

2023-2024 ANNUAL REPORT





**Confederation of Community Groups
Newry & District**

Annual Report 2023 / 2024

CCG Management Committee 2023 - 2024

Chairperson

Maureen Ruddy

Martins Lane Area Community Association

Vice Chairperson

Colin Hanna

Barcroft Community Association

Treasurer

Rosemarie McDonnell

Community Advice Newry, Mourne & Down

Executive Committee Directors:

Kathleen Lowry

Greater Linenhall Area Community Association

Ewan Morgan

Community Restorative Justice

Anne Woods

Cedar Foundation

Deirdre Shields

Newry Gateway Club

Rosemary Rooney

Davina's Ark

Colin Hanna

Barcroft Community Association

Marie-Clare Fitzpatrick

Ballinacraig Community Association

Co-opted Members :

Conor Patterson, Mickey Brady,

Company Information

Registered Office

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Solicitors

Ciaran Rafferty,
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Company Secretary

Raymond Jackson

Bankers

Bank of Ireland, 12 Trevor Hill, Newry

Auditors

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Company Registration No. NI22294

Charity Commission No. NIC101359

Inland Rev. Charity Reference XR40558

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Chairpersons Forward



I am delighted to present the Confederation of Community Group's Annual Review for 2023/24.

Despite the lack of a Stormont Executive for most of the period, a cost-of-living crisis and restricted funding issues I am glad to report that we were able to deliver our essential services to local communities.

Following a review of our strategic priorities I can confirm that the Confederation remains committed to the practice of Community Development. This commitment is evident throughout the report in terms of engagement, participation of local people, addressing inequalities, loneliness and hardship and increasing partnership working and capacity building.

We were delighted to retain core funding from the Department for Communities, Newry Mournie & Down District Council and from the Southern Health & Social Care Trust. To the DfC, NMDDC and SHSCT I offer our sincere thanks. Core funding remains

essential to support project delivery and underpins our overall sustainability.

Sadly, in December 2023 David Cunningham (former CCG Chair, Board member and friend) passed away after a long-term illness. Davy, whilst always affable, was also a person you could rely upon for guidance, clarity and advice. He steered the organization through some difficult times, showing great integrity and leadership and is sorely missed by all at CCG and in the wider community.

I would like to personally thank my fellow Board members, staff and volunteers and our wider membership for all their support and cooperation throughout the year. Thanks, are also due to our many funders who provide the vital financial support necessary for our work.

Maureen Ruddy

CHAIRPERSON – October 2024.



Chief Executive's Report



The 2023/24 year was particularly challenging yet rewarding. We continued to deliver an extensive programme whilst dealing with short-term funding during a time of increasing need for our services. The cost-of-living crisis continued to bite throughout this period and severely impacted those just about managing. We were delighted to assist some of those in most need in our local communities.

We continued to build partnerships with local community organisations, with funders and with our colleagues in the Com/Vol sector and were able to support groups in areas such as governance, policy & procedures, charity registration & reporting, training, operational planning, and sourcing of funds.

Through the Neighbourhood Renewal programme, we continued to provide practical support to local communities in areas of disadvantage throughout Newry City and have assisted them with community activities, funding applications and compliance with funding requirements.

We contributed to social policy development by working with strategic partnerships, attendance at seminars/conferences and by responding to consultations. We contributed extensively to the review of the sectors Regional Infrastructure and Neighbourhood Renewal programmes and strengthened engagement between statutory and com/vol sectors in the Community Coordination Hub and Strategic Stakeholders Forum.

Our Older Peoples Programme was restructured following an amalgamation of health programmes and tendering process and we established new community volunteering hubs for our Good Morning programme. We continued to provide affordable office accommodation, venue hire and back-office support resulting in generated income equating to approximately 53% of "normal income".

Finally, I would sincerely like to thank the staff team, volunteers and board members for their commitment and dedication during the past year.

Raymond Jackson.

Chief Executive - October 2024



Capacity Building, Advice & Support for groups within the Newry Neighbourhood Renewal area

In this period the following 9 Newry City community associations were assisted with a range of planning, governance and engagement activities:

Derrybeg CA, Three Ways CA, Linenhall CA, Barcroft CA, Meadow & Armagh Road CA, Martin's Lane CA, Drumalane & Quayside Close CA, Carnagat CA, Martin's Lane CA.

Drumalane & Quayside Close CA - Ongoing volunteer management support was provided to assist the CA with the development of activities and anchor groups for the community centre; engaging the services of the Education Authority allowed for the development of a Young Mothers Group and a Youth Group. The CA were also supported to proactively link with the newly formed Men's Shed and worked to deliver an inter-community sports and fun day.

Ballybot CA - The group were supported to develop an exciting new Music Festival for the Ballybot area as part of the overall community festival. Raymond Mc Creesh Park hosted over 13 local bands, showcasing talent and diversity with great representation from the local LGBTQIA+ community; attendees of all ages enjoyed the show and it is hoped that this will become an annual event. The CA also facilitated a yearlong inter-generational programme of activities thanks to funding from Awards for All.

Greater Linenhall Area CA - The CA were supported with the ongoing management of a busy community house. Thanks to funding secured from BBC Children In Need there was a full programme of activities, events and opportunities on offer for children and young people. Young people were supported to engage with a large outdoor mural project in the local play park. A number of events were also facilitated for the older residents in the Greater Linenhall area.

Martins Lane Area CA - The group have been supported to develop and deliver a wide range of programmes and activities without the benefit of a dedicated community base; they fully utilize the open outdoor space in the community and make use of the local primary school when the weather is unfavorable. A newly formed group for older people have enjoyed a range of lifelong learning and social

opportunities.

Three Ways CA - Ongoing community development support has been provided in relation to training needs, governance and funding; ensuring that the volunteers are well supported to manage a large and busy community centre that plays host to a multitude of anchor groups and user groups, providing a wealth of opportunities for the local community.

Meadow & Armagh Road CA - The CA have benefited from ongoing community development support as they navigate volunteer management issues and the threat of volunteer burnout. The loss of a long term anchor playgroup in the community centre was a knock for everyone, however, they have been supported to engage with Sure Start and Home Start for additional group provision. A new Tuesday night group for youth has also been developed and is going from strength to strength.

Derrybeg CA - Considerable work has been going on behind the scenes to provide bespoke community development and mentoring support to ensure governance structures are in place and are robust to support a new volunteer recruitment strategy. Working alongside Sure Start and the Education Authority to ensure some anchor groups and activities are being supported from the community centre.

Barcroft CA - The CA have been supported with ongoing volunteer and Centre management to ensure that a wide range of activities and events are available to benefit the local community. The Over 60's Club continues to thrive and the Youth Group evenings are always busy in the Centre. The Parent & Toddler group attracts people from across the Newry NRA's and beyond, and is always open to new attendees.

Carnagat CA - were assisted in re-locating their activities during this period in which their building is being extended and modernised. The group was assisted in locating and utilising alternative venues. The group's enlarged facility was scheduled to open in December 2023 but has been subject to delays.



Capacity Building, Advice & Support for groups outside the Newry Neighbourhood Renewal areas

CCG assisted the following groups with funding, engagement and governance issues:

- TAG (The Active Group)
- Youth Pride at The Crisis Cafe Newry
- SNAP (Special Needs & Autism Project)
- Soul Sisters (Cullyhanna)
- WALD Centre (Cullyhanna)
- Newtownhamilton Together - Women's group
- Derramore Men's shed – Bessbrook
- Lislea Men's Shed – Lislea
- Newry Street Unite, Kilkeel
- Moneydarragh Community Hub - the Mournes
- Clonduff GAC- Hilltown
- Brookvale Youth Club – Bessbrook
- Derramore Training & Development Association – Bessbrook
- Craobh Rua Hurling Club- Bessbrook
- Oriel Traditional Music Archive - Armagh / Louth/ Monaghan
- Swagath Indian Families Assoc. – N&M wide
- Tinnitus Group – Newry & Mourne wide

• **Newry Cricket Club** has a membership drawn mainly from the Kerala state in the south of India and many of the members are working locally within the health service. The group was assisted with basic set up and affiliation to the Northern Cricket Union which is the lead body for the game in N Ireland. Links have been created with the local Craobh Rua Hurling club and a pilot inter-club programme of activities is taking place each week at Newry Leisure centre from September – December.

• **The Crisis Café**, who provide services and support for many young people living across Newry, were provided with governance and funding support.

• **The Ballinacraig Community Association** were assisted in supporting households struggling with cost-of-living crisis; additional support to complete and collate feedback and funding returns for same.

• **Caring Coins Association** Ongoing mentoring and community development support has been provided to the Association to ensure policies are in place to support their work and governance is adhered to. This has assisted with the establishment of robust partnerships for the annual Christmas Appeal, and supported the development of the Community Café at Edward Street. The group have availed of governance training to assist with developing special interest subcommittees to advance new project ideas.

• **The Choir Studio** were provided with guidance on their basic governance and assisted with Charity Commission compliance.



• **Autism Families, Newtownhamilton CA, Naíscoil An Chreagáin, Mulla Hill Community First responders, Accolade Community Choir and the Rainbow Club** were all provided with advice on governance and safeguarding.





Capacity Building, Advice & Support for groups outside the Newry Neighbourhood Renewal areas

• **Davina’s Ark, Silvery Light Sailing and Newry Gateway Club** were assisted with enhanced Access NI checks.

• **Newry & Mourne Community Transport** received ongoing support including issues with DfI strategy and funding, HR and recruitment of CEO and driver, policy development and attendance at Board meetings.



• **Newry & Mourne Deaf Club** were provided with advice re Charity Commission compliance (26/5/23) and submission of annual return (14/2/24).

• **Newry Gateway Club and Autism Families** were assisted at their AGMs.

• **The Rathore Parents group** were rewarded for their efforts to fund a minibus for the school’s activities with a grant of £25K from the Clothworkers Foundation in London. The bus was officially launched in September at the school amongst scenes of great celebration.



• **Brookvale Youth club** were supported by the CCG in pursuing their plans to address their need for a home pitch & base. At the moment they are focusing on facilities in the Bessbrook village area

CCG worked with the following groups on local environmental issues:

- **Newtown Together Men’s Shed**
- **Derramore Men’s shed**
- **Lislea Men’s Shed – Lislea**
- **Derrybeg CA**
- **Drumalane & Quayside Close CA & Men’s shed**
- **Martin’s Lane CA**
- **Carnagat CA**
- **Greater Linenhall CA**
- **Newry Felons Association**



As part of its celebrations to mark 50 years since its formation CCG launched its “50 Trees for 50 Years” project. The project will hopefully see the establishment of 8-10 small community orchards within the Council area. Those groups involved in the project include Barcroft CA, Linenhall CA, Drumalane & Quayside Close / Quayside Close CA, New Town Together Men’s Shed, Lisdrumgullion Men’s Shed, Derrybeg CA, Lislea Men’s Shed, Ballinacraig CA, Ballybot CA, SWAGATH Indian Families Association, Martin’s Lane CA, Carnagat CA, Craobh Rua Camlocha.





Older People's Community Projects

The key development in the OPCP's activities centres around the re-structuring of funding and operations that took place between the handing of the contract for carer support from the Health and Social Care Board to the Southern Trust.

This affected our Good Day Good Carer project, and Trust decided to issue two separate contracts to deliver this work, combining both Carer support and older people support into one service, to be delivered across ABC and Newry and Mourne areas.

After a consultation with staff, volunteers and CCG Board, it was decided to submit a tender for both areas. CCG were successful in securing the tender for both, and commenced operation of this new combined service from 1st November 2023.



Good Day Project

Within the 2023-2024 year the Good Day Good Carer Project came to an end and has been merged into the new Good Morning contract. During the period up to November 2023, when the new service came into being, the Good Day Good Carer Service made a total of 3813 calls to older carers right across the Southern Trust area. The average call time was 15 minutes, and this equated to 953 volunteer hours engaging with and lending support to older isolated carers in the community.

From 2013 to 2023 the Good Day Good Carer project provided vital, daily contact to carers across the Southern Trust, and for a time, the service even operated NI-wide. Well over 400 carers received support and advice from our volunteers over this period and we thank our volunteers who gave this skilled role so much time over the years.

Other Developments withing OPCP

- The CCG has been active in engaging with a number of community groups to act as Community Volunteering Hubs as part of the CCG's Good Morning programme. Community Hubs for the Good Morning programme are now developed in the Newry & Mourne area with groups including WALD Centre (Cullyhanna), Lislea Men's Shed, Newry Street Unite, (Kilkeel), and Clonduff GAC. in the ABC Council area, we are actively working with ABC Network Portadown and the West Armagh consortium, Armagh Men's Shed and The Vibe Armagh.
- The CCG's Good Morning project in Newry and Mourne has been consolidating our volunteer base which now stands at 75 volunteers, expanding our volunteer network in hubs, and continuing our work engaging with key Trust teams. The work in the hubs is intensive, requiring lots of hands-on training work. We are spending a lot of time on the road, travelling to all our hubs, supporting the training delivery, while making sure the service still runs smoothly week to week.





Older People's Community Projects

- Another strand of volunteer recruitment has been opened with the development of an Employer Sponsored Volunteering Programme. Norbrook, now long-time partners with CCG have opened up Good Morning Calls to their staff as a volunteering option as an off-shoot of their 'Norbrook We Care at Christmas' Community Initiative. Up to 20 staff are expected to participate in this first tranche of training. In the ABC area, several employers have expressed interest in participating, including the Progressive Building Society.
- Hardware procurement continues, and we have delivered almost 20 laptops to community hubs making them more independent and allowing them to make use of the IT asset for other activities when not in use for calls.
- Interest in volunteering from Ballybot House remains strong as well, and we continue to recruit new volunteers and have a presence at many community events across the year.
- We ran a number of training events in this period, including Trust PPI training, where volunteers learned about the PPI process and we gained some insights as to how we can better incorporate our users' feedback.
- We also had a group of 5 volunteers attend Loneliness Awareness training, including other volunteers from the SAWN and the NMD Council Age Friendly Officer. Facilitated by CST, this session was very well received and is something we will look to roll out with other hubs in the coming months.
- Again, in tandem with our colleagues in SAWN we had 4 volunteers and 1 staff member complete Adult safeguarding training. It was a useful bit of networking for our volunteers on a personal level, and a good opportunity to update our knowledge in this important area.
- Our Project Staff upskilled themselves in a number of areas in recent months including Mental Health First Aid, Dementia Awareness training and Adult Safeguarding.

- Also, in this period CCG has accessed funding from Radius and Arbour Housing Associations as part of the Housing for All strategy. Developed in tandem with CCG's NR team, the delivery of the accompanying calendar of courses will include a one-day Volunteers' Celebration event to be held at Dromantine Conference centre.

Key Good Morning Service Statistics

GOOD MORNING N&M AREA:

APRIL 2023 - APRIL 2024

GM Newry & Mourne - Calls

Total: 15253

Average Call duration 7.09 minutes

Volunteer Hours devoted to the Service: 2008 Hours

GOOD MORNING ABC AREA:

NOVEMBER 2023 - APRIL 2024

GM Armagh, Banbridge & Craigavon- Calls

Total: 8320

Average Call duration 7.63 minutes

Volunteer Hours devoted to the Service: 1058 hours

TOTAL HOURS: 3066 Hours





Cross-Border Circle of Learning Project

The Confederation of Community Groups have been working and delivering on the cross-border Circle of Learning project for the past number of years and were delighted to continue this work into the 2023 to 2024 period. This innovative project is funded by the Department of Foreign Affairs, Reconciliation Fund, and project managed by Co-Operation Ireland. The Confederation of Community Groups are one of four Hubs involved with the project, the other Hubs being County Armagh Community Development, Dundalk Youth Partnership and the Clones Family Resource Centre.



The overarching aims of the project are rooted in the thematic pillars of 'repairing and building' within the Reconciliation Fund. That is, to 'repair' those issues which lead to division, conflict, and barriers to a deeply reconciled and peaceful society; and to work towards 'building' a strong and civil society that encompasses all communities, through the continued implementation of the Agreements and promoting a rights-based society, political stability and respect for all. These aims dovetail into the community development aims of the Confederation and compliment other work we are involved with.

To achieve progress towards these goals, each of the Hubs were asked to recruit four new groups to mentor and provide community development

support, with the aim of building capacity and skills whilst facilitating opportunities to network with both groups in their own area and with groups in the other three geographical localities, providing excellent opportunities for cross-border and cross-community engagement. The local groups working with the CCG during this period were Swagath Indian Families Association, the Crisis Café, Hilltown Community Association and Ballinacraig Community Association.

Each group received bespoke community development support tailored to their individual needs, this flexibility is one of the key strengths of the project, and it helped complete Baseline Skills Audits and Action Plans for the groups. CCG then assisted with the design of individual Social Action Plans to address key development issues in each locality. These Social Action Plans were financially supported by the project funding and needed to compliment the thematic pillars of the Reconciliation Fund, enabling groups to address issues of peacebuilding, networking and growing connections.

Each Hub also hosted a Networking and Study Visit to provide the opportunities for everyone involved in the project to come together, share experiences and learn from each other. This year we were delighted to host this event in Hilltown, with thanks to Hilltown Community Association for the warm welcome. The groups involved with CCG also benefited from other Hub visits to the Museum of Orange Heritage, Sloan's House in Loughgall, Dundalk Youth Centre and the newly refurbished Outcomers Centre in Roden Place, Dundalk, and a visit to the Family Resource Centre in Clones followed by a walking tour of historic Clones. Co-operation Ireland also hosted a Study Visit in Creggan for all the Hubs and groups involved.





Charity Regulation and Training

CCG acting as a Charity Commission “Support Agency” assisted the following groups to engage with the Charity Commission and to fulfil their legal requirements under charity law in relation to compliance and annual reporting.

- Greater Linenhall CA
- Ballybot CA
- Drumalane/Quayside CA
- Martins Lane CA
- Meadow/Armagh Road CA
- Barcroft CA
- Carnagat CA
- Three Ways CA
- Ballinacraig CA
- Newry Cricket Club
- Caring Coins
- Newtown Together Men’s Shed
- Derramore Training & Development Asso.
- Newry & Mourne Deaf Club

The range of topics covered included:

- Understanding your constitution
- Understanding charity scope
- Charity trustee roles
- Committee roles and responsibilities
- Running effective meetings
- Managing your community centre
- Managing volunteers
- Good governance
- Charity compliance
- Good relations
- Diversity inclusion



Community Development Training

Over the year CCG delivered on the job community development training to people from the following groups: Quayside Close CA, Meadow & Armagh Road CA, Drumalane CA, Martin’s Lane CA, SWAGATH, SNAP (Special Needs & Autism Project), Rathore Parents Group, Young LGBT Group, New Town Together, Choir Studio. Additionally we provided bespoke training to Drumalane/Quayside Close on 10/1/24, Ballybot CA on 17/1/24, Greater Linenhall CA on 24/1/24, Martins Lane CA on 31/1/24, Swagath Indian Families Association 7/1/24, Newtown Men’s Shed 22/3/24, Derramore Training & Development Association on 28/3/24, Newry Cricket Club on 20/3/24, Craobh Rua Hurling Club 6/3/24, Lislea Men’s Shed on 11/3/24, Newry Tinnitus group 27/3/24, Caring Coins on 21 & 22 / 2 / 24 , Ballinacraig CA 8/1/24, Newry Street Unite on Wed 6/3/24, Brookvale Youth Club on 18/2/24, Rathore Parents Group on 19/4/24, Oriel Traditional Music Archive on 29/3/24

CCG also organised 2 No Emergency First Aid courses on: 22 & 29 Jan & 5th Feb 2024 and 20&27 Feb & 5th March 2024 along with 1 No safeguarding (Child Protection) on 19th / 26th Feb & 4th March. CCG has accessed funding for delivery of a further calendar of courses including a one-day Volunteers’ Celebration event to be held later in 2024 at Dromantine Conference centre





Health & Wellbeing / Ethnic Minorities / Good Relations

CCG co-chaired Wellbeing Action Partnership (WAP) quarterly meetings and represented WAP at meetings of the South Down Homelessness Local Action Group (in partnership with NIHE and others) with particular emphasis on tackling chronic homelessness, including rough sleeping, whilst addressing housing supply.

CCG have worked weekly with the Trust's local and area wide staff to ensure a successful start to the new Good Morning service. The Good Morning service now includes both the Newry & Mourne and ABC legacy areas. In pursuit of this CCG have held a number of meetings with our counterparts in the ABC area

We also promoted and responded to a SHSCT consultation on future services at Daisy Hill Hospital (April 23) as a partner to the DHH Futures group.

Two members of staff attended Suicide Awareness course (facilitated by WAP partners Mental Health Forum)

We attended NMDDC "Health & Wellbeing/Community planning" summit at Canal Court (Oct 23) and attended South Down Homelessness LAG meeting (March 24)

CCG staff met with Newry Mourne & Down Youth Service regarding opportunities for young people from Newry – small number of young people engaged in Super TBUC programme. Attended TBUC Celebration event with Education Authority (25/1/24) – participants from across NRA's

Attended Central Good Relations Funding Forum on 9/1/24 (facilitated by TEO).

Met with SHSCT PWB manager to assist with recruitment for Community Health Champions programme on 10/1/24)

Attended Networking event with Radius and Arbour Housing Associations (17/1/24).

We provided ongoing support to Swagath Indian Families Association who have members living across Newry. We supported the group in developing outreach project ideas for Council funding

applications, to the following funds:

- Community Events & Festivals: Celebration of the Sri Rama Navami Festival.
- Community Engagement: 'Engage with Swagath' designed to promote greater involvement and participation across the community.
- Minority Communities: A celebration of the Bhagavad Geeta Reading's, 'Knowledge of the Soul.'
- PCSP: Project to promote community safety and vulnerability.

We also supported Swagath through the cross community and cross-border "Circle of Learning" project. The group members attended cross community events in the Museum of Orange Heritage in Loughgall, Clones Family Resource Centre, Dundalk Youth Centre and Hilltown and have had opportunities to network and build connections with people from a wide range of backgrounds on both sides of the border. Joint partnership working has been undertaken between Swagath and other groups involved in the project.

CCG has also provided support to a group of Indian men who are keen to connect through playing cricket. Many of these men have only recently arrived in Newry and they are engaging with the Newry Cricket Club as a means of meeting other Indian people as well as connecting with the wider community of Newry. This work is only in its very early stages and progress is being made in small steps in partnership with the SHSCT. We helped initiate a cross-community exchange between the newly formed Newry Cricket club and Craobh Rua Hurling club. Members of the cricket club come mainly from the Southern India state of Kerala and we provided mentoring and support to key people within the club.

We continued to work closely with staff in SHSCT & NMDDC in promoting the engagement of Travellers and ethnic minorities with their services.

We are also active members of the 'Newry Newcomers stakeholder Group' and attended training facilitated by the Law Society in relation to Asylum seekers (11/3/24) and gaining Refugee status (18/3/24). Information regarding asylum seekers / refugee status has been disseminated to local groups to help to combat misinformation and assist with integration of newcomer families.



Partnership Working

We continue to work on a range of partnerships / groups including:

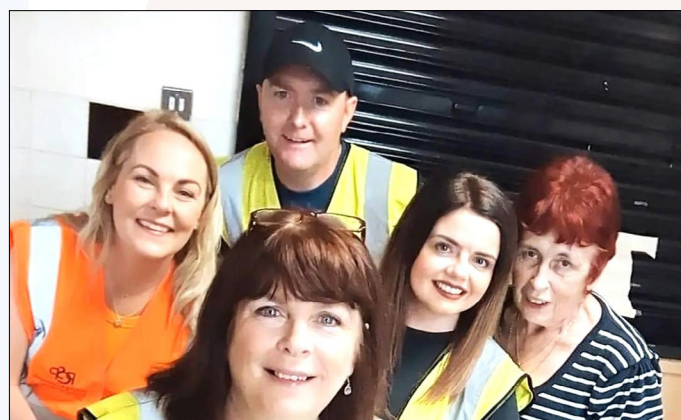
- Newry & Mourne Community Transport (NMCT)
- Community Development Network Forum (CDNF)
- Volunteer Now
- NMDDC Traveller Forum
- Mental Health Forum
- Children & Young People’s Partnership (CYPSP)
- Housing Community Network
- NMDDC Age Friendly Initiative
- Community Co-ordination Hub (CCH)
- Strategic Stakeholder Forum (SSF)
- Wellbeing Action Partnership (WAP)
- Newry Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership
- Greater Newry Vision Partnership
- Newry Chamber of Commerce & Trade
- Newry Surestart Management Group
- Southern Area Locality Planning Group
- John Moores NI Advisory Group
- SHSCT Community Sector Training



Partnership Working in the Neighbourhood Renewal programme

Events Attended:

- Attended Family Health Fair at Altnaveigh House in conjunction with Community Armagh Community Development Board.
- Attended meeting with Inspire Outreach workers.
- Engaged with Youth Action NI regards Barcroft Youth Club.
- Met with CAWT staff regards its new Outreach programme.
- Met with Radius HA to develop ideas for Good Relations projects across Newry NRA’s.





Community Planning and Engagement

CCG Board & staff attended regular meetings of the Community & Voluntary Strategic Stakeholders Forum (SSF), Community Coordination Hub (CCH), Greater Newry Vision Partnership and Newry Chamber of Commerce & Trade council throughout the period.

As members of the SSF we worked with Clanrye Group (lead partner) to deliver a Social SuperMarket (SSM) on behalf of SSF. This programme was built on the back of a very successful pilot programme in the previous period. £130k approx allocated to the programme and DfC Officials visited the SSM at Quays in March 2024.



Together with our SSF colleagues we helped coordinate Norbrook's "We Care at Christmas" programme (including distribution of cooked food, food hampers and toys) over a six week period up to Christmas and included 3 "older peoples" meals hosted at Norbrook headquarters. We also coordinated Norbrook's Easter Good Friday meals on wheels (150 meals distributed 26/3/24).

We attended quarterly Newry City DEA Forum meetings throughout the period, and supported representatives to participate in the Slieve Gullion and Crotlieve DEA Forums. We agreed to act as a reference agency in relation to Com/vol sector applications for appointment to DEA's throughout NM&D.

CCG staff attended meetings of NMDDC Newcomers programme at Town Hall (8/6/23, 12/10/23) and conference re Asylum seekers at Canal Court

(19/6/23) to help coordinate support. Similar schemes adopted in Downpatrick DEA. These are being promoted across all DEAs.

CCG staff met with NIHE staff on 13/9/23 regarding Community Involvement and Community Cohesion grant opportunities.

CCG staff worked in partnership with NMDDC DEA coordinator to establish an inter-agency group, including CCG, NMDDC, PSNI, PCSP, EA, Crisis Café, Mermaids, Magnet Centre, Newry.ie and Newry BID to develop and advance plans for Youth Pride in Newry weekend of events. This will cater for young LGBTQIA+ people and supporters from across several DEAs.

We attended meetings of the NMDDC/DfC Newry City Centre Regeneration working group throughout the year in relation to Civic Centre, public realm, Theatre/Conference centre, Office development and Newry city park. This Group has been established as a key strand in on-going consultation with civic society. We also attended the Newry City Park stakeholders Group meetings throughout and met with Design Team members re. access, options for park, lay-out and "meanwhile use."





Community Planning and Engagement

CCG staff attended CYPSP meetings throughout the year. Some of the issues raised included:

- Poor footfall from public at recent events attended.
- Post-pandemic attitude to volunteering has changed.
- More young people working from a younger age with increased drop-out from programmes for 14-15 yrs.
- Loneliness and communication issues are prevalent for some young people.
- Mobile Libraries will be off-road during summer, presenting a loss to rural communities.



CCG staff attended Sure Start Management Group meetings on 14/6/23 and 20/9/23 to assist in decision making on re-shaping the programmes in light of the pressure on an already stretched budget.

Also attended Sure Start Management Group planning day 26/1/24 and Extraordinary Management Group meeting on 20/3/24.

Sure Start are now in a position to provide the staffing in local areas to establish parent & toddler groups which will be supported by trained staff and resources for an interim period, until volunteers capacity has increased to allow them to take local ownership of the groups.



CCG manager attended and provided advice to groups at the Good Relations Funding Fair which was held in Lislea Community Centre on 20/9/23. The event was organised by the Slieve Gullion DEA co-ordinator. Staff attended NMDDC "Peace Plus" information session (2/2/24). CCG liaised with the Slieve Gullion and Newry DEA coordinators in arranging the Funding Fair to be held in Cloughreagh Community Centre on 24/4/24





Cost of Living / Hardship issues

Cost of Living/ Hardship issues have severely impacted those “most in need”. We have seen how those organisations closest to the ground, making timely interventions and targeting those most in need, have made a real difference in the lives of those “just about managing”.

The Community Coordination Hub (and Strategic Stakeholder Forum) have provided an exemplar for the partnership work between the Com / Vol and Statutory sectors.

Throughout the period we continued to act as com/vol sector representatives on NMDDC’s Community Coordination Hub (CCH) and have engaged with statutory departments and others to help coordinate the response to the cost-of-living crisis.

We helped co-ordinate a DfC “Cost of Living” (COL) funding programme (approx. £180k) via our established “EOI” and “Trusted Partner scheme” and engaged with the com/vol sector in the Newry, South Armagh and South Down areas including food banks, SVdP etc.

We completed the distribution of a £25k funding programme for people struggling to pay utility bills (funded by Newry Credit Union). This funding complemented the DfC “COL” funding (which was restricted to Food only).

As lead partner on behalf of the Strategic Stakeholder Forum (SSF) for DfC’s “Hardship Fund” programme we were able to co-ordinate a further £383k funding in the period Oct 23 – Mar 24 period.

The sector continues to demonstrate the capacity to deliver quickly “on the ground” to those most in need and the ability to deal with emergency situations as they arise.

Groups benefitted from the partnership working built up over a long period of time whilst struggling households and individuals benefitted in the form of food, food vouchers and wrap around services.





Civic Policy and Wider Engagement Initiatives

CCG staff attended a “People & Place Review” meeting on behalf of the Newry NR Partnership at the Think Lab (November 23). The Community Coordination Hub (and Strategic Stakeholder Forum) have provided an exemplar for the partnership work between the Com / Vol and Statutory sectors and has been highlighted as a possible engagement process / structure by DfC (during “People & Place” review process).

- We also attended regional meetings of the 36 NR Partnerships throughout the year (some of which were held at St Comgalls, Belfast). As part of the wider review of regional support programmes we met with Colm Boyle (Permanent Secretary DfC) and Jayne Brady (Head of Civil service).



- We chaired Board meetings of Community Places (who provide independent advice and support to individuals and groups in relation to planning, participatory budgeting, engagement and community planning). As part of a Com Places delegation, we met with DfI John O’Dowd (MLA and previous DfI minister) and Julie Harrison (permanent Sec DfI) re possible loss of funding and service delivery. Met John O’Dowd again (as Minister) (March 24) and responded to equality impact assessment (EQIA) on behalf of Com Places Board.

- Ongoing discussions with NIO Engagement Team including meeting at Ballybot House (23/5/23) with NIO personnel, re Windsor Framework, (25/10/23) and Command Paper (1/2/24).

- We attended an online consultation (14/9/23) re scoring social value on public contracts.

- Together with other local groups, we met with DfE officials (August 23) at NMEA in relation to sectoral/infrastructural funding programmes including proposed changes to Invest NI funding.

- We attended Community Development Network Forum (CDNF) meetings throughout the period and attended meetings with NICVA and DfC (CSSP) to discuss Cost of Living (COL) crisis, civic infrastructure, and VCD funding issues and contributed to CDNF response re same.

- We attended Newry & Mourne Community Transport Board meetings throughout the period (acted as Treasurer).

- We attended NICVA’s Cost of Living crisis support event in Portadown in May 23 and a follow up event in June 23.

- We remain a member of the Emergency Leadership Group although the “Emergency” has now been downgraded to longer term support particularly addressing “cost of living” and poverty. We also remain listed on NICVA’s website as a sub-regional support organisation for the NMDDC area.

- Interviewed for BBC Politics on Sunday “The State We Are In” (17/1/24) re cost of living (COL) crisis and state of com/vol sector. Also interviewed for Newry Democrat re COL crisis and SSM (29/3/24).



Seminars, Events and Consultations

Attended CYPSP Locality meetings throughout the period at Newry Youth Resource Centre.
 Attended Chamber of Commerce meetings and AGM December 23.

Attended NMDDC Traveller Forum meetings throughout the period.

Responded to Southern Relief Road consultation (25/9/23) as listed stakeholder.

Responded to Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) on behalf of Com Places Board (31/5/23) and on behalf of CCG (7/6/23) re DfI consultation.

We also took part in an online consultation (14/9/23) re scoring social value on public contracts.

Attended NR People & Place review 21/11/23 at thync lab with DfC officials.

Responded to DfC Regional Infrastructure Support Programme consultation 9/2/24.

We facilitated NICVA's "Volunteer and Staff recruitment" event at BBH (22/11/23).

Responded to DfI equality impact assessment (EQIA) on behalf of on behalf of CCG (7/6/23).

We hosted a DfC engagement event at BBH (11/5/23) and invited com/vol reps to attend to discuss issues of concern.

Attended National Lottery's "Sustainable Community Buildings" information session 15/2/24 – may help assists groups to apply for funding in future.





List of Current Tenants

ACTION MENTAL HEALTH

BLUE PRINT PIZZA

CEDAR FOUNDATION

CENTRE FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING NI (CILNI)

COMMUNITY ADVICE N.M.D.

COMMUNITY RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

DVA THEORY CENTRE

FRANK MCCORMACK (COUNSELLING)

HOMESTART NEWRY & MOURNE

HOME START COMMUNITY SHOP

LAF HAIR & BEAUTY

MENCAP

THE MENTAL HEALTH FORUM

NEXUS

PLAY THERAPY (ELISH BURNS)

PJ TOAL NEWRY COUNSELLING CENTRE

POSITIVE FUTURES

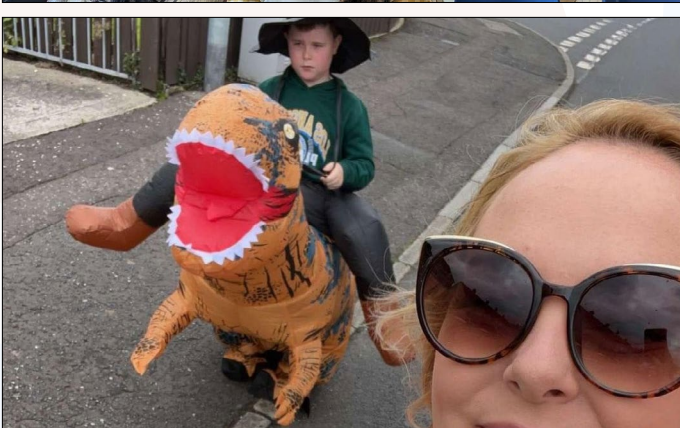
RADIUS HOUSING

SOUTHERN AGE WELL NETWORK

UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE (U3A)

VOLUNTEER NOW







Finance & Services 2023 / 2024

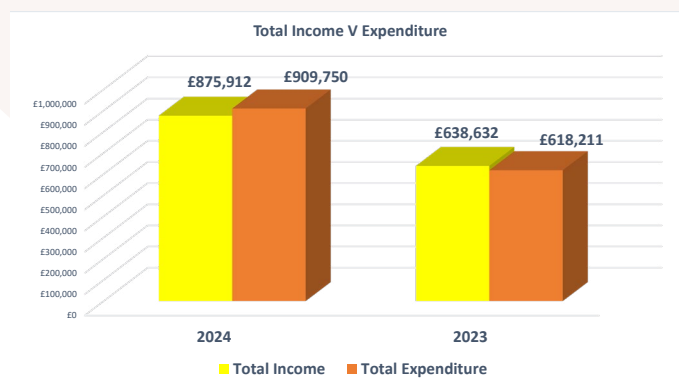
Total income for the year ended 31st March 2024 was £875,912. This was £237,280 more than the comparative figure (£638,632) for the period ended 31st March 2023. However £344, 891 of this year's (and £98,900 of last years) income related to Food Crisis / Social Supermarket / Hardship / Cost of living intervention programmes.

We maintained significant returns in Generated income from rental income, Management fees and venue hire facilities at Ballybot House/ An stóras.

Income streams derived from office, venue hire, back-office support and resource centre equated to more than 53% of total income (when Food crisis, social supermarket and Cost of Living money removed), with surplus income used to contribute to deficits within the General Management Account and the Neighbourhood Renewal Programme.

Total Expenditure increased from £618,211 last year to £909,750 in this period (again a significant increase in expenditure related to Hardship / Cost of Living funding). The result of this was an overall deficit of £33,838 for the year.

Significant increases in utility bills, repairs, maintenance and general running costs contributed to increased expenditure at our Ballybot House & An Stóras premises. These costs when combined with an increase in our employment costs cancelled out positive returns from our social enterprise. All other non-essential expenditure was restricted resulting in a positive cash-flow throughout the period without the need to seek any loan or overdraft facilities.



Despite significant contributions made towards long term sustainability the continuing support in core funding from DfC (Community Investment Fund), NMDDC (Community & Voluntary Service Level Agreement) and SHSCT (Older Peoples Programme) has been, and will continue to be, essential in supporting CCG to deliver projects/services in the face of perpetual challenges.

The Finance & Services team continue to discharge their duties in strict accordance with accounting policies and our audit has been prepared in line with the provisions of the Companies Act 2006 FRS 102 "The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland" and Accounting & Reporting by Charities Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP). Our Financial and Governance Controls continue to be deemed "Robust" (this is the lowest risk status as certified by the DfC's Voluntary & Community Division).

Conference, Retail, Day-care and Office Accommodation at Ballybot House & An Stóras

Retail, Day-care, Office accommodation, Venue Hire and Conference facilities remained a vital source of income throughout the year. We were sad to lose SHSCT (CAWT programme) and, due to lack of funding, Action Mental Health had to give up their tenancies at Ballybot House and An Stóras (Unit 1). However, this provided the opportunity for us to attract University of the 3rd Age (U3A) as new tenants and offer additional office space to Homestart. We were also delighted to welcome Positive Futures, Nexus, Eilish Burns and CRJ's Digging Deeper and EmpowerHer projects. We continued to use all available space for our own, distribution of foodstuffs and for additional venue hire facilities.



Finance & Services 2023 / 2024

Statement of Financial Activities for the financial year ended 31 March 2024

Incoming Resources

	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Charitable activities		
Grants from governments and other co-founders	585,025	352,380
Activities for generating funds	290,887	286,252
Other income	-	-
Total income	875,912	638,632

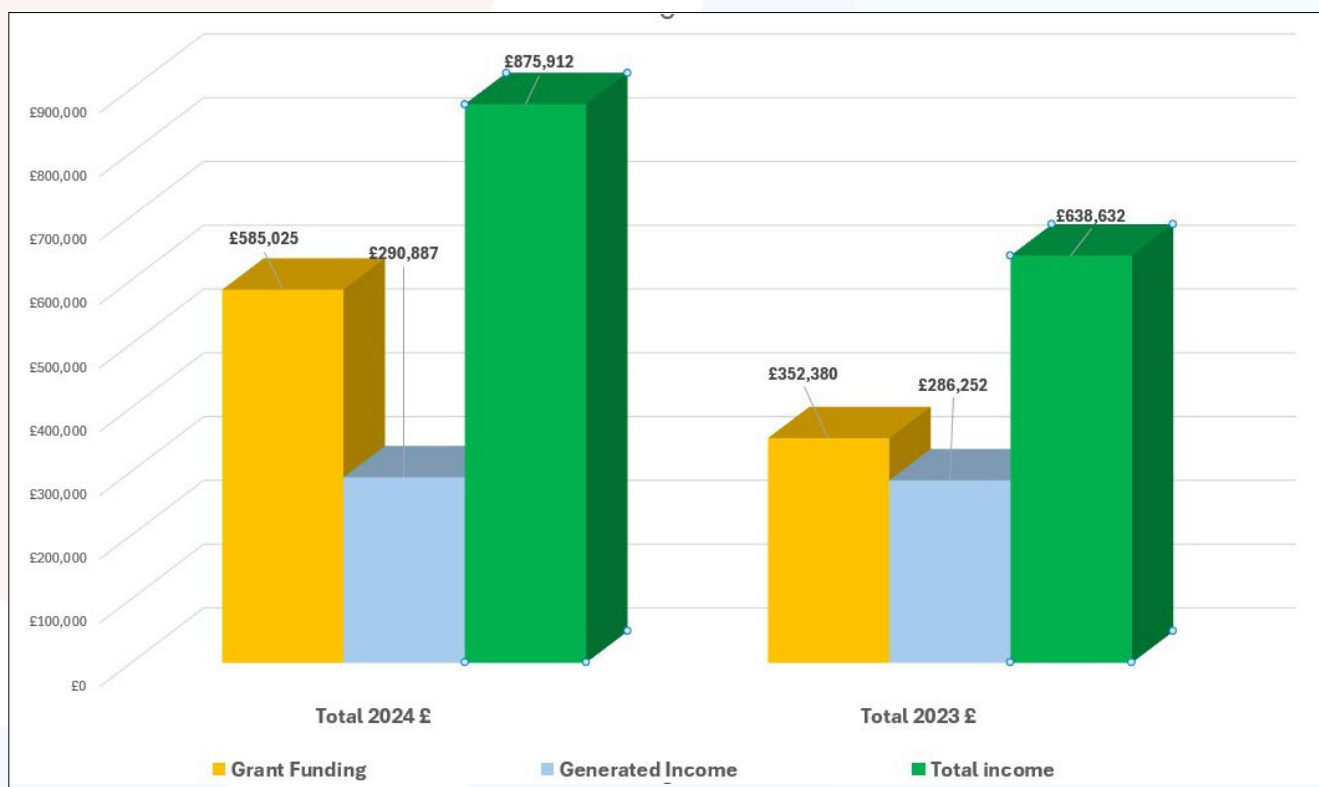
Expenditure

	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Charitable activities	909,750	618,211
Net income/(expenditure)	(33,838)	20,421
Transfers between funds	-	-
Net movement in funds for the financial year	(33,838)	20,421

Reconciliation of funds

Balances brought forward at 1 April 2023	2,449,837	2,429,416
Balances carried forward at 31 March 2024	2,415,999	2,449,837

Extract from Audited Accounts





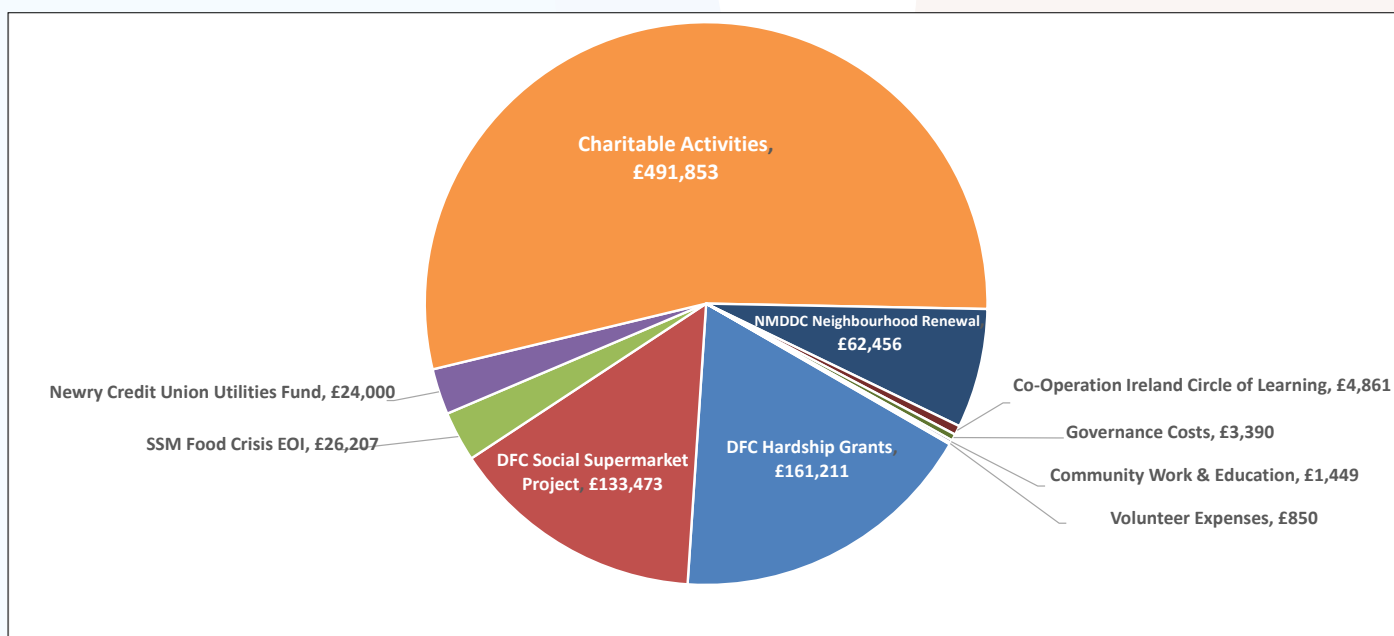
Finance & Services 2023 / 2024

Balance Sheet

	2024	£	2023	£
Fixed Assets				
Tangible assets	2,094,431		2,094,431	
Investments	1		1	
Total	2,094,432		2,094,432	
Current Assets				
Debtors	179,641		78,136	
Cash at bank and in hand	396,032		447,706	
Total	575,673		525,842	
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	(254,106)		(170,437)	
Net Current Assets	321,567		355,405	
Total Assets less Current Liabilities	2,415,999		2,449,837	
Funds				
Restricted trust funds	(86,009)		(73,178)	
Designated funds (unrestricted)	1,265,219		1,265,219	
General fund (unrestricted)	1,236,789		1,257,796	
Total funds	2,415,999		2,449,837	

Extract from Audited Accounts

2024 Charitable Activities Expenditure - £909,750





CONFEDERATION OF
COMMUNITY GROUPS

The Confederation of Community Groups Funders 2023 / 2024



Department for

Communities

Community Investment Fund, Hardship Funding,
Social Supermarket Fund, Cost of Living Fund



Comhairle Ceantair
**an Iúir, Mhúrn
agus an Dúin**

**Newry, Mourne
and Down**

District Council

Neighbourhood Renewal Grants
Core Fund
Hardship Funding



Southern Health
and Social Care Trust
**Older People's
Community Project**



Health and Social
Care Board

Out-Bound Telephone Support



Credit Union
Utility Fund



John Moore Foundation
Community Work & Education



co-operationireland
Circle of Learning

