



Reconnect SCIO
Trustees' Annual Report

October 2024 - September 2025

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Charity contact information

Reconnect SCIO

Scottish Charity Number: SC048076

24-34 North Bridge Street

Bathgate

EH48 4PS

01506 639000

Pete@reconnectcharity.com

www.reconnecttheatres.com

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Charity Trustees

Name all of your charity trustees for the period, and the date they left if they were not in post for the whole year

1. Peter Sneddon
2. Christopher Wilkinson
3. Steven Coulson
4. Dirk Anton De Gier

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Objectives and activities

Our charitable purpose

Reconnect are here to preserve and if needed restore historical buildings and landscapes, to provide sustainability for them and to teach the reconnection arts. Our tag line is evolving cultural heritage. In short this means we are all about taking the culturally or historically significant locations and providing sustainability for them financially but engaging or teaching the reconnection arts. The reconnection arts include music, theatre, art, writing, crafting, personal development and some complementary therapies.

Structure, governance and management

Reconnect SCIO is governed by a constitution.

Reconnect SCIO is a registered charity established on 18 January 2018. The charity's main objective is to advance the arts, heritage and culture. The organisation is governed by a Board of Trustees, whose members are elected in accordance with the charity's governing documents. Notably, one-third of the Directors/Trustees retire annually by rotation and are eligible for re-election. The Board convenes at least four times a year. The Trustees do not receive any monetary compensation for their services. However, the charity does reimburse reasonable expenses incurred by board members attending meetings. Moreover, Reconnect Theatres is committed to covering costs associated with any additional needs, such as access services for prospective and current board members. The current Board of Trustees comprises four members, two men and two women, bringing a wealth of expertise in various areas, including business, strategic management, and finance management. The Board consists of a Chair, Treasurer, and Secretary, each playing a crucial role in the organisation's strategic direction and financial stewardship. The charity's day-to-day operations are overseen by the Creative and strategic Director, who serves as the organisation's operational leader.

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What we do

Iconic Venues & Operations

Reconnect's growth features strategic rescues of historic venues, creating an efficient "self-funding model which aligned both of west Lothian's venues with shared ticketing, marketing, back-office, and joint brochures for economies of scale.

- **Reconnect Regal Theatre (Bathgate)**

Background: Opened 1938 as B-listed Art Deco cinema; closed 2016 due to financial issues. Reconnect took over in 2018, preserving heritage features (original plasterwork, auditorium) while transforming it into West Lothian's flagship independent multi-purpose theatre.

Capacity & Facilities: 230 seats 415 standing ; licensed bar/ full accessibility

Programming: Year-round mix of professional touring shows, local/amateur productions, comedy, music, tributes pantomimes, original Scottish works, and cinema.

Community Role: Base for emerging artists, amateur groups, workshops, school events (free/low-cost), and tourism boost for Bathgate.

- **Reconnect Howden Park (Livingston)**

Background: Built 1963–64 on grounds of 16th-century Howden House estate and incorporating the stable house and barns; previously managed by West Lothian Leisure (faced closure 2023 due to funding cuts). Reconnect provided temporary operations late 2023, secured full 11-year lease (to February 2035) in January/April 2024 after open bidding—deemed "best value" for sustainability and Creative Scotland alignment.

Capacity & Facilities: 300 -seat auditorium 106 studio theatre; gallery, dance studios, bistro/café, outdoor grounds; recent upgrades (accessibility, toilets); "community wing" via old stables for self-sustaining classes/events and to increase Gallery hanging space works completed in late 2024.

Programming: Theatre, music, dance, exhibitions, comedy; permanent base for Firefly Arts (youth theatre) and west Lothian arts association

Who we help (Key goals)

This year has been a vibrant and productive one for our venues, marked by strong audience engagement and a diverse programme of performances and activities. Our booking levels remained consistently high across all seasons, reflecting both the loyalty of returning partners and the growing interest from new producers and event organisers.

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- Making the arts accessible to every member of the community
- Promoting well-being and creating a space for social connection
- Improve the quality of life by bringing greater joy to participants' lives
- Reconnect offer funded places to all our youth activity on a request basis, this year we offered a total of 19 opportunities to families in the local area.
- Reconnect Offer show tickets for a selection of shows throughout the year for local community organisations and support groups.
- **A robust calendar of theatrical productions**, ranging from community theatre productions with Livingston Players and Shotts St Patricks Amateur Opera Group and youth performances through Dance Schools and Theatre Schools to professional touring shows, bringing in big names such as John Barrowman and the Still Game actors.
- **Increased demand for our event spaces**, with conferences, meetings, award ceremonies such as Local Swimming Clubs, West Lothian Armed Forces day, rehearsals, Weddings and private functions contributing to steady utilisation throughout the year.
- **Growth in repeat bookings**, particularly from arts organisations such as Livingston Art Association and Impact Art Group and local creative groups who value our technical support and accessible facilities. One of our regular customers has set up a fully inclusive photography group on a Saturday morning allowing people of all abilities to join.
- **Enhanced booking and scheduling systems**, improving communication with visiting companies and ensuring smoother event delivery.

These bookings have not only supported our financial performance but have also strengthened our reputation as a dynamic cultural hub within both our venues in West Lothian.

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Groups and Organisations We Supported

Supporting the arts and our wider community remains central to our mission. This year, we were proud to welcome and collaborate with a wide range of groups whose work enriches our cultural landscape. These included:

- Supporting Firefly arts who rent and share space in the RHP they provide youth activities for 5–25-year-olds with a focus on inclusion for you people who are socially, emotionally and economically marginalised. During this year they had 301 participants and sold 260 tickets for their winter show.
- Support Livingston arts association who are based at RHP and utilise the arts studios (ceramic and mixed art spaces) The have around 100 members and run 4 arts classes and 3 pottery groups. Weekly attendance is around 80. They hold an exhibition yearly at RHP
- Internal youth stage and rock schools, we operate classes for Music and theatre this year has seen a lot of growth in the classes with both participating in the GALA days and other community celebrations. Reconnect sees round 55 students a week across the year we also offer one off show opportunities in easter, summer and as part of our annual Panto. Total youth participants opportunities for 20/25 are 2580
- **Local theatre companies, Livingston Player and Shotts St Patricks Amateur Opera group** who staged original and licenced productions, and seasonal performances.
- **Charitable and community groups**, using our venue for fundraising events, awareness campaigns, and inclusive community-led performances, we are home to West Lothian Pride where the venue is used for the annual pride parade and family day. We host Poppy Scotland fundraising event every year, where we have been recognised as official sponsor of the band tour by providing a venue for this event. West Lothian Armed Forces Day as well as the Accre Somme Association events are hosted in our venues. Team Jak Foundation have held their Burns Supper and Christmas Parties over the past year and it was an absolute delight to be able to offer tickets to them and other charitable organisations for our panto performances that they were able to gift to people who would not have otherwise been able to attend the theatre.
- **Educational institutions**, including schools and colleges, who utilised our stage and facilities for showcases, examinations, and end-of-year productions. The Scottish Institute used our venue for shows and

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rehearsals prior to them easing to trade. We are also delighted to host West Lothian Primary Schools Dance Competition in March of each year.

- **Creative workshops and wellbeing groups**, offering sessions in performance, movement, arts and crafts and confidence-building. We have been able to support our own group Love the Skin You're In, primarily for women and Andy's Man Club, for men in our venues with both these groups thriving.
- Craft Fairs are another activity that brings a lot of other groups into the venue.

Many of these groups rely on accessible, well-equipped spaces to deliver their work, and we are proud to have played a role in supporting their artistic and social impact. We saw audience figures of

Funded projects 2024-25

Reconnect supported by our WLC imbedded Arts officer have applied for and received funding for the following project in this year.

Shakespeare for Schools October 24 - February 25 – Secondary schools project

The Shakespeare for Schools project gives secondary school pupils the opportunity to perform some of Shakespeare's most famous plays. This year S3 pupils from Bathgate Academy, The James Young High, West Calder High School and Inveralmond Community High schools worked on their own adaptation of Macbeth. Schools received workshops from Reconnect's Assistant Creative Director then pupils and teachers worked in class time to put together a section of the play which was then all brought together at a performance day at Reconnect Howden Park. Pupils had the opportunity to work with Reconnect's technical staff then performed to an audience of parents, family and friends. The project provides a vital audience development opportunity, as the participant also attended Reconnect's professional performance of Macbeth.

Ellie Stewart Writing Sessions in School November 24 - January 25

West Lothian based writer Ellie Stewart offered four writing sessions in schools to allow pupils to develop some creative writing and poetry skills. The sessions were delivered in a mixture of ways such as in class, to a book group within the library of the school, with some offering it as part of their Book Week Scotland activities.

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The project was part funded by Scottish Book Trust's Live Literature fund and supported by Reconnect Theatres.

Art of Light February 2025

The Art of Light project was delivered by highly experienced artist and science communicator, Kenny Bean. P3-P6 pupils were led through a series of amazing practical experiments to uncover the mysteries of light. Pupils learnt about theatre lighting and got creative with colour shadows using torches and props. They learnt about glow in the dark materials and how to use them on stage before making image transfers with light sensitive paper. They heard about the unusual story of scientist Ivo Kohler who wore upside-down goggles for a month then tried it out themselves using replica goggles to see the world upside down! The workshop allowed for the excitement of creative personal discovery through a series of well-resourced, hands-on experiments.

Summer Programme July - August 2025

Supported by West Lothian Council's Step Into Summer programme Reconnect ran a Summer Art Camp at Reconnect Howden Park allowing children aged 8-12 year to explore different kinds of media to create different pieces of art inspired by nature.

We also ran a Drama and Musical Theatre week at Reconnect Regal which allowed young people to learn different drama, dance and singing techniques and performed an informal sharing for family and friends at the end of the week.

Part of the funding also allowed to offer a small number of funded places on Reconnect Stage School's Madagascar Summer Stage school.

Write On! Creative Writing Conference 2025

Reconnect Theatres run the Write On! Creative Writing Conference for West Lothian school pupils, a daylong event, for S4 school pupils in September 2025. The event was attended by a total 66 pupils from 5 high schools. The day included an opening session with 5 professional writers who each read a short piece of their work. Pupils then attended two workshops, one in the morning and afternoon and then regrouped for a Q&A session.

Sessions were designed to help develop pupils creative writing skills. Feedback proved that the conference not only provided huge inspiration for the pupils own writing but also inspired teachers own practice back in the classroom.

West Lothian Community Cinema Network Oct 24- September 2025

Reconnect (SCIO) 24 - 34 North Bridge Street, Bathgate,

9

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In partnership with Generation Arts Reconnect Theatres have participated in the West Lothian Community Cinema Network to provide cinema screening in both Reconnect Howden Park and Reconnect Regal Theatre. Funding supported the licence fee for films and for some screening associated workshops for families, which provide activities either visual art or animation activities themed around the film shown.

Participation Figures

Project	Date	Number of Attendees	Number of Attendances	Funder	Amount
Shakespeare for Schools	Oct 24-Feb 25	85 (4 schools)	425	Reconnect SCIO	£3500
Ellie Stewart Writing Sessions	Nov 24-Feb 25	79 (4 schools)	79	Scottish Book Trust	£480
Art of Light	Feb 25	84 (2 schools)	84	Dickson Minto Charitable Trust	£750
Summer Programme	July-Aug 25	27 (3 projects)	146	West Lothian Council	£5000
Write on Creative Writing Conference	Sept 25	72 (6 schools)	72	Scottish Book Trust	£460
				WL Councillors Disbursement Fund	£1050
				Arms Forces Award	£500
				WL Schools Contribution	£360
					Total: £2370
Community Cinema Screenings	Oct 24-Sept 25	(12 Screenings)	253	Generation Arts/Film Hub Scotland	£1200

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FUNDED PROJECT TOTALS

Total external funding brought in:

£9,800

Total number of attendees worked with:

600

Total number of attendances:

1,059

Financial review

Statement of the charity's policy on reserves

The charity now operates a fund of currently £150,000 as strategic reserves which is based on approximately three months operational costs, we hold a £90,000 staffing fund that is used a buffer for trading seasonal variations and a utilities fund that both diminish over the year, both Utilities fund and Staff fund a replenished from Panto sales each year and are held for specific use of these aspects of operations.

Reconnect also have sinking fund set up for investment in the buildings we operate and a development and creative project fund

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Details of any deficit

Nil.

Future plans

Our strategic goals for the next five years

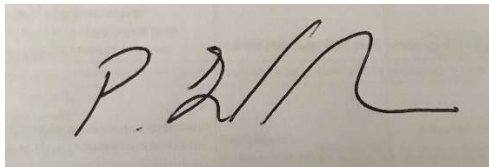
- Over the next five years, Reconnect SCIO will focus on achieving the following outcomes: establish a diverse, environmentally sustainable programme
- Prioritise professional development, community engagement, and strategic local partnerships.
- Produce mid-scale popular programming: We aim to challenge preconceptions between commercial and artistic types of work, offering diverse and engaging content to cater to a wide audience while maintaining artistic integrity.
- Look to set up new organisations to deliver sustainable futures for other community assets and organisations.
- Create a touring program and continue to develop our professional and youth theatre projects
- Develop partnerships with new Local authorities to implement our model of sustainable arts delivery and provide clear futures for arts venues

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Declaration

Signed on behalf of the charity trustees:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P. Sneddon', on a light-colored rectangular background.

Print name Peter Sneddon

Designation Project Director

Date 08/12/2023