From medieval times, merchants stored wine, especially claret in the deep cellars of the vaults. The present building dates from 1682 and houses the headquarters of the Scotch Malt Whisky Society and an excellent restaurant and wine bar known as Anfora. Leith Custom House was built in 1812. It was designed by Robert Reid. The impressive Coat of Arms over the entrance is that of George III. It is now owned by the City of Edinburgh Council but is on a long lease to SHBT to be used for the benefit of the Leith community.

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The King’s Work
Leith became Scotland’s Busiest port after Edward I of England sacked Berwick in 1296. It was given the monopoly of international trade for the east of Scotland. James I (1406-37) set up custom house at the harbour mouth known as the Kink’s Wark. It became a storehouse and arena and was enlarged over the years to Broad Wynd and along the present Bernard Street to Carpet Lane. James VI passed management to Bernard De Linton on condition he built a Caiithpeil, a Royal Tennis Court, which he did at the rear near to the present day Sainsburys shop.

Golf on Leith Links
Golf was banned in 1457 by King James II because it interfered with training in archery and kindred defence activities. The course was of only 5 holes. However, the shortest hole was 410 yards. In 1505, James IV discovered the wonderful game despite having also banned it. Mary, Queen of Scots also played regularly at Leith.

The Shore
George IV was given a huge welcome when he landed in 1822. Stage managed by Sir Walter Scott, as a result of the visit, the wearing of kilts was made legal and tartan permitted. It is therefore extremely fitting that the foremost experts in Highland Dress, Kinloch Anderson, are based nearby at Dock Street.

Leith Links
Leith Links is one of a group of open spaces spread along the north shore of the Water of Leith. It extends from Wester Hailes to the city centre. The Leith Links Golf Club was founded in 1867 and the course is 18 holes long. The climate is more conducive to golf than the west of Scotland with some winter greens. Leith Links Golf Club is one of the oldest in Scotland and is one of the few links courses in Scotland.

The Vaults
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