

## **Trustees Report**

**5<sup>th</sup> April 2022**

The Fermanagh Trust has two Patrons and Nine Trustees who oversee the Trust's work.

Joanna McVey – a founding Trustee is former Managing Director of William Trimble Ltd which owned the Impartial Reporter. Joanna is involved in a number of community and voluntary organisations in Fermanagh. Joanna and family have been actively involved in establishing the Joan Trimble Award Scheme a named fund within the Trust and is a member of the fund's advisory grants panel.

Frank McManus is a solicitor based in Lisnaskea, Frank has a long-term interest in the Fermanagh Gaelic Athletic Association.

Ernie Fisher(Vice Chairperson) is Chairman of Fisher Holdings Ltd and former Managing Director of Fisher Engineering Ltd. Ernie has been involved in community life in the Ballinamallard area for many years and is actively involved in a number of organisations including Ballinamallard Development Association and Ballinamallard Enterprise Company Ltd. Ernie was instrumental in establishing the Fisher Foundation a named fund with The Fermanagh Trust, and oversees the work of the Fisher Foundation advisory group. Ernie is Deputy Lieutenant for County Fermanagh and also a Director of the Armagh City Hotel Ltd.

Jim Ledwith – the convenor and a founding Trustee, Jim has a long track record of involvement in community life in County Fermanagh, particularly during his employment as Community Services Manager with Fermanagh District Council, which involved working with townland and village-based communities across Fermanagh. Jim was most recently involved in managing a community research project with the London based Young Foundation. Jim is an active member of Sruth ná hÉirne an Irish language conversation circle. A company Director of the Mummings Foundation, a not-for-profit organisation with a remit for the promoting and widening the understanding of mumming traditions at home and abroad.

Kevin Lunney is Chief Operations Officer at Mannock Holdings DAC. Previously Kevin was Group Development Director of the Quinn Group and General Manager of Quinn Insurance. Kevin is also a Director of various local renewable energy assets. On a voluntary basis Kevin is a Director of Kinawley Community Hall Association and is also involved in supporting post primary education in his local community.

Aideen McGinley (Chairperson) is chair of Fermanagh Trust. Aideen has extensive experience of public service in local and central government in Northern Ireland as CEO of Fermanagh District Council and Permanent Secretary in the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure, the Department of Employment and Learning and CEO of Ilex. A former National Trustee of the BBC, Aideen is a Trustee of the National Trust and Vice-Chair of The Carnegie UK Trust a Director of the Aisling centre and a

member of the expert panel on City of Culture for DCMS. She is involved in a number of other charities nationally and locally.

Sue Bryson (Secretary) is a Fermanagh native and solicitor by profession Sue recently retired as Deputy Chief Executive of and Head of Regulation within the Law Society of Northern Ireland. Sue is a Committee member of her local Concern charity shop and of her local Residents' Association.

Anna Devlin is a Chartered Accountant and Director of Cavanagh Kelly. Anna leads the Forensic Accounting team and specialises in providing expert reports in a range of commercial and civil litigation matters. On a voluntary basis, Anna is a Director of Enniskillen BID Ltd, a not-for-profit company which promotes the development of business activity within the Enniskillen town area.

Robert Gibson, a Civil Engineer, was formerly Director of Community, Health and Leisure with Fermanagh and Omagh District Council for five years. Prior to this Robert was Acting Chief Executive of Fermanagh District Council, for the last year of that Council, holding a Director role for 14 years previously. Robert has a long personal commitment to Community issues. Formerly Robert played rugby for Enniskillen RFC and is an ardent Ulster and Ireland supporter.

#### **Advisors**

Accountants – MacNeary Rasdale & Co. Ltd  
Wellington House  
30 Darling Street  
Enniskillen  
BT74 7EW

Solicitors                      Cleaver Fulton Rankin Solicitors  
50 Bedford Street  
Belfast  
BT2 7FW

## **2. Structure, Governance and Management.**

### **Trust Deed – Background**

The Fermanagh Trust was established in 1995 with the financial support and guidance of the Barrow Cadbury Trust with four founding Trustees.

### **Trustees**

Trustees are appointed at a meeting of the Trustees, new Trustees meet with the Chair and are given a briefing on the Trusts work and commitments, responsibilities, etc prior to joining the Board. We were delighted to welcome Robert Gibson as a new Trustee this year, Robert brings a wealth of local knowledge and experience to the Board.

### **Decisions**

The Trustees are responsible for the overall governance of the Trust and also oversee all grant making, the exception is grants of £300 and under which can be awarded by The Director with the support of one Trustee. All major strategic decisions are taken by the Trustees.

The Trust has two working committees in relation to Finance and Management and Strategy. Each Committee consists of at least two Trustees advise the Trustees on issues impacting the work of the Trust in these specific areas. This structure was put in place following a review of the Governance structures by the Trustees.

The Trust's Director is responsible for implementing the Fermanagh Trust's Strategy.

### **Affiliations – Membership:**

The Trust is a member of Philanthropy Ireland and the Association of Charitable Foundations (UK). The Trust is also a member of the N.I. Trust Group, NICVA and DTNI as well as being represented on a number of local committees/ partnerships.

### **Statement on Risk Assessment:**

The major risks to which The Fermanagh Trust are exposed, as identified by the Trustees, have been reviewed and systems have been established to manage those risks. The Trustees recognise the importance of overseeing the Trust assets including the Trust's financial investments, systems are in place to manage this aspect of the Trusts work.

In relation to Fermanagh House, in light of the Covid 19 public health crisis, the Trust updated its risk management guidelines.

The Trust has been operational since 1995 and has in place sound financial management procedures. These procedures have been guided by advice from internal auditors and evaluated and tested by the Trust accountants and external auditors over the past year.

The Trust has adequate and effective systems of Governance, Risk Management and Control in place.

### **3. Objectives and Activities.**

#### **a) Summary of Trust Objects – from Trust Deed**

The Trust was established in 1995 to promote any charitable purpose and to support initiatives which will lead to social and community development to improve the conditions of life for people in the County of Fermanagh and immediate hinterlands. In 2002 the Trust Deed was broadened to extend beyond the initial area of benefit to include ‘other exclusively charitable purposes in the United Kingdom and elsewhere which are in the opinion of the trustees beneficial to the community with a preference for those in the area of benefit.’

#### **b) Explanation of the Trust’s aims – including the differences we seek to make through our activities:**

A significant part of the Trust’s work involves both grant-making and developmental support to groups and organisations across Fermanagh and beyond. The Trust utilises its local knowledge and expertise to make a real difference to voluntary work taking place at a community level including providing a range of community education supports to volunteers and organisations.

Shared Education and building effective community relationships remains an important part of the Trusts work. Our focus on advancing Shared Education particularly in the preschool sector remains in line with the Trusts overall strategy.

Due to the challenges around public health particularly at the earlier part of the year the Trust recognised and supported local people both through the provision of grant aid and guidance and support for local community initiatives across Fermanagh. In addition, the Trust supported the implementation of a county wide befriending service, ‘Connect Fermanagh’ which supports vulnerable and isolated people across the County.

During the year the Trust continued to provide a mechanism for local donors, funders etc interested in supporting civil society. The Trust also supports community and voluntary endeavour and has a particular focus on building good relations between the two main traditions living in Fermanagh. Over the past twelve months this has involved the Trust working with over 187 organisations and projects from across Fermanagh and beyond.

### **c) Main objectives for 2021 /2022**

This year continued to be challenging for communities and people. While the impact of Covid on the work of the Fermanagh Trust and the organisations we support declined, many challenges remained. The Trusts main objectives as set out at the start of the year evolved in light of this.

The main objectives for the last year included:

- Implement the Trust strategy – ‘Investing in Communities 2019 – 2023’ focusing on helping groups support local people impacted by the challenging public health environment.
- Developing our grant making programme incorporating targeted grant making in response to Covid.
- Implementing the Trust’s community and voluntary support programme including continuing to provide support to numerous groups and organisations across Fermanagh and beyond.
- Support Shared Education including the delivery of the ‘Sharing from the Start’ project and supporting the ongoing mainstreaming of Shared Education.
- Ensure Fermanagh House operates as an effective and sustainable community networking centre with a particular focus on being available for counselling and other Covid support interventions.
- Explore new philanthropic partnerships.
- Developing the work of the Community Academy.
- Implementing the Community Education Leadership programme and other developmental approaches.
- Support the Connect Fermanagh initiative – a befriending service helping vulnerable and isolated members of the community during the Covid crisis.

### **d) Trust strategy**

The Trust’s strategy ‘Investing in Communities 2019-2023’ provides the foundation stone for the Trust to advance and implement the programme of work over the last year.

The Trustees advise and guide the Director on the development of the strategy and support the Director and the staff team with the advancement of this work. All of the Trustees play an important role in specific aspects of the emerging and developing work during the year.

### **e) Significant activities during the year**

The last year will be remembered as the year we began emerging from Covid, a year of transition and change for the communities and people we serve. The challenges and uncertainty resulted in the Trust being both reactive and proactive to the public health environment. While maintaining a lot of online activity the Trust increasingly moved to face to face meetings and training, while observing social distancing and all of the other health guidance.

We were delighted to support and welcome back so many people and organisations back to Fermanagh House, and as the year went on and confidence grew it was fantastic to see colleagues, partners and all of the organisations and service users back. For many there were wonderful smiles and even tears of joy as people met face to face for the first time. The Macular group held their Christmas dinner in Fermanagh House in December 2021, a joyous occasion, watching friends come together for the first time in 21 months.

The formal establishment of Connect Fermanagh as a standalone charity was another real highlight. Assisting in establishing a new Board with the majority of Board members current befrienders from within the service was very positive. The Fermanagh Trust provided significant in-kind support to the new charity helping the group develop a sound footing to build on the work going forward support included recruiting volunteer befrienders and the volunteers.

The Community Leadership Programme was a real success this year. We organised and supported a wide range of programmes working closely with our partners. This included supporting the Rural Community Network with the establishment and recruitment onto the Diploma in Community Development supported by National University of Ireland in Galway With the knowledge from providing this local support the Trust also actively engaged with regional based organisations to help bring much needed resources to local communities and organisations.

The Department for Communities, Community Investment Fund contributed to the Trust's core costs. The funding supported the Trust to be in a position to advice and support groups and organisations from across Fermanagh, with the Trust providing advice, mentoring, networking support and training.

The Trust continued to support the development of the Community Academy's work in partnership with the Department and the Resurgam Trust based in Lisburn, transferring knowledge and best practice to communities across NI. This included supporting community-based projects to advance major capital projects in the Urban Village areas of Derry /Londonderry and in Belfast. This work included hosting study visits, mentoring and networking support and delivering training on a range of themes.

The Trusts strategic work on rural poverty continued disseminating the findings on Poverty in Fermanagh 'Poverty in a Rural Findings – Working Together to Make a Difference' report with a number of organisations including the local Council, Health agencies and others. The Trust also actively supported a number of grass roots organisations helping make an effective contribution to people's lives across the community.

Throughout the year the Trust worked with the Early Years Organisation and the National Children's Network on the continued implementation of the Peace 4 Shared Education Programme Sharing from the Start. The Trust team playing an important role in the roll out of this work, ensuring a smooth and effective role out of the programme. Over seventy-preschools and approximately 2000 children benefited from the programme during the year.

## **f) Grant making**

The Trust's continues its important grant making including both unrestricted and restricted grant making through the named funds. The unrestricted grant making continued to provide grant awards of up to £3000. During the year, the Trust directly awarded over £250,000 in Grant Aid. The administration of the Fermanagh Recreational Fund continued during the year.

During the year the Trust also advised and supported a number of other regional and national funders helping to advance their Covid grant making work in Fermanagh. This included effective partnership working helping bring much needed resources to groups across Fermanagh.

Providing fundraising guidance and support to local organisations seeking significant financial support was an important part of the Trusts work particularly due to the challenges faced by groups facing a significant decline in income. This has involved a range of interventions ranging from holding seminars and workshops to direct one-to-one mentoring support. Fifty-six groups benefitted directly during the year.

The Wind Farm funds, which provide specific geographical based funding continued during the year to a wide range of small, localised organisations.

The Trusts' Young Grant-Makers Apprenticeships Programme, brought together young people from across Fermanagh. The young people became active grant-makers awarding grants to Youth based activities in the County and helped guide and inform the Trust in our work. This initiative is part of the Community Leadership programme.

## **4. Achievements and Performance.**

### **a) Review of activities**

The last year saw the team emerge from the pandemic, from social distanced meetings and engaging with policy makers and other online. The team fully returned to Fermanagh House while recognising and embracing the new reality of virtual working and supports.

During the year the Trust have continued to maintain its core staff team of thirteen.

Our social enterprise, Fermanagh House, seen a major uplift in activity and business compared to the previous year 20 – 21 where Covid had a huge negative impact. The team took every step possible to welcome back old friends and new while taking the necessary precautions to keep people safe.

The Trust consolidated on its work over the past year as evidenced by the work of the various initiatives and funds including the Sharing from the Start Programme, Fermanagh House, Poverty work and proactive community development work.

The first full year of implementing the Community Leadership programme was a real highlight. Our collaboration work with our project partners the Holywell Trust and the Rural Community Network led to over 200 people benefitting from a range of Community development training and support programmes. We look forward to building on this work in the coming year.

#### b) Fundraising / Income generation –

The Trust's balanced funding strategy traditionally included investment income, income from Fermanagh House, other income from consultancy work and flow-through funding, support from independent funders plus the support via grant aid from the Department of Communities. While the past year seen an increase in income generated compared to 2020 / 2021, the income generated remained lower than the pre Covid years. The team however embraced this challenging environment ensuring no deficit was incurred.

#### c). Investment's performance

The Trusts financial investments recorded positive returns during the year. The Trustees have taken a long-term view of the investments and the performance of the portfolio, and this continues.

During the year The Fermanagh Trust invested the bulk of its investment in the NI Central Investment Fund for Charities. The Fund is managed by the Department through recognised fund managers, the current fund manager is Aberdeen Standard Capital. The fund's investment policy is guided by a locally based Advisory Committee appointed by the Department, which meets in February, May, August and November each year.

The Fund operates as a discretionary managed fund. Participating charities pool their investments and are given a proportionate number of shares based on the most recent valuation (share price). The Fund invests in fixed-interest securities and selected equities. The allocation between fixed-interest securities and equities is reviewed and adjusted periodically, in line with the Fund's investment policy.

The Trust continues to have social investments in both the Drumlin Wind Energy and NI Community Energy Co-operative.

#### d) External relationships – beneficiaries, funders, etc

Collaboration and networking with local, regional and national organisations remained integral to the Fermanagh Trusts work with positive relationships with a wide range of organisations. The Trust's membership of the Association of Charitable Foundations, Philanthropy Ireland and the NI Funders Forum ensures the Trust is informed of opportunities and developments in the sector.

Our collaboration with The Holywell Trust and the Rural Community Network continues with the implementation of the Community Leadership training initiative in the West, with investment from The National Lottery Community Fund.

The 'Sharing from the Start' Programme with the Early Years Organisation and the National Childhood Network alongside other work in Shared Education has resulted in the Trust's continued involvement in a number of Shared Education Forums and networks.

The Trust has maintained a strong working relationship with a wide range of organisations including the Department for Communities. The Department's core funding is important in ensuring the Trust can deliver the community and voluntary sector support work across County Fermanagh. These relationships help the Trust advance our work.

The Trusts work with the Community Academy remained an important part of the Trusts 'outward looking' work and working with the Resurgam Trust the Community Academy implemented a programme of mentoring, networking and training support in the Urban Village areas of Derry / L'Derry and Belfast on behalf of the Executive Office. Looking to the future the Community Academy has significant potential to enhance community development practice, research and community leadership in Fermanagh and across NI.

During the year the Trust Director was an active Advisor Network member of Engage Britain Engage Britain's mission is to help find ways forward on the biggest challenges facing society through active citizen engagement and learning from grass roots organisations.

## **5. Financial Review.**

### **a). Financial position of the Trust**

The Trust is in a strong financial position, with a diverse range of income including private donations, charitable foundations, support from the SEUPB and the Department for Communities alongside and income generated from Fermanagh House and consultancy work. The Trustees continued to oversee the Trustees investment strategy during the period including investing in the NI Central Investment Fund for Charities.

### **b). Financial Management systems**

The Trust has in place sound financial management procedures which we are confident are robust and appropriate in terms of good governance. As part of the governance work, the Trustees completed a major financial systems review helping future proof our work.

### **c). Statement on Reserves**

The Trust has in place the necessary accessible reserves to cover 6 month's core costs. The Trust will endeavour to ensure this level of reserves is maintained.

#### d). Principal funding sources

The Trust continues to have a healthy mix of private donations, income generation and external funding support. The financial support from a number of charitable Trusts and funders continues to be appreciated as without it many of the Trust's activities would be impossible or significantly reduced. A number of staff are engaged on time limited projects funded by particular funders, and this work will continue subject to funding being secured and as deemed appropriate. Income generation from Fermanagh House continued to be impacted due to Covid, though it is clear that the Fermanagh House model remains a sustainable one going forward.

#### e) Investment Policy and Objectives

The Trust aims to maintain the value of the capital invested whilst maximising returns. The Trustees have recognised the need for a regular review of the Trust's investments, overseeing these through engaging with the investment managers, considering quarterly reports and regular meetings to discuss the Trust investments. After a review this year, the Trustees re-directed the majority of the Investments to the NI Central Investment Fund for Charities. The Trustees will continue to keep a close eye on equity investments with a view to safeguarding the capital value of the Investments.

### 6. Plans for Future Periods.

The Trust five-year strategy 'Investing in Communities 2019 – 2023' continues to guide and inform the Trust's future work. The Trust completed a midterm review of the Strategy during the year taking on board the impact of Covid on the Trusts work and the impact on communities and people across the County. The Trustees also began to have conversations about the Trusts future strategy and put in place a programme of work to take this work forward with the support and guidance of the Strategy committee.

The continued opening up of society and facilities resulted in Fermanagh House, once again, an important resource for our work in supporting civil society locally. The Trust will continue to oversee this community resource for the people of Fermanagh by working with and supporting not-for-profit initiatives over the coming period.

The Trust is committed to continuing to progress Shared Education, building on the Trust's knowledge and experience in this area. We utilised our knowledge and experience in this area to engage in and inform the Department of Education on the development of their Mainstreaming Shared Education initiative. Over the next year we will continue to build on the work with Early Years and the National Children's Network implementing the Peace 4 Sharing from the Start programme.

We fully understand the impact Covid has had on civic society and in particular on volunteering and recognise this will continue to have a huge impact on the Trusts work and the organisations we support. The Trust will continue to both convene, support and if possible, fund localised community initiatives and support grass roots community organising and leadership.

The Trust also remains committed to supporting the newly established charity Connect Fermanagh and help to firmly embed this County wide befriending service for those members of the community who are vulnerable, anxious, lonely or isolated across Fermanagh over the coming years.

The Trust also looks forward to the continued implementation of the Community Leadership in the West programme building the knowledge and competence of volunteers and staff across the community and voluntary sector in Fermanagh and beyond including the delivery of the Young Apprenticeship Grant making course.

#### Trustees' responsibilities statement

The Trustees are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice). The charity trustees are required to prepare financial statements for each year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable trust and the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently.
- observe the methods and principles in the applicable Charities SORP.
- make judgments and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent.
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in business. The trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the charity's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

#### Auditor

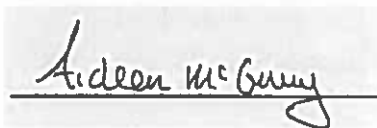
Each of the persons who is a Trustee at the date of approval of this report confirms that:

- So far as they are aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the charity's auditor is unaware; and

- They have taken all steps that they ought to have taken as a trustee to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the charity's auditor is aware of that information. The trustees' annual report was approved on 1<sup>st</sup> February 2023 and signed on behalf of the board of trustees by:

Aideen McGinley

Sue Bryson



Chairperson

Secretary