

Sandy Row Residents Association NI102632

Annual Report to Trustees for the Financial Year 1st April 2023 to 31st March 2024

Sandy Row Residents Association is formed to promote *the benefit of the inhabitants of the area of benefit (Sandy Row Area) without distinction of age, sex, race, political or religious or other opinion, by associating the statutory authorities, voluntary organisations and inhabitants in a common effort; to advance education; to preserve and protect health, both mental and physical; to provide and assist in the provision of facilities in the interests of social welfare for recreation and other leisure time occupation with the object of improving the conditions of life of the inhabitants of the area of benefit; to promote all or any of the objects for the benefit of the inhabitants of the area of benefit which now or hereafter may be deemed by law to be charitable.* Additionally, the Association retains the objects to *establish or to secure the establishment of a Community Centre (hereinafter called "the Centre") and to maintain and manage or to co-operate with any local statutory authority in the maintenance and management of such a Centre for activities promoted by the Association and its constituent bodies in furtherance of the above objects."*

For the year in question, the following persons served as Committee members and trustees of Sandy Row Residents Association

Jayne Nelson
Lynn Nelson
Patsy Hoy
Leanne Hoy
Mandy McAlister
Leanne Adams
Jodie Sloss
Annalise Sloss
Angela Millar
Joanne Hoy

This Report is for the financial year from 1st April 2023 to 31st March 2024 and a summary of the Associations activities includes;

At the opening of the session in question the Association had been dormant for the duration of the Covid pandemic and the various and successive lockdown situations. During that period the community base at 19A City Way was closed and remained closed until the start of this financial year.

Prior to the commencement of this particular session the Association lost a number of key personnel and officers of the charity; the remaining members held an initial meeting and it was agreed that there were still important roles and purposes that the Association retains

and that rather than pursuing dissolution a new committee was established and a plan of action for the rest of the year was put in place.

The Association was successful in raising a small Community Involvement Grant from the Housing Executive and combined with some funding from Belfast City Council and donations from a number of local sources, has been able to run a kids after-schools club and a range of other drop-in activities which sustained the community base.

We have now been running a After Schools project with children from the Sandy Row area for two days per week (Tuesdays and Fridays) from the 1st December 2023 right up until the 31st March 2024. The After Schools club has been split into two sessions on each of the days to accommodate the differing needs and demands of different age groups and between boys and girls. The project includes a wide range of indoor activities including crafts, cooking, baking and other learning games etc and the grant for the most part is covering the running costs of the community base to enable us to sustain this project, through payment of utilities ie heat and light but also ensuring that we have adequate insurance cover.

We also had a winter event for all our young people involving a Christmas party for all the young children in the area.

The current economic climate means that it is exceptionally difficult for many families in our community to find childcare options that are within budget; many of our children are frequently left to their own devices which, in a city centre neighbourhood, presents children with too many hazards and challenges. The purpose of the project is providing a small afterschool's project within the Sandy Row area that gives the children a safe place to play and socialize and where parents can feel assured that their children have a safe place to go to. We believe that our after schools project is beneficial for children of all ages and we have noticed that the number of children attending has reached 35 on each of our days; happily we are able to complement other after schools projects in the locality to ensure that gaps in provision are being filled.

In this first year of the reformed Association we have been able to secure a number of key outcomes, including providing children in the area with a safe place to play and socialize; assuring parents that their children have safe and supervised activities to engage in away from other potential hazards; children are learning skills and developing confidences and the ability to play and work with other children and we are helping families deal with well-being challenges and helping and supporting parents manage behaviours which would otherwise be quite challenging.

In the period leading to the end of the financial year we have undertaken some planning events and have a number of key areas of work and actions planned for the rest of 2024. This will involve the refit and decoration of the children's room, the exterior play area and garden and membership of Fairshare. This has been a challenging time but we have been supported by volunteers and committee members and by staff from the Housing Executive, Belfast City Council and Supporting Communities.

