

GLENCOLIN RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

A.G.M. REPORT

Monday 10th March 2025

The meeting began at 4.00pm

In Attendance:	Sean Lennon	Glencolin Residents Association
	Josephine Tubridy	Glencolin Residents Association
	Paddy Hardy	Glencolin Residents Association
	Betty Barr	Glencolin Residents Association
	Meabh Scott	Welfare Advice .
	Alison Mc Glinchy	Local Trader
	Teresa Hyland	Resident
	Jackie Bunting	Glencolin Residents Association
	Marty Black	Safer Neighbourhood
	Arder Carson	Local Councillor
	Alec Trainer	Resident
	Frances Perry	Resident
	Peter Burns	Resident
	Lorraine Gregory	Resident
	Conor Mackel	Tutor
	Donna Mc Clean	Resident
	Bruce McLarnen	Resident
	Mairead Mc Crea	Kids Together
	Bernie Coogan	Resident
	Sharon Mc Closkey	Independant
	Martine Barr	Resident
	Eilish Mc Ginn	I.T. Tutor/ Volunteer
	Jeannie Mc Dowell	Resident
	Chloe Quinn	Family support

1. Welcome and Chairperson's Annual Report:

Sean Lennon

Sean Lennon welcomed everyone to the 2025 A.G.M. Sean said it was with a very heavy heart that we record the passing of our esteemed former member Muriel Gordon. Many of you here tonight will have received this news with great sorrow and I want to extend our sincere sympathy to the family. She was an active member and a great character and will be sorely missed.

Prior to September 2007 the association had operated on an entirely voluntary basis, funding for a Project Manager was secured from B.R.O. (Belfast Regeneration Office) and known hereafter as D.F.C. (Department for Communities). In this very difficult time we enter a critical period of rising energy increases & what is known to us in the Community sector as an income related crisis and not as Government like to call it a cost of living crisis. We have watched as our doctors, nurses, health workers, teachers, classroom assistants, bus drivers and other public sector workers have been forced to take strike action for better pay & conditions. This sector has not seen pay increases for almost 10 years and nervously wait every year to see if contracts are being renewed in order to continue to provide vital services and plan ahead. No anti-poverty strategy has been agreed to replace Neighbourhood Renewal and the Executive has still not agreed on the way forward. Glencolin will continue to represent & support residents in association with other members of the community sector & Statutory agencies.

Throughout the year the organisation has dealt with an increasing number of resident's issues varying from Housing Executive, Belfast City Council & Community Safety. The withdrawal of the £20 Universal credit uplift has caused further hardship to families already existing on a very limited budget.

The C.D.O. continues to represent the organisation on the following forums,

- Lenadoon Neighbourhood Renewal
- West Belfast Housing Network (Consumer panel)
- Belfast Hills Forum
- Housing & Environmental Forum
- West Belfast Partnership Board Housing & Environmental sub-group

- West Belfast Partnership Board Area Renewal Forum
- Kids Together Disability Organisation
- Board of Falls Women's Centre..

These meetings also provide an excellent opportunity for networking within the sector.

We managed to get our senior citizens gardening and decorating scheme funded by B.C.C. for a second year, many thanks to all volunteers who assisted.

We have been able to continue with our service provision this year with support from the Housing Executive who continue to lease us the premises, Belfast City Council, D.F.C The Lottery & Social Supermarket

The women's group, addiction & mental health self help groups & older persons group continues to go from strength to strength. Residents continued to receive support from welfare advice & family advocacy, buddy support, counselling services, a variety of training, health & social activities have also taken place throughout the year. Jackie continues to work effortlessly on our behalf to secure funding so that the range of services on offer can continue.

I would like to thank everyone who supported me throughout the year. On behalf of the Management Committee & Safer Neighbourhood Project I would like to thank Jackie, our C.D.O. /Project Manager for her dedication and hard work throughout the year. We will continue to lobby and campaign for the Glencolin Community.

2. Minutes of A.G.M. 2024 and matters arising

Secretary's Report

Josephine Tubridy

Josephine welcomed everyone and asked those present to look over the minutes from the previous year. There were no matters arising. She then asked for a proposer and a seconder that the minutes were a true and accurate account. Proposed by Betty Barr and seconded by Patrick Hardy.

3. Staff Report

Jackie Bunting (C.D.O.)

I want to begin by endorsing Sean and expressing my sincere sadness at the passing of our esteemed friend & colleague Muriel. Sincere sympathy to the entire family circle. Muriel was one of life's finest, she was always on hand to help out, no job too big or too small. She was one of the first people I met when taking up the post 16 years ago and we soon became great friends. She was larger than life and we had many a disagreement but we always managed to see the funny side. Nobody who knew Muriel had a bad word to say about her. Everyone I have spoken to since her passing have said Glencolin has lost one of its finest, neighbour, friend, colleague, community worker. She started this project along with Betty & Danny to bring the community together and many a meeting was had over a cup of tea in their wee kitchen where activities etc. were planned for the community. It was a great honour to be part of their dream to see the area gain recognition from the Housing Executive who lease the premises and the Department funding the core post. I will continue to work with and for the local community.

Since taking up the post in September 2008 I have had the pleasure of seeing the project grow to the extent that we have outgrown the capacity of the community flat. A priority for me has and will continue to be a permanent community facility for this area. I have worked with the Management Committee in lobbying everyone involved in the re-development of the Glen Road to ensure that this organisation retains a high profile and gets the social amenities it deserves. The children of this area deserve a community facility and parents and residents deserve service provision in a safe, secure environment. Our welfare advice & family support service continues to provide a vital service as more people feel the financial pressures on family life, this has increased mental & physical health issues and we hope to secure funding to enable us to continue this work. We have been successful in our bid to deliver food vouchers through the Social Supermarket scheme and I hope we are successful in retaining this for another year as it enabled our welfare service to assist those in greatest need,

We have had another very busy year as we struggle to meet the demand and support people through this economic crisis. Our wide range of service provision included I.T. for beginners, Silver Surfers, Essential skills, Personal Development, Culture & Diversities, Ending Hate in our Communities, Sexual Health & Drug Awareness, Healthy Eating on a Budget, Stress Man. & Colour Therapy, Looking after our Mental Health, Art, History & Creative Writing classes, Yoga, Salsa, Pilates for over 50's. 15 volunteers had the opportunity to go on team building residential to Lusty Beg Island. I would like to thank the Housing Executive who have continued to work closely with us to improve housing conditions in the area. 15 homes will receive bathroom upgrades this year and an E.C.M. scheme has just been completed, which replaced guttering, repaired porches and other additional outdoor improvement works. These were postponed and further delayed as the Housing Executive employed a new contractor.

We are currently planning this year's activities, which will include another Social supermarket voucher scheme and social activities for older people, details of which have yet to be confirmed. We will continue to address residents social inequality issues. A priority for me has & will be the securing of funding to enable our service provision for families, women & Travellers groups. We will continue to have a strong voice on the lobbying front, particularly around, fuel poverty & the cost of living, education, affordable childcare, gender equality, zero hour contracts etc.

Finally I would like to take this opportunity to thank the following, without their support the work of the organisation would not be possible,

- The N.I.H.E. who lease us the building free of charge and have renewed our lease for a further two years. We would like to thank Lisa, Alison & all the team at the Diary Farm office. We wish Margaret Marley and her team well and thank them all their help and support throughout the year.
- Department for Communities who fund the post, in particular Brenda Richards for all her support throughout the year. We wish her a long & healthy retirement and she will be sorely missed. We welcome Karen and look forward to working with you. We had hoped to see a future plan for the sector in place but as yet we are still waiting for confirmation from the Minister as to our current level of funding for the coming financial year. This sector is facing a crucial financial crisis and the continuation of services is under severe threat without a clear anti-poverty strategy in place.
- Belfast City Council communities Department for all their grant aid support.
- Our political representative, Arder Carson for all his support.
- Our funders: Awards for All, Ireland Fund, C.F.N.I, Good Relations Council, Children in Need, John Moore Trust and in Particular Bernard Black , we wish him well in his retirement, Halifax, Charlie Mc Glinchy and last but not least Danny Mc Garry who has moved to a new post. We would like to Thank Sharon & Sinead from Kids Together for taking on our salary accounts without charge. This is an example of Community organisations supporting each other and utilising skills.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank all our volunteers, in particular the men and women of the Safer Neighbourhood Project, our listening ear buddy's and our Management Committee whose dedication to the residents of this area never ceases to amaze me. A special thank you to Sharonj Mc Closkey from Kids Together West Belfast, who will be our independent for this evening and to Josephine for preparing the refreshments and helping to organise the A.G.M.

4. Presentation of Accounts and Appointment of Auditor
Treasurers Report
Patrick Hardy

Paddy welcomed everyone and also sent his condolences to Muriel's family A great woman.

He informed everyone that 2023/ 2024 had been a very difficult period for the community sector in general. With Jackie's continued drive and commitment we managed to continue our service delivery throughout the year. He said sourcing funding was always ongoing and becoming increasingly hard in this current economic climate. He thanked Jackie on behalf of the Management Committee and for her assistance in preparing the year end returns for the auditor. He then asked everyone present if they were happy to ratify the accounts.

He then asked if everyone was happy to retain the services of Joe Quinn our auditor for the forthcoming year. This was agreed by everyone present.

5. Election of new committee
Chaired by Sharon Mc Closkey

Sharon began by asking the current committee to stand down. All said they were putting themselves forward for another term of office, this was agreed by everyone present. Betty was asked if she would take up Danny's position of Vice-chair as the members felt it is what he would have wanted and she has stood side by side with him since the formation of the organisation. She said it would be an honour and this was endorsed by everyone present. The association would like to take this opportunity to encourage some more residents to join the Management Committee. The Committee will remain behind to set dates for meetings etc.

6. A.O.B.

Resident's Thanked Jackie and the Management & volunteers for their continued work on behalf of everyone living in the area. For the continued service & support during a very difficult 2 years.

Jackie thanked the residents for their continued support and especially those who volunteer their time throughout the year and without whom service delivery at its current capacity would not be possible.

Jackie then brought the meeting to a close by once again thanking everyone for attending and inviting them to stay for refreshments.

The meeting ended at 5.15pm