

# The Royal Scottish Country Dance Society

*Promoting and developing  
Scottish country dancing  
worldwide*

## Annual Review 2011



The Royal Scottish Country Dance Society (RSCDS) is for everyone interested in traditional Scottish country dancing and music. The Society promotes and teaches Scottish country dancing and is acknowledged as the leading body for this expression of Scotland's rich cultural heritage.

## Chairman's Introduction



Photo by Stephen Webb

The Royal Scottish Country Dance Society was founded in 1923 by Jean Milligan and Ysobel Stewart, who were dedicated to reviving traditional dancing in Scotland, when it was in danger of disappearing! As a result of their commitment the Society, whose roots are in Scotland, rapidly grew into the international organisation we have today.

With a membership of just under 14,000 there are 169 branches with which we have a Licence Agreement, and over 350 affiliated groups scattered throughout the world.

Since its early days, while expanding as a social activity, the Society has had a robust examination system for training teachers and provides learning opportunities for young people to develop their skills. In addition, the Society organises residential Winter and Summer Schools, the latter held at the University of St. Andrews. The schools are attended by members and non-members alike, attracting many from our international community. As well as tuition on dance and music the Schools offer a wide range of social activities to cater for all interests.

The Society publishes a wide range of books and music under the direction of experienced professionals and, very recently, appointed an external contractor to develop and professionalise our music and new media production. The Society is managed by an elected Board, supported by elected Membership Services and Education & Training committees.

In the last few months, and since I became Chairman last autumn, discussions have continued on our structure and produced initial proposals for change. Our legal status is under review and a strategy linking Scottish country dancing and health is nearing completion. Partnership arrangements with other agencies are under consideration, along with our relationship with the wider dancing community.

As Chairman I have a duty to maintain contact with our Branches, at home and abroad, usually through regional forums. These have proved invaluable, allowing me to discuss matters of concern in a very direct way.

Our Society has much to offer as a historical source of music and dance, with a commitment to promote Scottish country dancing to a wide public. It is supported by a dedicated staff team at Headquarters and a strong volunteer force who give freely of their skills and talents. It is my privilege to hold the position of Chairman and to be charged with continuing the work of my predecessors to ensure a strong, forward looking Society in a rapidly changing world.



**Ruth Beattie**  
Chairman



## Message from The Secretary/Executive Officer



I am delighted to welcome you to our second RSCDS Annual Review and to have the opportunity to tell you about some of the exciting developments which have been taking place within the Society during the first year of our three year strategic plan.

Good communication with members has remained high on our agenda and, in 2010-11, has tended to mean "digital". Following our successful re-launch of the RSCDS website and on-line shop and augmenting our popular twice yearly, Scottish Country Dancer magazine, "ezines", or digital news communications are now arriving by email, keeping members and others interested in Scottish country dancing up to date with news and information, including forthcoming events.

Young Scottish country dancers have taken this a stage further, linking round the world with their own Youth ezine; swapping stories, exchanging new dances, discussing "fusion" of different dance forms and making new friends.

Older dancers have not been left out in the cold. Last year, research conducted by the University of Strathclyde concluded that Scottish country dancing exceeds other similar forms of exercise in maintaining mental and physical fitness and promoting longevity and enjoyment of life. All this, and it's fun too! As a result of similar research, the Society has decided to focus on the links with health and well-being to encourage older people into Scottish country dancing, and very shortly posters and other supporting information will arrive at Branches around the world to help you with new member recruitment and to share the Scottish country dancing experience.

It's hard to think about Scottish country dancing without also thinking about traditional music. To increase access to its music and recordings, the Society has just appointed its first Music and New Media Development Officer, who will work alongside the Music Director to develop and professionalise our music and exploit new media production. Many enthusiasts also will testify to the fact that there is nothing quite so good as dancing Scottish country to live music. Accordingly, the new Officer will also be looking at ways to capture the interest, enthusiasm and commitment of young musicians in maintaining and developing the music traditions of Scottish country dance.

In all of our endeavours we are exploring new ways to work with other organisations and agencies which share our interests and values. As part of a worldwide dynamic movement, it is important that the Society plays a role not only in preserving traditions in music and dance but also in pushing back boundaries to create the dance and music forms for the future.

I could write much more about new developments within the Society. Instead, I hope you will take the time to enjoy a leisurely read through the RSCDS Annual Review 2011. A warm welcome awaits all visitors to Coates Crescent and to [www.rscds.org](http://www.rscds.org), where we are always delighted to receive news, views and ideas about the RSCDS and Scottish country dancing around the world.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Elizabeth Foster".

**Elizabeth Foster**  
Secretary/Executive Officer

## Purpose and Aims

The principal aim of The Royal Scottish Country Dance Society is to promote and develop Scottish country dancing worldwide for the benefit of present and future generations.

The Society aims to achieve this by:

- Promoting and encouraging Scottish country dancing for all ages and abilities
- Providing technical support to Scottish country dancing by maintaining high standards of teaching, training teachers and musicians and publishing materials
- Supporting and widening the network of RSCDS Branches and other Scottish dance groups

## Membership

The RSCDS is based in Scotland with a single office in Edinburgh and a worldwide membership. Membership is open to all persons aged 12 years and over. Members form autonomous local associations (Branches) which are linked to the Society by a licence agreement. Many UK Branches are also registered charities.

Today the Society has over 13,000 members spread across more than 500 Branches and Affiliated groups worldwide.

## RSCDS Membership

Description	2011	2010	2009
Branch members	12,543	13,406	13,553
Individual members	778	820	896
Total members	13,321	14,226	14,449
Branches/local associations	169	168	169
Affiliated groups	345	357	370
Teachers' associations	3	3	2
Annual members	12,187	13,082	13,028
Long-term members	72	82	167
Life members	1,062	1,062	1,254



## Structure and Management

### Structure

The RSCDS was formed in 1923 as the Scottish Country Dance Society, becoming The Royal Scottish Country Dance Society in 1951. The Royal Scottish Country Dance Society is an unincorporated association, registered as a Scottish Charity (SC 016085) since 1969.

The Society is governed in accordance with relevant UK laws and regulations, including those specifically applicable to Scottish charities. The Management Board, which is the governing body of the Society meets at least four times a year. Management of the Society's operations and staff is delegated to the Secretary who has defined executive responsibilities and reports to the Management Board.

### Appointment of Trustees

Elections are held annually by the Society at their AGM. Only Society members who are aged 18 or more can be elected to the Management Board, and when elected they automatically become Trustees. The Chairman Elect is elected for a two-year period and then confirmed in office as Chairman for two years. The two Management Committee Convenors and up to twelve ordinary members of the Management Board are elected for three-year periods. On 31 March 2011 there were nine ordinary current members of the Board. All Trustee positions are voluntary and unpaid, as are all positions on the Management Committees, Panels and Working Groups.

### Committee Structure

The Committees advise the Management Board and implement policies as delegated to them by the Board. Each Committee has a Convenor who holds a seat on the Management Board. Along with Convenors, Convenors Elect and members of the Committees are elected by the Society at the AGM. The Society Chairman and Chairman Elect can attend and participate in any Committee or other meeting, but have no voting rights.

### Panels and Working Groups

Panels and Working Groups progress a wide range of work, reporting in the first instance to a Committee or directly to the Board.

Panels are permanent, but reviewed annually. Last year, their responsibilities included adjudicating examination appeals, organising events such as the AGM Conference Weekend, investments and constitutional matters. Working Groups are established each year for certain tasks, with a Chair and membership selected to best fulfil their purpose. Last year, along with other matters, they considered the role of the President/Vice Presidents, engagement of members overseas and VAT recovery.



## Committees and their Responsibilities

### Membership Services

Arranges for the publication of instructional literature and any other relevant material that they consider to be in the interests of the Society.

Conducts and encourages research that furthers the Society's aims.

Maintains the Society's archives.

Deals with matters relating to members, Branches and Affiliates.

*The Committee currently comprises a Convenor and six ordinary members, plus the Archivist and the Music Director, who are appointed by the Management Board.*

### Education & Training

Implements policy on education and training, specifically running the examination system which trains future teachers of Scottish country dancing.

Provides training and development for teachers, dancers and musicians.

Through the Youth Director, deals with matters involving younger dancers, including medal tests and the organisation of "Spring Fling" for young dancers.

Organises Summer and Winter Scottish country dancing schools in conjunction with the Schools Director.

Advises the Management Board on matters concerning the standards and performance of Society dances.

*The Committee currently comprises an elected Convenor and eight ordinary members, plus the Schools and Youth Directors who are appointed by the Management Board.*

## Advisory Group

### Finance and Governance Advisory Group

Supports and monitors the processes for internal and external audit.

Examines organisational plans and arrangements for good corporate governance, in particular risk management.

Scrutinises the annual budget, financial audit and related financial matters.

*The Committee currently comprises a Convenor, who is also the Treasurer, the Executive Officer and five ordinary members.*



## Review of Activities

The following activities were undertaken in addressing the six main action areas of the RSCDS Strategic Plan.

### Increasing the public profile and awareness of the work and role of the RSCDS

#### Website Development

The RSCDS website, re-launched in 2010, has proved to be key in communicating relevant information to a wide range of audiences, not least to broaden awareness of the rich country dance heritage of Scotland. The new online shop has increased sales noticeably, and online booking for RSCDS events has been introduced, with plans to incorporate online payment for events.

#### House Magazine

The Society magazine, *Scottish Country Dancer*, is published twice yearly in April and October and is delivered directly to members as part of their subscription. It is regarded as the prime means of communication from HQ to all members and acts as a discussion forum for the membership. The magazine aims to inform, entertain, and inspire Scottish country dancers, and contains a wide range of articles, Board and Committee reports, news from Branches and clubs around the world, event news and information.

#### Extending Digital Communications

Incorporating the member database into the new website has enabled the production and electronic distribution of ezines. These digital "news" communications are sent to all members with live email addresses as well as to those with an interest in Scottish country dancing and/or the RSCDS, who have signed up to receive them. Designed to complement the printed magazine, ezines are sent out around every three months.

#### Mailings to Branches

A minimum of eight Branch mailings a year continues, for the most part distributed electronically, with all documents available on the website for Branches and members to view.

#### Annual Review

2010 saw the launch of what will be an annual corporate publication. Less formal than the Annual Report, the brochure provides stakeholders, partner organisations, the media and various other audiences with facts and figures on the RSCDS as well as giving a flavour of the organisation and its activities.

#### Dance Scottish Week

Dance Scottish Week was introduced by the Society in 2007 to promote Scottish country dancing worldwide and encourage non-dancers to participate in Scottish dance. The event has grown to encompass a worldwide programme of events including taster sessions, classes for beginners, workshops for children, family ceilidhs and "bring a friend" evenings. A review of DSW 2010 highlighted the need for greater flexibility in timing to suit a worldwide audience. Dance Scottish 2011, therefore, encompasses a month of activities in November which run from the Society's AGM & Conference Weekend until St Andrews Day. All Branches are encouraged to develop recruitment events during Dance Scottish 2011 or at any time that suits local conditions under the "Dance Scottish" banner.

#### Sponsoring Traditional Music

Recognising the debt it owes to the many musicians worldwide who play for classes and dances, the Society continues to encourage a new generation of musicians. The RSCDS repeated its sponsorship of a trophy at the National Accordion and Fiddle Club Festival in 2011, awarded to the winner of a festival





class playing in the strict tempo SCD style: the class aims to reach out to new musicians and connect with other areas within traditional music. In addition, the Society continued its support of the MG Alba Scots Trad Music Awards, by sponsoring Club of the Year award at the Hands Up for Trad event.

## Extending access to Scottish country dancing across Scotland and worldwide

### RSCDS Schools

The Society organises various annual Schools and training events for Society members and the general public. During the past year the main events held were:

**Summer School 2011** - four sequential weeks in St Andrews, with 649 (2010: 729) participants, of which 41% (2010: 26%) were attending for the first time.

**Winter School 2011** – two successive five-day events in Pitlochry, with 163 participants, of which 25% were attending for the first time.

**Spring Fling 2011** – one weekend in Edinburgh, with 55+ participants from the UK and Europe.

These events are essential in helping to meet the aims and objectives of the Society, providing opportunities for dancers worldwide to improve their skills in a unique social atmosphere. **Summer School** is held in St Andrews, one of the most attractive of Scotland's university towns, a centre of scholarship and an appropriate location for the high level of tuition provided by some of the Society's best teachers and musicians. All levels of ability are catered for, and there is a steady increase in dancers attending for the first time. This year the Society celebrated 80 years of this historic event. **Winter School**, in its current two course format, enables dancers to improve their skills in a wonderful hotel and attend a ball at Blair Castle. **Spring Fling**, organised by young dancers for young dancers aged 16-35, takes place each year at a different location in the UK, providing personal development opportunities not only for young dancers but also young teachers. This year Edinburgh hosted a very successful Spring Fling; planning is now well underway for the 2012 event which will be held in Dundee and St Andrews.

### Young Dancer Development

A Young Dancer project has been acknowledged as a success in increasing the number of children and young people Scottish country dancing. Following a highly productive first year, this project, with its part-time development officer post, has secured funding for a second year from Creative Scotland.

With a remit to improve access to SCD by investigating and documenting successful practice and supporting Branches in developing initiatives to engage children and young people with SCD, project outputs to date include: Branch strategy and Day of Dance documents; Guidance for organising SCD events in schools and facilitating participative research with children; three Youth ezines written by young dancers for young dancers; a social networking site with dance exchange facility (located within the RSCDS website) where project news is published regularly and project outputs made available for downloading. As well as continuing to build on earlier achievements, the second year of this project will focus on supporting SCD teaching in/out of school and pioneering work with other dance forms.

### CPD Training

Running alongside the Young Dancer project, the Continuing Professional Development (CPD) initiative, to enable RSCDS teachers to deliver basic SCD teaching skills to school teachers in Scotland, continues to flourish, and there is now a centrally held register of 17 trained CPD providers.

### Youth Workshop

A successful Youth Workshop was held in September in London, where expert tuition improved dancing skills in a lively atmosphere. A second Youth Workshop linked to SUSCDF, planned for December in Glasgow had to be cancelled, however,



due to extreme weather. The Youth Team, drawn from this talented pool of dancers, promotes Scottish country dancing through displays and demonstrations at public events and performances, at competitive and non-competitive dance festivals in the UK and abroad.

### **Children's Festivals**

Scottish country dance festivals engage children and adults throughout the UK. Organised by local authorities and music festivals and assisted by Branches, they promote Scottish country dancing. Also in Scotland, they meet some "Health and Wellbeing" aims within the national schools' "Curriculum for Excellence".

## **Continuing to work to maintain and improve standards in Scottish country dancing**

### **Examiners**

Examiners maintain Society teaching and dancing standards and are kept up to date with regular bulletins on the latest protocols and examination procedures. To continue to provide a global network of expertise, the Society called for expressions of interest from those who considered they had the experience and ability to be future examiners. Following a selection process, three new examiners were appointed in 2011.

### **Qualifications for Teachers**

During the year, 61 members undertook the written part of the course leading to Part 1 of the teaching qualification, and 151 members followed courses leading to the full teaching certificate. The aim of the certification is to maintain high standards of tuition so that Scottish country dancing is taught to a consistently high standard in all countries where Branches and/or qualified teachers are active locally.

### **Teachers' Association Workshop**

The first Teachers' Association workshop was held in Perth, Scotland immediately prior to the 2010 AGM. Designed to establish good practice and work towards common goals, the event attracted representatives from the Australian Teachers Alliance (ATA), the Teacher's Association of Canada (TAC) and, from the UK, the South East Region Teachers Association (SERTA) and the Teacher's Association of Scotland (TAS). Following its success, bi-annual seminars are being planned.

### **International Teacher Development Fund**

Established just over a year ago, the International Teacher Development Fund has been used to send teachers from the UK to Canada and New Zealand, support tutor training in Australia and bring a young teacher from Canada to teach in the UK.

### **Non-examined Courses**

The Basic SCD Teaching Skills non-examined course which was launched in 2010 has been very popular. Courses have been delivered at Summer School and other locations in the UK, Canada, the USA and New Zealand. A course for training mentors has had a good uptake also as it is extremely helpful for those supporting examination candidates. Courses have been delivered at Summer School and in North America.

### **Beginners' Framework**

A Beginners' Framework, providing helpful advice for teaching Scottish country dancing to new dancers, including basic formations and steps and allowing for progression through three levels, has been developed and is now available on the website. A search facility to filter particular formation(s) according to level or rhythm has been included.

### **Tutoring Success**

Tutor training courses continue to be popular, and have been delivered in the UK,



Canada and Australia. *The Core Programme for Tutors* has been renamed the *Guide to Teaching SCD* and is now available on the website. This guide to teaching is an invaluable resource for tutors, teachers and candidates.

### **Medal Tests**

Medal Tests help teachers provide structured and progressive learning for young people, to stimulate and maintain interest and improve their dancing standards. Last year, 549 young people from Aberdeen to Bexleyheath took dancing tests for assessment under the medal test scheme.

## **Increasing the membership and improving membership services**

### **Marketing Materials for Branches**

Improved marketing materials have been made available to Branches for downloading to support their efforts to recruiting new members. The material can be customised, enabling details of classes and events to be incorporated in a RSCDS branded template.

### **Sale of Publications and Recordings**

The Society continues to publish and sell dance instructions, sheet and recorded music and books on the history of Scottish dance for the benefit of members and the general public. This is a key activity to keep Scottish music and dance traditions alive for use in a variety of settings and to preserve them for future generations.

### **RSCDS Recordings Project**

2010 saw the completion of a long term project to provide recorded music for all of the Society's numbered books of dance instructions, with the release of accompanying CD for books 7 and 17. *Book 46*, a new book of dances and recording were released, and the commemorative booklet, *Scottish Country Dances for Perth 800*, was published. In addition instructions for Books 13-18 were revised using standard terminology and released in A5 format.

### **The Kandahar Reel**

The Kandahar Reel, devised by two serving officers in Afghanistan, made the news in 2010. Inspired by this new dance in the reeling tradition, the dance was adapted to the SCD tradition. A joint publication by the Society and the Army Benevolent Fund followed with the dance in its original and adapted forms, together with the story of the dance and a brief history of the different forms of Scottish dance.

## **Continuous improvement in organisational management and governance including risk management**

### **Risk Management Policy**

The risk management plan, documenting the main identified risks to the Society, existing controls and plans for managing remaining risk, was reviewed satisfactorily by the Board in July 2010 and February 2011.

### **Best Practice Governance**

A training day, attended by the Board and Committee members, was held at the end of 2010. The topics included legal framework for charities and good corporate governance. In addition, new policies and procedures were developed in relation to equal opportunities, complaints, volunteers and safeguarding vulnerable children and adults.

### **Training and Quality**

The emphasis on quality assurance and training has continued throughout the year. Organisational structure, staff roles, responsibilities and good communication have been the key areas for development.

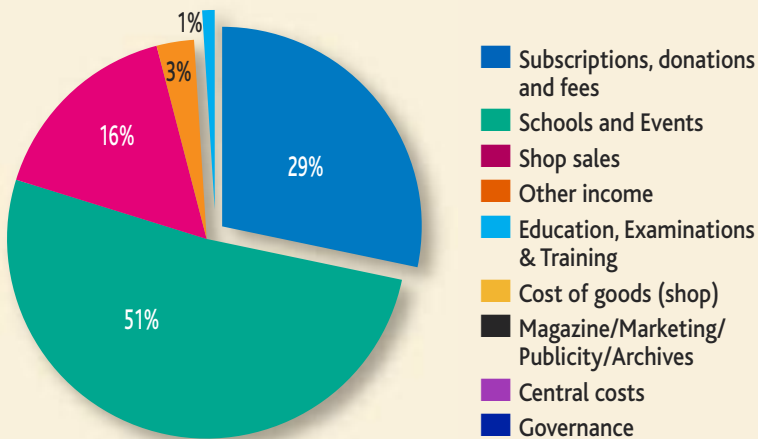


## The Year in Focus



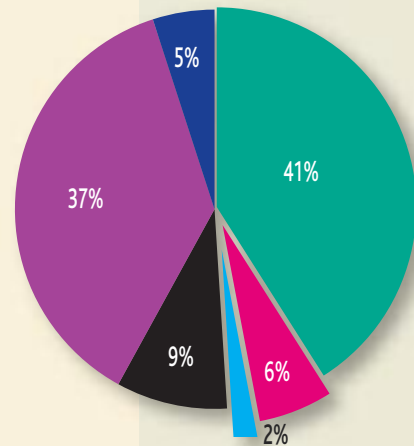
## Statement of Financial Activities

### Operational Income



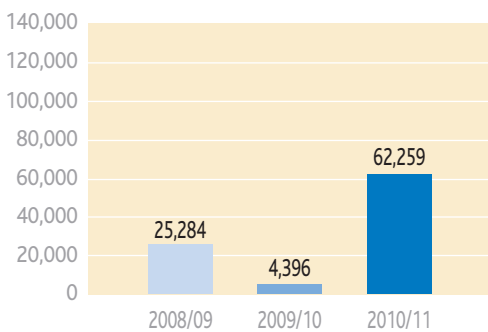
Total 744,389

### Operational Expenditure

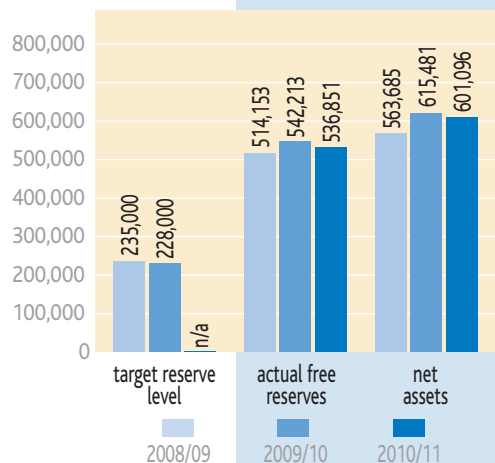


Total 682,130

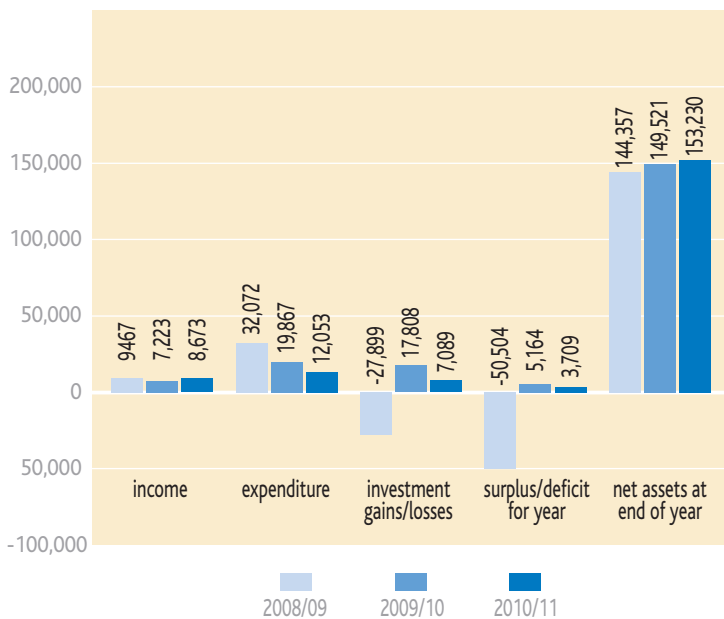
### General Fund results



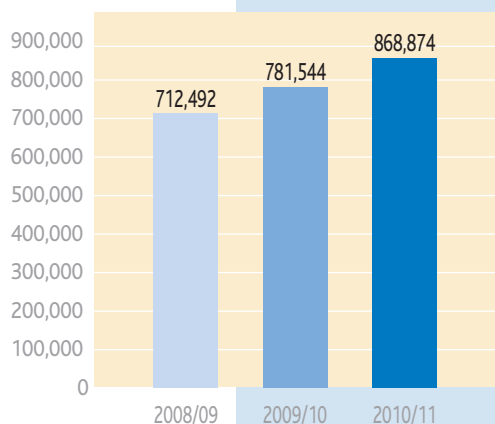
### General Fund assets



### Jean Milligan Memorial Fund results



### RSCDS Net Worth



## Statement of Financial Activities

### Annual Results

For the year to 31 March 2011 the Society produced a net income of £54,206 (2010 £3,844) before unrealised gains of £33,124 (2010 £65,208).

### Operational Activities

The operating activities for the year have been successful with revenue sales of £121,193 (2010 £48,896) following the production of new CDs and publications and the introduction of an online shop.

### Membership

The year saw a decline in membership income to £188,590 (2010 £200,386) reflecting a drop in the membership numbers to 13,321 (2010 14,226).

### Investment

Investment income increased to £26,329 (2010 £14,681) following an increased return on investments and additional funds placed with the investment manager. The net assets of the Society have increased to £868,874 (2010 £781,544).

### Creative Scotland – Grant Aid

A grant of £14,835 (2010 £12,009) was received from Creative Scotland to help continue our project of developing initiatives to encourage children and young people to take up Scottish country dancing.

### Development Fund

This is a fund designated by the Board to further develop the world-wide knowledge, practice and spread of Scottish country dancing and the RSCDS. During the year £100,000 was transferred to the fund, specifically to finance major activities outlined in the Society's strategic plan and to attract new members.

### Jean Milligan Memorial Fund

This is a fund designated by the Board to sponsor RSCDS Branch projects, scholarships to the RSCDS, Summer School and other educational activities. The Board intends that the value of this fund should not fall below £100,000.

### General Fund

This is an unrestricted fund used to support the general activities of the Society. The Management Board considers that the current level of reserves is sufficient to meet its future commitments and objectives.

### Investment Policy and Returns

The Management Board is responsible for ensuring that the Society's investment policy is followed.



## RSCDS Branches and Affiliated Groups

With more than 500 Branches and Affiliated Groups worldwide, the RSCDS has global representation across six continents, in the countries listed below:



Argentina	Ireland	Portugal
Australia	Italy	Russia
Austria	Jamaica	Scotland
Belarus	Japan	Singapore
Belgium	Kenya	South Africa
Canada	Luxembourg	Spain
Channel Islands	Monaco	Sri Lanka
Denmark	Northern Ireland	Sweden
England	Netherlands	Switzerland
France	New Zealand	Ukraine
Germany	Norway	USA
Hong Kong	Philippines	Wales
Hungary	Poland	West Indies



**Registered Office**

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The Royal Scottish Country Dance Society  
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