

Drumcree Community Trust

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Portadown
County Armagh
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HMRC Charities No: XR34864

3rd February 2015

Dear Friends,

On behalf of Drumcree Community Trust (DCT), located in the Garvaghy Road area of Portadown, County Armagh, we are writing to ask for your support with some of the funding challenges we are facing this year.

We also hope that you can take the time to read the attached background information about us and our community.

Over a year ago, DCT secured funding to completely refurbish, internally reconfigure and partially extend Drumcree Community Centre.

Those much needed physical works commenced in September last and are due to complete by late March of this year, with the community centre becoming fully operational once again in April.

These works are already creating a great buzz within the community with residents of all ages, and particularly our many young people, eagerly looking forward to the completion and the re-opening of the centre (see attached photographs).

While the costs of the actual physical works to Drumcree Community Centre are covered by that funding, and as the community centre has been temporarily closed to facilitate those works, DCT has incurred additional costs due to the fact of relocating to alternative premises in order to enable us to continue with our wide of activities and programmes.

We have established a dedicated fund-raising committee to assist us in meeting these additional costs.

Additionally, that committee has also been tasked to raise money to provide new equipment, furniture, etc, for the community centre upon its completion.

These additional costs of kitting out the community centre have been estimated at least another £25-£30,000 (\$37-\$45,000).

We are conscious that, upon completion, the refurbished and extended community centre will provide us with a number of welcome challenges and opportunities to develop and expand our activities for the increased benefit of all in our local community.

This appeal to you is in respect of raising funds to provide new equipment for our community centre and we hope that you or your organization might consider assisting us by contributing towards some of those costs.

We have also attached a "wish-list" of items which you or your organization might consider financially contributing towards.

All contributions will be individually receipted and acknowledged and the names of all donors will be collated and recorded in a dedicated book kept in the new Drumcree Community Centre.

As DCT approaches its 25th year of existence in 2016, we believe that with your assistance we can secure the Trust's ability to build upon those solid foundations we have laid down in our community over many years to ensure that DCT continues to play an integral, positive and valuable role in our community for many future years.

Our primary aim is to ensure that DCT continues to focus upon improving the life chances for people of all ages within our community, and our young people in particular, through learning, personal development and active citizenship while at the same time, developing further our vision of creating a stronger, more resilient, supportive, influential and inclusive community.

We are very conscious that there are many demands being made upon you.

However, we do hope that you may feel able to assist and support us in some way.

Yours sincerely,


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Fr Michael Bingham

Chairperson

michael_bingham1@btinternet.com


.....

Breandán Mac Cionnaith

Vice-Chairperson

breandanmac@googlemail.com

How you can donate to Drumcree Community Centre

We are suggesting several methods of how you or your organisation may donate financially towards our fund-raising campaign should you wish to do so.

1. By cheque/post

If you would like to post your donation to us, please make your cheque payable to 'Drumcree Community Trust' and address the envelope to Drumcree Community Trust, 3 Ashgrove Road, Portadown, County Armagh, Ireland, BT62 1DA.

Please do not send cash by post.

2. Paying directly into our bank account

For details on how to pay money directly into our bank account please e-mail brendanmac@googlemail.com

3. By donor advised tax deductible payment

You can make a tax-deductible donation to Drumcree Community Trust through Conway Mill Trust.

Simply write Drumcree Community Trust on your check, and mail it to Conway Mill Trust Inc., PO Box 101529, Pittsburgh, PA 15237.

Alternatively, simply go to www.conwaymilltrust.org and click the DONATE button to donate securely through PayPal using your checking account or credit card. Note on your PayPal transaction that you wish your donation directed to Drumcree Community Trust.

Either way, 100% of your donation will go to Drumcree Community Trust.

Drumcree Community Trust has a long-term and much appreciated supportive relationship with the Conway Mill Trust.

Drumcree Community Centre

‘Wish-list’

We have attempted to identify our most pressing needs and provided a brief description in the hope that you will consider assisting us.

New children’s play room and outdoor play area:	
Various play equipment/toys for pre-school age children up to the age of 4 years	£1,500
Various play equipment/toys for primary school age children 5-11 years	£2,000
Teenage Drop-In Area	
2 Camcorders for youth project @ £200 each	£400
2 digital cameras for youth project @ £100 each	£200
4 X-Box @ £150 each	£600
Whiteboard	£80
Seating and small tables	£500
Meeting-room/Classroom	
1 Board-room type table and 12/14 chairs	£750
Interactive Smartboard	£2,000
10 lap-tops @£499 each (for use in homework clubs, adult educational courses, etc.)	£4,999
Foyer/general seating area	
1 large flat-screen TV	£400
Main Hall	
Indoor Sports equipment (suitable for all age groups)	£2,500
Digital Projector and projection screen	£700
Portable PA system	£600-£800
Portable Disco lighting	£150
180 folding chairs @ £15 each and storage trolleys	£3,000
20 folding 5ft circular tables @ £70 each	£1,400
Kitchen	
Kitchen equipment: crockery, cutlery, and utensils to cater for up to 160/180 people at community events, birthday parties, etc.	£1,500
Main Office/Reception	
3 main computers (2 for staff use/ 1 management use only for records, finances)	£2,500 - £3,000
Total estimated costs	£26,479

Drumcree Community Trust – Our Background, History and Achievements

Established in 1991 to support the residents of north-west Portadown, Drumcree Community Trust (DCT) works to address the many social and economic problems in the area. Our organisation has developed substantially since 1991 and is widely recognised as the leading community development organisation within our community.

North-west Portadown is a compact urban community with just over 6,500 residents of whom around 1,500 are aged 0-15 years old. The area is largely defined by the working class housing estates which lie along the predominantly Catholic/nationalist Obins Street/Garvagh Road areas of the town and by the presence of five physical 'peacelines' which reflect the high level of political and sectarian divisions in the predominantly unionist town of Portadown.

Much of the Obins St/Garvagh Road area has suffered from historic and current high levels of poverty and multiple deprivation which, in addition to the political conflict, have had an adverse impact on the regeneration and development of the area.

From the outset, DCT has sought to utilise a community development model aimed at empowering local residents to set about making positive changes to their individual and collective lives.

The vision of DCT, inherent in many of our projects since 1991 has ensured that a climate could be created in which DCT could contribute to the process of addressing social injustice and the economic deprivation arising from that injustice.

This was made possible by enabling and supporting the community to recognise each challenge as an opportunity with the potential for the development of skills which in turn enhanced and increased individuals' self-esteem and the community's confidence thereby stimulating an environment for revitalisation and regeneration.

In the years since 1991, DCT has built and managed its own community building (Drumcree Community Centre).

This was a remarkable achievement at that time for our community, particularly as this was done without any assistance from government or statutory agencies.

Nor was that achievement without its major difficulties – not least of which was a malicious arson attack which completely destroyed the original building just weeks after its initial completion!

However, thanks to resilience of our local community and through the generosity of many residents and friends, the community centre was very quickly replaced.

Due to fears of a repeat attack, the replacement community centre was designed with small windows and heavy security doors and surrounded by steel palisade fencing to ensure the security of the building. Yet despite those ugly but necessary features, the local community fully embraced the new building with its activities organised for all age groups.

From those early beginnings, DCT has grown into a recognised charitable organisation, well known in the community for its friendly and encouraging environment.

For the past 24 years, Drumcree Community Trust has operated a wide range of activities and personal development programmes aimed at supporting children and young people, parents and carers, and adults - many of whom regularly participate in the various activities and programmes delivered in the community centre. We have also delivered a range of accredited and unaccredited training and educational courses; enabling local people to improve their confidence and skills.

DCT has also developed a local community-based health initiative (Drumcree House of Health) also targeted at supporting children, young people and adults, an ongoing initiative for over 15 years through a service level agreement with the Southern Health and Social Care Trust. The House of Health provides awareness and education programmes for children, young people and families on a range of complex issues including drugs and alcohol abuse, bullying, mental health issues, sexual health, etc and encourages residents to live positive, healthy lifestyles.

Activities and programmes organised through the Community Centre and House of Health are delivered by a staff of 4 part-time employees and our base of over 40 active volunteers.

Conscious of the detrimental impact of unemployment, DCT established the Mayfair Business Centre in 1994 with a view providing employment creation and training opportunities for local people. This led to the eventual purchase and redevelopment of an old derelict factory in the area. Opened in 1996, Mayfair is today home to 20 small local businesses which between them provide over 100 full- and part-time jobs to local people.

The central role which Drumcree Community Centre has played, and continues to play, in the life of our local community was also very visibly demonstrated during the turbulent years of the 1990's/early 2000's.

During those years, Drumcree Community Centre provided a safe and secure haven for residents of all ages, particularly young people, during the community's campaign to have contentious and sectarian marches re-routed away from the Garvaghy Road. The response to that campaign resulted in many members of our community being

brutalized by state forces while others were attacked by unionist paramilitaries and several local residents were murdered.

Nevertheless, the community's resolve to achieve its aim proved ultimately successful after several years of very intense conflict and trauma.

During those turbulent years, Drumcree Community Centre played host to many international observers, including scores of US and Canadian political and human rights activists, who witnessed at first hand the state's injustices against our small community. Those who visited our community centre were also able to experience the day-to-day work DCT carries out in our community with children, young people and adults.

With the upheaval of those years now behind us, DCT has continued to provide a safe and encouraging environment for learning opportunities, enabling local people to improve their confidence and skills in order to fulfil their potential, and participate in the development of their community.

Over the past decade DCT has strengthened links with community organisations across and beyond our immediate area.

We are a founding partner in the Portadown Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership Board, Northwest Portadown Network and Surestart. DCT has taken part in many cross community initiatives and we continue to advocate attitudinal change within our community. We also have previously engaged in a number of successful joint projects with local schools.

DCT has also built relationships with individuals and families from the new ethnic minority groupings that have moved into the area in recent years through our relationships and work with local schools to assist children from these new communities integrate into the life of our community.

Through all these various initiatives, DCT has grown in strength and capacity and our reputation supersedes our local boundaries as DCT has been recognised as a pioneering and innovative community-led and community-owned provider locally and regionally.

DCT has been publicly described by the Department of Social Development as "a model of best practice". In 2010, DCT was awarded the runner-up prize in the all-Ireland based 'Pride of Place' community awards competition organized by Co-operation Ireland for our work in combating drug and alcohol misuse. At the beginning of 2013, DCT also received a major award from Craigavon Borough Council in recognition of DCT's contribution to both the local and wider community.

As we approach our 25th year of existence in 2016, we look forward to many future years of ensuring that DCT continues to play an integral, positive and valuable role in our community.

New Drumcree Community Centre taking shape



An old view of the front of Drumcree Community Centre.



Children's room – 2 new stores for toys, games, etc, and new doorway in right-hand side wall leading to area for outdoor play.



Outside front – new larger windows, pillars in place for new porch at entrance



Old foyer area with new internal window on left into children's room. Internal window on right is where we've made a meeting/classroom suitable for groups of up to 15 or so. This room replaces the old seated area. External window in rear wall enlarged.



Ignore the insulation and timber-frames! This is the revamped room for younger children, new full length windows, door-way leading to new toilets for kids



New meeting/class room located where old seating area used to be.



This will be new reception and office viewed through window hatch in entrance hallway. This is located where the old kitchen and one of the small offices were.



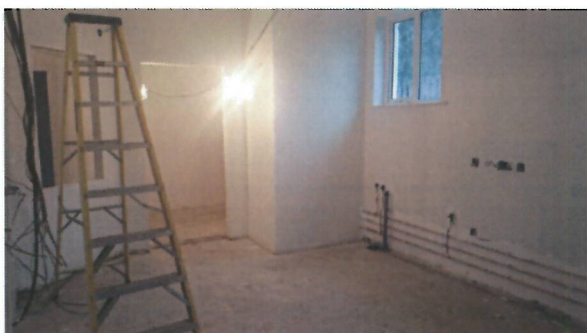
Old hall stripped right back, and the second serving hatch and doorway from new kitchen can be seen towards the corner.



New enlarged room for teenage drop-in. Large windows at front of building make a big difference.



View of extension from what used to be the garden area. Large corner window; entrance/exit and storage area.



This used to be main office and will now become the new kitchen. This doorway and hatch open into the old foyer area.



Porch going up over new entrance to hall.



Ongoing works to extension. Under-floor insulation being laid in extended hall. New windows and the second new entrance door to hall through gable wall all being installed.



Another view of hall looking towards the new serving hatch and door of kitchen.