

Ballymac Friendship Trust

Annual Report 2022/23

### **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 ex-prisoners and 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 300 persons attended the exhibition and talks.

### **Urban Villages - Arts and Creativity Programme.**

For Halloween, the Ballymac Centre transformed its main hall into the Great Hall from Hogwarts, offering a magical experience for young people from the Inner East area. The event featured 'wizarding' themed workshops, and over 300 young people attended the two-day celebration.

For Remembrance Day, we partnered with the Woodstock Traders Association to support a commemorative event honoring those who served and sacrificed

Christmas; The Crafty Ladies participated in four Christmas fayres, showcasing a variety of handmade goods created during their weekly craft sessions at the Ballymac. They also had the opportunity to attend a special slot at St. George's Market, where they were able to display their creations to an audience of over 2,000 visitors.

The Ballymac Community Christmas Dinner brought together 120 local neighbors, fostering a sense of community during the holiday season. In addition, two Christmas-themed coffee mornings were held, with 80 neighbors attending, further strengthening connections within the area.

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 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

In late July, we launched our Summer Scheme, which saw over 50 young people take part in two weeks of educational and fun trips. Throughout the program, all participants enjoyed hot breakfasts and healthy snacks. The initiative was supported by Belfast City Council.

We organized a camping trip to Enniskillen for six local families, offering a memorable experience that included camping, boating, and life skills activities.

We hosted a community event to mark the Queen's funeral, with 40 attendees gathering to share tea, coffee, and scones in remembrance.

#### 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 20 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