Cousland Village Hall Association Management Committee (CVHAMC) meeting on 4 May 2026 at 7.00pm in the Village Hall

Welcome

The Chair warmly welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Attendees

CVHAMC members	Stewart Buchan (Chair); Gordon Brown (Secretary); Gordon Dunn; Helen Wareing; Andrew McGovern; Doug Whyte; Douglas Bolton; Norrie Brown
Others in attendance	None
Apologies received	Tom Morrow (Treasurer); Sylv Lambie;
Conflicts of interest	None intimated.

Topic	Discussion	Action agreed
Governance		
Regulatory, constitutional and operational matters	All governance documentation is available to CVHA members via the CVHA tab on the Cousland Village website www.couslandvillage.co.uk and in the green CVHA folder, by the entrance in the hall.	
Financial Report	The Treasurer reported that: Bank balance is £9,775.63; Cash in hand amounts to £384.79. The April bank statement shows: Normal expenses for April were £629.11 (bar outgoings, café outgoings, TV licence, electricity, window cleaning etc). Income (unrestricted) for April was £793.21 (bar takings, café takings, hall rentals etc). We had also claimed gift aid for the last tax year and the donation from Norrie, which gave us an additional £71.31. The unrestricted income figure above does not include the successful grant application award of £800 restricted funding received from Midlothian Council to support our Gala Day activities.	
	A protracted discussion about a potential community buy-out of the village hall by CVHA, also discussed at the last meeting, took place. DW reported his detailed findings around the hall's ownership and our lease agreement. His researches bring no change to CVHAMC's understanding of the situation. There are still concerns about the possible financing of a buy-out and we need to understand more fully the pros and cons of such a purchase. There may be necessary changes to the legal status of CVHA and the implications of those to consider. It was decided we should find out more, by talking with other organisations who have gone through the process of community buy-out with the help of The Scottish Land Fund. Further discussion is needed at our next meeting.	SB to speak with TM HW to desk research case studies of other similar organisations who have done a community buy-out
Grant-funded projects update (restricted funds)	*Corra Foundation "Boost" funding* Excellent progress had been made with the lighting projects. "Mood lighting" is fitted and the control unit will be in place soon. The following further expenditures are to be made: New electronic lock and new main door for the hall. *Midlothian Council "Wellbeing Year 5" funding* A varied programme of wellbeing events, up to April 2027, has been shared in The Cousland Courier. All funds now allocated.	DB to fit control unit GB and TM to monitor expenditures and evaluate impact of spends and activities for reporting purposes
Invited Guests		

	There were no invited guests	
CVHA member's issues (raised since last meeting):		
	No issues were raised.	
Previous minutes		
Corrections	None	
Approval	Proposed by NB; Seconded by DW	
Matters arising	All matters are covered under the headings below.	
Hall maintenance and improvement reports		
Catering facility	Some marks had appeared on the kitchen worktop and it is hoped they can be cleaned off. The equipment trolley has been ordered.	GD to chase
Bar facility	The LED "Bar" sign has been much admired. It was agreed it should be put up for appropriate events and taken down again afterwards, to ensure it is not accidentally damaged by hall users. An internal roller blind is still to be purchased and fitted behind the grille.	TM to seek help, if required
Patio area	The boundary fencing on our neighbours' property is in progress. Plans for the temporary canopy are in place.	
Defibrillator	Regularly checked by SB. All is working as it should.	
Other issues	Fire extinguisher checks are completed and one replacement extinguisher was supplied. Intumescent strips are to be fitted to the kitchen fire-door in the next few weeks. The new secure storage shed has been built. It is robust. Broken window by the entrance door will be replaced by Lothian Glass. It was felt that this should be paid from funds rather than claimed via insurance policy. New emergency lights are to be fitted soon. The old, coloured spotlights from the hall are suitable for outside use and can be used to provide "mood lighting" at events such as the Gala Day barbeque.	GD and DB to finalise
Hall bookings report		
Local groups	No additional bookings. Regular group bookings at present comprise 2 weekly ones, 1 fortnightly and 1 quarterly. There has been an enquiry re hall availability for regular dance sessions on Friday evenings.	GB to meet with enquirer this Saturday morning to inspect the hall
Other bookings	Feedback from all private renters continues to be very positive. Bookings for May are as follows (at the moment): Local election activity, Dog -training seminar (no dogs), Birthday party, Leaving do. There are also three of the four wellbeing Gentle Yoga classes this month.	GB to liaise with hall users and organisers
Events in CVHA Calendar		
Review of past events	The May community café was very successful, very busy, once more there were first-time attendees. Over £320 was taken in, before expenses. Attendance at the last of the three wellbeing social evenings was down on previous events but a small profit was made from bar sales. We need to evaluate the social evenings more formally.	SB to speak with the bar convener about the past social evenings
Planned events	A busy social calendar is planned through to the end of the financial year: Jazz night in June (half of necessary ticket sales are achieved – some marketing is still required) Gala Day and Barbecue in August (need to get organising team together soon)	

	Whisky Tasting in September (ticket pricing and sales area to be finalised with Billy Lumsden) Country and Western Night with a Line-Dancing workshop in October (all arrangements are in hand) Licences, where required, for all these events are in place. There will be a family film night in November. A Christmas Afternoon Tea will be organised for mid-December. Other events are still to be finalised, for example, three more Wellbeing Social Evenings are provisionally scheduled for January, February and March 2027.	DB to circulate list of Gala Day tasks GB to finalise whisky tasting arrangements with BL
Engagement (Communications)		
Website	It is working well. CVHAMC members were again encouraged to look at the village website (Cousland Village) regularly and to suggest further improvements. Facebook event posts now appear there too.	TM to implement the changes agreed
Facebook page	Event notifications are being posted regularly and are drawn through onto the website above.	TM to monitor posts
Noticeboards and signs	Operating very effectively. SB agreed to look after putting up and taking down of the signs at the hall and on Southfield Road, now that MT has left the village.	
The Cousland Courier	Working very effectively. As yet, there had been no response to the appeal for help with the website. The next deadline for copy is 7 July. Material for submission will need to be agreed at our next meeting	Submit copy re Gala Day and autumn events ahead of next deadline
Other channels	The WhatsApp group "CVHAMC and Friends" continues to be used very effectively by lots of folk. Leaflets on tables at the café work well for some villagers and village events.	
Collaborative work with or support for other village groups		
Cousland Conservation Group	A report had been sent by SL, as follows: £100 from wellbeing fund allocated for a workshop and use of hall for refreshments etc. Sowing wildflower seeds etc in September. No funds allocated to proposed talk on wildflowers. (It was thought that Midlothian Climate Action Network might provide talks). £300 giftcard now received from former village playgroup for plants to improve swing park area. The council have acted on our request to improve paving and swing park area. Upgrade almost complete. Members of the group have been tidying some village areas from time to time. Recent Courier article on feeding wild birds. Sunflower growing competition for young people up to age 16 - a number of seedlings handed out at recent cafe.	
Petanque Group	There are friendly home matches are arranged with Tweed Valley on 5 July and Newtongrange on 6 September. It would be great to have local support. Haddington are keen to have a friendly matches on some evenings through the summer.	
Information and issues exchange with Tynewater Community Council (TCC)		
Updates from TCC	TCC still needs new members, especially a Secretary. Next meeting will be in person on 19 May at 7.00pm in Fala. Anyone wishing to participate should contact GB, ME or TM for details.	Anyone interested should speak to ME, TM or GB for further information

	All Cousland issues with roads etc were raised again at TCC and the recent Midlothian Transport Roads and Paths (MTRaP) meeting.	
Reporting of issues to TCC	Members were pleased to report the trench on Kiln Brae (Quarrybank) had been properly repaired. This is appreciated. No new issues were reported.	
AOCB		
New secure shed	Arrangements for key access to the new shed were agreed. We will reuse the current keysafe when new front door is fitted to the hall.	GD to save the keysafe
Date(s) of our next meeting(s)		
CVHAMC	The next meeting will be on Monday 1 June 2026 at 1900 in the Village Hall. It is hoped all committee members will be able to attend. The meeting is open to any member of CVHA.	Secretary to send papers one week in advance

Conclusion

The Chair thanked everyone for their valued contributions. The meeting finished at 2110.