

SUFFOLK
COMMUNITY FORUM

Annual General Meeting

Wednesday, 8th January 2025 at 6.30pm
124 Stewartstown Road, Belfast, BT11 9LY



**The Queen's Award
for Voluntary Service**

The MBE for volunteer groups

Suffolk Community Forum Annual General Meeting

Agenda

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Welcome & Apologies:

Minutes of previous:

(AGM) 22nd November 2024

Presentation of Annual Report:

Cathy Wilton - Outgoing Chairperson

Presentation of Annual Accounts:

Sammy Wilson - Outgoing Treasurer

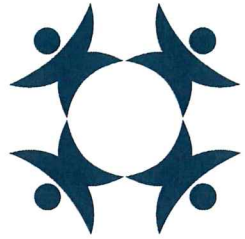
Accounts have been compiled and audited by McCreery, Turkington Stockman LTD. (Chartered Accountants)

Update on Projects:

Nominations for new Committee:

Election of officers will take place at next Forum meeting.

Any other business:



SUFFOLK
COMMUNITY FORUM

CHAIRPERSON'S ADDRESS

Suffolk Community Forum is pleased to present its Annual General Report for the year 2024 and whilst it can only provide a snapshot of work, we hope you find it encouraging. Over the year we have welcomed new faces on our management committee and want to thank all of those who have given of their time and energy to serve the community well. We would also like to thank our staff, without whom most of what we do would not be possible.

Over the past year we have seen some big changes in the Forum. Our previous employee Caroline Murphy retired, and Terry Donaghy took over the position of Community Development Worker. Caroline sadly passed away in March. I want to remark on the dedication she showed Suffolk over the years. Caroline worked hard for the betterment of Suffolk's residents. She will be sadly missed by the people who knew her.

One of our biggest roles continues to be that of making sure that Suffolk is represented and has an opportunity to have its voice heard in the broader arena. This is critical as we want to bring the best benefit to the community that we can. I personally would like to thank the Forum staff along with Committee Members who have represented our community and are willing to give up valuable personal time.

Our current core funding with DfC through the Neighbourhood Renewal Programme has been extended several times but we are expecting that a new strategy will be implemented in April 2025.

The reality is we are continuing to live in difficult Financial Times, and it is unrealistic to think this will not impact on our organisation. Funding is increasingly difficult to find for everyone and we have been extremely fortunate to have access to significant funding from SRRP over the past number of years that others have not. However, as the following report will show, we are responding to the new challenges with creative and realistic solutions.

Cathy Wilton
Chairperson

Annual Accounts 2023-2024

Sammy Wilson went through the accounts from last year with the group and asked members to read through them.

Cross-community Projects:

For a number of years Suffolk and the Men's Sheds, particularly the Half Moon Lake and The Plough, have been working together on a range of projects. Friendships have been made and trust built. We have received various amounts of funding from BCC Good Relations and through these funds, have been able to run courses, making traditional Leather Satchels which have been very popular. We have been successful with a second application. The next round will see thirty students attending Leather Workshop classes. Classes begin in January 2025.

<https://www.facebook.com/share/p/rpPxjGkvCioazLjv/?mibextid=WC7FNe>



Fight2Thrive boxing programme. This is a mental health program delivering help to young people using boxing as a bonding mechanism. This programme has been cross community with kids from Colindale. Fight2Thrive founder Colin Ward is running three cross community programs at the moment. We are currently looking at bringing the three classes together for a day. This will bring Suffolk children together with children from Londonderry and Dungannon.

<https://www.facebook.com/share/p/1CYy8nN9tb/?mibextid=wwXlfr>



The Forum applied to the National Lottery for funding on behalf of the Children's Project. The application was successful, and it assisted the Group in running Circus Skills classes. This funding seen our kids take part in the St Patrick's Day Parade. For some of Suffolk's children it was the first time experiencing a St Patrick's Day Parade.



This successful application enabled the Group to develop and grow. With the Forum's help they successfully applied for their own funding for a second Circus Skills programme. We are delighted to announce that they have been awarded funding from Belfast City Council for a second term. Congratulations to the Committee and volunteers.

Lidl:

This year has seen big changes and challenges for the residents of Suffolk. Lidl closed in July and began construction of its new store. The distribution on residents was inevitable. Lidl completed the new store and reopened in December. One week ahead of schedule.

The distribution of the new build was greater than anticipated. Cars, vans and lorries parked everywhere.



Construction was heavy and noisy. Residents had to endure it for several months.



Thankfully the new store opened ahead of schedule and looks great. I think everyone is happy it's over and the new store looks great

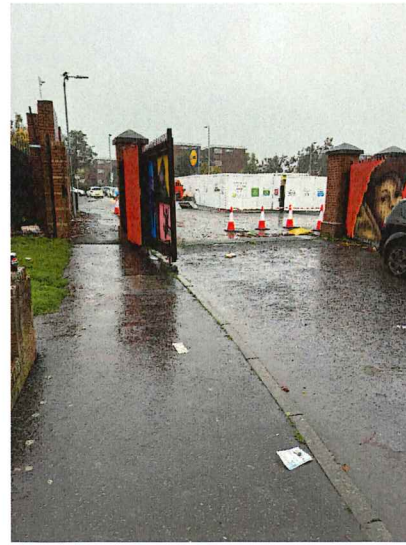


Malinmore Land:

During the construction of the new Lidl store, Suffolk Community Forum insisted the remaining part of the Malinmore Land gets a facelift. The work has begun and will finish when the weather turns a little better for planting trees.



During this part of the development the Kells Avenue peace gates were opened of heavy machinery. These gates have never been opened before.



MUGA:

The plans for our MUGA development our with Belfast City Council planning committee.

There have been a few obstacles to overcome and it's taking a little longer than anticipated to get the planning permission we need. We are confident that we can meet these obstacles and get the permission. It is just taking a little longer than expected.

The link and reference are below for anyone to look at.

<https://planningregister.planningsystemni.gov.uk/simple-search>

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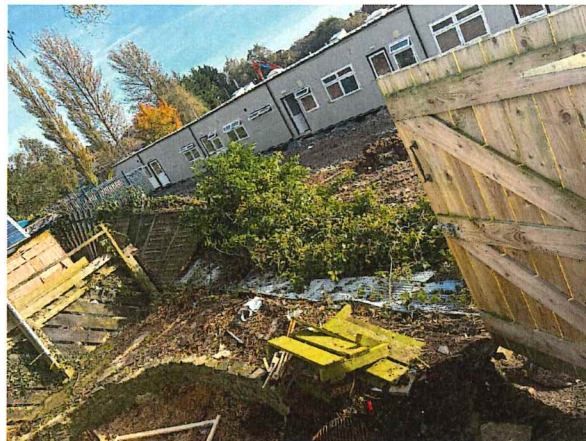


School Site:

Suffolk primary school site has seen big change's also this past year. This whole new development has been very quick and unexpected. No real consultation took place and everyone we asked for help with the new St. Gerard's School ignored our requests or didn't bother to help. No planning permission was granted before the work began. Suffolk residents basically woke up one morning with a new school being constructed on their doorstep.



Damage has been reported to resident's properties and still no response from the Education Authority.



No one from Suffolk opposed the new school development. It just would have been nice if they had of engaged with residents to make the process easier for everyone.



Representation of Committee:

Each Group within Suffolk was asked to nominate two representatives to the Forum.

Group	First Nomination	Second Nomination
Suffolk Woman's Group	Lesley Skey	Shalyn McKinley
Ladies Dart Team	Cathy Wilton	Maureen Appleton
Suffolk Children's Project	Joanne Moody	Naomi Cassidy
U.F.P.B. Flute Band	Sammy Wilson	To be decided
Suffolk Football Club	Roby Orr	To be decided
17 th Boys Brigade	Neil Douglas	To be decided
St. John the Baptist Church	Sandra Craig	To be decided
Suffolk Residents Association	Missy Spence	To be decided
Suffolk Bonfire Committee	Jason Spence	To be decided
Suffolk Events Circle	Rachel McDougall	To be decided
Upp/Falls Historical Society	Brian McDougall	To be decided

Election of Officers will take place at the next Forum Meeting on Wednesday 11th February 2025.

Meetings Attended:

- SRRP Board of Directors
- NIHE Central Housing Community Network
- Lenadoon Neighbourhood Partnership Board
- West Belfast and Shankill Housing Community Network
- PSNI Neighbourhood Teams
- David Robinson, Chief Executive, BCC Good Relations
- South-West Community Project
- Lenadoon Housing Environment Community Safety Group
- Belfast Bands Forum
- Areema Advisory Group

We wish to thank the following:

- Edwin Poots, MLA
- Councillor, Sarah Bunting
- Councillor, Tracy Kelly
- Henderson's Spar
- Jim and Matthew Walker, Henderson's
- Michael McCorry, BCC Community Outreach Officer
- South-West Foodbank
- South City Resource Centre
- John Hoey, Stewartstown Road Regeneration Project
- WB Cleaning Services
- Department for Communities
- BCC – various funding mechanisms including Good Relations
- David Robinson, Belfast City Council
- Grainne O'Hare, Belfast City Council
- Suffolk Community Centre
- The National Lottery
- Norman McCleery

Our thanks go to Stewartstown Road Regeneration Project for their special funding arrangement.



**Belfast
City Council**



**Housing
Executive**