

**DIALOGUE FOR DIVERSITY MINUTES of the Annual General Meeting
16 June 2022 at 5.30 p.m. by ZOOM**

Present: Terry Howard (Chair), Tom Layden (Company Secretary), Roma Carlisle, Jarlath Fields, Rosemary Murray, Adrian Clark, Brian Lennon

Apologies: Yvonne Jennings

1. **Minutes:** The minutes of the 2021 AGM were unanimously approved
Proposed: Tom Layden; seconded: Roma Carlisle

2. Appointment of Directors

The following were unanimously appointed as Directors for the coming year: Terry Howard, Tom Layden, Roma Carlisle and Yvonne Jennings.

Proposed: Terry Howard; seconded: Tom Layden

3. Appointment of Chair

Tom Layden was unanimously appointed Chair of the Directors

Proposed: Terry Howard; seconded: Roma Carlisle

4. Appointment of Company Secretary

Roma Carlisle was appointed Company Secretary

Proposed: Terry Howard; seconded: Tom Layden

5. Appointment of Treasurer

Tom Layden was appointed Company Treasurer;

Proposed: Terry Howard; seconded: Roma Carlisle

6. Appointment of Management Committee

The following were unanimously appointed as members of the Management Committee: Rosemary Murray, Jarlath Fields, Roma Carlisle, Adrian Clarke

Proposed: Roma Carlisle; seconded: Tom Layden

6. Treasurer's Report

The accounts for the financial year which have been prepared by Pdraig O'Connor, Accountant, Armagh, were approved. A summary of the accounts are laid out below as Appendix Two.

Proposed Tom Layden, seconded Roma Carlisle.

7. Appointment of Financial Overseer

Pdraigh O'Connor, Accountant, Unit A, 49 Keady Road, Armagh BT60 3NW was unanimously appointed Financial Overseer.

Proposed: Tom Layden, seconded Roma Carlisle

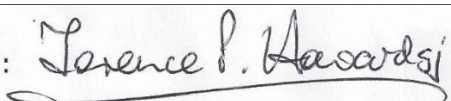
8. Chairman's Report

The Chairman in his comments thanked all who had taken part in the Projects for their hard word. His report is attached as Appendix One.

Proposed by Tom Layden, seconded by Roma Carlisle

There being no other business the meeting concluded at 6.15 p.m.

Signed:



Terry Howard, Chair

16 June 2022.

Minutes of AGM of Dialogue For Diversity 16 June 2022

Appendix One

Dialogue For Diversity

Programme Report 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022

Introduction

Dialogue For Diversity runs several projects: Community Support for ex-prisoners, Dialogue Between Divided groups, ACRE (Active Communities Restoring the Earth), and Church Reform.

We aim to reduce prejudice and to build respect between different groups through promoting understanding and empowerment. Our projects cover the four Universal Apostolic Preferences adopted in 2019 by the Society of Jesus:

- Accompanying marginalised people
- Working with young people
- Care of our common home
- Using the discernment process of the Spiritual Exercises of Ignatius in each of these.

1. Community Support

Community Support is a volunteer project that offers support and encouragement to newly released prisoners.

Mentors

We have 5 mentors. Nothing could happen without them. Their continued commitment and enthusiasm makes it possible to support our ex-prisoners. Mentoring was not always easy: it can be frustrating when people do not answer calls at pre-arranged times, and slip back to old ways. Nonetheless, volunteers all said that they found their work very fulfilling, and were often moved by the way mentees struggle against big odds to make sense of their lives.

Impact

Support is really important for many coming out of prison as they reintegrate into society. Sometimes this is because they have served a long sentence, and both they and the wider society have changed a lot. Sometimes it is because they need ongoing support for addiction or other issues. All the mentees at different times have expressed appreciation for the support they received. This was especially the case during some of the Covid lock-down periods.

We made 132 visits to individuals. Covid was a problem at different times but we were able to maintain contact by phone when we had to. This worked well with men that we had previously met, and with most of those who were new. It was good when face-to-face meetings started again.

Mentees

We supported 16 individuals on a regular basis. Three of these have now finished and feel they can manage on their own. We were also contacted by the family of a man we had supported several years ago who went back to gambling after a long time off it. He made contact with us after several months, and we are now seeing him regularly and he is going to Gamblers Anonymous.

Mentees faced a range of difficulties: addiction, sometimes with periods of lapses, and then coming off it. One gets tempted with sex abuse if he goes back on drink, but he has managed pretty well for the past year. One has a terminal illness, and support has been crucial for him. A third has shown great talent in art. With our encouragement he published an article on his journey in a journal in which all the articles are written by prisoners. This was a big boost to his confidence. Another is moving through a protracted process of release after a long sentence. This can be frustrating for him because there are no set dates to move on to the next stage, so he has to live with uncertainty.

Relations with other bodies

We continue to have a good relationship with Probation and are now getting more referrals than we can accept. We have an on-going relationship with Methodist Social Services who help with deposits on flats. Mentees also engaged with Prison Fellowship, Extern, AA, and other groups.

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We continue to have excellent relations with prison staff in Maghaberry. These, together with Probation, Housing Rights, and Prison Fellowship serve on our Advisory Group, but this has been unable to meet because of Covid. The Assets Recovery Community Scheme funded us, and we are very grateful for this.

The project makes a real difference to a number of isolated men. We are very conscious that any progress mentees make is first and foremost due to their own efforts to deal with the multiple issues that many face. We see ourselves as one of several organisations, voluntary and statutory, that are together offering support and encouragement. Supporting prisoners helps to reduce re-offending and this in turn reduces the terrible trauma that many experience when they suffer crime.

2. Other prison work

Chaplaincy

Frank Brady and Brian Lennon continue their chaplaincy work in Maghaberry. Because of Covid outside programmes like the Spiritual Exercises have been curtailed but we hope to resume these shortly. In response to Covid all new arrivals were kept in isolation for 14 days (later reduced to 10). This was brutally hard, but was defended on the basis that Covid never became widespread. Brian Lennon also lobbied various bodies about conditions in the Care and Support Unit in which prisoners can be kept isolated for 28 days, a sentence that can be increased to 56 days. A recent report critical of the Unit was published by Criminal Justice Inspection, Northern Ireland.

New publication

Martina Killeavy has written a series of meditations based on the Spiritual Exercises that she delivered in Maghaberry for 3 years before Covid. This will be published in Autumn 2022 by Dialogue For Diversity and the Jesuit Centre for Faith and Justice. It will have a forward by Greg Boyle, S.J., Director of Home Boy Industries, Los Angeles, and an Afterword by Peter McVerry, S.J.

3. Dialogue Project

During this period we ran a very successful programme. It consisted of two dialogue residentials, seven seminars, and two site visits. Fifteen participants from working class communities with opposing political identities in Newtownabbey, Newry and Ballyfermot took part.

There were several notable features. Brexit was seen as completely unacceptable to DUP supporters because 'it introduces a border in the middle of our country', it was much less of a problem to Nationalists. The past, as always, was divisive (was the conflict a glorious struggle for Irish freedom, or murder by terrorists?). So also was the future: the status quo of N. Ireland remaining in the UK, or moving to a new United Ireland.

However, not surprisingly, Republicans and DUP supporters found that they had more in common with each other than with Southerners. Southerners, for their part, said they knew nothing about the North, and although they would all vote for a United Ireland, they almost never thought of or spoke about the North. Further, they also thought Northerners knew little about the South, and still thought of the South as it was in the 1950s.

A major source of unity between the different groups was a passion about climate issues: there will be no UK or United Ireland if the planet is destroyed. This led to the Ballyfermot group getting help and advice from the Newry group about planting a pocket forest, and interest being shown in similar projects in Newtownabbey. (See more on this in the section on the ACRE project below).

Participants were clear that a new dialogue project should be set up, that it should involve a large proportion of younger people, and that there should be a major focus on climate. An application for funding on these lines has been made to the Department of Foreign Affairs, who along with the Community Relations Project funded the current dialogue.

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During the project participants asked for site visits to each other's areas. This was done in Newry and Newtownabbey, and the visit to Ballyfermot will take place in May. These visits were a huge success: they made a real difference because they enabled people to tell their own story in their own surroundings, and also for others to see their efforts to improve life in their community.

The process was greatly helped by input from Katie Hayward on the Protocol, John Barry on the Climate Disaster (both from Queens University), Andy Pollak on possible options for constitutional change, and Claire McCann and colleagues from the N. Ireland Human Rights Commission.

The process showed yet again that serious dialogue between deeply divided groups can lead to understanding, and that this can change relationships and lead to new partnerships.

5. ACRE (Active Communities Restoring the Earth)

The ACRE (Active Communities Restoring the Earth) Project was set up in 2020 to encourage and support local groups to restore the Earth, with an initial seed grant from the Irish Jesuits. It is a response to the urgent need for visible, ground level action around the climate disaster. ACRE reflects our individual and collective responsibility to care for our common home, highlighted by Pope Francis in *Laudato Si'* (2015).

Dympna Mallon left us in August 2021. We are very grateful to her for her work in setting up the project. Ciarán McLarnon joined us in January 2021 and has hit the ground running.

Activities

The major project completed during the year was the planting of the Pocket Forest in Barcroft Community Gardens in Newry. This was a partnership between ACRE, Newry Felons who own Barcroft Gardens, the Northern Ireland Housing Executive, and Newry Mourne and Down District Council, and – crucially – the expertise of Ashe Conrad-Jones and her colleagues at pocketforests.ie.

We knew Frank Johnston from the Newry Felons through our dialogue process, and he jumped at the suggestion from Dympna Mallon that they plant a pocket forest of over 300 trees. Soil preparation, including adding lots of organic material, feeding the worms and microorganisms which are essential for healthy soil, was the first step. A wide range of native trees and shrubs were densely planted together to encourage fast growth. We expect to see results within five years in attracting more birds, butterflies and bees. The forest was planted by the local school children who will use it as an outdoor classroom. The forest will also help biodiversity in the local area, as well as capturing and storing carbon.

It took a lot of work by different individuals in several agencies but finally the forest was planted on Thursday 3 February. Part of ACRE's ethos is that we help to set up projects like these, but in the end the project is wholly owned and managed by the local community, in this case Barcroft.

As well as the Newry Project, Ciarán McLarnon used his musical skills, especially with the ukulele, as a way into local community groups. He was able to give classes on carbon reduction, point to funding opportunities for projects that already exist like the Friends of Callan River and Armagh Men's Shed and help them with applications. Ciarán is also working with a local primary school to create a Carbon4 Kids project to support the school children to teach others about climate change. Through his links with Habinteg – a large housing association – he has also started conversations about how to sell their pilot project on retrofitting houses to a much wider group of tenants.

A major recent development is that we have been asked to partner with a major multinational company who are shortly opening a new factory in Newtownabbey and want to support climate work in local communities. This work will begin shortly with Ciarán replicating the successful engagement approaches in other areas we are hopeful of similar successes.

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ACRE is a little over one year in existence. It is now getting known as a project that can help local groups while at the same time ensuring that the ownership of these projects lies with the local groups. We are now in a position where groups are contacting us to see how we can work together. We are making a positive impact on groups and believe a flexible engagement approach works best given the range of groups and possibilities out there for us to help.

6. Organisational

Our web site is currently being redesigned and this is nearly complete. We are very grateful to Damian McCann for his help with this. Our database for Community Support has also been redesigned to take account of GDPR compliance needs. Our thanks to Jimmy Rafferty for this work and his ongoing support. Our handbook has been revised and brought up to date, taking account of our three projects. Rosemary Murray has done the vast amount of work on this, and again our thanks are due to her.

We are also very grateful to all those who serve in the background, and also to our volunteers and staff:

Trustees: Terry Howard, s.j. (Chair), Tom Layden, s.j. (Company Secretary), Yvonne Jennings, and Roma Carlisle.

Management Committee: Rosemary Murray (Chair), Roma Carlisle, Adrian Clarke, and Jarlath Fields.

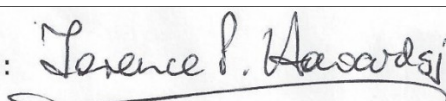
Community Support Management Committee: Mary Valley (Chair), Mary McGinn, Bernadette McArdle, Fionnuala Watters, and Osmond Mulligan. *Volunteers:* Osmond Mulligan, Kieran Murphy, Brendan Keane and Martina Killeavy.

Dialogue Project Management Committee: Kathy Wolff (Chair). Frank Johnston and Marie Delaney.

ACRE Management Committee: Brian Lennon (Chair), Rosemary Murray, Ciara Murphy, Kate Martin, Roma Carlisle, Caroline Caherty, Frank Johnston and John Barry. *Staff:* Ciarán McLarnon.

7. Death of Michael Bingham, s.j.

We were very sad to hear of the death of Michael Bingham, s.j. on 12 January 2022. He was a former member of both the chaplaincy in Maghaberry and of Community Support. He was extraordinarily dedicated to prisoners, both inside and outside jail. He will be sorely missed. May he rest in peace.

Signed:  Terry Howard, Chair 16 June 2022

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Appendix Two

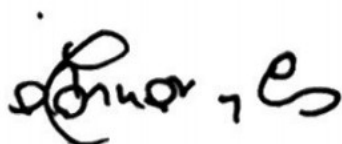
Dialogue for Diversity Income and Expenditure Account For the Year Ended 31 March 2022

	2022	No 1 A/c ACRE	No 2 A/c Community Support	No 3A/c Dialogue Project	Total	
	£					
<u>Income</u>						
ARCS Grant	7,401		7,401		7,401	
CRC Grant	2,218			2,218	2,218	
DFA Grant	7,992			7,992	7,992	
Jesuits Irish Province	5,904	5,904			5,904	
Jesuits in NI	5,904	5,904			5,904	
Donation	600		600		600	
Jesuits Grant	<u>7,380</u>	7,380			7,380	
	37,399	19,188	8,001	10,210		
<u>Less Expenditure</u>						
Employee Costs	14,018	14,018			14,018	
Employee Pension	460	460			460	
Employee Expenses	176	176			176	
Food & Travel	4,289		2,727	1,562	4,289	
Facilitation	3,075			3,075	3,075	
Membership Fees	40		40		40	
Cherry Orchard	890		890		890	
Insurance	1,421		1,421		1,421	
Rent	1,705		1,705		1,705	
Room Hire	4,682			4,682	4,682	
Office Supplies	150		150		150	
Advertising	596	596			596	
Accountancy	460	235	225		460	
Legal Fees	33	33			33	
Telephone	546		546		546	
		32,541	15,518	7,704	9,319	32,541
Net Surplus/(Deficit)		4,858	3,670	297	891	

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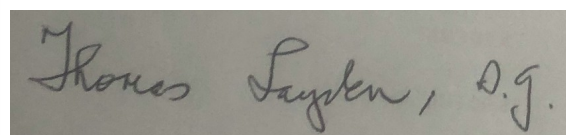
Dialogue for Diversity
Income and Expenditure Account
For the Year Ended 31 March 2022

	2022	No 1 A/c AGRE	No 2 A/c Community Support	No 3A/c Dialogue Project	Total	
	£					
Income						
ARCS Grant	7,401		7,401		7,401	
CRC Grant	2,215			2,215	2,215	
DFA Grant	7,992			7,992	7,992	
Jesuits Irish Province	5,904	5,904			5,904	
Jesuits in NI	5,904	5,904			5,904	
Donation	600		600		600	
Jesuits Grant	<u>7,350</u>	<u>7,350</u>			<u>7,350</u>	
	37,399	19,158	8,001	10,210		
Less Expenditure						
Employee Costs	14,015	14,015			14,015	
Employee Pension	460	460			460	
Employee Expenses	176	176			176	
Food & Travel	4,289		2,727	1,562	4,289	
Facilitation	3,075			3,075	3,075	
Membership Fees	40		40		40	
Cherry Orchard	590		590		590	
Insurance	1,421		1,421		1,421	
Rent	1,705		1,705		1,705	
Room Hire	4,652			4,652	4,652	
Office Supplies	150		150		150	
Advertising	595	595			595	
Accountancy	460	235	225		460	
Legal Fees	33	33			33	
Telephone	546		546		546	
		32,541	15,515	7,704	9,319	32,541
Net Surplus/(Deficit)		4,858	3,670	297	591	



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Signed



Tom Layden, S.J.
Company Secretary
16 June 2022