

## TRUSTEES' REPORT 2021-22

### 1. The Organisation

- 1.1 The Donaghadee Community Development Association was recognised as a charity by HMRC in 2011 and by the Charities Commission for Northern Ireland in 2016.
- 1.2 The trustees met in person or via ZOOM on 10 occasions during the year. Membership at March 2022 was as follows:-

Gary McNinch (Chair)

Denis Waterworth (Vice-Chair)

John Caldwell (Hon. Sec)

Adrian Kerr (Hon. Treasurer)

Kate Boyd

Alan Cowan

Carol Day

Gareth Irvine

Bill Kirkwood

Alan Maxwell

Murdo Murray

Karen McCullough

Harry Wilson

### 2.

#### The Purpose of the Charity

- 2.1 The stated purpose of the Association is

“To promote the advancement of citizenship and community development for the public benefit in the Donaghadee area, in particular:-

1. To improve the area known as Donaghadee for the benefit of the inhabitants of the area
2. To encourage the goodwill and involvement of the wider community
3. To foster and promote community spirit and civic pride
4. To promote and encourage the development of Donaghadee”

- 2.2 The public benefits that flow from this purpose are:-

- Donaghadee is a more attractive place in which to live;
- Improvements in infrastructure will encourage inward investment;
- The town attracts more visitors which helps the local economy and increases employment opportunity;
- An attractive townscape should increase awareness of the quality of the local environment and, in turn, promote a greater degree of responsibility in areas such as litter, dog fouling and re-cycling.
- A much higher degree of social cohesion;
- Residents take a keen interest in the development of their town and play a positive role in contributing to its development
- There will be higher levels of engagement in local clubs and organisations;
- Reduced anti-social behaviour

- 2.3 In essence, this means that the Association focuses on organising events, working closely with elected representatives and with other local organisations including

schools and statutory bodies to improve the town and engaging in activities which will bring the community closer together.

### 3. Main Activities and Achievements during 2020-21

#### 3.1 In any normal year the Association focusses activity on five strands:-

- Community engagement
- Improving the local environment
- Community support and development
- Expanding the local economy
- Campaigning and representation

The continuing Covid-19 pandemic continued to impact on our activities largely due to rules limiting social gathering. That said, we were able to progress on a number of fronts.

#### 3.2 Community Engagement

- a) Harbour Bicentenary – 2021 was the bicentenary of the building of Donaghadee's iconic harbour. We worked closely with the Council on a programme of events and were particularly delighted to welcome Prince Charles to Donaghadee as part of his visit to Northern Ireland in May 2021.
- b) Summer Festival – The nature of the pandemic and the risk of restrictions being tightened made planning of festival events difficult. A few events did however take place with good attendances at concerts (Abba Tribute and George Jones), the Horse Relay, Peninsula Sea Sprint. The introduction of an Art competition proved popular.
- c) Christmas – Working closely with RNLI, County Hardware and our local Rotary Club we organised Santa's arrival by lifeboat on Friday followed by a parade to the market. Santa's tour of the town on Saturday night continues to be very popular and the weekend rounded off with the Dee Runner's Fun Run at the Commons. Sadly no community carol service but hopes are high that this can return in 2022.
- d) Calendar – We organised a monthly calendar competition with the winner receiving a voucher for a local restaurant. The winning photographs were published in a 2022 calendar available free from local outlets.
- e) Mosaic – The refurbishment of the playground at Lemon's Wharf included the construction of a circular bed to house the stones painted by locals during the pandemic. DCDA was able to use the balance of funding from a lottery grant to organise a series of workshops to produce tiles for decorating the vertical surface of the structure. We are grateful to local artist Martin McClure for his work on the project.
- f) Website and Social Media - The Association uses its website ([www.visitdonaghadee.com](http://www.visitdonaghadee.com)) to inform the local community and visitors of current issues.
- g) Mayor's Charity – A concert was organised in the Golf Club in March 2022 and raised £950 for the Mayor's charities.

#### 3.3 Local Environment

- a) In Bloom – One of the highlights of the year was winning the Small Town category of the Translink Ulster in Bloom Competition. Supported by a huge team of volunteers we arranged the planting and watering of hanging baskets,

planting of containers and in a key new initiative the planting of window boxes by Killard School. Using a Council Grant for Community Development we purchased some 200 window boxes, discounted to wholesale price by County Hardware, and provided compost and plants. Pupils from the school planted these out and distributed them to selected properties in the town.

- b) Crommelin Wood – Work continues on Cromellin Wood. A platform extending into the wetland was built using funds from the Co-op Community Fund and we were also able to begin the process of establishing a tree nursery courtesy of a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund.
- c) Marine Litter - Donaghadee's four schools – Ballyvester Primary School, Donaghadee Primary School, Killard School and St Anne's Primary School – partnered with the Association on a Marine Litter Project. Following a successful bid for funding by the Association to Live Here Love Here, each school was allocated an area of coastline and an attractive litter picking station installed at each. On each visit to the beach, pupils gather and analyse litter according to type, size and weight. They will also collect water samples for analysis using water testing kits and digital microscopes. Their findings will be recorded and compared over time against previous analyses and the records of the other schools. Members of the public have also been encouraged to play their part by collecting litter.

### 3.5 Community support and development

- a) Information reel – The Association is a conduit for information on a wide variety of subjects ranging from government and public notices through to details of local events. This used to be distributed by email but the volume was such that it became apparent that many were not being read. As a solution, all notices are now placed on a rolling display which is published on our website and social media platform each Friday. For those without access to the internet a copy scrolls on a television located in the front window of Dee TV & Radio.
- b) Supporting groups – Community Group members have access to a range of equipment including gazebos, a pa system, presentation boards, laptops and a digital projector and screen. Information on grant opportunities is also circulated.

### 3.6 Expanding the local Economy

- a) Re-opening Retail – The Association worked closely with Ards and North Down Borough Council on the implementation of a grant programme to support the re-opening of retail. Grants were available for local businesses and the Association played its part in raising awareness and supporting application.
- b) Shop Local – Two shop local events were organised with participating traders given free gifts to distribute.

### 3.7 Campaigning and representation–

- a) Town Advisory Group – The Association has two representatives on the Donaghadee Town Advisory Group which includes councillors and representatives of statutory bodies. The main issues were support for retail following lockdown and the review to the Commons
- b) Car parking – we continue to press for improved car parking. No success thusfar but efforts continue

- c) Play Strategy – We wrote to the Council strongly opposing the proposed Play Strategy.
- d) Biodiversity – We contributed to the Council’s Biodiversity Plan

### *Thanks*

3.8 The Committee acknowledges with thanks the help and support received from a wide range of individuals and organisations throughout the year, in particular:-

- Elected representatives and officers of Ards and North Down Borough Council without whose support the Association would not be able to function at the current level;
- Local MLAs and our local MP who have all been supportive of our efforts; and,
- The many individuals, local organisations, churches, sporting clubs and traders who support our work through volunteering, sponsorship and support.

## **4. Financial Review**

4.1 The Association has a single bank account with the Ulster Bank, Newtownards and the accounts are prepared and audited by Stanley Woods & Co. The financial year is April – March. The Association’s finances are healthy. The Association has no paid employees.

4.2 The Association acknowledges with thanks the many organisations and individuals who provided financial support during the year by way of grants, advertising, sponsorship, donations and membership fees.

## **5. Community Involvement and Public Benefit**

5.1 The Association is anxious to involve the wider community and general public as much as possible in its activities. The Association had 142 members in March 2022 with just under 3,000 following on social media.

5.2 In undertaking these and other activities during the year, the Trustees have given careful consideration to the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland’s statutory guidance on public benefit. No harm arose to any individual or organisation as a result of the Association’s activities.

## **6. Priorities for 2022-23**

6.1 Given the impact of the global pandemic planning is particularly difficult. The Trustees have identified the following key priorities for 2022-23:-

- a) Subject to approval, organising festivals in the summer and at Christmas with a particular focus on the Queen’s Platinum Jubilee;
- b) To make further progress with the Crommelin Wood and Marine Litter Projects
- c) To co-ordinate the floral displays for the summer; and,
- d) To press for improvements to Donaghadee in meetings with Council officers and officials of other statutory bodies

## **7. Further Information**

7.1 Further information on the work of the Association can be obtained from the Honorary Secretary, John Caldwell, c/o 21 New Road, Donaghadee, BT21 0DR

SIGNED

Date:

*Vice-Chairman*