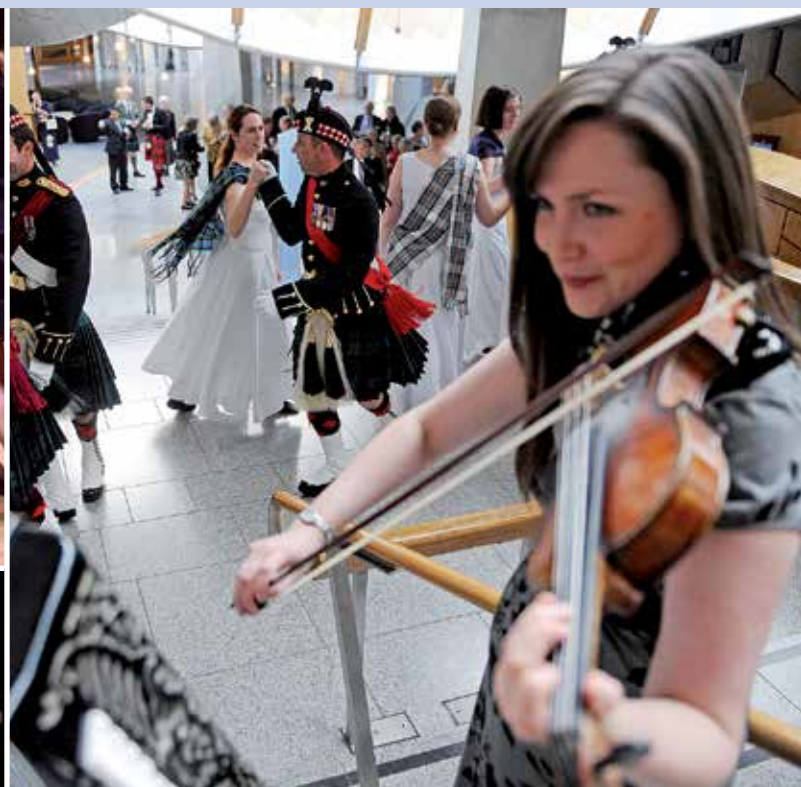


Annual Review 2015



rscds
Dance Scottish

Growing a vibrant worldwide
community of Scottish dance and music





Chairman's Introduction

It has been an eventful period; one that has brought many successes and challenges in equal measure. My abiding memory of the year will be the Thursday nights during Summer School in the Younger Hall in St Andrews. Each week, the floor was crowded with dancers from all over the world, all thoroughly enjoying themselves. It was good to be reminded of why the Society exists and must continue.

Following the very successful Commonwealth Ceilidh, we have been working together with Scottish Television (STV) to organise a series of fund raising events around the country and internationally, in conjunction with their annual children's Charity effort. Thank you to all the Branches and Groups, not only in Scotland, that signed up to be involved in this. It is wonderful to know that our passion and enthusiasm for Scottish country dancing have been used to support such a worthy cause.

Staffing at HQ was high on the agenda in 2015 as the Society faced the retirement of its two most senior employees within six months of each other; first Elspeth Gray and then Elizabeth Foster. Well-earned tributes have been paid to both elsewhere so it is to the remaining staff that I want to say a very sincere thank you; they coped magnificently with the change. As is the case, when one door closes, another opens. These personnel departures provided an opportunity to review the staffing structure and we took the decision to continue modernising our communication with members and Branches. As a result, Mike Greenwood was appointed to increase our use of social media and digital marketing. And, as I

write this, Gillian Wilson has taken up the post of Executive Officer and Secretary. I believe we have been fortunate to recruit Gillian and I look forward to working together with her, and the Management Board, to address the challenges we face.

A pressing issue is the continuing slow erosion of membership numbers and the consequent financial deficit. The Board has been examining the problem and looking at possibly radical solutions. In the short term, a further modest increase in the basic subscription is proposed, and the discussion session at the Annual Conference will focus on how the finances can be regularised.

Most importantly, however, the dancing has continued, and I have been honoured to attend a number of Branch functions including a number of significant anniversary balls. As the original Branches reach their ninetieth year, it reminds me that our Centenary is only 8 years away and no longer in the 'distant' future. While the various commemorations will be shaped by others further down the line, I do know that initial ideas are already being aired. What is certain, is that 2023 will be a landmark, worthy of real celebration.

For now, happy dancing.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J Healy', written over a light-colored, slightly textured background.

Jim Healy
Chairman

Purpose and Aims

RSCDS aims to grow a vibrant worldwide community of Scottish dance and music.

The Society aims to achieve this through:

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

Society Membership

The RSCDS is headquartered in Scotland with a single office in Edinburgh and a worldwide membership. Members form autonomous Local Associations (Branches), which link to the Society by a licence agreement. Many branches are registered charities. Individual membership is available; these members traditionally are known as HQ members. Membership is open to people, aged 12 and over, with an interest in the Society.

Today the Society has over 12,000 members spread across 160 Branches and more than 300 Affiliated Groups worldwide.

Description	2015	2014	2013
Branch members	11,818	12,269	12,355
HQ members	301*	818	745
Total members	12,119	13,087	13,100
Branches/Local Associations	159	165	164
Affiliated Groups	316	323	335
Teachers' Associations	3	3	3
Annual adult members	10,976	11,460	11,441
Young adult members(18-24)	95	98	116
Youth members (12-17)	56	48	43
Half-year adults	96	178	198
Life members	896	1303	1,302

*In 2015 HQ member numbers were clarified, with Affiliate Group secretaries not included in the number of members.

Committees and their Responsibilities

Education and Training

- *Advises the Board on matters concerning the standards and performance of Society dances, examinations and tests*
- *Implements policy on education and training, including organising Scottish country dancing schools*
- *Administers medal tests for children and young people*
- *Runs examinations for future teachers of Scottish country dancing*

Membership Services

- *Develops and updates instructional literature and other relevant material pertinent to the interests of the Society*
- *Conducts and disseminates research to further the Society's objectives*
- *Supports the Society's Archivist*
- *Deals with matters relating to members, Branches and Affiliates*

Youth Services

- *Advises the Board on policies and strategies to engage children and young people (CYP) with Scottish country dancing and music worldwide*
- *Researches, develops and evaluates the impact of activities and services for CYP*
- *Supports and promotes continuing professional development, training and activities for teaching CYP*
- *Develops Scottish country dancing and music in a contemporary arts environment*

Structure and Management



Mission Statement

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.

Structure

The Society was formed in 1923 as the Scottish Country Dance Society, becoming The Royal Scottish Country Dance Society in 1951. As of 1 April 2015, the Society changed its legal form from that of an "association of members" to that of a "company limited by guarantee". The Society name, patron, registered office, charity number and objects remain the same. The Society is now subject to UK company law as well as Scottish charity law. Each Branch is entitled to appoint at least two Delegates, who become company law members entitled to call for, attend and vote at General Meetings. The Management Board is the governing body of the Society and meets at least four times a year. All members of the Board, whether elected or appointed, are now both charity trustees and company directors.

Appointment of Trustees

Elections are held annually by the Society at its AGM. Only Society members aged 18 or over can be elected to the Board and, when elected, they automatically become Trustees. The Chairman Elect is elected for two years then confirmed as Chairman for two years. Management Committee Convenors and up to twelve ordinary members of the Board are elected for up to three years. All Trustee positions are voluntary and unpaid, as are all positions on the Management Committees, Panels and Working Groups.

Committee Structure

Committees provide advice, and implement policies as delegated to them by the Board. Each Convenor has a seat on the Board. As with Convenors, Convenors Elect and Committee members 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. Working Groups are established each year for certain tasks, with a Chair and membership selected to best fulfil their purpose.

Review of Activities

Underpinning the Society's activities is a Strategic Plan with five main aims.

- Increasing the public profile and awareness of the work and role of the RSCDS
- Extending access to Scottish country dancing across Scotland and worldwide
- Continuing to work to maintain and improve standards in Scottish country dancing
- Increasing the membership and improving membership services
- Continuous improvement in organisational management and governance including risk management

These objectives inform and feed into a diverse range of work and activities. A snapshot of what has been happening over the last year is summarised below.

Digital Communications

The Society is now starting to take full advantage of the many powerful platforms available and to expand its network in a number of ways that have not been explored previously. We are excited that our members are confident in our approach and continue to interact with us on a daily basis. The Society began to increase communication between Headquarters and Branches using online platforms to better disseminate information, news, and important documents. A communications schedule comprises Mailings to Branches and, every two to three weeks, a Newsletter is sent out to over 7,000 members worldwide detailing various activities and promotions. The high percentage of recipients opening the newsletter and following the links attached, signal a desire for more. A dedicated push for a heightened Social Media presence has been a success over the last 12 months. The RSCDS Facebook fan base has risen by over 450 new "likes", and Twitter followers increased by more than 300. RSCDS YouTube has been active, with videos of Book 49, Unit 2 Dances, a Flash Mob, and Summer School related videos bringing in over 70,000 views this year alone. The posting of content on a regular basis, combined with material that is interesting and



Review of Activities

engaging, has seen communication via Social Media take on a greater depth. Not only is the Society attracting more fans, but it is building confidence in online users by maintaining a regular and interesting profile. The RSCDS Website is a work in progress, and thanks must be given to those members who have written in with feedback on how we can make improvements. The website has some 30,000 users per month (most are returning users). With this much traffic it is important that the website is simple to use and delivers a good user experience. New pages have been added under 'Media' to help Branches and members take part in the push for an increased digital profile. Many pages have been re-organised so that relevant information, pertaining to the history of the Society, Headquarters and Branches, can be found more efficiently. In addition, a new Online Membership Renewal System has been introduced to enable the membership renewal process to be more straightforward.

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 keeps Scottish music and dance traditions alive for use in a variety of settings and helps preserve them for future generations. Over the last 6 months, the Society has made great strides in enabling RSCDS titles to be available via digital music retailers (iTunes, Amazon, Google Play etc.) and also streaming sites such as Spotify and Deezer. The digital music downloads and streaming process commenced with the preparation of existing recordings for sale as digital downloads. The first batch (Books 38 to 49) went live in August and all RSCDS recordings should be available in early 2016. In the future, titles will be in both digital and physical formats. Physical CDs are still available to purchase via the online shop, but now there is the option of downloading the music straight to computer or smart phone. Another exciting development, and one of particular benefit to exam candidates, has been the professional filming of dances with high definition which feature dances from multiple viewpoints.

RSCDS Schools and Events

The Society organises various annual schools and training events for members and the general public. These include: *Summer School*, held over four weeks in St Andrews, Scotland; *Winter School*, a five day event in Pitlochry, Scotland and *Spring Fling*, a weekend for young dancers, held each year in a different country. Each event provides the opportunity for dancers worldwide to learn and improve their skills in a unique social atmosphere, and attracts a rich mix of participants.

Increasing attendances and positive feedback marked out Summer School 2015 as a resounding success. Week 2 was sold out; the musicians' course proved immensely popular and it was encouraging to see an increase in dancers aged under 16. In total, over 670 people took part in the annual event to enjoy, dance, learn and appreciate the wealth of Scotland's music. Dancers came from locations as diverse





as Hong Kong, Australia and South America and we welcomed a large French contingent, in particular from Paris, Lyon and Brittany. We were delighted to greet a group of dancers from Argentina, and even more pleased, to hear that they intend to form a new branch, in Buenos Aires. Winter School 2015 welcomed 120 participants from as far afield as Australia and Japan. A record number of returning dancers were joined by some 30% who attended for the first time. Many delighted dancers have already put their names down to join us again in 2016. Organised predominantly by young people for young people, *Spring Fling* attracts young teachers, dancers and musicians from countries across Europe and further afield. **Spring Fling 2015 was held in London and attracted 78 participants.** The event included the culmination of a competition to encourage young dance devisors and composers. The competition attracted 46 dances which are now being tested for inclusion in Book 50.

The AGM and Conference Weekend, held in Perth, Scotland was action packed with increased attendance at all events. The Annual General Meeting saw the confirmation of Jim Healy as the new RSCDS Chairman and the non-stop weekend packed in a youth forum, workshops, classes, a teachers' conference (which attracted 76 RSCDS teachers), a dance and a civic reception. The highlight of the long weekend was the Saturday night ball with 524 dancers, from cities as far apart as Aberdeen and Toronto, taking to the floor.

Communicating with Members

Direct contact with members remains high on the agenda for the Management Board and staff. The Chairman, Chairman Elect and Board Members attended many functions throughout the year, both in the UK and overseas. Printed publications include *Scottish Country Dancer*, the RSCDS in-house magazine, which is published bi-annually. Delivered directly to all members as part of their subscription, the purpose of the magazine is to inform, entertain and inspire Scottish country dancers worldwide. Submissions from members are pivotal and, as such, *Scottish Country Dancer* is regarded as a member forum for news, discussion and exchange of views. The Annual Review is produced primarily to help inform and impress potential partners, stakeholders and funders but Branches and members are invited to order multiple copies to help to promote SCD and attract new dancers in their local area. Supported by a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund, the RSCDS Archive development project went live in the summer of 2015. The substantial project, which heralds a superb resource for members and all those interested in Scottish country dance, involved conversion work onsite to create more desirable and usable space and the creation of a fully accessible archive on Scottish country dance and the RSCDS. The bulk of the Archive catalogue is now accessible online via the 'News' section of the Society website where a large number of items are available to browse. This is an on-going initiative as we continue to receive new material. The Society is grateful for the bequests and donations, photographs, early illustrations, personal and branch stories and histories provided by members, Branches and Groups.

Review of Activities



Working in Partnership

Sponsorship plays an ongoing role in the Society's support of *traditional music*. The Society is indebted to the many musicians worldwide who play for classes and dances, and would like to encourage a new generation of musicians. Once again the Society sponsored a trophy at the *National Accordion and Fiddle Club Festival* along with the 'Instrumentalist of the Year Award' presented at the high profile *MG Alba Scots Traditional Music Awards*.

Engaging with Dance and Cultural Organisations provides opportunities to share Scottish country

dance skills and knowledge and to reach new audiences. For many years local Branches and Affiliated Groups have participated in country dance and music festivals and events organised by local councils, voluntary organisations, local groups and individuals. Demonstration teams again showcased Scottish country dance at public events and positively encouraged audience participation.

The STV Children's Appeal, a Scottish based charity, is set to benefit from the efforts of a marathon 24-hour ceilidh. Supported by the Society, the annual appeal launched a Ceilidh Challenge spearheaded by broadcaster and TV presenter Lorraine Kelly. Past RSCDS Chairman John Wilkinson devised a special dance for the occasion and RSCDS members, Branches and Groups supported or created fund raising events throughout the UK and overseas. Social media helped spread the word as enthusiastic participants, across the country and internationally, danced '*Kelly's Kaper*' and collected donations for this worthy cause.

Working in Schools and with Young People

Universities and Colleges are important in attracting new dancers, and the RSCDS has been active in the *Scottish Universities Scottish Country Dance Festival* and also at the annual *Inter Varsity Folk Dance Festival*. Young dancers participated in the Opening and Closing Ceremonies of the *Commonwealth Games* in Glasgow as well as during the event. In addition, Day Schools for young people were held in Aberdeen, St Andrews and Leeds. A new initiative was the formation of a Youth Branch for dancers up to 35 years of age.

With the highly successful pilot of the *Primary Schools Accreditation Scheme* in Aberdeenshire and Banffshire, Scotland, this initiative is now being rolled out. With three certificate levels, it is hoped to engage more schools, teachers and children in Scottish country dancing. A companion pack to the popular primary schools' '*Jigs & Reels*' was developed throughout the year. Launched in September 2015 at the *Scottish Festival of Learning* in Glasgow, the multi-media '*Dance Trad*,' aimed at secondary school teachers, extends the range of Scottish country dances and includes sections on ceilidh dance and dance devising. The new resource pack consists of a 60 page book with descriptions of 16 Scottish country dances, 14 ceilidh dances and comes with two CDs of music and two instructional DVDs.

Teaching, Training and Qualifications

During the year 137 candidates took Examinations in the UK and at residential schools in St Andrews, New Zealand and the Teachers' Association Canada. The filming of Unit 2 Examination dances, with recorded music, is now a valuable visual resource for candidates and their tutors. In addition, a handbook for tutors, and guidelines for the delivery of courses for Unit 2, 3 and 5 was developed. Continuing Professional Development (CPD) courses continue to be delivered to enable school teachers to introduce Scottish country dancing to their pupils at primary level through the 'Jigs and Reels' pack and the new multi-media pack for secondary age pupils, 'Dance Trad'. The non-examined *Basic SCD Teaching Skills* course remains popular with dancers who, on occasion, may be required to teach but do not wish to sit RSCDS teaching exams. The *Medal Tests* are as popular as ever with young dancers. Over the year, 438 children sat Medal Tests; ranging from Introductory to Grade 5. And at TAC summer school in Greely, USA, five teachers successfully undertook the Medal Test Assessor Course. Interest in the *Dancing Achievement Award* (DAA) continues to attract more dancers wishing to have their personal dancing assessed. The Award includes three levels of accreditation and can be entered at any level. The DAA is of particular relevance to dancers considering Teaching Certificate training courses.

Staff at HQ

RSCDS employs seven staff to work with the Committees and Board to help deliver our services. These are:

Executive Officer

Events Manager

Digital Marketing and Communications Officer

In-house Graphic Design Officer

Examinations and Schools Officer

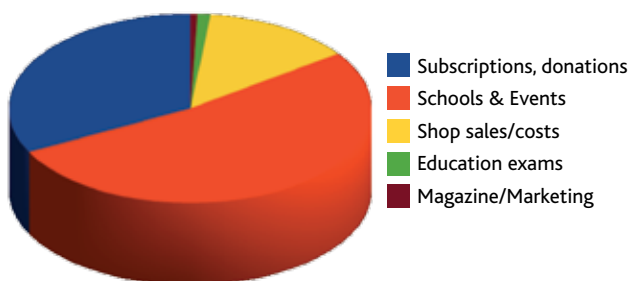
Finance and Administrative Manager

Finance and Administrative Assistant

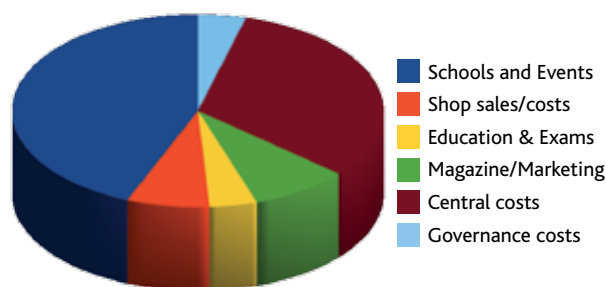
During this year we have also employed a full-time Archivist, largely funded through a Heritage Lottery Fund grant, who has worked with our main Archivist to set up a professional and digitised archive.

Statement of Financial Activities for 2014/15

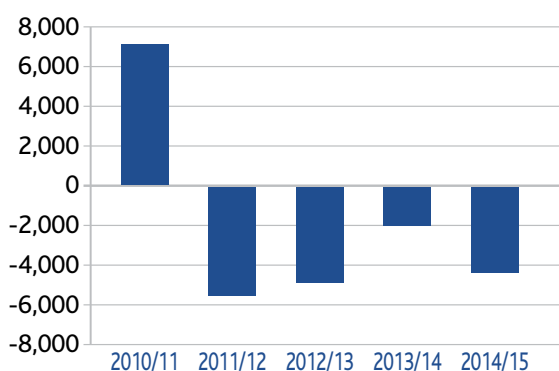
Operating Income



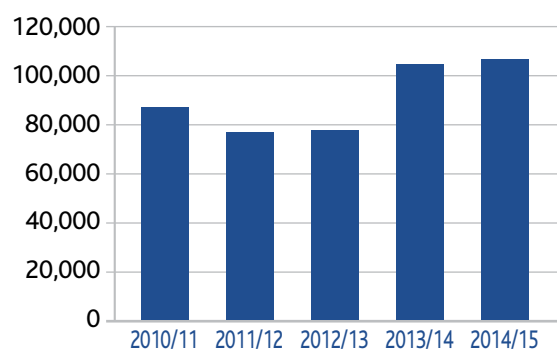
Operating Costs



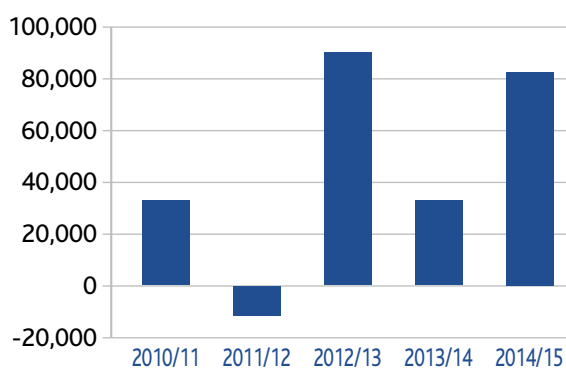
General Fund Results



Total Net Worth



Unrealised Investment gains/losses



Jean Milligan Memorial Fund

	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Opening balance	149,521	153,230	152,766	175,628	175,045
Income	15,762	10,204	10,720	8,178	6,579
Expenditure	(12,053)	(9,487)	(7,094)	(15,704)	(6,438)
Investment results		(1,181)	19,236	6,943	15,240
Transfers					
Closing balance	153,230	152,766	175,628	175,045	190,426

Overall results

For the financial year ended 31 March 2015, the Society had an income of £820,839 and expenditure of £878,386, showing a deficit of £47,275 (2014 - £21,648) on the General Fund and a total deficit on all funds of £57,547 (2014 – surplus of £234,131 including exceptional legacies of £273,205). The operating deficits were more than offset by the unrealised gains on our long-term investments amounting to £82,307 (2014 - £33,092). Investment gains cannot be relied on and the extent of the deficit on recurring activities continues to cause concern although the Society's overall financial position is very healthy with net worth amounting to £1,067,778 (2014 - £1,043,018). In order to bring the financial results of recurring operations back into balance, the Directors will bring forward a resolution at the next Annual General Meeting to increase the basic annual subscription from £18 to £20 a year.

Membership

The number of annual members at 31 March 2015 was 10,976 compared to 11,460 at the preceding year end a reduction of almost 6% although it is encouraging to see a small rise in Youth and Young adult membership from 146 last year to 151 this year. It will be interesting to see how the new Youth Branch which has just been formed affects these numbers. The other decrease is in life members from 1,303 to 896. In large part this is due to a detailed review of the HQ life members following the introduction of the new database. The staff are to be congratulated on the effort they put in to confirming those life members who are still active.

Jean Milligan Memorial Fund

It was agreed a few years ago that the fund would remain at a minimum of £100,000. The movements on this fund over the last five years is shown on the preceding page. Income has been reducing, mainly as a result of lower investment returns but expenditure has also slowed. A recent review has identified that the procedures for allocating expenditure to separate funds needs some improvement and this will be done in the current financial year.

Development Fund

The movements on this fund since its inception can be summarised as follows:

	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Opening balance		100,000	80,247	46,301	258,711
Income				279,510	18,000
Expenditure		(19,753)	(33,946)	(24,875)	(3,115)
Investment results					
Transfers	100,000			(42,225)	(41,212)
Closing balance	100,000	80,247	46,301	258,711	232,384

Transfers out represent mainly amounts transferred to the Designated Assets Fund representing longer-term investment in the Society's activities including the website and new members' database.

Investments

The Society's investments are kept under continuous review and, as can be seen from the graph above, have generated significant capital growth at a time when investment returns have been at historic lows.

As noted above the overall financial position is healthy but the tendency to reducing membership continues to cause concern and is the focus of much of the Board's attention at this time.

RSCDS Branches and Affiliated Groups

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



Argentina
Australia
Austria
Barbados
Belarus
Belgium
Canada
Cyprus
Denmark
England
Estonia

France
Germany
Hong Kong
Hungary
India
Ireland
Italy
Jamaica
Japan
Luxembourg
Monaco

Morocco
Northern Ireland
Netherlands
New Zealand
Philippines
Portugal
Qatar
Romania
Russia
Scotland
Singapore

South Africa
Spain
Sri Lanka
Sweden
Switzerland
Ukraine
United Kingdom
United States
Wales

Registered Office

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Company No. SC 480530