

UPPER TWEED COMMUNITY ENTERPRISE LTD

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT FOR THE SIXTH ANNUAL MEMBERS' MEETING

THURSDAY 11th SEPTEMBER 2025

This report covers the standard period of a year from 1st April 2024 until the 31st March 2025.

First of all an explanation: you may have noticed that I am not John Walbaum who was elected as Chairman at last years AMM. John sadly decided to step down as Chairman due to personal reasons and I was “volunteered” into the role. I had hoped to stand down at this years AMM but I feel that continuity is needed in the short term so my apologies – I’m here again! If anyone has the immediate urge to stand for election to the Board do let us know ‘later in the show’ when we get to that part of the Agenda.

As a reminder our current Board members are: Charles Donkers, Treasurer, Bill Sheridan who has been acting as Secretary and overseeing the refurbishment project, Jamie Prady who has taken on the IT role to streamline our IT system into what it should be; Camilla Younger who has been looking after the legal aspects of the temporary relocation to the village hall cottage and also the change of boundary between the shop and Kintyre Cottage next door and Alice Millar who we’ve yet to give a job to – and of course ‘our Jen’, manager of our community shop.

The success of the shop is entirely due to the hard work of Jen and her team, to whom I extend my gratitude on behalf of the Board, and indeed on behalf of many of our appreciative customers. Jen’s team consists of – in alphabetical order so as not to show any favours(!): Charlotte, Helen, Jim, Julie, Kara, Pauline and Ruth who very recently left us. Thank you all.

I should also point out that without you, our customers, we wouldn’t be here - so a very big thank you to you too.

You may have noticed we now have some youngsters helping out in the shop. We are keen to give youngsters the chance to get some work experience; it also helps with our standing with funders – not all businesses are fortunate enough to be able to do this. It is one of the benefits of being a community business.

We have had a busy year at the shop – what’s new! You will recall the shop closed its doors in November 2023 when we transitioned across to the village hall cottage. To everyone’s relief the shop re-opened with its new look premises in April this year. Credit must go to Jen and her staff for the challenge of trading from the cottage for the best part of a year and a half.

Credit must also go to Bill Sheridan who oversaw the refurbishment works of both premises. Bill joined the Board specifically for this role and now that works are “more or less complete” and the fact that Bill and Susan are now residents in Biggar, Bill is standing down from UTCE – many thanks Bill.

In terms of works “more or less complete” you may have noticed that the shop is rather warm. Some might say bloomin’ hot. One thing that was perhaps overlooked was the effect that the sun would have shining through that marvellous glass ceiling in the rear of the shop. It certainly lets lots of light through but it does nothing to reflect any UV and sadly we have suffered a small amount of spoilt stock as a result of the heat. We have now applied some heat reflective coating to the glass to reduce this; we also need to consider improving the air flow through the shop – lessons learnt. There are some other minor snagging issues that still need to be resolved and these are being addressed with the architect and the contractor.

I won’t mention trading figures, Charles will give those in his Treasurer’s Report. Charles too will be standing down from the Board and I’m sure Charles will explain more during his treasurer’s report.

We (actually I’ll correct that to Jen and her team!) are active updating the shops Facebook page on a regular basis but we really need someone with website skills to keep that up to date – if anyone is interested please get in touch with me.

And finally, may I thank you for coming along this evening and may I commend to you the resolutions in the AMM agenda - I hope these receive your full support.

Simon Edwards
Chairman, Upper Tweed Community Enterprise Ltd