



thecockburn**association**



ANNUAL REVIEW **2021-2022**

For Everyone who loves Edinburgh

www.cockburnassociation.org.uk

SC011544



Reference and Administrative Details 2021-22

Charity Registration Number: SC011544

Principal Office:

Trunk's Close
55 High Street
Edinburgh
EH1 1SR

Sir Sandy Crombie President

Council Members:

Prof Cliff Hague	Chair, Convener of Management & Finance Committee (Re-elected 2019)
Claire Mitchell	Vice-Chair, Management & Finance Committee (Elected 2021)
Alastair Cook	Convenor, Policy & Development Committee (Elected 2019; Re-elected 2022)
Richard Scothorne	Management & Finance Committee (Appointed 2021)
Prof Richard Rodger	Cockburn Urban Design Group (Appointed 2020)
Stephen Hajducki	Policy & Development Committee, Cockburn Urban Design Group (Re-elected 2021)
Mark Lazarowicz	Policy & Development Committee (Elected 2021)
William Moyes	Management & Finance Committee (Elected 2021)
Stuart Leckie	Elected 2022 (resigned July 2022)
Emily Yates	Policy & Development Committee (Elected 2022)
Peter Williamson	Policy & Development Committee (Elected 2022)

Council members who retired at last AGM:

Andrew MacLeod (Vice-chair), Robin Mair (Treasurer), Mariana Trusson, Alastair Shields

Members of the Policy & Development Committee who are not Council members:

Pam Barnes, Mathilde Delestre (resigned June 2022), Keith Anderson, Lila Angelaka

Staff

Terry Levinthal	Director
James Garry	Assistant Director
Dr DJ Johnston-Smith	Outreach & Development Officer (resigned May 2022)
Kvitka Perenhinets	Heritage Support Intern (started July 2022)

Solicitors:

Lindsays WS,
Caledonian Exchange
19A Canning Street
Edinburgh
EH3 8HE

Investment Managers

Brown Shipley

2 Multrees Walk

Edinburgh
EH1 3DQ

Bankers

Royal Bank of Scotland
Bank of Scotland

ANNUAL REVIEW 2021-22

CONTENTS

Council Members and Information—p.2

Chair's Report—p.3
Professor Cliff Hague OBE

Policy and Development Report—p.4
Terry Levinthal & James Garry

Finance Report—p.6
Bill Moyes

SoFA & Balance Sheet—p.7

Chair's Report

Professor Cliff Hague OBE
Chair of Council

I want to thank all members for their continued support of the Association during a year which has been marked by a worsening cost-of-living crisis. In these difficult times, our membership numbers have held steady: many charities have seen their numbers fall.



Professor Hague leading Trustee debate.

However, we have not been unscathed. In managing your Association, the Council of Trustees has had to factor in rising energy costs, other impacts of inflation (not least on our staffing costs) and the impact of the Russian invasion of Ukraine on global markets and hence on the values and returns on our investments.

Our main expenditure is on staffing. Post-Covid, we have little control over our income, beyond drawing

down from our investments. For several years we have run an annual budget deficit, which was met from those draw downs, which in turn were substantially offset by rising asset values. Your Trustees felt that this could no longer be seen as a sustainable strategy, given the situations we faced in 2022.

We lost the services of Dr John-son-Smith when he moved to a new job, and reluctantly decided not to fill his post that was dedicated to Outreach and Fundraising. It was a difficult decision, but enabled us to reduce the budgeted deficit for the year. We took on an intern in July 2022 on a 12 month contract at 2 days per week, mainly to help with membership and administration. The outcome then is that this last year our staffing resource has been less than in the recent past. The Treasurer's report provides more detail.

Doors Open Days and Open Edinburgh

Recognising that adjustments had to be made to the demands placed on the remaining staff, Trustees decided to "take a sabbatical" from Doors Open Days in September 2022. Since Covid arrived in 2020, great work has been done in putting Doors Open Days venues on our website. This has many advantages: virtual visits are available all year round to potentially a larger audience. The content of the website is improved, attracting more visits and so raising the profile of the Cockburn.

However, getting material online and delivering Doors Open Days had become increasingly demanding on our resources, and unsustainable with reduced staff and no major sponsor. The Trustees have decided not to take on Doors Open Days again in 2023.

Work has gone into rethinking what we are about and how that "brand" can be advanced through our activities.

We seek to be recognised as an independent campaigning organisation, respected for its longevity and expertise, that cares about the past and future of Edinburgh as a whole, and works in partnership with many local groups and community councils to strengthen the voice of civic society.

We have launched a new initiative, "Open Edinburgh". The aim is to offer a programme of public events

through the year, on topical themes, bringing together key players: the first was held in March on Student Housing. In addition, we plan a weekend of events in early summer that will be co-produced with local groups, enabling visits to neighbourhoods and open spaces across the city.

Open Edinburgh will also encompass the virtual venues that can be accessed on our website. We see Open Edinburgh as a way of taking forward our earlier *Our Unique City* initiative about the key challenges and opportunities for Edinburgh, as well as replicating aspects that made Doors Open Days popular for so many years. As I write we are in advanced discussions with potential partners.

Edinburgh Civic Forum

The Cockburn has continued to host and service the Edinburgh Civic Forum online. The Forum meets at least quarterly and enables direct dialogues between representatives of local groups and community councils, and City of Edinburgh Council officials and Chairs of Council committees. This year has seen significant changes in planning in the city. National Planning Framework 4 has been agreed by the Scottish Government, replacing the former regional scale of planning (SESPlan), but also the NPF4 policies became part of our Local Development Plan.

In addition CityPlan 2030 has been accepted by the City Council and submitted to the Scottish Government for Examination. The Cockburn has been broadly supportive of the direction of travel in CityPlan 2030.

Another concern of the Forum has been the need to regulate short-term lets, and again on this issue there has been useful dialogue at the Forum.

Engagement

As well as our much improved website, the Cockburn remains active on a range of social media channels including YouTube (66 videos, 135 subscribers), Instagram, Facebook (4,200 followers) and Twitter (10,600 followers). The 2022 Annual Lecture, commemorating Lord Cockburn's birthday, was given on 17 November, 2022 by Andrew Ferguson on the theme "Edinburgh's Common Good

Fund – Use and Abuse?”

Edinburgh Slavery and Colonialism Legacy Review

The Independent Review Group, of which I was a member, completed its work. Its full report was agreed by the City Council in August 2022.

And finally...

I would like to record my thanks to you, the members whose Association this is. Also I want to thank our dedicated staff and volunteers whose enthusiasm and energy is amazing. Thanks are also due to all those who have served on the Council of Trustees this year and in recent years, with particular thanks to Bill Moyes for taking on the role nobody wants to do – Treasurer – and to Robin Mair for the service he gave in that post. Thanks too to Sir Sandy Crombie for his support as President.



Trustees engaged in discussions at Strategy session hosted by Heriot-Watt University Confucius Institute.

I was honoured to become your Chair in 2016. Seven years older, I feel now is the time to step down. I have tried to fulfil the role to the best of my ability and in my own way. I hope a successor will take this exceptional organisation forward to new heights – in her or his own way.



Policy and Development Committee

Terry Levinthal (Director) and James Garry (Assistant Director)

The Cockburn's Policy and Development Committee acts as the main technical panel for the consideration of planning and architectural proposals. It meets on a regular basis and is supported in its work by trustees and external professionals. The committee reviews, discusses and comments on major planning

applications and significant consultations which relate to the long-standing interests of the Association and to those of its members.

During the year 2021-22, the Cockburn's Policy and Development Committee turned its attention to number of planning applications for outdoor seating on wooden decks in the Old Town. Under relaxed planning rules introduced by the Scottish Government during the Covid pandemic, hospitality businesses were able to create outside seating without planning permission in response to tight Covid-19 restrictions. The Cockburn Association strongly objected to these applications on the grounds that they would involve the quasi-privatisation of public urban space; would affect the wider amenity of neighbouring residents and businesses and were poorly designed in the context of the specific location and negatively impacted on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. In January 2022, the Council's Development Management Sub-Committee refused all applications, saying the structures negatively impact the Edinburgh World Heritage Site and Old Town Conservation Area.

In February local and national media reported the Cockburn's objection to plans to convert Forth House along with an adjacent office block into a new apartment-hotel development. Within the New Town Conservation Area and UNESCO World Heritage Site, we noted the considerable number of hotels already in the area. While we saw some merit in the proposals, we believed a return to residential use should be pursued which would be a more suitable use for this site.



Forth House, Forth Street

The Cockburn Association supported the listed building consent application for the proposed 'Forth Bridge Experience'. This proposal would allow the public to access this world-famous structure, its heritage and world-class views.

The Association considered plans for the redevelopment of the former Jenner's Department Store and gave its full support the proposals developed by AAA United A/S with David Chipperfield Architects. Over the year, the developers and their professional teams have engaged fully with the Cockburn at all stages and shared their thinking as the proposals emerged. This open, positive and constructive discussion gives us the confidence that scheme proposed is well-considered, sensitive and respectful of this iconic building but also creative and exciting in both ambition and vision.

Less positively, after being contacted by local stakeholders in Portobello and Morningside, we objected to two 5G telecommunication mast applications, one on Portobello High Street and another on Morningside Road. These proposals were not consistent with Conservation Area policies as they did not preserve or enhance the special character or appearance of the conservation area. We were pleased that the Council refused planning consent as a result.



George Square festival arrangements

In May 2022, as in previous years, we reviewed applications lodged for festival related venues at George Square Gardens and the Meadows. We had clear areas of concern relating to tree protection and noise management. Whilst we were neutral in our comments regarding George Square, the Cockburn objected to the application in the Meadows as it was inconsistent with Local Development Plan policies and with the Council's obligations to manage Common Good Assets for the public benefit. Perhaps not surprisingly, it was granted consent but City Councillors did articulate their concerns and hoped another site could be found.

At Cameron Toll, we responded to an initial consultation on the redevelopment of this 1980s retail development. The committee raised a number

of questions including how the connectivity around the site and community connectivity is to be achieved; how active travel and Tramline routes are to be integrated or protected; and more generally, what was the future of the current retail offering at Cameron Toll. Plans were then submitted for a 160-room hotel by 3DReid as part of the wider redevelopment including improvements to better integrate Cameron Toll with its neighbourhood. However, we had serious concerns relating to the impact on the neighbouring Dunedin School (former home of Sir Conan Doyle) to the extent that we objected to this application.

The committee considered several applications for Purpose-built student accommodation (PBSA), responding to local community concerns. After discussion, we objected to a proposed student housing block at Eyre Place on the grounds of adverse impact to existing properties in terms of noise, overshadowing and privacy, as well as a general view of overdevelopment. At Jock's Lodge near Meadowbank, we contributed to an early online community engagement exercise to a proposed development of student accommodation, including ground floor commercial space. We opened a direct dialogue with the developer. During these discussions, we agreed that this was a development site and that PBSA might be an appropriate use; however, the proposals that emerged were too massive and intrusive to support.

Radical Road at Holyrood Park



Fence preventing access to Radical Road

had been closed for years, a situation concerning enough but with Historic Environment Scotland erected structural fencing and other structures, the Committee instructed staff to determine if planning consent was required as no applications had been made. It emerged that consent was indeed required, and we articulated our desire to see the road

reopened than remain closed. The Cockburn joined forces with Mountaineering Scotland, ScotWays and the Ramblers to put pressure on HES to develop Strategic Development Plan for the Park and were pleased that this was agreed.

The Cockburn object to the proposed demolition of Elgin House, Haymarket and its redevelopment. In the context of the 'climate emergency' and Edinburgh's zero carbon ambitions, we considered that the applicant simply had not made the case for the complete demolition of a modern office building. An outline carbon assessment was provided as part of this application but did not appear to compare the carbon-related impacts of the proposed office and hotel buildings with the performance of a suitably refurbished Elgin House.

The redevelopment of the iconic



Scottish Widows from Salisbury Crag.

Category A-listed Scottish Widows building by the Commonwealth pool attracted considerable attention from the committee. We acknowledged that the existing office complex was no longer fit for purpose and would require substantial changes including partial demolition. However, we considered that elements of the proposed new housing were unacceptable, particularly its height and massing which would impact on views to Arthur Seat from Dalkeith Road. We felt that its replacement should have equal quality and architectural merit responding to both to the retained listed structure and to its wider urban setting - the proposals failed to achieve either of these requirements.

In addition to planning applications, we responded to policy consultations from local and national government. We submitted detailed comments to the Scottish Government's National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4). Overall, the Cockburn Association welcomed the general thrust and overall sentiment of NPF4. In particular, the strategic ambi-

tions to pioneer low-carbon, resilient urban living; reinvent and future-proof city centres; accelerate urban greening; rediscover urban coasts and waterfronts; reuse land and buildings; invest in net zero housing solutions; grow a wellbeing economy; reimagine development on the urban fringe; and improve urban accessibility were welcomed.

We welcomed the Council's Legacy of Slavery and Colonialism consultation exploring Edinburgh's slavery and colonialism legacy and noted the need for recognition of the positive contribution to Edinburgh that many persecuted individuals and groups have made.

In addition, we submitted our detailed response to City of Edinburgh Council's consultation on City Plan 2030. Whilst there are many aspects of City Plan 2030 that we welcome and support, we found that it is weakest in those areas of greatest importance, namely Climate impact and preparedness, Covid and post-Covid resilience and Brexit.

In the current year, we have



Image taken from planning application. Copyright may be reserved

Initial proposals for student housing at Jock's Lodge—an example of many schemes across the city

continued to focus on student accommodation proposals. Whilst the economic importance of the higher education sector and its students is clear, some of these have proved highly controversial at a community. Hotel developments still come in thick and fast with some in prominent city centre locations such as Princes Street. Significant housing schemes in Leith and elsewhere are also considered by the committee where the scale and massing of proposals are the focus. In the context of climate impacts and net zero carbon policies, we are objecting to the demolition and rebuilding of relatively modern buildings due to the loss of embedded carbon and energy, suggesting refurbishment as a better alternative. Finally, the committee has taken a keen interest in the city's green spaces, supporting masterplanning exer-

cised in Leith Links and Inch Park.

Full details of the Policy and Development Committee's work can be found on the consultation and planning proposals section on the Cockburn Association website.



Finance Report

Bill Moyes, Treasurer

The Statement of Financial Activities and Balance Sheet for the year ending 30 September 2022 are set out in this Annual Review. They have been inspected by our accountants Chiene and Tait LLP and were approved by the Cockburn Council on 25 April 2023. The full accounts are available on our website.

The adverse impact of the pandemic coupled with the cost of living pressures caused in part by the war in Ukraine meant that a financial deficit for the year ending 30 September 2022 of between £50,000.00 and £60,000.00 was expected.

The actual operating deficit for the year ending 30 September 2022 before movements in the value of our investments was £54,242.00. However, a substantial decrease in the value of investments of £74,052.00 means we ended the year with funds i.e. investments plus cash, carried forward of £506,138.00, a decrease of £124,294 from 2021. The key difference this year was a net loss on investments of £74,052.00 compared to the net gain last year (2021) of £74,358.00.

The operating deficit of £54,242 was only £1,371.00 higher than the previous year. The drop in income in subscriptions, donations and legacies was offset in part by tight financial control helped by staff voids reducing expenditure.

The decision to recruit a fixed-term part-time intern position

has added some costs but significantly less than the full-time Outreach officer post which Council decided to postpone. We continue to exert tight controls on spending where possible and considered very carefully issues such as office closure, etc as a means of saving further. A high operating deficit continues and your Council has authorised a withdrawal of £35,000.00 from our investments to ensure we are able to meet our financial obligations for the year.

The value of investments at year-end fell to £455,235 (compared to £583,226 on 30 September 2021), a trend which has continued with the value at the beginning of May 2023 of £452,075. The fund has been relatively stable but sensitive to the macro-environment. Global markets are regaining confidence so we hoping to see a slight recovery over the rest of 2023.

On a positive note, we have received notification of several legacies from past members. These will appear in the 2023 accounts. Bequests are hugely important to the Association and we would encourage members to consider leaving the Cockburn a gift in their wills, after they have taken care of family and friends.

While we are not in any immediate danger of being unable to fund our activities these circumstances are not sustainable in the medium to long term. The Trustees are examining what needs to be done to increase income and reduce costs to ensure that the Cockburn continues with its important work.



Update on the Old Royal High School

It is with considerable pleasure that we report the successful outcome that the Royal High School Preservation Trust are advancing their proposals to repurpose Thomas Hamilton's masterpiece into a world-class centre for music education and public performance for the benefit of the whole of Scotland.

Members will recall our opposition to previous proposals to convert the RHS into a hotel.

After a length public inquiry, Scottish Ministers rejected the idea, making way for the current proposals, which are now on site.

The Cockburn has given its full support to the plans by Richard Murphy Architect and look forward to the completion of the project.



Extract from Annual Report 1923

Huntly House

"The Council record, with much satisfaction, that this old historic house, dating from the sixteenth century, and forming one of the landmarks of the High Street, along with the adjacent properties in Bakehouse Close behind it, has been purchased by the City for preservation; this not only because it is a historic memorial of value, but also because it is a building of much beauty and of considerable architectural interest in itself."

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES (including Income and Expenditure Account)

Year ended 30 September 2022	Unrestricted		Restricted	Total 2022	Total 2021
	Capital	Revenue			
	£	£	£	£	£
Income and endowments from:	-	19,836	7,164	27,000	34,799
Donations and legacies	-	4,890		4,890	3,215
Charitable activities	-	11,277		11,277	13,589
Investments	-	36,003		43,167	51,603
-					
Expenditure on:					
Raising funds	-	9,620	-	9,620	4,908
Charitable activities	-	66,732	21,057	87,789	99,566
		76,352	21,057	97,409	104,474
Net gains/(losses) on investments	(74,052)	-	-	(74,052)	74,358
Net income/(expenditure)	(74,052)	(40,349)	(13,893)	(128,294)	21,487
Transfers between funds	(44,719)	40,349	4,370	-	-
Net movement in funds	(118,771)	-	(9,523)	(128,294)	21,487
Reconciliation of funds:					
Total funds brought forward	624,909	-	11,953	636,862	615,375
Total funds carried forward	506,138	-	2,430	508,568	636,862
All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities					

BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 30 SEPTEMBER 2022	2022		2021	
	£	£	£	£
Fixed assets:				
Tangible assets		25,114		25,346
Investments		429,065		518,865
		454,179		544,211
Current assets:				
Debtor	7,623		7,642	
Cash at bank and in hand	57,445		91,681	
	65,068		99,323	
Current liabilities:				
Amounts falling due within one year	(10,679)		(6,672)	
Net current assets				92,651
Net assets		54,389		636,862
Funds of the charity:				
Unrestricted funds		506,138		624,909
Restricted funds		2,430		11,953
		508,568		636,862

The accounts were independently examined by Chiene & Tait LLP and were approved by Council on 25 April 2023.



thecockburn**association**

Trunk's Close, 55 High Street
 Edinburgh EH1 1SR
www.cockburnassociation.org.uk
admin@cockburnassociation.org.uk
 t: 0131-557-8686
 Scottish charity 11544

Front photo: View to Arthur's Seat from Castle Esplanade (Pixabay—Eszter Miller)
 Back photo: St Andrew's Square at dusk ©Terry Levinthal/Cockburn Association
 All other photos © Terry Levinthal/Cockburn Association except Jock's Lodge sketch (Stallan Brand Architects)