

# Carrickfergus & District Historical Society



*In partnership with Carrickfergus Museum*

Charity Commission Registration Number NIC100315

## **Annual Report for the Year Ending 31 December 2024**



**Mid & East  
Antrim**  
Borough Council

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## **Carrickfergus and District Historical Society Annual Report for the Year Ending 31 December 2024**

The Trustees of the Society are pleased to submit their report and accounts for the period 1 January 2024 to 31 December 2024.

### ***Society Purpose and Governance***

The purpose of the Carrickfergus and District Historical Society is to promote a knowledge and understanding of the past by means of education, recording and dissemination of information, especially of the history of Carrickfergus and district. It seeks to develop an interest in our past and generate a curiosity of our history.

The Society's beneficiaries are the general public in the Carrickfergus area and those who originated from the area but have since moved away and are keen to learn about the lives of their ancestry. There are no private benefits flowing from the purpose.

The Society is affiliated to the Federation for Ulster Local Studies, which is an umbrella organisation for the historical societies within the nine Ulster counties and contributes to their activities. In addition, the meetings programme is delivered in partnership with the Carrickfergus Museum which is part of the Mid and East Antrim Borough Council.

The Society is based in Carrickfergus and holds its regular monthly meetings in Carrickfergus Town Hall and is managed by a team of Trustees – please see below:

<b>Role</b>	<b>Name</b>
Chairperson	Helen Rankin
Vice Chairman	George Elliott
Treasurer	Rodney McMaster
Honorary Secretary	Helen Clarke
Committee Members	Shirin Murphy, Laura Patrick, Joy Guest, Adrian Hack, Gladys Whan*

\*co-opted August 2024

The Society is governed by a constitution which was agreed at the Annual General Meeting held on 27 January 2016 – please see Appendix A. During the period of this report the Committee met on Zoom on 11 occasions to manage expenditure, review past events and plan future activities of the Society.

During the period of this report the Society had a membership of 64.

The Society has Annual Public Liability Insurance cover through our membership of the Federation for Ulster Local Studies.

### ***General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)***

The Society takes its responsibilities under GDPR seriously and continues to use an annual membership form which includes a reference to GDPR and seeks email addresses to ensure the Society meet the requirement that information is accurate and up to date. Individuals may unsubscribe from the Society contact list at anytime. A notice advising how the Society uses information is displayed at the desk at each meeting.

### ***Achievements and Performance***

During the period of this report the Society held 8 meetings with invited guest speakers and 2 visits to places of interest, a site visit to the Community archaeology dig and a walking tour. These events covered a wide range of local history interests and were open to members and non-members. Further details of the events arranged by the Society are given in Appendix B.

2024 marked the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the forming of the Society and as part of the anniversary the Society ran a number of special events.

- The **Carrickfergus Heritage Hub** ran from 11 May to 1 June in the Mid and East Antrim Council's Pop-Up shop at 2 Joymount. Approximately 800 people visited the Heritage Hub during the period to browse the old photos, hear one of the daily talks, see some home movie footage of Carrick in the 1960s or to collect a treasure hunt form. The daily talks covered a wide range of topics including the history of the Town Hall site, Irelands first settlers, Old Town records, Carrickfergus in World War II, women transported to Van Diemen's Land from Carrickfergus gaol in the 1840s, Richard Kane a forgotten son of Carrickfergus and a book launch.

- The Carrickfergus Heritage Hub also supported another of the anniversary special events – a **community archaeological dig** in Shaftesbury Park by the Community Archaeology Programme in which the Society and the Carrickfergus Museum were stakeholders. The dig took place from 21-31 May 2024 and a large number of adult volunteers and school children had the opportunity to get down on their hands and knees, get their hands dirty and join in the dig. The dig was part of a three-year archaeological heritage programme, organised by the Community Archaeological Programme Northern Ireland (CAPNI) based at Queen's University Belfast, supported by The National Lottery Heritage Fund, thanks to National Lottery players.
- On 7 September the Society, in partnership with Carrickfergus Museum, ran an anniversary **Conference - Carrickfergus Revisited: Exploring the development of the medieval town, before and after the arrival of the Anglo-Normans**. Approximately 70 people attended the conference which explored the archaeology and history of the settlements on the north-eastern shores of Belfast lough and the development of the medieval town, before and after the arrival of the Anglo-Normans. It showcased new research as well as highlighting the extensive knowledge that has been gathered to date from various excavations of our walled town.
- An **Anniversary Journal** was produced following the Conference and launched on 4 December. The conference and journal was funded by The Irish Walled Town Network and Carrickfergus Literary and Scientific Society (Union Hall) Trust Fund.

In total 1226 people attended Society events. As at 31 December 2024 the Society's Facebook page – Heritage Carrickfergus had approximately 2,900 members.

The Society produces a newsletter on regular basis which provides an update on the Society's activities and is circulated to all C&DHS email contacts, made available at each meeting and to local libraries and posted on the Society's Facebook page.

The Society re-commenced the project to map the grave markers in Kilroot cemetery. A team of 12 volunteers were on site on four occasions measuring, recording and photographing the grave markers and work has been completed on all 116 markers on the site. At the end of the project we hope to provide an online publication with information on each markers including recording the current state of the memorial.

In November 2023 the Society, in partnership with Carrickfergus Museum, commenced a research project looking at 'Carrickfergus before the Castle' which continued throughout 2024 attended by both Society members and non-members.

### **Accounts**

The Society charges a membership fee of £10 per annum and a small fee for attendance at meetings - during the period of this report the charge was £2 per meeting for members and £3 for non-members.

During 2024 the Society experienced a positive cash flow of £1,045 and a net income of £1,001.

The Society's accounts have been audited by the Society's Honorary Auditor Cyril H Beattie and a copy is attached at Appendix C.

### **Charities Commission for Northern Ireland Guidance**

In setting our objectives and planning our activities for year the Trustees gave careful consideration to the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland guidance on public benefit to ensure that the activities organised have helped to achieve the Society's purpose and provide a benefit to the beneficiaries.

Signed H. Clarke.  
Helen Clarke  
Honorary Secretary

Date 7.3.2025

## Carrickfergus and District Historical Society – Constitution

Charity Commission Registration Number NIC100315

Constitution agreed at Annual General Meeting held at Carrickfergus Library on Wednesday 27 January 2016

1. The name of this Society shall be “The Carrickfergus and District Historical Society” (hereinafter: The Society).
2. The object of The Society is to promote a knowledge and understanding of the past by means of education, recording and dissemination of information, especially in and about Carrickfergus.
3. Membership is open to those who are sympathetic to the object of The Society. Each member shall pay an annual subscription, the amount of which shall be determined by the membership at the Annual General Meeting.
4. An Annual General Meeting shall be held by the end of March each year. The date shall be circulated amongst members at least four months in advance. The purpose of the meeting shall be to receive reports from the officers of The Society and to elect a chairman, vice-chairman, honorary secretary, honorary treasurer, five other committee members and an honorary auditor. At the Annual General Meeting other business will be considered relevant to the running of the Society. At an Annual General Meeting or any General Business Meeting a quorum shall be fifteen members including at least two officers.
5. Any motions for consideration at the Annual General Meeting should be proposed 8 weeks before the date of the Annual General Meeting. The motion must be submitted in writing, signed by three members and lodged with the Honorary Secretary.
6. Each member is entitled to one vote at Annual or any General Meetings of the Society, but the chairman of the meeting shall have a casting vote in addition to an ordinary vote.
7. The Committee may use its discretion to co-opt additional members to the Committee, provided that the co-optees do not exceed two. A co-optee shall have the same rights and responsibilities as other members of committee.
8. The committee is responsible for the necessary tasks of running The Society, namely arranging meetings, lectures, publications, displays, field outings and other activities of a like kind when appropriate.
9. The committee may propose a president to an Annual General Meeting. The president may sit in committee *ex officio*. The president shall not be required to retire annually. The president shall relinquish the post if required to do so by two thirds of the committee or a majority of the membership present at a General Meeting.
10. The quorum for a committee meeting shall be three, two of whom must be elected officers.

11. An Extraordinary General Meeting will be held at the written request of fifteen members of The Society handed to Honorary Secretary with one month's notice to be given to members.
12. If at least two thirds of the committee or one third of the membership ask for The Society to be discontinued an Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) will be held. The time and place of the EGM and the motion for discussion shall be circulated to all members allowing at least one month's notice.
13. If The Society should dissolve itself or cease to function, then any funds and property vested in it shall be transferred to another charity or charities connected with the preservation of the history of the Carrickfergus area.
14. The constitution may not be altered except by majority vote at a General Meeting of The Society. A proposed amendment must be submitted in writing to the honorary secretary by at least three members.

### **CARRICKFERGUS AND DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY - PUBLIC BENEFIT STATEMENT.**

Continuation of Constitution.....

The purpose of Carrickfergus and District Historical Society is to promote a knowledge and understanding of the past by means of education, recording and dissemination of information, especially of the history of the Carrickfergus area.

These benefits can be demonstrated by feedback and words of thanks from the beneficiaries for the information received.

The purpose of our Charity will not lead to any harm.

The Charity's beneficiaries are the general public in the Carrickfergus area and those who originated from the area but have since moved away and are keen to learn about the lives of their ancestry.

There are no private benefits flowing from the purpose.

## Carrickfergus and District Historical Society

## Talks and Outings 2024

31 January 2024	AGM and talk Bound by Threads by Helen Johnston
28 February 2024	Talk on Mabel Glass by Steve Diamond
27 March 2024	General question and answer session chaired by Helen Rankin
27 April 2024	Talk 'Ancient Connections' by Dr Cormac McSparron
29 May 2024	Visit to Community Dig in Shaftesbury Park with Ruairi O Baoill
29 June 2024	Visit and walking tour Carnlough with Mary Watson
31 July 2024	Visit to Merville House
28 August 2024	Forgotten Women of Second World War walking tour – Adrian Hack
25 September 2024	Talk 'Bad Bridget' by Dr Elaine Farrell and L McCormick
30 October 2024	Talk on Kilroot Graveyard Project by Dr Laura Patrick
27 November 2024	50 <sup>th</sup> anniversary meeting – Foundation Day talk by Adrian Hack
4 December 2024	Murder mystery evening by Play Dead

50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Events

11 – 21 May 2024	Carrickfergus Heritage Hub pop up shop
21 – 31 May 2024	Community Dig Shaftesbury Park
7 September 2024	Anniversary conference – Carrickfergus Revisited

**Carrickfergus and District Historical Society Accounts for Year Ended 31 December 2024**



CDHS Audited Accounts 2024 (1).pdf    CDHS Accounts 2024 Auditor report.pdf