

Meeting: Applecross Community Hall committee meeting 24.02.26 | AI Notes by Fellow, reviewed by the committee

Present: Anne Macrae, Rhona McPartlin, Elodie Matthews, Holly Wood, Caty MacLennan, Ishbel Ferguson

Apologies: Barbara Gillies, Agnes Rymowicz

Summary

The committee meeting covered operational matters for the community hall, including financial updates, facility maintenance, and event planning. The committee approved a £350 fee for accountant Adam to finalise accounts for both the old organisation and SCIO, and agreed to badminton sessions continuing on Mondays only. The Applecross Community Company was approved to use the hall lounge as office and storage space for a two-year period at the proposed price.

Significant maintenance progress was reported, with Cameron Thompson and Duncan completing handrail and roof repairs respectively (both refusing payment), whilst ongoing issues with floor scuff marks and car park flooding require attention. The committee discussed several upcoming events including Gerry's book signing, the play park opening on Easter Monday, and potential band bookings for May. Additional topics included Gaelic signage funding options, a potential warming cupboard purchase for the kitchen, and drainage solutions for the increasingly problematic car park flooding.

Action items

- Anne to amend the meeting minutes to include thanks to Carolyn for organising the Christmas quiz
- Anne to email details of play equipment (Wendy House and sandpit items) to be purchased with the £500 grant from Dòchas
- Saara to message Holly to confirm the hall has an account with Sutherland Brothers for bar orders with direct debit payment
- Anne to email Louise the hairdresser to confirm booking plans for late March (around 17th March)
- Anne to find out more about local musicians and the Pinny Band playing in the hall
- Caty to bring up Gaelic signage funding options at the Bealach AGM
- Contact Ewan regarding solar panel removal update, and if no progress, arrange with healthcare to move it to the back container
- Investigate costs and sources for a warming cupboard, and consult with John, Elaine, and Judy about layout, dimensions, and size requirement
- Elodie to reply to Gordon confirming the hall agrees to the community company hiring the lounge for two years at the proposed price, after checking with Agnes and Barbara.

- Anne to liaise with Douglas Miles and enquire about the possibility of installing drainage along the play park fencing to address worsening flooding issues.

Decisions

- £350 fee approved for accountant Adam to complete accounts for the old organisation and SCIO
- Badminton sessions to continue on Mondays only, with Thursday sessions available upon request to Rhona
- Applecross Community Company approved to use the hall lounge as office and storage space for a two-year period at the proposed price
- Next committee meeting scheduled for Tuesday, 24th March at 7pm

Topics

Events and bookings

- Fairy lights in cupboard are heavily damaged with large sections not working after Christmas setup; committee suggests asking bride to purchase new ones or hall will need replacements
- Book swap scheduled for next Thursday (27th February) at 10am, followed by a strupag from 12pm. Gerry will speak about his book at 2pm with book signing afterwards.
- The Healthcare Association (Strupag) event moved to Easter Monday, with plans for an official opening of the playpark that weekend if Douglas Miles can complete turf, topsoil, and fencing work in time.
- Tasting Shapes enquired about performing at the hall during the first weekend of May as part of a Highland tour, with potential for a local band to join them. John Glover was contacted about local band availability.
- My Darling Clementine (folk duo) booking tentatively scheduled for 23rd May, pending final confirmation. The booking came through promotional materials shared by Barbara.
- Anne planning to attend the touring network 'Gathering' in Aberfeldy 21st March (Thursday through Sunday) for promoters to view showcases and connect with other venues about future bookings.

Financial matters

- Accountant Adam will approve accounts for the old organisation and SCIO for £350, with Christian currently working to finalise details before submission
- The committee unanimously approved the £350 fee without delay, as the accounts work has already been postponed
- Invoice updates completed for new bank account details, with Morrisons contacted to update payment information for car park hire

Community company office proposal

- The committee expressed general agreement to allow the Community Company to use the lounge as office and storage space, though had reservations about the back room due to sports equipment overflow
- The back room with marquees will be cleared for sports equipment storage to free up shelving space in the room beside the bar. The community company will need only shelving for a printer and basic storage.
- The community company is willing to purchase a lockable cupboard for their storage needs. The committee will reorganise existing furniture and crockery storage to accommodate their requirements.
- Two-year agreement proposed, which works well as significant work is planned for the church (their current space) that won't happen quickly. The regular use will help with heating costs and keep the space warm.
- Final approval pending confirmation from absent committee members (Agnes and Barbara) before sending official response to Gordon

Facility maintenance

- Cameron Thompson repaired the handrail by end of week and refused payment for the work
- Duncan completed roof repairs recently and also refused payment, demonstrating strong community support
- Ali Brown replaced the empty gas canister after waiting for James to be available to help with the task
- Black scuff marks appearing on hall floor from trainers or activities, despite white soles policy; Suzanne attempted cleaning but more marks reappeared
- Committee agreed to send another reminder about white soles requirement and potentially post laminated signage in the hall
- Solar panel equipment remains in the second shower by the bar ahead of RAF visit. Ewan from the healthcare group needs to confirm placement location (coordination with Milltown Crofters about wind sock positioning near sports pitch).
- Duncan requested permission to paint white parking lines in the car park for driving test practice (reversing). The committee had no objections, suggesting lines along the wall near disabled spaces.
- Car park flooding has worsened since ground was disturbed, with water gathering more extensively than the previous couple of puddles. This affects the area and makes it messy.
- Donald McKenzie suggested installing drainage along the play park fencing edge, connecting to an existing pipe he installed near the sewage cover that drains to the burn. The committee will enquire with Douglas Miles about this.

Kitchen equipment

- The lack of warming plates has been mentioned multiple times, particularly for events with catering. Judith had previously researched this and thought it would fit with the existing silver table.

- A previous warming trolley was considered but was past its useful life and secondhand, so wasn't suitable for purchase.
- Judith had researched company Adexa, which offers catering equipment including warming cupboards at good discount prices.
- The committee will investigate costs and consult with John, Elaine, and Judith (the most likely users) about exact layout, dimensions, and size requirements before making a purchase decision.

Gaelic signage project

- Bilingual Gaelic signs researched online but found to be expensive at approximately £30 each
- Roddy Maclean provided translations; committee considering starting with essential signs (main doors, kitchen, toilets) and adding more later
- Discussion about whether to ask Bealach Group for funding support, though concern raised about appropriateness since signs would benefit the hall rather than Bealach specifically
- Committee missed deadline for Gaelic Week funding (application was months ago) and will explore alternative funding sources rather than using core hall funds

Other updates

- Uppies versus Doonies football game postponed from this weekend due to shinty team competing in Fort William; considering following week but conflicts with housing consultation on Friday afternoon
- Future plans discussed for the corner where the container was, including potential wooden cabin or summer house shelter for parents whilst children play, though specifics depend on Highland Council completing their work and resolving the sewage cover situation.