

**Traquair Village Hall - Annual General Meeting  
Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> May 2026 at 7.30pm**

**Minutes**

**1. Welcome and Chair's Remarks**

The chair welcomed everyone and thanked them for giving up their evening. He promised to try and keep the meeting brief, but stated that it had been a busy year and there was a lot to cover.

**2. Attendees:**

Dani Dove, Suzi Park, Geoff Harrison, Sarah Phelan, Mark Phelan, Lesley Simpson, Joy Barlow, Gerald Barlow, Elaine Heron, Norman Donald, Moy Mackay, Lewis McCulloch, Catherine Maxwell-Stuart, Susan Christopher, Linda McGhee, Suzy Nairn

**3. Apologies:**

Joe Richardson, Rachel Lauder, Eileen Glendinning, Jacqui Payton

**4. Approval of the Minutes of the AGM – Thursday 24 April 2025**

Proposed: Catherine Maxwell-Stuart

Seconded: Suzy Nairn

**5. Matters Arising**

*(None from previous AGM)*

**6. Chair's Annual Report:**

Bookings for the year remained fairly consistent with last year's record-breaking hires, with over 1100 hours of bookings recorded – the bulk of which continue to be done online.

We did sadly lose our regular Tuesday night Tai Chi class in June after many years, as the travel for the organiser to Traquair was becoming unsustainable. However we have now got a weekly Pilates class on a Thursday night and have hosted countless other adhoc events including music, storytelling, crafts, dancing, food as well as numerous other parties and celebrations.

The hall once again provided a film club during the winter, which was run this year by Lewis. We screened a total of 6 films from October to April and also had various speakers come along including Stewart Wilson who gave us a brief history of mountain biking in the Tweed Valley and we were privileged to welcome the daughter of Arthur Phillips along to join us.

We also welcomed several members of the local beekeeping community along for our final film of the year – Honeyland, who brought an array of equipment, books and honey along and we were also given a presentation ahead of the screening by Diarmuid Cowan. Attendance was somewhat mixed throughout the season, with some screenings drawing in large numbers (a peak of 38 people) and others only selling a single ticket but we did manage to cover the licensing costs over the course of the year with thanks to some subsidies offered by Filmhub Scotland and SBCAN.

The hall was also hired as a venue for various music events – including performances by Euan Henderson & Gary Innes, a post-new-year ceilidh, and we opened up the hall for music from Deleerit for Burns Night. We have more live music coming up this year – Tommy Ashby is coming back home

from Suffolk to perform here on the 30<sup>th</sup> May with two other musicians which should be a fantastic night of music, and we are also hosting a trio of musicians later in the year from a band called Skelpt which promises an evening of lively folk music.

We took the decision to have a pause from hosting a Hogmanay ceilidh this year, to provide the committee with a break from organising it after a very busy year of bookings and works at the hall. Some enquiries have been made to see if we can run something this year again, though it's proving more difficult and costly to find performers, and we're keen that it remains a public event provided by the hall that's open to all.

With so many bookings it has been difficult to find time for any works and maintenance to be carried out but we have invested heavily in the hall over the last year.

In March we completed the refurbishment of the kitchen and the bar – with installation of new worktops and doors and new flooring in the kitchen, which has revitalised the space and given it a fresh new look when hirers arrive.

Following the earlier refurbishment of the wooden floor in the hall we supported the carpet bowls with subsidising the installation of some new wheels to their boards in order to try and prevent any damage to the floor surface. We've also installed new doors to the foyer to help with keeping the space warmer and they also close significantly more gently and quietly as well as provide a little more privacy in to the hall from the foyer. We've also installed some ceiling fans to help distribute warm air from the new wall-mounted heating units more evenly.

Other works have also taken place including a new kitchen water heater after the last one leaked and flooded the store room, an electrical inspection throughout the building (as required by our insurers), and we even had the piano tuned for a concert that took place late in 2025.

We also need to thank some local contractors for carrying out work for us. Malky Ewart came and renewed the drainage in the car park to try and alleviate the water that was gathering over the winter, and Rab Hill who fitted the foyer doors for us came and repaired the information board in the car park after it was damaged in bad weather and years of sunlight had caused the plastic cover to perish.

We also need to thank Norman & Ross Donald for sourcing another magnificent tree for the village at Christmas, and Moy Mackay for replacing the weathered colour panels in the phone box windows.

We also supported Peeblesshire First Responders and funded the purchase of a new Defibrillator for the village, after the previous one developed a battery fault and due to the age of it replacement parts were not available. Since then, the group have managed to secure funding to replace 12 of the oldest units in the region and thanked Traquair Hall for kick-starting their campaign.

The chair recalled being asked at the end of the last AGM "what plans do you have for this year?" and the answer was to try and have an easier 12 months... though he was not entirely sure that happened. It's been another busy time for everyone, and the whole committee and our trustees have been incredibly supportive in keeping the wheels turning smoothly here at the hall.

Our secretary, Aidan, unfortunately moved away from the area in 2025 but Sarah very kindly volunteered to take over minuting our meetings and keeping us on-track with monthly agendas on top of dealing with her duties as treasurer and kept our meetings on-track, on-time, and had minutes issued out to everyone before they even got home.

After 3 years as treasurer, Sarah is stepping down from the committee for a break and the chair thanked her for everything she's done in dealing with all the payments in and out from the hall, digitising our ledger and for her excellent record-keeping over the past 3 years.

Special thanks were given to Elaine, who has been involved with keeping the hall clean and tidy for everyone to use for a very long time – in fact nobody is quite sure exactly how long it's been, but she has seen numerous chairpersons come and go over the years. Often going above and beyond, and no doubt dealing with the aftermath of several events held here at the hall, she has kept an eye on the place and done amazing work keeping the hall in top shape ready to welcome people through the doors day after day. Elaine was presented a small gift from us here at the hall for you to enjoy at home now that you've got some time back each week instead of cleaning in here.

## **7. Presentation of the Financial Statement of Accounts:**

The audited accounts were only returned back from Viv Ross at the weekend, so there had not been a lot of time to review them yet.

Income from hall hire was down slightly this year, despite the busy diary. This is probably mostly down to the majority of bookings being charged by the hour and less "all-weekend" hires.

Function income is also down – possibly due to some quieter film screenings and the lack of ceilidh for Hogmanay. Our Burns Night ceilidh was not as well-attended as we would've hoped and we in fact made a small loss on this.

Last years total income figure is skewed somewhat by the grants we received, but removing the restricted funds & grants from last year's total gives a figure closer to this year's £15,073 income total.

Our outgoings have also gone up at over £22k compared to last year's £18k, and I expect that the new committee will need to review the hire charges at the hall as they have remained unchanged since before Covid in a bid to keep the hall affordable, however our costs have continued to rise each year.

While the bottom line figures of the accounts illustrate a loss of just over £7,000, we have used around £8k of our restricted funds from savings for various projects throughout the year, so excluding this from the calculations we have probably turned a small profit this year.

We are still in a strong financial position and have maintained a fairly consistent working account balance of around £10k throughout the year, and still have a healthy fund in our savings which is earmarked as restricted for emergency works and repairs.

G Barlow asked about ongoing grant applications. The chair explained there hasn't been much required this year as most major works have already been undertaken. The chair also explained the process for applying for grants and how complicated this is. J Barlow raised that the BCA are good in signposting to grants available and very supportive in the hall applying for these.

C Maxwell-Stuart asked about heating costs for the last year. Mark explained 500l of oil was put in the tank as a back-up, however the solar panels are still viable in reducing heating costs.

Accounts – Proposed: Mark Phelan, Seconded: Joy Barlow

#### **8. Nomination and Confirmation of the Financial Examiner**

It was suggested that we continue with Viv Ross

Proposed - Dani Dove, Seconded – Joy Barlow

#### **9. Nomination for service on the Committee 2025-2026 and Election:**

Suzy Nairn – seconded by Mark

#### **10. Confirmation of the present Committee Members wishing to serve 2026-27**

All agreed to continue with the exception of Sarah Phelan who will step down after the next meeting.

#### **11. AOCB (competent to the AGM)**

Joy, on behalf of the committee and those who use it, thanked Mark for his time spent as chair of the committee and the work he has put in to improve the hall for all those that use it.

Elaine raised the issue of the parking during events. The chair explained there are limited options for extending the car park. Suzy Nairn asked about using local fields – Catherine explained the fields are quite boggy and local farmers will not want to give up more space for this. Joy suggested adding information onto the terms and conditions regarding car sharing. Catherine has kindly offered the use of the car park at Traquair house for events if required and available. It remains an ongoing issue that is not easily resolved.

Norman asked about the number of trustees which is now down to 3. Catherine mentioned that Joe Richardson had spoken to her about this. Mark also suggested Stuart McMillan – Mark will discuss this with them.

#### **12. Chair's remarks and close of the meeting**

The chair thanked everyone for their support and taking time to attend the meeting.