

**DIALOGUE FOR DIVERSITY MINUTES of the Annual General Meeting
5 June 2025 at 2.30 p.m. by ZOOM**

Present:

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

Apologies: Gerry Clarke

1. **Minutes:** The minutes of the 2024 AGM were unanimously approved
Proposed: Tom Layden; seconded: Roma Carlisle

2. **Appointment of Directors**

The following were confirmed as continuing Directors for the coming year: Tom Layden, Roma Carlisle, Yvonne Jennings, Terry Howard, and Gerry Clarke.

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**

Tom Layden was appointed Company Secretary

Proposed: Terry Howard; seconded: Roma Carlisle

5. **Appointment of Treasurer**

Gerry Clarke was appointed Company Treasurer;

Proposed: Tom Layden; 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, Martina Killeavy, Kathy Wolff.

Proposed: Terry Howard; seconded: Tom Layden

6. **Treasurer's Report**

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

Proposed Tom Layden, seconded Terry Howard.

7. **Appointment of Financial Overseer**

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

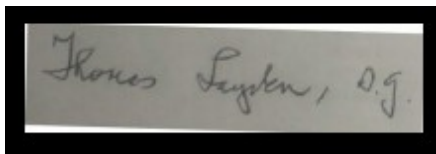
Proposed: Tom Layden, seconded Terry Howard

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: Signed:

Date: 5 June 2025

A rectangular box containing a handwritten signature in dark ink. The signature appears to read "Thomas Layden, D.J.".

There being no other business the meeting concluded at 3.00 p.m.

Appendix One

Dialogue For Diversity

Programme Report
1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025

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

Mentors

We have 5 mentors. Nothing could happen without them. Their continued commitment and enthusiasm makes it possible to support our ex-prisoners. As each of them freely admits they get more out of volunteering than they give. Their commitment is very high. They turn up as arranged and on time for all meetings with mentees.

Supervision is really important for all of us, and our monthly meetings, as well as one-to-one support meetings are a great help.

Mentoring is not 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. We have found that offering regular meetings to mentees is very important. Learning is constant.

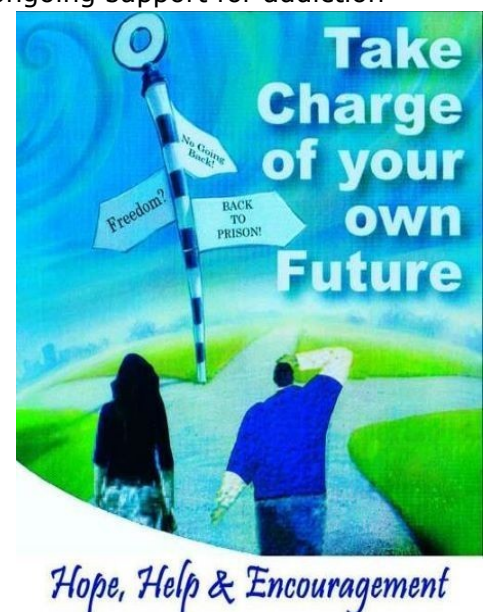
Impact

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.

We made approximately 322 visits to 22 individuals in this period. This is a 77% increase in the number of visits we made. This is not bad, since that is about the age of our youngest volunteer! Some of these were by phone. We find this works well with men that we had previously met and built a relationship with. But face-to-face visits remain our normal way of meeting.

Mentees

We supported 22 individuals on a regular basis – again a steep increase of 60%. Going over the logs for the year one is struck by the sheer volume of meetings that took place. Also how many show a slow but gradual progress in confidence. One sex offender was released from jail on to the streets which he found very hard, but which happens frequently with prisoners who have no housing. In his case he was lucky: the police



eventually arrested him because he was in danger of being attacked and also because he could not be properly supervised. This illustrates the danger to all the public of not having an adequate housing policy. He was lucky simple because prison was more comfortable than the streets of Belfast in the winter.

Another is now able to cope on his own. He was very proud of having an article he wrote with some help from his mentor, published in a prison magazine. Two have faced terminal illnesses, and one of these died: we accompanied him until the end.

Another suffering from bad depression has been greatly helped by walks beside the Bann, and now seems in somewhat better form.

Several face long hours isolated in hostels while they battle with addiction. This is not helped by others in the hostel being addicts.

Several comment how much Community Support meetings mean to them. An important aspect of this is that the meetings are regular, and the mentors are reliable. It also seems to matter that the mentors are unpaid, and are meeting the mentees simply because they want to do so.

Another had a very serious weight problem. Again the contact with the mentor helped him to go to his GP, meet a dietician, start in a gym, and is now in much better space.

Relationship issues come up frequently. Here, our volunteers have to be careful: if a mentee's license conditions require disclosure of any new relationships (for example to protect the children of the new partner) then we will check with the Probation officer to make sure this has been done.

Another younger man who was heavily focused on martial arts has now changed to wrestling and is off weed.

We also spoke at a parole hearing for a prisoner who was subsequently released.

Quite a number are socially isolated and our meeting with them is the only time they will be with someone other than a statutory body.

Themes

Several themes emerged from these visits:

a. Housing: it is a disgrace that in one of the richest countries in the world men who have served their sentence are being released on to the streets with no accommodation. This is guaranteed to impact negatively on their mental health. It is also a public safety issue since many will have addictions, and some of these will be violent or sex offenders.

Of course this is part of a wider housing crisis facing younger people looking for a home and immigrants. It is surely time politicians got their act together on this issue.

b. Medical: many of the men needed more than usual medical support and this was often difficult to access – as it is for so many others in society.

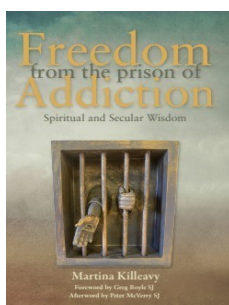
c. Social isolation: Many of the men we dealt with were socially isolated. This often exacerbated their mental health issues.

Relations with other bodies

We continue to have a good relationship with Probation and are now getting more referrals than we can accept. Mentees also engage with Prison Fellowship, Extern, AA, and other groups, including churches. We continue to have excellent relations with prison staff in Maghaberry.

Funding

We continue to rely on the Assets Recovery Community Scheme for funding, and we very much appreciate this. The project makes a real difference to a number of isolated men. We are very conscious that any progress that mentees make is first and foremost due to their own efforts to deal with the multiple issues that many face. We also see ourselves as one of several organisations, voluntary and statutory, that are together offering support and encouragement. Supporting prisoners is important also because it helps to reduce crime. This in turn reduces the terrible trauma that many experience when they suffer crime.



2. Other prison work

We continue to give a short version of the Spiritual Exercises of Ignatius of Loyola in Maghaberry, and they remain popular. Martina Killeavy's book *Freedom From The Prison of Addiction: Spiritual and Secular Wisdom* continues to sell at a steady rate, especially in the church of Clonard monastery in West Belfast.
<https://buy.stripe.com/9AQ7t7dongyEa2s9AB>

During the year we proposed a new initiative: to set a Prison Reform Project focussed on reducing the numbers in prison. This is still on our agenda, but so far we have not made progress on it because other projects tied us down. However, we hope to be able to focus on this soon.

3. Dialogue Project

During this period we ran another dialogue project. This involved two residentials, each 1.5 days a day seminar and two site visits. 19 people took part from mixed Republican, Loyalist, Unionist, Southern, Other, Muslim and ethnic backgrounds.

Recruiting as always was difficult: we need a diverse group who are passionate about different social and political issues.

We continue to follow the same process: asking what is it that matters most deeply to each individual in the social and political area. Only the individual him- or herself can answer this question, so the process is radically democratic.

As in previous dialogues, Loyalists were struck by changes in the South. Most Southerners knew little about Loyalists but were also struck how wrong were the stereotypes that Loyalists had of the South. Because some from different countries took part, people learnt about the journeys that some asylum seekers face. This was new to many. A Loyalist remarked that up to this he had always thought 'foreigners were foreigners'. The issue of relations between locals and migrants became more important as the dialogue progressed and there was a consensus that this should be the focus for next year.

Because participants were all from working-class areas there was a huge commonality between them on social issues. Northerners were continually amazed at the price of houses in the South and the general cost of living. Both North and South mentioned terrible experiences of the health services, especially mental health and the difficulty of accessing GPs. Drugs were everywhere.

At the same time, Northerners were very surprised to learn about the funding for community posts in Dublin, which seemed to be multi-annual, rather than on the basis of yearly applications as in the North.

Many Northerners were very dissatisfied with Stormont, but there was no indication that they would change their vote because of this.

The two site visits that we made were very popular. In the first we were hosted in Baron Hall, Newtownabbey. As part of this we visited the White House in Dalriada, Newtownabbey. This commemorates not only ancient Irish kingdoms but also the place where William of Orange met General Shomberg before the battle of the Boyne in 1690. We also learnt of the great community relations work in Barron Hall, and the struggles they have gone through over the years to maintain this.

In Dublin we were hosted by Cherry Orchard Family Resource Centre ('The Bungalow') and learnt about their educational work. Again we toured St Ultan's primary school with its wrap-around care for young people with special needs whom they integrate into the main school. We also saw the Equine Centre, and the climate garden from which vegetables are sold to local supermarkets. Northerners were struck by the impact of these projects, and how local community workers had got them off the ground.

Dialogue among community groups is vital: these are the groups working on the ground in very large segregated housing estates and in rural areas. There is very little communication, especially on political issues, between people from different backgrounds in these areas. Bringing together leaders from different areas helps to overcome this.

We are very grateful to the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs for funding the project.

5. ACRE (Active Communities Restoring the Earth)

ACRE's aim is to support and encourage working class communities in positive climate initiatives. Given the appalling level of our overall climate response to date, especially from the Government in N. Ireland, this work is vital. In the words of Pope Francis, 'Climate change is a global problem with grave implications: environmental, social, economic, political and for the distribution of goods. It represents one of the principal challenges facing humanity in our day'.

We have been working on a new six-week pilot course called 'My Planet, My Home'. The course was created to bridge the gap between a group's initial aspiration to create an environmental project and the time it takes to build this momentum internally. The course has been delivered successfully to several groups, including the Atlas Women's Centre in Lisburn. With further plans underway for the second session with the centre's working moms, the outcomes so far have been very beneficial for both the centre and ACRE. The local community commented on how "fantastic, informative, and vital" the informational sessions were.

These initial pilot outcomes were given as feedback to management staff at the centre. Suggestions were put forward to utilise resources onsite that have been forgotten about. The centre has its own raised beds and a polytunnel that are sitting idle. Members attending assumed that these were being used by others, as there were never any projects advertised for them. However, centre staff are now looking into the possibility of using these resources.

Because of the pilot ACRE was approached by Belfast City Council, We have since put forward a proposal to the Council to deliver 'My Planet, My Home' at their Girdwood Community Hub, situated at an interface area in North Belfast. The Centre there has put forward several green spaces they may be able to rewild.

Recently, we generated new partnerships with Lagan Park (Lisburn), Woven Housing (Belfast), Formation Works (NI-wide), and Friends of Callan River (Armagh). The Lagan Park project aims to reduce further flooding impacts along a stretch of the Lagan River. Friends of Callan River supplied 80 trees from their tree nursery. These were planted by both ourselves and Woven staff in an afternoon. Positive publicity for both Formation Works and Woven Housing led to a follow-up meeting with Formation Works, who are keen to replicate the project at their other business sites across Northern Ireland, with a view to engaging the local community in future planting events.

We also supported a new partnership between Armagh City Council and the Friends of Callan River. This was centred around tree planting at Amhain Mhaca (Navan Fort) in Armagh. The Friends of Callan River supplied native trees that they have grown themselves from seeds to increase the site's woodland areas. We used our community connections to host groups at the site alongside staff from the council. We welcomed each group with a short information session about the project, stressing the importance of climate action before they planted the trees. Don't Box Me In (DBMI), who are a local mixed-ability community group, and children from St Mary's School took part. We will continue to support Friends of Callan River who plan to plant thousands of trees over the next five years.

We have applied for funding to offer a course on pollinator patches that will work alongside a citizen science project. These patches entail an area set aside to be planted with Yellow-rattle, a local wildflower that removes nutrition from the soil. This reduced soil nutrition allows other native species to gain a foothold, providing a space for varied native species to thrive, which in turn feeds our pollinators. Groups can do a baseline survey with Ciaran McLarnon. He will then help them to install a small pollinator friendly patch that the group will revisit for a post-work pollinator survey. All data will be automatically uploaded to the UK Pollinator Monitoring Scheme (PoMS) website that feeds into the wider All-Ireland Pollinator plan. St. Marys and

Good Shepard Primary schools in Belfast, the Atlas Centre in Lisburn and Spring in Armagh have all expressed an interest in this course.

Ciarán McLarnon has nearly completed his Masters in Queen's. One of his projects was to measure biodiversity in Northern Ireland Railway stations. Ciaran McLarnon left us in January. We are very grateful to him for all his work. We gave a warm welcome to Keerthana Raj who was recruited for this post in May.

6. Organisational

We are very grateful to all our volunteers and staff:

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

Management Committee: Rosemary Murray (Chair), Roma Carlisle, Martina Killeavy, and Jarlath Fields.

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

Dialogue Project Management Committee: Kathy Wolff (Chair), Marie Delaney, and Brian Lennon.

ACRE Management Committee: Brian Lennon, Rosemary Murray, Ciara Murphy, Kate Martin, Roma Carlisle, *Staff:* Ciarán McLarnon (left 7 February 2025), Keerthana Raj (joined May 2025).

Dialogue for Diversity

Company registration number: **NI609868**

DIALOGUE FOR DIVERSITY

Company limited by guarantee

Unaudited Financial Statements

For the year ended 31 March 2025

Dialogue for Diversity

Unaudited Financial Statements

Year ended 31 March 2025

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Dialogue for Diversity

Officers and Professional Advisers

Year ended 31 March 2025

Directors

Fr Thomas Layden
Ms Roma Carlisle
Fr Gerard Clarke
Sr Yvonne Jennings
Fr Terry Howard

Company secretary

Fr Thomas Layden

Registered office

FAO Brian Lennon

The Community Centre , Dobbin Street
Armagh
BT61 7QQ
United Kingdom

Accountant

O'Connor & Co
Unit 1
49 Keady Road
Armagh
BT60 3NW
United Kingdom

Dialogue for Diversity

Directors' Report

Year ended 31 March 2025

The directors present their report and the unaudited financial statements of the company for the year ended 31 March 2025.

DIRECTORS

The directors who served the company during the year were as follows:

Fr Thomas Layden

Ms Roma Carlisle

Fr Gerard Clarke

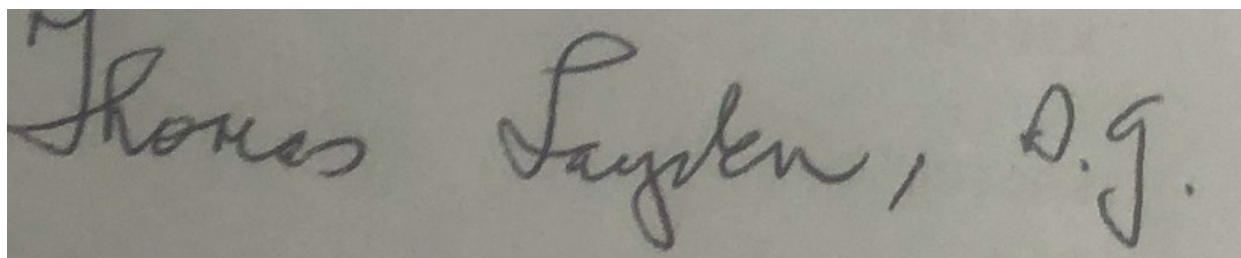
Sr Yvonne Jennings

Fr Terry Howard

SMALL COMPANY PROVISIONS

This report has been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies entitled to the small companies exemption.

This report was approved by the board of directors on 5 June 2025 and signed on behalf of the board by:

A photograph of a handwritten signature in dark ink on a light-colored surface. The signature reads "Thomas Layden, D.J." in a cursive script.

Fr Thomas Layden

Director

Dialogue for Diversity

Income Statement

Year ended 31 March 2025

	2025
	£
Other income	66,669
Cost of raw materials and consumables	(8,276)
Staff costs	(25,269)
Depreciation and other amounts written off assets	(1,140)
Other charges	(13,943)
Profit	18,041

Dialogue for Diversity

Statement of Financial Position

31 March 2025

	2025
	£
Fixed assets	4,560
Current assets	50,147
Prepayments and accrued income	908
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	(5,036)
Net current assets	46,019
Total assets less current liabilities	50,579
Capital and reserves	50,579

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

1 General information

The company is a private company limited by guarantee and is registered in Northern Ireland. The address of the registered office is FAO Brian Lennon, The Community Centre , Dobbin Street, Armagh, BT61 7QQ, United Kingdom.

Dialogue for Diversity

Statement of Financial Position (continued)

31 March 2025

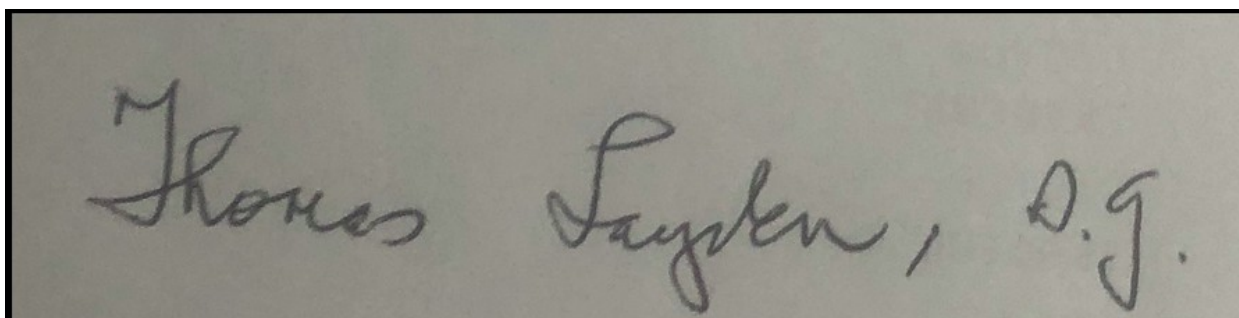
1 Average number of employees

For the year ending 31 March 2025, the company was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

Directors' responsibilities:

- The members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its financial statements for the year in question in accordance with section 476;
- The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and the preparation of financial statements.

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the micro-entity provisions.

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5 June 2025

Fr Thomas Layden

Director

Company registration number: NI609868

Dialogue for Diversity

Detailed Income Statement

Year ended 31 March 2025

OTHER INCOME

	2025
	£
Interest on bank deposits	6
Other income	66,663
	<u>66,669</u>
	<u>66,669</u>

COST OF RAW MATERIALS AND CONSUMABLES

	2025
	£
Other direct costs	8,276

STAFF COSTS

	2025
	£
Total wages and salaries	19,218
Total subcontracted staff	5,125
Total defined contribution pension costs	926
	<u>25,269</u>

DEPRECIATION AND OTHER AMOUNTS WRITTEN OFF ASSETS

	2025
	£
Total depreciation of tangible assets	1,140

Dialogue for Diversity

Detailed Income Statement (continued)

Year ended 31 March 2025

OTHER CHARGES

	2025
	£
Rent	4,215
Travelling	5,677
Subsistence	1,103
Printing, postage and stationery	272
Telephone	656
Accountancy fees	960
Premises insurance	996
Bank charges	(26)
Subscriptions	90
	<hr/> 13,943
Profit	<hr/> <hr/> 18,041

Appendix Two

Dialogue for Diversity
Income and Expenditure Account
For the Year Ended 31 March 2025

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