Edinburgh Club: printing and distribution	9,438	9,226
Website, Internet and publicity	1,067	1,144
Payments to local history organisations: BALH & SLHF	90	125
Winter lectures: hire of room	1,324	1,039
Winter lectures: meeting expenses	227	174
First Aid training	114	-
Payments for walks	360	805
Total	12,977	12,687

Trustees receive no remuneration. They are reimbursed for expenditure properly incurred on behalf of the Club, and not for any travel or accommodation costs. Six trustees were reimbursed for total expenditure of £1,137, which is included above. (In 2024-25, these numbers were six and £955).

4. Restricted funds

	At 30 June 2026	At 30 June 2025
	£	£
Southside Graveyards Fund	0	899
Total	0	899

This amount was included within the Bank and Cash balances at last year end (see Note 2 above).

5. Interest

	2025-26	2024-25
	£	£
Deposit accounts with UK banks	4,020	4,424
Total	4,020	4,424

The amount for 2025-26 is *not* included in the statements above, as was the case last year. It will be included in subsequent years when paid to the Club.

6. Deposit accounts/

6. Deposit accounts with UK Banks

	2025-26	2024-25
	£	£
Aldermore	27,979	25,000
Sainsburys Bank	-	24,713
Hampshire Trust Bank	-	25,000
Cambridge & Counties	-	15,363
Castle Community Bank	40,120	16,344
GB Bank	8,280	-
State Bank of India	16,031	-
Birmingham Bank	22,225	-
Redwood Bank	33,338	31,975
Total	147,973	138,395

Our investments are managed through the CAF Charity Deposit Platform, provided by Flagstone.

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of the Old Edinburgh Club

Respective responsibilities of trustees and Independent 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 ('the 2005 Act') and the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended) ('the 2006 Regulations'). The charity trustees consider that the audit requirement of Regulation 10(1)(d) of the 2006 Regulations does not apply. It is my responsibility to examine the accounts under Section 44(1)(c) of the 2005 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 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 of the accounts of the Old Edinburgh Club for 2025/26 no matter has come to my attention:

1. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements
 - a) to keep accounting records in accordance with Section 44(1)(a) of the 2005 Act and Regulation 4 of the 2006 Regulations, and
 - b) to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with Regulation 9 of the 2006 Regulationshave 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.

Signed



Date: 17 July 2026

Stuart J Lockhart
53 Kemp's End
Tranent
East Lothian
EH33 2GZ

Appendix 1 Our benefactors

Jean Butchart had a great interest in Edinburgh history and was a member of the Old Edinburgh Club for many years. She was very committed to honour her father's work, as City Librarian from 1942 until 1953 and author in 1955 *Prints and Drawings of Edinburgh*. He held that this collection, held in the Edinburgh Room of the Central Public Library, constituted the "finest collection in existence of topographical and historical prints of the City". In 1982 Miss Butchart presented her father's own collection to the City Library Service, which later featured as an exhibition in its own right. She previously funded the digitisation of the Old Series of Book of the Old Edinburgh Club, a major development in making the work of the OEC much more widely accessible.

Jean Ritchie Guild was also a long-term member of the OEC. She joined the University of Edinburgh Library staff in 1948 and played a significant role in the postwar development of the Library's collections. She became Reference Librarian, well-respected for her skills and knowledge, especially in relation to the Faculty of Arts. Later she was responsible for publicity, Library publications, visitor programmes and the Library's relationship with the wider community. She co-edited *Edinburgh University Library, 1580-1980: a collection of historical essays* (1982).