

# **Annual Report**

**November  
2022**

# History

The Edinburgh Canal Society was formed in the mid-80s. It campaigned for the reopening of the Lowland Canals to through navigation and supported the Millennium Link Project. The Ashley Terrace Boathouse was built on-site in the late 80s. The Boathouse was condemned in an engineering report for Scottish Canals in 2015. The site has been off-limits to the public since then.

Initial interest in resurrecting a society was aided by Andy Devenport and led to a meeting November 2020. In 2021 there were regular Zoom meetings and we finally got permission to be on-site for work parties from August 2021. We held the final ECS AGM in November 2021 and agreed to replace it with the Edinburgh Union Canal Society (EUCS).



# Governance

EUCS was subsequently registered as a SCIO in December 2021. We held an EGM on Zoom in January 2022 and elected office bearers and formed the committee and working groups. Currently there are 15 people on the committee. The working groups are Fundraising, Events & Publicity, Property & Logistics, and AGM & Constitution. We set up Microsoft 365 and Teams to aid the running of the society.

Our AGM is on Sunday, 6th November 2022 at Polwarth Parish Church and is a hybrid event. See website for the link.



# Property



There have been work parties on-site at the Ashley Terrace Boathouse most Sunday and Tuesday afternoons since August 2021.



The work carried out includes clearing six years' worth of vegetation; removing trees; planting bulbs and tubs; clearing gutters on the boathouse and the gutters in the street.



DIY skills have come into play sanding and painting the railings and gate; re-laying paving stones; starting to refurbish and reposition the smaller shed.

Clearing vegetation and waste has resulted in eight van loads being taken to the dump.

We are currently in discussions with Scottish Canals about removing the mound of spoil that goes from the embankment to the gate and making use of the facilities block on the opposite side of the towpath from the boathouse.





# Events & Publicity

We've used information stalls on the towpath to publicise the society and the community consultation that we have run. The stalls took place in October and November 2021, at Flotilla 200 in May 2022, at the Canal Festival in June 2022, and in September 2022. We provided refreshments and information at the Flotilla of Light in November 2021 and 2022.

We hosted the Flotilla 200 muster point at Harrison Park in May 2022. This celebrated the bicentenary of the Union Canal. As with all our stalls, we provided information on our activities, history about the Union Canal, refreshments, and home baking. CEC libraries and Merchiston Community Council have joined us at some of the stalls. Scottish Canals gave us an award for rejuvenating the society.

We gave a well-received talk on our plans to our neighbours Merchiston Community Council in March 2022. We gave a very enjoyable talk on the history of the Union Canal to The Open Door in August 2022 and have been invited back to give more talks in November.

In April we visited Linlithgow Union Canal Society to see what they do and how they are run. We visited their Fun Day with a cardboard boat race in August.

Our website is at [www.eucs.org.uk](http://www.eucs.org.uk) and we have an active presence on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. All of our stalls have been publicised on social media with posters put up locally. From September 2021 we have run a consultation to see what the community would like to see happen on the boathouse site. This received more than 450 responses.



# Finance



We started EUCS with a balance of £500 from ECS. During the year 2021-2022 our income has come from three sources. Fundraising, memberships and grant applications. From the three events where we sold refreshments and home baking we took a total of £1,300, £800 has been raised from memberships which we've been able to process since getting a bank account in August. We have registered with HMRC so will be able to claim for Gift-Aid on memberships and donations. In August we contacted 47 trusts asking for grants towards commissioning a feasibility study for a new building. So far two have been successful and we have £2,000 of grants.



All of our work relies on the generous support of our volunteers. These include helping to refurbish the boathouse site; preparing, dismantling, and working on stalls; meetings of the committee and working groups and the work that these generate. We have used over 3000 volunteer hours in the last year. If you would like to get involved, speak to a member of the committee.

Our chair and treasurer, Andrew Burns and Ford Buchanan, completed the 14 mile Kiltwalk in September. Due to generous donations and the 50% top-up, they raised a total of £1,110.

# Future


We are in discussions with Scottish Canals about a memorandum of understanding and eventually a lease. This will allow us to apply for capital grants towards a new building.


We will continue our drive for membership and to increase the number of volunteers. We will also continue our grant fundraising for a feasibility study of a future building.



[www.eucs.org.uk](http://www.eucs.org.uk)

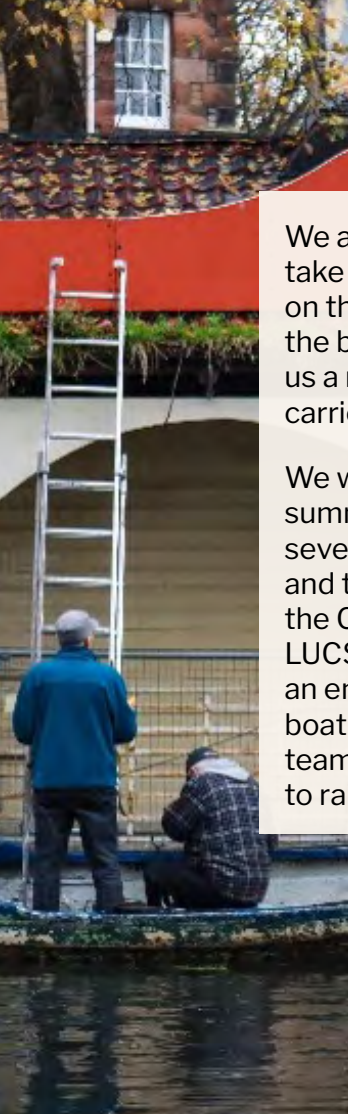
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We are in discussions to take on the facilities block on the towpath opposite the boathouse. This will give us a new base while work is carried out on-site.

We will run a raffle next summer and plan to have several information stalls and to have a presence at the Canal Festival and the LUCS Fun Day. This includes an entry to the cardboard boat race. We will also enter a team into the smaller Kiltwalk to raise money.

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