

ARDENTINNY VILLAGE HALL ASSOCIATION
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
Ardentinnyvillagehall8@gmail.com

Minutes of the AGM held on 6th May 2025 at Ardentinnny Village Hall at 7.30p.m.

Present: Mark Rowthorn (Chairman), Helen Rowthorn (Treasurer) and Elsbeth Brint.

Public: John Brint, James Urquhart, Jeannie Urquhart, Anne Wood, Keith Wood, Jim Robinson, Margaret Robinson, Dave Moodie, Lydia Moodie, Mike Loochin, Susie Robertson, Neil Bennett, Linda Naismith, Ken Walker, Colin Birks and Renee Birks, Sandra Primrose, Sandra Davidson.

1 Welcome and introductions

MR thanked everyone for attending the meeting.

2 Apologies

3 Received from Brian Hillesdon (Secretary), Malcolm Mackellar, Clair Tierney, Jo Carr, Geof Carr, Neil Robinson, Dee Robinson, Sophie Thompson, Andy Taplin and Linda Taplin.

4 Declaration of Interest

No declarations of interest declared.

5 Minutes of last AGM – 19th March 2024

The minutes of the last meeting had been made available on the Ardentinnny Community Council (ACC) website – Village Hall Page. A few hard copies were made available in the hall for information.

MR asked whether anyone had any comments, issues or matters arising regarding the minutes: None were made.

MR asked for a proposer and seconder that the minutes be accepted.

Proposed: Elsbeth Brint

Seconded: Keith Wood

6 Matters Arising

There were no matters arising from the previous minutes

7 Treasurers Report

A detailed breakdown of the financial activity (01-04-24 to 31-03-25) was presented by the treasurer, Helen Rowthorn (HR).

HR said that she joined the Team at the last AGM in March 2024 when Olwyn McShane was still the treasurer, however Olwyn later decided to resign, and she agreed to take over the job of treasurer.

The Hall's bank account 1st April 2024 had £9,343.20 and £50 in petty cash.

HR set up a savings account to hold money pending expenditure which would generate a small amount of interest for the hall. A PayPal account was also set up to take donations.

70 people have paid membership of the hall 2024-25

We received a grant from The Highgate Hall that Neil Robinson had applied for to replace the hall's heating and install a defibrillator at the hall.

We have also received grants from Ardentinnny Renewables Trust to install a broadband system in the hall. These grants have enabled these projects to improve the hall. A balance of £1,094.52 is held from these grants for the upkeep of the defibrillators.

Donations from various people have been given to the Hall via the PayPal link and the donation box installed in the hall all are gratefully received.

The weekly groups that use the Hall have also all contributed to the running of the Hall.

Regular events such as the quiz nights and the individual events organised by various people have again all contributed to the Hall's income for the year.

This year's expenses have been balanced by the grants received to improve the hall. It is hoped with these improvements the hall will be a more comfortable place to use for everyone.

Financial Activity from 1st April 2024 to 31st March 2025

INCOME

• Bank of Scotland opening balance	£9,393.20
Petty Cash	£50.00
Bank Interest	£69.94
Events	£1,291.36
Hall Hire	£730.00
Badminton Group	£360.00
Hobbies Group	£812.00

Music Group	£837.00
Tai-Chi	£168.00
Quiz Nights	£342.00
Donations	£510.66
Refunds	£60.13
Grants	£15,909.52
Membership	£852.00
Sale of Mugs	<u>£238.36</u>
TOTAL	£31,564.17

EXPENDITURE

• Postage	£6.78
Electric/Power	£1,316.61
Broad Band	£833.78
Hall Heating (Capital)	£11,757.66
Hall Lighting (Capital)	£254.88
Hall Cleaning	£275.81
Hall Insurance	£923.22
Stationery	£138.19
Donations	£40.00
Donation Box	£37.99
Firewise	£110.41
R&R	£64.09
Defib/ACC	£3,453.48
Hall events/booking exp.	<u>£464.06</u>
TOTAL	£19,676.96

- Closing balance on 31st March= £ 11,308.02 in the bank accounts and £579.19 in petty cash a total of £11,887.21

Proposed: Jeannie Urquhart

Seconded: James Urquhart

Note: Balance at the date of the AGM 6th May 2025 – Bank account £1,263.73, Savings account £6,032.62, which gives a sum-total of £7,296.35 in the bank accounts with a further £247.55 held in petty cash account makes a total balance of £7,543.90 in the Hall accounts.

8 Chairmans's Report

MR reported the following as a summary of the Management Team activity over the last year:

The new committee were appointed on 19th March 2024 and comprised initially:

Mark Rowthorn - Chairman

Brian Hillesdon - Secretary

Olwyn MacShane - Treasurer

Dee Robinson, Helen West and Elsbeth Brint as Trustees

Olwyn MacShane however decided to stand down as both a Trustee and Treasurer due to personal pressures in April and Helen West (as she was then) agreed to become the new Treasurer. Dee Robinson also stood down as a Trustee in early December. The Team want to publicly acknowledge and thank both Olwyn and Dee for all their hard work and input for the Hall, it is much appreciated.

Residents Survey

One of the first things that the new management team decided to do was to undertake a full survey of the Ardentinny residents to gain their opinions as to the main issues facing the Hall, and to seek their input into what they would like to see happen in the future.

As a result of the survey, a number of key points where people wanted to see changes or improvements were identified (in order as):

- Improve the heating - 13
- Improve the toilets - 10
- Refurbish the kitchen - 8
- Develop the cleaning rota - 4
- Remove and deal with the toxic mould - 3
- Improve the stage steps - 3
- Remove the stage balustrade - 3

This then formed the basis of the priorities for the Hall Management Team.

EGM

As a result, we then called an extraordinary general meeting held on the 9th of July to gain approval from Hall members to both refurbish the Hall, in order to deal with the items identified in the survey, and also to change the status of the hall charity from an unincorporated association to an incorporated organisation in order to better protect the trustees from personal risk.

Both of these was unanimously agreed by the Members.

Tackling the Priorities

1. Toxic Mould

One of the first things to be tackled before the new heating was installed, was to remove the toxic mould from the male and female toilets, and to redecorate the ceilings.

2. Cleaning Rota

At the same time, Elsbeth Brint set up a cleaning rota for volunteers to clean the Hall on a weekly basis. We would like to thank Elsbeth Brint for doing this, and also to thank Sandra Davidson, Robbie Lawrence, Isobel Gray, Helen Rowthorn, Dee Robinson, Catriona MacPhail, Anne Wood, Keith Wood and John Brint for giving up their time and regularly carrying out the cleaning.

3. Heating

New heating was installed to replace the existing heating in the main Hall plus extending into the areas of the building that have never previously been heated specifically to deter any future growth of toxic mould. This was achieved as a result of funding being obtained from the Highgate Hall Trust by Neil Robinson, with further funding from the Ardentinny Renewables Trust.

As part of the heating installation, a new three-phase board has been installed together with new wiring and trunking replacing the old non-compliant wiring. All of the hall walls were also repainted after the heating was installed, although redecoration of the main Hall ceiling is still outstanding.

As everyone knows, electricity costs have hugely increased and while the Hall does benefit from cheaper electricity supplied by the Hydro, the management team will need to closely monitor the energy consumption going forward. This may require the installation of further new controls on the main Hall heaters and consideration should also be given to improving the outstanding areas needing insulation and draft proofing.

Going forward it is important to recognise that the income from the Hall's use has to be able to meet its running costs - especially with the rising cost of electricity.

Although the Hall does have the benefit of cheaper power from the Hydro (as I have said), even these costs are increasing. The Hall pays an annual electric bill and as we have just discovered this year's bill is more than double the previous year.

There were some initial teething problems with the temperature control, (which we consider are improving), these appear to have been the main reason for the unusually high usage in December/January.

Although the new system has improved the heat in the Hall, monitoring of its use will be important to keep the bills manageable. So, turning it off when it's not required is important and not preheating the hall for periods longer than is absolutely necessary when there is no one using it.

4. Exterior Lighting

Further to the work on the heating, new LED exterior flood lighting has been installed with movement sensors to better illuminate the access routes to and from the Hall. At the same time all of the old defunct emergency lighting (both externally and internally) has been replaced with new energy efficient LED lights on a maintained supply. This means that now the designated escape routes will all be fully illuminated in the event of a power outage.

5. Hall – PayPal and donations

To assist the hall finances and help the refurbishment fund Helen Rowthorn set up a PayPal page allowing PayPal gift payments to be made to the Hall electronically online either as one-off payments or regular monthly giving. This provides us with a QR code that enables individuals to connect directly to the Hall donation site online using their mobile device. For those who wish to contribute physical cash manually a Donation box has been installed in the Entrance Lobby and we are grateful for any donations (of any size or amount).

6. Membership Cards

Another initiative of the management team has been to provide membership cards to Hall members to enable them to show proof of membership and also to gain discounted access to events organised by the Hall Management Team. Hall membership also entitles members to discounted rates when hiring the hall themselves for private events/functions.

7. Hall Website, Facebook, Instagram and Newsletter

Although the Village Hall doesn't have its own website, Helen Rowthorn has set up a new webpage for the Hall on the Community Council website. This now lists all key information about the Hall and gives regular news updates for the local community. New Facebook pages and Instagram pages have also been set up to provide up to date Hall news for local residents. A Hall Newsletter is also mailed out every week along with the Community Council News giving updates on the Hall and announcing any up-and-coming events.

8. Hall History

Helen Rowthorn has also collected together many of the old historic photographs showing life in the Hall and in the local area. These are now displayed around the Hall on the updated photo boards. She has also collected together much of this key information into a hard copy file which is soon to be available for anyone in the local community to see.

9. Fund raising and Hall events

Lots of activities have taken place in the Hall – some are regular group activities and others are one off events. This is obviously what the Hall is here for but it can't function unless individuals give up their time to make things happen.

We would like to thank those who run the regular groups in the Hall these are fundamental in sustaining the social life of the local Ardentinnny community. This wouldn't exist without those who run these regular groups and on behalf of the local community I want to sincerely thank you.

There have also been those who have carried out one-off fund-raising activities on behalf of the Hall, in particular I want to thank John Brint, who has hosted the regular monthly Hall quizzes throughout last year these have been very much appreciated.

MR confirmed that this month's Hall quiz has had to be cancelled due to a private Hall booking.

MR then went on to thank Neil Robinson for organising the Wreath Making, and the Hogmanay party – which were also very successful. Other activities have included the Sound-bath and the more recent Tabletop sale – all well attended and much appreciated.

10. Broadband and Internet

One of the other key things that happened in the last 12 months was the installation of broadband into the Hall by Stuart Gray. This was again funded by the Ardentinnny Renewables Trust and has enabled not only users of the Hall to be able to now access the Internet from the Hall but also to make Wi-Fi-based calls even if they have no mobile signal. This has been particularly important because it has enabled 999 calls to be made in the event of an emergency. SG has set up the Wifi to provide coverage not only in the hall but also across the car park as far as the container in case there is an emergency in the car park. He also conducted a separate exercise to determine whether it was possible to make 999 calls on a mobile phone, even if it doesn't have a network signal. As a result, we are able to confirm that it is. Even if your phone isn't showing any mobile phone signal, we can confirm that it will be possible to contact emergency services from the hall should the need arise.

11. Emergency Team Hub

The Village Hall has now become the emergency hub for the emergency team in the village and a significant amount of equipment has been purchased again funded by the Ardentinnny Renewables Trust (such as generator, power packs, gas stoves, kettles, etc) These will enable the emergency team to function in the event of future hazard events within the village.

12. Tidying up

We would also like to thank John and Elsbeth Brint for a complete tidy up job in the external container. This has now provided sufficient room in the container for the emergency equipment to be stored there. We would also like to thank all the ladies on the cleaning rota for a great job of rationalising the kitchen cupboard storage for generally tidying up the kitchen. Much appreciated.

We would also like to thank Keith Wood for venturing under the main floor and strengthening the timber joists where the floor was springing up and down, and also Stuart Gray for checking the inside of the roof to confirm that it is currently in a sound condition and that any staining on the existing ceiling is historic. This information will enable us to carry out redecoration of the whole ceiling in due course.

Obviously, the new management team will have plenty of things to be doing into the future, but looking back over the last 11 months significant progress has been made to maintaining the Hall in a safe and sound condition to enable it to be available into the future for the Ardentinnny community.

Lastly, we want to thank all the Hall Members for their continued support.

MR then asked whether there were any questions relating to his report.

Stuart Gray asked what progress had been made on changing the status of the Hall charity. MR said that Brian Hillesdon had been dealing with this and that it was still ongoing. As BH was away he said that he wasn't able to be more specific about where he had got to only that he had started this.

Mike Loochin asked the status of the Electricity bill and HR confirmed that this has been paid and the balance of the account stated in the financial report of £7,543.90 was the position after it had been paid.

He then asked about the position of the Hall insurance and HR confirmed that this was coming up for renewal on 13th May 2025 and it was likely that we would renew this with the existing insurer. MR stated that the previous years insurance was just under £1,000 and expected the new quote to be of a similar order.

Mike Loochin then asked what further work was being done to improve the heating as he didn't consider it fit for purpose. MR said that any future work would need to be down to the new management team. ML said that he couldn't believe that we hadn't sorted out the heating control within a year as it was either too hot or too cold. MR said that in his opinion the issue was the lack of

draft proofing and insulation in the Hall rather than the heating because the temperature drops very low (possibly 4 degrees) and it can take about an hour for the heating to raise the temperature 4 degrees. So, if it's only 4 degrees in the Hall then it will take 4 hours to reach a suitable temperature.

ML said that the problem was that the system chosen wasn't the one originally spec'd by Neil Robinson but MR said the original spec'd system was also a radiant panel heater system so it was the same type as the one installed (albeit a different manufacturer). ML said that he didn't agree that it was the same. MR went on to say that any heating system would struggle due to the poor insulation and that the system wasn't the issue.

ML said that he wasn't happy about the lack of control of the heating. MR said that it was possible that further work may need to be carried out on the heater controls. MR said that the installed controls were chosen for their simplicity. When the system was initially being installed a touch screen controller had been supplied but it was felt that this may be too complex for some Hall users (especially those with little computer knowledge) so it was decided to install a very simple push button control. This gives only an 'on' or 'off' option. ML said "so we can't change the temperature?". MR said 'yes' by switching it 'on' or 'off'. ML said that he couldn't believe that the hall had spent all this money on a system that didn't have better control. MR explained that there are temperature settings in the control but these have to be set by the management and can't be altered by local users.

ML wasn't happy about this and left the meeting together with Susie Robertson, Dave Moodie and Lydia Moodie.

The discussion continued in the meeting after their absence.

MR explained that while there was some insulation over the main Hall flat ceiling and under the floor, there was none where the main Hall ceiling sloped to either side and the whole front of the stage lets through all the draft from the extensive air vents below the floor. He said that Blairmore Hall has an identical heating system installed that works very well because their stage has been removed and the hall is a contained space. In Ardentinny the Hall isn't isolated from the kitchen due to the lack of kitchen doors. Effectively the heating is trying to heat up the exterior. MR said that he believed that if works were done to improve this then significant improvement would be felt in the performance of the heating.

James Urquhart said that he personally has a 'Ring' system that enables him to control his heating remotely. MR said that would be an ideal to achieve in the Hall and may be could be considered by the new management team.

Note: Subsequent to the meeting MR contacted Blairmore Hall Secretary (Barry Thompson) to establish the controls on their system. They confirmed that theirs are just on/off switches but are grouped in pairs so that 2 can be switched on or

off at a time. He was told that this works well for them. This may be worth the Ardentenny Hall Management Team Considering as a replacement solution.

9 Election of Committee

MR reported that the following Trustees would be standing down with immediate effect:

Mark Rowthorn would be standing down as Chairman and Trustee

Brian Hillesdon (has notified us in his absence) would be standing down as Secretary and Trustee

Elsbeth Brint would be standing down as Trustee

Helen Rowthorn confirmed that she is prepared to continue as Treasurer and Trustee

This leaves the team below the quorum required by the Constitution.

The Management Team have requested volunteers from the community to become Trustees to prevent the Hall having to close.

MR confirmed that the Management Team have received a number of written confirmations from people in the community willing to stand:

Those who have written as being willing to stand as new Trustees are:

- Ken Walker
- Malcolm Mackellar (who is unable to attend due to personal commitments)
- Clair Tierney (who is unable to attend due to personal commitments)
- Sophie Thompson (who is unable to attend due to personal commitments)

That gives us a compliment of 5 Trustees in total which is sufficient to meet the minimum required under the Constitution.

MR said that it will be the responsibility of the new Management Team to meet and agree a new Secretary and Chairman – no doubt they will make and announcement in due course.

MR then asked whether there was anyone else in the hall who would like to volunteer and be added to the Hall Trustees?

No further volunteers came forward.

Neil Bennett informed the meeting that he had considerable experience in applying for funding and would be available to assist the management team in this going forward, MR thanked him for his offer which was noted.

Margaret Robinson offered to help to take money on the door at any hall events going forward. HR thanked her for this offer which was noted.

Jim Robinson proposed a vote of thanks to the outgoing committee for the work done in the last year, which was acknowledged by those members present.

10 Future Meetings

MR confirmed the date for the next AGM as:

TBC