



CROMARTY COURTHOUSE TRUST
TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT
2024-2025

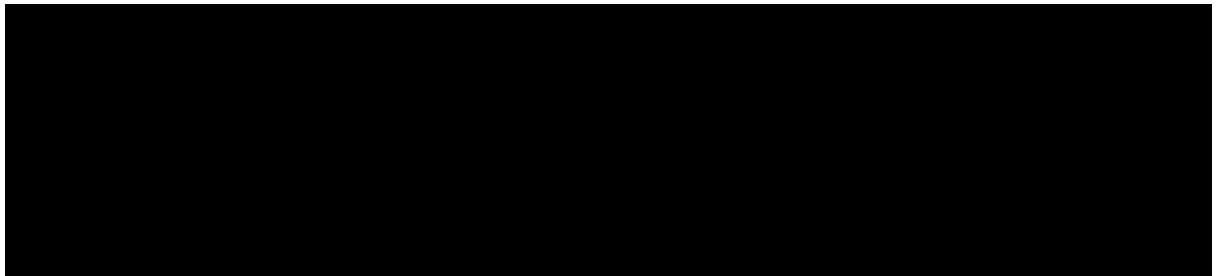




Charity contact information

Cromarty Courthouse Trust
Scottish Charity Number SC018438

Cromarty Courthouse Museum



Charitable Objectives

(a) To provide for the advancement of public education by the provision of the museum comprising the existing collection together with such other exhibits or items as may from time to time be comprised in the trust fund and to preserve them as a collection.

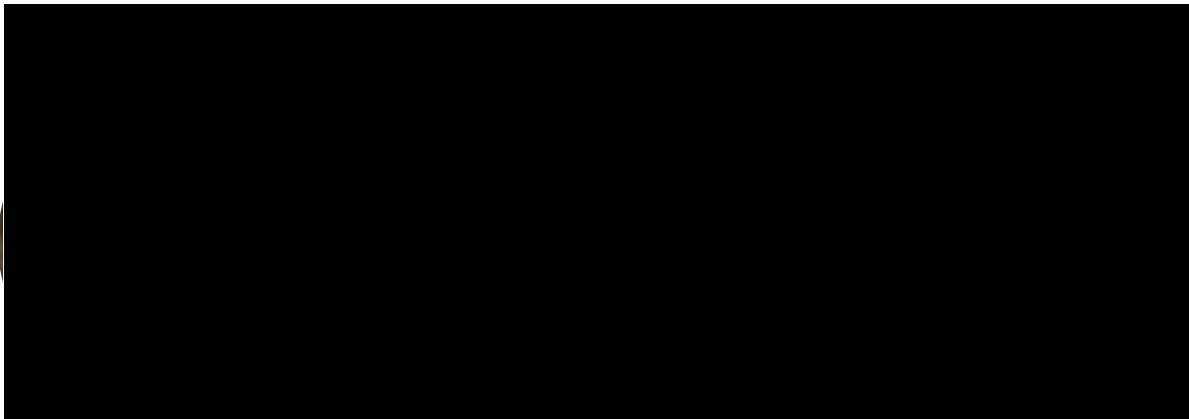
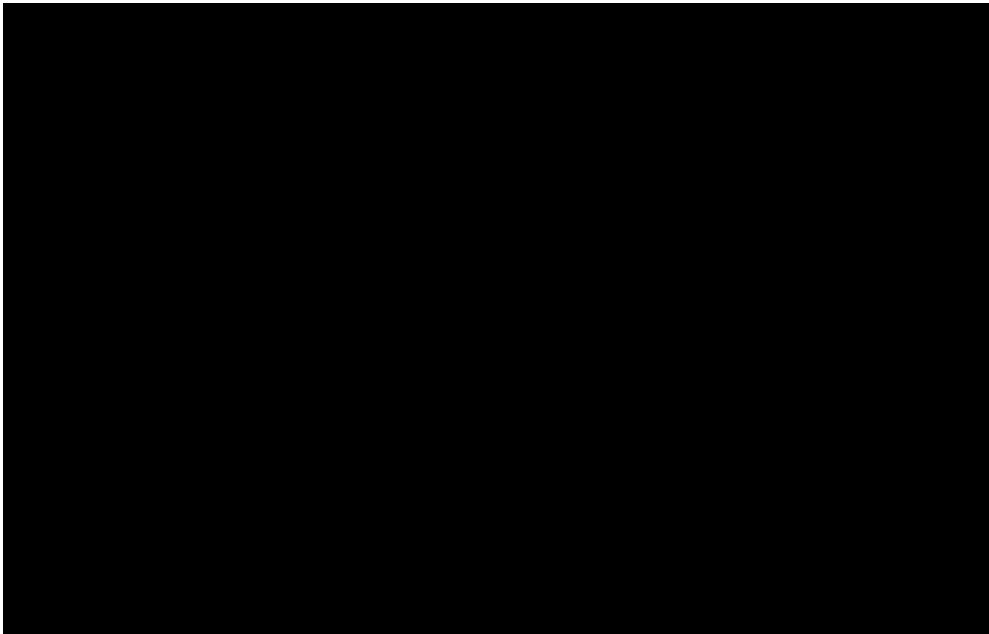
(b) To form establish and support and to aid in the formation, establishment and support of any other charitable companies, institutions, associations, trusts or societies formed for objects similar to the objects set out above.



Governing Document

Cromarty Courthouse Trust is governed by a Deed of Trust document dating from when the museum was established in 1989.

CHARITY TRUSTEES



worked in academia and industry for 11 years before an interest in computing initiated a major career shift. After gaining a masters in computer science she went on to complete a doctorate, using AI techniques to develop a computer based communication system for people unable to speak through trauma or illness. She spent the rest of her career as a research academic, her final role was to run a small research unit on e-learning within UHI, combining her cognitive sciences background with her love of the Scottish mountains. She has a cunning plan to be the oldest woman to climb all the Munros.





o-Chair

My Fishertown history going back generations. His Great-Grandfather was a fisherman, the first Cromarty lifeboat and Arthur grew up in Cromarty before working in large scale government funded agro-industrial irrigation programmes across Africa and Latin America. He had worked as a management consultant in the UK, Europe and the USA. His primary focus was on service delivery and client engagement. He served six years as a member of the Independent Monitoring Board at HMP High Down.

He enjoys travel and the great outdoors. His unfulfilled ambition is to play better tennis.



Secretary

I have been on the board of trustees for the museum since my family had moved to Cromarty. I have many years experience in the maritime industry background has been in the museum looking at working with the community. Children are near permanent fixtures in the museum garden. Beyond that I have been putting a full range of skills to use - cooking, gardening, washing up as well as dressing up! One of the greatest joys of being part of the museum team is the fantastic positive feedback when you engage with visitors - not dissimilar to the buzz of teaching a class of bright eyed 12 year olds.



Treasurer

tax and bookkeeping—because like spreadsheets and receipts. Tourism Economics, swapping r stats, and went on to work with d and Highlands and Islands rural development and sustainable tourism (and occasionally getting to call a walk “fieldwork”). Now working as a Community Liaison Manager for major construction projects of a utility company, [REDACTED] specialises in turning complex issues into meaningful conversations with communities. As a trustee, she brings experience in stakeholder engagement, finance and public sector funding. Outside work, Maren enjoys the great outdoors—preferably with er, and minimal midges.



Youth Trustee

use’s Youth Trustee, is a 15-year-academy with a big passion for arts. He’s been in numerous nd sings in the community lso works in housekeeping at the de in ensuring visitors enjoy a clean, safe, and welcoming space. He earns extra money with another local trust, helping with leafleting and advertising. It all funds his real passion—climbing! When not working or volunteering, he’s very likely clinging to a rock wall, hanging out at the climbing gym, or scrambling up a mountain. As Youth Trustee, [REDACTED] rings the young voice to the table, single-handed [REDACTED] ers the average age in board meetings, and bravely endures the occasional “boring board” talk.



Trustee

Completed University with a degree in History and subsequently taught History and English in primary schools for over 30 years. I have enjoyed working with colleagues and students in the Department and, as a Pastoral Tutor.

Post retirement my husband and I moved to Cromarty, a town we had visited for almost 20 years. Having visited the Courthouse Museum on numerous occasions, I became a volunteer shortly after our move and since then have very much enjoyed meeting, greeting and supporting visitors from all over the UK and world.



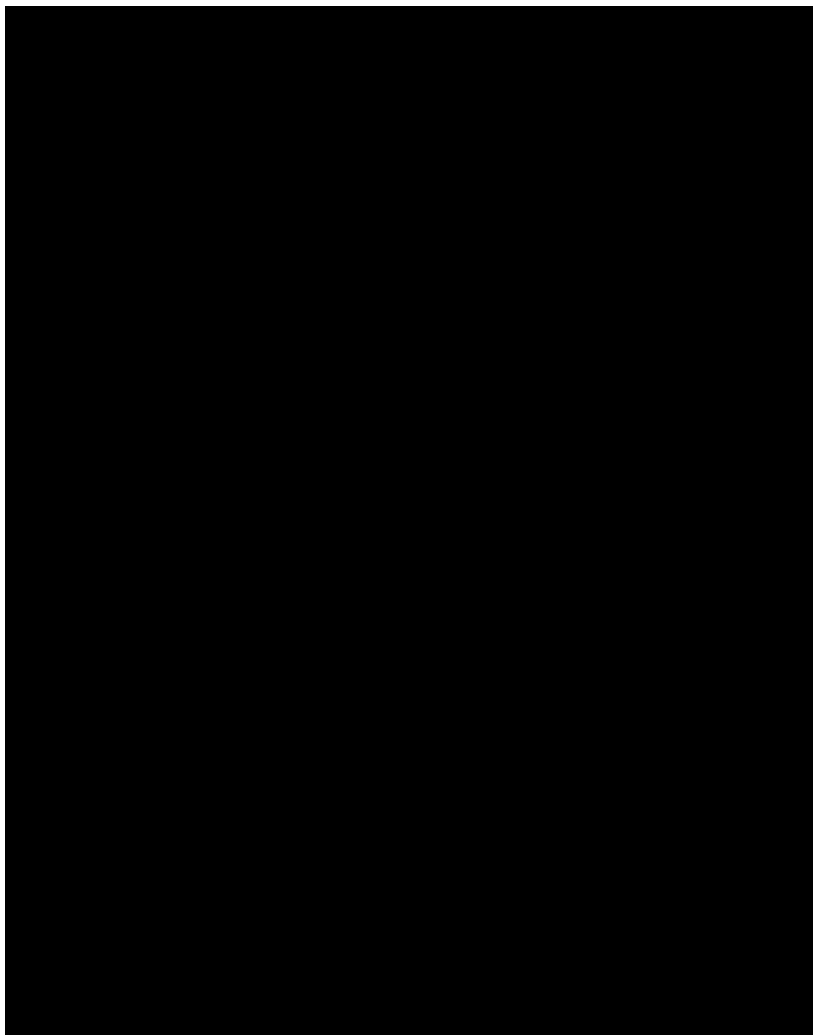
Museum, Councillor

I am a member of our Highland Council and have been a Councillor for the Courthouse. As a charity, we have a strong link between us. Outwith the Courthouse, I have been involved in a Lyme disease awareness campaigner. Having suffered from this disease since being a teenager, she now speaks at a multitude of events, in the UK and abroad, to educate the public about Lyme disease. As though that wasn't enough to keep her busy, she is also about to complete her BA Honours in English Literature and Creative Writing.

TRUSTEE RECRUITMENT AND APPOINTMENT

All trustees are recruited according to identified gaps in skills and/or experience identified during regular skills audits. We are actively recruiting trustees from outside the geographical areas as part of our ambition to diversify our strategic thinking.

Trustees are appointed by a majority vote by the existing trustee body at the next monthly board meeting. Under the terms of our SCIO trustees are usually asked to serve for a three year term with the option to renew for another term.





Manager/Curator

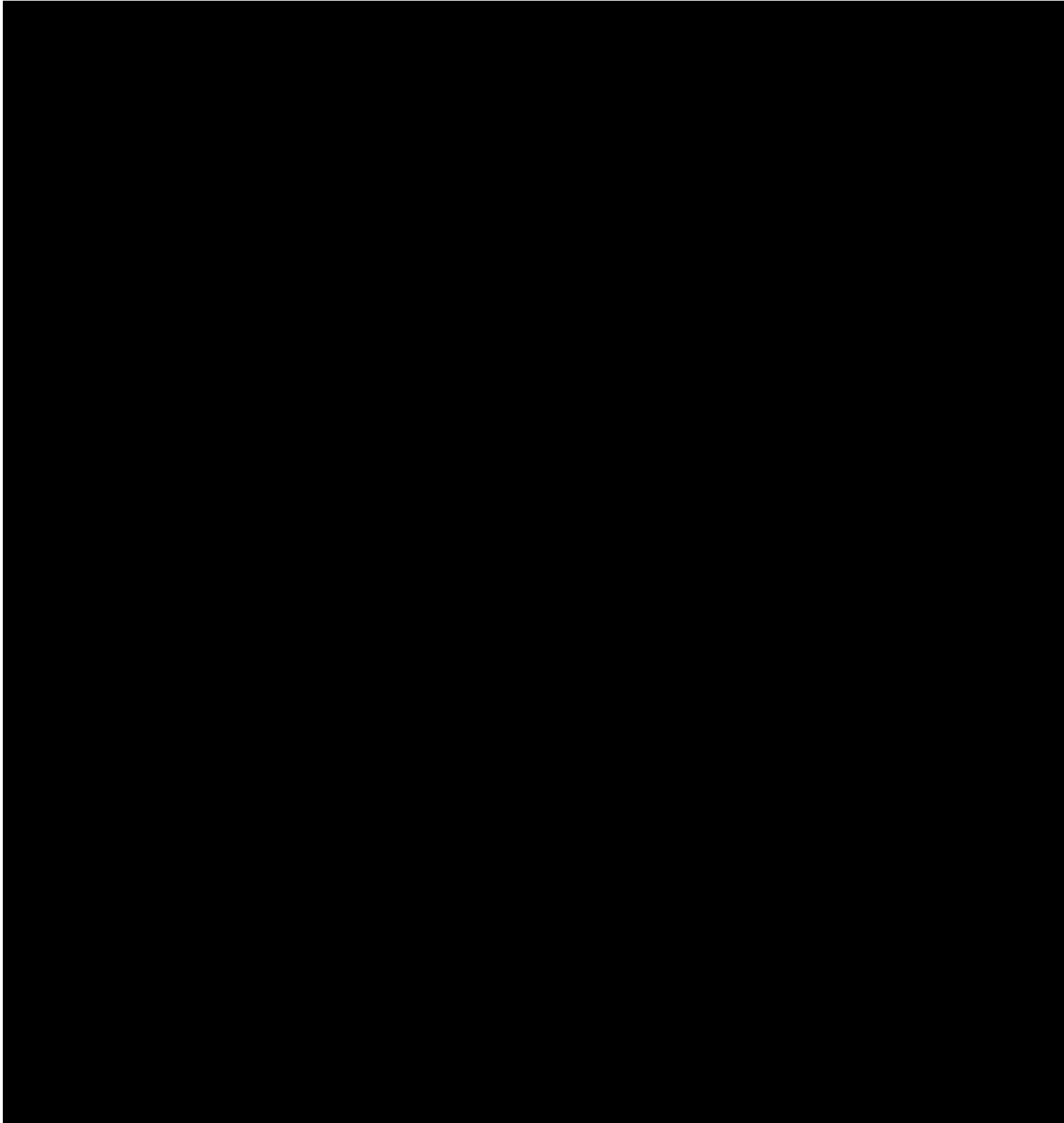
experienced museum and charity leader who is a subject specialist to strategic senior roles and has built award-winning teams. She specialises in supporting rural, community teams develop their vision and undergo significant change as part of their sustainable development journey. In her consultancy she facilitates difficult conversations across teams as part of identifying future strategy and mentors other third-sector professionals. She is passionate about inclusion and finding innovative community-focused solutions. When she isn't throwing her all into making heritage accessible for everyone she can be found wild swimming somewhere in the Highlands.



Graduate Digital Curator

interested in both digital and community engagement to ensure that our collection is relevant, accessible and meaningful. She has been working in the heritage sector, graduating from the University of Edinburgh with a first-class degree in History of Art and Italian in 2020. She specialises in digital storytelling, community outreach, and decolonial museum practice. Freya is the co-founder of museum consultancy Decolonial Focus, author of The Art Wanderer blog, team member at the Museum of British Colonialism, and a member of MGS's Decolonisation Collective. An enthusiast of everything outdoors, she can usually be found on a bike, up a mountain, or on a beach.

ORGANISATIONAL CHART



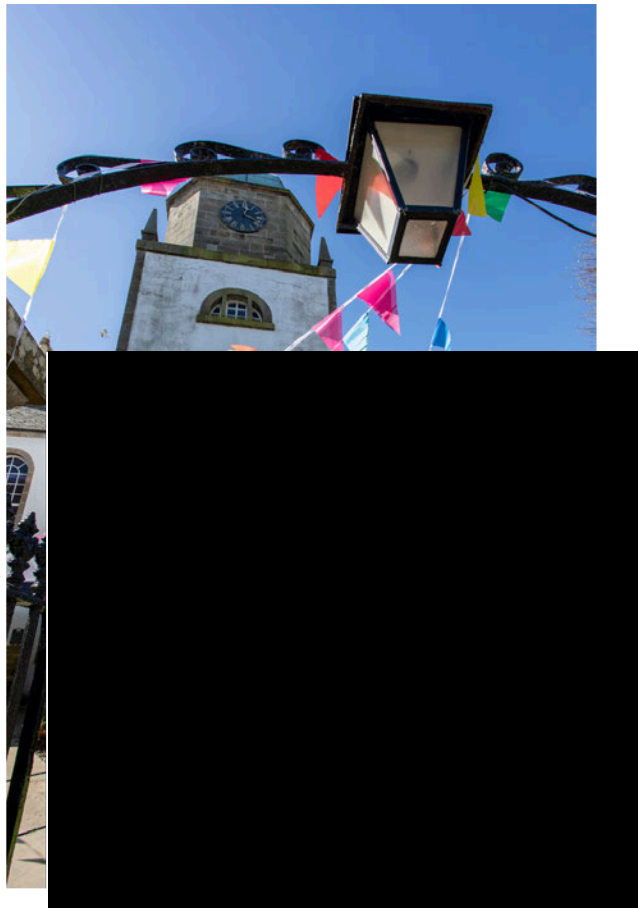
Volunteers

WHO WE ARE

Cromarty is a small town in the north of Scotland, located on the Black Isle peninsula, looking out to the sea and mountains of the Scottish Highlands. Cromarty is home to one of the best preserved trading and fishing towns in Scotland, as well as having excellent examples of Georgian architecture and a flourishing arts community.

The museum covers themes of local, Gaelic, and architectural history, as well as archeology, numismatics, legal and military history. Our collection of over 4,000 objects is housed in the spectacular eighteenth-century Courthouse building with a rare example of cell blocks added to the rear.

We are an independent charitable museum with a minimal level of core funding.



BREATHING NEW LIFE

Cromarty Courthouse Trust has had an exceptional year 2024-25 as we breathe new life into the museum. We have gone through a period of intense change in order to develop a sustainable future after many years of stasis. This process has been both exhilarating and at times hard for the team but highlights have included:

- 👥 Reaching 20,361 people
- 💷 Attracting over £70,000 of funding and support
- 💼 Employing a Digital Curator
- 🏗️ Started initial stages of a redevelopment project
- 🏆 Winning two national awards

We started the year by re-focusing on our charitable aims; to manage an independent charitable museum, and to work with partners and stakeholders to use the collection as an education tool; and have used these to guide us as we have expanded our activities, outputs, and outcomes now that we have been able to employ a professional manager through support from National Heritage Lottery Fund and Museums Galleries Scotland.

Our intention was to stem the losses that the core operations had been experiencing in previous years, assess our current position, explore new opportunities for development and pilot new ideas. We achieved our aim of re-setting the museum and developed a clear vision for the future.

WHO DO WE HELP?

As an organisation, Cromarty Courthouse Museum is a pillar of the community, frequently engaging and collaborating with local groups including the Youth Cafe, Camera Club, and the Four Ways Club (for older people at risk of social isolation). We also encourage the community to contribute to themes and displays within the museum through co-curated exhibitions, programming which supports accessibility and diversity, and remote volunteering opportunities.

We have put a lot of work into understanding our audiences and mapping them against sector and national benchmarks. This year we changed some of the questions in the visitor survey to better understand some of our target audiences and to align better with the reporting data that funders are looking for. We made sure the survey was available both digitally and on paper, and incentivised responses.

Through this work we have identified 5 key audiences triangulating our visitor survey data with Visit Scotland's profiles and team members' observations.

1. Community of Place - this is our geographically local audiences who had previously been fairly disengaged from the museum, only visiting when they had friends and family, and not seeing it as a space for them. We have spent a lot of time listening to them and asking what they would like from their local museum in order to reflect the community in all our activities and collaborating with trusted community partner organisations. The next step is to further segment this audience and develop programming that appeals to the parts of the community we aren't reaching just now.

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2. Community of Interest - mostly those with links to East Coast fishing villages, part of the Scottish diaspora or particularly interested in history. They have a significant overlap with VS's Engaged Sightseer visitor profile and are frequently visiting Cromarty for the National Trust property next door. They are our core audience and their needs have been well-met by the museum in the past.
 3. Families - we focused on developing this audience as a priority after identifying the potential for the museum to be a good intergenerational experience. We introduced colour and playfulness to the museum to welcome younger visitors, developed a tour of the building using a teddy to talk about complex themes, and made sure that there was at least one free activity at all times. Activities changed regularly to encourage repeat visits; the most successful were the origami, plastic bottle jellyfish, multi-week Summer Challenge and the milk bottle monsters. We had two private hire bookings for children's birthday parties due to this strategy.
 4. Adventure Seekers - attracted to Cromarty for the natural landscape and often doing the NC500. A museum visit isn't their primary activity in the day but they can often be some of our longest dwelling visitors if we programme the right exhibitions and activities and/or present information to suit more diverse learning styles. Successes this year were the Climate theme to the photography exhibition, the Built on Slavery walking tour, and the free volunteer-led tours.



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5. Neurodiverse visitors - there were several incidents of neurodiverse visitors finding the motion sensor audio recordings overwhelming and triggering, along with many visitors finding the mannequins scary so we took the decision to move the all soundscapes to QR codes allowing everyone to choose to listen. This also meant we could make both versions of the audio in the Courtroom available at once. Other actions we took were to increase the different types of learning styles we were using to present information and create a Sensory Kit that visitors can borrow to support their visit. All of these actions have the potential to improve every visitor's experience.

Long term we would like to convert a proportion of all of these audiences into a Community of the Willing who support the museum in its future planning. In the 2025 season we will be attempting to capture the postcodes of all visitors to map our audiences more accurately.

With the support of the Manager we have been able to develop strong working relationships with many partners and stakeholders. Many of these were event-based in this first year but have subsequently developed into joint projects and programming in 2025.

- Weekly free community craft mornings
- Highland Heritage Day
- A joint Easter Egg Hunt with the National Trust property next door
- A community Pub Quiz
- A talk as part of the History Society programme and improving collaboration with our Friends group
- Providing a venue for the Crime and Thrillers weekend
- Black Isle Heritage group responding to the lack of Destination Management Organisation and the local Place Plan
- Open Gardens weekend



- Hosting Clan Urquart and developing a new Smartify tour on Sir Thomas Urquart
- Hosting a visit from ARCH including a behind the scenes tour
- Cromarty Youth Cafe summer and October programme visits
- A stall at the Cromarty Regatta
- Participating in Doors Open festival
- Hallowe'en at the Courthouse to celebrate our Intangible Cultural Heritage
- Cromarty's late night Christmas Shopping trail
- Two of the monthly Community Markets in Cromarty

We had hoped to do a Christmas event but the building was too cold and damp so we pivoted to creating a window display instead. All of these engagement events and collaborations contributed to our growing soft influence within our communities and our future financial sustainability.



WHAT HAVE WE DONE?

This was a year of intense activity for the charity. As we worked to revitalise the museum our work fell into three clear strands:



Engagement: curatorial, community connection and museum experience



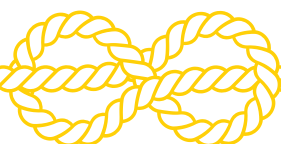
Building: partnership with Highland Council, advocating for repairs, improving accessibility, redevelopment



Governance: root and branch review, SCIO, trustee training and succession planning, financial sustainability

Highlights include:

- Museum open to the public Easter to Hallowe'en
- New interpretation methods to discuss the building as part of the museum experience; contextualising the mechanics of the building to exert power and control without passing judgement on individuals
- Volunteer-led tours
- 12 successful applications for funding for projects and/or support
- Being selected to be a Museum Transformer on the Delivering Change programme
- Governance review including board mentoring and improved risk management
- Improved financial management, separating core operations from projects for a clearer understanding of profitability and monthly management accounts
- Fully hybrid and flexible board meetings
- Provided a platform for the Cromarty News monthly e-newsletter
- Developed digital and heritage skills internally and externally



GOVERNANCE

As part of our work reviewing and improving the governance policies and procedures of the charity we were advised to update our structure from Trust Deed to SCIO in order to better protect the charity. We were supported in this work by Highland Third Sector Interface, MGS, and partner organisations. This will be a direct transfer from the existing Cromarty Courthouse Trust SC018438 to the new Cromarty Courthouse Trust SC054181 over the next financial year in line with OSCR best practice.

Sustainable Future

We have made significant progress in identifying and working towards a sustainable future for Cromarty Courthouse Museum. These have been multi-faceted but started with a facilitated Away Day for the Trustees and Manager to think about what role we play in our community and what social impact the museum could have in the future. This allowed us to capture ideas and start developing a forward strategy. Following on from those discussions it was clear we needed to undertake an Options Appraisal to address the longstanding issues with the building ranging from moving to another location to a capital redevelopment of the existing building and including a managed closure. A capital redevelopment project that made the courthouse building fit-for-purpose as a museum was identified as our strongest option but would only be possible if our landlord (Highland Council) were willing to partner with us on the project. This report was completed in July then audited by Just Enterprise to ensure we hadn't overlooked any key factors.

"This comprehensive and detailed report was thoroughly researched, very well written and - unusually in our experience - provided a realistic, level-headed assessment of the current position. It pulled no punches on what the challenges are but also looked creatively at how the museum might adapt to secure its future. The staff and trustees are using this report as a working document to help guide their decision-making. It's a piece of work they should be proud of."



BUILDING


We were awarded a grant from MGS to both improve the environmental conditions inside the building through controls such as dehumidifiers, humidistats and targeting portable heating, and blinds as well as streamlining our retail processes to make the associated roles more accessible. We have been removing 40 litres of water from the building daily and have seen the humidity drop from 90% to our target of 60% but at significantly increased energy consumption during this process. This work manages rather than fixes the issues with building repair but in the short-term it has made it a healthier and more comfortable workplace.

By streamlining the retail strategy and processes as well as disseminating training across the team we have been able to increase profit per head. Our biggest barrier currently is the lack of reception/welcome space in the museum where we can effectively locate the shop. The majority of the work was undertaken in this financial year.

In addition we have strengthened our environmental actions as we work towards Net Zero. Flexible working has had a positive impact on team wellbeing and reduced our commuting carbon footprint, we have continued to recycle as much as possible with packing being turned into crafts and decorations. We have collected the water from the dehumidifiers in a water butt to give us an outdoor source of water for the edible garden. Our energy costs continue to be exceptionally high as we reduced the humidity in the building.

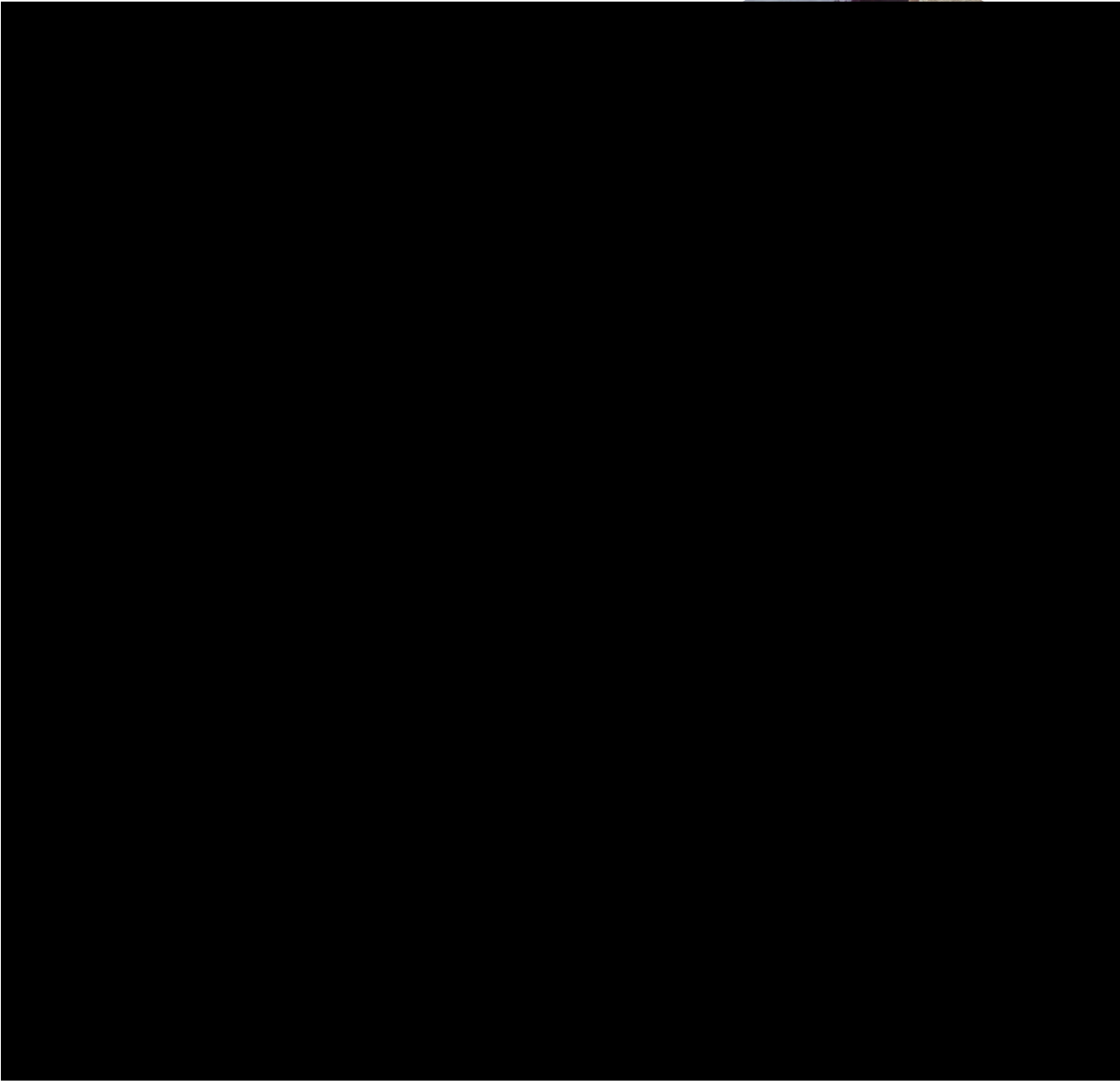

Sustainable Future

Over this year we have been able to develop a strong working relationship with the Highland Council. This work was stated before the Options Appraisal but became a priority after we identified the partnership as critical to the success of our strongest option. We had



a series of very positive discussions in autumn 2024 which gave us enough confidence to seek funding for a Feasibility Study.


The Feasibility Study would establish what options we had for increasing accessibility within the Grade A listed building with support from a conservation architect and develop a business plan for a redeveloped museum to confirm the sustainability of our plans. This work took place in spring 2025 and has given us the evidence we need to move forward with our plans.



ENGAGEMENT

We were awarded funding to recruit a Graduate Digital Engagement Curator for 12 months through support from Highland and Islands Enterprise (HIE) and Museums Galleries Scotland (MGS). This post has allowed us to deliver many more community engagement programmes as well as increase our digital resilience and improve our curatorial outputs. This has included developing co-curated digital content hosted on Smartify, digitising collections data and objects for a publicly accessible CMS and for the Inverness Castle Experience, undertaking remote volunteering projects to democratise the data cataloguing process, running in-house volunteering projects for Object Photography and Young Curators, commissioning a funded short film, and curating new interpretation and exhibitions.

As part of our resilience work we trialled different visitor experience models based on the needs of our identified audiences. These included volunteer-led tours of the building which were very well received but limited by low volunteer recruitment levels across Cromarty. We also increased our calls to action and messaging around the museum's charitable status and independent nature with multiple opportunities for visitors to donate via QR code or cash. This was very effective but donation levels were directly linked to disposable income of different audience segments. We received multiple notes in donation boxes stating visitors wished to donate but couldn't afford to. We also took the decision to reduce our opening to 5 days per week for the majority of the season because we were unable to get front of house volunteer support to make it viable to open. Finally we made the decision to adopt a dog friendly approach as we can manage any risk to the collection.




We diversified our fundraising through using card payments at the annual pub quiz, doing a 100 square fundraiser, collaborating with the Historical Society, becoming one of the support organisation in the Highland Community Lottery, subscribing to Easy Fundraising and crowdfunding for the clock project. We also started the process of opening an investment account with Rathbones as part of a long-term strategy to populate an investment fund.

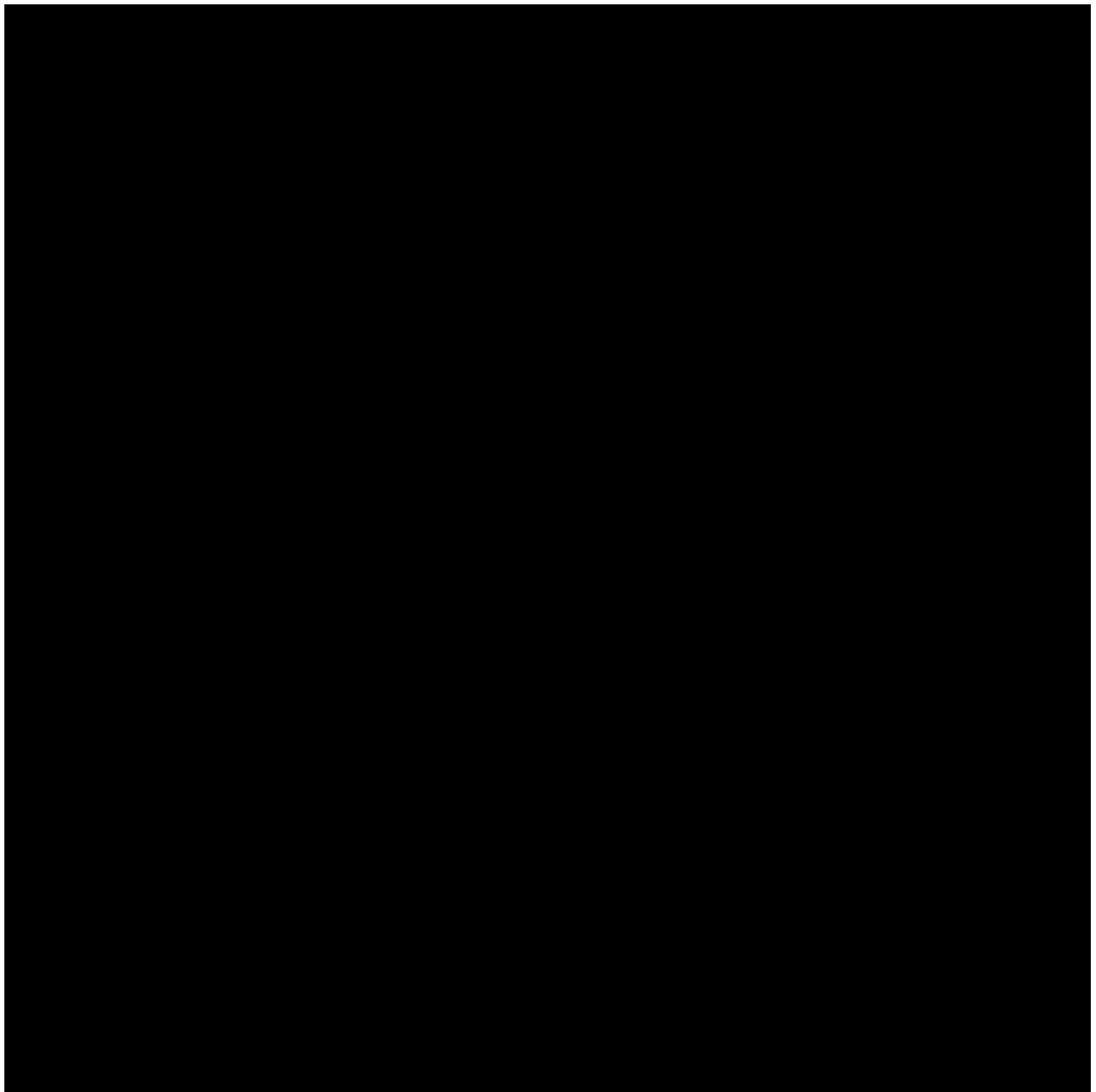
We were selected to be one of 19 organisations across Scotland being part of their anti-oppression programme as a Museum Transformer. This work has challenged us to think deeply about how we proactively make culture accessible to all and has directly influenced our future planning.

- Another MGS programme we participated in was Workforce for the Future.
- Cromarty63 funding awarded and premiered June 2025
- Camera Club responding to the theme of Climate Change, really well received by visitors.
- NHM partnership Interconnected Grant - Changing Tides exhibition including oral history (launched April 2025)
- Developed Cromarty School 150 exhibition, loans from Highland Museum of Childhood (launched April 2025)

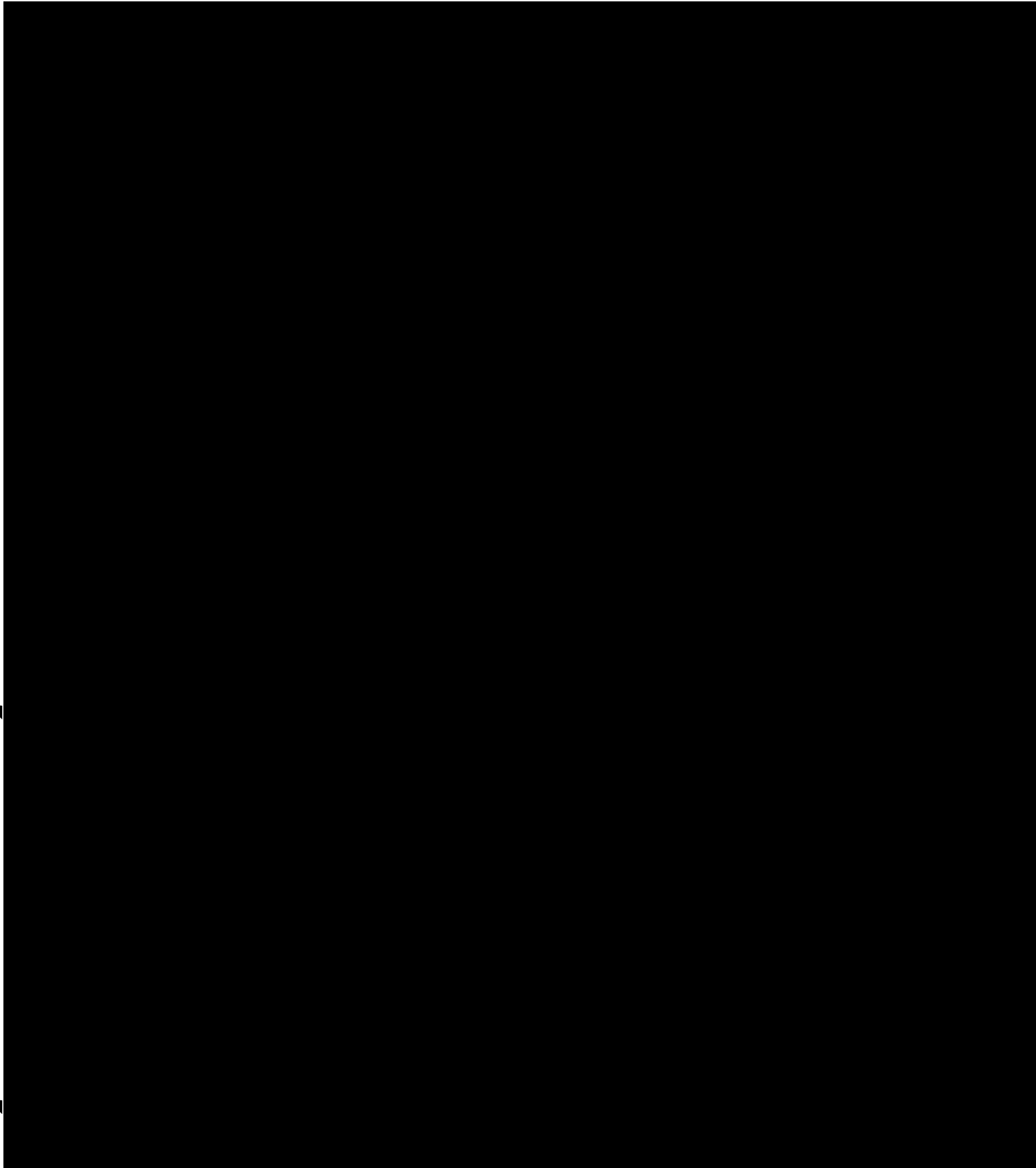
Alongside this work we have also invested in advocacy across the museum and heritage sector, place-based and regional, and at all levels of government. A highlight for the team was promoting CCT's work at Museums Galleries Scotland's parliamentary reception in October. We have also started to establish baseline data on our impact across our networks and partnerships, focusing on challenges our community of place faces: isolation, suicide and anxiety.



As part of improving our communications we started a soft re-brand to reflect our ambitions to be a welcoming charity by using a traditional Georgian yellow, increasing our use of colour throughout the museum, personal connection via handwritten chalkboards for messaging and promotion, and conscious recycling of materials for texture. This rainbow of colours was a soft way to demonstrate our inclusive values. We started to build a new mailing list and volunteer made Christmas cards which we handwrote to partners, stakeholders and supporters. This has been very successful and we are seeing our values being clearly understood by audiences.



Comments from our visitors
April 2024-March 2025



WHAT WAS ACHIEVED?

To sum up, the financial year 2024-25 looked like this for Cromarty Courthouse Museum:

👛 Graduate Digital Engagement Curator recruited

🏗️ Pathway for sustainable future identified

🎉 30+ events

🍏 A culture change within the charity, prioritising care and compassion

🤝 Partnership with the Highland Council to seek funding to redevelop the building

🕒 The Courthouse clock is striking again

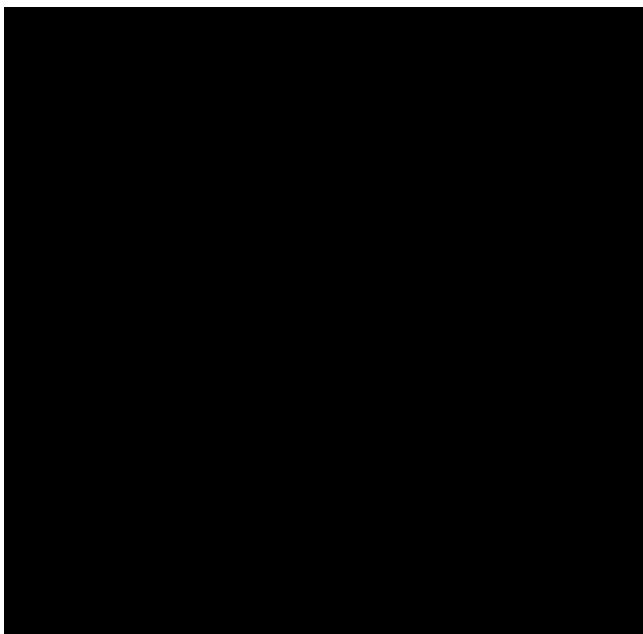
🎧 Memories of Cromarty Courthouse tour created

📊 Invited to present a paper at the Air Faire conference

📷 Community exhibition by Cromarty Camera Club and lighting workshops

🏆 Marsh Volunteering Award for Scotland

🏆 Collections Trust Highly Commended Award



CHALLENGES

We have clearly mapped our challenges this year and their interconnections as part of developing our future strategy.

- The poor state of repair of the courthouse building which impacts working conditions, increases energy costs and restricts income generating opportunities.
- Closely linked is the lack of basic facilities to operate a museum currently; we need to increase physical accessibility, proper toilet facilities, a kitchenette, a functioning welcome area to generate a sustainable income and securely manage payments from visitors.
- Team capacity will need to grow to match our ambitions for a sustainable future.
- The impact and restrictions of short-term funding in meeting the charity's potential.
- Volunteer fatigue forcing us to rely on paid roles for front-of-house activities.

In summary, we have worked hard this year to turn the direction of CCT around. We have started to address longstanding issues and build towards a sustainable future. We have stemmed the financial losses felt over several years which have been eating into our reserves but we have also come to the realisation that our biggest barrier to sustainability is that our building is not fit-for-purpose and that there isn't a good alternative within Cromarty or Resolis. Therefore our focus for next year will be to progress our development project ambitions along with our 5-yearly Accreditation return.

FUTURE PLANS

As we work towards a sustainable future we will continue to deliver the second half of the NHLF/MGS sustainability project along with multiple other active grant-funded projects. The fixed-term staff roles will be coming to an end so we will dedicate time and resources to succession planning to ensure that the momentum we have built is not lost.

We will be looking to continue to improve our care of the collection and to widen access through digital outputs. And will continue to manage our core costs to avoid any deficit. We will also be starting to prepare our next Accreditation return to Museums Galleries Scotland ahead of invitation in 2026.



Engagement: curatorial, community connection and museum experience

- Three new exhibitions for the 2025 season, including the touring *Following the Fish*
- Community engagement events including Fishy Dishy Day, Hallowe'en and Open Gardens
- Collaboration with stakeholders and partners, in particular Cromarty Youth Cafe and Museums Heritage Highland
- Seek funding for larger scale projects that engage diverse communities in collections





Building: partnership with Highland Council, advocating for repairs, improving accessibility, redevelopment

- Work with the Highland Council to sign an Memorandum of Understanding for the capital redevelopment project
- Prepare our Expression Of Interest to the keystone capital redevelopment project funder
- Seek funding for a Development Manager to prepare the capital project applications
- Continue making accessibility improvements within the current scope of the building
- Pilot a ticketed museum offer to see if this offers more financial sustainability

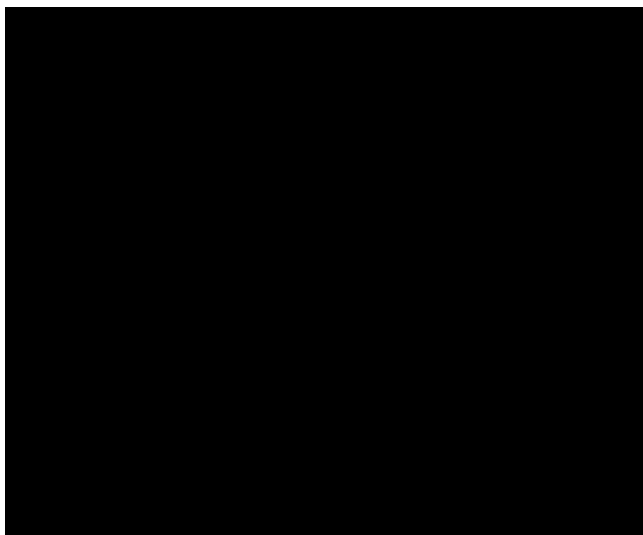


Governance: root and branch review, SCIO, trustee training and succession planning

- Complete the transition to the SCIO in the 2025-26 financial year and wind up the Deed of Trust
- Trustee role development including portfolios, succession planning, and preparation for the redevelopment project
- Using the Accreditation structure to widen training across the museum along all three pillars of the return
- Advocate for the charity's sustainable development needs to sector bodies and at different levels of government



Signed on behalf of the Cromarty Courthouse Trustees

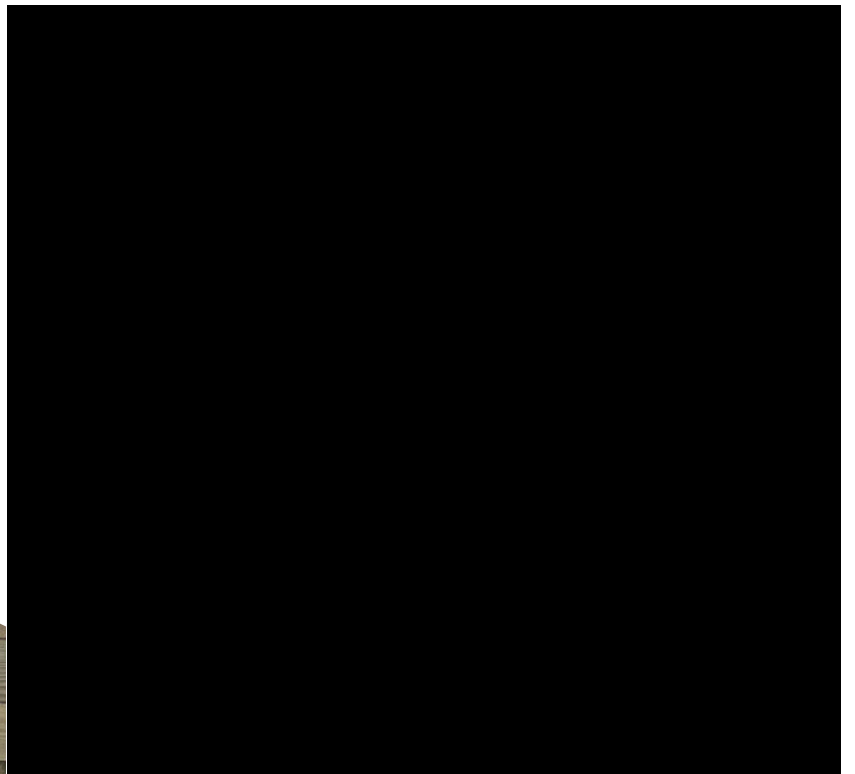


Chair of Trustees
8th December 2025

DONATED FACILITIES AND SERVICES

In the financial year 2024-25 Cromarty Courthouse Trust was lucky enough to be donated

- expertise and support by Cromarty Camera Club
- a bespoke outdoor reception desk with planter by Wood Blocx





FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Financial Report for the Year Ended 31 March 2025

Overview

The Cromarty Courthouse Trust has continued to deliver a broad and varied programme of projects and activities throughout 2024/25, supported by grants, fundraising, donations and trading income. The Trust manages both general and restricted funds, ensuring resources are allocated appropriately to support ongoing operations and specific, ringfenced projects. Not all projects align precisely with the financial year, and several restricted funds span multiple periods, reflecting the dynamic nature of our charitable work.

Financial Position

- Opening Bank & Cash Balances (1 April 2024): £61,159
- Deficit for the Year: £1,112
- Closing Bank & Cash Balances (31 March 2025): £60,048
 - Current Account: £8,506
 - Reserve Account: £51,541

INCOME AND EXPENSE

Cromarty Courthouse Trust

Profit And Loss Account

For the year ended 31 March 2025

		2,025	2,024
		£	£
Receipts			
	Donations received	8,333	7,869
	Fundraising income	147	3,061
	Grant Income	82,698	6,272
	Interest receivable	478	63
	Other income	500	2,751
	Restricted grants received	-	48,931
	Shop Sales	2,754	8,200
		<u>94,909</u>	<u>77,147</u>
Payments			
	Advertising and PR	1,024	437
	Bank charges	95	-
	Cleaning	8	-
	Community Engagement	826	-
	Consultancy fees	19,146	-
	Consumables	136	-
	Digitisation	497	-
	Equipment expensed	9,077	-
	Evaluation	1,425	-
	Exhibition Costs	974	438
	Grant Project Costs	-	8,372
	Heat, Light & Water	4,313	5,017
	Insurance	898	873
	Legal Fees	47	154
	Pensions	2,335	-
	Professional Fees	571	-
	Repairs and maintenance	1,454	4,956
	Shop Purchases	239	4,740
	Software	202	-
	Staff training & welfare	2,480	-
	Stationery and printing	935	967
	Subscriptions	116	-
	Telephone and internet	597	1,337
	Travel and subsistence	379	-
	Wages and salaries	48,230	12,022
	Wellbeing	17	-
		<u>96,021</u>	<u>39,313</u>
Net (Deficit)/surplus		<u>- 1,112</u>	<u>37,834</u>

INCOME AND EXPENSE

Income

The Courthouse Trust's income comprises primarily:

- Grant income from Highlife Highland for general spend
- Restricted grants from National Lottery Heritage Fund, Museums and Galleries Scotland, Highlands and Islands enterprise and other funders
- Fundraising activities and events
- Donations from the public and local groups
- Sales from the Courthouse shop
- Other including bank interest and business donations

Expenditure

The Courthouse Trust's costs relate principally to running and maintaining the museum and carrying out agreed projects. The most significant costs are salaries (including on-costs) professional fees incurred in specific grants and heating the building to an acceptable standard.

Project Highlights

- **Feasibility Study:** Fully funded by grants, with all income matched by consultancy expenditure.
- **Art Fund:** No movement this year
- **Clock Project:** Incurred a deficit due to repairs and maintenance exceeding restricted grant receipts.
- **GDEC and MGS Dehumidifiers:** Both show deficits, reflecting project expenditure ahead of final grant income.
- **Interconnected:** Achieved a surplus, supporting community engagement and exhibition costs.
- **Sustainability:** Significant activity, with substantial grant income and a healthy surplus supporting ongoing sustainability initiatives. Project spend continues into FY 2025/26, as the work is ongoing and not all expenditure falls within a single financial year.
- **Core Activities:** Continued to be supported by a mix of unrestricted and restricted income, covering operational costs and some staff salaries.

BALANCE SHEET

Cromarty Courthouse Trust

Scottish Charity Number SCO18438

Statement of Balances as at 31 March 2025

		2025 £	2024 £
Bank & Cash	Opening Cash & Bank Balances	61,159	23,325
	Surplus/(Deficit) for year	- 1,111	37,834
		<u>60,048</u>	<u>61,159</u>
	Closing Cash & Bank Balances		
	Current Account	8,506	10,686
	Reserve Account	51,541	50,063
	Cash in Hand		409
		<u>60,048</u>	<u>61,159</u>
Reserves	General Funds	22,768	21,098
	Restricted Funds	37,280	40,061
		<u>60,048</u>	<u>61,159</u>
Further Assets	Computers		320
	Shop Stock	670	2,997
		<u>670</u>	<u>3,317</u>

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

Basis of preparation

These accounts have been prepared on a cash basis. Income and expenditure are recognised only when amounts are received or paid through the bank during the financial year. No accruals or prepayments have been made in respect of income or costs relating to the period but not reflected in the bank statements at the year end.

Funding and Reserves

Cromarty Courthouse Trust maintains six months of core operating budget in reserve. In the financial year 2024-25 this amounted to £15,000 and ensures the long-term financial security of the organisation. The primary purpose of this reserve is to guarantee that, should future funding become insufficient to support continued operations, the Trust would have adequate funds available to wind up the museum's activities and close down in an orderly manner, without incurring any outstanding debts or liabilities.

This prudent approach ensures that the Trust can meet all its obligations to staff, suppliers, and the community, even in the event that closure becomes unavoidable. The reserve is reviewed regularly to ensure it remains sufficient for this purpose, reflecting best practice in charity governance and financial stewardship.

General Funds

- General Fund at Year End: £22,768



Restricted Funds

The Trust manages several restricted funds, each dedicated to specific projects or purposes. These restricted funds reflect the Trust's commitment to a variety of projects, some of which are ongoing and may not align exactly with the financial year. Deficits in certain funds represent timing differences or project expenditure ahead of final grant receipts (or vice versa), which is typical for multi-year or phased projects.

These projects include:

- Art Fund commission: £6,808
- Clock Project: -£1,694 (deficit carried forward)
- Graduate Digital Engagement Curator (GDEC): -£1,440 (deficit carried forward)
- Natural History Museum Interconnected fund: £962
- MGS Dehumidifiers: -£339 (deficit carried forward)
- Sustainability Project: £29,510

Other Assets

- Computers: £0
- Shop Stock: £670



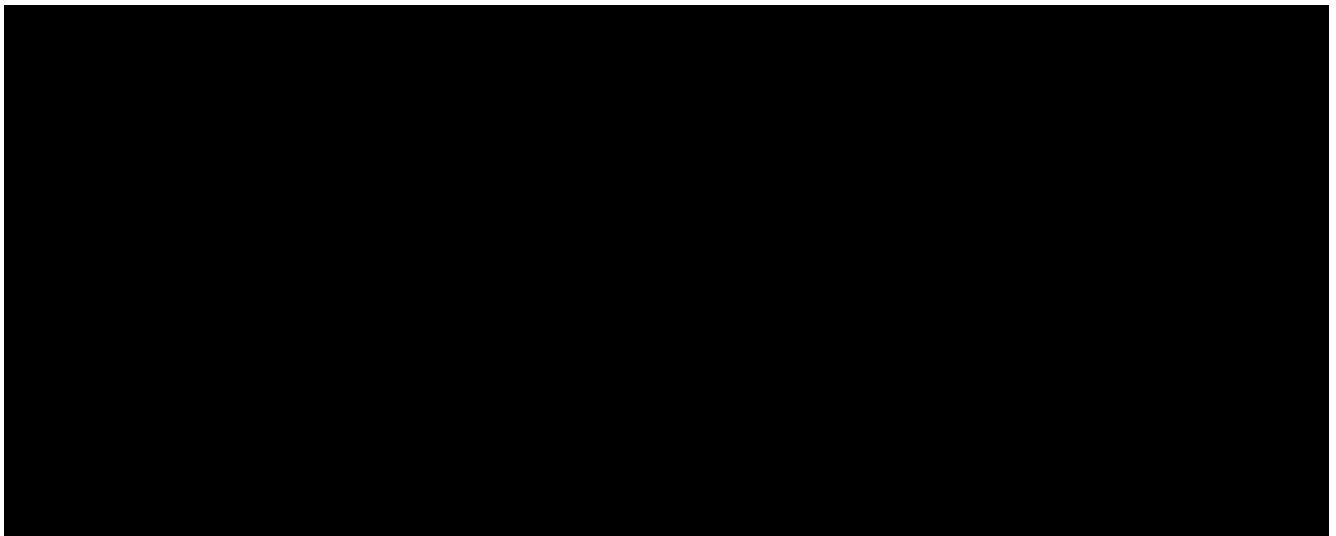
CONCLUSION

Narrative on Project Variety

The Trust's financial structure reflects the diversity of its work. Many projects are funded by restricted grants, which are carefully tracked and reported. The timing of receipts and payments for these projects does not always align with the financial year, resulting in some funds showing surpluses or deficits at year end. This is a normal feature of project-based charitable work and is managed through careful budgeting and reserve planning.

Conclusion

The Cromarty Courthouse Trust remains in a good financial position, with healthy reserves and a robust pipeline of projects. The Trust's ability to manage a variety of restricted funds and deliver impactful projects across multiple years demonstrates its commitment to the community and its effective stewardship of charitable resources.



INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF CROMARTY COURTHOUSE TRUST

I report on the accounts of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2024 which are set out on pages 32-36.

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.

The charity trustees consider that the audit requirement of Regulation 10(1) (d) 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 independent examiner's statement

My examination is 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 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

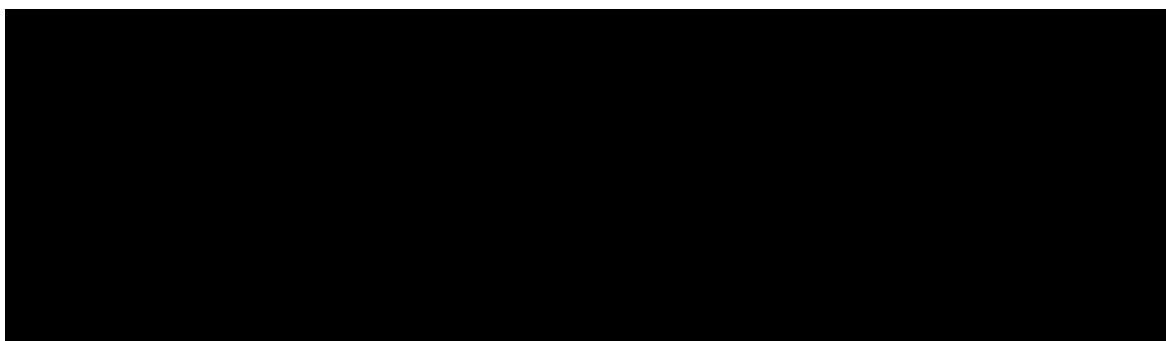
In the course of my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

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 comply with Regulation 9 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.



Quotes from our team about what they are most proud of
April 2024 - March 2025

team strong enough to have uncomfortable
ns which allowed us to build a robust and
vision for the future of the museum, and still
o have fun along the way!"

anager

"I really enjoyed doing research for people with a
Cromarty connection and finding them information
that they were unaware of."

unteer

