

Chairperson's Report to AGM 2022

February 2021-February 2022

Imagine Dundrum: Background

Imagine Dundrum held its inaugural meeting in January 2016. We came together in the belief that it was timely and essential that an active local group would work for a new vision for our urban village of Dundrum and its future, in the light of imminent redevelopment.

Over the past six years, Imagine Dundrum has undertaken projects at multiple levels to support and advance the future of Dundrum Village.

We have held fast to our primary and founding ethos and continued to engage with the community and to advocate for a voice for local people in the future development of Dundrum.

Imagine Dundrum's work in 2021: An Overview

In support of our vision and goal, during 2021 Imagine Dundrum continued to advocate for community engagement in future planning for Dundrum Village. We brought together people with expert knowledge of sustainable town and village development to share that experience with local people through our webinar, newsletters, social media, and website.

While focusing strongly on the future of Dundrum Village, the present state of the Village matters hugely too. Imagine Dundrum during 2021 engaged in a range of activities to improve the fabric of the Village and enhance the quality of the local environment.

Ten meetings of the Imagine Dundrum group were held in 2021, of which two were in-person meetings and 8 were held on Zoom.

An Architectural Conservation Area Designation for Dundrum Village

One of the first goals of Imagine Dundrum was to secure for key buildings in Dundrum Village the status of Architectural Conservation Area (ACA). An ACA identifies an area of special character and architectural interest and its purpose is to preserve that special character. Since 2016, Imagine Dundrum made several submissions to Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Council for ACA designation for Dundrum Village.

In 2021, following appraisal by the Conservation, the designated buildings on Main Street were given full ACA status by the Council. This status takes effect on publication of the County Development Plan in March 2022. This was excellent news for Dundrum.

Proposals for the future

Imagine Dundrum prepared a comprehensive set of proposals for the future of the Village. These proposals, drawing on all our work of the past six years, were sent to Hammerson, Allianz, Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Council's Chief Executive and executives, local Councillors and TDs and to all local people on our mailing list. This document represents a serious effort to bring local thinking to bear on the future of the Village.

Our November webinar

In November, Imagine Dundrum brought together experts in town planning to offer new thinking and ideas for Dundrum Village. Architects Robin Mandal and John Dobbin shared views and ideas about sustainable development and human scale residential development as an alternative to high

rise apartment blocks. The webinar, chaired by Dr. Alan Mee of the UCD School of Architecture, was also an opportunity for Imagine Dundrum to bring our proposals to a wider group of local people. The webinar attracted a large attendance of over 200 people. Its success was a tribute to the organising team, and the attendance reflected the work of group members in publicising the event.

Improving Main Street

During 2021, Imagine Dundrum took several initiatives aimed at improving Main Street. These included:

- A submission to Dún Laoghaire Rathdown for grant funding to for outdoor cultural space in Dundrum;
- Engagement with Hammerson-Allianz seeking improvements in the condition of buildings on Main Street owned by the company;
- Securing a grant, for the second year, to erect Christmas lights in the Village.

The Civic Centre for Dundrum

Making the case for a Civic Centre at the heart of Dundrum Village is one of Imagine Dundrum's primary objectives. We have made several submissions to the Council, seeking assurances about this.

During 2021, funding was successfully sought by Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Council from the Department of Housing for the preparation of a Master Plan for the Civic Centre. Imagine Dundrum has continued to engage with Council officials, local TDs, and other key stakeholders to ensure that this critical project goes ahead on a suitable site at the heart of the Village. We are appreciative of the open access to our Ministers: Minister Catherine Martin T.D., and Minister of State Josepha Madigan T.D., and to Neale Richmond T.D. for their support for the Civic Centre project.

Links with the Irish Architecture Foundation

Imagine Dundrum has built strong links with the Irish Architecture Foundation (IAF) since our work began and these links continued in 2021. Imagine Dundrum participated in the IAF Open House programme, with heritage walks of Dundrum led by John Lennon, local historian and member of Imagine Dundrum. The Imagine Dundrum Chairperson also contributed to a number of IAF webinars on aspects of town and village development. We very much value the links with IAF and their active assistance and support.

Other activities

Imagine Dundrum contributed to the work of the consultant engaged to prepare a Strategic Plan for the Mill Theatre. Members of the group also participated in activities organised by Dundrum 2030, the group working on applying the Sustainable Development Goals at local level.

MANAGING OUR BUSINESS

Involvement in the Public Participation Network (PPN)

Imagine Dundrum is a member of the Dún Laoghaire Rathdown PPN. and provides information about activities and opportunities that can be of value to us. Members of the group took part in a number of workshops run by the PPN on issues of interest to Imagine Dundrum.

Successful grant applications

Imagine Dundrum made a number of successful grant applications, which have resulted in most helpful finance for our work. We are grateful to the Dún Laoghaire Rathdown Council's Community Department, Arts Department and Local Enterprise Office for the grant funding.

Our website and Facebook page

Our newly upgraded website and our Facebook page continue to be an important communication tool . Our Facebook page is getting off the ground with help from group member Rebecca Fozzard.

GDPR compliance, and lobbying registration

These important facets of our work are looked after well and ensure our compliance with these governance requirements.

Thanks and appreciation

Thanks to all the Imagine Dundrum team for another effective year's work and for their many investments in the work, which are too numerous to record.

We also wish to thank the Chief Executive of Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Council, and the Directors and members of staff for their most helpful support during the year. Thanks also to the Dundrum Ward councillors for their support throughout the year.