



ANNUAL REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES

Greyabbey & District Community Association

For the period 1st January 2023 to 31st December 2023

Registered charity number NI107114

Greyabbey & District Community Association
Trustees Report

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Charity Trustees

**Fred Wray
Janet Hamilton
Stephen Newell**

Trustees are appointed or re-appointed at the AGM

Postal Address

11 Watermeade Crescent, Greyabbey, BT22 2XB

The Charity's governing document is the Constitution as amended on 19th June 2017

The objects of the charity are as set out in the governing document, namely:

The advancement of citizenship and community development to inspire civic values and encourage voluntary and community activity in areas of health, education, the arts, sports and recreation and culture and heritage.

To develop and implement programmes concerned with promoting community cohesion through physical, social and economic improvements to the appearance of the area of benefit and impacting on the quality of life of residents.

The trustees are grateful for the many hours our member volunteers gave to the charity over the past year. Without their time, energy and expertise we could not have achieved so much.

Review of Activities

We continued to hold monthly face to face meetings throughout the year

Our Friends of the Abbey group continued their fund-raising activities and we saw a return to the numbers we experienced pre- covid. Coach tours restarted during the year bringing in around 40% of our visitors. In total we welcomed some 9800 visitors to the Abbey.

Our Trusted Partner agreement with the Dept for Communities in late 2022, which gives us more autonomy at the Abbey meant we could recruit more volunteers to assist.

Our volunteers continued their work on the Abbey Physic Garden and surrounds most weekends and this gave everyone concerned a valuable outlet as well as keeping the gardens in tip top condition. This year we upgraded the paths in the Physic Garden.

As well as providing planters and floral displays in Main Street, we ran competitions for the best Hanging Basket and Window Box floral displays again and we were rewarded by an increase in the number of entries. The winners were rewarded with vouchers which could be redeemed in any of the village shops.

Our first major event was in May 2023 to celebrate the coronation of King Charles. We held a weekend of festivities including a Village Lunch and a Firework Display held on Church Hill in the Rosemount Estate (by kind permission of the Montgomery family).

Also, in May we organised the annual Bluebell Walk though Rosemount Estate. This walk raised funds for repairs to the Bell Tower at St Saviour's church.

In June we commenced the first of our 'Have A Go' events with yoga classes on four mornings in the Abbey grounds. This was followed later in the year by Water Painting & Block Printing classes. We rounded off in October with six 'learn how to crochet' classes. All the classes were open to village residents and all were over-subscribed, so they can be counted as a great success.

In June we also had a Wild Flower event on North Street, where the Council has set aside a strip of land to allow it to be used as a wild flower meadow. As well as a talk on the subject we also had drawing and art lessons for those interested.

In July we organised a Summer Concert at St Saviours church in memory of our late colleague Michele Strong. Many of her friends from the Ulster Orchestra gave up of their time one beautiful Saturday evening to remember her in music. As she also had been a bell ringer in the church it was agreed all proceeds would go towards the cost of repairs to the bell tower.

Our Christmas Event in 2023 was unfortunately badly affected by adverse weather conditions meaning we had to slightly curtailed some of the evening events. Nevertheless, we were able to have our traditional Christmas Lunch for senior citizens of the village, cooked by the crew at Trinity Church and served by our members. After the lunch entertainment was provided by local artists.

For the evening event the weather meant Santa had to be indoors but he still brought presents for every child in the village. The Salvation Army provided music for the Xmas tree switch on. The event ended with an indoor craft market held at the Primary School.

Throughout the year, we kept everyone updated on Community Association events by way of our Newsletter – with every house in the village getting a copy four times a year.

To our great surprise we learned in November that we were being presented with the Kings Award for Voluntary Service. The citation reads:

For breathing life into the Abbey and boosting the village.

This honour would not have been achieved without the hard work and dedication of all our volunteers past and present, and the trustees acknowledged this at the subsequent presentation

Financial Review

During the year we had an income of £23,868 and expenses of £21,088 giving us a surplus of c.£2,780

As with previous years, the main source was from our Friends of the Abbey project where donations, fees, and retail sales amounted to c.£18,600. Our Summer Concert raised some £2,300 with a further £2,000 of income by way of grants.

Our expenses included upgrades to the Physic Garden, the cost of electronic whiteboards for the Primary School, and the Christmas and Coronation events. The monies we raised (£2150) from the Summer Concert went towards repairs at St Saviours Church.

Our bank balance at the year-end was £22,978.

DECLARATION

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above

Signed on behalf of the trustees by

Stephen Newell
Trustee

Date : 19th August 2024