

ESOLPERTH

SC 046650

TRUSTEE ANNUAL REPORT

September 2024 – August 2025



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Chair's Statement

I am pleased to present this Trustees' Annual Report for ESOLPerth for the year ended 31 August 2025. I would like to thank my fellow trustees, staff and volunteers for their contribution to the preparation of this report.

ESOLPerth continues to provide free English language tuition to New Scots in Perth and Kinross, which remains the core focus of the charity. Over recent years, we have seen an increase in service users from refugee and asylum-seeking communities. Alongside language provision, this has led to a growing demand for advocacy and practical support to help individuals access services, advice, and opportunities within their community.

ESOLPerth is more than a place to learn English. It is a welcoming community where individuals can build confidence, seek advice, and develop connections. The strength of this environment is reflected in the commitment of our staff and volunteers, many of whom have supported the organisation over a number of years.

On behalf of the Board, I would like to thank our Centre Manager, Senior Tutor, staff, volunteers, and supporters for their dedication and professionalism. Their work continues to make a meaningful difference in the lives of those we support

Dr. Rob Jarvis
Chair, Esolperth

May 2026

Trustee's Report for the year ended 31st August 2025

The trustees present their annual report together with the financial statements for the year ended 31 August 2025. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005, the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended), and the Charities SORP (FRS 102).

Structure of Governance and Management

The Board of Trustees who served during the year were:

Dr Rob Jarvis – Chair

Mr Keith Milne – Treasurer

Ms Karin Newton – Secretary

Dr Paul Crawford

Mr Samuel Monie

Mr Andrew Parrott

Governing Document

The charity is governed by its Constitution effective from 1st January 2023.

Recruitment and Appointment of Trustees

Trustees are recruited and appointed in accordance with the charity's Constitution and good practice guidance.

Risk Management

The trustees maintain a risk register which is reviewed regularly. Key risks include fluctuations in funding and increasing demand for services. These are mitigated through financial planning, diversification of funding sources, and ongoing monitoring of service delivery capacity

Health & Safety

Trustees ensure that appropriate health and safety policies and procedures are in place and that regular risk assessments are conducted.

Financial Controls

The charity maintains established financial policies and procedures, which are reviewed annually. The Board receives regular financial reports to monitor performance and manage financial risk.

Origins and Background

ESOLPerth was established in June 2016 to support asylum seekers, refugees, and other migrants in Perth through free English language tuition and integration support through advocacy. The charity has grown significantly since its inception and now supports around 65–70 learners per day on our 4 core teaching days, and a few individuals or small groups on our evening or weekend sessions. We also provide additional support to remove barriers to full and active participation in Scottish Society.

OBJECTIVES AND PUBLIC BENEFIT

Charitable Purpose

Our charitable purpose is to promote the learning of the English language, specifically the speaking, reading, writing and understanding of English, to enable positive integration into British society at the level chosen by the student, up to and including further education.

Our main activities in relation to these objectives are:

1. Providing free English lessons to Refugees, Asylum Seekers and other migrant communities within Perth and surrounding district.
2. Providing wellbeing support to service users to build confidence and instil a sense of belonging in their adopted homeland.
3. Providing linguistic support when required in dealing with officialdom, welfare, educational and social interlocutors.
4. Providing an introduction to local cultures and traditions and the opportunity to participate in other activities designed to facilitate integration into the local community.

Public Benefit Statement

All of the charity's activities are undertaken in pursuit of its charitable purposes and provide public benefit. The charity supports refugees, asylum seekers and migrant communities to integrate into society through improved language skills, increased confidence, and enhanced access to essential services, education, and employment opportunities.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

Our achievements this year, are best exemplified in the following message, sent to us by a service user who attended ESOLPerth during 2024-25.

"To the Management and Teachers of ESOLPerth.

I extend my heartfelt thanks and deep appreciation to all of you for the support and education you provided me during my time with you. My experience at ESOLPerth was truly special and enriching in every way, and have left a lasting positive impact on me that I will always carry. I would especially like to thank the wonderful teachers:

Starting with Linda, who became like a mother to me and also Kasia, Michael, Margaret, Lavinia, Aga, Miami and Tinusha. Each of you left a unique mark on my educational journey, whether through your distinctive teaching style, your kind support or your constant encouragement.

Your dedication, patience and care played a major role in improving my language skills and boosting my confidence.

I am truly grateful for every moment I spent with you.

You have all my respect and appreciation and I wish you continued success and excellence.

With sincere regards, Hashim D S”

ESOL Classes

Thanks to Kasia, our excellent Senior Tutor, and her team of dedicated ESOL tutors and volunteers, ESOLPerth provided over 30,000 student hours of ESOL teaching with an average of 65 students attending classes each day. We are very fortunate that many of our Staff, Tutors and Volunteers have been with us for several years, which speaks to the need for this service and the appreciation of our service users. During this time we saw 18 of our students transfer to courses at UHI Perth and 32 students obtained employment in Perth and other cities.

We also held a wonderful, celebratory prizegiving at the end of the academic year, where Perth’s Lord Provost, Xander McDade, was gracious enough to hand out the prizes to our deserving ESOL students. Each class also gave a short performance related to Scottish culture – some sang a Scottish song, another gave us a wonderful collective recitation of Burns’ poem “A Red, Red, Rose”

We were also able to extend the square footage of our offices, when some additional space became available, and that gave us the opportunity to allow our service users to create a social space, which gives those asylum seekers housed in cramped hotel accommodation and the chance to gather together in a friendly space and listen to music, chat, play games etc.

Some parents accessing ESOLPerth’s classes and advocacy support are required to attend with their young children due to a lack of available or affordable childcare. The organisation recognises that this presents a significant barrier to participation and learning.

To help mitigate this barrier, ESOLPerth employs a qualified and experienced Nursery Nurse who provides support within the learning environment by engaging and supervising very young children while parents take part in classes or receive advocacy support. This arrangement enables parents to participate more fully and effectively in the services offered.

It is important to note that ESOLPerth does not provide registered childcare services and is not licensed to do so. The role of the Nursery Nurse is solely to support parents’ engagement by assisting with children present during sessions, rather than to deliver formal childcare provision.

We run two outreach language sessions for a small group each week in Blairgowrie, staffed by two volunteer tutors with teaching materials, exercise books provided by ESOLPerth. For the most part, the students, who are usually young mothers, progress into work after 4-6 months of classes.

Staff Training, Safeguarding and Risk Management

The organisation is committed to ensuring that staff and volunteers are appropriately trained to support the safe and effective delivery of its services. In 2024/25 this included training to enhance awareness of mental health and wellbeing, enabling staff to recognise indicators of distress, vulnerability, or potential risk among service users.

Staff are supported to respond in a proportionate and appropriate manner, in line with the organisation’s safeguarding policies and procedures. This includes maintaining professional boundaries, initiating supportive engagement where appropriate, and signposting individuals to relevant external agencies and

specialist services. This approach forms part of the organisation's wider commitment to safeguarding, duty of care, and the mitigation of risk to beneficiaries.

In addition, all staff and volunteers received general fire safety training to ensure awareness of fire prevention measures, emergency procedures, and their responsibilities in maintaining a safe environment for service users, colleagues, and visitors. This contributes to the organisation's overall health and safety framework and supports compliance with relevant legislation and good practice.

Through these measures, the organisation seeks to proactively identify and reduce risks, while promoting a safe, supportive, and inclusive environment for all those who engage with its services.

Extra-Curricular Activities

We are fortunate to be able to offer the following extra-curricular activities within our premises, which contribute to wellbeing, interpersonal skills, and sense of community, as well as further encouraging use of English in a social setting.

Art Sessions – two per week throughout the language school year, conducted by our committed and talented tutor, Miami. Classes cover a wide range of media and skill sets, for the complete novice and the more advanced artist. We are immensely proud of the work they have produced, and it hangs prominently within our offices.

Guitar Classes - Guitar classes were run throughout the year for both adults and children.

Football Training – We work with some local amateur football clubs who hold regular football training sessions, and ESOLPerth organised a Tayside "World Cup" event with some ESOL students from Dundee.

Driving Theory Class – with our Centre Manager and Tutors, we now hold weekly Driving Theory classes to encourage and enable our students to be ready for driving tests when they are given leave to remain. This enhances confidence and improves employment opportunities, as well as giving them general road traffic awareness in the UK.

Cultural Visits – our services users this year have had the opportunity to attend events in Perth Theatre and Pitlochry Festival Theatre, thanks to their outreach programmes, and during Summer School, at least one day per week is devoted to a trip out to locations such as St Andrews and Edinburgh to give our students the opportunity to see for themselves some of our historic sites and learn about our traditions and culture. We also celebrate St Andrew's Day and have even taught them some traditional dances for a Ceilidh.

Improving Employment Prospects –

Street League – who work with our students twice a week to help them develop the soft presentation skills which will help them get into work

Prospective Employers – we have invited several local employers in to talk to our service users about how to apply for jobs with their organisation, and the skills and qualities they seek in new employees.

Advocacy and Welfare Service Delivery and Impact

Over the past year, ESOLPerth has continued to experience significant demand for its services, reflecting both the complexity of the challenges faced by our service users and the essential role the organisation plays within the community. In academic year 2024/25 we dealt with over 300 advocacy issues for our service users. Many of the individuals we support are navigating life in the UK while English is not their first language, often alongside limited familiarity with UK systems, infrastructure, and administrative processes. This combination can make even routine tasks particularly difficult.

Our Centre Manager, supported by a dedicated team of staff and volunteers, has continued to deliver a high-quality, responsive service that is both practical and person-centred. The support provided spans a wide range of day-to-day needs, including assistance with completing official forms, making telephone calls—particularly in relation to arranging medical appointments—and liaising with schools on behalf of families.

In addition, the team has provided essential guidance and practical help in areas such as opening bank accounts, navigating the eVisa process, and understanding Permission to Work requirements. These services are vital in enabling individuals to establish stability and independence within their new environment.

We are very fortunate to have access to a wonderful immigration solicitor who, although based in Glasgow, visited our office 4 times in the course of the academic year, and responded to over 30 calls on urgent matters. We also engaged with Home Office and Migrant Help over 100 times in 2024/25.

A key aspect of our work is ensuring that service users are appropriately signposted to specialist organisations where further support is required. This includes referrals and guidance in relation to:

- Welfare and benefits, including Universal Credit
- Crisis Grant applications and access to emergency financial support
- Food bank referrals
- Access to healthcare services
- Education-related issues for both adults and children
- Legal aid and related advisory services

We were also pleased to broaden our support offering this year through the contribution of two volunteer medical professionals, who delivered a series of informative talks for our service users. These sessions covered important topics such as women's health and navigating the NHS, helping to build confidence and understanding in accessing healthcare services.

Through this combination of direct support and effective signposting, ESOLPerth helps individuals to overcome immediate barriers while also building the confidence and knowledge needed to engage independently with services in the future.

The Trustees would like to record their appreciation for the commitment and professionalism of the Centre Manager, staff, and volunteers, whose work continues to make a meaningful and often transformative difference to the lives of those we serve.

Partnering Organisations

We are proud to partner with the following local organisations in the provision of additional activities for our service users. We have found that collaborating in these more social sessions greatly enhances confidence and language acquisition, in addition to having a very positive effect on one's mental wellbeing.

International Café – allows all international people located in the Perth area to meet, make friends and connections with the local community.

Perth Chess Club - meets every Monday within our premises and welcomes our students to attend.

Fair City FC - a local football club which supports our annual football tournament, which is our contribution to Refugee Festival Scotland each June. The club also provide practical assistance throughout the football season.

Perth Speakers Club – holds fortnightly meetings within our premises during Winter and Spring terms and provide an excellent opportunity to our students to participate in public speaking in a very warm, welcoming and encouraging environment.

Evidence of Impact

Feedback from service users highlights the positive impact of ESOLPerth's work in improving language skills, confidence, and overall wellbeing. The trustees are committed to further developing methods to measure and demonstrate outcomes in future reporting periods.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

The charity continues to rely on a combination of grants and donations to fund its activities. The trustees are grateful for the ongoing support of funders, donors and partners.

2024/25 Financial Year

We had a surplus in our 2024/25 financial accounts of £36,874, with a balance carried forward of £62,289. We benefitted from a number of grants from different organisations, some of which committed to longer term funding enabling the board to plan for the longer term with confidence.

Reserves Policy

The trustees aim to maintain unrestricted reserves of approximately £20,000 to provide financial stability and manage fluctuations in income and expenditure. Reserves are monitored regularly by the Board.

Funding

The charity receives funding from a range of charitable trusts, public bodies and individual donors.

We are immensely grateful to the following organisations for their financial support over the past 12 months:

Forteviot Charitable Trust
Gannochy Trust
Garfield Weston
Henry Smith Foundation
Perth & Kinross Council
The National Lottery Community Fund
The Scottish Refugee Council

Trustees' Responsibilities in Relation to the Financial Statements

The trustees are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

The law applicable to Scottish charities requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources of the charity for that period.

In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP (FRS 102);
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which are sufficient to show and explain the charity's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity, and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended).

They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The trustees are responsible for the overall governance of the charity and for ensuring that it operates in accordance with its charitable purposes.

Trustee Remuneration and Related Party Transactions

No trustee received any remuneration during the year. Any expenses reimbursed to trustees were in accordance with the charity's policies. There were no related party transactions requiring disclosure

The trustees declare that they have approved the Trustees' Annual Report.

Signed on behalf of the board of Trustees by:



Karin Newton

Secretary, Board of Trustees

28th May 2026