

Ballymac Friendship Trust

Annual Report 22/23

Communities in Transition

As part of the Communities in Transition Cultural identity

We delivered a programme of workshops delivering arts and craft skills. Over thirty mostly young people took part in weekly workshops learning skills in leatherwork, model making, glass and mural painting. We created several videos explaining Loyalism. We took our exhibition on Loyalism to Glasgow and over 1500 persons attended the exhibition and talks.

Urban Villages - Arts and Creativity Programme.

Hallowe'en - This supported arts and crafts workshops in Ballymac, Diamond, Doyle Hosford, Short Strand and Walkway Community Association. At the Ballymac Centre we re-created the Great Hall from Hogwarts in our main hall and provided 'wizarding' themed workshops for young people from the Inner East area. Over 300 young people attended the 3-day event.

Remembrance – A variety of events took place from the 5th to 10th Nov, culminating in an outdoor event in Pitt Park open to all with over 200 attending. We also supported an event at the Diamond.

Christmas; This supported arts and crafts workshops in Ballymac, Diamond, Doyle Hosford, Short Strand, and Walkway Community Association. We hosted a Christmas market in the Banana Block in Portview Trade Centre with over 400 attending.

St. Patricks – funding supported workshops in Ballymac, Diamond and Walkway, as well as a range of activities in the Short Strand, including tea dances, football tournaments, fun day and evening celebration.

In February our Crafty Ladies engaged in a Retail Enterprise Training Programme, that culminated in them selling their products at St. Georges Market. In March we hosted a celebration event in the Short Strand Community Centre to thank all those who volunteer in Inner East, the event included a two course meal, and entertainment. 90 people attended the event

Urban Villages – Keeping Warm, Staying Safe.

Ballymac led on this project and co-ordinated warm hubs, across the inner east area. We ensured there was a hub open everyday of the week that provided a free hot meal. These were Ballymac Wednesday and Friday, Short Strand, Thursday lunch, Megaine Memorial, Thursday evening, Youth Initiatives, Wednesday evening, Diamond, Tuesday lunch, Walkway, Monday lunch. We also issued over 200 air

fryers; 500 snood blankets and 100 heated throws to families and elderly impacted by the cost-of-living crisis.

Summer Community Diversionary Fund

In July we hosted Chalk Fest, a three-day event that welcomed chalk artists from across Europe who created pavement masterpieces as well as workshops with young people, the festival culminated in a fun day and street party with carnival rides, live music and afternoon tea. Over 500 people attended over the 3-day event.

In June we celebrated the Queens Jubilee with a huge street party and funday, over 600 people attended the one-day event.

Late July we commenced our Summer Scheme, over 50 young people took part in two weeks of educational/ fun trips. All participants availed of hot breakfasts and healthy snacks over the 2-week programme. Supported by Belfast City Council

Ongoing Programmes

- Youth Club every Monday and Friday, delivered in partnership with Youth Initiatives - 50 participants.
- Homework club, over 20 young people regularly attend the classes Key Stage 2 on a Tuesday and Key Stage 1 on a Thursday
- Crafty Ladies meet on a Wednesday and 26 women with ages ranging from 27 – 82 regularly attending. This project is supported by the PHA.
- CFC Inner East meet every Sunday with over 70 members.
- Ballymacarrett Flute Band - Thursday evenings 40 members
- Dance classes – Saturday Morning
- Connect Club – Tuesday and Thursday night.
- Community gym open daily and free for community use – over 40 persons regularly use the facility.

We also deliver a mentorship programme for young people at risk. The Shed Mentor project supports the work of Ballymac Shed, a social economy business that has contracts for building maintenance and ground works. The project also delivers a range training courses such as health and safety, dynamic risk assessments, basic joinery, decorating etc., all designed to develop work skills in participants. There are currently 7 young people on the programme.



Hogwarts Great Hall at Ballymac



The Crafty Ladies at St. Georges Market



One of the acts at the Urban Villages Celebration event in Short Strand