

Secretary's report for AGM 2015/16 on 09/02/17

INTRODUCTION

I am reporting on the period 1st Oct 2015-30th Sept 2016. For the Board our continued emphasis is on improving the Centre and the services we provide for the community. A huge amount of credit is due to our staff for their on-going support which has allowed us to improve the Centre and the services we provide to the Community. I'd like to thank our Centre Manager Pat Murphy and his team for all their hard work in keeping the Centre looking well and providing a good service in our DIY, gym and laundry. I'd also like to thank Ann Walsh who is acting manager in Little Voyagers for keeping the show on the road in challenging circumstances.

VOLUNTEERS

On behalf of the board I must acknowledge the support we receive from those who have volunteered their time and talents to the Centre to run events such as the tea dances and our weekly bingo. It would be very difficult to run these events without their help. Thank you very much to those individuals, we really do appreciate your assistance.

LITTLE VOYAGERS

Renovations to pre-school: Our biggest project for the reporting period was the renovation to the pre-school which was carried out in the summer of 2016. This was done to facilitate the increased demand for places. We consulted with all the groups using the hall before any plans were drawn up for the work and sought their input. The changes made to the hall have been kept to a minimum but the pre-school area has been transformed and we are very happy with the result. An additional benefit has been the greatly increased size of the entrance hallway.

Outside play area: We also carried out some work in the crèche's small outdoor play area. We removed a largely unused outdoor toilet and laid new decking. We installed an outdoor sink for water play. The walls were painted and outdoor wall decorations were hung. The space is now much bigger, brighter and inviting.

Significant staff changes: The period I'm reporting on has seen a lot of staff upheaval. Hellen O' Connor passed away in Jan 2016. 3 staff members are currently on maternity leave with another due to go on maternity leave next month. Another staff member is out on sick leave since last summer but we hope she will be back to us in the autumn. I would like to thank our childcare team for continuing to deliver a great service through this challenging period.

Breda Egan retired in Sept after many years' service in the laundry. I'd like to thank her for her service and wish her the best in her retirement.

ASC: The numbers in our ASC has increased greatly. We introduced a new bus service to collect the children at 2.10 & 3.10 from Ardfert national School. This is working well.

Daffodil Day: We run an annual fundraiser for the Irish Cancer Society's daffodil day. Hellen was always very involved in organising and running this event.

Santa's Grotto: For the last 3 Christmases Santa's Grotto has run in conjunction with the Christmas market. This has proved to be successful so we anticipate that we will continue with this arrangement. A huge amount of work goes into this event and great credit is due to the staff of Little Voyagers.

IMPROVEMENTS IN CENTRE 2014/2015

A number of improvements apart from the pre-school renovations have taken place since October 2015 which I'll briefly run through.

New sign: We bought a new sign for above the entrance door in Nov 2015.

KCC grant: We applied for and received a grant of €1000 from KCC. With this grant we bought a new bingo machine & a microphone, an iron press for laundry and 2 new folding tables.

GREEN SPACES

Fair Green: In Sept 2016 we held a public meeting to seek the views of the community on what to do with the Green with a view to establishing a subcommittee who will decide what to do with the green. The general consensus of those at the meeting was that the Green should largely remain as it is with only minor changes. Pat and his team maintain the green and cut the grass which has meant the Green looking a lot better.

Wiring of Fair Green: Liam O Halloran wired the Fair Green in Dec for the Christmas lights. Toireasa Ferris agreed to fund this project from her councillor's allocation.

SENIORS

Ardfert/Kilmoyley Senior Citizens Group continues to meet every Tuesday in the Community centre and is open to all and happy to see new people join. A number of tea-dances were organised and have proved to be very popular. Great credit is due to the Seniors' committee who give of their time so generously.

COLLABORATIONS/FORGING COMMUNITY LINKS

We as a board feel it's very important that groups and organisations in Ardfert support one another so we do our best to help where we can.

President's visit to Ardfert: We worked closely with the ADA in April 2016 to assist them in making the president's visit to the village a success.

Tree planted by Brownies: The brownies planted an oak tree in the fair green.

Tidy towns: We also support the Tidy Towns' committee where we can.

These events were a huge success and shows what can be achieved when a community works together.

Thank you for your attention.

Barbara O'Grady
Secretary
Ardfert Community Council CLG