

Trustees Report Families Beyond Conflict

1. Name of Charity

Families Beyond Conflict

2. Address

56 Tennent Street
Belfast
Co. Antrim
BT13 3GB

3. NI Charity Commission Number

Charity Number: NIC101840

4. The Purpose of the Charity

Families Beyond Conflict was established to build the capacity of the community of the socially and economically disadvantaged greater Shankill area of Belfast. By promoting learning experiences to increase the skills, abilities and confidence of individuals and groups FBC empowers them to trust, combat exclusion and marginalisation and create a sense of belonging. Families Beyond Conflict puts in place support systems, strategies and mechanisms to encourage and facilitate a healing process with the object of bridge building leading to reconciliation within the entire community and beyond.

5. Charity Trustees

Mrs Sharon Bailey: Chairperson
Mrs Caroline Moffett: Secretary
Mrs Marie McNiece: Treasurer
Mr Anthony Clarke: Member
Ms Lauren Quirey: Member
Mrs Catherine Bickerstaff

6. Financial year of relevance of this trustee report

1st April 2018 to 31st March 2019

7. Summary of the Charity's main activities to further its purposes for the public benefit

During the period 1st April 2018 – 31st March 2019 Families Beyond Conflict delivered the following services to the following numbers of clients.

Work Area	Anticipated Outputs at 1 st April 2018	Actual at 31 st March 2019
Health and Wellbeing		
Complimentary Therapies	32 clients – 192 sessions	32 clients – 192 sessions
Social Support		
Crafty Bunch	12 Women over 55	13 Women
Men's Group	12 Men	17 Men
Young Mum's Group	12 Young Mothers	13 Young Mothers
Thursday Group	12 Women over 55	13 Women over 55
Family Bonding Scheme	20 young people/15 adults	22 young people/15 adults
FBC Drop-in Centre	Open 8.30am – 5.00pm Mon-Fri	Open 8.30am – 5.00pm Mon-Fri

Families Beyond Conflict have provided the following programmes

Health and Well being

Complimentary Therapies

The programme has met all its aims and objectives. This year we completed 6 x 1 hour sessions for 32 clients each over a 6-week period.

FBC hosts the therapy clinic 2 days a week to facilitate a range of times and days to ensure the clients are able to attend and access their full 6 session run. The programme has been run by a single Therapist through our partner group the Centre of Health and Wellbeing for several years. This Therapist left in September and we welcomed a new Therapist for the runs in 2019. She is very experienced and quickly settled into the routines and ways of FBC. As our previous Therapist did she assessed the needs of each client on an individual basis and administered the most appropriate course of therapies to best meet their personal needs. She also promoted the benefits of a healthier lifestyle by providing clients with information, advice and handouts. The clients took an active role in deciding what therapy they receive; this enhanced their feelings of being in control of their moods and emotions – something few have on a daily basis. The ultimate aim continues to be to calm negative emotions and improved positive emotions and to demonstrate how making life-changing choices can greatly benefit physical and mental health.

Talking Therapies

The programme has surpassed all its aims and objectives with 12 clients undertaking talking therapies in the Spectrum Centre since EBCC established a base there. Although this is a move from our initial plan it is a very positive one. The Families Beyond Conflict Centre is a busy place with a lot of people traffic most days although we tried to provide the best and quietest accommodation it was not always conducive to Talking Therapies. Families make referrals; the target of 5 clients for this year was exceeded as EBCC become more established in the Spectrum Centre and 12 referrals from FBC are undertaking therapies with EBCCS, with a new target of 12 again for next year. The close proximity of the Spectrum Centre to the FBC Centre is also very positive as it is in the heart of the area where most of our clients live and it is perceived as a very familiar and safe venue.

The Project Manager at FBC no longer line-manages the Therapist but still provides a friendly and approachable first contact service. EBCC helps clients deal with problems such as anxiety, depression and stress brought about by being a victim and/or survivor of the Conflict. The objective of the programme is to support clients as they manage their problems better.

Evaluation is carried out by the therapist, in conjunction with EBCC using CORENET

Social Support

Monday Group

The programme has more than met all its aims and objectives. The Crafty Bunch is made up of 13 women aged over 60 years who are struggling to deal with the stress and trauma as a result of the Conflict in Northern Ireland.

From April 2018 to March 2019 the group met on 48 Mondays (including 3 bank holidays) and a further 2 Thursdays and took part in 6 respite trips/meetings. The first was a 2 day stay in the Canal Court Hotel in Newry. Twenty one women from the Monday and Thursday groups (unfortunately 4 had to withdraw due to personal illness or family illness) joined together at the beginning of June for their 2 day break. The group joined together again for another residential on 9 – 11 November – this time the group of 23 went to the Adair Arms in Ballymena where there was a focus on Christmas shopping. Aside from the benefits of socialising the ladies also enjoyed a quiz and bingo. The ladies mostly fund these residential themselves and save on a weekly basis at their meetings which helps them budget in a sensible and routine way. The money is totally in their hands and banked by an individual member who pays for the event on the day on their behalf, meticulous records are maintained. The sharing of time with the ladies from the Thursday group on respite trips and on residential greatly enhances their experiences and enables them to develop new friendships.

One of the highlights of the project has been a programme which was run in the Spectrum Centre by the Big Ideas Programme. All the Thursday Ladies took part and 8 of the Monday Ladies. We were delighted to welcome Cassie and Ruth from the Big

Ideas programme which is based in London. They came to run a programme for us commemorating the incredibly tough times Mothers had in the First World War as they sent their sons to battle often never to return. We spent the morning with warm up exercises and confidence building discussions. Then, we read beautiful but poignant letters from poet Wilfred Owen to his Mother; he was based on the front line in France. This gave us a real feel for the terrible conditions the men serving were experiencing and also the awful fear and dread those left at home constantly felt. Wilfred died in Battle 2 days before the end of the war and his Mum received his final letter the same day as the telegram to say he had been killed - it was Armistice Day. It was a hard story to hear but it really brought home the tragedy of war for those who fought their own physical and emotional battles at home and away.

Following a lovely lunch the group set about making commemorative pin cushions - similar to those sent from Mothers to their sons at the front and those sent home from the front. The cushions were included in a very successful exhibition in London in September called Motherhood, Loss and the First World War. Totally different to what the ladies normally do together it greatly enhanced their friendships as they really opened up in discussion about loss, a very emotional session where the ladies were very supportive and encouraging of each other. The following week we recorded a blog as part of the evaluation of the programme which, alongside a series of photos of the workshop was heard at the exhibition. It was clear the ladies were really touched by their involvement and it led to much discussion about women's roles in the Troubles and how it affected them.

In November there was a follow up to the project. The Monday and Thursday groups researched the role of women in the First World War. In small groups the women identified a woman or women who they felt inspired them in 2 areas – on the home front and in medical service. The group then focussed on local woman Jessie Getty and the contribution she made as an auxiliary nurse. The group designed and created a memorial mural to commemorate the lives of these inspirational women. The mural was on display in the Families Beyond Conflict Centre until the new year. It was a poignant memorial in recognition and gratitude of the women who lived through the First World War. It also emphasised the impact the Great War had on the role women of the time and its legacy for all women since in our community and beyond on the 100th anniversary of the end of the war.

The focus of the group continues to be Arts and Crafts. The programme was varied and included; crocheting, decoupage, making small jewellery boxes, making sun catchers and other arts and crafts activities they share among each other and through the Project Managers lead. The group also play bingo and do occasional quizzes which they enjoy. They really enjoyed the Belfast Marathon which runs passed the centre, there is a lot of friendly banter with the fun runners as the ladies sit in the sun with their tea on lovely comfy chairs!!

On 20th September the group once again came together with the Thursday ladies for a respite trip to the Linen Green for some shopping. The original plan was to go onto the Argory near Dungannon for a tour of the beautiful 'Gentleman's Residence' which belongs to the National Trust. However, the storms of the previous day had caused a number of trees to fall which meant the venue was unsafe. In spite of many attempts to find an alternative destination it was not possible at such short notice. After the Linen Green we proceeded as originally scheduled onto lunch and a pottery demonstration at Ballydougan Pottery, near Lurgan. Although not to plan it was a very full day and greatly enjoyed and appreciated by all.

In October the group took part in a series of mosaic workshops which took place over a 3 week period. They learned the techniques and decorated a photo frame/mirror which they took home, they greatly enjoyed the project and the work was to a very high standard. In the period to Christmas they enjoyed several festive based arts and crafts sessions including making greetings cards, snow globes and various decorations. The group joined with the Thursday group for Christmas dinner at the New Life Church, off the Shankill Road on 13th December and had a party in the Centre at their last meeting of the year on 17th December which included festive games including pass the parcel, pin the nose on the snowman and Christmas bingo – always a favourite.

In the New Year the ladies enjoyed a series of craft including card making, craft with clothes pegs, making sun catchers, sharing their favourite music, which they greatly enjoyed and a movie morning. They also took part in 2 further respite trips, one to Lisburn to explore the Linen museum which was a trip back in time for several of the ladies who had worked in the local mills in their youth. This was followed by the compulsory shopping. In March a transgenerational group from all the projects joined together on a respite trip to Beeleek Pottery in Co. Fermanagh, it proved an excellent trip for the final get together of the year. There were 26 people attended in all with a good representation from each group. It was most pleasing to see the courteous and respectful interaction between the age groups and genders. Many stories and experiences were shared and it was interesting to hear of the incredible changes in the Shankill area over the past 50 years. It was the most appreciated event/activity of the year by all those who took part. Unfortunately, the budget won't allow this type of event to happen on a more regular basis but those who took part greatly benefitted from the experience and new intergenerational friendships were quickly forged as they shared time together.

Thursday Group

The programme has met all its aims and objectives. The Thursday group is made up of 13 ladies over 60, who have met 48 times over the period and taken part in a 2 day respite trip to Newry and a weekend residential to Ballymena with the Monday group, the two World War 1 projects and the trip to Linen Green, and the Pottery as well as

the trip to the Linen Museum in Lisburn and the transgenerational visit to Beeleek – see above for details. There is currently more than a full complement of members.

The Thursday ladies completed a 10 week programme in conjunction with the Play Resource Warehouse called “A ticket to Ride”. The ladies designed and made a scrapbook of special holidays and journeys they had taken, some of the photographs included were over 80 years old. They learned at least 10 different techniques of paper making and decorating and several other new arts and crafts methods as well as calligraphy which they thoroughly enjoyed. In November the group went to the Play Resource Warehouse for the launch of the exhibition. They have begun the next stage of this programme and from January have completed 5 further sessions with the Play Resource Warehouse. During those sessions their work focussed on creating individual canvasses which they designed and painted themselves using a technique of mixing, pouring and spreading paint to create random and beautiful patterns. The ladies then completed a giant canvass between them which was outstandingly beautiful and will grace the walls of our Centre when it returns from the exhibition in June. They also had an introduction to technology using a graphics ap which enabled them to complete an artist’s representation of themselves using their photographs. The resulting self-portraits were excellent. The ladies begin their final 5 weeks of the programme in April where they will be making collages. This programme has been a real boost to what we can offer this group and we are grateful to the Play Resource Warehouse and the Arts Council for including us in the project.

During the summer the ladies enjoyed taking part in bingo and quizzes and 2 decoupage projects. In October the ladies designed and decorated photo frames – they have done this before and really enjoyed it so requested to do it again, the high quality of their work showed that practice made perfect! In the run up to Christmas they enjoyed card making, Christmas decoupage and making various decorations. They joined the Monday ladies for their Christmas dinner on the 13th December and had their own party on 20th December at the Centre before the Christmas break. In the first 3 months of 2019 aside from the Play Resource Warehouse project the ladies have enjoyed making sun catchers and the usual bingo and quizzes.

The attendance for both these women’s groups rarely falls below 90% and is often 100% which is a real indicator of the need for these programmes. The demand for this work in the area is huge – there is no other group in the vicinity of our catchment area (Greater Shankill) offering the type of long term support Families Beyond Conflict provides. Our programmes serve to combat the isolation and social exclusion that is culturally unique and experienced by so many in the area. While there is an undisputed value and short term benefit of one-off meetings, therapies and counselling there remains an undeniable link between long term isolation and social exclusion and poor physical and mental health and wellbeing. FBC bring people together on a regular and frequent basis to spend time in a way that is appropriate to their needs. At present, FBC is working at full capacity with only one worker. Another worker would

enable at least 2 more groups to be set up to meet on a weekly basis and there would also be an opportunity to extend the Summer family programme with a follow-up programme throughout the year. FBC has a waiting list that would almost immediately fill any places.

Mothers Group

This group of 13 Mum's who have children at school meet every Wednesday morning at the FBC Centre and have taken part in 45 weekly meetings since the beginning of April 2018. The meetings combat their isolation by providing a venue where they can meet every week to share and support each other in facing the challenges of a parent living on a limited budget. The group only meet during term time, however, many were involved in the family summer programme during July/August.

The groups programme has been quite varied. During the year the group enjoyed a wide range of activities. The group were away for a weekend residential at the Adair Arms in Ballymena, like the ladies in the older groups they fund these residentials themselves and save on a weekly basis at their meetings which helps them budget. They enjoyed their time away and aside from the traditional shopping there were 2 workshops based on stress management and women I most admire and how we can be more like them. They all took part enthusiastically and got very involved in the discussions, many would not have got involved at all even a few months ago. They had another overnight stay in Ballymena at the beginning of December, they did some Christmas shopping and enjoyed a Christmas party night.

The group enjoyed a 10 pin bowling session at Dundonald followed by lunch on 20th June – this was attended by all the group, attendance generally has been excellent with a full turnout most weeks. On the last day before breaking up for the school summer holidays they held a baby shower for one of the Mums to be – the group played games, had lunch and shared “baby” stories. The ladies have really become very good friends and are incredibly supportive and encouraging of each other.

On their return from summer break they had a ‘catch up with the news’ meeting followed by 2 planning and contract sessions, and a game of bingo (always popular). In October the group went on a respite trip to Ballydougan Pottery where they made and decorated clay plaques which were later fired and returned to the ladies. They really engaged with the project and were as ever very creative in their designs. The group also had a lovely lunch together, they really appreciate spending time together. The programme to Christmas was very busy – they spent 4 weeks doing pebble art – they each designed a canvass using pebbles collected on a walk on Holywood beach. The group really relished the bracing walk and agreed to repeat it as many said they rarely walked for pleasure and it cleared their heads and had a calming effect. The resulting canvasses were varied – some had taken a ‘Family’ theme and made a family tree others had focussed more on a festive subject – once again the standard was very high. They also made other decorations and had a party in the Centre on their

last day before the Christmas break. They also did other crafts including decoupage and took part in recording session for a pod cast through the WRDA – the questions focussed on being a woman living in the Shankill Road, how women feel they are treated, who influences them and what they aspire to be. The ladies responded very well to the process after being a little reticent to begin with.

In the period from January to March the group took part in a 6 week long life coaching programme run by our partners at Centre for Health and Wellbeing. The programme gave the girls personal space and support to grow and develop. Individually, they set life targets and goals and learned techniques to improve self-motivation and commitment to achieving their objectives.

The final respite trip for the group was to Aunt Sandras Chocolate Factory in March. All members attended and greatly enjoyed the experience – the very entertaining workshop proved very popular (a must for the children's summer programme and other groups) and was followed by a lunch altogether. Four of the group attended the intergenerational trip to Beeleek and greatly enjoyed meeting new people and the opportunity to spend time with others outside their usual programme. Attendance is almost always 100% and there is a demand for the group to meet outside term time as many have expressed an interest in extending contact time and the group will be meeting on the 2 Wednesday evenings over the Easter School break when they can get partners or other family members to look after their children. I will monitor this for future school breaks.

INTERGENERATIONAL

Men's Group

Seventeen men are involved in the programme, this is one more than the proposed 16 as one family group is made up of a Father and 2 sons. The group have met on 45 occasions since the beginning of April 2018. Every other week the men meet at a local Leisure Centre for football training and a match. Aside from the obvious health benefits of the football some of the men are still attending the gym at other times in the week, inspired by the exercise and their football. I have witnessed an improvement in fitness levels and footballing technique. Attendance is always good for football and has never fallen below 90%.

Alternate weeks the group meet in our Centre. The men are a little reticent to take part in organised activities at the Centre and are content to spend time together with their dad/son/uncle/nephew in a safe and secure environment away from the distractions in the home where they often spend time in separate rooms.

The men had their last meeting before a short summer break from 3rd July and returned on 7th August, many were away on holiday. Plans to have a respite trip in September were thwarted by holidays and work – it is difficult to organise trips that suit everyone as all the men work or are students. Eventually we managed to organise a

trip to Need for Speed for a go Karting session in November. The group are always quite competitive (in a friendly way) and the Go Karting was no exception. They were split into teams and took part in a 90 minute relay endurance race. In spite of the initial speeds and daredevil driving as the race progressed they slowed down as the energy sapping race took its toll. Everyone thoroughly enjoyed the event although there were reports of aching muscles and sore backs the next day.

It proved almost impossible to organise a second respite trip that suited everyone in the group. However, 6 members of the group joined with the other FBC members on the intergenerational trip to Beeleek in March. They thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity to meet new people and share stories with other folk especially about the old days in the Shankill Road. It was an experience they would love to repeat and other members who were unable to attend are keen to meet up with other groups. These men really relish their time with their sons and each other.

Family Bonding Scheme

The Programme began in April with planning and child recruitment. Twenty young people were registered, which met targets. The Parents/Guardians met for the first time in June when they were informed of their roles and responsibilities during the programme. The programme provided an opportunity for the young people and older members of their families to share new experiences and spend positive time together in an environment outside the usual one they share. A very full and exciting programme was arranged over a period of 3 weeks commencing on 23rd July. There was a good balance of activities geared to meeting the various likes and needs of the young people. The activities included ice-breakers and team building, soft play areas, climbing activities, Claresmount Farm, swimming, African drumming, the Ulster American Folk Park, a day trip to the coast and Breckenhill Outdoor Pursuits Centre. For most events we had at least 16 adult family members attending and only on 2 occasions did child attendance fall below 100%. The intergenerational rapport and respect that developed were the outstanding features of the programme as well as the growth of friendships and regular and ongoing contact between individual children and adults outside of the project. Although it was quite difficult to procure suitable activities at a reasonable price the young people (and their families) really enjoyed the best programme we could provide.

FBC Drop-In

We provide a safe and secure environment where members of the local community can seek free advice and/or support on issues such as pensions or benefits. As always the vast majority of callers require redirection to the most appropriate local service. It is estimated that about 10% require more support such as making benefit applications or CV's or job searches on line. There is no regular pattern in terms of numbers of callers who require support. Approximately 3-4 would call into the Centre each week. We continue to provide counselling for people through our programme run in conjunction with East Belfast Counselling Service. New recording processes have

been introduced which require all visitors who seek support and advice to complete a victims and survivors declaration before they can be assisted and this enhances the attendance records we are able to maintain.

8. Main Achievements during the year

For the third consecutive year Families Beyond Conflict has greatly developed and superseded targets in respect of every programme. As can be seen from the reports on each project we have worked with 126 young people and adults on a regular basis over the past year with over 100 others' "dropping in" for advice or company. As always, a major achievement for a small charity with a single paid employee.

9. Public Benefit Requirement

The Trustees have had due regard to the Commissions Public Benefit Requirement and ensured that all activities, courses, programmes and projects have been delivered to meet the requirement. No trustees have received private benefit.

10. A Review of the Charity's financial position on 31st March 2017

On 31st March 2017 the financial position of the charity was as follows;

Income	2019	2018
Victims and Survivors		£56,457
Expenditure		£28,666
Programme Costs		£10,901
Running Costs		£13,504
Total		£53,071
Surplus/(Deficit)		£ 3,394

11. Deficit

The charity had a surplus of **£3394** for the year ended 31st March 2019. This operating surplus is a result of the charity continuing its charitable operations at the same time as being committed to meeting the deficit from the previous year. New funding was obtained for 3 years from the Victims and Survivors Service to run from 1st April 2017 – 31st March 2020. Families Beyond Conflict is committed to meeting the remaining deficit from sources other than VSS over the next year.

11. Trustees Signature

I hereby declare that this report is a true and accurate account of the charities operations during 2018 - 2019

Signature



Mrs Sharon Bailey Chairperson

12th December 2019

