



LOCAL INITIATIVES IN NEW GALLOWAY

ANNUAL REPORT, APRIL 2025 - MARCH 2026



CHAIR'S MESSAGE

Guy Benson



As a newcomer to the Glenkens, I remain extremely humble that I was asked to take on the role of Chair LING. I and indeed the board have had a very hard act to follow on from our previous post holders, who created a strong centre of gravity and the conditions for success, for which I offer my sincere thanks.

On behalf of the LING board of trustees, our staff and indeed our volunteers, I am delighted that we continue to serve all our community. I wanted to re-emphasise that the board appreciates the support and the 'can-do' attitude from each and every one of you. This has been another hugely busy year for LING and without us all pulling together it would not have been possible – thank you.

The needs of our communities, whether they are economic, social or environmental, require collective action and innovative solutions. A strong partnership between local government, friends, other funders, charities, and voluntary and community organisations is an essential element of delivering on our LING mission; maintaining and improving public spaces and facilities, providing recreational activities for all and preserving historic or architecturally significant buildings (like our Town Hall).

The connections between these groups, our local community and the individuals that live in them are key to targeting support where it is most needed. While we may not be able to control and influence what happens in a more dangerous world now, we can absolutely influence, drive change and provide benefits for our community.

Finally, the LING board, staff and our volunteers will continue to work collaboratively to deliver impactful, sustainable outcomes which meet the needs of our community. I hope that during my time as Chair LING, we will continue to make significant progress towards achieving our mission. However, this is not something that I can do alone, so I look forward to working with you to make it a reality. By working together, we can maximise our impact and achieve more than the sum of our parts.

OUR MISSION:

- ★ maintaining and improving **public spaces and facilities**
- ★ providing **recreational activities** for all
- ★ preserving **historic or architecturally significant buildings**, like New Galloway Town Hall



WHAT OUR MEMBERS SAID

96%

of those surveyed
said LING's presence
has improved their
wellbeing

80%

Improved Sense
of Community

49%

Gave a purpose

53%

Reported an improvement
in Mental Wellbeing

88%

Improvement in
social connection

53%

Learned a new skill

49%

Improved their
physical
wellbeing

OUR YEAR IN NUMBERS

843

Community
Café footfall

542

Hubbub footfall
(From July 2025)

1

tonne of surplus stock
donated by the Co-Op
(from October 2025)

60 +

Volunteers gave up there
time to help LING

423

Larder Meals delivered
(from January 2026)

295

dishes in the
Community
Larder freezer

WET FELTING

written by **Ginny Shipway**

The felting group, known as Galloway Feltmakers, started in mid-2025. Most of the group had little or no previous experience of felting, but they have taken to it with enthusiasm and we now have 12 members with a regular weekly attendance of about 8 people.

The group worked together to produce a felted banner for Remembrance Day (right) which was exhibited at the CatStrand, the Town Hall, and St Margaret's Church.

The group was also instrumental in arranging and running a very successful Craft Fair event in November - and will be doing so again this October!



Competition
winners
David and
Christine



SPORTS EVENING

written by **Ray Bridgeman**

Sports night continued in the Town Hall on Tuesday evenings, and has been well-established over many years. Indoor carpet bowling is well-supported and enjoyed by a regular group of players of all ages and abilities.

Competition takes place in a generally light-hearted manner and players benefit both socially and from a little light exercise. Table tennis is available upstairs and we would welcome any potential players to come along!

HISTORY GROUP

written by **Avril Bridgeman**

All are welcome to join our quest of researching such things as the origins of the shields on the ceiling of the Upper Hall or who were significant people in New Galloway's past such as our own CARSON and WYLIE .

A great deal of research went into our recent Shop Front Walk identifying the many previous businesses that once graced our High Street.

After a short summer break we are planning a visit to Kells Churchyard in September to explore the many interesting headstones it holds.



EVENTS

Variety is what was on offer with this year's events! Movers and shakers shared an evening of jazz with Jonnie Dowswell's

band, and the annual Hogmanay Ceilidh.

Foodies enjoyed Cheese and Wine during Glenkens Food Month and curry back in March.

We shared skills at our Knife Sharpening session, CPR and AED training, and during the plethora of events at the Community Garden.

Then there were our community events such as our Litter Pick (with the Community Council), and hosting the inaugural event of the so-called 'NG12'.

And of course Christmas saw our seasonal mainstays - the Lights On Walk Down and the Senior Citizens

Christmas Lunch!

This year has been marked by more collaboration with other local organisations, and by increased volunteer involvement. Volunteers have led training sessions, played music, and even organised entire events themselves, including the Craft Fair, Hogmanay Ceilidh, and 150th Anniversary Gala Ball - no mean feat!

This means our community gets to play a direct role in shaping LING as an organisation, as well as contributing significantly towards keeping New Galloway vibrant and active.

So to everyone who has attended, helped at, or organised our events in any capacity: **THANK YOU!**





MEN'S MONDAY MORNING COFFEE

The Romans had their convivium, the Greeks their symposium, and the men of New Galloway have a coffee morning every Monday in the Lower Hall.

Bob Glaister, group facilitator, writes: 'This year we have had some talks – on finance for seniors, prostate issues, wills and power of attorney – and some outings for lunch, and to the Devil's Porridge Museum, a distillery and the Dumfries Aviation Museum.'

COMMUNITY CAFÉ

Volunteers keep the Community Café going, cooking delicious main courses, serving tables with a smile, and diligently doing the washing up...

We've had a wide variety of food on offer and visitors dropping by from near and far. All of them comment on the friendly, welcoming atmosphere provided by both our volunteers and our punters!



THE HUB

This year has been one of great change for The Hub, including the change of name from Hubbub.

Vanessa and Julie Garner are the dynamic duo who keep the show on the road, turning donated Co-Op produce into meals and puddings in an effort to help reduce food waste.

We also started hosting external organisations to offer extra support and better access to services for our community.



OUTDOOR WORK written by **David Hardy**

The Footpath Maintenance Group is made up of eight active members. Following several major storms in 2025/26, the team played a vital role in keeping local paths safe and accessible by clearing fallen branches and trees.

In addition to routine path maintenance and an ongoing programme to improve signage, members completed several key projects, helping to restore and rebuild boardwalks and bridges in the Golf Club Woods and on the Garroch Estate.





FACILITIES

The Town Hall has received several upgrades since our last AGM thanks mainly to our Facilities Group - Andrew Frew, Glynnie Shackleton and Larry Winger - who work tirelessly to ensure the building is functional and meets the needs of our community.

Whether it's adding a screen to the kitchen window, designing storage units, sourcing stage lighting, or fitting fridges, the list is endless and ranges from large scale projects to odd jobs. We're exceedingly grateful to the volunteers who roll up their sleeves and get things done!

image:

1 commercial fridge in kitchen **2** stage lights installed in upper hall **3** time capsule plaque mounted on cupboard under stairs **4** blackboard up in lower hall **5** storage unit for lower hall **6** sofas donated to hall by the Davis family **7** blinds installed in both halls and back stairway **8** door stops made for the lift

INCOME

£127,011.29 total

Glenkens District Trust
12.6%



LING Projects
13.2%

Garfield Weston Grant
11.8%

Donations
7.3%

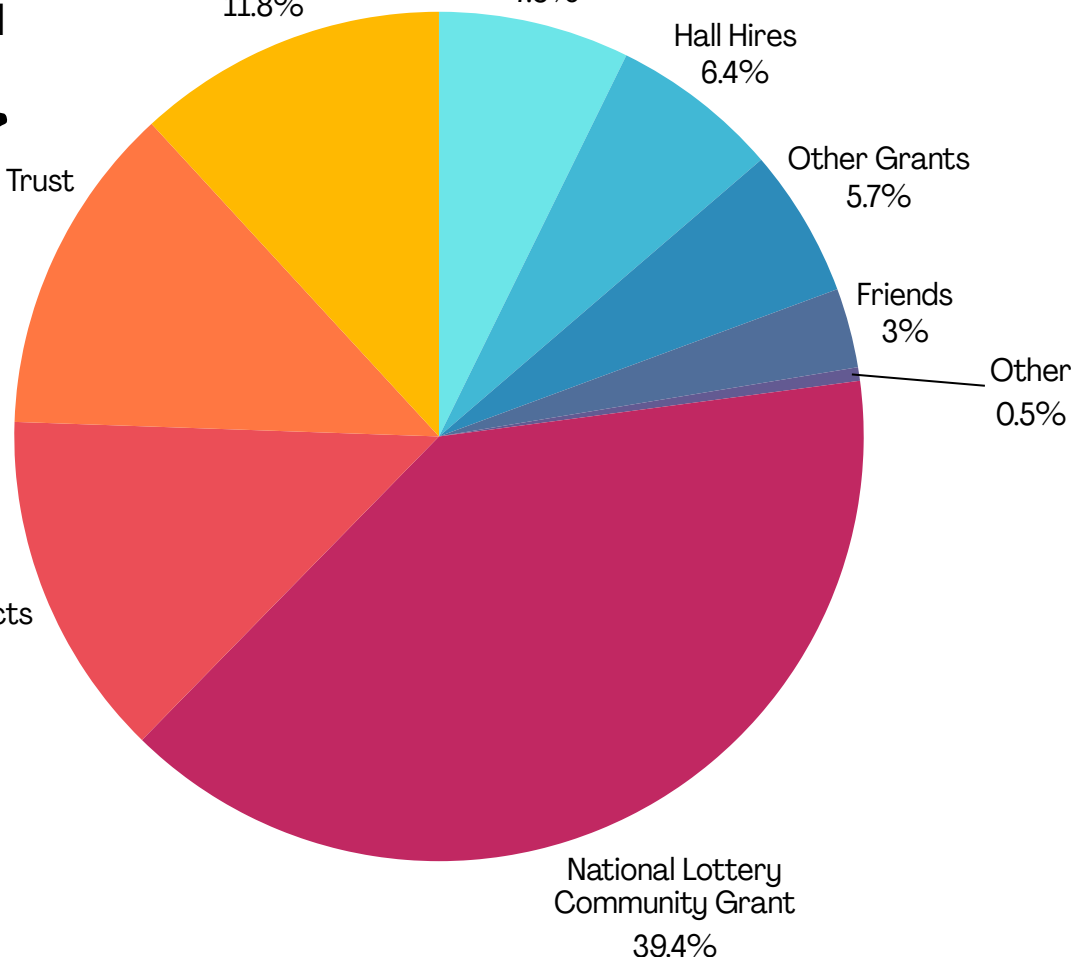
Hall Hires
6.4%

Other Grants
5.7%

Friends
3%

Other
0.5%

National Lottery
Community Grant
39.4%

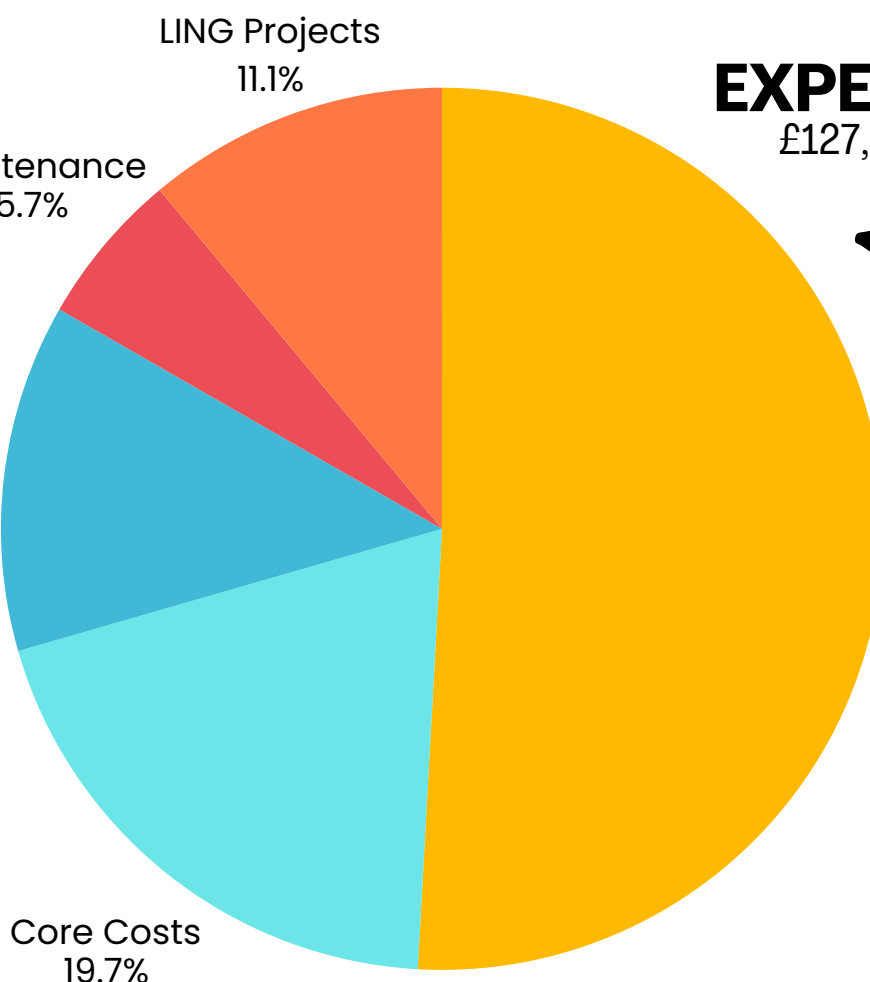


EXPENDITURE

£127,447.94 total



Staff
50.9%



NATIONAL LOTTERY COMMUNITY FUND

*Space for everyone: creating a community health
and wellbeing hub*

CO-OP CASTLE DOUGLAS

*Contribution to fridge and continued support of Community
Larder*

DRAX

New Galloway and Kells Senior Citizens Christmas Lunch

DUMFRIES AND GALLOWAY COUNCIL:
DISCRETIONARY FUND

150th Anniversary Gala Ball

DUMFRIES AND GALLOWAY COUNCIL:
POVERTY AND INEQUALITIES FUND

Community Larder expansion project

GALLOWAY ASSOCIATION OF GLASGOW

New Galloway History Project - book

GARFIELD WESTON

*Space for everyone: creating a community health
and wellbeing hub*

GLENKENS AND DISTRICT TRUST

*New Galloway play park upgrades, support for The Hub, and support for
Community Larder*

NEW GALLOWAY AND KELS COMMUNITY COUNCIL

*150th Anniversary Gala Ball and New Galloway and Kells Senior
Citizens Christmas Lunch*

