

Arisaig and District Community Council
Minutes of the AGM on Monday 30th June 2025

Held as a hybrid meeting

1. Present in person: Gerard MacDonald, Sheila Kingswood, Blair Martin, Val Stuart-Orchard
Present online: A Whittaker, H Waterston, L Saggars (Councillor)
Apologies: M Milligan, Police
2. Minutes of the AGM held on 17th June 2024 were approved after being proposed by AW and seconded by SK
3. Matters arising from the minutes: there were no matters arising
4. Annual report – Gerry MacDonald delivered a report on the activities of the year April 2024 – March 2025 which is shown in full at Appendix I
5. Financial report – Sheila Kingswood delivered the financial report for the year April 2024 – March 2025 which is shown in Appendix II. Thanks to Rosemary Bridge for examining the accounts
6. Election of Office Bearers. A new Vice Chair was elected following the resignation of Hannah Waterston. All other Office Bearers were re-elected as before. The Board is now as follows:
Chair – Gerry MacDonald
Vice Chair – Arthur Whittaker
Treasurer – Sheila Kingswood
Secretary – Val Stuart-Orchard

Co-opted board members are:
Megan Milligan
Arthur Whittaker

Associate member:
Blair Martin
7. Any other business: There were no items raised.

Appendix I

Arisaig and District Community Council – Chairman's Report 2024-25

Introduction

This year's annual report is for the period from April 2024-March 2025. The Community Council has had another busy year, with work on-going on various projects, most of which are outlined below.

The Community Council

The current Community Councillors are:

Gerry MacDonald (Chair)

Hannah Waterston (Vice Chair)

Sheila Kingswood (Treasurer)

Val Stuart-Orchard (Secretary)

Megan Milligan

Arthur Whittaker

Blair Martin

Meetings

During the year in question, the Council held the full complement of one AGM and nine ordinary meetings, there being no meetings scheduled in July, August or December in any year.

Summary of the Year

There follows a brief note on many of the key issues which occupied the Council's time in the year in question. We were sorry to lose our Chair, Iain Macniven, in June – his resignation led to a Board re-shuffle, with Gerry MacDonald stepping into the Chair role, and Hannah Waterston becoming Vice Chair. It is fair to say that the Community Council has struggled to find new members – and we are very grateful to Blair Martin for coming on board in recent months. Following Angus MacDonald's appointment as MP to our area at the July 2024 General Election, he was no longer able to support the Community Council, however, we have been lucky to have, and are grateful for the continuing support of our Councillor Liz Sagers.

Burial Ground

The burial ground remains an issue of huge concern. There are no lairs available in Arisaig – and residents are currently having to be buried elsewhere. The land adjacent to the Church originally proposed Bereavement Services at Highland Council is not suitable due to drainage issues. Alternative options are still being sought.

Mackintosh Centre

After many months of community pressure (including regular meetings with representatives of the 3 local Community Councils, Friends of the Mackintosh, Kate Forbes' office and NHS Highland), the Mackintosh Centre finally re-opened to residents in mid-November 2024, However, remains closed to daycare clients – apparently due to a lack of staff. The Community Council continues to push for this invaluable service to be re-introduced

Defibrillator

Pads for all 3 defibrillators in the village need to be replaced this year. We are hoping that the Gower Trust will continue to support these invaluable aids

Bonfire Night/Fireworks

The village fireworks and bonfire were a great success once again. Huge thanks to the anonymous donor for the fabulous fireworks and to the team of helpers who organised the bonfire and set off the fireworks.

Christmas Lights

Over the years, the village Christmas lights had fallen into disrepair but not been replaced. Many people in the village were unhappy about this. Thanks to grants from the Highland Council's Discretionary Fund, the Gower Trust, the former Agricultural Show and Arisaig Games, we were able to purchase both new column and tree lights. Our MP, Angus MacDonald kindly donated a tree for the village too.

Swing Park

Working closely with ACT, the Community Council (and Megan Milligan in particular) managed to raise enough funding to upgrade the village swing park. Work began in March 2025 with the removal of old fixtures, and the new play equipment was installed in May.

Local Place Plan

Scottish Government is keen that all areas have a Local Place Plan – essentially highlighting the wants/desires of all sections of the community for their area. It is important because Councils will have to take note of community priorities as stated in Place Plans. Pulling together a Local Place Plan is a huge undertaking – and the 3 local Community Councils started a working group with a view to creating one Local Place Plan for the whole area as we share many facilities. Despite several meetings taking place, no meaningful progress has been made and there is no chance of meeting the application deadline. There will, however be the opportunity to comment on the appropriate part of Highland Council's draft Place Plan next year.

Resilience Plan

Work is currently underway to review the existing village resilience plan. It is hoped that an updated plan will be available in late autumn before winter weather kicks in once again.

Conclusion

As ever, I would like to thank the Council members for their support and commitment to the work of the Council during the year. We also benefit hugely from the support and guidance which we receive from our ward team at Highland Council.

Finally, I must thank all members of the local community for their input throughout the year. We are always receptive to new ideas and fresh input. Whilst the current board is in place until the next Community Council elections in October 2027, we would encourage anyone interested in getting involved with the work of the Community Council to get in touch and find out how they could become part of our activities

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Appendix 2

ADCC Annual Treasurer's report - End of year 2024-2025

The year opened with a bank balance of £1270 and closed with a balance of £1242 - a deficit of £28 for the year. Funds were raised over the year to cover the costs of new Christmas lighting and we are very grateful to the various bodies that funded us. We hold funds in hand to cover the cost of the renewal of the Public Entertainment Licence in 2025, required for the annual Bonfire and Firework display.

Annual expenses incurred were for:

Bank service charge	4.25
Website and email	108.00
Meeting room hire	135.00
Insurance	157.00
Remembrance Wreaths	<u>73.00</u>
TOTAL	477.25

The annual Highland Council Grant is for £473.27, so we are always slightly on the back foot, though the Remembrance wreaths would not be expected to be covered by this. Bank charges were introduced at £4.25 per month in March.

We are again grateful to Arthur Whittaker for sharing his Teams account with us for use for meetings.

The accounts have been prepared for submission to Highland Council and were kindly scrutinised by Rosemary Bridge.

30 June 2025