

Martins Lane Area Community Association

Trustees Annual Report

1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023

NIC: 103596



Together Everyone Achieves More

Charity Details

Charity Name: Martin's Lane Area Community Association

Charity Number: Registered as a Charity in Northern Ireland - NIC 103596

Purpose: The Association is established to promote the benefit of the inhabitants of the Martin's Lane area; that is the inhabitants of Martin's Lane, Altnaveigh Park, Castlekeele, Corrinshogo and The Demense, (hereinafter called the "area of benefit"), without distinction of age, gender, sexuality, nationality, ethnic origin, political or religious opinion, by associating the statutory authorities, voluntary organisations and the inhabitants in a common effort to relieve poverty, advance education and to provide or assist in providing facilities in the interests of social welfare for recreation or other leisure-time occupation, with the object of improving the conditions of life of the said inhabitants.

Charity Trustees as of 31st March 2023

Mrs Maureen Ruddy (Chairperson)

Mrs Linda Devlin (Secretary)

Ms Francine Ruddy (Treasurer)

Ms Michelle Kennedy – retired during the year.

Mrs Fiona Brothers

Mrs Deborah Mc Shane – retired during the year.

Miss Aimee-Lee Mc Shane – retired during the year.

Mr Frank Ruddy

Mr Paul Byrne – retired during the year.

Mrs Ciara Byrne

Mrs Laura Toman

Note: No other Charity Trustees in the Year to 31st March 2023

Accountant / Independent Examiner

Mc Cann & Teggart Ltd

53 Patrick Street

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TEL: 02830269765

Insurance Broker & Underwriter

Marsh Insurance Ltd (Ecclesiastical Brokers)

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PO Box 183, Donegall Square West, Belfast

Chairpersons Report

This year has been a challenging year for our Charity with highs and lows, funding remains as difficult as ever, however, we were lucky to have a healthy bank balance at the start of this reporting period due to funding awarded in the previous financial year and this meant we were able to deliver an amazing range of opportunities to benefit our community.

This year we lost the services of some valued committee members due to family and work commitments; on the plus side we gained some new volunteers who proved to be invaluable to us in the running of all our activities.

This year we seen the formation of our Older Peoples group, who have named themselves 'Never Say Never' and they have proven to be quite a dynamic group with 30+ members and growing all the time. We applied to the John Moore's Foundation for funding to get the group up and running and received a grant of £3500, which will be reported on in our next financial period.

With limited resources and despite having no base and limited access to alternative venues we were able to facilitate a full seven-week summer scheme and seasonal activities throughout the year. Through our partnership work we have been able to bring training and employment opportunities to the community as well as information sharing because it will only be by working together that we can achieve societal changes.

With support from the Confederation of Community Groups we have received funding from their Crisis Support scheme to help families with the pressure of the costs of living by providing food vouchers when we were contacted in the strictest of confidence for help.

We continue to fulfil all good governance requirements and ensure that our Charity is operating within the guidelines laid down by the Charity Commission NI. Our accounts have again been independently examined by Steven McCann from McCann and Teggart Accountants Ltd. We continue to work in partnership with a wide range of agencies and organisations for the benefit of our whole community.

The aim and culmination of all our work must be the creation of a stronger, more vibrant community where all are included and respected. While we are making good progress much more needs to be done. We need new members to come forward and join us as both Charity Trustees and as volunteers, we hope these new members will come to the table with new ideas and new energies. We hope the volunteers that we have gained will still be there to help in the community and offer us a few hours of their time to help us with activities and trips when required.

I would like to take the opportunity to thank all our funders without your support our work throughout the year would have been severely curtailed, and as you can see from this report, we have been busy with a wide range of activities, events, and trips for both young and old. We are already planning for the year ahead and look forward to another action-packed program of activities.

We would like to thank the Confederation of Community Groups and in particular Cathy McMahon (Community Development Worker). We would like to thank our funders NMDDC, the John Moore's Foundation and NIHE, we would also like to thank Dennison's for their kind donation and the Mallon Family for organising and paying for science workshops which the kids thoroughly enjoyed.

I would also like to thank all our partners; the other members of the Newry Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership Board, statutory bodies, councillors, voluntary and community organisations, local residents and all our dedicated volunteers/committee and of course the residents of the Martin's Lane area for all your help and support; we are ready for whatever challenges the year ahead brings and look forward to working towards a more vibrant community.

Maureen Ruddy
Chairperson

Public Benefit Statement

The Trustees of Martin's Lane Area Community Association confirm that they have complied with their duty under Section 17(5) of the Charities Act 2011 to have regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit and that the public benefit requirement has informed the activities of the Martin's Lane Area Community Association in the year to the 31st March 2023.

In evaluating public benefit, the Trustees note that membership of the Association is open to all residents in the 'area of benefit' - (Full Members aged 18 and over, Junior Members under age 18) - and we strive to provide a wide range of activities, events, trips and group sessions that will cater for all ages. Note that some necessary and reasonable restrictions have been put in place for different age groups.

Summary of Main Activities

Trustees were delighted to have been able to offer the community a varied portfolio of community events, activities and trips to suit all ages and abilities. Once again, we have utilised all available space and venues locally, including St Malachy's Primary School, Altnaveigh Play Park and the local kickabout area, ensuring that provision is right in the heart of our area of benefit to make it as accessible as possible for the local community.

Summer Scheme

Trustees worked tirelessly to deliver an eight-week summer programme for children and young people which provided no cost opportunities that would never otherwise have been available or accessible by local families. This summer programme included:

- Multi-Cultural day with African Drumming Circle, Circus Skills, Arts & Crafts, Bubble Making and much more.



- Old School Sports Day, featuring classic games and challenges.
- Multi Sports Boot Camp Week with Cathal Fegan, kindly funded via the Neighbourhood Renewal Health Subgroup.
- Arts & Crafts workshops.
- Outdoor Play & Games sessions.
- Hip Hop Dance classes also funded by the Neighbourhood Renewal Health Subgroup.

Trustees were mindful of the many challenges and struggles being faced by local households, these included financial pressures, physical and mental health issues, and the ongoing challenges being presented by the cost-of-living crisis which immediately followed the Covid-19 pandemic. The cumulative impact of all of this has meant that families have not had a break or a chance to get back on their feet. Trustees therefore felt it was important to offer local families the opportunity to enjoy some community trips and outings; opportunities that would never otherwise have been available. Over the Summer these included:

- An outing to the local Omniplex cinema.
- A trip to Fort Evergreen – a Pet and Play Farm with indoor soft play, barrel train rides, zipline and outdoor adventure fort, and the chance to interact with amazing animals.
- A trip to The Rink Roller Disco to show off some moves by the children and the young at heart.
- A pyjama party at Peter Pan’s Neverland.
- An ‘out of this world’ trip to Armagh Planetarium.
- A family trip and picnic at Gosford Forest Park.
- An adrenaline packed trip for young people to Lurgaboy Adventure Centre.
- An action-packed day at The Jungle NI.
- A family trip to Portrush.
- A back-to-school trip to Airtastic.

Our Summer programme culminated with a Community Carnival Celebration Day which was a fun packed day of family activities in the local play park and play area. There were a wide range of bouncy castles and inflatable obstacle courses, children entertainment, face painting, music and food/refreshments, all enjoyed by over 200 attendees.

Youth Group

Trustees were disappointed that the Education Authority (EA) funding was cut for the Youth Group as this meant there was no EA outreach youth worker provision for the Martin’s Lane Area. Some of the young people from the Martin’s Lane area travelled to the Bosco Youth Centre to join the youth group there but this was not a viable option for young people with no access to transport at home. Trustees have been mindful to provide a range of suitable opportunities for these young people and are hopeful of reestablishing a formal youth group moving forward.

Older People's 'Never Say Never' Group Development



Trustees were pleased to officially launch an Older People's Group for the Martin's Lane Area which will be supported in its first year with funding received from the John Moore's Foundation.

The first event on offer was the Growing Project whereby 30 older people got to experience a trip to An Tobar, a social enterprise farm in Silverbridge, South Armagh, this trip was funded by the Neighbourhood Renewal Health Subgroup. Participants got to explore this amazing facility, learn about planting & growing and the benefits afforded by the same in terms of physical & mental health alongside environmental benefits.

- The Never Say Never group also benefited from a community trip to the Crumlin Road Gaol where they experienced the history tour, which sparked both learning and some lively discussions amongst members. The day was finished with a beautiful meal and time shared together, allowing bonds of friendship and social connections to develop which we hope will help reduce feelings of social isolation for many older residents.
- The next destination for the group was the Ulster American Folk Park, followed by dinner at Sally's in Omagh; this trip was a first for most attendees and the feedback from everyone was overwhelmingly positive.



Seasonal Events

- For Easter, 50 children and young people enjoyed a high energy trip to Airtastic in Newtownards where everyone got to participate in trampoline fun, and a game of bowls followed by food & drinks.
- At Halloween, children and young people were treated to Scary Movie Night with tricks and treats provided.
- At Christmas time we changed our usual plans and there were several different opportunities available to cater for as many as possible. We ran Santa's Magical Mystery Tour to the Jungle NI where children got to meet Santa, enjoy activities, and receive a selection box. For our older residents we offered a trip for Christmas Dinner to the Canal Court Hotel. Thanks to local Newry City Councillor Malone, we were able to distribute packages of turkeys and hams to families who were experiencing difficulties. Thanks to the staff of Norbrook and the Confederation of Community Groups we were able to distribute meals and desserts, over a 6-week period, to benefit local residents who were struggling with the cost of living and/or social isolation and vulnerability.

Activities, Training and More ...



Thanks to the Southern Health and Social Care Trust (SHSCT) and the Neighbourhood Renewal (NR) Health subgroup: the Northern Ireland Chest, Heart and Stroke Bus visited our area, providing free health checks for residents. In addition, the SHSCT NR Health sub-group also provided a 4-week programme of basketball training, 4 weeks of hip hop dance classes, 4 weeks of Zumba dance classes for young people and 4 weeks of Zumba for adults which was then extended for a further 6 weeks due to the incredible uptake.

Thanks to this same partnership we were able to run a Slow Cooker programme which allowed us to distribute 8 large and 2 small slow cookers to targeted local families; this was then followed up with a 'Cook It' skills training programme.

Through our partnership working with the SHSCT we were also able to attend free training on the Autism Reality Experience Bus; additional places were also made available to residents. There was also a visit from the Virtual Dementia Bus Experience, attended by both Trustees, volunteers and residents.

Charity Trustees also completed Emergency First Aid Training and offered the same opportunity to residents who wished to avail of the free training opportunity.

We were delighted to be able to offer additional free training opportunities to the community, these included Safeguarding (Children and Young People), Adult Safeguarding Awareness, Emergency First Aid, and Grow Good Well Being.

Trustees worked closely with the Community Education team at Southern Regional College and disseminated information about a range of training opportunities for residents living across the Newry Neighbourhood Renewal areas; these included, Door Security, CSR Card Training, Forklift Training, the OCEANS programme and more.

Trustees represented the Martin's Lane Area Community Association at the Pride of Place celebration event in the Canal Court Hotel.

Thanks to a very kind donation from Newry City Councillor Malone, Trustees were able to offer free tickets for young people to attend Newry City Football Club games.

Networking and Partnerships

One of our aims as Trustees has been to establish proper networks and channels of communication between ourselves and other local community groups, with organisations representing the community & voluntary sector and with the statutory authorities. We are active and enthusiastic partners on the Newry Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership alongside the Department for Communities, Newry, Mourne & Down District Council, Confederation of Community Groups, Southern Health & Social Care Trust, Housing

Executive, Community Restorative Justice Newry & Armagh, Education Authority, Southern Regional College, Newry & Mourne Enterprise Agency, and the other Neighbourhood Renewal Community Associations.

A Trustee also sits on the Management Committee for the Confederation of Community Groups to ensure representation for our area.

Trustees have continued to represent the Martins Lane Area on the Housing Executives' Housing Community Network meetings to ensure that the needs of residents and the area are addressed. We continue to work with the PSNI and Community Restorative Justice in the policing in the community meetings.

Tackling Issues in the Community



Trustees have been disappointed at the ongoing anti-social behaviour which has been taking place in the local play park. These issues are always reported to Newry, Mourne & Down District Council and Trustees continue to work in partnership with all local agencies to try and address these issues.

Alongside this partnership working, Trustees endeavour to engage with the young people in a positive programme of activity, encouraging civic pride and reducing the boredom which often leads to low level anti-social behaviour.



Financial Review

Financial Performance

In a very challenging financial landscape with increasingly competitive funding streams financial performance has been largely consistent with Trustees expectations.

We started this financial year with a healthy bank balance of £23,454 which relates to external grants funding awarded in the previous financial period, which was spent in the current financial period. Due to this 'funding balance' being carried over, our income for the current year was lower as we must be careful to align funding with the volunteer capacity to deliver on the ground.

Full details are included in the copy of Independent Financial Examiners Report included with Trustees Report.

Income

Income receipts for the year totalled at only £4,574, as compared to £18,444 for the previous year; however, this financial year started with a balance of just over £23K from funding awarded in the previous period.

The breakdown for the current financial period was as follows:

- Newry, Mourne & Down District Council - £3,407
(Running costs via the Neighbourhood Renewal Programme)
- Education Authority - £500
- Southern Health & Social Care Trust - £100
- Donations: £567

Expenditure

Expenditure for the year totalled £17,469, as compared to £8,464 for the previous year. This reflected a much busier year for the charity, delivering on a wider range of activities, events, trips, and opportunities to benefit the local community. Major expenditure for the year centred on Community Trips and Community Events in line with funding awarded.

Funds Materially in Deficit

As of the 31st of March 2023, the Martin's Lane Area Community Association had no funds in material deficit.

Major Risks

No major risks have been identified; however, the Trustees of Martin's Lane Area Community Association note that external funding streams are becoming increasingly competitive, technical and problematic to secure.

Financial Management

The Martin's Lane Area Community Association maintain robust financial systems and have good financial management systems in place; we have successfully held a number of grants and have always fulfilled all accounting, reporting and monitoring requirements; our annual accounts are always independently examined.

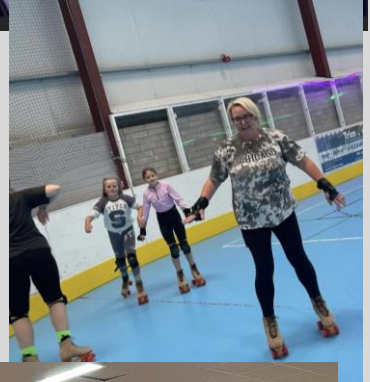
Assets and Liabilities

The Trustees of the Martins Lane Area Community Association can confirm that the Association currently hold no assets and have identified no liabilities moving forward.

Photographic Highlights







Our Appreciation for Your Support ...

We would like to take this opportunity to extend our gratitude to the following funders, agencies and individuals who have supported the work of the Martins Lane Area Community Association throughout the year.

- ◆ The Residents of the Martin's Lane Area.
- ◆ The Department for Communities - Neighbourhood Renewal Programme and the associated sub-groups; Health (SHSCT), Education (EA), Community/Physical (NM&DDC/NIHE), and Economic (NMEA).
- ◆ The members of the Newry Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership Board.
- ◆ Neighbourhood Renewal Community Associations.
- ◆ Neighbourhood Renewal Co-Ordinator.
- ◆ The Confederation of Community Groups.
- ◆ Newry, Mourne & Down District Council.
- ◆ The Southern Health & Social Care Trust.
- ◆ Newry & Mourne Extended Schools.
- ◆ St Malachy's Nursery and Primary School.
- ◆ John Moores Foundation
- ◆ The Charity Commission NI
- ◆ Dennisons



Comhairle Ceantair
an Iúir, Mhúrn
agus an Dúin

Newry, Mourne
and Down
District Council



Department for
Communities

An Roinn

Pobal

Mánnystrie o

Communities

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**CONFEDERATION OF
COMMUNITY GROUPS**



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