

Annual Report

CHESS SCOTLAND



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President

This has been a challenging year for Chess Scotland.

A number of 'well kent' faces have passed on leaving the chess scene in Scotland a sadder place. We have also seen resignations from a number of Directors. I would like to thank Andy for his huge contribution to the chess scene here. It is good that he will continue as an arbiter and as our FIDE delegate. Alice has been with us for less time but has made a significant contribution to the promotion of female chess. It is good to know that although Harry has left the junior scene nationally, he is continuing his work at local level.

Of course, I would like to thank all of the other Directors and officials for their continuing efforts. Without their work the chess scene would be a much poorer place. I would normally avoid singling out anyone but a special mention to Andy Burnett for his efforts despite health problems.

While this is not a review of the year we have a number of individual achievements to highlight.

Keti Arachamia-Grant has very recently won the World Women's Over 50 Championship. Always difficult to make reference to a woman's age, but in this case it would be inexcusable not to mention such a magnificent achievement.

Continuing the recent successes of our junior players, Vladyslav Shopynskyi won the British U8 title.

Andy Howie was fairly recently appointed Chair of the FIDE Fair Play Commission. Congratulations to them all for their achievements.

The finances of CS continue to be healthy and our Finance Director will provide much more information on this.

We did have to defend court action brought by a disgruntled player which has highlighted deficiencies in our constitution and wasted considerable time and reduced development work which should have been taking place.

We had initially intended to have called a parallel SGM to revise the constitution but this will now be called early next year.

Looking towards the future where hopefully there will be some significant developments.

We are intending, with your agreement, to transform Chess Scotland into a SCIO. This will give us charitable status and hopefully open up additional sources of commercial funding and potentially other advantages such as being eligible for gift aid donations.

As hinted above, this will require a total rewrite of the constitution with significant changes having to be made to satisfy the regulators. There will be more on this in the report from the Finance Director.



It is good to see new people coming forward to seek election. However, there are still vacancies and volunteers are wanted. There are two vacancies which occurred between the calling of the meeting and the AGM taking place. Following consultation it was felt that trying to fill these vacancies at such short notice would deprive potential candidates from applying. Therefore, I request anyone interested in any of the vacant positions to get in touch following the meeting.

An initiative which has been delayed has been the introduction of a 'Remote League'. This would be a hybrid league for clubs in remote regions or other areas with small populations. The difference between hybrid and online is that it would be hoped that the players in each team would come together at a central venue to meet opposition at another venue, For those of you above a certain age, this is the modern equivalent of telephone matches but vastly superior as there is no time delay in the transmission of moves. Anyone willing to be the league's organiser should get in touch.

There will also be the reintroduction of a Seniors Championship in the new year.

CS will also be considering its methods of communication. The Forum has fallen out of popularity and is now very much old tech. We welcome suggestions on modern replacements which will allow our members to have a voice.

I end my report with expressing thanks to all officials and members of CS and hope that you will continue to support the organisation in what will potentially be a year of significant change.

Alex McFarlane



Admin Director

Introduction

I wish to start by giving thanks to all my Executive Committee and Management Board colleagues. They all put in a significant amount of work into their respective roles and the level of respect and admiration I have for all of them is high.

Special Mention

I would like to acknowledge the work and efforts of three people who have recently stepped down.

Firstly, many thanks to Harry Marron, who in his time of roughly 6 years, the Chess Scotland junior calendar has evolved markedly and the contribution of Harry's efforts to Chess Scotland should not be underestimated. I wish him well in future endeavours and he will no doubt remain a pivotal part of junior development in the West of Scotland in times to come.

The ongoing development of Women's chess in Scotland has been significant in the last 2 years and I want to pay tribute to Alice for the work she has done. In particular, the Women's Championships and Women's Allegro Championships have been fantastic events for competition and connection.

Lastly, I would like to acknowledge the tremendous amount of time, effort and work that Andy Howie has given Chess Scotland over his 17 years as Executive Director. There are no words for the level of commitment that Andy gives to chess in Scotland and globally. He will continue to remain involved as FIDE delegate with the wealth of experience that he has in this liaison work.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion remains a priority for Chess Scotland and ongoing observations suggest that the Scottish chess community remains a place that is tolerant and welcoming of diversity. This includes doing all we can to ensure that the community and events that occur within it feels like a safe environment for women, children and any persons with vulnerability.

This year there have been plenty of new adults and juniors at tournaments and other events. Part of the thriving of any community is the ability to be welcoming of new people to it and the majority of feedback I get from newcomers to Scottish chess is positive.

Many thanks to all for your support over this last year.

Ruairidh McKay
Admin Director



Finance Director

Introduction

It has been another busy year, and this report is intended to give an overview of all matters financial and can be considered alongside the annual accounts to 30th April 2025.

Financial Overview for the Year Ended 30 April 2025

During the financial year ended 30 April 2025, Chess Scotland maintained a stable financial position. Cash reserves reached their highest level in the past decade (see chart below). The Association achieved a surplus of £5,255 for the 2024-25 financial year (refer to the 2025 Accounts), despite incurring exceptional legal expenses of approximately £2,615. Expenditure was managed prudently in light of these circumstances, contributing to the favourable year-end result.

Given the strength of the Association's cash position, steps are being taken to open a new savings account offering instant access and an interest rate of 3.8%, to optimise returns on available funds.



Going forward

At its meeting held on 24 September 2025, Council approved the extension of the Financial Plan through to the 2027–28 financial year. The revised plan provides for the continued investment in and development of chess across Scotland, while maintaining a balanced (break-even) financial position over the next three financial years to 2027–28.

Annual membership fees were retained at their existing levels, with no increases implemented since the 2017–18 financial year.

Switch from Paypal to Stripe

In May 2025, we transitioned from PayPal to Stripe for processing membership payments. This change was driven by the benefits of lower transaction fees, reduced administrative workload, and improved data



management. Additionally, Stripe enables memberships to operate on an annual subscription model with automatic renewals, thereby minimizing the need for manual follow-up on renewals. To date, the platform has performed effectively, and I would like to extend my sincere thanks to our Webmaster, Andrew Flemming, for overseeing a smooth and efficient implementation and transition from PayPal.

Charitable status

Work has continued wrt. charitable status and changing Chess Scotland's legal entity to a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO) is the preferred option. This provides several advantages – incorporation, limited liability, charitable status specifically potential gift aid benefit and more access to grant funding.

This will require a new constitution and changes to Chess Scotland's structure. The Scottish Bridge Union (SBU) attained SCIO status in 2021 and their role is broadly similar to Chess Scotland's and we have received their advice. Additionally, we have sought assistance from the Council of Voluntary Service (CVS) who have provided a model constitution and guidance. They will also assist in review of our documentation and application ahead of submission to the Office of Scottish Charities Regulator (OSCR).

The timing of this change is still to be confirmed but it will require communication to the membership and two Chess Scotland SGMs – one to give approval in principle to move ahead with the SCIO application and appoint initial trustees: the second to dissolve the unincorporated association and transfer of assets to the SCIO following acceptance by OSCR. Finally, there will need to be an initial AGM for the newly incorporated SCIO to appoint trustees and officers of the new organisation.

Supporters

Chess Scotland's ability to operate within its means is made possible through the generous support of our sponsors and donors. We are deeply grateful to the sponsors of the Scottish Championships — The Kingsbarns Company of Distillers Limited and D&M Pension — as well as to Lothians Junior Chess, Lezie Chess Academy, our individual members, and our Grand Prix sponsors for their continued financial contributions.

Equally, the commitment and dedication of our volunteer officers, who devote their time and expertise, are fundamental to the ongoing development and promotion of chess in Scotland. I wish to express my sincere thanks to all our sponsors and volunteers, whose combined efforts enable Chess Scotland to function effectively and continue to grow.

As we approach the Annual General Meeting (AGM), I would also like to extend my appreciation to colleagues who have stepped down from their roles, and to convey my best wishes to those standing for election.

David Deary
Finance Director
November 2025



Women's Director

In the last 12 months, there have been several highlights for women's and girls' chess in Scotland:

- The Scottish Women's Allegro with 26 entries and participation of 4 titled players.
- The training day for Scottish Female International Players, aimed at candidate players for future European and Olympiad events – very well received day with high level training from top Scottish players, and good time and format for team bonding, the day received very good feedback from attendees.
- Scottish Women's team participation in European Team Championships in Batumi, the first time a Women's team has been sent for this event for many years. The team, captained by player Darima, fought bravely against extremely tough opposition. Keti with a strong performance leading the team by example on Board 1. Caitlin Reid had an outstanding event gaining over 40 rating points after a performance rating of 1929 and being very close to WFM performance.
- Inclusion of Women's and Girls' Prize categories in the Grand Prix – many thanks to Dougie for arranging this.
- At time of writing, entries are being received for the 2025 Scottish Women's Championship. Hopefully entries numbers allow two sections, as did last year's.

Many individual achievements and contributions have been seen in Scottish Women's chess. Below are a few examples, but by no means an exhaustive list:

- Keti representing Scotland at the World Senior Championships in Italy.
- Chrysa playing in the European Club Cup in Rhodes.
- Eve Clark gaining over 200 FIDE rating points in the last 12 months, making her another strong contender for international selection.
- Karen Howie passing her FPE exam.
- Glynis Grant's continued dedication to running the SNCL.
- Florence Wilson passing the first stage of the CS National Arbiter's Course.
- Kanishka and Chrysa representing Scotland at the European Women's Championship.
- Five Scots taking part in the annual Queens' Festival, being the 3rd most represented country participating in the European Qualifiers.
- Caitlin Reid's participation in BBC's Chess Masters Program, making it to the semi-finals.

Many thanks to everyone for their support and guidance during my time as Women's Director. I sincerely hope that this progress can continue, that Scotland will see more events for Women and Girls, and many more achievements be added to the ever-growing list.

Alice Lampard

Women's Director



International Director (Junior)

Chess Scotland – International Junior Director Report 2025

Overview

Another successful year has unfolded on the international stage for our talented Scottish juniors. The dedication and hard work of our young players continue to make Scotland proud. Below is a highlight of their achievements in 2024–2025.

Key International Performances

European Youth Chess Championship 2024 – Prague, 16 Aug – 01 Sep 2024

- Chrysa Mitraka – U14 Girls
- Tavish Railwani – U10
- Advik Mittal – U12
- Neev Lukhi – U14

All players delivered excellent performances, demonstrating skill, determination, and sportsmanship at this prestigious event.

FIDE World Cadet Chess Championships 2024 – Montesilvano, Italy, 14–27 Nov 2024

- Ritvik Deepak Ambattu – U12

Ritvik performed admirably in a very strong tournament, gaining invaluable experience against some of the world's top young players.

Glorney 2025 – Newport, Wales

Four Scottish teams – Glorney, Gilbert, Robinsons, and Stokes – travelled to Newport for the tournament. All 20 players showcased excellent performances, achieving multiple wins and engaging in several closely contested games.

Team Line-ups:

- Glorney Team: Aryan Munshi, Zachary Patton, Euan McDiarmid, Igor Semenov, Marvin Gera
- Robinsons Team: Yashwardhan Shankar, Alagu Naachiappan Karthick, Atticus Yip, Oscar Yip, Sriram Bhaskar, Rowan I Oren-Woods
- Stokes Team: Aadith Prabhu, Haruo Uegaki, Yushu Huang, Vladyslav Shopynskyi, Sumanth Prakash, Krishiv Ganesh
- Gilbert Team: Angharad Hunt, Anika Munshi, Aaratrika Ghatkar

Each team fought hard to secure strong results, reflecting the rising standard of junior chess in Scotland. Our juniors are developing at an impressive rate, with new talent continually emerging.



Challenges and Recommendations

There is a pronounced shortfall in funding to adequately support junior players, particularly in relation to training and participation in key international tournaments such as the Glorney. Rising travel and accommodation costs are increasingly limiting participation and opportunities for competitive development.

The next Glorney tournament will be held in Ireland in summer 2026, with Scotland scheduled to host in 2027. To maximize Scotland's chances of success in future events, the following measures are recommended:

1. **Dedicated Training Programmes:** Establish structured training programmes for selected juniors in each team to ensure they are fully prepared for international competition.
2. **Financial Support for Participation:** Provide targeted funding to cover travel, accommodation, and tournament expenses, thereby reducing barriers to entry.
3. **Structured Preparation Plans:** Establish preparation programmes aimed at supporting juniors in improving their performance in international competitions.

It is essential that Scottish juniors receive adequate support. With appropriate funding and structured training, Scotland's young players can continue to achieve excellence at the international level, enhancing the reputation and standing of Chess Scotland.

Sherry Porwal
International Junior Director



Home Director (Junior)

Another positive year for Junior Chess Players in Scotland. It was fabulous to see a Scottish Junior (Vladyslav Shopynskyi) win the British U8 Championship in Liverpool. A tremendous achievement from a brilliant talent!

The number of Scottish Junior Players rated 2000+ on the FIDE Standard Play List continues to grow (I calculate an additional 4 players from December 2024).

I was also delighted to welcome 2 newly titled junior players in 2025 (FM Rishi Vijayakumar and CM Rithvik Deepak Ambattu).

On the domestic front Chrysa Mitraka won the Scottish Women's Rapidplay Championships 2025, meaning that Scotland had two 14-year-olds holding the Scottish Women's Titles. All of Chess Scotland's (junior only) Championships (Primary & Secondary Individuals, Girls' and School Teams') were hotly contested and attracted healthy entries in 2025.

The overall numbers and strength of juniors playing in adult congresses also continues to grow.

Despite Chess Scotland generously donating funding to junior chess through the 'Chess For All' initiative we still have a shortfall of financial support to our junior players. The lack of a level playing field will continue to present challenges in terms of representation at international and top-level domestic events.

Harry Marron

Home Junior Director



Arbiter and Rules Director

The Arbiters' Committee met as usual on 19 March and approved the previous minutes and discussed matters arising from them and from FIDE information received. We noted that Andy Howie was made chair of the Fair Play Commission of FIDE.

It was decided to run a National Arbiter (NA) Course and this took place on 22-24 August 2025 run by CS President and FIDE Arbiter Lecturer, Alex McFarlane and he deserves a special mention for the quality of the course and the hard work he puts in on our behalf. 9 people sat the examination at the end of the course and all of them passed the course. All have now completed PVG procedure and so two of them have reached the standard required to be a Licensed NA with more to follow in due course. All of those still seeking norms are currently trying to find opportunities at Scottish events to get the required satisfactory reports to progress to NA level. Others are also progressing from previous courses and we have added to both our NA and FA population in the year.

I would suggest that our Arbiter training is in it's best position for many years and we hope to continue to continue the good work in producing new NA, FA and even IAs in the near future.

A request for arbiter activity reports for 2025 will be issued shortly to qualified arbiters.

I would like to personally thank all the Arbiters' Committee for their hard work on behalf of Chess in Scotland throughout 2025 (the other members being International Arbiters Alex McFarlane, Andy Howie, David Clayton and FIDE Arbiters John McNicoll and Ruairidh McKay). Without their efforts during the year the calendar would be fairly empty.

We will be looking closely at where we can improve when the Arbiters' Committee meets early in 2026.

Alistair Maxwell FA,

Arbiter and Rules Director



International Director

This has been a busy year, as usual, and although ill health has kept me from personally enjoying as many of the events as I usually do, I have been trying to keep on top of the Scotland players and teams who have represented us proudly this year. A brief rundown of what has been happening...

Seniors

World Senior Team Championships (February 2025)

This event is a 'must-play' for many of our seniors and being held in Prague made it even more attractive. The last time it was there it was halted midway through due to the pandemic crisis – this time there was only a terrible hotel to contend with. This is an issue I feel needs addressing for next year's events.

Scotland fielded four teams, two each in the 50+ and 65+ sections with a full pictorial report appearing in the [February 2025 edition](#) of *Scottish Chess* magazine. High points were Raj Bhopal's defeat of Czech legend Vlastimil Jansa, Neil Farrell's felling of two IMs and Ian Aird's excellent, undefeated +4 =3 performance.

Unfortunately, this would be Ian's last appearance for Scotland's, falling victim to a rapid onset of liver cancer this past summer. He will be [sadly missed](#) by all his friends in Chess Scotland, as will two other stalwarts of the senior set-up, [Alastair Dawson](#) and [Peter Jamieson](#) who both passed this year.

European Senior Team Championships (April 2025)

Unfortunately, Scotland didn't field any teams at this event due to its close proximity in date to the WSTCC in Prague (above) and also being held in Swidnica, Poland, which had fairly recently hosted the event (2023).

European Senior Individual Championships (September 2025)

This event was held in Rabat, Croatia and three Scottish players participated: Neil Farrell, Alan Minnican, and George Neave. A full report will appear in the **October issue** of *Scottish chess*, currently being worked on.

World Senior Individual Championships (October 2025)



This 11-round event is running as I write this in the small Italian coastal town of Gallipoli (not to be confused with the infamous Turkish peninsula of the same name).

GM Paul Motwani and Jonathan Grant are playing in the 50+ Open while GM Ketevan Arakhamia—Grant is currently leading the Women's 50+ Championships. A full report will appear in the **December issue** of *Scottish Chess* magazine.

Adult International

Women's European Individual Championships (March)

Scotland had two representatives at this event in Rhodes, with Kanishka Bhatia and Chrysa Mitraka taking on the cream of Europe's female players.

A full report with games from both girls appeared in the [April 2025 issue](#) of *Scottish Chess* magazine. Kanishka finished on 4/11, having played 8 titled opponents, while Chrysa scored 3/11, playing 7 titled players along the way.

Many thanks to Chess Scotland for their contribution.

European Team Championships (October 2025)

Scotland entered teams to both sections of this event, held in Batumi, Georgia. We were bottom seeds in the Women's section and second bottom in the Open and were looking to a) finish above seeding, b) provide norm opportunities, and c) challenge for individual board medals.

We succeeded in at least one of those fields, with Frederick "Freddy" Waldhausen Gordon picking up an 8-round IM norm (but narrowly missing the 9-round version with a last round loss). We are hoping this might help him towards the IM title.

Keti Arakhamia Grant was also in fine form and was vying for a board 1 medal almost all the way, eventually finishing 8th with 6.5/8 and a 2472 TPR.

Other notable results were those of Martin Mitchell, who won two games, and Caitlin Reid, who won three games, in what is the strongest team event on the calendar.

Although we finished last in both competitions, I feel that this event should perhaps be seen as an important opportunity for our best young players to gain international honours and norm opportunities.

I would like to thank my captains Chris Morrison and Darima Donitova-Johnstone, along with Maja Waldhausen Gordon, as well as the other players, for making the running of this event (from my perspective) as smooth as possible.

A full report will appear in the **October issue** of *Scottish Chess* magazine.



Women's International Training Day (September 2025)

A few weeks prior to the Euro Championships (above) we held a training day for our strongest females. Organised by myself and Alice Lampard, and funded by CS, we ran four sessions of training at the Mercure Livingston Hotel. Ten females were put through their paces by GM Keti Arakhamia Grant, Jonathan Grant, Alan Minnican and IM Andrew Greet on a variety of topics.

A full report on this initiative will appear in the **October issue** of Scottish Chess.

Domestic/International

British Championships

Chess Scotland are allocated two spots in the British Championship proper, one for each of our own national champions or their stand-ins. Rishi Vijayakumar was given one spot but the other, for a female player, went unused.

I did manage to squeeze an extra spot for a male out of the organisers but unfortunately family illness at short notice prevented the player from taking it up. It should be noted, however, that the ECF (alone of all the 'home nations') are given 'wildcard' entries over and above other qualification considerations. They have 8 of them. This glaringly unfair allocation needs to be addressed, despite the ECF eventually offering up one spot to CS.

Into 2026

Going forward, there is a full calendar of events planned for next year and, with the Olympiad being held in Samarkand, Uzbekistan, some serious funding/fundraising required.

For now, I would like to thank the Executive Committee – in particular David Deary – and everyone else who has helped me in 2025.

Andy Burnett

26/10/25



Home Director

I planned the Richardson/Spens/Cambell Rosebowl for 2025.

I got 8 clubs in the Richardson. In the final were Bon Accord/Edinburgh. With Edinburgh winning the Richardson trophy 6,5-1,5.

For the Spens/Cambell Rosebowl, 7 clubs entered. The finalist was Lenzie/Wandering Dragons. With board 1&2 ending in a draw and a win for Wandering Dragons on board 3, Wandering Dragons winning the Spens cup 2,5-2,5.

The final for the Cambell/Rosebowl were Hamilton/Edinburgh Civil Service. Hamilton won the trophy 4,5-0,5.

The Scottish Championships Chess Festival was held in Dunfermline over the week 7th-13th July.

In all 123 players enter over the 6 events we held. The Open was won by **GM Johan-Sebastian Christiansen NOR (2642) winning all his 9 games, and IM Andrew Greet SCO (2396)** winning the Scottish Cup.

All boards were live and broadcast on the internet via Chess.com and Lichess.org

Thanks

Thor Saemundsson



Grading Officer

Andrew Fleming has provided details of the new online grading system and associated upgrades to the website. Many thanks to Andrew for the extensive work in preparation for the launch of online grades and the ongoing updates of the new systems.

The legacy program was developed by Alex Bisset between 2002-2007 and at that time moved Chess Scotland ahead of many other federations in providing rapid collation and publication of grading information. However there was a hint it was time to move on when the program stopped producing new player numbers (pnums) earlier this year after it hit an upper number limit.

Area graders are now getting experience in using the new online-only program and reporting back on any problems or suggesting tweaks to the new system. One immediate improvement for weekend tournament organisers is the facility by which pairing data compiled in the Swiss Manager program used by arbiters can produce an output file compatible with the new system resulting in a significant labour saving when reporting grading data.

Grading recalculation is now more frequent with a daily update once data is submitted and checked. Parallel with that development those weekend tournament which use congress.ork.uk software for their events will benefit from daily updates to the live CS grades of entrants.

FIDE: The number of Scotland players who are FIDE rated and registered continues to increase assisted by events on the weekend circuit which offer FIDE rating in addition to domestic rating. Players who are CS members benefit from automatic inclusion of their outside Scotland FIDE result data into domestic processing. FIDE have now expanded the information available to federations by producing a monthly file for Rapid and Blitz data.

Blitz: Starting in January the intention is to offer a CS Blitz rating in addition to the current Standard and Allegro. A number of weekend tournaments have a Blitz evening as part of their programme of events.

Douglas Bryson

October 2025



PVG Report

PVG has moved to online reporting and from July 2024 Chess Scotland has fully processed 20 PVG applications with 2 more being processed. Anyone wishing to undergo PVG can fill the form at <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSemLcntKEqNB2N3cXdQfTjsbdaLVmie3Xj6f69w216vr683tQ/viewform> as long as they or their club has a valid Chess Scotland membership. All applications were successful.

This year with increased volumes for Disclosure Scotland due to the Disclosure (Scotland) Act 2020 coming into force on 1st April 2025 the average time for an application has been around 2-3 weeks but it can take longer if needing to check foreign jurisdictions. On the 1st April 2026 the expiry of PVG applications shall come into force with PVG's being valid for 5 years. As of now there's no indication to how PVG's obtained before 1st April 2021 shall be treated since in theory they'd all expire on same day.

With the move to online processing it makes sense to move legacy applications to electronic form which shall be done that will also improve lookup times for queries. This is currently being done and I'm liaising with CS to ensure any new systems are compliant with Data Protection. This will hopefully introduce efficiencies for CS officers etc over the current system that involves asking PVG Lead and then they have to dig through a filing cabinet searching for a PVG certificate that may or may not exist and could be filed in several different locations depending on initial application they may have made.

As always I'm happy to accept feedback if there's any way PVG Applications for Chess Scotland can be improved.

Kenny McGeoch

PVG Lead Signatory



Membership Secretary

Membership Secretary Report

Full	Jul-15	Jul-16	Jul-17	Oct-18	Oct-19	Oct-20	Oct-21	Oct-22	Oct-23	Oct-24	Oct-25
Adult	145	139	127	275	252	222	209	243	232	242	241
Under 17	6	17	22	64	59	76	87	93	94	74	77
Under 14	11										
Student				13	14	21	23	25	26	27	26
Family Adult	25	23	23	23	27	26	31	29	17	27	30
Family Junior	4	11	11	17	15	14	14	16	7	6	9
Basic											
Adult	150	145	144								
Under 17	5	33	37								
Under 14	21										
Family Adult	16	8	11								
Family Junior	4	9	13								
Patron & Life											
Patron	4	6	4	2	2	1	1	1	1	2	0
Life	99	102	104	141	138	139	139	141	146	151	154
Life Magazine	30	27	24								
Totals	520	520	520	535	507	499	504	548	523	529	537
	Jul-15	Jul-16	Jul-17	Oct-18	Oct-19	Oct-20	Oct-21	Oct-22	Oct-23	Oct-23	Oct-25
Adult	336	316	305	298	279	248	232	268	258	269	271
Junior	51	70	83	94	88	111	124	134	127	107	112
Patron & Life	133	134	132	143	140	140	140	142	147	153	154

Membership numbers are higher than last season, which is good news given that we have lost a few long term members this past year, each of whom will continue to be sorely missed.

I would mention that it was brought up at the last council meeting that numbers were down and I would like to take the opportunity to point out that membership numbers are and will continue to be fluid, there is always a slight downturn during the summer break with numbers picking up again when the chess season officially restarts.

This past year has seen a number of improvements in the website, including a compulsory form for new/returning members to complete which provides the necessary information required to process memberships more thoroughly. We have also seen the introduction of the new stripe payment system which has again been instrumental in streamlining the membership process as well as seeing a reduction in the processing fee of stripe in comparison to PayPal.

I would like to take this opportunity to further mention that as membership secretary, I am entitled to some time away from my duties and should not be required to work 52 weeks a year. More often than not I end up working of membership renewals and processing new memberships whilst actually trying to enjoy a family holiday. This last part also true of every single post holder within Chess Scotland. We do have live outsiders of Chess Scotland also and it would be very nice if others could remember that.

I will not be in attendance at the AGM as I have a prior engagement but hope that the meeting goes well and without incident.



Webmaster

Webmaster's Report - Nov 2025

New Grading System

The new grading system took over the grading calculations at the beginning of the 2024-25 season. Subsequently, the new grading system also took over the process of submitting results for grading at the beginning of the 2025-26 season and the existing legacy grading system was retired.

Feedback during beta testing of the new system has been positive. Further development continues to make improvements and resolve bugs, and I anticipate this process of refinement to continue into the future as the grading system evolves.

Website

We now host our website on a new server (as of a few months ago when the website was redeveloped). The new server offers more resources, without costing more, and this was the reason for the change.

The redevelopment of the website was the most significant technical change to the website we've ever made. The change was not aesthetic, which is why you may have (hopefully) hardly noticed. However, we extricated the website from the Wordpress infrastructure entirely and replaced it with a bespoke front-end system that is simpler to use and more flexible for our needs. This change provided the foundations upon which the new grading system could be deployed, and future-proofs Chess Scotland's web infrastructure.

Data Backup

Acronis backup provides us with third-party cloud storage to ensure our grading database is safely backed up beyond our own server. Given the grading system is now entirely remote from our home computers, this is an essential step to protect Chess Scotland from the potential loss should any cyber attack occur.

Stripe

Chess Scotland moved from Paypal to Stripe to process payments. Our previous web infrastructure with Paypal was a legacy version and no longer supported. This presented both a problem and an opportunity to make a change. Stripe offers us more flexibility than the equivalent Paypal infrastructure and provides a small cost saving, so the decision was taken to go with Stripe.



Our Stripe account has been running successfully for months now, and all seems to be going well. Further technical developments of more integrated payment solutions for Chess Scotland are now possible in the future, if required.

Forum

Technical issues with the forum have been noted. The forum is completely separate from the website technically (different database / file structure / code etc). The forum is also rarely used. I think at some stage we should consider whether or not we still want to host a forum in its current format, or replace it with something that is more accessible and better suited to the level of engagement that we have. I am open-minded to any proposed ideas, should this be something we wish to change.

Email

The Chess Scotland email addresses continue to receive spam, although small improvements have been noted since we have refined our spam policies on the new server. Nevertheless, spam remains an issue, and my proposed solution has not changed over the years.

Having researched various options, there appears to be no better or cheaper alternative than creating Microsoft Exchange mailboxes for our email needs. The approximate cost of this would be £3.70 / mailbox / month. To mitigate the financial impact, I propose we reduce the number of email addresses we have to not more than 10, producing a total cost in the region of £450 annually. The benefits of Exchange mail are vast, and well worth the investment in my opinion.

Feedback

Please continue to send your questions or feedback to webmaster@chessscotland.com on any web or grading system related issues.

I try to respond to all emails when I get time, but I may not respond to all emails quickly. However, I do record all suggestions and it does inform future developments, so please don't be put off or offended if I don't reply.



Standards Committee

COMPLAINTS

Since the last AGM, 6 formal complaints were received by the Standards Committee. One (No. 25-01) was resolved by Local Resolution involving the Standards Committee Chair. The others were deemed of sufficient gravity to require involvement of either the full Standards Committee or a smaller formal Investigation Panel. Of these complaints, two were not upheld, as they were similar to previous complaints and the same judgements applied. A further 2 cases were outside the remit of the Standards Committee and would need to be referred by the complainant to a higher body, either Council or a General Meeting. In the final case, the decision and subsequent recommendation has been circulated to both parties and an outcome agreed.

TERM OF OFFICE

The 3-year term of the current Standards Committee now ends. All members of the Committee have agreed to stand for another 3 years and it is recommended that the AGM approve the re-appointment of Lara Barnes, Elaine Bamber, Gerald Lobley, Kenny McGeoch, Keith Rose and Steve Smith.

Gerald Lobley
(Chair of the Standards Committee)



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Annual Report

Anti-Cheating Committee

Nothing to report this year.