

Chairman's Annual Report for Lisanelly Regeneration Group (GK House)

Trustees (Committee Members), experienced the new normal after Covid 19, during the period June 2022-2023. Some new Faces had joined the Committee and had expressed ideas for future routes LRG could take GK House. Making use of the entire building would be beneficial to those in our catchment area, even more so after Covid 19. Recommendations were then made to access funding for various aspects, including new folding chairs, first aid, committee training, youth group, core costs, safe-guarding and flower arranging. Plans towards updating equipment and establishing varied programs, to encourage further engagement within the area are currently being looked into. However, more interaction is required within the community, to build upon what is provided in future. Covid had prevented door-to-door contact with a lot of non-tech individuals, struggling families and the housebound. People are thankfully beginning to accept outdoor communication again and are looking towards GK House as it's communal hub once more.

As restrictions ended, a successful GK Youth Summer 2022 Scheme took place, with an amazing Youth Club 2022-2023 following suit. The children were able to re-connect with friends in the building and regain a feeling of normality after previous year's limitations. The children needed to experience life beyond Covid 19, which had taken a toll on them and their families. Focusing on their mental Health encouraged them to open up and express their frustrations. Certificates were also awarded to those who took part in a well-being program, with a visit to the local council offices in Omagh, for their presentations.

To further enhance what we provide teenagers, the TBUC project came to light, with its varying aspects of enabling youth to attain new skills and cross-community work. TBUC was acknowledged as an ideal program to support the needs of the local teens, sadly, as with many charities funding has seen decreases or cuts and unfortunately, it was cut for 2023. With high hopes, TBUC will be up and running in 2024.

Our older generation had seen restrictions; beyond anything they'd witnessed before. It was vital for LRG to try and bring them out of their homes and back to socialisation. In November 2022, LRG members spoke to SWAP, about bringing these individuals to GK House for a Christmas lunch with music. The event proved to be successful and led to more lunches being organised at GK House during February, March and June 2023. It has enabled the elderly community to be actively involved with others once again.

On 23rd November 2022, representatives from community groups in Omagh, were invited to a working lunch with councillors from Fermanagh and Omagh District Council. Discussions about issues within our communities and the town itself were highlighted. The council members were extremely interested in working with us and even visited community centres, including GK House. It was a positive experience which may lead to future endeavours. Anything that benefits the people is a welcomed addition.

A request to Omagh Volunteer Centre, for assistance in addressing GK House's community garden, led to LRG being referred onto the Business in the Community Northern Ireland. The organisation then sent a volunteer team from NI Water in April 2023, to help improve the garden and re-establish planting beds. The end result has created an enrichment to the garden alongside the existing poly tunnel and its wide array of delicious vegetables. The

planting beds are open for use by the community and guidance is always available upon request.

As members of LRG, we voluntarily commit our spare time to helping those who ask for understanding and support. It is essential that we work together to provide this to everyone we represent. Returning to normal, but with respect to a different type, LRG is hopeful in remaining a steadfast in the local community. Times have changed since Covid and more stresses are befalling those around us. Financial problems, food/fuel poverty, family dynamics and health are among the leading issues affecting the local people. Being committed to providing a service to those who seek it, is a fundamental part of LRG. It is hoped that new Volunteers can be enticed into GK House to further this and enable a larger support group for the area. This can lead to new skills being added to LRG, which enhances the committee as a whole.

On a personal note, I'd like to thank all of the out-going committee members for their work throughout the year 2022-2023. Without your invaluable time and efforts LRG wouldn't be possible.

Louise Camac 28/06/23

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Chairman