

# **Carrickfergus Hub Improving Lives Locally (CHILL)**



## **ANNUAL REPORT APRIL 2024- MARCH 2025**

**Caretaker's House, Antrim Street, Carrickfergus, BT38 7DG**

**[info@chillonline.org](mailto:info@chillonline.org)**

**CHARITY NO: NIC 108329**

## **Committee Members**

Stephen Weir	Chairperson
Brian Smyth	Vice Chairperson
Darren Wren	Treasurer
Helen McClean	Secretary
Chris Dorrian	
Eleanor Ellerslie	
Maggie Doherty	Vice Secretary

## **AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

CHILL aims to improve and promote positive mental health and wellbeing, and to raise awareness of suicide prevention.

Our main objective is to work collaboratively with the local Community & Voluntary Sector organisations to support individuals and their families, including children and young people affected by mental health issues, to raise awareness of suicide prevention and to improve the wellbeing of the community.

## **ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS**

This year was again very challenging, given the ever-increasing and ongoing pressures put on the Health Service and subsequent impacts on the work we do. Below is a summary of the main activities over the past 12 months.

- We have renewed our lease with Council for premises.
- Success of CHILL weekly walks has continued. It is a pleasure to see new connections being made and walkers' wellbeing nurtured.
- A Facebook Group specifically for Weekly Walks and a WhatsApp Group for those not on social media ensures regular updates.
- Monthly CHILL n CHAT evenings continue to be well supported and provide a friendly informal space for anyone wishing to come along. Average numbers are around 10 each month.
- Our monthly Veterans Breakfast continues on the first Sunday of each month with volunteers welcoming and supporting attendees and relevant organisations attending to offer useful resources and support information. This year we secured funding from Gills Charity to help promote wellbeing services for older people in the Carrickfergus area and these were well attended and received.
- Funding from Mulhollands Community Engagement allowed us to provide practical support through 'Chill n Eat', where a hot meal and companionship was provided in a discrete setting.
- Young Chillerz, a group of young people who will support other young people in their schools and communities looking after their mental health and wellbeing, continues

and has seen our youth help with tidy ups and gardening in their communities whilst gaining useful skills and building their confidence. There have also been visits to forest/southampton working on self development and connecting with others as well as nature. An excellent piece of work on Bereavement was also delivered to the Group by CRUSE.

- We previously facilitated weekly sea swims over the warmer months with new members joining. We hope to resurrect our swims again this year.
- CHILL continues to be a centre for student counsellors attending Northern Regional College and Belfast Met to avail of placement and supervised practice in a voluntary capacity
- In 2024/25 period we had 8 volunteer and student counsellors and this continues to grow. Students completed their qualifying hours with CHILL and proceeded to become fully qualified Counsellors and stay on with CHILL.
- We provided approximately 1559 hours of counselling, all free of charge.
- CHILL continue to meet with and work with other community, voluntary and statutory organisations to ensure that the health and wellbeing of people living in the local community are addressed.
- Our dedicated and fully trained volunteers provide weekend Outreach support to our youth, visiting hotspots and connecting, supporting and following up on issues, whilst liaising with other agencies to ensure everyone is safe.
- CHILL actively participate in Carrick & Greenisland Community Cluster Groups – hosted by Mid and East Antrim Borough Council.
- CHILL continue to post positive support on our Facebook Page and keep the local community up to date with things happening in the Mid and East Antrim Borough Council Area
- Fundraising has been a priority this year to allow our work to continue, with practical actions including Coffee Mornings at Fortfield, Tweedie Pies donation, Tesco collection as well as grants income.

Thank you to all of our funders

- The National Lottery Community Fund
- The Halifax Foundation

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Thank you to Mid and East Antrim Borough Council who continue to support the work of CHILL in providing mental, emotional and physical health support in the local community.

Finally thank all those who have continued to support us during the year through their fundraising efforts and donations. We really appreciate your support and involvement this year.

We look forward to continuing to deliver and expand on our core issues this year and are grateful for all the support we receive.

**Stephen Weir**  
**Chairperson**

23 September 2025