

Charity Number: NIC100157



Aghalee Village Hall

Aghalee Village Hall

Annual Report and Unaudited Financial Statements

for the financial year ended 31 December 2024

Daly Park & Company Ltd
Chartered Accountants
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Aghalee Village Hall

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Aghalee Village Hall TRUSTEES' AND OTHER INFORMATION

Trustees	Christopher Buller Alison Gawith Anne Miskelly Pat McAdams Michael Beacham Derek Blakely Stephen Bann Matt Hull Bobbie Hamill Pauline Buller Kerry Quinn Fernando Gutierrez Fiona Maree Andrea Huff Susan McCavigan John Harris Ian Christie
Charity Number in Northern Ireland	NIC100157
Principal Address	6 Lurgan Road Aghalee Co. Armagh BT67 0DD United Kingdom
Independent Examiner	Daly Park & Company Ltd Chartered Accountants 4 Carnegie Steet Lurgan Co. Armagh BT66 6AS Northern Ireland
Principal Bankers	Danske Bank 45-48 High Street Portadown Co. Armagh BT62 1LB Northern Ireland
Solicitors	R M Cullen & Son 16-22 Edward Street Portadown Co. Armagh BT62 3NA Northern Ireland

Aghalee Village Hall TRUSTEES' REPORT

for the financial year ended 31 December 2024

The trustees present their Trustees' Report and the unaudited financial statements for the financial year ended 31 December 2024.

The financial statements are prepared in accordance with the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008, FRS 102 "The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland" and Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their financial statements in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102).

The Trustees' Report contains the information required to be provided in the Trustees' Annual Report under the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) guidelines. The trustees of the charity are also charity trustees for the purpose of charity law and under the charity's constitution are known as members of the board of trustees.

In this report the trustees of Aghalee Village Hall present a summary of its purpose, governance, activities, achievements and finances for the financial year 31 December 2024.

The organisation is a registered charity and hence the report and results are presented in a form which complies with the requirements of the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008 and, although not obliged to comply with the Statement of Recommended Practice applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland FRS 102, the organisation has implemented its recommendations where relevant in these financial statements.

Financial Review

The results for the financial year are set out on page 24 and additional notes are provided showing income and expenditure in greater detail.

Results and Dividends

At the end of the financial year the charity has assets of £257,062 (2023 - £296,116) and liabilities of £2,755 (2023 - £1,640). The net assets of the charity have decreased by £(40,169).

At the dawn of 2024

- 2023 had been confirmed as the world's warmest year on record - 1.48C warmer than the long-term average, driven by climate change and El Niño,
- A magnitude 7.6 earthquake struck Japan's western coast, killing an estimated 120 people and injuring more than 100,
- The lowest January temperature of -43.6 C (minus 46.5 F) had been recorded in Sweden for 25 years in Swedish Lapland,
- January 2024 brought a month of contrasts to the UK weather, with three named storms, a significant spell of cold, wintry weather and finally a new UK daily maximum temperature record for January.

And here in Aghalee, the first meeting of Aghalee Village Hall was cancelled due to bad weather!

AGM 2024 - report

This was held on Wednesday 15th May 2024 at 7.30pm

Acting Chairperson: Vice Chairperson Matt Hull was unable to attend and had nominated Anne Miskelly to stand in as Chairperson for the evening and to read his report for 2023.

The Acting Chairperson welcomed everyone to this 2024 AGM of Aghalee Village Hall relating to work to year end 31/12/2023, and welcomed Cllr Claire Kemp and Gina Biggerstaff, Community Services Development Officer with Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council, who will be acting as independent presiding officer during nominations to the 2024/5 committee.

All meeting paperwork from 2023 was provided, plus the minutes from AGM 2022.

MINUTES 2022 - ADOPTION OF ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS Y/e 31/12/22

Acceptance of the minutes was proposed by Alison Gawith, seconded by Pat McAdams and signed. There were no matters arising.

REPORTS 2023

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT for 2023 was presented by Anne Miskelly

As 2023 dawned, in Northern Ireland we had been without a functioning government for some 11 months, and major budgetary crises were facing a number of public services. All did not bode well for the incoming year.

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However, at AVH, after Christmas 2022 when a number of the Village Hall Committee were recovering after having been in hospital, had contracted Covid or had a bad 'flu which was going about, everyone seemed well recovered and fighting fit.

We had some excitements in 2023, the first was to celebrate the Hall's 90th anniversary in September, and we did this by running a Special Afternoon Tea. A request for photos went out on social media beforehand and which were then added to over 100 donated by Soldierstown Church from their celebration of their Heritage project. We displayed a 90th anniversary table with minute book from the first days in 1933 along with the opening photograph, a short history of different activities through the decades, and 2 booklets of the old village pictures which proved very popular. The Art group showed their paintings, old friendships were renewed and new ones made. Everyone had a great afternoon, with a delicious handmade afternoon tea made entirely by Fiona Maree of the committee. Our thanks to all who made it such a wonderful event.

The second excitement was when we were approached in September by a location scout for the Children's BBC programme 'A Kind of Spark'. They needed an authentic village hall in which to film some scenes for the new series of the programme and had found us in the online yellow pages. They told us we seemed to be the only remaining authentic village hall in the Province.

A Kind of Spark is a story about friendship, courage and self-belief, based on the award-winning novel by neurodivergent author Elle McNicoll. Aimed at children 8-12, it tells the inspirational story of teenager Addie, a neurodivergent girl, growing up and learning the power of her voice.

To cut a long story short, we hired the hall to the film unit for a total of 6 weeks and were paid a handsome rental fee for the duration. We had some shifting about to relocate all our groups and workshops, but we managed it pretty well and thank local Church and Memorial halls for helping us out. As you would imagine, filming caused huge excitement in the village and local area. There were advantages to many due to the filming, re-location sites all made a profit, as did local building supplies, shops both here and in Aghagallon and the cafés in Aghagallon. Members of the committee were in and out daily with the film company and have a few photos for use when allowed. The series aired on 26th April 2024.

Other highlights during 2023 included:

Art Exhibition: in April

Coronation Drop in Event: 6th May

Country Music Night: 13th May

Summer Solstice Walk: 24th June

Rock & Pop Night: 7th October

Christmas Event: Thurs/Fri/Sat 7th- 9th December

Craft Fair held by a local resident: 24th November

During the post Covid **Activities Programme over 2022 & 2023** we held a total of 116 workshops and 8 courses. There were 1,300 places available and more than 300 individuals booked places. The programme was funded by: Telecommunity, Halifax Foundation NI, The Honourable The Irish Society, John Moores Foundation NI, Arnold Clark, Arts Council Northern Ireland, Garfield Weston and Awards for All. Thanks also to Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council for funding the Coronation and Christmas events. Our sincere thanks to all of these funders as without their support much of the programme wouldn't have been possible.

Social Media page and website – Thanks to Fiona Maree and Peter Rusk for managing both of these which have proved to be very popular, and over the year on our pages we have advertised the work of the hall and reunited the community with all manner of items lost and found.

Newsletter – Once again we produced 2 editions of the newsletter, each reaching more than 1,000 people, in hard copy and on line.

Regular user groups – Thanks to all our regular user groups who continue to meet each week and provide services and activities to all their members and paying vital rental income as they do so.

Resignation – Our Chairman Lewis Trevithick resigned from the Committee in December, stepping down after 5 years in the Chair. We thank him for his time and support of the organisation over the years and wish him well in the future.

Village matters

Traffic calming - Finally happened in 2024, after community discussions started around 2016!

Festive lighting – We continue to repair, erect and pay for the festive lights throughout the village and were pleased this year to have paid for a pole at Coronation Gardens to be rewired. Thanks to the volunteers for managing this each year.

The Future for AVH

In January 2024 we discussed the future of the hall. We want to try and engage the community further and create a strategic plan for the next 3-5 years. We met with Victoria Jackson, Community Development Officer Lisburn &

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Castlereagh City Council and McGarry Consultants, to discuss how we could do this. The project will be focussed on strategic development, future proofing and building sustainability. A Strategic Plan was drawn up and while we were unsuccessful in attracting funding at that time, we met again and reviewed what we could achieve ourselves.

We reviewed our rental hire rates as they had not been increased since 2015.

We sought consultancy fees for 2024 to help with the plan and were successful through Awards for All.

We carried out a skills audit with the current committee and from this will work out what is required by way of additional skills and people.

We planned and created a Community Audit for early 2024.

In 2024 we need to:

Review the findings of the Community Audit.

Create a business plan for the next 3-5 years.

Break the Strategic plan into shorter term activities more easily achievable.

Look at grants available with a possible regard to the employment of a part-time Hall Manager.

Conclusion

It's been busy year for us with a great deal to celebrate and some serious future plans to think about. I would just like to highlight that none of the successes in 2023 would have been remotely possible without the continuing valuable input and support of all the committee members and volunteers working together as a team and I am very grateful for their help and support and thank them all very much indeed.

TREASURER'S REPORT for Y/e 31/12/23 was presented by Chris Buller

On your seats you will have a copy of the accounts to year end December 2023. In accordance with current charity legislation, these have been independently checked by Daly Park & Company Ltd given an unqualified, or clean report.

We offer a huge thank you to everyone in the local community who has supported us with raffle prizes and donations, and especially to Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council who put their trust in us and continued their valuable support through their various programmes, and to all the other Trusts and Agencies who have helped us with funding once again this year.

Income for the year decreased on the previous year to £63,827 (2022 - £94,593). The reason for this decrease was the reduction in the number of grants received this year. Grants received in 2023 were £22,595, down from £73,224 in 2022 and were received from Halifax Foundation NI £4,000, combined awards from Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council of £8,595 and Awards for All of £10,000.

On a more positive side, the income from rent from hire of the hall increased this year to almost £33,000 (from £17,500 in 2022), mainly due to 6 weeks hire rental from the filming event hire.

Total donations raised through fundraising of £4,642, including a donation from Deutsche Bank matching funds raised at the Carols n Cake event held in 2022, and HMRC Gift Aid of £477.26.

Expenditure (excluding depreciation) for the year has also decreased to £67,402 (2022 - £73,099).

Direct costs on the provision of the hall/activities stayed in line with the level of income received and totalled £64,706 or 96%. This is an increase of 1% on 2022 figures (95%) and includes, cleaning, wages, tutor fees, rates, insurance, light & heat, repairs, programme costs & subscriptions, and consultancy fees in relation to planning for the future. Admin costs made up the remainder of £2,696 (4%) – general admin expenses, bank fees, professional fees and are down 1% from 2022.

Deficit for the year is £3,575 (excluding depreciation) and there is still approximately £26,000 of grant income received in 2023 that crosses over and will be spent in 2024.

This deficit has been reflected in our cash reserves which have decreased from £88k to approx. £85k at year end. The Charity continues to be in a very strong and secure financial position for the next twelve months. The large cash reserves held at 31st December 2023 have been saved up over the past few years and are to go towards the planned refurbishment and repair works to be carried out in 2024; once these are completed our reserves will be back in line with policy.

96% ratio of spend on direct project costs is excellent value for money and we would emphasise to all those present the valuable work we are carrying out on behalf of our local community. I present the accounts for scrutiny and adoption. There were no matters arising and the report was adopted.

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The 2024 nominations from the regular user groups as follows.

Book Club	Fiona Maree & Kerry Quinn
Aghalee Taekwondo	Susan McCavigan & Michael Beacham
Ballinderry Badminton Club	Derek Blakely & Bobbie Hamill
Aghalee Upholstery Group	Anne Miskelly & Alison Gawith
Needlecraft Club	Pat McAdams
Art Club	John Harris
Ballet & AgeNI	Pauline Buller

The total regular group representatives nominated is 11, so up to 6 Public representatives may be elected at AGM. Nominations were confirmed for public representatives as follows. There is space for one more and it was noted that volunteers can also be co-opted at a later date.

Public Representatives wishing to stand again in 2024

Matt Hull
Chris Buller
Andrea Huff
Stephen Bann
Fernando Gutierrez
Vacant

The public representatives were proposed by Chris Buller and seconded by Stephen Bann.

Two Special Advisers were acknowledged for their continuing important work: Ruth Macauley, Bookings and Carol Redpath, Safeguarding.

New Reps and Trustees

John Harris will be the new Art Rep – Pauline will meet up with him in June to induct.

Another local man, Ian Christie volunteered to become a committee member. Pauline will go through induction at a mutually suitable date.

Officers

At the first committee meeting of the management trustees after AGM, the following officers and other posts were appointed and elected. All are on a voluntary basis and training is given as required. If we cannot appoint from within the committee, interested parties can be co-opted into post.

Members of the committee are encouraged to consider taking on a post in order to enable the committee to function properly and to take pressure off individuals.

Legal Officers for following 3 years

Chairperson – Anne Miskelly, Vice-Chairperson - Matt Hull, Secretary - Pauline Buller, Treasurer - Chris Buller

Others:

Marketing & Publicity, including Website and social media - Fiona Maree, Ian Christie and Peter Rusk I.T. - Fernando Gutierrez

Booking Secretary - Ruth Macauley

Safeguarding - Carol Redpath

Programme and Courses -Pauline Buller

H&S/Fire Officer – Anne Miskelly and John Harris as Deputy

Maintenance Cttee - Matt, Chris, Lewis, Fernando and others as required

End of 2024 AGM Report

Other AVH Business in 2024

Grants 2024

LCCC - Community Services Grant 24	Core costs	4,730.00
TNL People & Communities	Activity Prog 2025-26	46,822.00
Hedley Foundation	Elderly Hardship	2,500.00
Enkalon	Core costs	500.00
LCCC - Xmas Grant	Christmas	1,000.00
LCCC - DIY Grant	Maintenance	1,305.00
Total		£56,857.00

Fundraising 2024

Art Exhibition	£	80.00	
Afternoon Tea	£	275.00	
Rock n Pop Night	£	1,000.00	
Upholstery Donations	£	192.18	
Christmas Donations	£	364.93	
Other Donations	£	360.00	
			Grand Total £2,272.11

HMRC on Donations £ 249.28 to be added to this figure.

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We thank all of those funders and individuals who have made donations and/or awarded grants and funds to enable Aghalee Village Hall to continue its work in the community. Without your valued support, none of what we do would be possible.



Ballot Prizes 2024

We received brilliant support from local businesses to the ballot prizes totalling more than £750 and we thank them very much:-

Hannons Transport - 2 Glasgow Express coach trip vouchers, Classic Kitchens – Steam cleaner, Aghalee Taekwondo Club – 6 weeks lessons and insurance cover, Aghalee Vehicle Services - Voucher £50, Centra Aghalee - Voucher £50, Beeches Resource Centre - Wool Wire Sign, Aghalee Pharmacy – Cushion, Trish Rogers Originals - Cheeseboard & Coasters, Breadboard and Tealight holder, The Copper Tree - Xmas fused glass decoration, Aghalee Building Supplies - Voucher £30, Relatively Ceramics - Piece of pottery, Nifty Needles - Snowman and Sewing kit and other prizes from various AVH members.

We thank each and every one of these companies and individuals for their continuing generous donations of prizes for our ballots and events over the year.

Vice Chairperson

Matt Hull was absent for a couple of months while having a new hip, and returned to committee in July.

Retirements

Walter Robertson decided to retire from the committee, but hoped still to be able to help out at Christmas. Walter has been with the committee since 1995, some 29 years, and has helped over the years in numerous ways. The committee thanked Walter for his service and wished him very well in his retirement.

Sheila Hull had been unwell and retired from working as cleaner at the hall after working for us for 22 years. The committee thanked Sheila for her service and offered her its best wishes.

Cleaning Arrangements

Lindsey Matchett, took on the cleaning work until the end of December. She has expressed an interest in taking on the work as per Sheila's hours, should it become available. The committee agreed a 3-month trial (Jan-March). The role is not that of an employee and will be invoiced on a monthly basis.

Centre manager

We made an application to Halifax 40 Invest for funding towards salary of p/t centre manager and are looking also at The Fore and Heritage Lottery funding to further develop this role.

Annual events 2024

Country Night and *Solstice Walk* were not held this year

Art Exhibition and Afternoon Tea – 20th to 22nd September

The combined Art exhibition and Afternoon tea events were held between Friday 20th and Sunday 22nd September. The SRC art group exhibited the work they had created over the previous year. This event opened on Friday night and was very well attended over the weekend. The group donated £80 from sales made. The Afternoon Tea event was well attended again with committee member Fiona Maree making all the baked goods and sandwiches for the event, ably helped by other committee members acting as waiting and kitchen staff. A total of £275 was donated after expenses. Many thanks to everyone who worked so hard and were involved in making the weekend such a success.

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De-stash event pics – 29th June

This year the hall was hired for its first de-stash event. This is not a craft fair but an event where crafters and other like-minded people come together to sell on excess crafting goods and items. AVH set up the small hall as a tea room and made £130. It is planned by the organiser to hold up to 4 events next year.



Rock & Pop Night – 5th October

The Village Hall was once again the venue for the annual Rock and Pop gig night on Saturday 5th October. The audience was entertained by regulars, Dazed and The Renegade Kings as well as 3 acts appearing for the first time. All performers appeared free of charge with takings going to support the Village Hall.

Dazed opened the evening with their blend of 70's classics, such as Baker Street, Starman and Nights in White Satin. Next up were the newcomers Eddie and Connor playing a mixture of old and new material, followed by Liz, who sang a solo of 'Torn' followed by a duet with John of the The Renegade Kings and finally Siobhan who performed two beautiful solo ballads.

Following a very well supported raffle, The Renegade Kings took to the stage to perform hits from the likes of Bruce Springsteen, Queen and many more, as well as a few of their own compositions. (Keep an eye out on social media for their upcoming appearances).

Once again everyone had a great night, a total of £1,000 was raised and hopefully we can do it all over again, same time next year. Huge thanks to everyone concerned.



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Craft Fair – 2nd November

Local woman and artist, Trish Rogers once again hosted the annual Christmas craft fair at the hall. AVH Secretary Pauline and her daughter Katherine and granddaughter Abigail, took a table at the fair and along with sales from their crafts made a donation of £200 to AVH.



Rock Choir NI – 17th November

We held a Rock Choir NI event to raise funds for Dementia NI. We had a full house, a wonderful time and £450 in donations was raised.



Christmas Switch on – 5th December

This was a wonderful event in the hall. After the festive lights were repaired, erected and lit up, we held our annual, free. Community switch-on event, which was attended by The Mayor of Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council, Cllr Kurtis Dickson, who conducted the countdown. Our three partner schools each sang a Christmas song and Toby Pinecone was there to check who was on the naughty or nice list. The hall was full of happy people who were served refreshments by Ruth Macauley and a band of ladies from the committee.



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Santa Visits – 6th & 7th December

Following the switch on event, we held our annual Santa visits. The Paul Green Hall had been transformed for the duration into the Grotto and Waiting Room by many of the committee. Over the Friday evening and Saturday despite Storm Darragh, this also went very well apart from 16 no show families, due to the very bad weather on the Saturday morning. Santa saw 51 families and 114 children including babes in arms. Between choirs on Thursday night and Santa visits we gave out 162 dairy and non-dairy selection boxes and 4 books, leaving 43 selection boxes which we donated to Moira foodbank.

The total raised between the 2 events of £364.93



Activities Programme 2024

The 2024 activities programme was greatly reduced from 2022 + 2023, due to few grants being available. In the first 3 months of 2024 we carried out the workshops and courses displaced by the filming at the hall during the end of 2023, and from April to the end of December we completed the programme for the year. The stats for the reduced 2024 programme:- we held 36 workshops and 11 courses. There were 350+ places available and all places were booked. The programme was funded by grants received in late 2023 from: Halifax Foundation NI and LCCC MAC. We thank both of them most sincerely as without their support we just would not have been able to provide such wonderful opportunities to the community. AVH made up the balance of around £5,000.

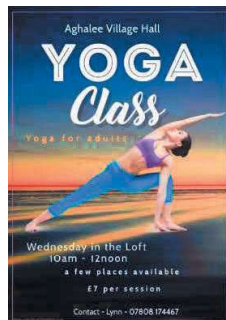


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New activity

We took two new bookings: Adult Yoga – Wednesday 24th April between 10am and 12pm & Child Yoga – Monday 3rd June between 6.30 and 7.30pm (on a 4 week trial basis); these new classes addressed a couple of the findings from the survey. The adult yoga was successful and has continued through the rest for the year, but sadly, the children's and family programmes didn't survive once children returned to school in September.



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Loss of Activity

After 20+ years with Aghalee Village Hall, the Jeanne Cree School of Ballet left the hall at the end of October and moved to Craigmore Church Hall. This was because of their need for additional hours on a Thursday which we were unable to give. We are sorry to see them go, they will be a great loss to us in both income/use of the hall and in bringing people to the hall. We thank Mrs Cree for her use of the hall over the years and wish her well in Craigmore.

Activities Programme 2025 – 2026

In May, we heard we had been awarded a total of £46,822 over 2 years by The National Lottery, People & Communities, for a continuation of the Activities Programme into 2025/26. This was wonderful news and we are deeply indebted to the Lottery for this wonderful award to continue to host the programme in 2025 and 2026. Within the month the hard work of finding tutors and new activities along with the timetabling started! Advertising for term 1 started on 17th November for applications opening on 24th. The public was notified via the usual noticeboards, webpages and social media posts. The Secretary managed this. This year we asked people to pay up front for the activities they were successful in obtaining. We look forward to the activities starting in January 2025. In total there will be 47 workshops and courses over 2025 reaching children, teens, families, SEN and adults and the cost for the whole of 2025 will be approximately £22,000.



Term 1 Activities



Caretaking

This year we continued to require caretaking help required from club reps and we thank them for their help and support:

TUESDAY NIGHT - Taekwondo Club – after class put out tables and chairs for AgeNI on Wed morning.

WEDNESDAY NIGHT - Exercise Class – after class put out against wall 16 tables for Thursday Upholstery.

THURSDAY NIGHT – Either Taekwondo Club or Ballinderry Badminton Club (depending on who is the last group using the hall on a Thursday night) – after class put out and erect 15 tables for SRC use on a Friday morning.

One of the new committee members has very kindly offered to help out with caretaking arrangements and it is hoped this will prove to be suitable and will really help us manage more efficiently and we thank them for their offer of help.

Other Hall Activity – Regular Programme

- AgeNI WEDNESDAYS in the Main Hall – 10.00am – 3.00pm (Over 65) – Contact: Gillian Thompson Manager - Contact: 07733 912 876 Gillian.Thompson@ageni.org
- Aghalee Taekwondo Club TUESDAYS - in the Main Hall – 6.30pm – 8.00pm (Age 7+) THURSDAYS - in the Main Hall – 6.30pm – 8.00pm (Age 7+) Contact: Michael Beacham – 07548 885 114, or email Michaelb5717478@btinternet.com
- AVH Upholstery Classes THURSDAYS mornings – 9.30am – 12.30pm in the Main Hall. Contact: June Acheson 028 9261 9177
- Ballinderry Senior Badminton MONDAY evenings and THURSDAY evenings 8 to late. Contact: Text or call Bobbie Hamill on 07919 123 027 or Derek Blakely on 07791 267 636.

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- Book Club FIRST TUESDAY of each month - In The Loft. Contact: Clare Ward 028 9265 0377
- Needlecraft Group SECOND TUESDAY of each month - In The Loft.
- Southern Regional College - Hobby Art MONDAYS in the Paul Green Hall – 10:15am – 12:15pm. Contact: Jim Cunningham 07711 981 732 or College on 0300 123 1233.
- Southern Regional College - Upholstery Classes FRIDAYS in the Main Hall. 10.00am to 12.00pm and 12.30pm - 14.30pm. Contact: Jim Cunningham 07711 981 732
- Yoga for adults – Tuesday mornings in the Main Hall and Wednesday mornings by arrangement 10.00am to 12.00pm. Contact: Lynn on 07808 174467.

Hire increases

In January we implemented our new hire charges which hadn't been increased since 2015. We made some modest increases and we feel the hire of the hall is still very good value for money. We have 3 rooms to choose from: the main badminton sized hall for larger groups, private parties and hires, the Paul Green hall suitable for classes and/or workshops and the Loft for small groups, such as yoga, smaller clubs etc. We advertised through various methods to encourage further hire of the hall and will continue to do this in 2025.

Legal status

We considered options for AVH legal status as we said we would do this as part of our strategy review. Information was gathered with help from CCNI, NICVA and the consultant about the options available to AVH regarding a review of its status, these being: stay as it is or becoming a company limited by guarantee. This was discussed at length and a unanimous decision was made to stay as we are. We will review again in some years time.



Maintenance

Alley-way – a non-slip surface – we had work carried out on this and complained to the contractor that the surface they put down was not suitable and had lifted off and that AVH was very dissatisfied with the service. An apology and full reimbursement were received.

Main works – March

Major repairs to the rear of the hall were carried out. This work was remedial work to the original 1930s high woodwork along with replacement soffit and fascia at the Paul Green Hall and the rear of the main building. We painted the high areas of the hall and repaired various gutters and spouts. We also put in a rear fire door from the kitchen along with a ramp to service the change in ground height. Other items such as interior painting, replacement of all lights with LED lights and replacement curtains will be completed whenever funds allow. These main repairs to cost a total of £19,998, which we had saved towards over the previous couple of years.



Legionella requirements – water improvements

We also spent time and effort in upgrading our plumbing after a Legionella audit, which showed there was room for improvement. We replaced the tank water storage plumbing with direct main input to designated water heaters for each area meaning there would be constant hot water as and when required and that this would also comply with Legionella requirements. Old doglegs pipes were removed and the whole plumbing system overhauled. One of the committee undertook to carry out the monthly paperwork requirements and checks

Policy Reviews

Our Safeguarding Advisor Carol had reviewed and a draft updated Safeguarding policy and Code of Conduct for discussion and consideration. Committee members were each expected to sign Code of Conduct and also to undertake the training to complete the review of our Safeguarding Policy. Details of suitable training were sent round. We agreed that 2 people would complete training each year and the revised Safeguarding Policy was proposed, seconded and agreed.

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Strategy progress

Pauline has been continuing to work with the consultant on this. We looked at working up an application for some possible funding opportunities (several have been identified) to fund a part-time Centre Manager. We also asked NICVA to review our Constitution (it appeared the AVH Trust document had been amended over the years to become a Constitution on one document and this had been accepted by the Charities Commission as our governing document) and to advise on possible changes/improvements to enable us to remain on track for the future. They are to come back to us with recommendations. We had to consider what 'heritage' with regard to the hall is, as heritage means different things to different people.

We spoke with both Maghaberry and Aghagallon community halls and the findings from these were surprising. We seem to be doing well despite our concerns about the future and both of the other groups are also having difficulties very similar to our own, despite Maghaberry receiving Council grant aid towards 1 full time and 2 part-time employees and Aghagallon receiving grant aid for a part-time admin employee. In both cases the groups had to make up the difference in wages from their letting incomes. We also spoke with Rural Community Network of which we are a member, and they reviewed our Governance, were very impressed, and said we should be congratulated for the way in which we work and manage ourselves. We spoke to local Councillor Claire Kemp, with regard to the Council Community Facilities Audit to see how this might impact on AVH and found that many of the other groups wanted to have a forum for Killultagh area and have a 'borrowing' facility in place whereby all the groups could advise what equipment they held and from which others could borrow. We advised Claire there were insurance implications with this proposal as AVH insurers were not keen for us to 'lend' items off premises as they are then not covered.

Survey - a community survey was carried out Jan/Feb asking what people would like to see happening at the Hall, as well as opinions requested from each group/workshop using the hall.

After reviewing the information gathered, it was felt there weren't many surprises from results of the survey. As usual, we were in equal opinion: doing well/not doing enough, addressing all we were asked/not addressing enough, providing enough activities/not providing enough. We are already addressing many of the items requested, but it was acknowledged that we did need to try and publicise the hall more in the near future to try and attract more regular and other users which would in turn provide more activities and income. Daytime Yoga classes in the Loft were already planned in April for a trial 6 weeks. The main hall remains open for public hire for private parties and activities. The Activity Programme which is based mainly in the PG Hall would finish at the end of May. There were a number of requests for a Men's Shed but there aren't really any suitable rooms in which to house a venture like this as equipment would need to be safely contained, but it is possible a men's group could meet on a regular or drop in basis. Also requested was Youth club at the hall, but without official input from Education Authority it was felt this would be very difficult to achieve. Regarding other, village matters that came out of the survey, they remain: - the state of the towpath, traffic calming on different roads and dog fouling, none of which it was felt we can really do much about. The details of the survey will be added into strategic planning.

Other Work, Events & Activities of AVH in 2024

Aurora – Twice!

Aurora spectacular - We were treated to an amazing light show over Northern Ireland on the night of Friday 11th May and once again on 10th October.

Not usually seen over NI, the lights were visible after some of strongest geomagnetic storms in more than 20 years hit the earth. The most active conditions tend to occur at the maximum of and 11 year solar cycle, and it was expected to be possible to see the lights for a few days after this, depending on cloud cover and pollution.

The lights appear as bright swirling sheets or curtains of light in the night sky and can range in colour from green through to pink, purple and red. They are caused by charged particles from the storms in the sun hitting gases in the earth's atmosphere. The different colours occur due to different gases being energised by the charged particles. The most common gases affected are nitrogen and oxygen. Oxygen glows green and nitrogen varies pink, purple and blue. Oxygen at higher levels glows red. While these can be seen by the naked eye, they aren't often seen to their full beauty until captured by either camera or phone, which see more than the human eyes. The most impressive auroras occur when the sun emits very large clouds of particles during a solar storm, called 'coronal mass ejections'.

Aghalee Village Hall TRUSTEES' REPORT

for the financial year ended 31 December 2024



Bank – The Bank changed banking arrangements when it closed in Lurgan. The next nearest branch is in Portadown and the only alternative is to use the Post Office to lodge cash and cheques. In 2024 a PIN number with debit cash lodgement cards was required to make cash lodgements. We had to write asking for new cards and PIN numbers to be sent out. Paperwork T&Cs for these cards was approved and accepted by the committee with Pauline Buller being the named person to lodge on behalf of the organisation.

Blueways – We were contacted by Joe Nelson of Aghagallon Community Group about possible funding opportunity/developments for Greenways and Blueways through both council areas. We had talked in the past about the possibility of connecting our respective villages by reopening the towpath from Aghalee to Aghagallon. ABC Council is still committed to their preferred Greenway investment being Aghalee to Portadown. Aligned with the Greeways are the Blueways, **which** are a brand-new outdoor recreation offering, currently unique to **Ireland**. They encourage the use of lakes, canals, rivers and coastal environments for walking, cycling, swimming, kayaking, stand up paddle boarding while engaging with nature and heritage. The Waterways Community is lobbying for this locally with Aghagallon Community Centre. We agreed that AVH would support the venture and committee member Kerry Quinn had agreed to be our representative; she will contact Joe and advise about our situation, and confirm our agreement to support the venture.

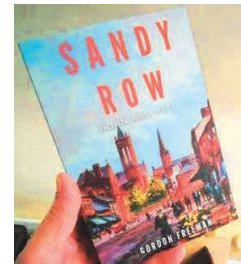
Book

A message came in about a new book that would be of great historical interest to the people of Aghalee and Soldierstown – the memoirs of a young boy from Sandy Row in Belfast evacuated to Aghalee during World War II. It must have felt as though he was hundreds of miles from home - yet it's a journey many make now on a daily basis to go to work. While the book is only in part about his time in Aghalee, the story as a whole will be a fascinating one to many.

"Aghalee and Soldierstown residents will find a new book fascinating.

The title is 'Sandy Row Born and Bred' by the late Gordon Freeman who devoted a whole chapter to his experiences in the Aghalee area when he was evacuated there as a child from Sandy Row, Belfast during World War II. The chapter is entitled, 'The Farmer's Boy' which he certainly was

not, and perhaps he would never have survived the country but for the close friendship he struck up with Teddy Dugan. They were both pupils at Soldierstown School. The book tells of the adventures they had together. I understand Teddy is no longer with us; not sure when he died. It would be interesting to know if any of the families mentioned have still family connections with the area. It would also be interesting to know if some of the place names mentioned in the book are still used today. For example, would anyone today know the whereabouts of McKinstry's Hill? The book will make a very important inclusion in the local history of the Aghalee and Soldierstown area. The book is not for profit and any proceeds after the cost of producing the book, will go into community work in the greater Sandy Row area in Belfast. The paperback book can be purchased through Amazon. There is also a Kindle edition."



Bus Shelters

After several years of asking Translink for bus shelters in the village, they finally admitted they had 'misplaced' our application. MLA David Honeyford contacted them on our behalf and championed our cause again. The result of this is that, after asking for 4 shelters we are to get 1, this on Ballycairn Road, for the bus going into Lisburn, as Translink say this is the busiest stop.

Chip Shop Planter

We are indebted to Christine Lynn, from Down to Earth Gardening for continuing to sort out and replant this container every season. It's lovely to have this sort of job carried out by a local business on a voluntary basis

Aghalee Village Hall TRUSTEES' REPORT

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Community Transport

We met with Richard Dougherty, manager of Lagan Valley Rural Transport, which now includes Aghalee in its area. Registration with LVRT means those of us in the Aghalee rural area within Lagan Valley electoral area, with little or no access to public transport or those who have disabilities, can avail of a booking system for trips into Lisburn and all points East. This service will prove to be a real boon to our community.



Deaths in the community

There were a number of deaths affecting committee members plus a large number of deaths in the local community 2024 and we offer our sincere condolences to those who have been bereaved.

Committee related deaths included:

Nat Skelton – 7th February, father of committee member Anne Miskelly.

Matt McFarland - 5th July, father of committee member Pat McAdams.

Rita Blakely – 6th July, mother of committee member Derek Blakely. Rita was involved in the work of Aghalee Village Hall and helped to run Aghalee Tiny Tots Playgroup in the 1980s. There are many children from the village who will fondly remember being looked after by Rita.

Maureen Taylor & Ernie Taylor – 22nd June & 23rd September, both former badminton players who spent many happy hours at the hall. Maureen was also a former Village Hall committee member 1978-1985.

Gwen Johnston & George Johnston – 4th May & 27th September – George was a former Secretary of AVH for 10 years 1985 – 1994. Sadly predeceased by his wife Gwen in May. George & Gwen moved to Aghalee in or around 1979 and took a great interest in matters going on in the village. They both became involved in various ways in the work of the hall. On retirement from business, George was able to spend much more of his time involved with Aghalee Village Hall and during his tenure as Secretary, was instrumental in the great refurbishment of 1985/86. After his retirement from the hall committee, George was often consulted about matters relating and gave of his immense knowledge so willingly to those seeking his help. As recently as a week before his death the current Secretary called in with him to chew over a problem that needed a fresh perspective and some sage advice, which was given in a measured and carefully considered way as always, and more to the point, was so very appropriate.

Kathleen Searson – 20th October, mother of Seamus Searson volunteer and mother in law of committee member Fiona Maree

Roly Lyons – 9th December - Roly was a committee member and representative of Aghalee Badminton Club in 1987 and again from 1993 to 1996. He was a great mentor for young players just learning the game and always great craic at the same time. He especially enjoyed the 'round robin' nights when young and old pitched in playing against each other.

Festive Lighting

In early 2023 AVH had agreed to fund the infrastructure to a refurbished Dfl lighting column at Coronation Gardens, to enable our festive lighting to be displayed there at Christmas. Since then several other Dfl columns have either become faulty or had infrastructures removed for one reason or another. In December '24 Chris repaired the festive lights and had arranged for these to be put up on the working columns with help from Nigel Grant and Frank McGrady. Electrical contractor Stephen Magee Electrical supervised as per Dfl/NIE licence requirements, but it transpired several columns didn't work.

AVH continued to petition Dfl as to why we should be expected to fund the replacement or repair when it has largely been through the actions of Dfl that these no longer worked. The result in late December 2024 was that Dfl agreed to repair/reinstate a number of columns to enable the festive lighting to be properly restored from 2025.

Fire Officer

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for the financial year ended 31 December 2024

We needed someone new to undertake training for the Legionella requirements and Scan Alarm Fire checking requirements and carry out the monthly safety checks at the hall.

Also, fire evacuation checks will need to be undertaken by each user group at least once per year and records kept. It is expected each group representative will carry this out. Anne Miskelly agreed to undertake training as Fire Officer and John Harris agreed to be Deputy.



Football changing facility

The Council plans for a replacement changing facility at the playing fields are now approved and although there is as yet no date to start building, the demolition of the old facility will be a huge improvement to the playing field.

Noted that there is no public toilet in the Village and AVH has asked whether one would be included as part of this development.

Fly tipping and litter

We have highlighted episodes of fly tipping around the area to try and discourage this and other littering. On different roads in the district, in both council areas, items such as fridges, lorry loads of tyres and black plastic bags of rubbish have been dumped. Both councils have responded to remove the items. There are number of local people who regularly collect litter from the sides of the roads and we thank them and their efforts to keep our community cleaner.



Gold lamé - Filming legacy

The gold lamé backdrop to the stage left by CBBC crew in 2023 has proved to be a big hit with all our users and those who perform on the stage. It certainly adds to the sense of entertainment at the hall.



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for the financial year ended 31 December 2024

Over the year we advertised lost or found pets on our social media page and had reports of at least 16 dogs, 14 cats and 5 cattle! We also had a report of sheep tangled up in barbed wire. In the main everyone was happily reunited. We were also asked continuously over the year about permission to advertise on our social media page. We don't advertise on this page but responding to demand, we opened a new page, **Aghalee Notice Board** for people to freely post items of interest.

Men's Group

After a post to gauge interest, one of our committee, Ian Christie suggested a cohort of those interested could arrange to meet to discuss what might be possible to organise. He agreed to convene a meeting in the Loft early in 2025 to see how this might develop.

Moira Station

The plans for the new arrangement at Moira train station were finally approved and it is expected work will start in Spring 2025 to provide an additional 466 parking spaces, 23 disabled spaces, secure cycle parking and related supporting structures, allowing improved links to Belfast and other towns and cities. Work is to be completed by the end of 2026. There is still considerable disappointment about the continuing very poor egress on to the A26, safe pedestrian access over the A26 from Maghaberry direction, nor for additional lighting on the approach roads, but local politicians continue to petition on behalf of the community.



Seats and path at Wildflower meadow

One of our committee, Stephen Bann, worked with the Council to improve the seating and install a path at the wildflower meadow area in the village. By June the work was completed and it looks very well, with seasonal planters installed in front of the seating area.

Thank-you meal 2024

We met in The Gate Inn on Friday 31st May 2024 for our 'thank you' meal for all our regular volunteers over the year. This went very well with 23 people attending and having a super meal and the best of craic.

Traffic Calming/update

Money for this was to have come from Small Villages Scheme but due to all the restrictions we were unsure when the work would finally be carried out. Work started on 19th March and was expected to last 4 weeks. We approached the Council about the roses which were removed from the beds opposite the hall to facilitate the works as the contractor advised these had been dug up and discarded. By June the work was completed. In October the roses were replanted. There have been a great number of complaints about people driving down the centre of the humps and misusing the measures put in place and we have directed complainants to DfI directly. Planning is now being sought for speed ramps on part of the Soldierstown Road at the housing to slow traffic as it enters the village from there. There is no date yet for these works to commence.



Aghalee Village Hall TRUSTEES' REPORT

for the financial year ended 31 December 2024



Soldierstown Road Improvements

Volunteers - thanks

Very many thanks to all the volunteers and helpers who have helped out in any way over the past 12 months. There are those who have: set out tables and equipment, put this all away again, looked after bookings, collected subs and ticked off names at workshops, washed dishes, served food, given of their time to fundraise, sell ballot tickets, do the H&S paperwork, sort the accounts, become elves and other Christmas VIPS, and make the hall what it has been over 2024. Thank you all – without you the Village Hall would not be able to continue its work.

Youth worker – Aghalee

There continues to be no dedicated youth worker for the young people in the community. The Education Authority have been unable to attract anyone suitable to the post, despite advertising a few times. We will continue to work with the EA to try and find some provision for our youth.

Wildlife

We are all very fortunate to have such a beautiful area of the world in which to live. Our social media pages are full of pictures of the life that goes on around us.



Credit – Lindsay Clarke



Credit – Bob McGlade

Aghalee Village Hall
TRUSTEES' REPORT
for the financial year ended 31 December 2024



Credit – Abigail Lloyd



Credit – Pauline Buller

Future - Planning for 2025

The future for Aghalee Village Hall is secure for the short term. There are funds in the bank from various activities, our major Activities Programme is catered for over 2025/26 and we have the staff to achieve what we need to. For the medium term, we need to consolidate our position, bring in more regular users to the hall, expand our activities and above all, find the resources to employ a part-time centre manager to relieve some of the pressures on a few dedicated individuals. For the longer term, we will meet and discuss options with the appropriate agencies and advisors and by the end of 2025, should hopefully be in a position to identify our strategy for the long term future of the hall within the community.

Compliance with Sector-Wide Legislation and Standards

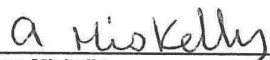
The company engages pro-actively with legislation, standards and codes which are developed for the sector. Aghalee Village Hall subscribes to and is compliant with the following:

- The Charities SORP (FRS 102)

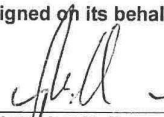
Public Benefit

The charity has given careful consideration to the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland's guidance on public benefit to ensure that the activities entered into during the year have helped to achieve the Charity's objectives and activities, as well as providing public benefit.

Approved by the Board of Trustees on 19 March 2025 and signed on its behalf by:



Anne Miskelly
Trustee



Christopher Buller
Trustee

Aghalee Village Hall
STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES
for the financial year ended 31 December 2024

The trustees are responsible for preparing the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and regulations.

The law applicable to charities in Northern Ireland requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the assets, liabilities and financial position of the company as at the financial year end date and of the surplus or deficit of the company and otherwise comply with the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008.

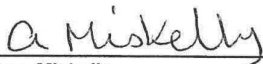
In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP
- make judgements and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether the financial statements have been prepared in accordance with applicable accounting standards, identify those standards, and note the effect and the reasons for any material departure from those standards; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the company will continue in operation.


The trustees confirm that they have complied with the above requirements in preparing the financial statements.

The trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the company's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Approved by the Board of Trustees on 19 March 2025 and signed on its behalf by:



Anne Miskelly
Trustee



Christopher Buller
Trustee