

Movilla Abbey Church – Church of Ireland & Methodist Church in Ireland Trustees' Annual Report for the year ended 31 December 2022

**Movilla Abbey Church
63 Movilla Road
Newtownards BT23 8EZ
Charity Number: NIC 102613**

With regard to the Charity Commission's Public benefit requirement statutory guidance, the trustees are pleased to present this year's annual report.

Movilla Abbey Church (Church of Ireland & Methodist Church in Ireland) is a lively and friendly church in the heart of east Newtownards close to the ancient ruins of Movilla Abbey. It was established in 1980, as a shared ecumenical partnership between the Church of Ireland (COI) and the Methodist Church in Ireland (MCI), by whom the property is equally shared and owned.

As was highlighted in our CCNI Annual Report 2021, after a Commissioning Service in October 2021 we became a single, united congregation belonging fully and equally to both the Methodist Church in Ireland and the Church of Ireland. This decision was approved and ratified at the aforementioned Commissioning Service led by the COI Diocesan Bishop, Rt Rev David McClay, and the MCI District Superintendent, Rev Philip Agnew.

The process of 'coming together' was more formally established in November 2022, when a new 'Leadership Team' was appointed and elected to fulfil the constitutional roles of both the COI Select Vestry and the MCI Church Council.

Purpose and function

The charitable purpose of the Church of Ireland, of which Movilla Abbey Church remains a local expression, and through whom we act as Charity Trustees, is the advancement of the Christian religion.

The principal function of Movilla Abbey Church is to support the advancement of the Christian religion, through engagement with the general public, by promoting the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. Being open to and engaging with society as a whole, and offering support for those needing help are fundamental to an expression of Christian faith. The Church's care for the disadvantaged, the sick, the elderly and the young is a clear public benefit. It's ministries of baptism, marriage and funerals provide a vital public service to the community and families from birth, through life and death.

This can be measured and evidenced through increased social integration and pastoral care delivered at the point of need. The direct benefit of participation in Church life includes the

enjoyment of public worship and the giving and receiving of pastoral ministry, improved understanding of the values relating to civic engagement, community cohesion, and providing a bridge between diverse groups; as well as improved educational outcomes through the Church's ministry of teaching both children and adults.

The beneficiaries are the general public, and the public valuation of the benefits can be evidenced through attendance at public worship, participation in Church governance and willingness to support through contributions, the continuing witness of the Church.

As a result of these objectives, Movilla Abbey Church has custody of property, records, materials and artefacts of significance to the cultural and religious heritage, and maintenance of which (until November 2022) was undertaken by both the Select Vestry, and the Church Council separately. From 20th November 2022, a new united governing body (the Leadership Team) was established, which fulfils all the roles and responsibilities of both Select Vestry and Church Council.

Governing Document and Constitution of the Charity

Chapter III of the Constitution of the Church of Ireland governs Parishes and Parochial organisation.

Organisational Structure

The Select Vestry members (who from 20 Nov 2022 are known, at Movilla as *Leadership Team* members) are the charity's trustees and are responsible for the day-to-day management of the parish and consists of the serving member(s) of the clergy, the church wardens, the glebe wardens, and usually not more than ten members of the General Vestry, elected at the annual meeting of the General Vestry, known as the Easter Vestry.

The Select Vestry is chaired by the incumbent minister or other member of the clergy officiating in the parish. Select Vestry members are responsible for making decisions on matters of general concern and importance to the parish including issues of fabric and finance. The Select Vestry meets at times fixed by members or by the Diocesan Synod. Special meetings may be convened at any time by the Chairperson or the church warden.

The principal Select Vestry office-bearers for the year 2022 (from April – Nov) were:

Clergy	Rev. Alan Peek (SV Chairperson)
Secretary	Martin McAlinney
Treasurer	Karen Boyd
Church Wardens:	Ian Lappin (Rector's) Lorraine McVeigh (People's)
Glebe Warden:	Ian Lappin (Rector's)
Additional Select Vestry members were:	

Gillian Clarke
Lisa Currie
Michael Hilland
Rosemary Lappin
Barbara Soley

From Nov 2022 the principal office bearers of the new Leadership Team were:

Clergy	Rev Alan Peek (Co-Chair) Rev Michael Spence (Co-Chair)
Secretary & Church Steward	Patricia Meara
Church Steward	Lorraine McVeigh
Co-Treasurers	Karen Boyd Cheryl Stewart
Property Stewards	Ian Lappin Robin Hamill

Additional Leadership Team Members were:

Trevor Bristow
Gary Dunn
Barbara Haughan
Rosemary Lappin
Georgie Herron
Gillian Clarke

Public Worship & Working Together

Movilla Abbey Church buildings and grounds are shared and administered equally by both the Church of Ireland (Anglican) and the Methodist Church in Ireland (Methodist). Since social restrictions imposed by the Covid Pandemic in 2020, forced our public worship online, Sunday gatherings, which were formerly denominationally separate, were united in a single weekly Sunday service at 11am. When public gathering was re-permitted in 2021, we continued to meet as one Anglican & Methodist congregation at 11am, retaining our online streaming option for those at home. This continued to be the pattern throughout 2022, when we saw greater numbers returning to Sunday morning worship, but also maintained a healthy weekly engagement online with views by existing members, but also new visitors.

From September 2022, weekly Sunday Evening worship gatherings at 7pm were re-established, along with a Midweek Communion service on Wednesdays at 11am. Throughout 2022, our midweek Life Groups (smaller home-based groups for worship, bible study, prayer and outreach) continued to connect people, and resource them for Christian life and mission.

Community Involvement, Outreach and Mission

Following Pandemic restrictions and limitations in 2021, Movilla's community life returned to something like a 'new normal' in 2022. Here is a summary of our community engagement:

- Nursery & Playgroup – this is a private enterprise, independent of Movilla Abbey Church, that rent a significant section of our buildings Mon-Fri during term times, but it has very strong ties to our church community, including staff.
- Parent & Toddler Groups – Two weekly sessions on Tuesday and Thursday mornings, which have had problems with over-subscription, necessitating limiting places.
- Wednesday Coffee Shop – a thriving outreach, run by dedicated volunteers to community members from all walks of life, providing cooked breakfasts, tea, coffee and snacks. Operates in our purpose-built 'Welcome Space' with commercial-quality seating and dining.
- Seniors Lunches – a fortnightly gathering providing important social space for isolated and vulnerable older adults, as well as a nutritious hot two-course meal.
- Children's Uniformed Organisations – Guiding, Scouting and Boys Brigade organisations for children of all ages, meet every night Monday to Thursday.
- School Engagement – Church members serving as Transferor Reps on different local school Boards of Governors. We also provide a fortnightly, free coffee and drinks ministry to parents and children at the school gates of Abbey Primary School.
- Summer Kids Club – in July 2022 we ran a fun-packed, full week 'Encanto' themed Kid's club for over 50 local children, providing lunch in an attempt to address 'holiday hunger' in poorer families
- Litter-Picking Ministry – a monthly community service on Saturday mornings, providing picking (and safely disposing) of public litter on public streets within a half-mile radius of our church premises
- And other work going on outside the building each week includes Pastoral care visits, Life groups each with their own community mission engagement including serving at Bowtown Kids Club, Rivenwood outreach to new residents, and Comber 'Muddy church' for young families.
- And then we have the charitable work through which we support organisations by regular donations or fundraising efforts (usually fry mornings, facilitated by our Catering Team). In 2022 we have donated to Newtownards food bank, CAP, Street Pastors, LINK, Churches Ministry of Healing, Leprosy Mission, Christian Aid and others.
- Christmas 2022 included several community engagement highlights: a well-attended Carols by candlelight service, a Blue Christmas service (a reflective seasonal service for bereaved and lonely persons), a popup nativity service for young families and small children. And our 'Christmas Light' event, where we invited local families to an outdoor, dramatised, re-telling by costumed characters, of the Nativity story, followed by a puppet show, some crafts and food indoors. Over 350 attended.

Compliance with Public Benefit

The charitable purpose of Movilla Abbey Church is the advancement of religion through holding regular worship and communicating with the caring for parishioners and others in our community.

This is achieved through Christian witness and outreach, and is delivered through the provision of public worship and the various activities outlined above. It is of benefit to all in the community. There is also pastoral support and visits for those in need.

The Parish has given careful consideration to the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland's guidance on public benefit to ensure that activities entered into during the year have helped to achieve the Parish's objectives and activities, while also providing public benefit.

Financial Review

Full details of the receipts and expenditure can be found in the charity accounts submitted separately, alongside this report. All items of income and expenditure included within the receipts and Payments Statement have been accounted for on a cash receipts basis.

Going concern

The trustees have reviewed the budgets for the year ahead and are satisfied that there are adequate funds in place to ensure that the Parish can continue its activities and the financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2022 can be signed off as a going concern.

Pay and remuneration

The stipend of the Rector is administered by the Parish. In 2021 this was £32,764 per annum, including locomotory and office expenses. (See Financial Report for further details)

Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities

The Trustees are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the statement of receipts and payments and statement of assets and liabilities in accordance with the applicable law and regulations. The law applicable to charities in Northern Ireland with income of less than £250,000 requires the trustees to prepare a statement of receipts and payments and a statement of assets and liabilities for each financial year.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the Parish's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time.

Signed on behalf of the trustees



Trustee: Rev Alan Peek
Date: 3rd May 2023



Trustee: Mrs Rosemary Lappin
Date: 3rd May 2023