

COSTA Annual Report

Costa Your Local Rural Support Network

Supporting Rural Communities in the
Dungannon & South Tyrone Borough Council Area



2017 / 2018

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Community
Organisations of
South
Tyrone &
Area



Community Organisations of South Tyrone & Areas Ltd

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Mid Ulster District Council and Peace IV

Registered Company in Northern Ireland No: NI 42832

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ISO 9001:2015 Cert: FS 592437

Chairperson's Address



Hello and a very warm welcome to all for COSTA's 2018 AGM!

I take great pleasure in presenting our Annual Report which showcases the level and diversity of our work both for and in the local community.

Undoubtedly the Sector has endured another tough year as the political context in which we find ourselves locally, regionally, nationally and beyond remains volatile. The current political situation in Stormont is undoubtedly causing great damage to our country and poses a real threat to all aspects of our lives from health, employment, the economy and also the smaller decisions that in reality can have a huge impact on all our daily lives. To add to that, we also now struggle through the current Brexit negotiations and continue to hope for a positive outcome despite the never-ending complexities faced by the unique challenges posed by our imminent exit from the European Union.

COSTA continues providing for the local community via COSTA's only remaining staff member Development Manager Loraine Griffin. Luckily, April 1st 2018 saw the awarding of a further new tender from DAERA to deliver a Local Rural Community Development Support Service across Mid Ulster. I express sincere thanks on behalf of the COSTA Board to both Loraine, and Conor Corr of CWSAN, for successfully securing the new tender. This means that COSTA continues to deliver and sustain the Local Rural Community Development Service (LRCDS) throughout the Dungannon and South Tyrone area; sub-contracted under CWSAN (Cookstown & Western Shores Area Network) as part of 8 regional providers. Our strong partnership with CWSAN, covering Cookstown and Magherafelt, continues to prosper and we look forward to hopefully many more positive years of working together.

COSTA would like to acknowledge and thank the Department of Agriculture, Environment & Rural Affairs (DEARA), our keystone funder which makes the Network possible, and also for their leadership role in developing (TRPSI) Tackling Rural Poverty & Social Inclusion and the Rural Micro Capital Grant Scheme which have run very successfully for over 4 years now.

I would like to also take this opportunity to give a note of thanks to all fellow Board members: Trevor Lockhart, Heather McLaughlin, Anthony McGonnell, Raymond Harrison, John Burrell, Liz Salter, Wilfred Mitchell, David McFarlane, Rosina O'Neill and Carmen Hamill. The Board has certainly arisen to meet all challenges posed. To Mid Ulster District Council, and especially, the Councilors who sit as Advisors on our Board: Frances Burton, Sharon McAleer, Dominic Molloy, Joe O'Neill, Robert Mulligan, and Philip Clarke MUDC Community Development Manager - I would like to pass on COSTA's gratitude.

There have been many extremely positive developments for COSTA this year as we continued to serve on the Peace IV Partnership, Mid Ulster Community Planning and the Joint Voluntary Community Sector Forum Panel. In conjunction with CWSAN, both Networks employed Jennifer Hamilton on a 2 ½ year Engaging Rural Communities (ERC) Programme under Mid Ulster's Peace IV Programme. We wish Jennifer success in assisting 16 groups across Mid Ulster to explore new ways of working together.

It is hoped that despite our challenging environment, COSTA can remain here for the local community many more years to come. I wish you, your communities, groups and villages all the very best for the future.

Richard Knox - COSTA Chairperson

Network Development Manager's Report



Welcome everyone as we celebrate our 18th Birthday!

Despite further cuts and challenging conditions, 2018 has seen the very successful completion of the 6th year of the DAERA-funded Rural Community Development Support Service (RCDS) for Mid Ulster in partnership with CWSAN.

The Network has delivered over 13 Workshops to 138 participants and over 285 supports to the local community. We have actively engaged with over 180 local groups and communities face-to-face and our key activities can be viewed on pages 7 - 15 of this Report.

We have already seen the successful delivery of 4 Phases of the DAERA Rural Micro Capital Grant Scheme with our partners CWSAN. More recently, in total around 80 grants were awarded right across the Mid Ulster area under the 2017 Phase. We are now hoping that a further (5th) phase may open in September 2018 and we will keep you all posted and up-to-date on all developments as they happen.

As ever, I extend my sincere thanks to the entire COSTA Board who volunteer their time and expertise to the Network throughout the year - and still I don't know how Richard, our Chairperson, gets any time for the cows!

Thank you also to Mid Ulster District Council for their continued support of COSTA, and in particular, Philip Clarke who serves as Statutory Representative, and Faye and Ted Sharkey who maintain the US Grants site so meticulously.

Councillors: Burton, Mulligan, McAleer, Molloy and O'Neill provide constant valuable support, guidance and wisdom. This year again we have received further improvements – with more still to come – to our office and the President Grant's site courtesy of Ulster Scots and MUDC funding.

Thank you to our guests and hosts as this year our AGM is held in Aghaloo Hall which is an excellent example of the SWARD Local Action Group – 'Access to Services' Funding under the previous NI Rural Development Programme. I hope that funding such as this will not be lost to us after our departure from the EU.

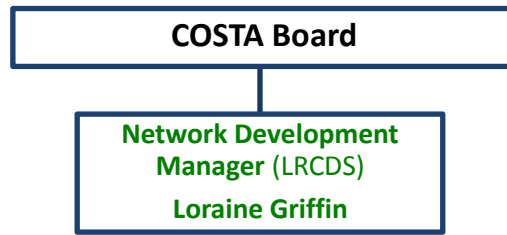
Indeed, we all hope that community development funding will not be adversely affected as programmes like the LRCDS are vital to securing the COSTA office as a neutral community base which is used daily by local groups. I take great pleasure in going out to our surrounding rural areas and I strongly encourage groups to take advantage of the fact that we have a Rural Outreach Service and we aim to visit most member groups over the next 12 months - so please do give us a call at any time as I would be delighted to visit. Local groups should also take advantage of the Engaging Rural Communities Programme and small grant opportunities which are now running.

Unfortunately, while the current uncertainty continues COSTA should still be here for another 3 years and what lies beyond that still remains to be seen as we anxiously await the restart of Stormont. To date very fortunately all our Ministers: "*Michelles 1, 2 and 3*" have all been very supportive of the Local Rural Support Network Infrastructure. We hope to have a Minister and regional government back in place soon and also to see suitable arrangements in-place post-Brexit.

COSTA has now been in existence for 18 years and I certainly aim to ensure that a local office and a local service remains here as **YOUR Local Support Network** for the Dungannon and South Tyrone area for as long into the future as possible :)

Loraine Griffin – Network Development Manager

COSTA Staff



COSTA Board of Directors

Richard Knox	<i>Chairperson</i>	Heather Nixon-McLaughlin
Elizabeth Salter	<i>Vice Chairperson</i>	Raymond Harrison
Trevor Lockhart	<i>Secretary & Company Secretary</i>	Carmen Hamill
John Burrell	<i>Treasurer</i>	Rosina O’Neill
Anthony McGonnell		David McFarlane
Wilfred Mitchell OBE		

Associate Board Members

Cllr Robert Mulligan	Cllr Frances Burton	Cllr Sharon McAleer
Cllr Dominic Molloy	Cllr Joe O’Neill	

Statutory Representative

Philip Clarke – Mid Ulster District Council – Community Development Manager

Bankers

Ulster Bank Ltd
Main Street
Clogher
Co Tyrone

Accountants

Mac Neary Rasdale & Co
Registered Accountants & Auditors
Darling Street
Enniskillen



The Local Rural Support Networks

- Supporting rural living across Northern Ireland -

A Unique Rural Infrastructure

COSTA is one of 8 independent Local Rural Support Networks networked together under a unique rural focus. This strong and unique rural infrastructure covers all of rural Northern Ireland.

The Local Networks draw members who are largely rural and cover a wide range of community and voluntary sector organisations in their area of remit including: community groups, social economy, play groups, farmers, women, youth, disability and older people etc.

The LRSNs have been officially recognised as an example of good practice and an essential conduit between rural communities and statutory bodies – providing communities with access to the decision making process, and decision makers with a means of tapping into the expert local knowledge on the ground.

We are membership based and our Management Boards are elected each year at AGM from our member groups. Our primary aim is to support local groups and organisations to achieve what they want for their community. **We help groups to help themselves by working *with* groups and *not for* groups.**

Visit: www.localruralsupportnetworks.org for further information.



View the Local Rural Support

Networks RCDSS Video at:

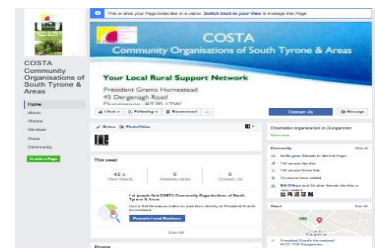
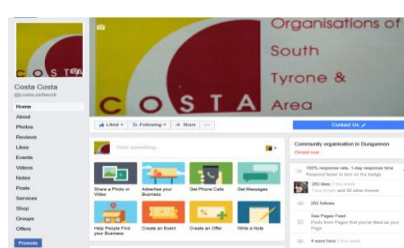
<https://youtu.be/loUG-6T3tII>

COSTA Online

Follow us on our Facebook Pages for the latest NEWS on all forthcoming Projects, Events, Training and Workshops.

All COSTA's Newsletters, Annual Reports and Leaflets can now be accessed on-line and downloaded as pdf documents.

COSTA Website: www.costaruralsupportnetwork.org



Local Rural Community Development Support Service



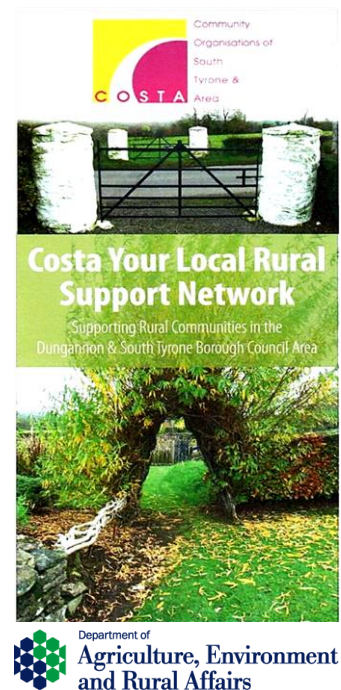
Community Organisations of South Tyrone & Areas (COSTA) in conjunction with Cookstown and Western Shores Area Network (CWSAN) have continued to work in close partnership. With over 6 years now already completed, we strive towards the start of our 7th year, from April 2018, delivering a newly updated 'Local Rural Community Development Service' for the Mid Ulster area covering the Dungannon and South Tyrone area (COSTA) and the Cookstown & Magherafelt areas (CWSAN).

The key elements of this current contract with the Department of Agriculture, Environment & Rural Affairs (DAERA) supported through their **Tackling Rural Poverty and Social Isolation Framework 2012 – 2017:**

- 1. Supporting Access to the NI Rural Development Programme;**
- 2. Assisting Development of the Rural & Social Economy;**
- 3. Supporting and Assisting Access to the DARD Tackling Rural Poverty & Social Isolation Programme;**
- 4. Developing Capacity & Leadership.**

The LRCDS provides on-going practical Community Development support services - responsive local needs:

- **Community Office at U.S. Grants & Rural Outreach Service.**
- **Events / Workshops / Visits / Meetings.**
- **Signposting / Information / Practical assistance.**
- **Newsletters / E-Bulletins / Public Relations.**
- **Facebook Page / Website / Social Media.**
- **Funding / 'Grant-Tracker' searches.**
- **Assistance with funding applications.**
- **Networking & Sharing expertise.**
- **Capacity Building & Training.**
- **Good Practice Checklists & Action Plans.**
- **Governance & Board / Management Committee Skills.**
- **Office Services – access to photocopying, fax and email.**
- **Resources, Library, Equipment Loan.**
- **Community Audit (support), SWOTs, Profiles, Statistics / NINIS.**
- **Policies, Procedures, Good Practice, Guides.**
- **Needs Assessments, Skills Reviews.**
- **Wide range of Management & Leadership Support Services.**



The Local Rural Community Development Service is funded by the Department of Agriculture, Environment & Rural Affairs (DAERA) under the Tackling Rural Poverty & Social Isolation (TRPSI) Programme.

COSTA Rural Support Network - Snapshot of the Year

The COSTA Rural Community Development Support Service (RCDSS) delivered across the Dungannon & South Tyrone area of Mid Ulster District:

1. Local Groups: Increased Awareness of local groups / Improved Capacity / Enhanced Sustainability:

- **180 COSTA Members.**
- **RCDSS 282 groups / supports.**
- **13 Workshops / 138 attendees.**
- **7 Newsletters, 424 Email-outs, 107 Website updates, 143 Face Book updates.**
- Supporting NIRDP 2014-2020: 10 Mid Ulster Rural Development Partnership LAG Promotions.
- 3 Villages / Groups / Applications Supported.
- 82 Tackling Rural Poverty & Social Isolation (TRPSI) Promotions / Signpostings / Referrals: ARTS, CDM Community / Rural transport, RYE Connect, Rural Support, SUSE+ / DEL / Skills / FarmSAFE, Libraries NI, Farm Family Health Checks.
- **1 'Energy Efficiency in the Home' Event 22/9/2017, 50 attendees, Smith Memorial Hall, Ballygawley.**
- **3 'Charity Registration' & 'Charity Annual Returns' Information Workshops: 16/5/2017, 17/5/2017, 20/9/2017.**
- **6 COSTA 'Open Door Support Days': 38 attendees / supports 25/5/2017, 28/9/2017, 22/11/2017, 20/12/2017, 21/2/2018, 28/3/2018.**
- 4 Good Practice Checklists / Action Plans.
- 20+ Rural Voice / Consultations / Survey Feedback.
- 52 Regional Links & Engagements (NIVCA, RCD, RNNI, RCN, SENI etc).
- Charity Registration Support Service: 85 Charity Registrations / Supports.
- Social Economy Awareness: 7 Newsletters, 23 Promotions / Email-outs,
- **DAERA Rural Micro Capital Grants Scheme: 4 Phases jointly managed with CWSAN to date.**
- **80 Groups funded under DAERA Micro Capital Grants Scheme 2017 (Phase 4).**
- **48 supports under DAERA 'Rural Micro Capital Grant Scheme'.**
- **2 DAERA 'Rural Micro Capital Grant Scheme' Workshops: Pre-Application Workshop 28/9/2017 (9 attendees) and Letter of Offer Workshop 13/11/2017 (25 attendees).**



2. **Local Individuals: Improved Capacity of individuals, Farmers and Farm Families:**

- Grant Tracker / Funding Information provision 50 groups.
- Positive Regional Engagements: 52 engagements / actions.
- 1 'COSTA 2017 AGM': Bawn Hall, 36 attendees, 28/7/2017.
- 1 Board Workshop – Human Rights & The Human Rights Act (1998) 10 attendees, 15/12/2018.
- 25 'Keep Warm Packs' distributed to Christians Against Poverty for distribution 5/9/2017.

3. **Relationships: Bonding (Improve relations within community) / Bridging (Improve relations with 'other' communities) / Linking (Improve relations with Decision Makers / Statutory Agencies)**

- **Joint Voluntary Community Sector Forum: 4 Meetings.**
- **Rural Proofing & Rural Needs Act – July 2017.**
- **Impacts of Welfare Reform – July 2017.**
- **LRSNs RCDSS – Rural Needs Strategy – July 2017.**
- Capacity Building Relationships: 17+ Partnerships.
- Influencing & Engaging Statutory Bodies regarding Community Development: 84 attendances.
- **Alleviating Poverty & Social Isolation: 17 Partnerships / 84 attendances.**
- **Community Planning / Structures: 12 Meetings / Events / 5 Actions.**
- Promotion of Libraries NI: 1 Referral, 7 Newsletters, 5 Email-outs / Social Media.
- Linking & Signposting: RCDSS 282 groups / supports.
- Promoting Good / Community Relations: 20 promotions.
- Future Voluntary Community Sector Mechanisms for Community Development Delivery: 13 Meetings / engagements with DARD & RCDSS Local Rural Support Networks.
- ISO 9001:2015 QMS Attainment since 01/02/2017.
- 2 ISO Internal Audits 3/7/17 and 29/1/2018.
- 9 ISO 9001:2015 QMS Steering Group Meetings.
- 1 Company House Annual Return: 31/03/2018.
- 1 Charity Commission NI Annual Return: 9/4/2018.
- 4 COSTA Board Meetings and 1 AGM.
- 4 RCDSS Financial Visits & Monitoring Visits.



COSTA Rural Voice – Consultations

1. CYPSP Action Plan Priorities Feedback 9/5/17.
2. CO3 - Quarter 2 Survey of the 3rd Sector Index 13/6/2017
3. Parenting NI - Needs & Services Survey 15/6/2017.
4. NICVA - Viewfinder Survey: Data Governance & Security 27/6/20217
5. RCN - Brexit Survey 29/6/2017.
6. CFNI Vital Signs Survey 7/7.
7. **Rural Proofing / Rural Needs Act & the Impacts of Welfare Reform on Rural People & Communities 27/7/2017.**
8. **LRSNs RCDSS Rural Needs Paper – July 2017.**
9. PIP Policy 8/11/2017.
10. 10B Mini Bus Driving Licence Requirements 8/11/2017.
11. Contacted all local Cllrs, MPs, MLAs and Lord re Welfare Reform & 2 Child Cap Clause 9/11/2017.
12. **COSTA secured 102 Responses from local member Groups and Politicians 26/1/2018 regarding the Department for Finance & DAERA proposals to cut the Rural Affairs Budget.**
13. NICVA Public Affairs Survey 4/1/2018.
14. CYPSP Action & Planning Survey 8/1/2018.
15. CO3 - Sectoral Report 11/1/2018.
16. MUDC Good Relations Survey 15/1/2018.
17. MUDC Poverty Consultation 14/3/2018.



COSTA Project Partnerships & Representation 2017 / 2018

- Mid Ulster District Peace IV Partnership.
- Mid Ulster District Community Plan: Voluntary Community Sector Panel Member.
- Mid Ulster District Community Plan: Education & Skills Thematic Working Group.
- Mid Ulster LAPN – Local Anti-Poverty Network.
- Mid Ulster Seniors Network (MUSN).
- Community Sector Training - Management Group.
- Rural & Urban Community Networks Forum.
- DAERA Departmental Monitoring Group.
- Rural Network Northern Ireland (Member).
- Joint Voluntary Community Sector Forum Panel.
- Game Changer Project Management Team.
- Agewell Mid-Ulster Partnership.
- CYPSP - Children & Young People Strategic Partnership Locality Group: Dungannon & Clogher Valley.
- RCDSS / Local Rural Support Networks Officers Forum.
- ISO 9001:2015 Quality Management Status Steering Group.
- MUD Peace IV Engaging Rural Communities.



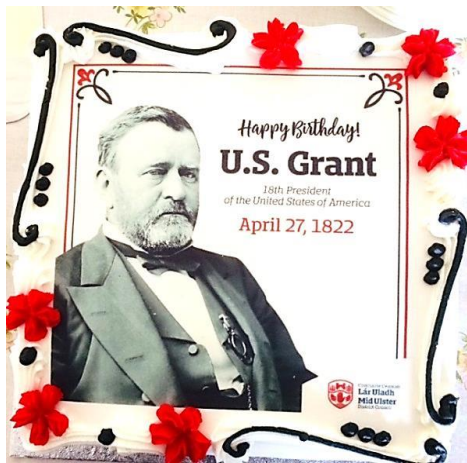
The United States Consulate Visits President Grant's Homestead

COSTA was very honoured to be part of an official visit to our office and tourist site hosted by Cllr Kim Ashton Chairperson of Mid Ulster District Council.

Mr Dan Lawton Consul General of the US Consulate enjoyed a visit to the Dergenagh Homestead and received a tour of the cottage, site grounds and a warm welcome.



Wishing the 18th President General Ulysses S. Grant of the United States of America a Happy Birthday!



By happy coincidence, it also happened to be the birth date of President Grant 27th April (1822) and a cake was specially made to mark the occasion. Indeed April 2018 also sees COSTA's 18th Birthday too!

The Consulate office in Belfast is the second oldest continuously operating U.S. Consulate in the world. It was opened on 17th May 1796 by the first American President George Washington and reinforces the importance of 18 U.S. Presidents having Ancestral roots here in Northern Ireland.

Mr Lawton presented MUDC Council Chairperson Kim Ashton and also Faye and Ted Sharkey each with a US Seal in appreciation of the visit and for the preservation of the historic site at Dergenagh. Community Representatives from Killeeshil & Clonaneese Historical Society: Brendan Holland and Jonathan Gray attended along with Trevor Lockhart and Loraine Griffin of COSTA Rural Support Network and Mid Ulster Council Tourism Officials.



The New Local Rural Community Development Service (LRCDS)

From 1 May 2018 to 31 March 2020, the newly revised RCDSS rolled out across Mid Ulster District Council area. The new contract funded by DAERA and delivered by COSTA & CWSAN will focus on following main themes:

Support for Community Planning
Support for Isolated Rural People
Support for Sustainability of Rural Areas



COSTA will be on-hand as ever to meet the needs of our membership and local groups – call us!

Mid Ulster District Community Plan

From 1 April 2015, the new Mid Ulster District Council assumed responsibility for Community Planning which is about the public, voluntary and community sector working together to design and deliver services which make a real difference to the lives of local people. Over 40 partners are working closely together on the plan and Mid Ulster now has a Community Plan which sets out a vision for our place as:



Comhairle Ceantair
Lár Uladh
Mid Ulster
District Council

“a welcoming place where our people are content, healthy and safe; educated and skilled; where our economy is thriving; our environment and heritage are sustained; and where our public services excel”

The Plan has identified 15 outcomes encompassed across 5 themes:

- **Economic Growth**
- **Infrastructure**
- **Education & Skills**
- **Health & Well-being**
- **Vibrant & Safe Communities**



The proposed outcomes impact on all areas of life, from increasing access to affordable housing and caring for those who are most vulnerable, to creating vibrant towns and villages, safer communities and better skilled and qualified people.

COSTA is currently represented on the Voluntary Community Sector Panel and the Education & Skills Thematic Working Group. Work is very actively progressing and there is excellent progress towards addressing the work set out in the Thematic Action Plans. We will be in contact with almost all groups in the area from 2018 onwards to keep local communities involved and fully up-to-date.

Mid Ulster District Peace IV Partnership

Mid Ulster District Council is now actively delivering their **Peace IV Action Plan** to implement the new Peace IV Programme across the district. A number of programmes are now being delivered directly by the Council and other key strategic voluntary / community organisations located within the area including CWSAN and COSTA. **COSTA currently sits on the Mid Ulster District Peace IV Partnership as a Voluntary Community Sector Partner and as Partnership Vice-Chairperson.**

Over the past 12 months, Mid Ulster District Council has announced £2.8m worth of funding under the European Union's PEACE IV Programme. The funding will be used to support a number of locally-based

projects and initiatives that will promote positive relations between people from different communities and backgrounds.

The Grant Programmes, also like the Peace IV Action Plan, are being delivered under three key themes:



- **Children & Young People**
- **Building Positive Relations**
- **Shared Spaces & Services**



Mid Ulster's PEACE IV Project is supported by the European Union's PEACE IV Programme, managed by the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB).

Peace IV Project – Engaging Rural Communities Programme (ERC)

COSTA, in partnership with CWSAN, are delivering a significant 'Engaging Rural Communities' Programme under 'Building Positive Relations' aimed at 'Targeted Rural Communities'.

Launched on 1st March 2018, this new and exciting project being delivered by local Rural Support Networks CWSAN and COSTA is supported by the European Union's PEACE IV Programme which is managed by the Special EU programmes Body (SEUPB) in partnership with Mid Ulster District Council.

Community groups within the Mid Ulster District Council are being invited to contact newly appointed **Community Engagement Officer Jennifer Hamilton** for potential inclusion in this project. The project has been designed for those groups at early stages of development who are interested in growing their capacities to undertake cross community activities and shared projects in the same area, a neighbouring area or with a group of similar interest. A small grant will be available for up to 12 groups across mid Ulster rural areas to work on a partnership project.

The Rural Communities Programme will be run over a period of 2 ½ years and will take groups through 4 phases of development, providing training sessions, facilitation and mentoring throughout. Groups are most welcome to speak directly to Jennifer Hamilton, the projects new Community Engagement Officer. It is expected that there will be huge interest from rural community organisations and thus there will be a process of selection at early stages. Those groups who are from marginalised sectors within the council area will be prioritised in selection. A range of training is available on offer and training can be designed specifically to the needs of community groups. **Within this PEACE IV initiative there is a grant available to those groups to come on to the programme.**

Jennifer Hamilton has a very wide range of experience in single identity and cross community work, working with a wide range of groups and funding bodies. **Jennifer can be contacted from Wednesday to Fridays only in the Crieve Centre, Stewartstown on 028 877 38845 or via email at jennifer@cwsan.org**

Good Community Relations Programme

COSTA continues to work closely with Mid Ulster District Council in delivering an annual programme to help address local issues. COSTA provides support to local communities on an ongoing basis via training and practical actions to support **Equality & Human Rights and Diversity, Inclusion & Anti-Racism.**

COSTA delivered 1 Workshop on Human Rights & The Human Rights Act (1998) on 15/12/2017 in Corick House to 10 people.



Joint Voluntary Community Sector Forum

In April 2017 COSTA was successfully nominated to the Joint Voluntary Community Sector Forum facilitated by NICVA. The forum meets with all the Department heads on a quarterly basis to lobby for the Sector. The Joint Forum is comprised of representatives from across government and the voluntary and community sector. It facilitates an open discussion about the relationship between these two sectors. Members of the panel are from the following organisations:

COSTA

Rural Community Network

Evangelical Alliance

NI Environmental Link

Volunteer Now

Womens Resource and Development Agency

Sandy Row Community Forum

East Belfast Community Development Agency

Diabetes UK

Carers NI

NI Youth Forum

Start 360

Voluntary Arts Ireland

Children in NI



The Voluntary and Community panel meets with the membership from government departments three times per year as the Joint Forum to facilitate regular dialogue between the voluntary and community sector and government, and to support effective collaboration between the two.

As a key rural representative from west of the Bann, COSTA has attended 4 meetings this year to date and the important issues currently being tackled by the Forum include: identifying strategic and work actions ahead, Welfare Reform, Suicide, Drugs and Health issues, Funding issues for the Sector including the Department of Finance's proposed cuts to the Rural Affairs budget and refreshing 'The Compact' between Government and the Third Sector.

Mid Ulster Rural Development Partnership



MID ULSTER
Rural Development
Partnership

The Mid Ulster Rural Development Partnership Local Action Group for is taking forward the delivery of Priority 6 funding under the 2014-2020 NI Rural Development Programme in partnership with MUD Council. Mid Ulster has a focus on supporting its rural communities and rural enterprise as 2/3 of the local population live in rural areas. A local Rural Development Strategy for Mid Ulster has been developed by the Partnership to address local need and develop the rural economy. This current Programme is funded under the NI Rural Development Programme 2014-2020 via the Department of Environment, Agriculture & Rural Affairs and is open to people who live in, or organisations which operate in, either the countryside or in settlements with a population of less than 5,000. At local level funding will be used to encourage the economic development of rural Mid Ulster and will be delivered across a range of schemes: **Rural Business Investment, Rural Services, Village Renewal, Rural Broadband and Co-operation.**

COSTA is keeping the community fully up-to-date with rural development funding opportunities as they arise and assisting groups to access the current range of programmes on offer – call us at any time.

For further information on MURDP LAG contact: Eamon Gallogly - Programme Manager, Mid Ulster District Council Tel: 028 867 64714, Email: rdp@midulstercouncil.org

COSTA 'Open Door Days'

Throughout the year **38 people / 31 groups have accessed 6 'Open Door Days'** held once every 2 months. The Open Door Days provide COSTA members and local groups with **access via one-to-one appointments to free and confidential support, advice and information** on topics such as:

- **Charity Registration**
- **Charity Annual Returns**
- **Funding application forms assistance**
- **'Grant Tracker' Funding Searches**
- **Good Governance Reviews and Support**
- **Information & Signposting**
- **Constitutions**
- **Policies & Procedures**
- **Good Practice Checklists**
- **Action Plans**

COSTA 'Charity Registration' & 'Charity Annual Returns Information' Workshops

Throughout the year COSTA, as a recognised support organisation, has engaged with **78 groups** to comply with the new Charity Commission NI legislation **via 3 Workshops and 6 'Open Doors Support Days' and one-to-one** supports held at President Grant's Homestead to provide direct information and support to those 'called forward' to register as Charities. **To date over 135 groups have been assisted to complete or submit their Charity Registrations and / or Annual Returns.** In line with upcoming demand, COSTA is **continuing to offer free essential guidance, information and practical assistance to successfully complete Charity Registrations and Annual Returns to the Charity Commission NI.**

DAERA Rural Micro Capital Grant Scheme 2017 (DRMCG)

The Rural Micro Capital Grant Scheme funded by DAERA provides grants of up to 85% of the total cost of a small project, up to a maximum grant limit of £1,500, and are designed to address local issues of:

- **Access Poverty**
- **Financial Poverty**
- **Social Isolation**

Phase 1 was first piloted in May 2015, since then Phases 2, 3 and now the 2017 Phase (4) was launched in September 2017. CWSAN and COSTA jointly deliver the DRMC Grant Scheme throughout the Mid Ulster District Council area along with the other 9 Network regionally. There has been a huge uptake in the scheme from all manner of local groups wishing to carry out small capital projects which can fall under one or more 3 Key areas:

- **Modernisation (of premises / assets)**
- **Information Communication Technology**
- **Health & Wellbeing**

The Minister of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs, Michelle McIlveen MLA has spoken in the NI Assembly about how pleased the Department is with the positive difference these small grants have made to groups, not only in capital value, but in confidence building.

Under the 2017 Phase (4), around 80 eligible projects in the MUDC area were funded and we hope that a further Phase (5) of DRMCG will open again soon.

ISO 9001:2015



Since May 2009 COSTA and the Rural Support Networks have all successfully, and very proudly, held the internationally recognised ISO 9001:2008 Quality Management Standard (QMS) for excellence. **We are very proud to announce that as of 1st February 2017 we successfully attained the newly updated ISO**

9001:2015 Quality Management Standard (Certificate No. FS 592437). The new Standard carries a stronger emphasis on the management of risk and organisational sustainability which is particularly relevant to us all at present. **The next full ISO Audit of COSTA is scheduled for 29 January 2019.**

Key Capacity Building Workshops & Interagency Events

COSTA & NEA 'Energy Efficiency in the Home Event'

COSTA and Paul Wallace from NEA hosted an Energy Efficiency in the Home Event on Friday 22nd September 2017 at the Smyth Hall in Ballygawley. **Over 50 people attended** the highly informative talk on:



Energy and where we use it
Energy efficient space & water heating
Controls on the central heating system
Energy efficient lighting & appliances
Keeping the heat where it is needed
Overcoming Heat Loss



Policing & Community Safety Partnership (PCSP) 'Home Security & Crime Prevention Event for Older People'



Over 50 people attended Aghaloo Community Centre in Aghnacloy on Friday 27 April 2018, 10:00am – 1:00pm to view Information stands from 8 organisations including COSTA. The Interagency Event consisted of an Opening Address by Cllr Kenneth Reid - Chair of PCSP and a range of talks by: PSNI Crime Prevention Officer – Home Security & Scams, Agewell - Handy Van Scheme, Mid Ulster District Council – Household Recycling.

Keep Warm Packs

In July 2017, COSTA worked closely with Christians Against Poverty to distribute **25 Free Keep Warm Packs** to local rural households deemed most in-need in the area.



BrExit

We envisage that BrExit will have a major impact on the entire region, Farmers, local rural and border communities and the voluntary / community Sector. On 13 February 2018 COSTA attended a Conference organised by STEP on 'The Implications of Brexit on Migrant Communities'. **COSTA will continue to play a key role in supporting, assisting and informing the local community and groups during the BrExit process which is important for this border area.**

Local Rural CD Support Service via COSTA Local Rural Support Network



Over the past 3 years the Networks, like almost all organisations, have faced serious funding cuts of over 30%. **COSTA believes a local presence in the centre of the former Council area of Dungannon & South Tyrone is very important for our community particularly given the fact that the former Dungannon Borough area alone stretches for nearly 40 miles. Despite a future that appears to remain new and quite uncertain – particularly now that we face into Brexit - we remain very positive and pro-active as the Local Rural Support Network.**



COSTA delivers the
**Rural Community Development
Support Service (RCDSS)**

**In the Dungannon & South Tyrone area of
Mid Ulster District Council**

(sub-contracted under CWSAN as part of the
9 providers of the Rural CDSS) - funded by the

**Department of Agriculture, Environment & Rural Affairs (DAERA)
Tackling Rural Poverty & Social Isolation Programme (TRPSI).**



Comhairle Ceantair
Lár Uladh
Mid Ulster
District Council

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