Report of Chair to AGM of Ardboe Community Projects on 18th October 2016

Firstly can I welcome everyone to our AGM. With the merger of the 2 groups, Ardboe Community Projects and Ardboe Regeneration Group at our AGM on 15th April last year, we have covered 2 financial years. We finish the most recent year of 31st July 2016 with a healthy surplus in the bank of £2,332.

Following the AGM and merger in April 2015 we undertook the following activities. We relaunched the new group with a Fun Day on 4th July, when we had an American theme to mark the date. This was well attended and was enjoyed by all the family.

We had decided that part of our remit would be to see if we could start some groups or projects within the parish. We compiled a questionnaire to find out what people wanted and from that we decided to fund some “taster” classes to see if there was an appetite for these groups/activities. With the help of a few others Sharon set up a very successful Mother and Toddler Group, which continues to run on a weekly basis in Ardboe Parish Centre. Ronan set up a 6-week taster boxing club, which has since developed into a fully-fledged Boxing Club in its own rite and has gone from strength to strength. I set up Juicing classes which were well attended but the instructor failed to take them on under his own name, and coupled with the summer evenings, the class ceased – maybe this can be revisited at a later stage. We were also approached about a Buggyfit class for mothers and toddlers, which we funded in May/June time.

Chris Callan was instrumental in securing funding for several events including the initial Fun Day. He also secured funding from the Department of the Environment for an environmental project to run in 4 local schools – Ardboe, Moortown, Derrychrin and Ballylifford. The project was run in conjunction with RSPB.

We also were instrumental in pushing forward with a Village Plan for Ardboe. Having a Village Plan is a key factor when being considered for funding. It also lets the people have their say in what they want to see for our village. We worked very closely with Martina Totten initially from Mid Ulster District Council and her successor Sean McElhatton. To them we send our thanks for their hard work and dedication. In May we held an open meeting at which Fergal O’Donnell of Galbally Community Centre and Carol Doey of The Hub in Cocktstown both told the story of their own place and experience. It certainly gave us food for thought as to what we could achieve in Ardboe.

Halloween saw us hold the annual fancy dress disco for the kids. This was well attended and a good fundraiser too. In December we had the now annual switching on of the Christmas Tree lights, with Cliona Hagen there to entertain the crowds. The indoor craft fair and market still proved to be a popular event too.
At the beginning of this year I was approached by Adrian McCreesh of Mid Ulster Council to facilitate a meeting/viewing of Ardboe Parish Centre by the Northern Trust with a view to them renting a room to run a satellite programme for those with learning disabilities. After several meetings, this eventually got up and running in June. As a follow on from that we began meetings with Ardboe Parish Centre committee in a bid to see if we could work more closely together. We wanted to regenerate the parish centre with more events. We decided to start a monthly country night. However, the first one wasn’t well attended. The second one was as part of our Great Rossa Festival and was a better night, but we decided that we would shelve this idea for now. The Festival weekend also had a Fun Day which was well attended and of course the Great Rossa Run was the highlight of the weekend – we thank the GRR committee for their help and support during the weekend.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the members of Ardboe Community Projects for their hard work and commitment since April last year. There is a lot of hard work that goes on behind the scenes that not many are aware of – Toddler groups don’t just open up with everything in place, discos don’t run themselves, advertising and promotion of events doesn’t just happen. And the dreaded paperwork has to be completed by someone!! So to you all, a heartfelt thank you.

On the note of paperwork, can I officially thank our auditor, Frankie Quinn, for keeping us right with HMRC and filing all our returns.

It just remains for me to wish everyone another successful year in ACP. If we achieve half as much in the next year as we have since the last AGM, Ardboe will indeed be a very lucky community.

Deirdre Mayo

Chairperson

18th October 2016