

The Future



We have concluded discussions with Scottish Canals about a '**Memorandum of Understanding**' (**MoU**) and an eventual 'long-term lease' for the Ashley Terrace Boathouse site. An MoU was agreed in October 2024, and this will now allow us to apply for capital grants towards a new building.

Over the last 2-years, we have now successfully raised our target of £10,000 to commission a feasibility study into the viability of our future plans for a new boat house. We will table a draft of this '**Business Plan**' document at this year's AGM.

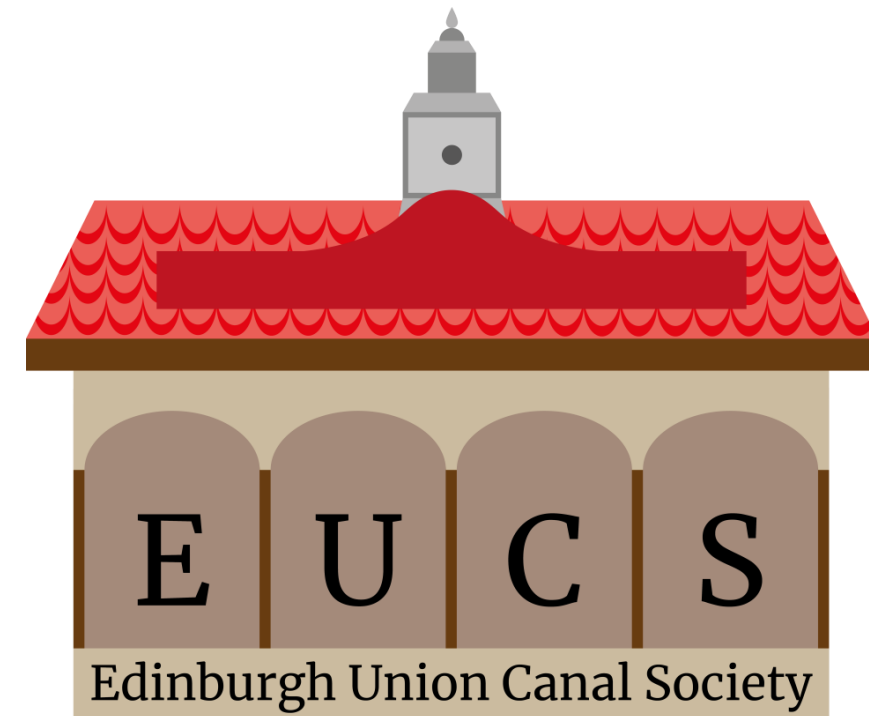
We will continue our drive for membership and to increase the number of volunteers.

And next year, we will once again hire out three rowing boats between late April and late September 2025. We will also continue with our stalls in April, June, September and November.

with thanks to:

Simon Williams for our website cover-photo
(www.edinburghphotos.co.uk)

Michael Burns for our EUCS boathouse-logo



Annual Report



November 2024

www.eucs.org.uk

promoting the appreciation of the Union Canal
... centred on the *Ashley Terrace Boathouse*

History

The Edinburgh Canal Society (ECS) 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 1980s. Regrettably, the Boathouse was condemned in an engineering report for Scottish Canals in 2015. The site has been off-limits to the general public since then.

As part of the regeneration of the society, we held the final ECS AGM in November 2021 and agreed to replace it with the Edinburgh Union Canal Society (EUCS), re-formed with a new structure as a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO). This has been a very successful venture and we are now in a stable financial situation, are well supported by the local community and are hiring out rowing boats through the boating season (April to September). This past year (2024) has seen the second successful season that rowing boats have been available for hire.

Governance

EUCS was registered as a SCIO in December 2021. Currently there are 13 people on the Main Committee. We also have two working sub-groups: 'Fundraising & Strategy' and 'Operations'. We have set up a Microsoft 365 account, and Teams-channel, to help aid the ongoing and efficient running of the society.

And this year, our AGM is at 2pm, on Sunday 3rd November 2024, at the 'Merchiston Tennis Club', which is on Polwarth Terrace, EH11 1NA.

Property

There have been work parties on-site at the Ashley Terrace Boathouse most Sunday and Tuesday afternoons since August 2021. This year the 'Operations' sub-group has focused on repairing/refurbishing a third traditional rowing boat, which was ready for hire at the start of the season. We have been delighted by the boats' popularity.

All the boats have subsequently been hired out from the first Sunday after Easter to the last Sunday of September. Overall, there has been just over 3/5-ths take up of the available slots. The hiring has generated just over £1,100 for the society. We have had great feedback from our customers, even having some repeat hirers and a few pirates, who you just might be able to spot on the back-page of this Annual Report!

The 'Operations' sub-group has also continued to do general maintenance on the site.

Events & Publicity

We have held a number of events throughout the year. We started the season in April 2024 with a refreshments, tombola and information stall. On the third Saturday in June we participated fully in the Edinburgh Canal Festival with a stall and rowing boats for hire. In September we had an end of season refreshment, information and raffle stall. Merchiston Community Council had a welcome presence/stall at all of these events.

All the stalls have generated revenue for the society and have also been excellent at raising awareness of our activities. The stalls have become popular community events that local people (and those from further afield), look forward to and enjoy. Our last stall for 2024 will be on Saturday 9th November, as part of the 'Flotilla of Lights' celebrations.

Finance

We started October 2023 with £13,400. We end the year with £20,300. We have raised £6,650 in grant money through the generosity of trust funds. We have raised £3,900 from selling home-baking and refreshments at events, rowing boat hire and from a fundraising-walk undertaken by two of our members. We have also raised over £1,200 in memberships and eligible gift aid.

Our biggest outlays this year have been the final disposing of a trip boat that was past its useable life; and the ongoing refurbishment of our now, three, rowing boats.

We ran the rowing boats on Sundays, from April until September, and they continued to be very popular with just over 3/5-ths occupancy. Along with a further grant to cover some of the refurbishments, they have provided a small source of income.

Our restricted grant monies are earmarked for the next step in our plans to build a new boathouse. The money will help fund a 'Business Plan', which will outline how the new boathouse will run once we get the keys. We have now produced such a draft '**Business Plan**' document; and are thus in a position to start to raise capital funding.

Volunteering

All of our work relies on the generous support of our volunteers. Tasks undertaken have included helping to refurbish the boathouse site; preparing, dismantling, and working on stalls; meetings of the committee and the sub-groups and the work that these generate. Throughout the last year, we have used just over 2,000 volunteer hours.

If you would like to get involved, please do speak to a member of the committee. We currently have around 90-members; and would really welcome reaching 100 in 2025.