

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 2020 were as follows:-

Gary McNinch (Chair)	Carol Day
Denis Waterworth (Vice-Chair)	Bill Kirkwood
John Caldwell (Hon. Sec)	Alan Maxwell
Adrian Kerr (Hon. Treasurer)	Karen McCullough
Kate Boyd	Harry Wilson

Two trustees resigned during the course of the year – Fred Green (May 2019) and Lorraine Moore (February 2020)

1.3 The Trustees met on 10 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 2019-20

3.1 Activities during the year focused on four strands:-

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

Community Engagement

3.2 Summer Festival- This annual event ran from 22nd June – 11 September. A total of 35 different organisations were involved in organising 80 events. Total attendances were of the order of 15,000 and this was delivered at a total cost of just over £19,000.



Just under £16,000 of this came from grants by Ards and North Down Borough Council with the balance met by advertising and sponsorship from local traders. Several new events were included and feedback from the community was very positive

Festival 2019 – Soap Box Derby

3.3 Christmas – Events took place throughout the period leading up to Christmas and publicised in an attractive trifold programme. The programme involved 12 different organisations. The annual switch-on following the Community Carol Service on Sunday 1st December was well attended. DCDA's main activity was the co-ordination of the Santa arrival, parade and market on 29th November. The Santa Parade and market continued and were supported by a crowd estimated by PSNI to be 4,000. The Santa Fun Run was organised this year by Dee Runners and was very popular. The total event cost just over £4,000 with the bulk of this met by grants from the Borough Council.

3.4 Halloween – A Halloween Fireworks Display on the harbour with stalls and entertainment in the Community Centre was very successful.

3.5 Crommelin Wood Restoration - Throughout the year, work continued on this project with the ongoing financial support of Live Here Love Here funding and the Co-op Community Fund from our local store in Donaghadee. We are grateful to Ards and North Down Borough Council for their continuing help and advice in implementing the various improvements and for granting us a further two-year lease to continue our work. This year work concentrated on pathway maintenance and the provision of interpretative boards, detailing bird life and tree identification. Work also began on the provision of viewing platforms over the wetland area of the forest and the preparation of a specification for an environmental study to ensure that enhancement planting and maintenance of this area does not damage existing features and wildlife inhabitants. Our specialist forestry adviser and local resident, Bill Wright continues to advise on all aspects of our work and is always available to share his knowledge and expertise with school groups and those interested in tree planting and maintenance. The Association is encouraged by the increased use of the newly constructed pathways by locals, who appreciate the woodland environment and its unique contribution to enhancing the quality of life in Donaghadee and the surrounding area.

- 3.6 Volunteers Night- Attendance at a Volunteer Celebration and Recognition event in March was affected by the global pandemic but we were delighted to have an attendance of 65 people representing 15 different community organisations in the town. Prior to the meal there were speakers from the local Council and Volunteer Now following which there was a panel discussion.
- 3.7 Community Development Project – Each year, Ards and North Down Borough Council makes available a grant for community development. This year's project was to work with Donaghadee Primary School and St Anne's Primary School to make a mosaic celebrating the town 110 year-old lifeboat station. Martin McClure, who had previous experience in making mosaics of this nature was appointed to lend his professional expertise. We asked the Rotary Club of Donaghadee to support the project by making a substantial financial contribution when it emerged that the project required planning approval with an application fee of £848. Delays in obtaining planning permission forced a delay of the project until the spring when the global Coronavirus pandemic meant it could not be completed. The project was eventually completed in November 2020.
- 3.8 Coronavirus Global Pandemic – In the second half of March the Government imposed a lockdown in response to the global pandemic. 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. Applications were made to various funds to secure funds for the 2020-21 year.
- 3.9 Shop Local Promotions – The popular shop local days were organised as part of the Summer and Christmas festivals and were well supported with positive feedback from participating traders.
- 3.10 Website and Social Media – During the year the Association continued to use its website (www.visitdonaghadee.com) to inform the local community and visitors of current issues.

Community Support and Development

- 3.11 Support for Groups - The Association continued to circulate information of value to organisations in the locality. This included opportunities for grants, training courses and support programmes.
- 3.12 Equipment - We loaned out various items of equipment from our store. These items which are available for use by our member organisations include a portable stage, a pa system, digital projector and screen, gazebos, New Age Kurling game, walkie talkies and display panels. These enable organisations to put on their own events to raise funds, promote membership etc.

Expanding the Local Economy

- 3.13 Trader Engagement – A sub-committee of local traders supports the Association in its desire to see a more vibrant town centre offering opportunities for employment. The forum provides an opportunity to inform traders of events and other developments and obtain their views on issues affecting the local economy.
- 3.14 Floral Decorations – the Association worked with local traders to erect some 60 hanging baskets around the town. This involved fixing brackets, purchasing baskets and arranging their planting with local suppliers. The displays alongside those

arranged by the local Council were a major factor in the town being awarded Best Kept Small Town by the Northern Ireland Amenity Council.

- 3.15 Heritage Coasters – In what proved to be a very popular project the Association worked closely with Donaghadee Tour Guides, the Historical Society and the Council to produce a series of 8 coasters celebrating the history and heritage of the town. These were funded through a Heritage Grant of £500 from the local Council and funds from the education theme within the Townscape Heritage Initiative. Feedback has been extremely positive.

Campaigning and Representation

- 3.16 Committee members participated at regular meetings of Council Officers and representatives of our sister groups in Comber, Holywood, Newtownards and Bangor. This has been very useful in exchanging information, co-ordinating events to avoid clashes and as a forum for discussion of Council policies such as Floral Decorations and Street Trading.

- 3.17 The Association has two of the three community seats on the Donaghadee Town Steering Group which is the forum charged with the management of the Townscape Heritage Initiative, Public Realm Works, the free WIFI service and the implementation of the Donaghadee Masterplan. This forum allows for discussion of issues such as:-

- The prioritisation of Masterplan works; and
- The impact of proposed housing developments on the town infrastructure including traffic flows and car parking;

- 3.18 Business Rates – The Association consulted with local traders before making a detailed response to the Rates Review being conducted by the Department of Finance.

- 3.19 CCTV Petition – a burglary at a local town centre shop prompted calls for a CCTV system to be installed in the town centre. The Association organised a petition which was signed by over 1,000 people and presented this to the Mayor in June 2019. A response is awaited.

Thanks

- 3.20 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. During the year this has been achieved in a variety of ways, in particular:-

- Involvement in the festivals in the summer and at Christmas gives participants and non-participants increased civic pride;
- The festivals also generate much needed footfall and enable many local businesses to remain viable;

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 2020-21

6.1 Given the impact of the global pandemic planning is particularly difficult. The Trustees have identified the following key priorities for 2019-20:-

- 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

Date:

Chairman