

Chairperson's Report – April 2025 to April 2026

Good evening everyone, and thank you for coming along to our AGM.

This past year has been an incredibly busy and productive one for our association, and I'm proud of what we've been able to achieve together as a community.

We started the year with a really important addition to the area, installing a defibrillator in April 2025 in partnership with the British Heart Foundation. This is something that could make a life-saving difference within our community.

Throughout the year, we've worked hard to improve both our facilities and the wider environment. Following flood damage, the hut was repaired with new taps, pipework, and a water heater installed, making it much more usable. We've continued to push for further improvements to the hut and surrounding areas, including ongoing engagement with the council and Housing Executive.

Our community gardens have seen significant progress. From planting flowers through the ABC grant, to purchasing a ride-on lawnmower through funds raised at our Car Treasure Hunt, we've made real improvements to the space. We also introduced composting initiatives, held open days, and carried out clean-ups and maintenance following storm damage.

Fundraising and community support have been a big part of our year. Between raffles, events, and activities like the Car Treasure Hunt, we raised vital funds not only for maintenance but also for new equipment and initiatives. We also made efforts to give back, including providing logs to older residents and small gifts at Christmas.

We've also placed a strong focus on community engagement. Surveys were carried out to gather feedback on what residents want to see, and we've held regular community meetings to keep everyone informed and involved. While engagement can sometimes be a challenge, we remain committed to listening and working on behalf of all residents.

A wide range of events and activities took place over the year for all age groups. These included messy play sessions, workshops, seasonal events like Halloween and Christmas activities, family movie nights, BBQs, litter picks, and educational sessions such as money skills workshops and Makaton training. It's been great to see so many people taking part. We've also worked closely with a range of partners including the council, Housing Executive, PSNI, local councillors, and community organisations to address issues such as potholes, safety concerns, environmental maintenance, and future development opportunities.

There have of course been challenges along the way, including storm damage, ongoing issues with facilities, and at times limited engagement on certain projects. However, we've continued to move forward and adapt where needed.

One of the highlights of the year was receiving the Housing Executive Cleaner, Greener South Award, which is a testament to the hard work and dedication of everyone involved.

I would like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank our committee members for their ongoing commitment, and our volunteers who give their time so generously. Thanks also to our funders, partners, and everyone in the community who has supported us throughout the year.

Looking ahead, our focus will be on continuing to improve our facilities, progressing plans for a better community space, increasing participation, and building on the strong foundations we've put in place this year.

Finally, thank you to everyone here tonight and to all who have supported the association over the past year. Together, we are making a real difference in our community.

Thank you.

Joanne Armstrong
(Chairperson)