

# **DORNOCH HERITAGE SCIO**

## **Annual Report 2023-24**

### **1. Introduction**

DH SCIO became a SCIO (SC008747) in November 2011 and our purposes are as set out in our Constitution. [www.historylinks.org.uk](http://www.historylinks.org.uk) (About us). These are:

- The advancement of education, arts, heritage and culture relating to the history of Dornoch and surrounding district.
- The advancement of heritage and culture relating to Dornoch (and adjoining areas of the Highlands if relevant);
- The maintenance of a museum in Dornoch to make the above heritage accessible for all to enjoy.
- To promote community engagement and to encourage heritage research within the community.

These purposes are to benefit the community of Dornoch and all postcodes within the IV25 postcode sector. The collection area is some 100 sq miles; from Dornoch, north to The Mound, west to Rogart, Lairg, Bonar Bridge and back eastwards to Dornoch. Our main work is the running of a community-led independent museum, Historylinks. We employ a Curator, Museum Assistant, Outreach worker and Children's Club Leader.

### **2. Activities during 2023/4**

We have continued to open our doors to the public from April to October offering permanent exhibitions and displays, a children's room and an annually changing temporary exhibition. In 2023 we highlighted the career of Dornoch-born Royal Naval diver and Air Sea Rescue Officer, Chris Murray, whose exceptionally brave rescue work earned him the Queen's Gallantry Medal.

Photo exhibition

We continue to offer a children's Heritage club, the Young Curators, now in its fifth year. Two young people have now 'graduated' as Club and Museum volunteers. The heritage-themed fun and educational programme continues to be very popular for the 8 – 12 age group. Work experience students from Tain and Dornoch Academy also assist during school holidays.



DH SCIO is a membership organisation, now comprising 257 members. We continue to organise monthly heritage talks for our members during the winter/spring season which are also open to the public. Talks in 2023/24 have been wide ranging and fascinating. The membership sub-committee also raises much-needed funds through holding twice yearly coffee mornings and sales, and a sell-out 'Taste of Burns' evening in January.

The main focus of the Board in the past year, working with the Curator, has been on raising the necessary funds to construct and fit out of an extension to the existing Historylinks Museum, the Historylinks 'Heritage Hub'. After three years of work to raise funds from Heritage Lottery, Museums Galleries Scotland, a range of trusts, foundations, the local authority, Dornoch Common Good Fund and with the generous support of Dornoch Heritage members and businesses in our community, we raised in excess of £600,000. Construction began in November 2023 with a completion date of May 2024.



### 3. Impact of Historylinks

The permanent collection in the Museum is of high quality and comprehensively presents the environmental, historical and social evolution of Dornoch and the surrounding area of East Sutherland. Every year our Curator and the team research and present an innovative special exhibition. The Historylinks online archive [www.historylinksarchive](http://www.historylinksarchive) contains over 15,000 entries and is accessible to the public.

Visitor feedback from the survey we carried out in season 23/24 confirmed high levels of visitor satisfaction and enjoyment. A low percentage of users lived in Dornoch and the age range of visitors was predominantly over 50, although many family groups visited and appreciated the museum. From this feedback we need to continue to reach out to local people and under-represented groups such as young people.

Historylinks makes a significant impact on the community of the town. Our outreach programme engages many people not previously involved in heritage in creative workshops and learning experiences, and we offer a significant programme of talks and fund-raisers in the winter season which regularly attract 60 or more participants. We are a membership organisation and enjoy wholehearted support from our 250+ members. In a recent fund raising appeal we received in excess of £25,000 towards the building of the Heritage Hub to complete the package of funding from other sources.

We have been approached by other independent museums and heritage centres for advice on areas such as raising funds from eg Heritage Lottery Fund, how to attract and sustain a team of volunteers, and how to construct and manage an annual budget.

In terms of the local economy, Historylinks makes a significant contribution. We employ four staff from the area, we employ local tradespersons, we purchase supplies locally whenever we can and we source stock for our retail area from local artists, craft workers and Brora Social Enterprise. As a destination attraction we contribute to bringing visitors to Dornoch who generate income for self-catering providers, cafes, shops etc.

The Heritage Hub represents a step change for Historylinks. We will have substantially more gallery space to exhibit our collection, a great deal of which has had to be kept in store. We will also have a community room for the first time, enabling us to provide heritage workshops on our own premises, special one off cultural events, opportunities



for the community to research and curate their own exhibitions, and a home for the Young Curators group.

#### 4. Volunteers

Historylinks has a small staff team and volunteer support is therefore of paramount importance to support the range of our work; including front of house, archiving, fund raising, talks and tours and support to the Curator in the exercise of her role. The Museum sub-committee has the key role in the latter. The value we place on volunteers cannot be overstated and without them we could not offer the range and quality of work to which we aspire. We have a strong body of volunteers as can be seen from the SCIO organisational chart [www.historylinks.org.uk](http://www.historylinks.org.uk). Succession planning is a constant theme on our agenda and we have welcomed two new Board members during 2023/4: Fiona McKinlay and Richard Hickson. Board members continuing in office are Alison Davies and Andrew Senior, Co-Chairs, and Jerry Bishop, Treasurer. We also plan an independently led Board strategic review in the coming year to review our governance performance.

#### 5. Future priorities

In 2023/4 the Board and Museum sub-committee have been preparing for the Museums Galleries Scotland re-Accreditation process in June 2024. This involves meeting the high standards in terms of Collection Care, Conservation, Access, and related policies and plans.

We have committed the reserves accumulated by our members' fund raising over the years, to the building of the Heritage Hub. We will continue our policy of retaining a reserve of 4 months operational funding which would be called upon for emergency purposes.



The fit out of the Heritage Hub and the roll out of the Community Activity Programme will be top priorities for 2024/5, fulfilling the plans we have drawn up to create an exciting new space for visitors and for the local community.

Longer term, the next chapter for DH SCIO is realising our aim to become more self-reliant from a financial perspective and in the coming year the Board intends to review Board performance and draw up a new Business Plan to take this goal forward.

### Declaration

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees

Signature(s)		
Full name(s)	Alison Davies	Jerry Bishop
Position (e.g. Chair)	Chair	Treasurer
Date	4/12/2024	4/12/2024



## INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF DORNOCH HERITAGE SCIO

I report on the accounts for the year ended 31st March 2024.

### **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's trustees consider that the audit requirement of Regulation 10(1)(a) to (c) of the Accounts Regulations does not apply. It is my responsibility to examine the accounts as required under Section 44(1)(c) of the Act and to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

### **Basis of the independent examiner's report**

My examination was carried out in accordance with Regulation 11 of the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006. 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 seeking explanations from you as 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 connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention :

- (1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that, in any material respect, the requirements
  - to keep accounting records in accordance with Section 44(1)(a) of the 2005 Act and Regulation 4 of the 2006 Accounts Regulations; and
  - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and to comply with Regulation 8 of the 2006 Accounts Regulations

have 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.



Mr Calum Stewart CA  
The Institute of Chartered Accountants of Scotland

Goldwells Ltd  
10 Knockbreck Street  
Tain  
Ross-Shire  
IV19 1BJ

3<sup>rd</sup> December 2024

# **DORNOCH HERITAGE SCIO**

## **STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2024**

	<b>Unrestricted</b>	<b>Restricted</b>	<b>31/03/2024</b>	<b>31/03/2023</b>
<b>RECEIPTS</b>				
Donations	£ 2,213.29	£ 9,656.14	£ 11,869.43	£ 14,502.39
Grants	£ 9,272.00	£ 369,664.64	£ 378,936.64	£ 14,609.59
Loan (Heating System)	£ -	£ 5,801.73	£ 5,801.73	£ -
Receipts from fundraising activities	£ 2,355.93	£ 2,924.30	£ 5,280.23	£ 2,428.49
Gross trading receipts	£ 26,080.71	£ -	£ 26,080.71	£ 23,787.68
Income from investments (to capital)	£ 32,292.41	£ -	£ 32,292.41	£ -
Receipts from other charitable activities	£ 4,539.75	£ -	£ 4,539.75	£ 2,355.25
FIT payments	£ 1,141.98	£ -	£ 1,141.98	£ 1,228.80
Gift Aid	£ 2,935.10	£ -	£ 2,935.10	£ 3,057.19
Bank Interest	£ 973.43	£ -	£ 973.43	£ -
Other income	£ 253.09	£ -	£ 253.09	£ -
<b>TOTAL RECEIPTS</b>	<b>£ 82,057.69</b>	<b>£ 388,046.81</b>	<b>£ 470,104.50</b>	<b>£ 61,969.39</b>
<b>PAYMENTS</b>				
Expenses for fundraising activities	£ 1,023.27	£ -	£ 1,023.27	£ 684.00
Gross trading payments	£ 2,608.98	£ -	£ 2,608.98	£ 3,877.33
Payments relating to charitable activities	£ 48,988.91	£ -	£ 48,988.91	£ 47,895.05
Grants and donations	£ 3,532.09	£ -	£ 3,532.09	£ 4,267.75
Governance costs	£ 70.00	£ -	£ 70.00	£ 70.00
Other payments	£ 32.80	£ -	£ 32.80	
<b>SUB-TOTAL</b>	<b>£ 56,256.05</b>	<b>£ -</b>	<b>£ 56,256.05</b>	<b>£ 56,794.13</b>
<b>PAYMENTS RELATING TO ASSET &amp; INVESTMENT MOVEMENT</b>				
Purchase of fixed assets	£ -	£ 232,652.30	£ 232,652.30	£ -
Purchase of investments	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -
<b>TOTAL PAYMENTS</b>	<b>£ 56,256.05</b>	<b>£ 232,652.30</b>	<b>£ 288,908.35</b>	<b>£ 56,794.13</b>
<b>NET (- PAYMENTS) RECEIPTS TRANSFERS TO/(FROM) FUNDS</b>	<b>£ 25,801.64</b>	<b>£ 155,394.51</b>	<b>£ 181,196.15</b>	<b>£ 5,175.26</b>
<b>(-DEFICIT) SURPLUS FOR YEAR</b>	<b>£ 25,801.64</b>	<b>£ 155,394.51</b>	<b>£ 181,196.15</b>	<b>£ 5,175.26</b>

## **DORNOCH HERITAGE SCIO**

### **STATEMENT OF BALANCES YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2024**

	<b><u>31/03/2024</u></b>	<b><u>31/03/2023</u></b>
<b>Cash</b>		
Till Float	£ 50.00	£ 50.00
Staff Floats	£ 100.00	£ 100.00
Change Float	£ 193.00	£ 193.00
	<b>£ 343.00</b>	<b>£ 343.00</b>
<b>Bank Accounts</b>		
Bank of Scotland ( <i>Museum</i> )	£ 12,548.15	£ 10,177.30
Clydesdale Bank ( <i>DHS</i> )	£ 11,642.67	£ 10,004.25
Virgin Money ( <i>Hub</i> )	£ 195,743.70	£ 22,664.70
	<b>£ 219,934.52</b>	<b>£ 42,846.25</b>
<b>Investment Accounts</b>		
Hampshire Trust Bank	£ 10,766.40	£ 10,659.80
Hampshire Trust Bank	£ -	£ 20,801.59
Cambridge & Counties	£ -	£ 10,102.55
	<b>£ 10,766.40</b>	<b>£ 41,563.94</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£ 231,043.92</b>	<b>£ 84,753.19</b>



**DORNOCH HERITAGE SCIO**

**THE FOLLOWING PAGES DO NOT FORM PART OF THE STATUTORY ACCOUNTS**

# HISTORYLINKS HERITAGE HUB PROJECT ACCOUNTS 2023/24

<b>Income</b>			<b>£ 378,860.24</b>
<b>Grants</b>			<b>£ 334,238.15</b>
	<i>Shroder Foundation</i>	£ 25,000.00	
	<i>Dornoch Common Good Fund (1)</i>	£ 7,000.00	
	<i>Dornoch Common Good Fund (2)</i>	£ 43,000.00	
	<i>Garfield Weston Foundation</i>	£ 50,000.00	
	<i>Hugh Fraser Foundation</i>	£ 10,000.00	
	<i>Foyle Foundation</i>	£ 10,000.00	
	<i>Coastal Communities Fund</i>	£ 45,000.00	
	<i>National Lottery Heritage Fund (1)</i>	£ 38,244.67	
	<i>National Lottery Heritage Fund (2)</i>	£ 40,842.28	
	<i>Highland Council POT 170</i>	£ 25,000.00	
	<i>Baxter Foundation</i>	£ 10,000.00	
	<i>HIE Green Energy Fund</i>	£ 30,151.20	
<b>Matured Investments</b>			<b>£ 32,292.41</b>
	<i>Hampshire Trust Bank</i>	£ 21,472.71	
	<i>Cambridge &amp; Counties</i>	£ 10,819.70	
<b>Donations</b>			<b>£ 7,223.20</b>
<b>Gift Aid</b>			<b>£ 1,208.75</b>
<b>Fund Raising</b>			<b>£ 2,924.30</b>
<b>Interest</b>			<b>£ 973.43</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>			<b>£ 205,781.24</b>
<b>Extension Contract</b>			<b>£ 150,705.45</b>
	<i>GMR Henderson (1)</i>	£ 60,876.00	
	<i>GMR Henderson (2)</i>	£ 19,905.22	
	<i>GMR Henderson (3)</i>	£ 69,924.23	
<b>Professional Fees</b>			<b>£ 20,443.20</b>
	<i>Torrance Partnership (QS)</i>	£ 9,660.00	
	<i>Blueprint Architecture (Cont Mgr)</i>	£ 1,800.00	
	<i>Scotsafe (CDM)</i>	£ 2,400.00	
	<i>Future Group (Asbestos)</i>	£ 423.60	
	<i>Highland Archaeology Services</i>	£ 6,039.60	
	<i>DACIC (Room Hire)</i>	£ 120.00	
<b>Refurbishments</b>			<b>£ 34,632.59</b>
	<i>Click Netherfield (Cabinets)</i>	£ 26,151.60	
	<i>CK Interiors (Flooring)</i>	£ 4,812.54	
	<i>Joinery, Electrical &amp; Materials</i>	£ 3,668.45	
<b>Surplus</b>			<b>£ 173,079.00</b>
<b>Opening Balance</b>	<i>VM Account 01/04/2023</i>		<b>£ 22,664.70</b>
<b>Closing Balance</b>	<i>VM Account 31/03/2024</i>		<b>£ 195,743.70</b>