

Friends of Drumross – Trustees Report,

During the year 1st April 2023 – 31st March 2024 there were 4 committee meetings and an AGM. The officers were re-elected to their posts as follows; Chairman – Niqi Rainey, Vice Chairman – Jim McMillan, Treasurer – Alan Gilmour & Minutes Secretary – Susan Byrne.

I confirm that all the trustees have complied with their duty under charity law to have regard to the Commission's public benefit guidance when exercising any powers or duties to which the guidance is relevant.
Niqi Rainey, 31st October 2024

This report covers our accounting year of 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024.

For the year to end of March 2024 Drumross continued to keep the number of visitors in the building to a minimum. So, it has still not been possible for any fundraising events to be held at Drumross. I'm sure you'll agree that we are all missing the wonderful Summer and Christmas Concerts that Michael Murtagh organizes and are looking forward to them happening again. The changes to the handling, or rather non-handling of cash by both of the day centres has had a negative impact on our ability to sell event tickets or gather in fund raising money and also on how we can ensure staff are not out of pocket. We continue to try to work with the management team to facilitate our ongoing support for Drumross and New Way, but don't have a clear process yet.

January 2024 marked the 40th anniversary of Drumross Adult Centre opening its doors to Service Users for the first time. Plans are underway to celebrate this with a Formal in August. Friends of Drumross have been approached by the staff to cover the costs of the event, which will take place at Corrs Corner. Room hire, all meals, a DJ, Photographer and decorations are expected to cost around £2,500 .

Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough Council opened applications for a Special Event Grant, to hold an event celebrating the King's Coronation in May 2023. After consulting with the Service Users, they decided that they wanted a petting zoo to come to Drumross, a barbeque for lunch and a visit by an ice cream van. We were successful in our application and everyone had a great day, including a visit by Paula Bradley, the Deputy Mayoress.

Our March 2024 year end accounts have been signed off. In summary we received £4986, with our main fundraising events being a walk at Hazelbank in May and a Hallowe'en Quiz and Disco in October and had expenditure of £3580, with our account for the year ending with a balance of £5729. Our constitution has been updated to accurately reflect that we raise funds to provide resources to both Drumross and New Way Adult Centres, albeit that we will retain the name of Friends of Drumross.

We have set up a fundraising charity account with Just Giving. This has allowed us to receive additional monies in the form of Gift Aid. It also provides us with an easier way to promote our fundraising activities online and to reach a much wider audience. This was first used for our Hazelbank walk and Emma Lusk has set up a fundraiser page as she will be running the Belfast Marathon on 5th May in aid of Friends of Drumross. Our plans to have a team run the marathon on our behalf hasn't been possible this year, so we are grateful for Emma thinking of us. If anyone is interested in running next year's marathon for us, either individually or as part of a team, please give your contact details to Robert Dallas. If you have any other ideas for fundraising, please let me or one of the other committee members know. Alternatively, Just Giving allows anyone to set up a fundraising page linked to our Charity Account, they don't even have to contact us to do this.

We continue to be extremely grateful to those families that think of us when a loved one dies. This year we have received donations in the memory of Janet Patterson and Jimmy Moore.

During this year Friends of Drumross has funded various resources and outings requested by the service users and staff including Sports Day medals, various DJ and ice cream van visits, an open top bus tour around Belfast and trips to the Pantomime at the Grand Opera House. In December we funded the Christmas Dinner for staff of Drumross at Corrs Corner, as the Trust was only funding meals for the Service Users.

I want to give a special thank you to Nadia Fox, Susie Knox and Liz McVarnock as they stepped down as committee members and Trustees in October 2023. Their work over the years has made a big impact on our fundraising, especially in the organising of our quiz nights. Also, an enormous thank you to Ann McMurtry who retired from her

post as clerical assistant in December. Her work in support of Friends of Drumross is greatly missed. I want to thank the committee and trustees for their ongoing commitment to Friends of Drumross, and to everyone that makes donations or otherwise supports us to help to enhance the daily experience for the Service Users and Staff at Drumross and New Way Adult Centres.

Niqi Rainey

10th October 2024