



Edinburgh Southside Choir

Trustees' Annual Report

1 January – 31 December 2025



Contact Details

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Charity Trustees

Lynette Clark, Gillian Foy, Judith Smeaton (Chair) *Resigned May 2025*

Geraldine Clark (Chair), Alan Wallace (Treasurer), Janey Read (Secretary)

Janette Thomson

Appointed May 2025 Kate Müller, Gail Keating, Jo Eales

Appointed November 2025 Lyn Leslie



Edinburgh Southside Choir

Edinburgh Southside Choir is a SCIO which was incorporated on the 15th August, 2022 replacing the Southside Community Choir which began in Autumn 2010 becoming a Charity in October 2017. We meet on Wednesday evenings from September – May and since 2018 our main home has been the Greyfriars Charteris Centre. During refurbishment and Covid we have also met in the Life Church and operated as a Virtual Choir.

As an organisation our purpose is, through singing,

to advance, improve, develop and maintain public education in, and appreciation of, the art and science of music in all its aspects.

to help improve the mental health and social welfare of both choir members and general public through public concerts.

The Choir was established by our Musical Director to enable people of all ages to come together to enjoy singing and all the benefits that accrue from this. Anyone who is interested can join, there is no requirement to read music and we don't have auditions. The Choir includes many who have never sung or have not sung for some years as well as more experienced singers. Singing is good for the soul and the body and we just love to sing – together.



The Choir is a member of 'Making Music'



Structure, governance and management

At the AGM in April 2022 the members agreed that the Choir should change its governance structure to be a Scottish Charity Incorporated Organisation (SCIO). A new constitution was agreed by the members in June 2022 and the Edinburgh Southside Choir was incorporated on 15th August, 2022. The transition was completed in October 2022 when the legacy body, Southside Community Choir, was wound up and its assets transferred to Edinburgh Southside Choir. The day to day management of the Choir is undertaken by the Trustees, known as the Choir Committee. Under the standard SCIO constitution all members of the Choir are eligible to stand for election as Trustees and/or to propose other members for election. We are regulated by and accountable to the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator, OSCR.

Since 2020 Committee meetings were undertaken on Zoom, reverting to in person meetings in 2025. The AGM is held in person during a rehearsal. The Trustees of the Edinburgh Southside Choir met 7 times in 2025. The Musical Director may attend meetings but may not be a Trustee. The office bearers, Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary and Treasurer are nominated by the Trustees. The Trustees are elected annually at the AGM in May and new Trustees are given an Induction and information pack. No Trustees, nor anyone connected to them, receive remuneration apart from reimbursement of out of pocket expenses incurred for choir purposes.

Office bearers 2025

Chair: Judith Smeaton/Geraldine Clark

Treasurer: Alan Wallace

Vice Chair/Secretary: Janey Read

Activities, Achievements and Performances in 2025

We continue to rehearse in Binks Hall at the Charteris Centre from January to mid May and return after the Summer break from September to early December.

We performed two concerts at the Charteris Centre during 2025. At the Summer concert we were joined by guest performer Mhari Gibson, who sang solo and in a moving duet with our Musical Director Seonaid Lynn. Mhari is a long term friend of the choir and her performance was, as always much appreciated by audience and choir. There was an excellent attendance of around 90 people.



At our Christmas concert, in early December our Accompanist Donald Thomson played his own composition We Three Kings and a Piano Duet – Libertango by Astor Piazzola with Lyn Leslie. Both of which were thoroughly enjoyed and this, together with a mixed programme of music, gave everyone a great start to the Festive celebrations. Attendance beat recent records at over 110.



The day after the concert the choir was asked to sing in Blackwell's book shop. Donald brought his piano and we entertained Christmas shoppers for an hour, sustained by mince pies and mulled wine.

Twenty members of the choir joined together at our local Italian restaurant – the first time we have been able to arrange a social outing since Covid. Hopefully the first of many to come.

We now have an up to date website with a section just for choir members and we would like to thank everyone, both members and friends of the choir who have supplied photographs.

We have begun to develop our Instagram and Facebook accounts.

Our thanks to Seonaid Lyn our Musical Director who has supported and encouraged us throughout the year. To Donald Thomson our Accompanist, and for his solo playing during our concerts. To Mhairi Gibson for her inspiring singing and Lyn Leslie for her piano playing.

We remain very grateful to everyone who has supported and helped the choir during the year. The staff at Greyfriars Charteris Centre, Janette Thomson for being wardrobe mistress and folder keeper, Kate Müller for her work with Social Media, Lyn Leslie and Alan Wallace for research into external funding, Jo Eales and Gail Keating for their organising of the concert and all friends and relatives who attended the concert.

Although people come and go as members the total numbers don't fluctuate too much and by the end of 2025, we had 36 paid up members (12 men and 24 women).



Financial review

Whereas our financial year runs 1st January – 31st December our operating year, for which fees are paid, is September – May. The main source of the Choir's income, over 80%, remains members' fees and subscriptions augmented by the recoveries through the Gift Aid scheme. The Committee agreed to keep fees for 24/25 unchanged from the previous year and to continue allowing people to choose whether they paid annually, by session or monthly. There are concessionary rates and we continue to encourage those members who pay concessionary rates, and who can afford to do so, to include a donation when paying fees. Where applicable such donations also came within the Gift Aid scheme.

The payment to our Musical Director includes not only her time in preparing for and leading rehearsals and concerts but also the use of the music which remains her personal property.

Payments to our Musical Director and Accompanist are reviewed on an annual basis.

Concert expenditure includes printing fees, premises hire and performing fees. These were offset by the admission fees for the concert in the Binks Hall. Overall, the concerts made a surplus of £1,041.

There was an operating deficit of £706 for the year.

Reserves

The period opening reserves were £5,496

The period end reserves were £4,790. The level of reserves is affected by the fact that some members chose to pay the whole of the 24/25 fees in September 2024. Reserves are equivalent to around 6 months running costs in normal circumstances.

Acknowledgements

Many thanks go to our past Chair Judith Smeaton and to Lynette Clark, and Gillian Foy for their long service on the Committee. Once again thanks go to Alan Wallace our Treasurer, to Judith Smeaton who manages the Gift Aid returns and to Sheena Campbell, the Independent Examiner, for their accuracy and efficiency in producing the annual accounts

Future Plans

We continue to have Committee meetings prior to rehearsals.

Our date for the May 2026 concert is agreed and will be in St. Giles Cathedral. The choir has sung here before and it is always a special occasion. The date for the December 2026 concert is agreed.

As part of our ongoing financial plans we are researching funding and sponsorship.

We continue to sing, entertain and enjoy the music, friendship and laughter of Wednesday evenings.

Declaration

Signed on behalf of the charity trustees:

Print name	Geraldine Clark
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Designation	Chair
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Date 31st May, 2026

