

# Mountsandel Discovery and Heritage Group

Northern Ireland · Charity number 108552

## Details

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**Status** Received

**Registered** 2022-02-23

**Register** [View on the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland register](#)

## Contact

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**Address** 13 Burnside Road  
Portstewart  
BT55 7ns  
BT55 7NS

**Phone** 028 7083 2719

**Email** [maura@candyjar.co.uk](mailto:maura@candyjar.co.uk)

**Website** <http://www.mountsandeldiscovery.com/>

## Activities

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**Purposes:** 1. EDUCATION To stimulate public understanding and increase knowledge of shared histories associated with Coleraine's Mountsandel site. To assist in the development of Mountsandel learning resources for a range of demographics, for both local and wider use. To work in partnership with relevant authorities, academics and institutions in developing such learning resources and in facilitating educational experiences/activities for a range of demographics 2. CITIZENSHIP AND COMMUNITY To promote interest in local historic/heritage sites in order to encourage social benefits including civic pride/ pride of place and cross community engagement. To instigate reciprocal partnerships between public, private and voluntary organisations in the local area and beyond. To promote the development of Mountsandel as a tourism and heritage attraction to the economic benefit of the local area and as a means of social regeneration. To provide opportunities for community engagement, providing experiences and resources which will be of tangible use for local communities. To work to make all activities and projects accessible for all. (Section 75 NI Act 1998 guidelines) 3. ENVIRONMENT To promote sustainable development of local natural resources, namely Mountsandel Forest, the River Bann and Riverside Parkland, encouraging the conservation of local wildlife and natural habitats. 4. CULTURE, ARTS & HERITAGE To highlight and educate a range of demographics on the history of Mountsandel (of national and international significance). To encourage the preservation/conservation of existing heritage sites across the Bann Valley and Mountsandel, working with the relevant groups, individuals and authorities. 5. HEALTH PROMOTION To encourage the use and preservation of Mountsandel Forest, the Bann Valley and Riverside Parkland as local greenways providing opportunities for sensory and physical experiences which are beneficial to the health and wellbeing of local communities and visitors.

**What the charity does:** The advancement of education, The advancement of citizenship or community development, The advancement of the arts, culture, heritage or science, The advancement of environmental protection or improvement

**How the charity works:** Community development, Education/training, Heritage/historical

**Who the charity helps:** General public

## Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2024-12-31	£1,369	£376	£0	0

## Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
Mr Andrew Anderson		
Mr Derek Sinnamon		
Mr Liam Hickey		
Mr Patrick Lennon		
Mrs Dorothy Black		
Mrs Maura Hickey		
Mrs Rachael Marshall		
Ms Carol Martin		
Ms Loretto Blackwood		

**Mountsandel Discovery and Heritage Group**

Northern Ireland - Charity number 108552

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# Accounts

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**MOUNTSANDEL DISCOVERY & HERITAGE GROUP**

**Charity Commission No. NIC 108552**

**Date registered: 23 February 2022**

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**MOUNTSANDEL DISCOVERY & HERITAGE GROUP  
ANNUAL REPORT  
YEAR 2024**

The **Mountsandel Discovery & Heritage Group (MDHG)** was formed in 2017 and constituted as an unincorporated organisation on 17 December 2018.

The Group opened a Community/Business Account at Barclay's Bank on 8 September 2018.

MDHG was granted CCNI charitable status on 23 February 2022.

The Trustees present their Annual Mentoring Returns for the year 2024  
(1 January 2024 – 31 December 2024)

**REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS**

Registered charity name	<b>Mountsandel Discovery &amp; Heritage Group</b>
Charity registration number	<b>NIC 108552</b>
Registered Office (2023)	13 Burnside Road PORTSTEWART BT55 7NS

**Bankers:**

Barclay's Bank PLC, 27/29 Church Street, COLERAINE, BT52 1AW

**The Trustees:**

The Trustees who served the charity during the period were as follows:

Mrs Maura Hickey (Chair)  
Ms Donna McCloskey (Secretary) resigned (Dec 2024)  
Ms Loretto Blackwood (Treasurer)  
Mr Derek Sinnamon  
Mr Liam Hickey  
Ms Rachael Marshall (nee Garrett)  
Mr Andrew Anderson  
Ms Dorothy Black  
Mr Patrick Lennon  
Ms Carol Martin

**MOUNTSANDEL DISCOVERY AND HERITAGE GROUP  
ANNUAL REPORT  
YEAR 2024**

**COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

**Royal Court Hotel – in person**

9 <sup>th</sup> January (AGM)	12 <sup>th</sup> March	11 <sup>th</sup> March	19 <sup>th</sup> June
12 <sup>th</sup> September	11 <sup>th</sup> November	11 <sup>th</sup> December	

**ZOOM**

12 <sup>th</sup> February	15 <sup>th</sup> April	13 <sup>th</sup> May	15 <sup>th</sup> July
12 <sup>th</sup> August	9 <sup>th</sup> October	23 <sup>rd</sup> October	

24<sup>th</sup> June (Corbally Rd.)

**Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council (CCGBC) - Engagement Meetings**

- February 6 - Lunch-time meeting with CCGBC staff officers to discuss possible sponsor partner re Heritage Lottery funding.
- February 13 - Members met with Anne McNicholl re CRUN becoming sponsor partner for HLF Funding. (CRUN's board thought our project did not meet their objectives).
- 26<sup>th</sup> April - Mountsandel Concept Meeting held with New Director of Leisure and Development, Head of Tourism, council officers, Finance Minister and Elected Member: Discussion re Vision: shared space /education resource/ regeneration / tourism potential, essential economic and community benefits/possible Working Group reinstatement.
- 10<sup>th</sup> June - MDHG meeting with CCGBC and Ulster University Coleraine (UUC). Peace Plus application – Community, Education and the Environment was successful and Special European Programme Body (SEUPB) have apportioned £232,000 to spend.
- UUC Education Department guaranteed monies from the application to work with schools and history department to further develop the project.
- June - Discussion Meeting to allocation of SEUPB £232,000 on environment pillar and education pillar (in attendance – CCGBC Officers: Peter Thompson, Patricia O'Bryne, MDHG members: Chair Maura Hickey, Patrick Lennon and Liam Hickey)
- 30<sup>th</sup> October - CCGBC Working Group (Staff, Councillors and MDHG members) reinstated as first step and driven by elected members. Outcome Niamh Archibald (Councillor) was elected as Chair and Dorothy Black (MDHG) Vice Chair.
- Progress of project will be driven by CCGBC, remainder of Peace Plus money to develop 'the field' work in conjunction with HED. It is council's responsibility to raise money and potential areas of funding considered were, Landfill Fund, Shared Ireland Fund. Council to apply to 'Towns Programme' to raise money for realistic estimate of the project to include a bridge across the river.
- December - Laura Henry, Biodiversity and Habitat officer for CCGBC has stated that she is keen to work with MDHG.

## ULSTER UNIVERSITY ENGAGEMENT MEETINGS

- Peace Plus Application, Project and next actions were discussed. Round table event to include all stakeholders ie Waterways Ireland, The Honourable the Irish Society etc. Master Plan Blueprint to be available to all stakeholders. Joined up thinking essential, all working towards a shared goal. Waterways Ireland stressed, “The Bann” is the spine of the project, the site is the “core”.
- UUC, Schools and CCEA to collaborate using Peace Plus money for education. Members met with Duncan Morrow (Director of Community Engagement) to discuss proposed round table event postponed until early 2025. Dorothy Black is working on the UUC Education Pillar.
- MDHG Chair (Maura Hickey) contacted Claire Mulrone, ‘Head of Widening Access and Participation’ regarding the rebranding and upgrading of social media platforms. Patrick Lennon worked with students from the interactive media department during the first semester, to realise the project.
- Due to this success, CMDHG contacted MDHG Chair , as part of the ‘Science Shop,’ and was offered a new ‘Mountsandel History Project’ in the second semester with the opportunity to work with forty undergraduates mentored by four PHD graduates. MDHG are liaising with UU Science Shop and History Department.

## LOBBYING

- 12<sup>th</sup> January - MDHG committee members met with Duane Farrell, the new CEO of The Honourable the Irish Society. A presentation was organised to inform him of the importance of the Mountsandel site and our progress so far.
- 8<sup>th</sup> March - The Chair attended the Causeway Chamber President’s Annual Dinner with Malachy O’Neil (UU Director of Regional Engagement), held in the Lodge Hotel. The outcome of that evening was that Malachy nominated Duncan Morrow to work with MDHG.
- 24<sup>th</sup> May - Chair wrote introductory letters to the Taoiseach’s office, and the Tanaiste Michaël Martin, on behalf of MDHG and received a reply from the Tanaiste’s office. apologising for the late response and stating that we were too late to apply for funding this year but can apply early 2025 for Shared Island Funding.
- October - Chair contacted Economy Minister to seek a meeting.
- 28<sup>th</sup> November - a group met Economy Minister to seek his support for Mountsandel project, which was very well received by the Minister.
- MDHG contacted Council’s Biodiversity Officer.

## EDUCATION DEVELOPMENTS

- 1<sup>st</sup> August - CEO, Duane Farrell (The Honourable the Irish Society) was approached by members regarding funding for the schools' days.
- 24<sup>th</sup> September - Annual Mountsandel Schools Day Workshops in collaboration with the Rotary Club of Coleraine. CEO, Duane Farrell, The Honourable the Irish Society, also attended part of the event and saw for himself how the children enjoyed the outdoor learning experience.
- Work was undertaken with UU Media Department to rebrand and upgrade the Mountsandel website and social media outlets for getting our message out.
- Peter Thompson, CCGBC agreed to contribute £500 to the £950 online cost for renewal of website hosting, domain and SSL.
- 15<sup>th</sup> October - Mountsandel talk to Probus.
- 11<sup>th</sup> November - Initial meeting with representatives from MDHG, UU, CCGBC, about possible Round Table invitees. The project is seen as Community Outreach and Liam Campbell, Robin Ruddock and Jim Allen were suggested as possible invitees. CCEA needs to be involved.
- A follow up was undertaken re CCEA current educational strategy on Teacher Professional Learning which contributes to CCEA's resource bank of Thematic units and Interconnected Learning Ideas.
- 29<sup>th</sup> November - Zoom Meeting with Esther Martin CCEA was organised and a nominated member of staff to liaise with MDHG was agreed.

## OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

- 14<sup>th</sup> March 2024 - "Amazing this Space" Members attended a showcase event at Hillsborough invited by Matt Gamble of Co-operation Ireland.
- 18<sup>th</sup> June - Meeting with Matt Gamble, Co-Operation Ireland, at Juniper Hill Caravan site re migration/Mountsandel/River Bann. The committee decided that we could not work with Co-operation Ireland as we are a lobbying group and did not have sufficient volunteers or time to undertake the activities that they need to fulfil their conditions.
- 5<sup>th</sup> September - Heritage Trust Network (HTN) Event in Derry/Londonderry. Group member attended. Outcome from that networking event led to engagement with Alan Clarke (HTN).
- 13<sup>th</sup> September – Ulster University (UU) Course Director of PGCE Primary, Beverly McCormick, met with MDHG member.
- 25<sup>th</sup> September - Patrick arranged a visit to Friel's Bar Swatragh to investigate how they set up their museum.

- October - Waterways Ireland grant application for £1,150 was awarded in March 2024. The grant was used for a number of outreach events to promote the importance of the River Bann and Mountsandel such as promotional event for one week arranged in Coleraine Library, 'Mountsandel River Bann Talks' and by the committee at the Sandel Centre regarding, 'An Evening Celebrating the River Bann' for residents and interested people. Application for a grant in 2025 will be submitted..
- 27<sup>th</sup> November - Museum Services, Sarah Calvin, was approached regarding the Blue Plaque to honour Andrew McLean May whose work contributed to Professor Peter Woodman's discoveries at Mountsandel.
- 6<sup>th</sup> September and 13<sup>th</sup> December - Meeting with Alan Clarke Heritage Trust Network for his thoughts on how to develop the project with heritage to the forefront.
- The Honourable the Irish Society CEO has agreed funding of £800 per event for "Schools-days" for the next two years, subject to approval by the board. Application will be submitted

## SUB-GROUPS

**Education:** Dorothy Black, Loretto Blackwood, Carol Martin

**Symposium/Round Table event:** Donna Copsey, Derek Sinnamon, Thomas McErlean, Dorothy Black, Carol Martin, Loretto Blackwood

**Lobbying:** Derek Sinnamon, Patrick Lennon, Liam Hickey

**Council Working Group:** Dorothy Black., Maura Hickey, Derek Sinnanon, Carol Martin , Donna Copsey, Loretto Blackwood.

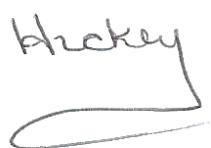
## Press Coverage

Library Event  
Sandel Centre  
Schools Day

BBC live interview, "Your Place and Mine" re Mesolithic site and its synergies with the river.

**Chair: Maura Hickey**

Maura T Hickey



**INDEPENDENT EXAMINERS REPORT TO THE CHARITY TRUSTEES OF  
MOUNTSANDEL DISCOVERY AND HERITAGE GROUP**

I report on the accounts of the Trust for the year ended **31 December 2024**, which are set out on the following pages.

**Respective responsibilities of charity trustees and examiner**

As the charity's trustees you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 65 of the Charities Act
- follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland under section 65(9)(b) of the Charities Act
- state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

**Basis of independent examiner's report**

I have examined your charity accounts as required under section 65 of the Charities Act and my examination was carried out in accordance with the general Directions given by the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland under section 65(9)(b) of the Charities Act. The examination included a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also included consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as charity trustees concerning any such matters.

My role is to state whether any material matters have come to my attention giving me cause to believe:

1. That accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 63 of the Charities Act
2. That the accounts do not accord with those accounting records
3. That the accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements of the Charities Act
4. That there is further information needed for a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

**Independent examiner's statement**

I have completed my examination and have no concerns in respect of the matters (1) to (4) listed above and, in connection with following the Directions of the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland, I have found no matters that require drawing to your attention. Signed:

Signed: *JR Esler*  
Name: *JOHN ESLETT (Accountant)*  
Address: *39 Kylebeg Road Coleraine BT52 1VZ*  
Date: *19th October 2025*

**MOUNTSANDEL Discovery and Heritage Group**  
**INCOME & EXPENDITURE Account 1 January 2024 - 31 December 2024**

	2024	2023
Opening Balance as at 01 January	128.63	313.13
<b>INCOME</b>		
<b>Grants:</b>		
Waterways Ireland	1150.00	720.00 THTIS
Fundraising Donations	219.54	130.00
<b>Total Income Received</b>	<b>1369.54</b>	<b>850.00</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>		
Events & Projects	376.44	1034.50
Bank Charges		
Petty Cash		
Fees		
Equipment		
Travel		
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>376.44</b>	<b>1034.50</b>
<b>Surplus of Income/Expenditure</b>	<b>993.10</b>	<b>-184.50</b>
Account Balance as at 31 December	<b>1121.73</b>	<b>128.63</b>

**MOUNTSANDEL Discovery and Heritage Group**

1 January 2024 to 31 December 2024

Balance Sheet as at 31 December 2024

	2024	2023
<b>Current Assets</b>		
Bank	1121.73	128.63
Debtors	0.00	0.00
	<b>1121.73</b>	<b>128.63</b>
<b>Creditors</b>	550.70	94.40
<b>Net Current Assets</b>	<b>571.03</b>	<b>34.23</b>

This income and expenditure report has been produced from the information supplied by the committee of **MOUNTSANDEL Discovery & Heritage Group**

Chair (MAURA HICKEY)

*Maura T Hickey*

Treasurer (LORETTO BLACKWOOD)

*Loretto Blackwood*  
*Maura T Hickey*

**Mountsandel Discovery and Heritage Group**

Northern Ireland - Charity number 108552

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# Accounts

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# MOUNTSANDEL

DISCOVERY & HERITAGE GROUP

MOUNTSANDEL DISCOVERY & HERITAGE GROUP

Charity Commission No. NIC 108552

Date registered: 23 February 2022

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**MOUNTSANDEL DISCOVERY & HERITAGE GROUP**  
**ANNUAL REPORT**  
**YEAR 2023**

The **Mountsandel Discovery & Heritage Group (MDHG)** was formed in 2017 and constituted as an unincorporated organisation on 17 December 2018.

The Group opened a Community/Business Account at Barclay's Bank on 8 September 2018.

MDHG was granted CCNI charitable status on 23 February 2022.

The Trustees present their report for the year 2023 (1 January 2023 – 31 December 2023)

**REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS**

Registered charity name                      **Mountsandel Discovery & Heritage Group**

Charity registration number                **NIC 108552**

Registered Office (2023)                    13 Burnside Road  
PORTSTEWART  
BT55 7NS

**Bankers:**

Barclay's Bank PLC, 27/29 Church Street, COLERAINE, BT52 1AW

**The Trustees:**

The Trustees who served the charity during the period were as follows:

Mrs Maura Hickey (Chair)

Ms Donna McCloskey (Secretary)

Ms Loretto Blackwood (Treasurer)

Mr Derek Sinnamon

Mr Liam Hickey

Ms Rachael Marshall (nee Garrett)

Mr Andrew Anderson

Ms Dorothy Black

Mr Patrick Lennon (joined 2023)

Ms Carol Martin (joined 2023)

**MOUNTSANDEL DISCOVERY AND HERITAGE GROUP**  
**ANNUAL REPORT**  
**YEAR 2023**

## 1 - COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The Trustees held 16 meetings on the following dates.

### In Person:

9 Jan 2023	7 March 2023 (AGM)	19 June 2023
31 Jul 2023	21 Aug 2023	

### Zoom :

20 Feb 2023	5 Apr 2023	24 Apr 2023	10 May 2023
15 May 2023	5 Jun 2023	11 Sep 2023	9 Oct 2023
23 Oct 2023	29 Nov 2023	11 Dec 2023	

## 2 - CAUSEWAYS COAST AND GLENS BOROUGH COUNCIL (CCGBC) ENGAGEMENT MEETINGS

- Response to **Strategic Outline Case (SOC)** (13 Jan 2023)
- Consideration of **Way Forward** to develop site (3 Mar 2023)
- **Working Party** - Terms of Reference for proposed working party/steering group and strategic direction defining Mountsandel Experience.
- **Symposium** – part funding for symposium agreed, discussion on Capital Funding. (12 May 2023)
- **Study Trip** with Council officers to Tullhogue & Newgrange sites (29 Nov 2023)
- **A. McL. May Blue plaque** application (4 Dec 2023)
- **Debriefing of Council Study Trip** and MDHG and CCGBC Officers discussion re **Stage 2 in Peace 4 funding application** for £275,000 to upgrade Mountsandel site (20 Dec 2023)

## 3 - ULSTER UNIVERSITY (UU) ENGAGEMENT MEETINGS

- Symposium sub-group meetings to progress 2022 proposal (8 Feb 2023)
- UU Meeting including Michael McGlade (Yellow Design - Augmented Reality) input by Zoom to finalise symposium (25 April 2023)
- Inaugural Mountsandel Symposium MDHG in partnership with UU the Riverside Theatre and CCGBC. More than 170 delegates attended.(14 June 2023) more info see item 6
- Symposium debrief and way ahead chaired by Ulster University (24 Jul 2023)

## 4 - EDUCATION DEVELOPMENTS

- Education Sub-group to be set up (20 December 2023) Suggested collaboration with:  
UU Department of Education (Dr Shauna McGill)  
CCGBC – Council Officers (Museum Services / Leisure & Recreation)  
MDHG – Dorothy Black and Loretto Blackwood

## 5 - LOBBYING / FUNDING

- Co-Operation Ireland, Peter Sheridan re funding (28 Apr 2023)
- Councillor Niambh Archibald to progress Land Fill Communities Fund & Introduction to Sinn Fein's Tourism Spokesperson (3 Oct 2023)

- Meeting with David Jackson (CEO CCGBC) regarding discrepancies with bridge costings for City Deal selection (17 Dec 2023)
- Councillors re The Growth Deal /Bridge - Norman Hillis, Caoimhe Archibald, Niambh Archibald
- The Hon. The Irish society discussion on rolling grant for schools' days ongoing

## 6 - OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

- **Art Competition – 16 May 2023**

Local primary schools in the area were invited to participate in the art competition on the theme of Mesolithic Mountsandel – marking the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the excavation of the Mountsandel site. 172 submitted competition entries, judged by Art teacher and MDHG members.

Prize Winners were hosted by the Mayor of the CCGBC (Councillor Ivor Wallace) at Council Mayoral office.

- **Symposium (Inaugural) – 14 June 2023**

Symposium, “The Gathering”, organised in partnership with Ulster University Coleraine and Riverside Theatre. The four main themes:

**THEME 1** - 50 years since the late Prof Peter Woodman's find of early habitation at Mountsandel, the site has remained untouched.

Professor Mike Baillie (QUB), Thomas McErlean and Colin Breen (UU) all shared personal experiences of working with Peter.

**THEME 2** - focused on education and the value of Mountsandel as an educational resource.

Teachers helped the delegates see Mountsandel through the eyes of children and the importance of developing learning through engaging with our natural and cultural heritage.

**THEME 3** - A Visitor Experience, introduced by Professor Kathryn Best German University of Cairo spoke of the importance of using the local resources in imaginative ways to encourage interest and care for heritage and to create a sense of space and place for locals and visitors.

Dr Paddy Fitzgerald from the Mellon Centre for Migration Studies said Mountsandel offered many opportunities for interdisciplinary teams to work to further explore diversity and heritage.

Mary Harte Chairperson Donegal East Tourism talked of connecting communities and heritage.

**THEME 4** - Professor Duncan Morrow introduced the final session of the day on Economic Tourism and Environmental Sustainability.

Patrick Lennon suggested how marketing, tourism, photography, filming, social media and reality technology can be used to introduce historical sites to much wider audiences.

Augmented Reality use in Sustainable Tourism – Michael McGlade – Yellow Design.

Tony McCance told of the long and complex process for the Tullaghogue Fort project to come to fruition.

### Schools' Day Workshops

- **6th MDHG Annual Mountsandel Schools' Day** workshops in collaboration with the Rotary Club of Coleraine and CCGBC Museum Services and involvement of UU History PGCE Students to cement partnership with the University.  
Four on-site workshops with facilitators explaining the context; demonstrating foraging; hunting: fishing / flint knapping. Two local schools (The Irish Society and St Malachy PS (cross-

community event) participated with approximately 70 pupils with teachers, assistants and volunteers.(19 Sep 2023)

- **Museum Services** (CCGBC) rolled out the September Schools Day Workshops for a further 4 days, week beginning 18th Sep 2023, offering a place to the schools in the borough on a first come first served . ( Limited to eight places)

#### Connections

- Meeting with Dr Katherine Best (Cairo University) to discuss connections, of Bann with Castleroe, Kilrea, Portglenone, New Ferry, Toome and Tullyhogue (29 July 2023)
- Study trip with T. McErlan Tullyhogue, Church-Island, and New Ferry(29 July 2023)
- Meeting with Matt Gamble Co-operation Ireland out-come "Amazing Space Schools (31 July 2023) Programme," involving Loretto College, Coleraine Grammar, "Art Based on Mountsandel"
- Neil Jackman of Arbarta Heritage, Tipperary (on-line) to discuss possibilities re Mountsandel site.(21 Aug 2023)
- Health Worker (retired) talk re Mountsandel and the River Bann Corridor (11 Oct 2023)
- Community Engagement Event at Sandel Centre successfully engaged with community stakeholders, potential future partners or users, which will form the basis of our Heritage Lottery Fund application. (16 October 2023)
- Ulster University local literature day featured "The Salmon People" & "Reflections on the Bann" to raise the importance and significance of Mountsandel and the River Bann Corridor(11 Nov 2023)

#### 7 - FUTURE / FUNDING

- Meeting Helen Quigley to discuss opportunities for the way ahead.(20 Nov 2023)
- Matt Gamble Co-Operation Ireland Heritage through possible Migration Funding application (4 Dec 2023)
- Small Grant Funding opportunity from Waterways Ireland progressing re future event(s) to promote awareness of Mountsandel and the River Bann corridor (15 Dec 2025)
- HLF funding for project officer ongoing
- Peace 4 funding application at stage 2 for £275,000 to upgrade Mountsandel

#### 8 - PRESS COVERAGE

Art competition; Symposium; Schools' Day; Community Engagement Event  
See Facebook: [www.facebook.com/MountsandelDiscoveryAndHeritageGroup](http://www.facebook.com/MountsandelDiscoveryAndHeritageGroup)

#### 9 – TRUSTEES

Two new Trustees joined the MDHG: Patrick Lennon and Carol Martin.

10 – THANK you to the members who have given generously of their time during the period of the report.

MAURA HICKEY (Chair)

*Maura T Hickey*

Date: 13 - 12 - 24

**INDEPENDENT EXAMINERS REPORT TO THE CHARITY TRUSTEES OF:**

**MOUNTSANDEL DISCOVERY AND HERITAGE GROUP**

I report on the accounts of the charity for the year ended 31 December 2023 as set out on the following page.

**Respective responsibilities of charity trustees and examiner**

As the charity trustees you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008.

It is my responsibility to:

Examine the accounts under section 65 of the Charities Act

Follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland under section 65(9)(b) of the Charities Act

State whether particular matters have come to my attention

**Basis of independent examiner's report**

I have examined your charity accounts as required under section 65 of the Charities Act and my examination was carried out in accordance with the general Directions given by the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland under section 65(9)(b) of the Charities Act. The examination included a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as charity trustees concerning any such matters.

My role is to state whether any material matters have come to my attention giving me cause to believe:

1. That accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 63 of the Charities Act
2. That the accounts do not accord with those accounting records
3. That the accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements of the Charities Act
4. That there is further information needed for a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

**Independent Examiners Statement**

The charity's gross income did not exceed £250,000.

I have completed my examination and have no concerns in respect of the matters (1) to (4) listed above and, in connection with following the Directions of the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland, I have found no matters that require drawing to your attention.

Signed: *[Signature]*  
Name: *JOHN ESLATZ (ACCOUNTANT)*  
Address: *30 KYLEBEG AVENUE, COLTRANE, BT52 1JN*  
Date: *10th December 2024*

**MOUNTSANDEL Discovery and Heritage Group**  
**INCOME & EXPENDITURE Account 1 January 2023 - 31 December 2023**

	2023	2022
Opening Balance as at 01 January	313.13	922.23
<b>INCOME</b>		
Grants:		
The Hon. The Irish Society	720.00	150.57
Fundraising		
Donations	130.00	365.00
<b>Total Income Received</b>	<b>850.00</b>	<b>515.57</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>		
Events & Projects	1034.50	1124.67
Bank Charges		
Petty Cash		
Fees		
Equipment		
Travel		
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>1034.50</b>	<b>1124.67</b>
<b>Surplus of Income/Expenditure</b>	<b>-184.50</b>	<b>-609.10</b>
<b>Account Balance as at 31 December</b>	<b>128.63</b>	<b>313.13</b>

**MOUNTSANDEL Discovery and Heritage Group**

**1 January 2023 to 31 December 2023**

Balance Sheet as at 31 December 2023

	2023	2022
<b>Current Assets</b>		
Bank	128.63	313.13
Debtors	0.00	0.00
	<b>128.63</b>	<b>313.13</b>
<b>Creditors</b>	94.40	0.00
<b>Net Current Assets</b>	<b>34.23</b>	<b>313.13</b>

This income and expenditure report has been produced from the information supplied by the committee of **MOUNTSANDEL Discovery & Heritage Group**

*Maura T Hickey*

Chair (MAURA HICKEY)

*Loretto Blackwood*

Treasurer (LORETTO BLACKWOOD)

*128.63  
10/12/24*

**Mountsandel Discovery and Heritage Group**

Northern Ireland - Charity number 108552

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# Annual report

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# MOUNTSANDEL

DISCOVERY & HERITAGE GROUP

MOUNTSANDEL DISCOVERY & HERITAGE GROUP

Charity Commission No. NIC 108552

Date registered: 23 February 2022

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**MOUNTSANDEL DISCOVERY & HERITAGE GROUP  
ANNUAL REPORT  
YEAR 2023**

The **Mountsandel Discovery & Heritage Group (MDHG)** was formed in 2017 and constituted as an unincorporated organisation on 17 December 2018.

The Group opened a Community/Business Account at Barclay's Bank on 8 September 2018.

MDHG was granted CCNI charitable status on 23 February 2022.

The Trustees present their report for the year 2023 (1 January 2023 – 31 December 2023)

**REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS**

Registered charity name                      **Mountsandel Discovery & Heritage Group**

Charity registration number                **NIC 108552**

Registered Office (2023)                    13 Burnside Road  
PORTSTEWART  
BT55 7NS

**Bankers:**

Barclay's Bank PLC, 27/29 Church Street, COLERAINE, BT52 1AW

**The Trustees:**

The Trustees who served the charity during the period were as follows:

Mrs Maura Hickey (Chair)  
Ms Donna McCloskey (Secretary)  
Ms Loretto Blackwood (Treasurer)  
Mr Derek Sinnamon  
Mr Liam Hickey  
Ms Rachael Marshall (nee Garrett)  
Mr Andrew Anderson  
Ms Dorothy Black  
Mr Patrick Lennon (joined 2023)  
Ms Carol Martin (joined 2023)

**MOUNTSANDEL DISCOVERY AND HERITAGE GROUP**  
**ANNUAL REPORT**  
**YEAR 2023**

## 1 - COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The Trustees held 16 meetings on the following dates.

### In Person:

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31 Jul 2023	21 Aug 2023	

### Zoom :

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## 2 - CAUSEWAYS COAST AND GLENS BOROUGH COUNCIL (CCGBC) ENGAGEMENT MEETINGS

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- **Debriefing of Council Study Trip** and MDHG and CCGBC Officers discussion re **Stage 2 in Peace 4 funding application** for £275,000 to upgrade Mountsandel site (20 Dec 2023)

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- UU Meeting including Michael McGlade (Yellow Design - Augmented Reality) input by Zoom to finalise symposium (25 April 2023)
- Inaugural Mountsandel Symposium MDHG in partnership with UU the Riverside Theatre and CCGBC. More than 170 delegates attended.(14 June 2023) more info see item 6
- Symposium debrief and way ahead chaired by Ulster University (24 Jul 2023)

## 4 - EDUCATION DEVELOPMENTS

- Education Sub-group to be set up (20 December 2023) Suggested collaboration with:  
UU Department of Education (Dr Shauna McGill)  
CCGBC – Council Officers (Museum Services / Leisure & Recreation)  
MDHG – Dorothy Black and Loretto Blackwood

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- Co-Operation Ireland, Peter Sheridan re funding (28 Apr 2023)
- Councillor Niambh Archibald to progress Land Fill Communities Fund & Introduction to Sinn Fein's Tourism Spokesperson (3 Oct 2023)

- Meeting with David Jackson (CEO CCGBC) regarding discrepancies with bridge costings for City Deal selection (17 Dec 2023)
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- The Hon. The Irish society discussion on rolling grant for schools' days ongoing

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- **Art Competition – 16 May 2023**

Local primary schools in the area were invited to participate in the art competition on the theme of Mesolithic Mountsandel – marking the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the excavation of the Mountsandel site. 172 submitted competition entries, judged by Art teacher and MDHG members.

Prize Winners were hosted by the Mayor of the CCGBC (Councillor Ivor Wallace) at Council Mayoral office.

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Symposium, “The Gathering”, organised in partnership with Ulster University Coleraine and Riverside Theatre. The four main themes:

**THEME 1** - 50 years since the late Prof Peter Woodman's find of early habitation at Mountsandel, the site has remained untouched.

Professor Mike Baillie (QUB), Thomas McErlean and Colin Breen (UU) all shared personal experiences of working with Peter.

**THEME 2** - focused on education and the value of Mountsandel as an educational resource.

Teachers helped the delegates see Mountsandel through the eyes of children and the importance of developing learning through engaging with our natural and cultural heritage.

**THEME 3** - A Visitor Experience, introduced by Professor Kathryn Best German University of Cairo spoke of the importance of using the local resources in imaginative ways to encourage interest and care for heritage and to create a sense of space and place for locals and visitors.

Dr Paddy Fitzgerald from the Mellon Centre for Migration Studies said Mountsandel offered many opportunities for interdisciplinary teams to work to further explore diversity and heritage.

Mary Harte Chairperson Donegal East Tourism talked of connecting communities and heritage.

**THEME 4** - Professor Duncan Morrow introduced the final session of the day on Economic Tourism and Environmental Sustainability.

Patrick Lennon suggested how marketing, tourism, photography, filming, social media and reality technology can be used to introduce historical sites to much wider audiences.

Augmented Reality use in Sustainable Tourism – Michael McGlade – Yellow Design.

Tony McCance told of the long and complex process for the Tullaghogue Fort project to come to fruition.

### Schools' Day Workshops

- **6th MDHG Annual Mountsandel Schools' Day** workshops in collaboration with the Rotary Club of Coleraine and CCGBC Museum Services and involvement of UU History PGCE Students to cement partnership with the University.  
Four on-site workshops with facilitators explaining the context; demonstrating foraging; hunting: fishing / flint knapping. Two local schools (The Irish Society and St Malachy PS (cross-

community event) participated with approximately 70 pupils with teachers, assistants and volunteers.(19 Sep 2023)

- **Museum Services** (CCGBC) rolled out the September Schools Day Workshops for a further 4 days, week beginning 18th Sep 2023, offering a place to the schools in the borough on a first come first served . ( Limited to eight places)

#### Connections

- Meeting with Dr Katherine Best (Cairo University) to discuss connections, of Bann with Castleroe, Kilrea, Portglenone, New Ferry, Toome and Tullyhogue (29 July 2023)
- Study trip with T. McErlean Tullyhogue, Church-Island, and New Ferry(29 July 2023)
- Meeting with Matt Gamble **Co-operation Ireland** out-come "Amazing Space Schools (31 July 2023) Programme," involving Loretto College, Coleraine Grammar, "Art Based on Mountsandel"
- Neil Jackman of **Arbarta Heritage**, Tipperary (on-line) to discuss possibilities re Mountsandel site.(21 Aug 2023)
- **Health Worker** (retired) talk re Mountsandel and the River Bann Corridor (11 Oct 2023)
- **Community Engagement Event** at Sandel Centre successfully engaged with community stakeholders, potential future partners or users, which will form the basis of our Heritage Lottery Fund application. (16 October 2023)
- Ulster University **local literature day** featured "The Salmon People" & "Reflections on the Bann" to raise the importance and significance of Mountsandel and the River Bann Corridor(11 Nov 2023)

#### 7 - FUTURE / FUNDING

- Meeting Helen Quigley to discuss opportunities for the way ahead.(20 Nov 2023)
- Matt Gamble **Co-Operation Ireland** Heritage through possible Migration Funding application (4 Dec 2023)
- Small Grant Funding opportunity from **Waterways Ireland** progressing re future event(s) to promote awareness of Mountsandel and the River Bann corridor (15 Dec 2025)
- **HLF funding** for project officer ongoing
- **Peace 4 funding** application at stage 2 for £275,000 to upgrade Mountsandel

#### 8 - PRESS COVERAGE

Art competition; Symposium; Schools' Day; Community Engagement Event  
See Facebook: [www.facebook.com/MountsandelDiscoveryAndHeritageGroup](http://www.facebook.com/MountsandelDiscoveryAndHeritageGroup)

#### 9 – TRUSTEES

Two new Trustees joined the MDHG: Patrick Lennon and Carol Martin.

**10 – THANK you** to the members who have given generously of their time during the period of the report.

MAURA HICKEY (Chair)

*Maura T Hickey*

Date: 13 - 12 - 24

**INDEPENDENT EXAMINERS REPORT TO THE CHARITY TRUSTEES OF:**

**MOUNTSANDEL DISCOVERY AND HERITAGE GROUP**

I report on the accounts of the charity for the year ended 31 December 2023 as set out on the following page.

**Respective responsibilities of charity trustees and examiner**

As the charity trustees you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008.

It is my responsibility to:

Examine the accounts under section 65 of the Charities Act

Follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland under section 65(9)(b) of the Charities Act

State whether particular matters have come to my attention

**Basis of independent examiner's report**

I have examined your charity accounts as required under section 65 of the Charities Act and my examination was carried out in accordance with the general Directions given by the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland under section 65(9)(b) of the Charities Act. The examination included a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as charity trustees concerning any such matters.

My role is to state whether any material matters have come to my attention giving me cause to believe:

1. That accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 63 of the Charities Act
2. That the accounts do not accord with those accounting records
3. That the accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements of the Charities Act
4. That there is further information needed for a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

**Independent Examiners Statement**

The charity's gross income did not exceed £250,000.

I have completed my examination and have no concerns in respect of the matters (1) to (4) listed above and, in connection with following the Directions of the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland, I have found no matters that require drawing to your attention.

Signed: *[Signature]*  
Name: *JOHN ESLATZ (ACCOUNTANT)*  
Address: *30 KYLEBEG AVENUE, COLTRANE, B252JN*  
Date: *10th December 2024*

**MOUNTSANDEL Discovery and Heritage Group**  
**INCOME & EXPENDITURE Account 1 January 2023 - 31 December 2023**

	2023	2022
Opening Balance as at 01 January	313.13	922.23
<b>INCOME</b>		
Grants:		
The Hon. The Irish Society	720.00	150.57
Fundraising		
Donations	130.00	365.00
<b>Total Income Received</b>	<b>850.00</b>	<b>515.57</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>		
Events & Projects	1034.50	1124.67
Bank Charges		
Petty Cash		
Fees		
Equipment		
Travel		
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>1034.50</b>	<b>1124.67</b>
<b>Surplus of Income/Expenditure</b>	<b>-184.50</b>	<b>-609.10</b>
<b>Account Balance as at 31 December</b>	<b>128.63</b>	<b>313.13</b>

**MOUNTSANDEL Discovery and Heritage Group**

**1 January 2023 to 31 December 2023**

Balance Sheet as at 31 December 2023

	2023	2022
<b>Current Assets</b>		
Bank	128.63	313.13
Debtors	0.00	0.00
	<b>128.63</b>	<b>313.13</b>
<b>Creditors</b>	94.40	0.00
<b>Net Current Assets</b>	<b>34.23</b>	<b>313.13</b>

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*Maura T Hickey*

Chair (MAURA HICKEY)

*Loretto Blackwood*

Treasurer (LORETTO BLACKWOOD)

*128.63  
10/12/24*

**Mountsandel Discovery and Heritage Group**

Northern Ireland - Charity number 108552

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# Annual return

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# MOUNTSANDEL

DISCOVERY & HERITAGE GROUP

MOUNTSANDEL DISCOVERY & HERITAGE GROUP

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Address: *30 KYLEBEG AVENUE, COLTRANE, B252JN*  
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**MOUNTSANDEL Discovery and Heritage Group**

**1 January 2023 to 31 December 2023**

Balance Sheet as at 31 December 2023

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