

North Down Community Assistance

Annual Report for the year April 2017-March 2018

NIC102430

Objectives & Aims

Relieve poverty, sickness for the aged and to promote the public benefit of the inhabitants of Newtownards, Comber and Donaghadee and its environs hereinafter described as “the area of public benefit” without distinction of age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, gender, race or nationality, political, religious or other opinions by associating the statutory authorities, voluntary organisations and inhabitants in a common effort to advance education, and to provide facilities of interests of social welfare for recreation or other leisure-time occupation, with the object of improving the conditions of the life for the said inhabitants.

Throughout this year listed below is some of the valuable work we have done.

We collected food items and operated a voluntary ‘food bank’ which involved the distribution of food parcels and tackling loneliness.

As stated the areas we serve are quite often deprived areas, we have high levels of unemployment and many one parent families.

Throughout the year we supported partner groups to have a regular pick up with a local supermarket and with this help we are able to deliver food parcel’s to those who need it most, many of whom are over the age of 65.

We found that by delivering a small hamper and spending 30-45 minutes having a chat has significantly improved our older generations mental health and has made them feel valued again.

Family events and youth events.

Throughout the year we assist with several different events, such as trips that promote quality family time - we take around 20 families to various locations and have many family orientated fun days; alongside this we also have dedicated events for youth club such as Christmas, Halloween and Easter events.

Training and skills building.

We provide courses to the community such as first aid, child protection etc . This service has assisted several people to gain paid employment.

Our work with other communities.

We receive and distribute on a basis agreed with the local Council, the cultural expression grant that each community listed with us receive. We ensure timely distribution of each communities’ funding support, manage the receipts and ensure all is running smoothly. We have these accounts independently examined and signed off by a qualified person and all details are reported to Ards and North Down Borough Council.

Throughout the year we continued to run our housing support service for local residents.

It is acknowledged that this is one of our most valued services is the housing support service we offer. We work closely with the Northern Ireland Housing Executive in resolving any issues that tenants face. We help tenants with repairs and maintenance issues, we help with finding people permanent homes, and liaison with the housing executive closely in regards to community schemes available.

We assist tenants who may have issues arising in regards to the Disabled facilities grants and we also assist with housing benefit queries.

Our office has been open 5 days per week from which we offer local councilor and MLAS surgeries .

We at North Down Community Assistance pride ourselves on the work we do and work closely with other community organizations to ensure a peaceful and inclusive society for all.