

# ABERLADY COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

## Trustees' Report 2025–26: Community Update

### What are we here for?

Primarily, we look after Aberlady Village Hall, but our work also aims to promote the well-being of the inhabitants of Aberlady and to foster good community spirit.

The village hall is at the heart of village life, and this year it was used on 339 out of 365 days — a 93% occupancy rate. That's a lot of clubs, activities, games, music, cups of tea, dancing, sport and celebrations.

### Who was on the Board or Trustees elected at the June 2025 AGM?

- Steven Polwart (Chair)
- Samantha Robertson (Treasurer)
- Ian Barcroft (Secretary)
- Donna Mathieson (Property Trustee)
- Ros Richardson (Property Trustee)
- Dr Andrew Smith (Property Trustee)
- Liz Forsyth (Property Trustee, NBCAP rep)
- Gillian Brydon (Hall Refurbishment Lead)
- Sadia Ward (Fundraising, NBCAP rep)
- Lawrence Connelly (Fabric Convenor)
- Sue Jardine (Defibrillators and village amenities)
- Carole Bold (Website, Facebook and newsletter)

A big thank-you to Booking Secretary Sammy-Jo Gilholm and every volunteer who fixed, tidied, hosted, baked, lifted, shifted, and generally kept the hall ticking. Without you nothing would happen.

### A big change:

After a lot of patient work (special thanks to Ian Barcroft), we completed the re-organisation to become a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO) on 31 May 2026. In short, the charity now owns the village hall, can sign contracts, and gives trustees better protection. The old 1951 Deed of Trust is retired, and the former charity (SC008764) is being wound up. From now on everyone is simply a "Charity Trustee" — there is no separate "Property Trustee" role.

We're saying thank you and goodbye to Donna Mathieson, Ros Richardson and Gillian Brydon, who between them have given more than 70 years of service to the ACA. What an amazing legacy. Our new constitution limits trustee terms to six years, so recruiting new people is a must-do for the coming year.

## Planning ahead:

We agreed a simple three-year Business Plan in October 2025. It's a live document we'll keep updating so we stay on top of bookings, maintenance and fundraising.

## Hall refurbishment — where we're up to:

- Phase 1 (outside): Repointing the stonework is booked for summer 2026. This should end the cycle of emergency repairs for generations. Funded by a £20,000 SUEZ Foundation grant plus ACA funds. Contractor: East Coast Masonry.
- Phase 2 (inside): We have Planning Permission and a Building Warrant. Tantallon Projects is guiding us through the tender process for refurbishing the Small Hall. Three tenders are in; we'll use the report to pin down costs and shape our fundraising.
- Thanks to our architects Jones Robbins Tobin and the project subgroup for steering what has been a complex project.

## Keeping the hall running:

- Lawrence Connelly has kept a close eye on day-to-day maintenance — thank you. The building is old and always needs something done, but there have been no major surprises this year. We did install a new fire alarm panel.
- Samantha Robertson has made our finances clearer and easier to compare year-to-year. We now have four years of figures presented consistently.
- Independent examination: Dick Gill examined the accounts for 2025–26. From next year this will move to Leanne Gillies or EIG Management Services.

## What happened in the hall?

- Regular weekly clubs and classes include: Scouting & Guiding, Tai Chi, Badminton, Stream Fit Callanetics classes, Senior Moves, Zumba, Pickleball
- New this year: The Aberlady Singers choir, Dog Training classes, and a very popular Thursday Drop-in Session (2–4pm in the Small Hall)
- The Outreach Post Office is in the hall on Thu afternoons 1.00-3.30pm
- You can now book to play pickleball, badminton, table tennis and unihoc
- We hosted 3 weddings, 3 Christmas Party Nights, a Hogmanay Ceilidh, 28 children's parties, the church plant sale, Autumn Fair, Choir concerts, several private parties and of course Aberlady Gala
- We said goodbye to The Drama Mill and Kids Dance Class.
- The Christmas Market returned and raised £1,736.47 — brilliant. With Gillian and Erika moving away, a new committee has stepped up to keep it going.
- Other highlights: Remembrance Community Lunch, the Aberlady Christmas Songbook, and Cycling UK bike-maintenance workshops.
- Communications: Two editions of the Heads-Up newsletter went out. Carole Bold now looks after the newsletter, Facebook and the website.
- Friends of the Hall: Launched in May 2026 with a leaflet delivered to every home — an easy way to lend your support to the hall.

## Defibrillators and village amenities:

Thanks for the outstanding work done by Sue Jardine and the volunteer support team who manage the network of five defibrillators in the village. The teams' outreach and contribution with the wider NBCA defib project, working with Together in Health, has resulted in a 6th community defibrillator now being available at Ballencrieff. A simple CPR/defib guide went through every letterbox with the May newsletter. Sue also keeps an watchful eye on the condition of the village benches, bins, toilets and other local amenities.

## Money in, money out (headline picture)

- Note: These are draft figures while the independent examination finishes.

INCOME	2025-26
Hall Bookings	20,026
Donations	6,465
ACA Fundraising	3,849
Awards & Grants	14,688
	<b>45,028</b>

HALL BOOKINGS	2025-26
Weddings	1,200
Children's Parties	1,426
Parties & Dances	1,649
Sports & Exercise	7,328
Clubs & Activities	7,273
Services	1,150
	<b>20,026</b>

EXPENDITURE	2025-26
Cleaning & Caretaking	3,947
Insurance, Licenses & Professional Fees	4,516
Maintenance: Regular Planned	1,536
Maintenance: Unplanned	1,688
Utility Bills	4,583
Other	506
Refurbishment Costs	22,120
	<b>38,896</b>
2025-26 Surplus	<b>6,132</b>

- Reserves: We aim to keep a reserve of £15K in case of emergency repairs
- It has been a busy year of ACA fundraising with several events and activities across the year. Thanks to everyone who gave their time to help deliver these successful events and keep a look out for future events in 2026-27.

ACA FUNDRAISING	
Christmas Market	1,736
Friends of the Hall	475
Swish Event	1,006
Teen Girl Swish	261
Yoga Sessions	371
	<b>3,849</b>

## What's next in 2026-27

- Refresh ACA (SCIO) branding.
- Trial an online booking system.
- Create a practical Hall Operations Manual to sit alongside the Business Plan.
- Recruit new members and future trustees

- Deliver Phase 1 repointing and finalise the plan and funding for Phase 2 (Small Hall).
- Support the Aberlady Wild Goose Art Trail.
- Host another community lunch event
- Continue to improve the fabric and facilities available and to encourage further use of the village hall
- Continue working with other local organisations such as ELC, Gullane Area Community Council and North Berwick Coastal Area Partnership as well as village groups and associations.

Thank you to everyone who booked the hall, volunteered, lead a class, or club, stacked chairs, baked a traybake, or donated — you keep the heart of the village beating. Here's to another busy year.

If you'd like to get involved with the work of the ACA, to help out with the management and maintenance of the hall, to lead or volunteer at an event, we'd love to hear from you. Please contact us at [community.association@aberlady.org](mailto:community.association@aberlady.org)

Approved by the trustees on 16.06.26 and signed on their behalf by



Steven Polwart (Chair)