

## **CHARITY COMMISSION REPORT 2023/24**

The purpose of Ballymaconnelly Renewal Group is to advance community development and encourage civic pride and active citizenship by providing a range of services and programmes which have been highlighted through community consultations. The benefits include increased development, skills, and a better quality of life and improved mental health and wellbeing for the beneficiaries; enhanced independence, reduction of rural isolation and provision of a safer and inclusive community.

### **Objectives, Activities and Performances 2023/24**

In setting our objectives and planning our activities for the year the Committee considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit to ensure that the activities have helped to achieve the Charity's purposes and provide a benefit to the beneficiaries. We are more aware than ever of the importance of organisations like our own and the valuable part they play in their communities offering support from loneliness and an escape from isolation and mental health issues; all grant funding received is put to good use with this in mind. During 2023/24 we were fortunate to receive grant funding for a number of programmes from various bodies.

In our aim to fulfill our objectives we secured a Social Connections Grant from Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council. This funding enabled us to run activities for the Seniors Group meetings; Bop with Babs, Christmas Crafts, Beetle Drive and also to provide a light lunch at the meetings. NACN facilitated us having a Healthy Eating Expert attend two meetings where she gave nutritional advice and cooking demonstrations with lunch to follow. COAST awarded a grant which funded Christmas lunch for our Seniors. A summer outing was also enjoyed by our Seniors Group with a visit to Belfast War Memorial Museum followed by shopping at Junction One and then evening meal on the way home. This outing was funded by kind donations from the local community.

During the year we had a number of meetings charting the history of our local area kindly chaired by local historian Mr Keith Beattie. Grant Funding of £3000 from Energia Long Mountain Community Fund enabled us to do some hard landscaping to a previously untouched area adjacent to the car park and to upgrade our outdoor litter bins and provide pet waste bins around the riverside walk and community garden. PCSP also awarded us a grant for outdoor space which funded the installation of security cameras and the required signage. Donations received enabled us to erect a storage facility to the rear of the property providing much needed additional storage for extra seating, band instruments etc. Hopefully 2024/25 will see us in a financial position to insulate and add wiring to the storage facility.

The outdoor children's play area was officially opened during October 2023 and representatives from Energia Long Mountain Fund attended along with many of the smaller members of the local community. A great day was had by all and a lovely message was received afterwards from one of the funders congratulating us on "such a successful community project with all generations reaping the benefits".

Being solely dependent on our faithful band of volunteers we are delighted with what was achieved for our small rural community over the year and are ever grateful to our funders for their continued support. We aim to strive to continue in any way that we can to benefit the local community and promote improved mental health and physical wellbeing.

### **Grant Funding was secured from the following:**

Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council

NACN  
PCSP  
COAST  
Energia Long Mountain Fund/The Community Foundation

Without this funding we would be able to achieve a mere fraction of what we are currently enabled to do so it is therefore essential to us and is very much appreciated.

The Chairman & Committee  
Ballymaconnelly Renewal Group