

February 2026

Aboyne and Mid-Deeside Community Shed (also known as Aboyne & District Men's Shed) is a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation, SCO47036

Address:- Aboyne and Mid-Deeside Community Shed, Cemetery Road, Aboyne, AB34 5DZ

The tenth Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Charity will be held in the Shed on 28th February and is scheduled to:-

1. Approve the minutes of the ninth AGM, held on 22 February, 2025.
2. Present the Chairman's and Treasurer's reports.
3. Hold the elections/re-elections necessary to ensure all officer positions remain filled, as required by the Constitution.
4. Hold and necessary elections/re-elections of trustees as required by the Constitution.
5. Approve the accounts for the period.
6. Address any questions and issues arising.

The following report covers assorted activities of the Charity since the last AGM was held on 22 February, 2025.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Board Changes: – Phil Lay and Mike Brooks stood down as Trustees. Derek Shaw and Alan Smith were elected as Trustees taking the Board to its full complement of twelve trustees. Alan Smith was elected to the office of Treasurer vacated by Phil Lay.

The Board met once per month throughout the year.

Activities: -

- Nineteen different groups regularly rented the studio or social area with a slight increase in rental income to £15,432 from £14,885 in 2024, despite rental rates remaining unchanged. Footfall increased 4% from 2024 to 488 persons/month. The workshop continued with its opening times of Tuesday afternoons, Thursday afternoons and Saturday mornings.
- Several of our long-standing user groups (e.g., Chanters, TuttiFrutti Yoga, Ready Steady Aboyne, Emma Stewart Pilates) retired or moved on during the year but fortunately, their hours have been replaced by new users (e.g., Young at Heart Deeside, Marjie Millum Pilates, Suzanne Collins Pilates, Velotech Bicycle maintenance, John Turley 1st Aid).
- The “fly-cup” group that meets on Thursday mornings in the workshop remains in robust health. Typically, 20+ men attend to enjoy a cup of tea or coffee, a warm buttery and banter in front of a warm log fire. Several report that this opportunity for weekly interaction has a very positive impact on the quality of their lives. Miscellaneous activities of the group included a First Aid presentation, a basic cooking demonstration in the shed's kitchen, a presentation on energy saving and a presentation on oral hygiene. There were also trips to the Cooperage at Craigellachie

and the Garioch Indoor Bowling Centre with transport funded by the £2000 grant that had been received late in 2024.

- In August all listed members were asked to confirm that they wished to remain as members. The trustees were aware that a significant number were no longer interested in being involved, or were unable to be involved for a variety of reasons and that in accordance with GDPR, we should not be holding their data. This clean-up exercise took longer than anticipated but is now complete. Our list of ??? members only includes names who have confirmed their interest.
- The Shed continues to benefit greatly from donations it receives and has received in the past from members and other benefactors. For example, the repair, marketing and sale of various donated assets, by one of our energetic, commercially savvy members, has raised £7,532 and the raffle of bottles from our stand at the Aboyne Highland Games raised £1,417. We also receive donations from members of the community in appreciation of the repairs we have done for them.
- We were fortunate this year to be adopted by a small group of pupils from Lathallan School who adopted us as their charity for their participation in the Youth Philanthropy Initiative. Their activities raised £812 which we used to fund the renovation of garden furniture at Aboyne Hospital.
- Throughout the year, the active members in the workshop have made a number of improvements and purchases of new equipment, e.g., a new bobbin sander and office printer. Regulatory changes required the replacement of our foam fire-extinguishers.
- The benefit of the re-configuration work that we made to the solar PV panels in 2024 became apparent this year. We were able to take advantage of an exceptionally sunny summer and received feed-in tariff payments of £1,056 compared with the payments in 2024 of £378.
- Our mutually beneficial relationship with the Mid Deeside Community Trust continues. The office is staffed on weekday mornings.
- Our relationship with King's Trust Youth Development Programme (funded by Aberdeenshire Council and managed by Horseback UK) has continued. Two cohorts have been hosted during the year. This programme gives work/life skills to young people (16-25) who are not in education, employment or training.
- We were pleased to renew our insurance with the same cover and company as previously for a premium of £1,540 vs. £1,886 in 2024. Also, the potential liability of £1,316 for water and sewerage services at the Golf Road premises that we faced were satisfactorily resolved with Wave Utilities accepting our argument that we should have qualified for charitable exemption and withdrawing their bill.
- The Shed participated in the Aboyne Highland Games on 2nd August. We renewed our membership in the Scottish Men's Shed Association and representatives attended two regional networking events. We also renewed our membership of Age Scotland to 2028.

Reserves, Potential Liabilities & Possible Uses:-

The combination of our building's low running costs and the exceptional receipts discussed above has resulted in the charity currently holding cash in excess of its policy for operational reserves. This reserves policy was originally set in 2024 at 1-2 years operational outgoings of about £12,000 but the trustees now believe that a higher number to include potential future expenditures, e.g., roof repair and studio heating upgrade, but also the regular replacement of worn, used equipment, is more appropriate. This number has not yet been determined but it is expected that our available cash will still significantly exceed this new reserve number and could, in the right circumstances, be used to support other groups in the community whose aims are aligned with ours. As a reminder, our aims are to:-

- Combat rural isolation, loneliness and promote good mental health.
- Provide a creative space to make and repair things.
- Enable the teaching and acquisition of practical skills.
- Provide a comfortable space to relax and meet people in a truly community space.

It was in recognition of this position that the trustees decided donate £1000 to the Mid Deeside Day Centre (aka the Wednesday Lunch Club) which has recently suffered a cut in their principal source of funding. If members make us aware of a need, the trustees will consider support for other community groups providing they are locally based and have aims that align with ours.

Undoubtedly, the Shed has become a well known, valued part of our local community. Building on its reputation as a bright, comfortable, competitively priced community space, the awareness and use of the facility has grown steadily. That said, we still have capacity for further use of the workshop, studio, social area and kitchen and the trustees continue to encourage new users.

However, we must recognise that the key ingredient of our success has been and remains the enthusiasm and willingness of our active members to give their time and expertise. We have no employees and are completely dependent on volunteers who are only involved because for a myriad of different reasons, they want to be. And yet, we often rely on their contribution beyond their particular interests. What can be described as "janitorial" duties or dealing with customers' issues are probably not what drew them to shed in the first place but nonetheless are essential for the smooth running of the Community Shed. Our most significant challenge is to renew and sustain this willingness into future generations.

That is a tough challenge and one that that will never be completely solved but in the meantime, I would like to express my sincere appreciation and thanks to all those that have contributed to our success over the past year. My fellow trustees just get on with things and make stuff happen as well as satisfying the formalities of running a charity such as ours. I give specific mention to our two retiring trustees, Ken Paterson and Rab Birnie. Every time we warm ourselves in front of the log-burning stove we appreciate K & I Paterson's generous donation to the workshop and as well as serving as secretary over recent years Rab has provided pro bono cleaning services since it became operational, helping to maintain the building's excellent reputation with our user groups.

I express my sincere thanks to the Trustees and all of our active members.