Kesh Development Association 2017-18

The cut and thrust of daily needs for our Community Association continue to grow and expand. The onset of Welfare Reform and the introduction of Universal credit has meant that organizations like KDA are being asked to provide link points for all kinds of IT services. Thankfully we have been able to secure high speed public broadband through Airfibre and this has proved a real boon to everyone using the Centre. We will continue to support the older and more vulnerable members of the community in whatever way we can and we have had several significant wins with Turn2U and make the call.

We have continued to liaise with Fermanagh Omagh Council and we are delighted that our heating problems will finally be addressed with a complete refurbishment of the Community Centre to include insulation installation and a new energy efficient heating system. This should reduce our energy consumption significantly and we hope work will start late 2018.

We also need to find ways to cut our electric bills and we hope that with proposer insulation we will reduce the amount of electric needed. The efficiency and running costs of the Community Centre represent a large challenge in terms of the years ahead and it is a shame that we have missed the photo voltaic boom for solar panels. We need to keep a watchful eye on future natural energy grants that would lead to overall sustainability. When the insulation and new heating system has been installed it would be useful to conduct a future energy efficiency audit that could be used for future direction.

We have also been fortunate to have a new Christmas Lights scheme that covers the village and involves the whole community in a spirit of celebration. 2017 was an amazing spectacle of colour and light and we truly thank everyone for their generous support. It’s a real challenge to beat last year but with good planning and a genuine focus on the wider community’s needs we can see real progress being made.

Finally we have been fortunate to deepen our relationship with Ederney Community Development Trust through our involvement of the North Fermanagh Valley Project. This ground-breaking scheme has transformed the barren lands at the old Devenish College but also helped the communities to come closer together for training, planning and education. The challenge of having this facility open, maintained and ready for community use is real and prevalent. As a community we must consider how this investment by ‘Space and Place’ can be rewarded with greater cooperation and application of the economies of scale. Thus issues relating to HR, Action Planning and good governance can be shared and appreciated together. The relationship that has developed has been positive and cathartic on both sides and provides a genuine foundation for the future.

Neville Armstrong

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