

Secretary’s Report 2019

Firstly, I would like to express my gratitude at being entrusted with the role of Secretary at such an amazing club. Coming into the role somewhat unexpectedly during the year, I leveraged the knowledge and guidance of my fellow Executive Officers. I would like to thank them for their help, advice and patience in getting me functional and up to speed with the role.

At this point I would also like to acknowledge my predecessor, Patrick, and on behalf of the Executive Committee members and the club membership thank him for his many years of service in various roles.

Our fabulous facilities committee have given the club countless years of service & unfortunately have decided to pass on the baton. We thank them for their work in delivering the fine facilities we have here today & for the continued upkeep & maintenance of all aspects of it. It sometimes can be overlooked but its greatly appreciated.

The membership continues to increase and with that so too does the costs to keep things operational and volume of work behind the scenes. This is our club and as such I would encourage everyone to volunteer and contribute in any way they can. A massive thank you to all the sponsors who have assisted financially and the volunteers who have given of their time and expertise for the good of the community and club.

**On-Field**

The season has been a long one for some of the players with the U21 side beginning the year & about to close it out alongside the U13’s. We wish them well in the upcoming competition and encourage our membership to get behind them.

The success of the current senior teams across all codes stems from the work done with these players from the academy right the way up to senior level. We need to ensure we continue this pathway to build on the progress made to this point & push the club towards even more success within the Senior grades. Participating in championship finals, Ulster finals, gaining promotion to division 1 etc. are all phenomenal achievements but let's be greedy & strive for more. This isn't just down to the players/management but all of us within the club pulling together to deliver marginal gains.

It was great to see older playing members within the club volunteering to help out with refereeing, umpiring etc. at tournaments and also attending underage training sessions. I think this is vital to tie together all strands of the club from the younger members right up to the senior teams.

Success at the younger ages is not quantified by trophies and medals, but in creating a fun and friendly environment to promote learning and participation in our games. The benefits of this can be seen by the current senior teams in each code having progressed through the ranks from academy to senior level and in some cases county level. This was evident in the delivery of a very successful Cul Camp hosted by the team headed up by Hilary. With the numbers of kids involved it’s a daunting challenge, but it was expertly delivered.

The club successfully hosted a number of tournaments throughout the season. None of which would have been possible without the planning/organisation of both Paul Dougan and Stephen McConnell and their tournament team. Thank you to all involved in that effort. In recent the Gaelic for mothers and others hosted a successful, well-attended tournament.

We are so proud of all of our members who represent themselves, their families and our club with such distinction in the various school, University and County teams. Congratulations to you all & good luck in the school/College competitions between now and the end of the year. Being a Fermanagh man, I can't wish the lads on the county sides luck for the Ulster championship next year!! The club were also represented nationally at Feile by the domestic all-conquering U14 girls' team and by Liam Blaney in the hurling skills in Dublin.

**Hurling Championship**

It was a great honour for the club to host the double header hurling championship games. Special thanks go to Ronan McCaughey for coordinating the team of volunteers before and on the day of the games. It was so successfully run that the club was asked to host another before the games had even finished.

Getting the opportunity to host more games like this has to be the aim for us all, as it's an opportunity to showcase our wonderful club and facilities. We do need to be cognisant of our neighbours and avoid affecting them in any way. With that in mind, a word of thanks to the wider parish for its support throughout the year and to Fr. Michael and Fr. Conor for their support and encouragement throughout the year.

**Fundraising**

Thanks to Orla McKeever for the exemplary running of the club lottery. Participation throughout the year has been up and down and I would like to encourage all members to support it if they can. It and Club Carryduff are the financial lifeblood of the club.

We are grateful to those who continue to contribute monthly to our club development fund. Club Carryduff has enabled us to progress the developments outlined throughout this report. To help deliver the objectives set out in the Club Development plan, a relaunch of Club Carryduff is imminent. We would encourage new and existing members of the club to demonstrate their commitment to the future development of our club and facilities from which everyone will benefit.

Members of the senior teams across the codes have to be acknowledged for the efforts they put in with multiple car washes delivered in the car park. I believe some more are upcoming before the year end. Their efforts progressed to the massively successful and well attended night at the races in the Ivanhoe, with the draw for the New York trip.

There have been numerous other smaller fundraising activities throughout the year from various teams and age groups. I applaud the diverse nature of these fundraisers, whether it be Irish News Awards, 80’s Disco’s etc. All efforts such as these is greatly appreciated by all in the executive committee and finance sub-committee.

I would like to thank all those who participated in the Down Club Draw this year. If you can, please try and support the Down Club Draw. A large portion of each ticket sold comes back to the club, so participation benefits us.

The Annual Club Shindig is on the horizon. If you haven't already done so, please get your ticket. It should be a great night to celebrate and appreciate the achievements from throughout the year. There may even be some special guests.

**Hub**

I feel it would be remiss of me to not mention Michael and Joan given the volume of work they have done within the Hub throughout the year. Rain, hail or shine & whatever the event the hub team are there to ensure the shop is open for business.

I would encourage the wider membership to respect the Hub and the dressing room facilities. We can all pick up litter if we see it to save someone else having to tidy up afterwards. We also need to be aware of the facilities and ensure that we protect them – ensuring that they are locked up when leaving & that lights are turned off etc.

**Development**

The club development plan (which can be found on the website) details the development plans for this year and the years ahead. The big item for this year in regard to development is obviously the erection of the four floodlights on pitch 2. This is the first phase of a multi-phase deliverable. Thanks to all those that helped deliver the project to this point. A special mention to Mark Hollywood and his tireless quests with grant applications.

We have initiated discussions with Lisburn Castlereagh City Council and Carryduff Colts FC about the development a floodlit, enclosed 4G sports facility at Lough Moss which the Council would maintain as a Council facility. Both Clubs have indicated to Council their ability to work with each other in a partnership approach to assure that use of the facility could be shared between both clubs, as well as being available publicly. We are keen to achieve a preferential user status with Council: this would be very beneficial to our Club as the demand upon our own pitches is already generating significant maintenance issues as a consequence of the number of teams and the 'wear-and-tear' on pitch surfaces.

**Membership**

The current membership of the club stands at 1261 as opposed to 1095 at 31 October 2018.

**Communication**

Philip has diligently ensured that the club has a very large presence on the approved social media platforms and a website regularly updated. The regular updates on social media are very beneficial to club members overseas or unable to attend. Thanks Philip.

**Cultural**

It was disappointing to see that when in consideration for hosting the event that we were unable to draw upon any interested parties from within the membership for the Scor na n-Óg. It’s great to see the efforts that the club goes to in order to deliver on the cultural side of things. Irish language and Music classes are delivered weekly. New musicians and Gaelgoirí are always welcome.

Hopefully we can get expressions of interest in the upcoming Scor.

**Sympathies**

The Club and community were deeply saddened by the deaths of family members of Club members throughout the year. Our club are indebted to many who have gone to their eternal reward and it is only right that we acknowledge their memory. All those club members who lost family and friends during the year will continue to be remembered in our thoughts and prayers. Our sympathy and condolences are extended to all those families who have been bereaved during the year.

Is mise

Niall Mac Fearghais

Rúnaí

Cumann Lúthcleas Gael Ceathrú Aodha Dhuibh