

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 at March 2021 were 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

* from March 2021

1.3 The Trustees met on 12 occasions during the year.

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 four strands:-

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

The Covid-19 pandemic necessitated the curtailment of much of our normal activity and in consequence our main focus was on helping and supporting the local community and working with the Council and other Agencies to support local traders.

- 3.2 Here to Help - The Association became aware of the Here to Help Group who were running errands and providing non-perishable items for those most in need. The Association “adopted” the group for the purposes of funding and allocated £500 from its own funds towards the purchase of PPE. Other funds were secured from other sources and as a result the group was able to provide much needed help and support to those most in need. By mid-June the need for support had reduced and the Group stood down having accomplished just under 1,000 individual tasks.

- 3.3 Christmas 2020 – Covid Regulations prevented the organisation of events involving crowds and consequently the Annual Santa Arrival and Parade did not take place. This came as a major disappointment to many families and in response to requests from the community the Association worked with the Rotary Club of Donaghadee to organise a tour of the town with “Santa” on a sleigh fastened on the back of a lorry kindly supplied by County Hardware. This was an outstanding success and brought enjoyment to those watching from their doorstep or driveway.

- 3.4 In Bloom – The Association organised hanging baskets for local traders and, in a new initiative, arranged for the planting of the Council-owned containers on the seafront and some beds using the services of volunteers with plants provided by the Council.

- 3.5 Crommelin Wood - This year, mainly due to Covid prevention restrictions, work has been confined to low maintenance of the site and submitting further grant applications to Live Here Love Here (LHLH) and The National Lottery Heritage Fund. The planned work - thanks to LHLH and the Co-Op Community fund, to install an extended platform in the wetland area, can now commence in Sept. 2021.

Future plans for the woodland include: A Donaghadee centenary tree nursery, memory area and additional pathways.

We have also launched a "Friends of Crommelin Wood" initiative to encourage local residents to help and support our ongoing work and assist with general maintenance of the area.

Unfortunately, vandalism, littering and anti-social behaviour, continues to be a problem both in terms of repair costs, nuisance to the surrounding area and inhibiting increased usage and event organisation. However, on a positive note, local schools: and in particular Killard have taken an active role in litter picking and repair initiatives, and there is a substantial increase in use by the locals who found

the woodland walk a great source of fresh air and exercise during the extended lockdown period.

As usual, we are grateful to all our funders and to Ards and North Down Borough Council, for their ongoing support and for granting us a licence to carry out the ongoing programme of improvements to this unique local facility.

- 3.6 Support for Traders – Support was provided for traders by way of information and guidance on Covid restrictions and also on grant opportunities. The Association was represented on the Covid Recovery Group which helped frame financial support for traders funding equipment such as screens, awning etc. In a novel approach we co-ordinated Shop Window entertainment in a Council-led initiative.
- 3.7 Communication and Engagement – A local company was engaged to produce a report on how we might improve communication and engagement. An action plan has been produced and is being implemented. A key element is a new website.

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. Covid regulations prevented much of this in 2020-21 but it is hoped to expand our volunteer network in 2021-22.
- 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 2021-22

- 6.1 Given the impact of the global pandemic planning is particularly difficult. The Trustees have identified the following key priorities for 2021-22:-
- a) Supporting the local community during the pandemic

- b) Subject to approval, organising festivals in the summer and at Christmas;
- c) To make further progress with the Crommelin Wood Project
- d) To organise a hanging basket scheme for the summer;
- e) To support town centre regeneration by organising events and encouraging shop local; and
- f) 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



Vice-Chairman

Date: 18th October 2021