

# **MAGHERALIN COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION AGM 21 SEPTEMBER 2023**

## **CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT April 2022 – March 2023**

This meeting will give us a chance to let you know what we have achieved and carried out in the last Financial Year.

Once again we have had a busy year with a number of successful applications for funding, this takes a lot of effort but worth it when successful. Our Video created by Brett Young from TADA shows some of our work in the village and it along with the great posters designed by Brett have been displayed in the village and On our Facebook Page in the hope we would attract some new members. It will run again during Refreshments

Looking back at last year it was good to see Crocus Flowers thickened out well at the base of the Magheralin Sign on Flinty Hill and they were a nice display in the Spring.

The Police Property Fund Grant allowed us to cover a number of areas and the first project was the completion of the Mural in Clarendon Park Recreation Area in May which was done by more senior members of the village. We had great fun and we were pleased with the finished work. We had a wonderful Senior's Outing to Antrim Castle Grounds and Glenarm Castle and this brought together older members from both communities, some of whom had not met up in years. In the Autumn we had PSNI Officers deliver 2 sessions for young people and parents/guardians on Anti Social Behaviour, One Punch Kills, Internet Safety,

unfortunately these were not as well attended as we would have liked. Our IT Course for Beginners delivered by Southern Regional College was a great success with 10 very happy participants who went home able to order Online, book holidays etc. The Home Safety and Internet Security Session for adults was very well attended and delivered in an informative and interesting way. We had 2 Health Sessions – Bowel Cancer for Men and Breast & Cervical Cancer for Women, both well attended and found to be very useful. To further increase awareness, we were delighted to be able to book the Action Cancer Big Bus visit the village and the take up was excellent. We were very happy as the Police Property Fund agreed that they would cover the hire cost of £450 as we were able to keep it within our budget. Although there was a lot of work co-ordinating the many different sessions, the Police Property Fund was well used and of great benefit to the village.

As we have developed a very good working relationship with both schools we once again organised the Christmas Art & Poetry Competition with Rev Genoe and Fr Shahjan judging the entries. Both schools videoed their schools singing Carols and these were incorporated into Santa's Walk About and the Switching On of our Christmas Lights and the video shown on our Facebook Page. The Community Association was happy to be successful in its application for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Funding and both schools held Tea Parties.

Craigavon Volunteer Bureau informed us of the EPIC Award – Empowering People in Communities and a number of our Members have to date received their 100 hours Certificate.

Our Polytunnel at the rear of Maralin VPS has been a real asset – and it enabled us to apply successfully for the **ABC TAKE 500+ Grant for our Project Growing Together Young and Old**. We had a very attractive display in the Civic Centre with art work completed by our Ukrainian Guests and we attracted a lot of attention with Selfies and enough votes to get our Grant of £965. **SEE THE NOTICEBOARD AS YOU CAME IN, YOU COULD HAVE A SELFIE!!** We developed our School's Programme teaching the children where food comes from and how to grow vegetables from seed. St Patrick's Club members grew courgettes, marrows, potatoes and herbs and Maralin pupils helped us to plant our tomatoes, peppers and cabbages along with Sunflower Seeds. A big thank you to Jain Wright you provided the expertise for this project. The project will finish tomorrow when St Patrick's Garden Club Members will make the return visit to Maralin Village PS to see the work carried out by the Pupils and enjoy meeting up and having some refreshments We were delighted to access DART Transport for this.

Our 2<sup>nd</sup> St Patrick's Concerts had to be cancelled because of Covid We had organised one this year, tickets printed and ready to go when we had the tragic death of the young child in Moira whose family is from Magheralin so it was felt it was only right to cancel.

The Flower beds created in Clarendon Park are developing well and we had a visit from the Mayor in August when the Recreation Area was officially opened. He seemed impressed with our work on the Beds and with the Wetland area

which has attracted all varieties of bugs, butterflies and insects. The plants in the Old Graveyard are getting established and it is hoped overtime they will not require too much maintenance. We got our Bench installed there last summer with the Inscription Magheralin Community Association Live Here Love Here, very apt for the setting.

Members of our **Litter Picking Group** continue to work hard to keep the outlying roads clean, but it is an uphill battle. A number of us have registered with the Keep N Ireland Beautiful - Adopt a Spot programme - this covers New Forge Rd, Acre Rd, Springhill Rd and Ballymagin/ Damhill Rd. We got additional Gardening tools and seeds for this as we had already got our Hi Vis vests.

Our Gardening Team are a bunch of very energetic and enthusiastic members who enjoy working together, sharing knowledge and seeds. We meet every Tuesday morning at 10 and work until 12 or a little later if work needs finished. We have a Whats App Group and members are kept informed each week where we will work and most importantly meet for a cuppa usually around 11 30. The Polytunnel has been the perfect meeting spot especially in bad weather. Planting of the Ulster in Bloom 4,000 plants kept us very busy at the end of June but unfortunately some of the plants were no longer at their best or had time to be established when the Judges were probably out and about. The Housing Executive created and look after the flower beds outside the

Pensioner's bungalows at Florenceville, but we underplant them and keep the beds weeded and watered when needed. We are always looking for new members to share the load of keeping the village looking as good as we can. Whether you are a total novice or have green fingers, we would love to have you join us and hopefully our Video highlights the benefit of being a member.

**Neighbourhood Watch Schemes** I would invite **Mary Scullion** one of the members to give a short report.

**The Oil Club – Tom Hughes will give a short report**

**Mens Shed Report - Tommy Burke will give a short report.**

May I express my gratitude to ABC Council and TADA, for its funding and their staff for their support. A big thanks to the Police Property Fund which enabled us to deliver such a wide and varied programme. To our Political Representatives for their support throughout the year and of course all our Committee Members, Gardeners and Litter Pickers and our friends in the village who support our work. To Rev Genoe and Fr Shahjan for being our willing Art & Poetry judges. Lastly our appreciation to St Patrick's and the Masonic Hall for hosting our monthly meetings in 2022-23.

We have already noted a number of apologies at the beginning of the meeting including Harry and Liz Briggs who are enjoying some sunshine in Zynthos.

**Harry** has decided to stand down as Vice Chairperson but thankfully will still

remain on the Committee though in a more reduced role. At this point I would like to record my thanks to him for his enthusiasm and commitment from the formation of the Association in 2014 and we hope he will still share his wisdom and advice when he can. **Mary Mann**, our Secretary is also standing down, a big thank you to Mary for her patience with me over the years getting Agendas and Minutes ready to circulate to members. We wish you well Mary and your continuation of membership of the Committee is appreciated.

**Caitríona Hughes**

**Chairperson**