

TRUSTEES

James Lilwall **Chairman**

John Menzies **Vice-Chairman**, Marietta Menzies **Secretary**, William Mason **Treasurer**, *vacant* **Caretaker**, John Mallen **Booking Clerk**, David Cockburn **Web Site**, Carolyn Good, Rob Edwards & Rita Edwards

Chairman's Report June 2016

Annual general meetings are an ideal opportunity to just, for a minute, reflect on what has gone before, say thank you and talk a little about future plans and challenges.

As I reflected, my immediate thought was what a very long report this would be. I'm glad to say that I have kept it to a minimum, but so much has been achieved that it's difficult to know what to leave out, but I acknowledge I have for the sake of time.

Firstly I would just like to take a minute to remember Les, he is missed by us all. His total commitment, energy and enthusiasm were unstinting and we thank Josie for pointing him in our direction when they arrived in the village. Les was totally committed and he's irreplaceable. The ongoing success of the hall is a fitting tribute to all he did in helping us deliver our aims. My fellow trustees stepped in, supported and helped fill the large void that Les has left, a sign of real teamwork and collaboration.

On that note let me thank all my fellow trustees for the enormous amount of work and commitment they have put in over the last year in getting the hall up and running. Many hours of hard work has gone in to making the hall the success it is today. It's very easy to take a lot of this commitment and hard work for granted; we do so at our peril. The whole community can now benefit from this fantastic facility and its very encouraging seeing more and more engaging with the many events and organisations using the facilities. We were delighted that Rob and Rita joined us during the year and we were sorry to see Karin leave us and we thank her for all the input, expertise and support she gave us over the years.

I think it is fair to say that the new hall has far exceeded all our expectations, the flexibility and layout has been a revelation. Every new event or booking is showing us something else that the hall can provide and accommodate. We are learning lots in our first year of operation and we have appreciated everybody's patience, we have made mistakes on the way and for those we apologise, but this is all new to us and we are making very good progress. The new facilities are stimulating new ideas, opportunities, bookings and a good general growth in numbers attending the many events and functions. New classes, fitness, social and fundraising events have been established by various groups and individuals. Casual one off bookings continue to grow.

The facilities continue to be enhanced with generous gifts, limited spend and also through grant applications. The new chairs in the main hall have been a great success and thanks must go to David and the cinema group.

As we come to the end of our first year the building accounts still need to be finalised, which William will talk about a little later, snagging with the building now needs to be completed and we focus our attention on provisioning for the future financial needs of the building, annual maintenance and depreciation of the fixtures and fittings.

Financially the hall is turning in a small trading surplus, but we need to continue to focus on key growth areas to fully realise the financial stability of the facilities. It's costing us around £850 a month to just open the doors.

Running the new hall is a small business and our approach needs to be balanced but sustainable to provide continuity in the coming years.

We have capacity, plenty of it so we have to keep marketing and promoting the hall to local and outside user groups.

I mentioned sustainability earlier, we must now focus on the long term, I touched on the financials, but there is a social element here to. The hall is still new; we've only just had the keys for a year, so in a way it's still a novelty. Our challenge will be to keep the levels of enthusiasm and energy going to stimulate engagement. We must get more people involved; it's still surprising how many familiar faces are at different events and functions.

We need some new trustees, some new faces. We must manage succession amongst the key and critical roles so we have the right skill sets for future caretakers, treasures and secretaries amongst others.

I'll finish by saying thank you again, to you all collectively; it is a privilege to chair such a group working on such a rewarding programme.

James Lilwall
Chairman