

Governance of Dyffryn Ardudwy and Talybont Village Hall

Frequently Asked Questions

Introduction

This document has been prepared to provide clear answers to some of the most common questions about how Dyffryn Ardudwy and Talybont Village Hall is governed and managed.

The Village Hall is a charity held on trust for the benefit of the local community. Its governance is set out in a governing document which establishes the role and responsibilities of the trustees and the framework within which the Hall must be managed.

These FAQs are intended to explain key aspects of that governance in straightforward terms, and to help residents, users and stakeholders better understand how decisions are made.

They do not replace or alter the governing document or charity law, but are offered as an explanatory guide to support transparency and communication.

Why is the Community Council making decisions about the Village Hall?

The Community Council is not acting on its own behalf in this matter. Under the Governing Document, Dyffryn Ardudwy and Talybont Community Council serves as the trustee of the Village Hall charity.

As trustees, the Council has a legal responsibility to manage the Village Hall, including its finances, property, and activities. Trustees must always act in the best interests of the charity.

Who owns the Village Hall?

The Village Hall is a charitable asset held on trust for the benefit of the whole community.

The Hall's charitable trust was established by a Charity Commission Scheme dated 4 September 1931. Under that Scheme, the members of Llanenddwyn Parish Council (now Dyffryn Ardudwy and Talybont Community Council) were appointed to administer and manage the charity as trustees.

The Community Council acts as trustee and is legally responsible for managing the Hall, its finances, property and activities in accordance with the Governing Document and charity law.

Who are the trustees of the Hall?

The trustees are the serving members of Dyffryn Ardudwy and Talybont Community Council. Together they form the trustee body responsible for managing the Village Hall charity in accordance with the Governing Document and charity law.

Can non-Community Councillors be trustees of the Hall?

No. Under the Governing Document, the trustees are the serving members of Dyffryn Ardudwy and Talybont Community Council. A person becomes a trustee when they become a councillor and ceases to be a trustee when they leave the Community Council.

Who appoints the trustees?

Trustees are not separately appointed. Under the Governing Document, a person automatically becomes a trustee when elected or appointed to the Community Council and ceases to be a trustee when they leave, resign or become disqualified under charity law.

Why were non-Community Councillors registered as trustees in the past?

Historic Charity Commission records and administrative records have, at times, listed individuals who were not members of the Community Council as trustees.

However, the identity of the trustees is determined by the Governing Document, not by administrative records. Since the Charity Commission Scheme of 4 September 1931, the charity has been administered and managed by the members of Llanenddwyn Parish Council (now Dyffryn Ardudwy and Talybont Community Council) acting as trustees.

Historic records do not alter the legal position established by the Governing Document. The current and governing position is that the trustees of the Village Hall are the serving members of Dyffryn Ardudwy and Talybont Community Council acting as trustee of the charity.

Why is the Community Council taking a more active role in managing the Village Hall?

The Community Council is not taking ownership of, or assuming new control over, the Village Hall. Under the Charity Commission Scheme of 4 September 1931 and the current Governing Document (2007), the members of the Community Council have long been the charity's trustees.

Following a review of the Governing Document, charity law and Charity Commission guidance, the trustees concluded that they should take a more active role in exercising responsibilities that have always rested with them. This includes oversight of the Hall's governance, finances, property and use.

This is not a change in ownership or authority, but a commitment to ensuring that the charity is managed in accordance with its Governing Document and charity law.

Do trustees have to consider community views?

Yes. Trustees should consider the views of residents and hall users when making decisions. The AGM provides an opportunity for residents to raise questions on the Annual Report and Accounts.

However, trustees must make decisions in the best interests of the charity as a whole and cannot simply follow the wishes of any individual, group or majority opinion where doing so would conflict with their legal duties.

Can the public decide how the Hall is run?

No. Under the Governing Document, responsibility for managing the Village Hall rests with the trustees.

Residents and hall users are encouraged to share their views and suggestions and may vote on matters reserved to the AGM or residents under the Governing Document. However, they do not have the authority to direct the trustees or determine how the Hall is managed on a day-to-day basis.

What can the public vote on at the AGM?

All inhabitants of the area of benefit aged 18 and over may attend and vote at the AGM.

The AGM provides an opportunity for residents to receive the Annual Report and Financial Accounts and to ask questions about them. The Governing Document also requires resident approval for certain matters, including some amendments to the Governing Document and certain decisions relating to the sale of charity property. Responsibility for the day-to-day management of the Hall remains with the trustees.

Can residents require trustees to hold a public vote?

The Governing Document requires public votes in certain circumstances, including proposed amendments to the Governing Document and some decisions relating to the sale of charity property.

However, responsibility for decision-making remains with the trustees unless the Governing Document specifically requires a vote of residents.

Can the public hold a vote of no confidence in the trustees?

No. The trustees hold office because they are members of Dyffryn Ardudwy and Talybont Community Council. There is no provision in the Governing Document for a vote of no confidence in the trustees.

Trustees may leave office through resignation, disqualification under charity law, or by ceasing to be members of the Community Council. Changes to the trustee body therefore occur through Community Council appointment and the legal processes governing trusteeship, rather than by public vote.

Does there have to be a separate Village Hall Committee?

No. The Governing Document does not require a separate Village Hall Committee. The trustees may establish committees if they consider it helpful, but responsibility for managing the charity remains with the trustees.

What is the purpose of a Village Hall Committee?

A Village Hall Committee can assist the trustees with matters such as events, fundraising, maintenance and community engagement. Any committee acts on behalf of, and under the authority of, the trustees.

What powers can be delegated to a Village Hall Committee?

Trustees may delegate certain day-to-day tasks and functions to a committee, such as organising events or assisting with maintenance projects.

What powers cannot be delegated to a Village Hall Committee?

Trustees remain responsible for the overall governance and management of the charity. Decisions relating to trustee duties, finances, charity property, legal compliance, governance and strategic direction remain the responsibility of the trustees and cannot be delegated away.

Can the community insist that the Hall is run by a Village Hall Committee rather than the trustees?

No. The Governing Document places responsibility for managing the charity on the trustees. While trustees may establish committees or involve volunteers, the community cannot require the trustees to transfer their responsibilities to a separate committee.

At a previous AGM it was stated that ordinary members might be appointed to a Village Hall Committee. Why is this no longer being proposed?

At the 2025 AGM it was suggested that the appointment of ordinary members to a separate Village Hall Committee would be considered at a future date.

Following a deeper review of the Governing Document, charity law and Charity Commission guidance, the trustees concluded that, as the Hall operates under a sole trustee arrangement, a separate management committee is not currently required. The trustees are therefore managing the Hall directly in accordance with their legal responsibilities.

The statement made at the AGM reflected the understanding at that time. Following further review, the trustees determined that direct management by the trustee body is the most appropriate arrangement at this time.

This does not reduce opportunities for community involvement. The trustees continue to welcome volunteers to help organise events, support fundraising activities, undertake maintenance projects and assist with the general upkeep of the Hall. Community support remains essential to the Hall's success and long-term sustainability.

Who appoints the Secretary and Treasurer?

The Secretary and Treasurer are appointed by the trustees. They may be trustees themselves, or other suitable individuals appointed by the trustees to assist with the administration and financial management of the charity.

Are appointments made at the AGM?

No. The appointment of the Secretary and Treasurer is a matter for the trustees. These appointments may be made at any properly convened trustee meeting and do not have to take place at the AGM.

Who decides the programme of events for the Hall?

The trustees are responsible for deciding how the Hall is used and for ensuring that activities are consistent with the charity's purposes. In practice, the trustees may work with volunteers, user groups and organisers to develop and support a programme of events for the benefit of the community.

Can the public or groups decide how much they pay for hire?

No. Charges for the hire of the Hall are determined by the trustees. Trustees must ensure that charges are fair and consistent with their duty to manage the charity's assets in the best interests of the charity.

Hire rates are reviewed periodically and are based on a number of factors, including the Hall's running costs, maintenance requirements, utility costs, insurance, and other operational expenses. Trustees also consider the rates charged by comparable local facilities to ensure that our charges remain reasonable and competitive.

Unfortunately, increases in the cost of living and significant rises in energy and fuel costs have increased the cost of operating and maintaining the Hall. As a result, occasional adjustments to hire charges are unavoidable if the Hall is to remain financially sustainable and available for future use by the community.

While trustees recognise the importance of keeping the Hall affordable and accessible, they also have a responsibility to ensure that income from hire charges contributes appropriately towards the upkeep, repair, and long-term viability of this valuable community asset.

Does the Hall need to provide storage for hall users?

No. The Hall is a multi-purpose community facility and is not required to provide dedicated storage space for individual user groups.

We appreciate that some groups would find additional storage convenient. However, the Hall is used by a number of clubs, groups and organisations each week, many of whom would like extra storage. It would not be practical or fair to provide dedicated storage for everyone, and there is simply insufficient space to accommodate the demand.

The Hall already has a shipping container, a garden shed and multiple cupboards, all of which are fully utilised. The priority for these storage areas is equipment and supplies needed to operate the Hall effectively, such as cleaning equipment, tables, chairs, crockery, glasses, kitchen equipment and other items required for the running of the facility.

As trustees, we must ensure that the Hall remains a flexible, safe and welcoming venue for all users. Experience has shown that storage can quickly reduce the usability of key areas. For example, kitchen cupboards previously located on the stage had to be removed because they restricted use of the stage and reduced its suitability for performances and events.

Additional cupboards or storage units around the building would reduce usable space, create management and insurance challenges, and detract from the appearance of the Hall. The trustees believe that the Hall should remain clean, uncluttered and attractive for the wide variety of community activities, celebrations and events it hosts throughout the year.

For these reasons, the trustees do not intend to increase storage provision for individual groups and will continue to manage the available space in a way that best serves the wider community.

Can one group have exclusive use of a room at the hall?

Potentially, yes, but only in limited circumstances and where it is consistent with the charity's purposes and approved by the trustees.

The Village Hall exists for the benefit of the whole community. Trustees therefore have a legal duty to ensure that any use of Hall space supports the charity's purposes and provides public benefit.

Any arrangement must:

- Be in the best interests of the charity.
- Support the charitable purpose of the Hall.
- Not conflict with the Hall's purpose of serving the wider community.
- Not unfairly restrict access for other users.
- Be properly documented and provide fair value to the charity.
- Deliver a clear benefit consistent with the charity's objectives.

The trustees may permit a group to use a room or area on a regular basis, or in some circumstances grant exclusive use of part of the premises. However, they must carefully consider whether doing so would reduce public benefit or conflict with the charitable purposes for which the Hall is held.

Each proposal must be considered individually, taking into account the Governing Document, charity law, Charity Commission guidance, community benefit and any relevant legal or regulatory requirements.

Are trustee meetings public?

No. Trustee meetings are charity meetings, not Community Council meetings.

As the Village Hall operates under a sole trustee arrangement, trustee meetings are not public meetings and members of the public do not have an automatic right to attend, participate in discussions, receive meeting papers or inspect trustee minutes. Trustees may invite individuals to attend or make representations on specific matters where they consider it appropriate.

Trustee meetings are governed by charity law rather than the public access requirements that apply to meetings of the Community Council acting in its local authority capacity.

Trustee meetings are held so that trustees can fulfil their legal responsibilities for managing the charity and may involve discussion of financial, contractual, governance and legal matters.

Can members of the public demand to attend trustee meetings?

No. Members of the public do not have a legal right to attend trustee meetings. Trustees may invite individuals to attend or provide information on specific matters where they consider it helpful, but attendance is at the discretion of the trustees.

Do trustee meeting minutes have to be published?

No. The Governing Document requires trustee meeting minutes to be kept, but neither the Governing Document nor charity law generally requires them to be published or made available to the public.

Final Note

These Frequently Asked Questions are intended to provide a clear and accessible explanation of how Dyffryn Ardudwy and Talybont Village Hall is governed and managed.

They are designed to support understanding and transparency and should be read alongside the Village Hall's Governing Document, which remains the definitive legal framework for the charity.

The Trustees will review and update these FAQs from time to time to ensure they remain relevant.

If you have any further questions, please contact the Trustees via the usual Village Hall channels.