

## **Annual Report – Aros Hall AGM 2025/2026**

It has been another busy, productive and rewarding year for Aros Hall, and I would like to begin by thanking everyone who has played a part in making the hall such a valued community space. From our regular user groups and local organisations to one-off events, workshops and visitors, it is your continued support and use of the hall that ensures Aros Hall remains at the very heart of our community.

As with any community facility, the year has brought its share of challenges, but there has also been a great deal to celebrate. One of the standout moments of the year was the visit from Their Royal Highnesses The Prince and Princess of Wales on 29 April 2025. They received a warm welcome from the Tobermory community during their visit to Aros Hall and the Tobermory Producers Market. This special occasion also brought significant support through a grant from The Royal Foundation, awarded to fund a number of important improvements including enhancements to the Rainydays soft play area, refurbishment of the Community Fridge space, replacement of the hall's stairlift, upgrades to the heating system and essential roof repairs. This funding was further strengthened by a generous £5,000 donation from the Co-op to support improvements to Rainydays, and a kind donation from Lego to enrich the play space. Beyond the funding itself, the visit was a wonderful opportunity to showcase the incredible community spirit of Tobermory, alongside the outstanding local produce and talent our island has to offer. We were also delighted to be one of the Tobermory Coop's Local Causes, providing funds to decorate the main hall and foyer space.

Throughout the year, the hall has continued to provide a welcoming space for a wide variety of events, activities and celebrations. From the fantastic work of our regular hall users, to the beautiful displays at the Tobermory Horticultural Society Flower Show, and celebrations of Gaelic culture and heritage through the local Mòd, the hall has remained a place where our community comes together. We were also delighted to welcome back the Tobermory Games Dance in 2025, another brilliant example of the hall bringing people together to celebrate local traditions.

The festive period once again demonstrated the important role Aros Hall plays within the community calendar. Both our Christmas Party and Hogmanay Dance were wonderfully attended, and I would like to thank Treshnish and Eddie O'Donnell for ensuring both evenings were such memorable celebrations. The 2025 pantomime, Rapunzel, was another huge success and a wonderful example of the extraordinary volunteer spirit that exists within our town. The commitment shown by the cast, crew and production team was exceptional, and they deserve enormous credit for bringing such joy to the community.

We were also pleased to support the town's Christmas lights efforts by providing electricity for the town Christmas tree. Rainydays was once again transformed into Santa's Grotto, creating a magical festive experience for local families. A special thank you goes to Faith for creating such a wonderful space for our younger community members, and to Evie and Nicola for helping deliver the sessions.

In February, our annual Wine and Wisdom Quiz Night once again brought the community together for a fantastic evening while raising valuable funds for the hall. Thank you to our quizmasters — Alasdair, Georgia and Coll — for hosting another hugely enjoyable event.

The Tobermory Producers Market continues to be one of our most important fundraising activities. In 2025, the market raised £3,203, representing only a very small 2% reduction on the previous year's total. I would like to extend sincere thanks to Tobermory Harbour Association for continuing to provide the market site at a fair rate, and to Tobermory Distillery for their ongoing generosity in allowing use of their courtyard free of charge for the Christmas Markets. Unfortunately, severe weather meant we had to cancel the planned outdoor Christmas Market, but we remain incredibly grateful for the support shown by our partners and stallholders.

The MESS Island Castaways Charity Shop returned to the hall foyer from April through to October, continuing to provide valuable volunteering opportunities while raising funds for local causes. Alongside this, the Community Fridge — also managed by MESS — has continued its excellent work supporting local people while diverting more than 5,000 kilograms of food waste from landfill over the past year. This important work would not be possible without the dedication of the volunteers involved, and they deserve special recognition.

Like many organisations, Aros Hall continues to face rising operational costs, with electricity expenditure increasing by 51% compared with the previous year. This underlines the importance of continuing to invest in energy efficiency improvements and technologies that will help us operate more sustainably while protecting the long-term future of the hall.

I would also like to offer heartfelt thanks to our hall staff, Joanne and Gillian, whose hard work behind the scenes keeps Aros Hall running smoothly and ensures the space remains welcoming and well cared for. Your dedication does not go unnoticed, and we are incredibly grateful for everything you do. Thank you as well to our volunteer committee members, who generously give their time and energy to oversee the running of the hall on behalf of the wider community. Your commitment is fundamental to ensuring Aros Hall continues to thrive.

Looking ahead, we are excited about the future and remain committed to ensuring Aros Hall continues to serve as a vibrant, welcoming and sustainable community space for generations to come.

Thank you once again to everyone who continues to support Aros Hall. It truly belongs to the community, and its continued success is a reflection of the people who make Tobermory such a special place.



16<sup>th</sup> July 2026

Morven Summers

Chair, Aros Hall Committee