



Coiste Forbartha Charn Tóchair
Carntogher Community Association

Tuairisc na Bliana

Annual Report

Eanair – Nollaig 2024

January – December 2024



The Trustees, who are also the directors of the company for the purposes of the Companies Act, present their annual report and audited financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 December 2024.

The information with respect to trustees, directors, officers and advisers set out on the information page, forms part of this report.

1.0 Background

Carntogher Community Association was originally set up as an unincorporated association on 8th January 1992 and formally reconstituted as a company limited by guarantee with Charitable Status on 16th December 1998.

1.1 Charitable Purposes & Constitution and how our charitable activities deliver public benefit

The trustees have had regard to the Commissions Public benefit statutory guidance.

The objects of the Association as set out in the Memorandum of Association are as follows:

(i) to promote the revival of the Irish-language in General and within the Carntogher Area in particular.

(ii) to promote the benefit of the inhabitants of Carntogher and its environs without distinction of age, sex, race, political, religious or other opinion by the advancement of education and the provision of facilities in the interest of social welfare for recreation and leisure time occupation with the object of improving the conditions of life for the said inhabitants;

(iii) to preserve for the benefit of the public whatever land buildings or other structures may exist in Carntogher and its environs of particular beauty or historical or architectural interest;

(iv) to provide or secure the provision of public amenities in Carntogher and its environs for the benefit of the inhabitants thereof;

(v) the conservation and protection of land in the Carntogher area which is of aesthetic or scientific interest.

1.2 Administration & Governance

Carntogher Community Association is registered with the Companies Registrar under registration number NI035332. It is also recognised as a charity by the Inland Revenue, NIC 104017. Its registered office is at An Carn, 132A Tirkane Road, Maghera Co. Derry BT46 SRE and most of its ongoing operations are also located at this address. The trustees and secretary of the charity are as follows:

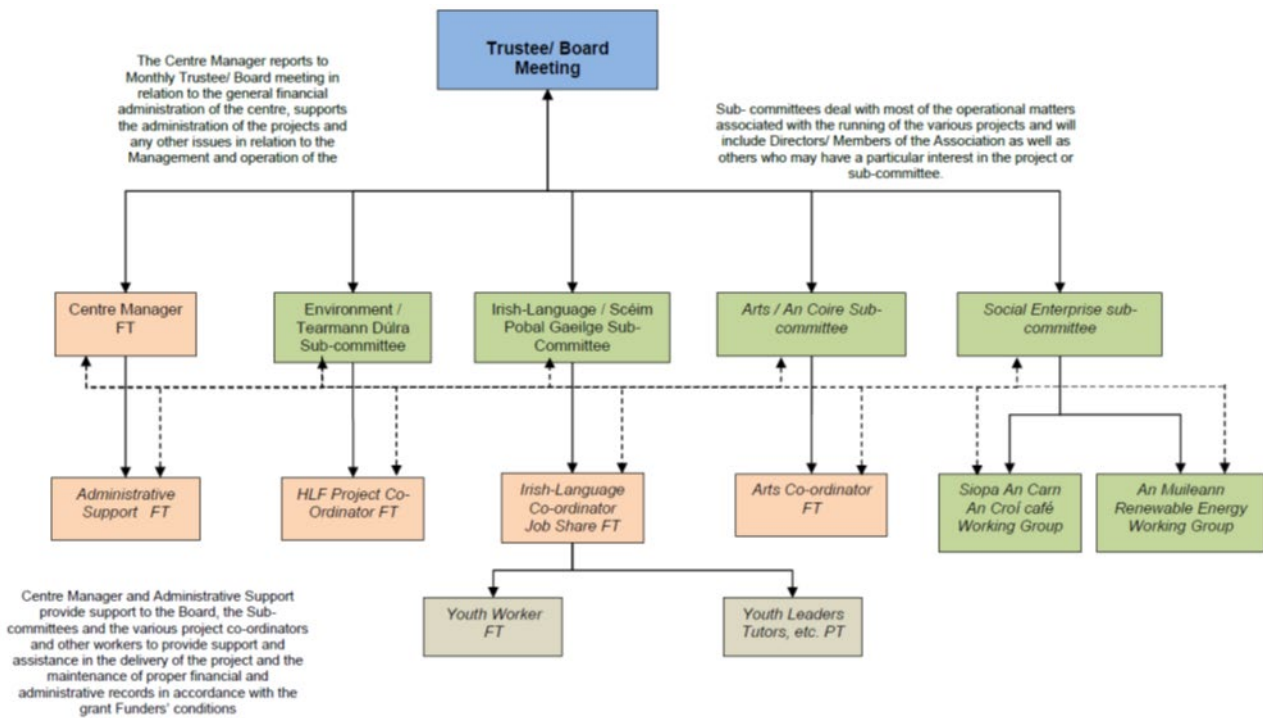
- Liam O Flannagan (Chairman)
- Niall O'Kane (Secretary)
- Caoimhe Mhic Thaidhg (Appointed 01/04/2024)
- Barry Glass
- Karen Mills
- John Donnelly (Resigned 01/04/2024)

The Charity also admits additional members to the management committee who are involved in the management and delivery of the activities of the charity. These are appointed at the AGM and are as follows:

- Martin Diamond
- Pdraig Ó Mianain
- Susan Uí Mhianain
- Claire Mulholland
- Pat Mullan

All of the above members have the option to attend the Trustees/ Board meetings and to be involved in a range of sub-committees. The charity has 7 direct employees and its social economy businesses employ over 10 full time and part time employees (6 FTE).

The operational management structure of the charity is as follows



The Trustees/ Board meeting takes place on a bimonthly basis and the sub-committee meetings generally happen on a monthly basis. Applications for trusteeship/directorship are sought at the AGM which is advertised within the local area.

1.3 Financial Review & Reserves Policy

The Trustees, who are also the directors of the company for the purposes of the Companies Act, have approved their annual report and audited financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 December 2024.

The financial statements are prepared in accordance with "Accounting and Reporting by Charities" the Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland issued in October 2019, the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102), the Companies Act 2006 and UK Generally Accepted Accounting Practice.

The charity's policy on restricted funds is to separately record donations, grants and other sources of fundraising where restrictions are imposed that are narrower than the charity's overall objectives. The majority of these incoming resources have been utilised in the year for their intended purpose.

The trustees have a policy of designating funds for specific purposes. The charity has received funds from a number of sources to finance the acquisition of fixed assets. The trustees have established a policy whereby the unrestricted funds not committed or invested in tangible fixed assets of designated for specific purposes ("the free reserves") held by the charity should be between six and nine months of the resources expended, which equates to a range of £160,000 to £240,000, in general funds. At this level, the trustees consider that they would be able to continue the current activities of the charity in the event of a significant drop in income. It would be necessary to consider how the income would be replaced or activities changed.

At the balance sheet date the free reserves (Net Current Assets), amounted to £177,579 and fell with the target level of £160,000 to £240,000. This showed an increase in the

free reserves of £43,475 from the previous year which showed a reserve of £134,104. We will continue in the coming years to preserve this reserve in our Net Current Assets.

In order to deliver a long term sustainable position in relation to its core operational costs and the rebuilding of its reserves the Association will continue to adopt the strategy of promoting social economy projects in order to build a source of income including An Croí Cafe, Siopa An Carn (a gift shop/ book shop/ post office), An Teach Glas, self-catering accommodation and a new venture Prionta. To date these ventures have been working towards a modest income to the Association, but building on the success of these ventures will provide a sustainable income to the Association that will help meet our core costs, allow match funding for various projects, and to start to rebuild out capital reserves.

1.4 Investment Policy

While building its reserve, the charity aims to ensure that there is sufficient cash flow to meet its ongoing commitments. Funds that are surplus to immediate requirements will be kept available on a current account and any funds not immediately required will be invested in short term deposit accounts at the most beneficial rates available reflecting the investment period.

1.5 Risk Management

The trustees have reviewed the major risks to which the charity is exposed and systems have been established to manage those risks.

2.0 Charitable Activities - Introduction

Overall, 2024 proved to be another busy year for the Association with a wide range of successful projects promoted during the year and the continued growth of our social enterprises.

The following provides a summary of the activities undertaken through the various projects during the year:

CARNTOGHER SUSTAINABILITY PROJECT 2024 - 2027.

In early 2024, the Associations management board successfully secured £103,500 from GF Trust. Carntogher Sustainability Project will aim to help fund our strategy for achieving financial viability of the Community Association over a three-year period. As the group has grown substantially and the numbers of projects have expanded, the burden on the group to ensure sustainability has increased significantly.

We have met this challenge with success for many years and have produced a very impressive range of projects and social economy businesses. However, despite our success in promoting projects we have found it increasingly difficult over the past number of years to meet the overhead costs of the association including wages for core staff members as well as raising the balance funding required for promoting the various projects. The Association is extremely grateful to the GF Trust for their support over the next three years.

Scéim Forbartha Líonra Gaeilge - Foras na Gaeilge

Scéim Forbartha Líonra Gaeilge began in January 2022 replacing the previous SPG project. The organisation was successfully in its application to the funding scheme to secure the community funding until beyond 2024. The funding scheme covers the Irish language officer wage and overheads with a small amount contributing to programme costs. A full programme was delivered with a range of courses,

activities/classes, Irish classes for adults, one day intensive courses for adults (Seachtain na Gaeilge) and a Ciorcal Comhrá Conversation circle for adults.

Seachtain na Gaeilge was delivered during the month of March and included a Dianchúrsa for adults – Intensive Course – 4 levels, GCSE & As & A2 Dianchúrsaí, Workshops with Maire Andrews and local Gaelscoileanna, Screening of Frank agus Rosie & Tarrach, Lá na Scoileanna // Schools day with Franzini Brothers and Gaelscoileanna and school days for R5 – R7 & P7 from English medium schools.

Feis Charn Tóchair provided a range of competitions onsite including music, traditional singing, poetry recitation, art, fáinne competition, scholarship award, writing competitions (with over 800 entries). Recordings of the poems for each age group available on our You Tube channel was of benefit to families and parents in helping their children prepare for the Feis. 25 volunteers to help co-ordinate and deliver the Feis. Children and teenagers from 31 different schools took part.

Other activities delivered through this programme included

- Dianchúrsa Gaeilge onsite during Féile Charn Tóchair. 4 levels.
- Dianchúrsaí Cruinnis – a series of 3 Intensive Accuracy full day courses took place with 20 + adults attending per day
- Spraoi an tSathairn – Saturday morning fun club through Irish for children in Rang 2 – Rang 4. Activities include – sports, team games, arts & crafts, storytelling 35+ attending weekly

Scéim Líonra - Foras na Gaeilge

Líonra – 2024 spanned year 2-3 of the Líonra project. Much of the work of the Líonra project has revolved around increasing the understanding of both the status of language in the area with successful schemes such as the ‘Labhair Gaeilge Liom’ campaign and creating an increased buy-in from the community with the Carnlann community archive project which charted the growth and development of the association and the Irish language.

We have welcomed several visits of public, private and voluntary sector groups and individuals that share an interest in our work throughout the year and continue to bolster important relationships with stakeholders and maintain a strong language presence in Maghera town. The project also undertook a successful pilot scheme in youth leadership which will roll out officially in September 2025. With successful lobbying the language planning budget increased to just over £83,000 for the year.

Club Óige / Youth Activities

2024 saw great participation through all Irish language youth activities with over 100 members from R5 upward, activities included weekly youth club, group singing class, art class, drama club, sports club and summer schemes. Activities were held between An Carn, Drumnaph Nature Reserve and Maghera Leisure Centre and also included a few trips to other centres. We put emphasis on drama especially with our young people keen to perform on stage locally and in national competitions. We received first place in the youth category of the Glór na nGael competition due to the wide variety of activities and programmes available through Irish to our local young people. Alongside one full-time youth worker and approx. 6 youth support staff who offer these activities to our youth, we participated in an ‘apprentice’ programme where qualifications and experience were gained throughout the year.



Community Library/Leabharlann Phobail

The community library offers a much-needed resource for the local community and during 2024 St Brigids PS / Bunscoil Naoimh Bríd continued to visit on a regular basis to support the work of the teachers and parents. A number of storytelling events took place to support young families on the start of the IME journeys.

The Library has both an English language and an Irish-language section, together with internet access, computer-based learning material including software packages, DVDs and CDs. The library is also well used by the wider community and its use is continuing to build. The Irish-language section of the library is something that is not available through the Education Authority Library provision particularly important in helping to develop a love for learning and reading in Irish for the wider south-Derry hinterland outside of a formal education environment.

The Association identified a further need to enhance and update the library and through funding from Foras na Gaeilge, the Association implemented new software for the categorising and borrowing of books. The new system will aim to improve the process for users and also support staff to manage the day to day operations of the library.



An Croí Café

An Croí staff have worked tirelessly to continue to build up a strong customer base in 2024 and increase footfall during quieter periods (mornings and Sundays). Sundays have increased substantially during the year. Rising operational costs are still proving difficult to sustain and has resulted in a trading lose for the year. Plans are in place to make changes to cut these costs and increase turnover in 2025 which

includes increases to menu prices and attracting additional business through outside catering. .



Training & Recreational Courses & Classes

A full programme of workshops and classes was delivered in 2024 and these included Pilates, Sewing, health & wellbeing talks, St Brigids Cross making, Silver jewellery , kids art classes to name a few. Uptake for workshops has remained strong throughout the year.



Post Office & Siopa An Carn

Siopa An Carn and Tirkane Post office are together a very important part of attracting people into An Carn and in attracting the local community into the building.

Tirkane Post Office is open 5 days a week and helps to provide more opportunities to use the service in the local community. Additional services like Amazon Hub has attracted many new customers to the Post Office and made more people aware of the services on offer.



Siopa An Carn continues to grow and expand as a well-established gift/book business. A new manager, Gemma Ward, was employed to help the business to thrive and grow with a keen focus on online trading and overseeing the administrative side of the business. Focus has been placed on creating more footfall and attracting more tourism related business.

From a financial point of view, it was a difficult year with increased turnover recorded but rising operational costs and wages contributing to a loss in 2024. A number of measures are planned for 2025 to tackle growing costs and try to reverse this.

Efforts to improve our online presence will also be the key focus again in 2025 and developing a range of Irish language products.



Féile Charn Tóchair 2024

The festival is now into its 27th year and this year the Association made every effort to offer a wide range of events. The festival committee planned a full programme of events that can be found on our website: www.ancarn.org. Events included: Rith An Carn, Family Funday & BBQ, , Irish mass at Granaghan Mass Rock, Lifting of the Seefinn Stone, Colaiste Charn Tóchair, Adult Dianchursa, Music & Craft workshops at Drumnaph and Historical talks on Carntogher mountain. With over 1400 attendees, the festival proved very successful. The festival received funding from Foras na Gaeilge, Mid Ulster Council, Arts Council NI and DJ Print towards marketing, capital items and entertainment.



Drumnaph Community Nature Reserve

Funding was granted from Dormant Accounts NI to hire a Reserve Manger for a period of 3 years. The post was successfully filled in July 2024, and during the remaining six months of the year, approximately £12,000 was secured in grant funding (Rural Micro Capital Grants Scheme and The Asda Foundation). This funding facilitated the purchase of new benches which were installed around the Reserve, and the construction of a mezzanine floor within the large shed on site. The latter works has created a dedicated storage space, and subsequently opened up the ground floor to better facilitate visiting groups.

In November 2024, a new committee was elected in Cairde Dhroim nDamh, which now meet on a bi-monthly basis to discuss activities within the Reserve. The group is currently updating its banking process, and once complete, aims to apply for charitable status.

The Drumnaph website was developed to support monthly sponsors to sign up, and additional pages were added to outline opportunities for corporate partnerships. A corporate volunteering day took place in November in collaboration with BITC and NI Water, resulting in the clearance of an area along the Loch Bran Trail.

Visitor Numbers:

MONTH	DRUMNP1	DRUMNP2
Jan-24	1653	1286
Feb-24	1941	1790
Mar-24	1960	690
Apr-24	2091	1985
May-24	2783	2098
Jun-24	2871	3039
Jul-24	3127	2191
Aug-24	3240	3518
Sep-24	2590	1976
Oct-24	2181	1880
Nov-24	1474	1482
Dec-24	1040	1153
TOTAL	26951	23088

An Coire / Arts Council Project Funding

Carntogher Art Programme continued to deliver a bilingual arts programme within the community. The programme has been varied and inclusive with the programme reflecting previous years and recommendations being implemented. The programme delivered 35 separate workshops/classes including the regular painting, fused glass, sewing and wreath making. However, a number of new workshops like silver jewellery making, and felt making proved extremely popular among participants. A total of 16 different events have happened within the programme in 2024 including a number of music events – Niall Hanna & Damien McKee CD launch and Mr Hullabaloo Christmas Shows a few key highlights. A few other highlights included the annual Culture Night and Nollaig na Bman cookery demo and music evening.

Thanks to the continued support of our funders, Arts Council NI & Mid Ulster District Council, who continue to support us in the delivery of the arts to our community. The project has been running very successfully over the past 9 years in attracting new people to experience the arts and also develop the skills of those in the local area and further afield. A full programme has been planned for 2025 & can be found on our website www.ancarn.org

Community Action Fund Project

A new project was secured in 2024 from Donegal County Council. The funding of €50,000 is a cross boarder project in partnership with Cillulta in Donegal and will involve Upgrading of thermal performance of building by upgrading the external wall insulation from the inside of the An Carn building and installation of renewable heating including air-source Heat Pump, Solar and Battery Storage. Project is due to complete in 2025.

Self Catering Accommodation – An Teach Glas

In 2024, our average occupancy for the year was 26.5%. This is down on 2023 figures and well below the NI average. Contributing factors could be the change in trends and families travelling abroad again to holiday. Focus must be on attracting more staycations in 2025.

2024						
	Teach Shuí Finn			Teach Loch Bran		
	Available bed nights	Occupied bed nights	% rate	Available bed nights	Occupied bed nights	% rate
January	31	1	3%	31	1	3%
February	29	1	3%	29	3	10%
March	31	2	6%	31	5	16%
April	30	9	30%	30	2	7%
May	31	14	45%	31	7	23%
June	30	19	63%	30	18	60%
July	31	24	77%	31	16	52%
August	31	21	68%	31	9	29%
September	30	12	40%	30	4	13%
October	31	20	65%	31	10	32%
November	30	2	7%	30	6	20%
December	31	19	61%	31	13	42%
Average %	144		32%	94		21%

The Association continued to use on-line booking sites such as AirBnB, Booking.com and TripAdvisor to help to attract more guests to stay in 2024. However, our own booking site was launched – www.anteachglas.com. This website will in due course offer the option to guests and tourists to book activities for Spraoi as a package with

their stay, as well offering a breakfast option as part of their package, not only as a selling point for the houses but also in hopes to increase footfall in An Croí.

The booking engine on the website has cut administration time on our end, in providing access to all relevant parties to the details of each booking, (number of guest, check in time etc.), providing financial reports, and integrating all booking platforms together etc. This should simplify the operational side of the business and allow more time for marketing.

The houses continue to be increasingly popular, especially amongst larger groups of people and families, and the Association increased prices for the 2024/2025 season to reflect the standard of services provided and the increase in costs of bills.

The houses and café are still working alongside each other to encourage those staying to avail of the other services provided in the An Carn Complex – we are offering a discounted breakfast for guests staying on longer stays. We are intending to extend this deal to other local accommodation providers in attempts to increase footfall during the quiet, breakfast hours in the café.



New Social Enterprise – Prionta Ltd

We established our new printing company in October 2021 with the aim to design and print gift in Irish. We created our own line of Christmas gifts and décor, including pyjamas, cushions and mugs, and sold these mainly to Siopa an Carn, where they proved to be a huge hit. We also sold these to other distributors, Cultúrlann Uí Chanáin and Cultúrlann MacAdam Ó Fiaich. In 2023, we had no production due to staff shortages although plans are underway to establish a mini enterprise group involving the Irish language leadership programme in 2024.

Future Projects –

The Association is continually working on new project ideas and these include for 2025:

1. Sustainable Community Buildings Grant – Big Lottery to improve energy efficiency within the An Carn building
2. Peace Plus project in partnership with Gaoth Dobhair GAC and Slaughtneil GAC – cross boarder project focusing on intergenerational activities and general community activity.

Use of the An Carn Facilities by other organisations

The An Carn centre is used by a number of other organisations, both commercial and voluntary.

Carn Wheelers

Carn Wheelers is the local cycling club and is based at An Carn. It uses the centre as a base for its regular monthly meetings and provides an opportunity for cooperation on activities and events. An Carn currently provides the facilities at An Carn free of charge to Carn Wheelers.



North West Mountain Rescue.

The North-West Mountain Rescue is based at An Carn and uses the centre for its regular meetings and for training events and activities as well as publicity etc. Again there are opportunities for co-operation between the mountain rescue and the Association in relation to the provision of First Aid courses and helping out at Rith An Chairn. Both groups continued to work together in 2018/2019 on Carntogher Resilience Project.



Club Óige Luraigh

Club Óige Luraigh continues to provide a range of activities through the medium of Irish for children from 8 to 18 years old. The young people play an important part in organising and delivering the events themselves and these events and activities provide an important opportunity for children to use their language within an informal and fun environment.



Sperrin Walkers Club

Sperrin Walking Club uses the An Carn centre for their monthly meetings and any training courses they deliver. We hope to establish strong links with the group in order to deliver a Carntogher Walking festival in the future.

Community First Responder Scheme – Dalriada Urgent Care



This community scheme involves volunteers from the local area who are working together with Dalriada Urgent Care to deliver grass roots medical care for members of the community. The scheme offers an essential service and support to medical professional. Quarterly training and training for new volunteers is facilitated at An Carn.

Ceoltóirí Luraigh – Machaire Rátha / Carn Tóchair

Ceoltóirí Luraigh make regular use of the buildings at An Carn for their weekly classes, which cater for approx 150 students over a range of instruments including banjo, fiddle, accordion, bodhrán, guitar, tin whistle, flute and a growing Grúpa Ceoil. On an annual basis they avail of the facilities at An Coire for a concert where these classes are showcasing their ability to their families in a state of the art venue. The committee also hold meetings at an Carn on a monthly basis.



Conclusion

During the 2024 year the Association continued to perform an important community function within the Carntogher area. The Association has continued to provide important support for a range of other organisations within the area and hopes to further extend this with ongoing collaboration and partnership building.

The sheer range of projects promoted by the Association is an ongoing challenge to its operation as a single Management Board and the Directors are currently undertaking a review of the management structure of the group to delegate much responsibility for the delivery of the various projects to a range of sub-committees.

In the process of doing this we are taking the opportunity to broaden the involvement and membership of the Group to attract people who have an interest in each of the various projects, but who may not have been interested in being involved on a general management board. If successful, this will further strengthen the function of the Association locally and in turn strengthen the viability.

2025 will be another exciting year for the Association with plans to implement better management structures and the ongoing development at Drumnaph Nature Reserve, new projects and plans to develop tourism in the area.

Statement of trustees' responsibilities in respect of the annual report and the financial statements

The trustees are responsible for preparing the financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view, in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice of the state of the affairs of the charity and of the statement of financial activities of the charity for that period. In preparing those financial statements the officers and members of the committee are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the accounts; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the company will continue in business.

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the club and that help ensure that the accounts comply with the Companies Act 2006. 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.

Statement of disclosure of information to auditors

So far as each of the trustees in office at the date of approval of these financial statements is aware:

- there is no relevant information of which the charity's accountants are unaware; and
- they have taken all the steps that they ought to have taken as trustees/directors in order to make themselves aware of any relevant information and to establish that the charity's accountants are aware of that information.

Auditors

MKP Accountants Ltd, 42A-44A New Row, Coleraine, offer themselves for re-appointment.

Small Company Rules

This report has been prepared in accordance with the special provisions relating to companies subject to the small companies regime within Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006.

This report was approved by the trustees on 13th November 2025 and signed on their behalf by:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "N O'Kane". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'N' and 'O'.

Niall O'Kane, Company Secretary
Carntogher Community Association






Annual Report 2024 MKP amended

Final Audit Report

2025-11-14

Created:	2025-11-14
By:	MKP Accountants (office@emaccountants.co.uk)
Status:	Signed
Transaction ID:	CBJCHBCAABAAu4V-cgGLoACocAK-B7tY54-6gnqwc9zu

"Annual Report 2024 MKP amended" History

-  Document created by MKP Accountants (office@emaccountants.co.uk)
2025-11-14 - 5:08:43 PM GMT
-  Document emailed to Niall O'Kane (niall@fermacproperties.com) for signature
2025-11-14 - 5:08:49 PM GMT
-  Email viewed by Niall O'Kane (niall@fermacproperties.com)
2025-11-14 - 6:00:51 PM GMT
-  Document e-signed by Niall O'Kane (niall@fermacproperties.com)
Signature Date: 2025-11-14 - 6:01:12 PM GMT - Time Source: server
-  Agreement completed.
2025-11-14 - 6:01:12 PM GMT