The voice of Carrickfergus Community

Foreword by Coordinator Janice Cherry:

2017 has so far been a challenging year for the wider community and voluntary sector. The consequences of political uncertainty and lack of an agreed budget is already impacting on services provided by the voluntary and community sector.

However, despite these challenges, CCF has celebrated a successful and busy start to the year with numerous courses, events and workshops taking place. We continue to stay focussed on our main aim; to develop and strengthen the community infrastructure within Carrickfergus. With the brighter evenings on their way, we are planning to roll out a number of courses and events over the coming months, so watch this space! Remember to subscribe to our weekly e-zine to be kept up to date.

Thank you for your continued support,

A Tribute to Jacqueline Clawson

Carrickfergus Community Forum Board of Directors and staff would like to extend our sincere condolences to the family and friends of Jacqueline Clawson who sadly passed away in January.

Jacqueline was a regular at the Forum, taking part in many of the courses and events over the years and was always a joy to work with. She always had a smile on her face and will be greatly missed by all the staff.

Sadly missed along life's way, quietly remembered every day... No longer in our life to share, but in our hearts, you're always there.

“Many people are good at talking about what they are doing, but in fact do little. Others do a lot but don't talk about it; they are the ones who make a community live.”  Jean Vanier
Carrick 100 Launch at Town Hall

The launch of the Carrickfergus 100 Project leaflets and power point took place on 16th February 2017. The date was chosen because it was exactly 100 Years ago that day, when Carrickfergus lad, Private Richard McDermott Royal Irish Fusiliers was killed in action in France 1917.

David Hilditch MLA and Councillor Noel Jordan jointly launched the project in the Old Town Hall which was attended by over forty people. Tommy Kirkham, Community Development Worker with Carrickfergus Community Forum thanked all those who participated in the Project and specifically George Watson and Angela Wright for their almost weekly impute for nine months. The leaflets are available in all major shops, visitor centres, libraries and churches in the Whitehead to Greenisland areas. The power point that complements the leaflet has been made available to all Schools in the local area as well. In his speech Tommy said "That those young men and women who lie in Graveyards all over the World will only eventually die when people stop visiting the graveyards or remembering their Sacrifice".

Guest Speaker Dr. Ian Adamson OBE, President of the Somme Association in Northern Ireland also paid tribute to the project and said that groups like Carrickfergus Community Forum can only exist due to funding being made available and in this case it was the Northern Ireland Housing Executive through the SPOD programme who sponsored the research and the end result of the leaflets and memory pens being available to children through the Schools and the various points.

UDR Commemoration in Carrickfergus

A new memorial was unveiled in Carrick on Saturday 6th February in commemoration of former local UDR soldiers.

A parade to the war memorial at Joymount was led by The Pride of the Raven band and a service was conducted at the memorial by Pastor Sam Grant. Guests included Her Majesty’s representative in County Antrim Lord Lieutenant Joan Christie and relatives of murdered UDR members Private HJ Russell, Private SA Carleton and Lieutenant WC Kerr whose names are inscribed on the new six foot black granite memorial.

Chairperson of the Ulster Defence Regiment Association Stephen Weir stated: "Over the past year, the members of the UDR Association have worked vigorously to raise the funds for this memorial. We would like to take the opportunity to thank the borough for all their kind donations and help in making this possible. Without this support, we would have struggled to achieve the goal of having the memorial erected."

The new memorial can be viewed at Carrickfergus Marine Gardens.
Welfare Reform Information Workshop

In January, The Forum hosted a CAB Welfare Reform Information Workshop for participants to find out about the changes to the benefits system that may affect some people.

The workshop which was facilitated by Citizens Advice Bureau provided a basic overview and introduction to welfare reform, including Universal Credit, Personal Independence Payment and the mitigations package etc.

The workshop covered topics such as how to complete a disability claim form effectively and what to expect at a medical assessment. Participants also had a chance to ask about the changes in reference to their individual cases. Thank you to CAB for a very informative morning.

Dementia friendly communities Workshop

Back in January, The Forum held a workshop to enable Dementia Friendly Communities, supporting people affected by dementia to live well in their community.

There are 850,000 people living with dementia in the UK. This is expected to rise to 1 million by 2021. One third of people living with dementia do not feel part of their community.

Facilitated by the Alzheimer’s Society, the workshop encouraged participants (pictured right) to all play a part in enabling people with dementia to live well wherever they are.

Carrickfergus Art Club celebrates its 40th anniversary with an exhibition in the Civic Centre from 22nd of April to the 6th of May.

The club was originally formed in 1976 at a meeting in the Jubilee Hall organised by the Arts Committee of Carrickfergus Council and was attended by two of the founder members of the club, Manson Blair and Pearl Patterson. Manson Blair was appointed Chairman and those interested met in the old Antrim street premises also occupied by the boxing club and a band practice. At that time they had 26 members and the premises were not really suitable so in early 1977 they acquired a classroom in Sunnylands Primary School where we enjoyed the tutorage of a Mr Savage from WEA. Later they moved for a short time to Central Primary School and then to the Bowling club. They eventually found the Ideal venue in the art room of Downshire School where they still meet today.

The first exhibition was held in the town Hall for 3 days in September 1977 and since them they have been holding exhibitions twice a year these have proved very popular with there supporters over the last 40 years. For many years they held their exhibitions in the library but for the past few years they have exhibited in the gallery of the Civic Centre.

The club promotes art in the town and the number of members has kept growing. Today they have reached the maximum number and have a waiting list and they would encourage anyone interested in art to come along to the exhibition and leave their name on it.
On 29th March, Carrickfergus Pageant Committee relaunched The Royal Landing at Carrickfergus Castle (pictured below).

The “Royal Landing” at Carrickfergus is a cultural phenomenon with its spectacular sights and sounds. Set against the amazing and iconic imagery of the majestic Norman Castle, the festival commemorates the Royal landings at Carrickfergus by King William of Orange on the 14th June 1690. This year is the 327th anniversary.

The event brings history back to life with a colourful spectacle featuring re-enactors consisting of musicians, soldiers, dragoons and town dignitaries dressed in period costume.

It is a chance for visitors to experience first-hand local history and the importance of the town as a gateway to Ireland in historical conquests.

Each year, the colourful festival celebrates Carrickfergus' unique history and features Historical re-enactments, exhibitions, a funfair, family and live entertainment.

This festival involves the participation of an entire town as they plan and deliver these annual fixtures in the calendar.

The Royal Landing will take place in Carrickfergus on the Saturday 10th June. For more information, see the Facebook page: www.facebook.com/theroyallandings
UPCOMING COURSES AT CCF:

We are preparing our program for 17/18 and would like to give our member groups the opportunity to request workshops and courses.

We are currently looking for expressions of interest for a course in Governance. It will involve key sessions such as:

- How to set up a group
- How to open a bank account
- Recording meetings
- Managing funding
- Applying for funding
- How to fill in a funding application
- Finance accountability/monitoring and returns

We are also hoping to run workshops in:

- Sign language
- Community development level 1 and 2
- Talking about tough issues to your children
- Charity Commission

And information sessions on:

- Welfare reform
- Community planning
- Charity Commission
- Meet the councillors event

Access NI Enhanced Checks

CCF is a registered Umbrella Body with Access NI. This means that we submit enhanced criminal record checks for community organisations in the Carrickfergus area. Access NI authorises umbrella bodies to provide these services to organisations. For more information on this service contact Janice Cherry, Coordinator 02893359777.

Places will be allocated on a first come first served basis.

We kindly ask that if your registration has been confirmed and circumstances change that you are no longer able to attend the workshop, please let us know so that we can offer places to those on our reserve list.

See something you like? Get in touch with us for more information, to register your interest or book a place 02893 359777.

Have you read Mid & East Antrim Borough Council’s Community Planning Guide yet? It explains what community planning is, who is involved, and how it is governed. You can download it from their website: www.midandeastantrim.gov.uk/downloads/MEA_Community_Planning_Guide.pdf
Carrickfergus Older People’s Forum was established in March 2011, set up in recognition of the number of older people living locally that are isolated and have little or no contact with anyone else on a daily basis. They wanted to target these Older People so that they could avail of opportunities to engage in community-based activities where they could have fun, try something different, make new friends and become included.

COPF have monthly meetings in CCF to discuss older people’s issues. Their membership also feeds into what’s happening at Older People’s Parliament level and they do practical things like distribute the winter warm packs and identify current needs. All their members are volunteers and are older people themselves, so they understand.

COPF have just relaunched the Older People’s Forum (pictured above at March relaunch) and now plan to develop their action plan for 2017/2018 to offer new opportunities to engage local older people. Chairperson Beryl McKnight states, “Any older person aged 50+ living in Carrickfergus and the wider surrounding area is welcome to take part. We are particularly keen to increase our male membership and would encourage older men out there to come forward. Anyone attending their meetings will find them informative and enjoyable – they always have a laugh and you will also get a cup of tea or coffee and a bun.”

Any older person that is interested in finding out more about us can contact CCF on 02893359777 and we will pass your details on to the Older People’s Forum.
Celebrating Cultural Diversity Event

On 9th February, MEAAP hosted a Celebrating Diversity event at Tullyglass House. The Forum arranged for the Men’s Shed, Sunnylands 50+ Group and members of Carrickfergus Older People’s Forum to attend the event which celebrated language, dance and culture. It was a joint partnership event with the other three clusters, Mid & East Antrim Agewell Partnership and the Inter Ethnic Forum. Fun, laughter and creativity was all on show when over 200 older people were came together to celebrate the wide diversity of cultures in the borough.

The event, which commenced with the launch of a local research report into the needs of older ethnic minority communities and older people in the area, showed that the needs of all older people in Mid and East Antrim are similar, with money worries, fear of crime, health and loneliness being the top four concerns. As well as dance, the event also featured an opportunity for a colourful patchwork quilt of Rangoli rice paper artwork to be created, having giving every audience member the opportunity to create an individual tile. Other multicultural workshops included henna tattooing, Polish Papercutting and also creating an origami rooster as it is the “Chinese Year of the Rooster”. A great day was had by all!

Bann Maine West Good Practice Visit

Back in February, Carrickfergus Older People’s Forum visited to Bann Maine West Community Cluster for a food practice visit and networking event at the Wild Duck in Portglenone.

On arrival, they were introduced to laughter yoga, a practice involving prolonged voluntary laughter. Laughter yoga is based on the belief that voluntary laughter provides the same physiological and psychological benefits as spontaneous laughter. Laughter yoga is done in groups, with eye contact, jokes and playfulness between participants.

The Cluster concept was initiated in 2010 when Ballymena Borough Council (now Mid & East Antrim Borough Council) divided their Council area into four – North, South, East and West. A group was set up for each area with Bann Maine West set up to support the community groups in rural west areas of Ballymena. They work together with other member groups to provide support, funding opportunities and training in a wide variety of topics. There are no membership fees, although membership is strictly limited.

It was a great opportunity to meet the group and see what work they are doing with their local community. Thanks again to Bann Maine West for hosting COPF on what was a very enjoyable day. Carrickfergus Older People’s Forum hopes to be able to return the invitation in the not too distant future!
You are welcome to attend...

**Learning Disability Pride – Carrickfergus**  
**Saturday 27th May 2017 - 12pm to 4pm**

This day will celebrate people with learning disabilities from across Northern Ireland. We are expecting over 2000 people to attend and hope that includes you!

**What You Need to Know**

The main points about the day are:

- **Flying the Flag for Learning Disability** – Join our carnival parade or volunteer with us on the day!
- **Market Stalls for All** - Set up your social enterprise or information stall in our market place.
- **Get into the Groove and Let’s Learn Together** - Get involved with our family fun activities on the day. Shop, eat and be entertained!

You can find out more information on our Website, Facebook and Twitter.

Please email us to let us know what parts of the day you would like to take part in. You are welcome to bring a group of people and we would appreciate if you can confirm how many people from your family/team/service/organisation that you expect will attend on the day.

**Please RSVP by 28th April 2017**

Our email address is: learningdisabilitypride@gmail.com

www.learningdisabilitypride.org  
www.facebook.com/learningdisabilitypride  
www.twitter.com/LD_Pride2017

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**Got something to say? We’re Listening.**

We would love to hear from you!

If you would like to contribute to this newsletter or have an event you would like to advertise in our ezine, please contact us!

The views and opinions expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily reflect the views of the CCF Board of Directors and Staff.