

WCDA End of Year Report for AGM (2022 – 2023)

Thankfully, this year saw an end to the Covid-19 restrictions which had caused a significant amount of interruption to the WCDA's usual activities in the previous years. Our projects slowly began to resume and I am pleased to report that most of the projects associated with the WCDA have now fully resumed. This short report seeks to give a snapshot of what our projects have been doing throughout the year.

Flower planting

We continued to coordinate summer flower planting within the village and are very thankful to Kyle Weir for administrating this and liaising with the Council and local groups and individuals who are involved with the planting. It was also wonderful to see the young, and not-as-young from the village joining together to help re-plant the flowers on the wall along Main Street. A huge effort by all. This really does make a difference to the aesthetics of the village and is greatly appreciated by the community.

Community Carols event

Unfortunately, the Community Carols event had to be cancelled at the last minute this year due to a weather warning for ice. It was such a disappointment as everyone was really looking forward to it, especially the Primary school choir who were able to participate once again following the lifting of Covid restrictions. This was the first time we have ever had to cancel the event, but through the effective decision making of the committee and the power of social media, we were able to make the decision and get the message out around the village at a very rapid rate. It did however highlight the importance of having a clear risk assessment and how useful it is for making decisions such as this. Our thanks must go to all who had agreed to help out - Holy Trinity Church, the Primary School Choir, the Salvation Army Band as well as all those who had agreed to do readings. Hopefully this is the last time we will have to be forced into such a decision.

The Historical Society

The Historical Society have held 7 talks since September and went on a guided tour of Armagh Observatory in January. There has been an average of 15 people in attendance each night. The 22/23 talks schedule covered a wide range of topics from significant women in Irish history, to NI's role and contingency planning during the Cold War. The November talk was on the 1641 Rebellion, but focused on the witness statements taken from people at the time which was an alternative angle to explore the topic. It has been a successful year and the society has welcomed back familiar faces after the pandemic as well as new faces.

The Art Club

The Art Club resumed their activities again this year. They have seen a steady attendance and have been working hard at their artwork. This was evident from their recent Exhibition of their artwork, held in the local Presbyterian church hall. A wonderful display of hard work, talent and creativity. Well done to the Art Club. A tremendous effort as always.

The Men's Shed

The Men's Shed have continued to enjoy their time together on Wednesday evenings. The group has a consistent membership of between 10 – 15 men. They have been busy throughout the year making all sorts of things – reindeers for sale at Christmas time, a workbench/table, planters for the garden as well as helping some local residents to restore the Irish cottage (or 'wee house') in the village. I think I speak for everyone when I say it is truly remarkable what has been achieved – the little house looks absolutely amazing. Well done to all involved.

The Men's Shed has seen a significant shift this year as they have become their own constituted group. They set up a committee, a bank account for their own funds and have written their own policies. A wonderful achievement in such a short space of time. As a constituted group, they are now in a much better position to be able to apply for bigger funding opportunities. This will be a significant move for them and we wish them every success as they step out on their own. We are thankful to Andy Soye and the team of volunteers that he has formed to help get it constituted, as well as giving of their time on Wednesday evenings.

Community Garden

Unfortunately, due to an ongoing issue with a sloping wall, the Community Garden had to cease their activities this year until further notice. They have subsequently been unable to meet. It is a shame, but hopefully the issue with the wall can be resolved soon and they can get back to enjoying the use of the garden space. On a more positive note, the men from the Men's Shed made planters for the garden which will prove to be very beneficial upon resumption of the project.

Climate Change

Whilst the Climate Change group have not met publicly in the past year, individuals within the group have been active in advocating around matters related to climate change. Some members attended meetings in relation to Active Transport and greenways.

Couch to 5k

Couch to 5K decided not to run this year. They are planning to get back in 2024.

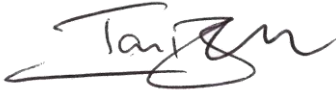
The Community Choir

The Community Choir also resumed activities this year, and have been welcoming some members. They have enjoyed a social night out at the Banville hotel and are currently working towards an autumn concert in September.

As with any local community group, we are thankful for the many volunteers who have made all this possible, including the WCDA Committee Members. Special thanks must go to Mark Gordon, our Treasurer, who does a superb job of managing our finances and preparing the end of year accounts, and Laura Stevenson, our Secretary for taking minutes. The attention to detail and clarity of process from both individuals helps to keep us accountable and is very reassuring. Continued thanks must also go to John Egerton who administrates

our website and emails. Special thanks must also go to our landlord, Love for Life and their board for their generosity in the terms of the lease use of the mobile unit.

I am hopeful that in the incoming year WCDA and our associated projects will continue to bring positive benefit to the whole community of Waringstown, as well as contributing to a sense of community and village life for all who call this place home.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ian Bingham', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Ian Bingham
Chairperson of WCDA

Date: 12th June 2023