Mearns Minibus Link

Scottish Charity No. SC049513

Annual Report and Financial Statements

for the year ended 31 July 2026

Trustees' Annual Report

For the year ended 31 July 2026

The Trustees have pleasure in presenting their report together with the financial statements for the year ended 31 July 2026.

Reference and Administrative Information

Charity name
Mearns Minibus Link

Charity no.
SC049513

Address
The Venue
84 High Street
Laurencekirk
AB30 1BJ

Current Trustees

Sheila Aitken	
Shelagh Richardson	Secretary/Treasurer
Allan Smith	Chair
Sharon Vaughan	
Stuart Vaughan	

Structure, Governance and Management

Constitution

The Charity is a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (a SCIO). It was registered in its current legal form on 01 August 2019. It has a single tier structure and as such the Trustees are the Members of the charity.

Appointment of Trustees

The activities of the organisation are controlled by the Management Committee that meets on a regular basis. Members of the Management Committee are referred to as the charity's Trustees. Membership of the Management Committee is open to anyone over the age of eighteen years, irrespective of gender, race or creed, living or working in the Mearns area. Each member can serve for no more than three years before offering themselves for re-election. There must be a minimum of five and a maximum of ten trustees.

Objectives and Activities

Charitable purposes

Firstly, to provide a recreational facility, with the object of improving the conditions of life for the persons for whom the facilities or activities are primarily intended. This will be achieved by the provision and maintenance of a reliable community minibus which will counter the disadvantages of rural isolation in the Mearns area.

Secondly, to advance the relief of those in need by reason of age, ill-health, disability, financial hardship or other disadvantage by providing them with the means to access a range of facilities and opportunities that would otherwise be inaccessible to them.

Activities

The community minibus continues to be well used within the area. Groups such as the Mearns Walking Group, the Pensioners' Lunch Club, and the Senior Citizens' Club are regular hirers while many groups make use of the minibus as and when required (eg. the Scouts, the local Heritage Group, Mearns & Coastal Healthy Living Network, St Cyrus Friendship Group, etc).

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In August 2025, we again provided a day-long shuttle service for people attending the Johnshaven Fish Festival – and it proved to be a very busy day for the volunteer driver. It once more gave us the opportunity to show off the minibus to local individuals and groups based on the coast who might have had no prior knowledge of the service we provide.

We have also transported several wheelchair-using clients to and from medical appointments or between care homes. We continue to have a good working relationship with Mearns & Coastal Healthy Living Network and if they are unable to respond to a transport request due to client mobility issues, we are able to assist with our wheelchair-accessible vehicle.



In August 2025, we manned a stall at the local Laurencekirk Gala Day. As well as having fun with the usual competitions and games, this gave members of the local community an opportunity to get onboard the minibus and have a look around - to get information and to ask any questions on hiring conditions and costs etc.

Achievements and Performance

Our original aim was to provide and operate a reliable community minibus service, as all the Trustees believe that such a vehicle is vital in local communities, especially those located in rural areas. We feel that we are achieving our aims by the positive feedback we are receiving from local people and community groups. Having a small bank of reliable, willing and helpful drivers goes a long way in helping us maintain a high standard of performance.

As well as hiring the minibus out to community groups, we have been able to reach people who would otherwise be unable to get out and about and those who live alone and are lacking any social interaction. For example, we have been hired by two sheltered housing associations in Laurencekirk and Stonehaven to take residents on days out and the feedback from participants has been heartwarming.

Financial review

As can be seen from the financial statements below, we have generated income of £9,865 from hires and MiDAS training and £5,370 in grants and donations. Our reserve account still stands at £22,500. with an annual surplus this year of £5,712.

We currently have £2,023 of restricted funding which is specifically to go towards a new minibus, when the time comes. We continue to use the ordinary community business account for day-to-day running expenses.

Due to ever increasing running costs, we reluctantly had to increase mileage charges to £1.40/mile at the start of 2026 with a minimum hire charge of £22. The income from hires is therefore higher than last year, and we hope this trend can be maintained in the near future, without the need to inflict a further increase. In April this year, we were fortunate to be awarded a grant of £5,000 from the Tullo & Twinshiels Windfarm Community Fund to go towards the day-to-day running costs of the minibus. This has been a great help in offsetting the continual rising prices.

Reserves policy

The Trustees of Mearns Minibus Link are keen to ensure that the current community minibus is replaced when it becomes uneconomical to run. We currently have £22,500 in a separate account and, while only £2,023 of this is restricted, we do intend that all of this will go towards the cost of a vehicle upgrade when the time comes.

Plans for future

We are hopeful that usage of our community minibus will continue to increase as time goes on and as ever more local people become aware of the services we have to offer.

We took ownership of the minibus in November 2020, so are aware that we should be looking to change/upgrade the vehicle in the not too distant future. We have to firstly decide whether or not to go for an electric vehicle or to stay with the diesel option.

While we have a good bank of volunteer drivers, we are always on the look-out for more. We continue to offer MiDAS assessments (Minibus Driver Awareness Scheme) as our Chair is a qualified MiDAS Assessor.

Approved by the Trustees on 7 October 2026 and signed on their behalf by:

Shelagh R Richardson

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Trustee - signed Trustee - printed

Statement of Receipts and Payments for the year ended 31 July 2026

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Year ended 31.07.26 £	Year ended 31.07.25 £
Receipts				
Hires	8,170	-	8,170	6,096
Grants	5,000	-	5,000	-
Donations	370	-	370	3,847
Insurance Excess	-	-	-	500
MiDAS Training	1,695	-	1,695	600
Total Receipts	**15,235**	**-**	**15,235**	**8,043**
Payments				
Charitable activities costs				
Staffing	2,220	-	2,220	1,830
Permits/licences (ICO/Section 19)	58	-	58	47
Laptop expenses	16	-	16	39
Advertising (graphics renewal)	170	-	170	256
Stationery	80	-	80	79
Petty cash	-	-	-	-
Misc.	40	-	40	68
Mystery Tour expend.	-	-	-	279
MiDAS Training costs	1,622	-	1,622	620
Vehicle running costs				
Insurance	1,913	-	1,913	2,100
Diesel	1,721	-	1,721	1,427
Road tax	360	-	360	345
Repairs/new wipers/keybox	79	-	79	2,891
Maintenance/MOT/Service	1,246	-	1,246	795
Total Payments	**9,525**	**-**	**9,525**	**10,776**
Surplus/(Deficit) for the year	**5,712**	**-**	**5,712**	**(2,733)**

Statement of Balances - as at 31 July 2026

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Year ended 31.07.26 £	Year ended 31.07.25 £
Opening cash at bank and in hand	21,471	2,023	23,494	26,227
Surplus/(Deficit) for the year	5,712	-	5,712	(2,733)
Closing cash at bank and in hand	27,184	2,023	29,207	23,494
Bank and Cash Balances				
RBS Charity Accounts (2)	27,184	2,023	29,207	23,494
	21,471	2,023	**29,207**	23,494

Approved by the Trustees on 7 October 2026 and signed on their behalf by:

Shelagh R Richardson

..... Shelagh R Richardson

Trustee - signed Trustee - printed

Notes to the Accounts - for the year ended 31 July 2026

1. Basis of accounting

These accounts have been prepared on the Receipts and Payments basis in accordance with the Charities & Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended).

2. Nature and purpose of funds

Unrestricted funds are those that may be used at the discretion of the Trustees in furtherance of the objects of the charity.

Restricted funds may only be used for specific purposes within the objects of the Charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for specific purposes. During the year, the Charity received donations amounting to £370. (£100 from Laurencekirk Inner Wheel and £270 from the public.)

3. Trustees' remuneration, expenses and benefits

Year ended 31 July 2026	Nil
Year ended 31 July 2025	Nil

4. Transactions with Trustees and connected persons

Year ended 31 July 2026	Nil
Year ended 31 July 2025	Nil

5. Grants received

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Year ended 31.07.26	Year ended 31.07.25
	£	£	£	£
	5,000	-	5,000	-
Total	**5,000**	**-**	**5,000**	**-**

6. Donations

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Year ended 31.07.26	Year ended 31.07.25
	£	£	£	£
	370	-	370	847
Total	**370**	**-**	**370**	**847**