

minutes

Sound Around Ards AGM		
Thursday 8th May 2025	2.00 pm	Londonderry Park Community Centre, Newtownards
Meeting called by	Sound Around Ards Committee	
Type of meeting	Annual General Meeting	
Note taker	Alison Coyle	
Attendees	Phil Baron (PB) - Chair, Alison Coyle (AC), Gordon Cleland (GC), Trevor Dillon (TD), Jim Hamilton (JH), Valerie Hassard (VH), Tom Johnston (TJ), Elizabeth Lemon (EL), Heather Marshall (HM), Joan Moore (JM), Irene McNair (IMcN), Libby Rankin (LR), Elizabeth Warden (EW) and guest speaker Christine Wilson.	
Apologies	See seperate document	

Colour coding – Anything highlighted in red are actions

Welcome

Phil Baron (PB) welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked them for taking the time out to attend. He also extended a welcome to Heather Marshall who is interested in volunteering.

Apologies

Alison Coyle (AC) said she had received a large number of apologies this year with quite a few from volunteers who are still working, so she suggested that the next AGM be either in the evening or at a weekend to enable everyone who wanted to attend to be able to do so.

Minutes of last AGM

PB confirmed that all present had received copies of the last AGM minutes and papers sent out via email by the secretary. He asked if those persons who had been present at that meeting had any amendments or changes they wished made. As no-one had any changes, he asked if someone who had been present at the last meeting would propose the signing of the minute as a true record. Valerie Hassard (VH) proposed and Gordon Cleland (GC) seconded that the minutes be signed as correct. All were in agreement. Minutes signed by PB.

Constitution changes made at last AGM agreed and signed

PB read the amendments agreed at the last AGM and confirmed that they had been made to the constitution and so signed the new copy for records.

Actions from the last meeting

Contact be made with the Charity Commission to clarify if there is a minimum number of persons serve on committees.

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AC informed the meeting she had made contact with the Charity Commission and there was no minimum number of persons required for a committee as long as there was a Chair, Secretary and Treasurer. ACTION NOW CLOSED

AC and PB to get together and come up with a draft version of a listeners survey which AC would circulate by email for feedback.

AC stated that this action was now complete and the survey had been undertaken in the early summer. ACTION NOW CLOSED

Chairpersons report

PB presented a report of the work of Sound Around Ards (SAA) since the last AGM in May 2024 (Copy of his report is in Appendix 1).

No questions were raised on this report.

Secretary's update on listener numbers

Alison Coyle (AC) gave her report and explained that even though there had only been an increase of 3 listeners we had in fact added 17 but had lost 14 during the period.

Jim Hamilton (JH) asked the Chair had there been any feedback from the Care Homes on how useful they found the CD? PB explained that some care homes use it as part of their activity hour and others take it to individual residents rooms. Libby Rankin (LR) asked would there be any advantage to one of the volunteers attending a session when the CD was being played. All thought this was a very good idea. Christine Wilson, who is a long time listener said she had visited a friend recently who had moved in to a care home and she had taken along one of her older CDs when she visited which the lady appreciated. Christine said she actually does this when visiting visually impaired friends as it seems to be well received. A copy of the full report is in Appendix 2.

Appointment of officer bearers for 2025/26 session

PB conducted the appointment of office bearers for the 2025/26 session and the following officers were re-elected on mass.

<u>Office</u>	<u>Occupant</u>
Chair	Phil Baron
Secretary	Alison Coyle
Treasurer	Trevor Dillon
Committee	Anne Johnston
Committee	Gordon Cleland
Committee	Valerie Hassard

This was proposed by Elizabeth Warden (EW) and seconded by Irene McNair.

Libby Rankin was proposed as a committee member by Joan Moore (JM) and seconded by Valerie Hassard (VH). Libby agreed to serve. Passed unanimously.

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Arrangements for volunteers visit to Stormont

AC stated that 13 members had confirmed their attendance with 18 unable to attend and 4 had not yet replied.

She informed the meeting that she would be in contact with everyone who was attending to confirm all the arrangements for the visit. She also stated that Councillor Stephen Dunne (who had extended the invitation because it was our 45th anniversary) had said that he would like to entertain the attendees afterwards in the Councillors parlour to tea and biscuits. AC suggested she bring along a small cake for a photo opportunity. No descent to this suggestion.

Treasurers report

Trevor Dillon (TD) gave a brief explanation of the annual statement of accounts for the year ending 1st April 2025, (which can be seen in appendix 3). Also attached is the narrative for the financial review section of the Trustees' Annual Report 2025 which goes in to all the detail (which can be seen in appendix 4).

TD made special mention of the donation from Tesco Springhill of £1500 this year.

TD again thanked the auditor Ernie Trew for his work on the accounts and AC asked would Mr Trew be prepared to be the auditor for another year. TD stated he would, but he thought that this may be the last year. AC asked should SAA present a gift to Mr Trew for his work, but TD suggested that we wait until he has decided to stand down and then make a presentation to him.

The adoption of the accounts was proposed by Tom Johnston (TJ) and seconded by Gordon Cleland (GC).

Any other business

Tree planting

AC informed the meeting that she had been approached by Councillor Stephen Dunne to see if SAA would be interested in being considered for a tree to be planted in their name to mark the 45th anniversary. He explained that SAA would have to apply to the Council, so AC had completed the paperwork and would inform the volunteers of their decision when she received it.

Listener "get togethers"

Libby Rankin (LR) suggested that SAA consider hosting an afternoon tea party for the listeners. AC said that the committee had already considered this, but thought it might be a logistical nightmare getting transport etc arranged. Jim Hamilton suggested we consider two events, one in Ards and the other in Bangor. After discussion it was agreed as a good idea and something that the committee should research further. **Action – Committee to look at possibility of having a listeners get together.**

Association of Talking Newspapers update

AC stated that SAA are one of now only ten Groups in Northern Ireland. In distributions we are the second largest and we are one of only two groups who still deliver the service via CD. Discussion followed about the process of changing from CD to USB and Gordon Cleland asked would the content on each USB each week have to be manually deleted before the next content was uploaded. AC explained she was only informing the volunteers that we are just one of two still using CD and she was not making any suggestion that we move to USB. **Action – AC to speak to the technician at Craigavon TN re Gordons query.**

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The meeting was then handed over to our guest speaker Christine Wilson, who spoke very eloquently and honestly about what it is like to be a visually impaired person.

There being no further business PB again thanked everyone for coming and said that he felt it was a very productive AGM.

The meeting closed at 3.30 pm.

Agreed as a correct record and signed

Chair _____

Secretary _____

Date _____

minutes

Appendix 1 (Chairperson report)

CHAIRMANS REPORT. SOUND AROUND ARDS AGM 8th May 2025

|In the last year SAA continued to raise its profile by making contact
With a number of service providers namely;
Dementia NI, Salvation Army Befriending Service, Orthoptic services
At the Ulster and Bangor Hospitals, the Stroke Services at the Ulster
Hospital, Local Parkinsons and MS Groups and the North Down
Community Network. In addition information was sent to 12 local
Libraries with our new style poster and leaflets. Wardens at a number of
Sheltered Accommodations and several local Probus Groups.

We had a successful meeting with the owners of ~~Optomise~~ Eye care
who were very enthusiastic in working with us by promoting our work
by way of delivering our leaflets and verbally mentioning the work of our
Charity as their staff carry out eye examinations in nursing homes and
sheltered accommodation.

During the year we invited the three original members of the Lions Club
who were instrumental in establishing SAA some 45 years ago to view
our newly refurbished studio, they were very impressed to say the least
in particular with modern technology. (That's the three gentlemen that
attended our 40yr celebration – of course they were treated to coffee
and scones afterwards at the Hospital Gate Lodge). In addition the
lottery fund representative also visited the studio on a recording evening,
again very impressed how the lottery fund money had been spent and how
responsible we had been in purchasing equipment, maintaining records
and receipts.

minutes

Appendix 1 Cont'd

TECHNICIANS

During the year one of our established technicians moved on as a result of additional employment, and of course we thank Penny White for her help during her time with us.

Thankfully we remembered Selena Gamble, Selena had started to learn the ropes as a technician prior to Covid arriving and as a result the opportunity to continue was lost. We are grateful to Anne Johnston who was able to make contact with Selena and who agreed to join us and has now been with us for a number of months.

Survey Results

As you would have seen in last years minutes we intended to carry out A survey to establish the views of our listeners in respect of our recordings. This was undertaken during the summer last year. Fifty ~~questionnaires~~ were Sent out with a return rate of 90%. Copies of the results were circulated, However if anyone still requires a copy of the results in particular the Alison can help.

The findings of the survey were discussed by committee as a result A point of contact for the listeners if they have any queries has been Established verbally in the recordings and in addition listeners have been provided with a card displaying the contact details for display in their homes.

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Appendix 1 Cont'd

As well we are more conscious of the length of articles.

We did receive a number of queries in respect of the standard of Royal Mail delivery times, which was a highly publicised situation throughout borough. We were able to tell if a disc hadn't been delivered because a) the disc was still inside and b) the address label hadn't been turned over by the listener which meant it hadn't left the Post Office or it had been returned undelivered for whatever reason. There was a period of a few weeks when we monitored the situation by recording and photographing the discs that hadn't been delivered, unfortunately a specific geographical area could not be established. we checked the returned wallets before leaving the Post Office in order to avoid allegations of us manipulating the situation by checking them elsewhere. I am pleased to say the situation has improved in recent weeks.

In order to play our part in offsetting postal issues we now operate a Three set system, one week we have wallets going out marked with a yellow Sticker, the following week with a blue sticker and then the third week with a red sticker. This has proved successful giving the listener a further week to return their wallets.

FUNDING

During the year we applied to the Spar Community Fund for funding but our application was unsuccessful.

However, we had tremendous success with the Tesco second hand book stall at Springhill, where they donate to Charities on a monthly basis from donations made at the book stall. Amazingly we received a Cheque for

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Appendix 1 Cont'd

£1500 and at the same time excellent publicity via our local papers with the cheque being collected by Valerie Hazzard, thank you Valerie.

CONCLUSION

We have had an excellent year in providing much to our listeners all Possible by the continuing devotion of all our volunteers, which as Chairman I am eternally grateful. In many aspects of our volunteering In particular the number of contacts made, the ongoing strive for publicity the offer of talks to various groups and the actual number of talks that have taken place, it takes forethought, planning and an abundance of enthusiasm and whilst Alison and I discuss plenty of what we do or propose to do and the decisions we make the transformation of the charity is mainly down to the enthusiasm, the willingness and the abundance of energy of our Secretary Alison who makes all things possible. We are so grateful, thank you Alison.

minutes

Appendix 2

Update on membership figures for 2025 AGM

At our last AGM we had 42 Listeners and 9 care homes.

At present we now have 45 listeners and 11 care homes on our circulation list.

So, an increase of 3 individual members and 2 care home facilities.

All these listeners are active and both Phil and myself follow up any members who have not returned their envelopes for 3 or more weeks.

In the past year we have lost 14 individual members and gained 17.

Of the ones we have gained –

- 3 came through sensory services
- 2 from speaking engagements
- 2 came through articles in the Chronicle
- 10 through general outreach.

We are a little concerned that 8 of the new members who asked for the service have not stayed. On further investigation it seems that the majority of these people had been referred by family members without first asking the user.

Of the longer term members we have lost this year –

- 2 moved in to full time care
- 1 moved to County Tyrone
- And 3 passed away.

So in summary we are still doing well with keeping our numbers up, but we do have to keep constantly trying to recruit or follow up non returns.

minutes

Appendix 3 Treasurers receipts and payments report

SOUND AROUND ARDS TALKING NEWSPAPER

(registered with Northern Ireland Charity Commission NIC 1005199)

RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT

YEAR-ENDED 1 APRIL 2025

Receipts	2024-25 €	2023-24 €
Tesco Collection	1500.00	47.66
Donations	400.10	120.00
Community Lottery Fund NI	0.00	6000.00
Bank Interest	61.72	66.46
	<u>1961.82</u>	<u>6783.12</u>
Payments		
Insurance	154.53	227.10
Membership Fees - TNFA/ATHNI	62.00	62.00
Discs	288.75	295.45
Postal Wallets	550.80	0.00
Publicity Flyers	149.00	0.00
Stationery and Other Supplies	29.50	123.66
Community Lottery Fund NI - Expenditure	€	€
- Laptop & associated equipment	0.00	669.82
- Audio Equipment	162.96	419.95
- Multi CD Copier	0.00	359.99
- Portable CD Player	0.00	63.96
- Furniture	0.00	896.42
- Marketing/Publicity Material	149.00	207.60
- 40th Anniversary Celebration	162.50	2092.31
- Volunteers Gifts/Coffee Morning	123.50	497.73
- Printing, Stationery, Other Costs	121.58	294.62
- CD's for recording	80.97	199.90
	<u>800.51</u>	<u>5702.32</u>
	<u>2035.69</u>	<u>6419.82</u>
Surplus(Deficit) for year	-73.27	342.30
Bank Reconciliation		
Opening Cash Balance - Progressive Account	3039.40	2697.10
Surplus(Deficit) for year	-73.27	342.30
Closing Cash Balance - Progressive Account	<u>2966.13</u>	<u>3039.40</u>

Approved by the trustees at the AGM on 8th May 2025 and signed on their behalf by:


Phil Baron, President


Trevor Dillon, Treasurer

Independent Examiner's Statement

I have completed my examination and am satisfied that accounting records were kept in accordance with the Charities Act, that the accounts accord with those accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Charities Act and that no further information is needed for a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached. In addition, I have found no matters that require drawing to your attention.


Ernie Trew 38 Thornhill Park Belfast BT5 7AR

minutes

Appendix 4 (Treasurers's report – Narrative

Narrative for Financial Review section of Trustees' Annual Report 2025

This year's Finance Report is starting to return to normal patterns after last year's finances were dramatically affected by the receipt of a substantial grant from the Community Lottery Fund Nt and the subsequent associated expenditure. However, the remaining grant funds have now been spent and this continues to distort the picture this year to some extent. Receipts for the year totalled £1,962, largely as a result of Tesco Springhill's Charity Bookstall which raised a fantastic £:1500. The remaining income (£462) represented other donations, collections and bank interest received .

Payments for the year totalled £2,035 with a sizeable portion (£800) representing the remaining Lottery Fund expenditure. That leaves operational spend at £1,235 covering new postal wallets (£551), replacement discs (£289), publicity flyers (£149), insurance fees (£155) with the balance representing membership fees and sundry supplies. With additional income available from Tesco's, we took the opportunity to purchase new postal wallets.

The net result for the year was that we operated close to break-even with a small deficit of £73. This gave us a small reduction in our bank cash balance from £3,039 to £2,966 as at 1st April 2025.

In conclusion, the organisation's finances remain in a strong position with a cash balance of £2,966. The current levels of cash held would be sufficient to meet over 3 years operating costs. This is comfortably within our target of ensuring that, at the very least, an amount equivalent to one-year's operating costs (£900) is held in reserve at each year-end.

Trevor Dillon

Treasurer

End of minutes of 2025 AGM