

Annual General Meeting to be held on 19th May 2014

Our Annual General Meeting will take place in the Community Centre on Monday, 19th May at 6.00pm. The Agenda for the meeting will be as follows:-

1. Apologies and Welcome
2. Chairman's report
3. Hon Treasurer's report
4. Vision for the Future
5. Any Other Business

Please make every effort to attend and in doing so support our efforts to improve the economic and community life of our town. Numbers attending our last meeting were comparatively disappointing and we are hoping to see an improvement at this next meeting. Remember, as the title of our newsletter suggests, it is only by working together that we can make Donaghadee the thriving community we each desire. If you cannot attend, but wish to register your support for us, please send an apology via someone you know who is planning to attend or send an apology to the Secretary, John Caldwell (Tel 9188 8667, e-mail info@visitdonaghadee.com).

Membership Renewal

Membership renewals are now due. The annual cost has been retained at a token £10 which includes for traders and community organisation a free listing on our website www.visitdonaghadee.com. If you would like to change your entry simply send an email to info@visitdonaghadee.com. If you are not a member but would be interested in showing your support for our work, please ask for a membership form or download the appropriate form from the Contact Us section of the website

Donaghadee Festival Fortnight 2-16 August

Plans are well advanced for this year's festival. Events which have proved popular in recent years have been retained and we have also introduced several new items, including a climbing wall and assault course and an aquathon. We are hoping to publicise the festival by means of a 16 page newspaper distributed free to 50,000 homes and properties. If your organisation is planning an event which you would like to publicise as part of the festival programme do please get in touch as a matter of urgency.

Donaghadee Commerce and Development Group – Management Committee 2013-14

David Cochrane (Chair)

William Kirkwood

John Caldwell (Hon Secretary)

Gary McNinch

Shirley Cochrane (Hon Treasurer)

Denis Waterworth

Trevor Conway

Town Masterplan, WIFI, Public Realm and the Townscape Heritage Initiative

Over the last year we have been working very closely with Ards Borough Council on a range of initiatives focussed on developing the town. Work has begun on the preparation of a Masterplan setting out the vision for Donaghadee for the next 15 years and this will include a series of public consultation meetings. The introduction of free WiFi in the town has been delayed because of the need for planning approvals. Site investigation work for the public realm scheme (valued at £2.4m) is underway. The Townscape Heritage Initiative has also been delayed as the Council and the Heritage Lottery Fund seek to resolve some outstanding issues but it is hoped that this will commence very shortly.

Donaghadee in Bloom

We have continued to develop the hanging basket scheme. Over the next few weeks we shall be contacting those premises which have availed of the scheme in the past.

Car Parking

We are acutely aware of the problem of car parking in the town centre. Unfortunately neither of the two streams of funding coming to the town include funds for car parking but there will be an opportunity to press for improvement during the consultation on the Masterplan. We would continue to urge those traders and businesses parking all day on the Shorefront to refrain from doing so and use the car parks at Crommelin Park or William Street instead. This will release more spaces for shoppers.

Sir Samuel Kelly

We have been working very closely with the Steering Group formed to explore the potential of a permanent home for the Sir Samuel Kelly Lifeboat. Following a well-attended public consultation meeting last month, the Steering Group intends to form a company to take forward this important project

Seniors Showcase

The Seniors Showcase held in the Community Centre last month featured some 26 exhibitors and was well attended. Information was freely available on health, housing, advice and education.

Business Awards

We introduced the Donaghadee Business Awards last year and would propose to continue with this in the current year. We will be contacting traders in the autumn with more information on the scheme.

World War 1 Commemoration

This year sees the centenary of the outbreak of the First World War and we are working in partnership with the local Historical Society, local primary schools and the Somme Centre to develop a programme of events spanning the next two years.

..... And Finally

If you wish to raise any issue or if you have an idea which you feel we should take forward do please speak to any Committee member or email us at info@visitdonaghadee.com.