

Annual Report & Accounts

APRIL 2004 - MARCH 2005





To sustain and enhance the environment,
rural regeneration, cultural heritage
and visitor opportunities
of the Mourne and Slieve Croob
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
and contribute to the well-being of
Mourne's communities.

OUR MISSION

Chairman's Report



Where do the years go? It's hard to believe that another one just has and indeed for the Trust it has been busier than ever.

The frenetic pace to commit the EU's Peace II NRRTI funding before the end of June 2004 was replaced by the frenetic pace to achieve spend before the N+2 targets caught up on us. With extra reports from the various projects the Trust is running, the workload of the core staff has also increased noticeably. This has been driven by, not only the environmental needs of management, interpretation and careful exploitation but also the needs of the communities for economic growth and regeneration. It has again brought home to us just how small an organisation we are with a staff of only thirteen and just how under resourced we are when it comes to attempting to deliver our mission statement.

With such restrictions, there are sometimes painful decisions to be made. Although we are aware of the overall needs of the area, we have to address the more damaging and urgent needs through targeting and prioritisation and many other needs have become aspirational in the meantime. This requires a strategic and at times ruthless approach to ensure that what we undertake, we can ultimately deliver. Management of an area such as Mourne requires resources, both human and financial, far in excess of those available from existing sources. To add to the problem, government departments, both central and local, are under great pressure to reduce expenditure. It is up to us to convince them that further investment is required to build a new economy based on the sustainable resources of areas such as Mourne, namely the environment and the heritage and culture of its indigenous communities. The Mourne Heritage Trust, through its very existence has demonstrated that such an approach is necessary, sustainable and is good value for money. The time for such decisions is now, because we don't have the luxury of time. European funding is reducing dramatically over the next two years.



The Mourne National Park Working Party (MNPWP) is now "getting into its stride" and will, in my opinion, produce the necessary evidence from sound and meaningful research to convince government, both local and central and the local communities that the logical way forward is to assess all of an areas resources

and exploit them in a managed way to create a sustainable economy. I am convinced that this can only be achieved through the declaration of a National Park (Celtic Model), which would enable the appropriate management structures to be put in place creating the opportunities for the justifiable public and private sector investments. This will achieve the managed economic growth required to sustain the local indigenous communities faced with the decline in incomes from the traditional industries of agriculture and fishing.

Thankfully we in the Trust do not have to make that decision, that is the remit of the MNPWP. However it again has restricted resources and I hope government will recognise the deficiency and rectify it in the near future so that appropriate research may obtain the correct information enabling it to reach the right decisions for us all. The future of Mourne and in particular its communities is a challenge. One that will only be resolved by a strategic, measured and logical approach, it will certainly not be resolved by just saying no. Such a response is no longer acceptable to our society; change must be addressed and managed by examining options. If some individuals don't want to see a National Park in the Mourne then what is their alternative option to safeguard the communities who live here because the "do nothing option" does not address the economic decline that we can already see occurring around us. Let us, as communities, have the maturity to examine the options and choose a way forward together which will sustain us and future generations.

In closing I would like to thank the Board, the Staff, the Volunteers and the Friends for their commitment, work and support throughout the year and I look forward to another frenetic year 2005-2006.

Dr A W Mitchell, MBE, Chairman



This year, 2004/2005, is certainly the year when the proposed National Park for Mourne has moved into the public spotlight.

This has been brought about not just by the setting up of the Mourne National Park Working Party, but also by an initial period of consultation on primary legislation for National Parks in Northern Ireland as a whole. This timing of both being launched together, may have created some confusion, but this certainly did raise public interest and awareness in the subject of a National Park for Mourne.

This in turn has created an enhanced area of work for the Trust, with many and on-going requests for information. In October 2004 the Trust hosted a visit to Snowdonia and Cairngorms National Parks for local farming representatives, which in turn has generated much interest and debate throughout the farming community.

All this activity has not, however, deflected the Trust from our core activities of providing for the management and sustainable development of the Mourne AONB, and doing so in a way which provides value for money for our core funders and other partners. The first year of the Trust's new Operational Plan 2004-2007 has been successfully delivered, with the Trust aligning its human and financial resources to meeting our on-going and new priorities.

Our Ranger Service and Countryside Team continue to deliver a wide range of visitor and environmental management programmes across the AONB, whilst our Biodiversity Programme has worked to raise awareness of the importance of the area's wildlife and the role which individuals can play in enhancing biodiversity. A new biodiversity strategy and action programme will now set priorities for future action by the Trust, our partners and by the public. The on-going work of our Conservation Volunteers, Guardians of Green Space and Volunteer Rangers adds significantly to the work of the Trust in these areas.

The completion of the first Mourne Visitor Survey, together with the installation of a range of visitor counters at key visitor sites is



beginning to yield, for the first time, vital information which will help the Trust, our partners, and a range of other agencies plan for the future management of the area.

Sustainable Tourism continues to be a key part of the Trust's role. The development of a Pilot Green Accreditation Scheme and the on-going development of the EU Sustainable

Tourism Charter in Mourne have been among the highlights in a year which has seen the Trust work under significant pressure to deliver the Peace II funding to the Mourne area. A large number of new initiatives in the private, public and voluntary sector are now underway, all of which will greatly enhance the development of tourism in Mourne.

The publication of 'Traditional Buildings in Ireland - A Homeowner's Handbook' represents another key milestone in the Trust's Built Heritage Programme. Published in February 2005, the handbook has helped share, in an accessible way, much of the experience and expertise learned in Mourne to date. The handbook will make a considerable impact on the re-use of our traditional buildings across Ireland and beyond.

Through the AONB website 'www.mournelive.com' and the delivery of a number of new publications the Trust has continued to enhance its information service to the visitor and the general public.

The Mourne Heritage Trust continues to act as a model of best practice for sustainable rural resource management, and in doing so acts as a significant champion for the Mourne area.

Whilst the Trust has seen an increase in its core funding during the year, a lot is being achieved on what remain limited human and financial resources. This is testament to the ability and commitment of the staff team, the Board of Trustees and those who volunteer or help in any way.

Maintaining this momentum in order to achieve our agreed priorities as set out within the Operational Plan must remain a key task for the year ahead.

Tony Gates,
Chief Executive, Mourne Heritage Trust

● Overview of Operations...

● RANGER SERVICE



Participants at a hedge laying course

The Trust continued to employ one full-time Ranger throughout the report period. This year, for the first time the Ranger Service has been fully funded by the Trust's core funders, as project funding from the Esmee Fairburn Trust came to an end.

During May and June 2004 the service worked proactively with the Northern Ireland Fire Service on the containment of wild land fires and undertook a watching brief on extinguished fires to form an early response in case of re-ignition.

Two NVQ training placements were commenced during the period with the Ranger undertaking training and NVQ assessment functions on environmental conservation subjects. This programme has completed 2 NVQs in dry stone walling and has progressed 1 full Environmental Conservation NVQ and 2 day courses in hedge laying, a 1 day course in hedge planting and a 1 day course in dry stone walling.

The Ranger service continued to undertake an environmental monitoring function reporting damage on sites of nature conservation value to relevant enforcement agencies including monitoring erosion and grazing in the Eastern Mourne upland candidate Special Area of Conservation, monitoring upland ASSIs and monitoring coastal ASSIs. The Ranger Service also continued to respond to 85 public enquiries and complaints on issues such as illegal dumping, abandoned cars, litter, fires and vandalism.

● MOURNE CONSERVATION VOLUNTEERS

The Trusts volunteering programme continued during the year with a range of practical projects. Mourne Conservation Volunteers devoted a total of 189 days work, the equivalent of £9,450 labour for nature conservation projects. 14 new conservation volunteers were recruited for participation in the Saturday activities.

Key Volunteer Outputs 2004/05 at a glance

- Volunteers undertook comprehensive development of the Silent Valley tree nursery. An additional 2,500 oak and 500 hazel were planted. By the end of the season 200 holly plants were produced for use in schools and visitor sites.
- Path stabilisation work was undertaken at Lackan Bog using willow revegetations.
- Trees were planted and hedge maintenance carried out at several visitor sites including Lighthouse Road and Binders Cove Souterrain.
- Hedge planting was co-ordinated with the Finnis Community Association.
- Volunteers undertook a rhododendron survey at Ben Crom reservoir.
- Several litter picking events were held to remove litter and waste dropped along key access routes through the mountains.

● BIODIVERSITY STRATEGY AND ACTION PROGRAMME

During this year the Biodiversity Programme focused on raising awareness of biodiversity. This was initially achieved through the 'Wake up to Wildlife' Consultation Day held in Shimna College on the 19th June 2004. At this event over 60 members of the public and representatives of statutory agencies considered the main issues affecting biodiversity within the AONB and a research project was initiated to evaluate biodiversity within landscape character areas and community priorities for local action.

The 'mournelive' website was expanded with an additional 7 pages relating to biodiversity subjects including an interactive forum to allow on-going interaction on Biodiversity issues. A 'Biodiversity in Mourne' leaflet was produced and circulated widely throughout the area to raise awareness of the project.

The Trusts' Natural Heritage Sub-group was also expanded with representatives of Forest Service, DCAL (Inland Fisheries) and DARD on sea fisheries, to form a steering group providing



Biodiversity leaflet

technical feedback and direction on strategy development.

The Biodiversity Officer has lead the creation of a series of giant bird tables and wild flower meadows on publicly owned property across the AONB. This was also complemented by the ongoing work of the Mourne Conservation Volunteers delivering practical action for wildlife throughout the AONB.

A process of data collection was initiated by the Biodiversity Officer, in order to determine the range of species and habitats within the AONB and their current state of health.



Wildflower planting at Gundrum.

• **Other key activities to 31 March 2005 include:**

• **Volunteer Rangers and Guardians of Green Space**

The Trust continued to develop this part of its longer term volunteering activities throughout the year. Volunteer Rangers acted as assistant leaders on the Summer and Winter walks programme, and helped to oversee the programme of practical volunteering projects.

Four new Volunteer Rangers were recruited and have committed to providing the Trust with one day during the week. An additional 25 volunteer days were provided by the Volunteer Ranger Service during the past year.

A number of Guardians of Green Space continue to work



Volunteers undertaking planting works at the Newcastle Granite Trail.

with the Trust Ranger Service, helping the Trust monitor the environment and the impacts of recreation in Mourne at a community level.

• **Mourne Farmer Liaison Group**

The Trust has continued to develop links with the farming community with 60 Mourne farmers now registered on the MHT Farmer Liaison Group. The Group continues to meet bi-annually to discuss matters of common interest between farmers and the Trust.

The Farmer Liaison Group completed the second part of a Mourne/Wicklow Farmer Exchange Visit in June 2004 with 14 farmers from Mourne visiting Wicklow.

The Trust secured funding for, organised and led a Mourne farmers study visit to Snowdonia and Cairngorms National Parks in October 2004, including pre and post visit information workshops and briefings. The Trust assisted in the production of a post visit report on the findings of their visit by Mourne Farmers in January 2005. A copy of this report is available from the Trust's website 'www.mournelive.com'.



Participants in the National Parks study visit.

• **Schools and Community Initiatives**

A tree planting programme was held with students at Shimna College as part of the Biodiversity Programme's Wake Up to Wildlife consultation event.

Environmental awareness training was also held for South Eastern Education and Library Board Youth leaders at the Cabra Towers Outdoor Education Centre.

The Trust's Countryside Team has continued to provide practical and technical assistance to a number of community environmental, school and conservation volunteer projects with local schools.

The Mourne Ranger Service and Conservation Volunteers undertook the development of a pond in Hilltown Primary School.

• **Safer Mournes Partnership**

The Trust participated in the formation of the Safer Mournes Partnership at the request of the Northern Ireland Fire Service. The Trust accepted a request to chair this partnership. The partnership has subsequently produced a leaflet under the umbrella of the Safer Summer Campaign to encourage good countryside behaviour and highlight the issues of crime prevention and community safety.



VISITOR SURVEYS AND VISITOR MONITORING WILL YIELD VITAL INFORMATION

In the past much of the information required to plan effective management strategies within the Mourne AONB has not been available. Whilst there has been much anecdotal evidence on how and why people visit the Mourne AONB, few surveys have been undertaken and little or no evidence has been available on the number of people visiting the open countryside. With the initiation of the AONB visitor survey and visitor monitoring programmes this is now set to change.

A visitor survey, undertaken on behalf of the Mourne Heritage Trust by Research and Evaluation Services was initiated during the year, with visitor surveys being undertaken at 14 key visitor locations within the AONB between July and September 2004. A Visitor Survey Report and a Summary Report were published by the Trust in October 2004, the first of their kind for the area. These were widely circulated among our tourism and management partners and local tourism businesses.



This year has also seen the installation of electronic counters, including pedestrian counters and vehicle counters at 23 locations. This included the installation of solar panels, as the main power source at two locations, as a pilot project. This project is being overseen by Instep Solutions Ltd, in conjunction with the Trust, and it is anticipated that following a field testing period initial year 1 baseline information will be available from 2005. This will yield important data on the number and pattern of visits to key visitor sites across Mourne and will assist the Trust and its partners in helping to plan future service delivery and to develop strategies to better manage the distribution of visits throughout the AONB.

● Overview of Operations

● COUNTRYSIDE MANAGEMENT SERVICE

The Trust employed a team of two full-time countryside officers during the year. Two temporary workers supplemented this team during the busy summer period.

Outputs Achieved to March 2005

- Maintenance of 17 car parks and visitor sites including litter clearance, grass cutting, graffiti removal and essential maintenance of site furniture e.g. picnic tables and bins.
- Maintenance of 43 public rights of way and green lanes including removal of obstructions, hedge cutting

and strimming of grass verges.

- Maintenance of 7 cycle routes with a total of 182 directional plates on wooden posts. Essential maintenance includes keeping posts free of vegetation, graffiti removal, replacing lost or broken plates and posts.
- Installation of way-marker posts, interpretative panels and route clearance for the Newcastle Challenge Trail.
- Maintenance checks were undertaken for 55 stiles within the high Mournes, with essential repairs undertaken to 42 stiles.

- Inspection undertaken to 51 interpretative panels, with maintenance and essential repairs undertaken to panels.

- Annual flailing of hedges on the rights of way network completed in March 2005.

Other key activities to 31 March 2005 include:

• Access trail enhancement

The implementation of the Newcastle Challenge Trail was completed during the year with directional posts and interpretative panels being installed along its 20km route around

Newcastle and Castlewellan. An additional section was also cleared to form a new link for the route through Castlewellan Forest Park.

• Walk, Talk and Pedal Programme

During the year the Trust successfully applied for grant aid to the Mourne NRTI Programme to develop a programme of guided walks, talks and an annual cycling event.

Summer and Winter walks programmes were organised and delivered with a total of 20 walks being scheduled for a variety of routes throughout the Mourne Mountains and Slieve Croob catering for a range of abilities. A series of 10 talks was also developed and delivered on the cultural, built and natural heritage of the AONB. The Trust held a family cycling event in Newcastle in December 2004.



'Pedal the Promenade' - December 2004.



PILOT GREEN BUSINESSES LEAD THE WAY

During this year the Pilot Green Tourism Accreditation Scheme was completed, with a launch of the scheme in February 2005 in the Ecos Centre, Ballymena. The scheme saw the accreditation of nine businesses in the Mourne area (with a further 4 in South Armagh and 9 in the Causeway Coast and Glens area).

The scheme aims to help tourism businesses reduce the environmental impact of their business, save costs and market to a new audience. The 9 participating businesses in Mourne have now implemented recommendations arising from the consultants audit report. Some measures were relatively inexpensive and easy to implement, however, others used the opportunity to avail of the grant aid set aside for this phase of the pilot to undertake more capital intensive adjustment to their practices. Grant aid was provided for a range of items including water butts, sensor lights, recycling bins, soap dispensers, low energy light bulbs, gas meters etc.

With some cost savings having been realised in this phase of the project it is anticipated that a further round of practical works with the participating businesses will take place in 2005/06.

The 3 participating areas are now beginning an internal review of the scheme with a view to presenting a report to NITB. This report will make recommendations for the future implementation of a green tourism scheme across the whole of Northern Ireland.

EUROPEAN TOURISM CHARTER

During the year further development work has taken place on the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism. The Trust has also looked at ways of implementing the recommendations that were made in the Europarc Assessors Report.

The Trust has secured funding from the NRRTI Programme for the further development of the Charter in Mourne. Preparation is underway for the hosting of a Sustainable Tourism Conference to be held in June 2005. This will be targeted at the private sector and one of the key aims of this event will be to establish a private sector tourism forum for the Mourne area.

The Trust has developed a Sustainable Tourism Business Manual which will be launched in June 2005 and distributed to tourism related businesses across the AONB.

The Trust has also participated in the EU Charter Parks Network through involvement in two networking meetings, and has also advised on a number of other protected areas within the UK including the Cairngorms National Park on the adoption of the Sustainable Tourism Charter.

SUSTAINABLE TOURISM PROGRAMME (NRRTI)

With the pressures for early programme expenditure (N+2), the original commitment date of 31st December 2004 was brought forward by 6 months and the Mourne Heritage Trust Partnership was asked to commit its entire budget by 30 June 2004. This presented the NRRTI Partnership with an onerous task and, as a result, all efforts in the first 6 months of 2004 were channelled into achieving this target. In addition to committing the entire budget for the programme to a total of 69 projects



Pilot Green Accreditation launch - February 2005.

within the deadline, a reserve list of projects was also established (5 reserve projects totalling approximately €600,000).

The N+2 expenditure target to December 2004 was 52% of the total Mourne NRRTI funding allocation or some €1,520,261. This target was not achieved in Mourne or by any of the NRRTI Partnerships. By the end of March 2005, expenditure had reached €662,531.

Priorities for the coming year will be pursuance of the new N+2 target for 2005 which is set at 79.5% of programme funding

• Other Key Achievements in 2004/05

• Mourne Inns Programme

Four Mourne Inns have received grant aid under the NRRTI Programme, namely; Maghera Inn, Thierafurth Inn, Anglers' Rest and Lowtown Bar. With the exception of the Anglers' Rest, all 3 projects were underway by the end of March 2005.

• Tourism Gateway Development

Information on the Mourne area was enhanced through the provision of dedicated Mourne Displays in the following Tourist Information Centres: Banbridge Gateway TIC, Downpatrick TIC, Newry TIC, Killeel TIC and Newcastle TIC.

• Mourne Events Programme

A total of 7 events were funded during the 2004 season. The nature of the events varied, ranging from an Olympic Triathlon event right through to several Music and Cultural events.

• Tourism Training Programme

The tender for delivery of a tourism training programme was advertised in August 2004. The tenders were

assessed and scored by a panel and the successful delivery agent (East Down Institute) was appointed in early October 2004. Following a call for expressions of interest in participating in the programme, an audit was undertaken to establish the training needs of the respective businesses.

A programme was designed to address these needs and a registration evening was held on the 21st March 2005. The training courses will commence following the Easter 2005 holiday period and will complete during 2005.

• New and Existing Tourism Business Development

Two projects were completed during the year (Greenhill YMCA and Mount Pleasant Equestrian Centre). The project at Mount Pleasant Equestrian Centre, Castlewellan was officially opened by Mr Roy McClenaghan (DARD) on the 21st September 2004.



Roy McClenaghan (DARD) launches Mount Pleasant Equestrian Centre project

Built Heritage



TRADITIONAL BUILDINGS HANDBOOK – 'A KEY RESOURCE FOR OWNERS'

'Traditional Buildings of Ireland – A Homeowners Handbook' was published in January 2005 and had its formal launch at Hanna's Close Killeel by Frank Mc Donald from the Irish Times.

The handbook has proven very popular among homeowners and building restoration practitioners with over 500 copies having been distributed to date throughout Ireland, the UK, Europe and North America. The handbook has also won great reviews from academic and media circles.

1000 copies of the handbook have been printed, together with 200 CD ROMs.

The handbook is also available online at www.mournelive.com.



● Overview of Built Heritage Activities

● Mourne Homesteads Programme

Detailed proposals for Phase 1 of the Heritage Lottery Fund buildings restoration programme were prepared and tenders sought in June 2004. Given that tenders were €95,000 above the budget available to the scheme, additional grant aid has had to be sought. By end of September additional grant aid of €50,000 has been secured from the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation and a successful application for listed building grant of €12,265 from EHS.

This additional funding, together with additional contributions from the property owners and some cost reductions resulted in work on Phase 1 of the HLF building restoration programme commencing on site in March 2005.

● Traditional Skills Training Programme

Mourne Homesteads: The traditional skills training Programme as part of the Mourne Homesteads Programme was due to finish in April 2004, however due

to budgetary savings and the re-scheduling of some courses, the programme was extended until September 2004 with the agreement of Co-operation Ireland. Three additional courses were held with the involvement of a further 26 participants.

Rural Down Partnership Training Programme:

Following initial delays this programme was formally advertised in June 2004. By the end of September two trainees had started formal NVQ courses in environmental conservation and dry stone walling.

Since February 2005 the Trust has been working with Historic Scotland on a HLF bursary scheme bid for accredited traditional skills training.



Participant at dry stone walling training.

Creating Awareness and Promoting Understanding

MOURNE
AONB

● **An overview**

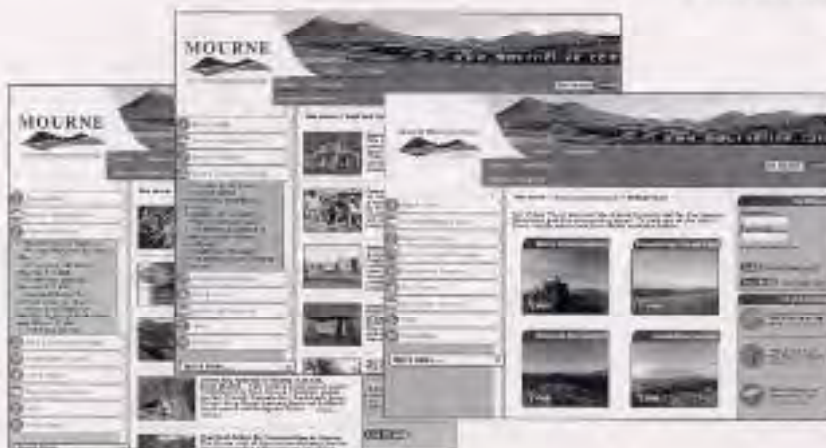
● **Mourne AONB Website Management**

Following on-going development and amendments to the Trust web site the site was formally launched in September 2004. The www.mournelive.com web site has received much positive feedback and was achieving some 1,500 visits per month prior to its formal launch.

During the year a number of on-going refinements to the website have been undertaken including:

- the provision of a series of virtual tour pictures on the site;
- the establishment of a number of interactive forums;
- the development of a media archive;
- the provision of most of the Trusts information sheets, reports and strategies in PDF format; and
- updating of the "Out and About" section

Over the six month period from the launch, the website has been achieving an average of 3,500 visits per month.



● **Mourne Information Publications**

During the year the Trust updated and re-published a series of walking route card for the high Mournes.

Work was undertaken on the preparation of an AONB leaflet with the preparation of draft text, sourcing of photographic images and the development of an updated map of the AONB.

A contract was also tendered for collation, design and production of an additional series of school information and work sheets to supplement the existing range of fact sheets on the AONB.



Other activities throughout the year

● **MHT Office Information Service**

The Trust continues to provide its AONB Visitor Information Point through the Trust Offices in Newcastle. Approximately 1,600 visitors used the Trust office information service throughout the year.

● **Media, Publicity and Public Awareness**

The Trust continued to maintain a high profile in local and regional

published and broadcast media throughout the year. 35 MHT/AONB related articles featured in local and regional press and other publications. In addition to this, dealing with media enquiries in respect of these proposals became a very time consuming exercise for the Trust.

The Trust contributed to a number of broadcast media programmes and news articles during the year for both television and radio, including the Republic of Ireland networked "Eco-Eye" programme, which was broadcast in February 2005.

•Community and Statutory Liaison and Consultation

Staff and Trustees continue to develop links and consult with a wide variety of community groups and statutory agencies and elected officials. These links take the form of consultation on planned or existing Trust programmes or active partnerships for the delivery of Trust priorities.

•Friends of Mourne

During the year a Friends of Mourne co-ordinator, Mr Bernard Davey, was appointed from the Board to work

with the Trust staff in planning for the reinvigoration of the FOM scheme. An Action Plan for the future development of the scheme was approved by the Board of Trustees in March 2005 and will be implemented from the beginning of the year 2005/06. This makes provision for the expansion of the Friends of Mourne to include categories for 'Junior Friends' and 'Business Friends'.

•Networking and Hosting Visits

The Trust has continued to work with a wide variety of networks and partnerships and continues to host study visits to the Mourne AONB in order to promote Mourne, to help further understanding and to share best practice. The Trust continued to be members of and contribute to a broad range of networks and consultative forums and has hosted visits to Mourne by 15 regional, national and international study groups including a visit by international tourism officials hosted by NITB in April 2004, a study group from Orkney in July 2004 and a Ministerial Visit by Barry Gardiner MP.

Trust Management and Administration



OFFICE AND FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION

The Trust employs one full-time Office Manager and one part-time administrative Assistant.

This small team is responsible for providing all general administration and clerical support to the Trust. In addition the team provides an information service to the public from the Trust's Offices and is responsible for the maintenance of the AONB website.

CORE FUNDING

The Trust received the following core funding for the year:

	2004/05	2003/04
EHS	£139,788 (59%)	£107,601 (54%)
Banbridge D.C.	£ 17,040 (7%)	£ 17,040 (8.5%)
Down D.C.	£ 28,016 (12%)	£ 27,200 (13.5%)
Newry & Mourne D.C.	£ 24,000 (10%)	£ 24,000 (12%)
NITB	£ 28,389 (12%)	£ 24,630 (12%)
Total	£237,233	£200,471

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The Board of Trustees met on 11 occasions and the Executive Committee on 3 occasions during the year. There were no changes to the membership of the Board of Trustees throughout the year.

The Trust's seventh AGM was held on 22 September 2004 and was attended by 70 people.

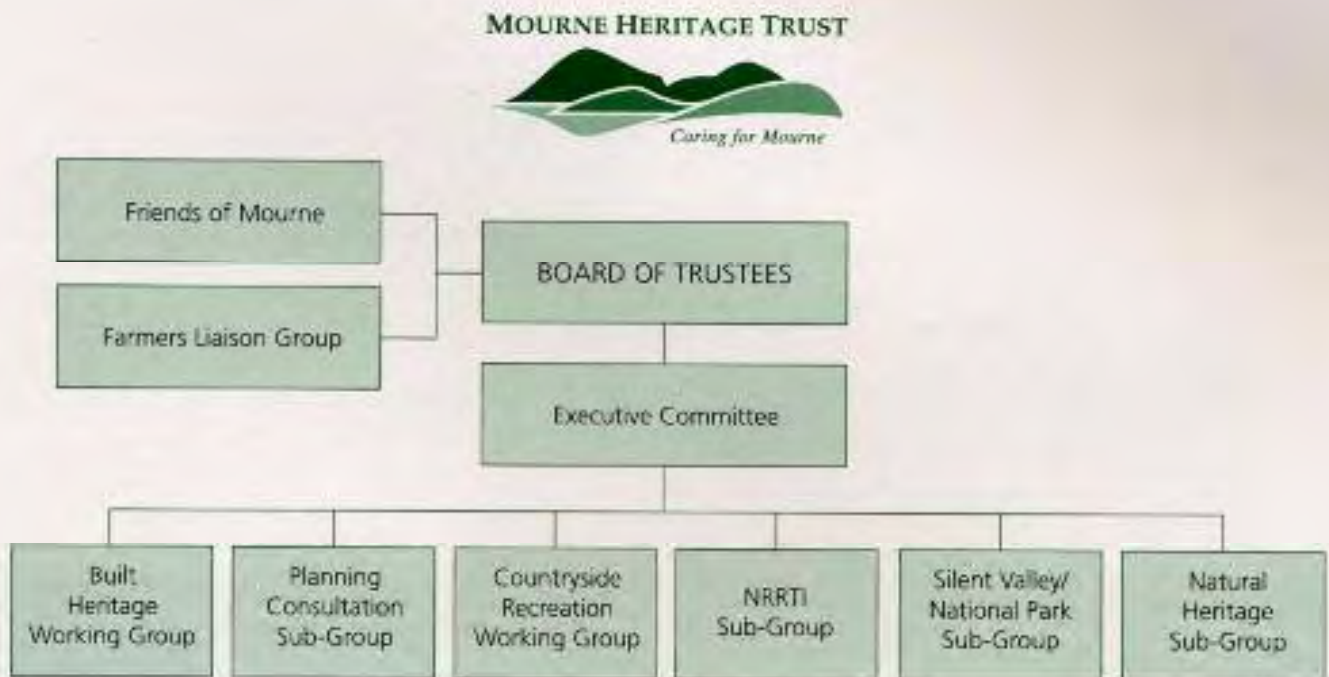
STAFFING

There were a number of staff changes during this report period. In June 2004 Ms Anna Meenan joined the Trust as Built Heritage Officer, with Rosemary McVerry taking the post of Administrative Assistant in the same month. Mr Barry Ferguson joined the Trust as Tourism Project Officer in October 2004. The number of full and part-time staff employed by the Trust was 13, with 2 seasonal workers being employed during the summer period.

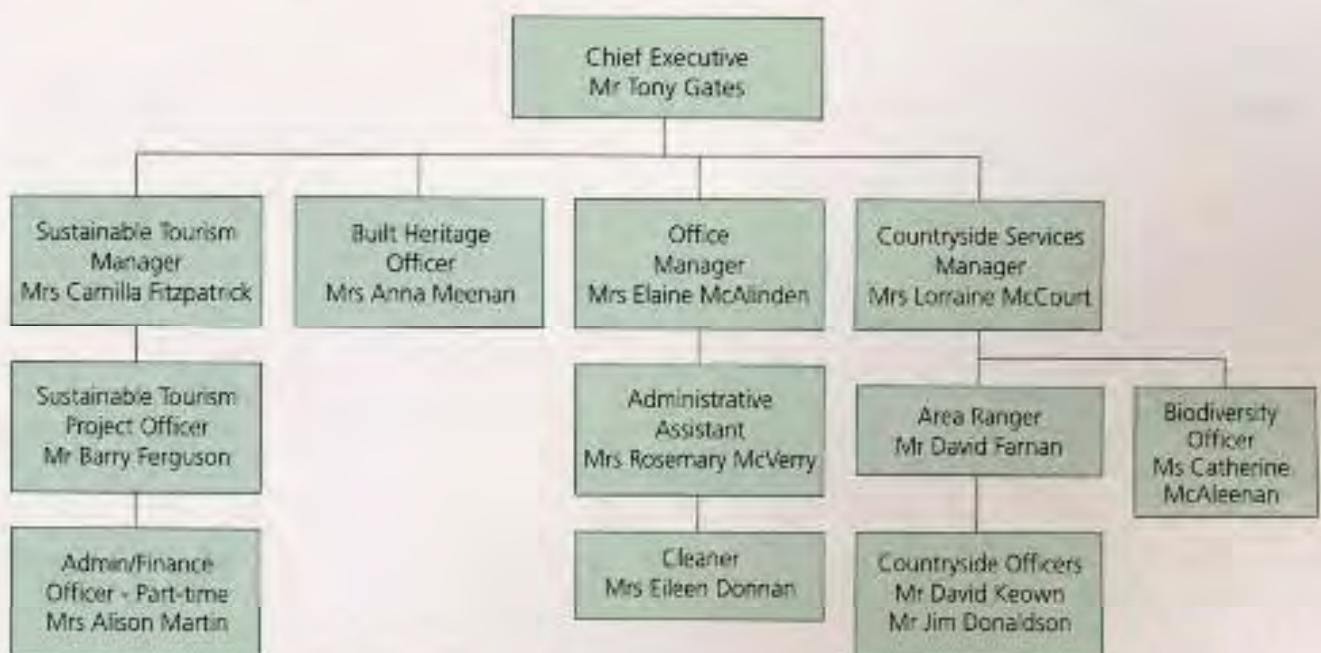
MOURNE NATIONAL PARK WORKING PARTY

The Mourne National Park Working Party met for the first time in October 2004, and has continued to meet on a monthly basis since then.

The Trust is represented on the National Park Working party by its Chair (who serves as a full member), and its Chief Executive (who serves as an observer).



Staff Structure as at 31 March 2005



Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2005

Directors' Report

The Directors present their report and financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2005.

Principal Activities and Review of the Business

The principal activity of the company continued to be that of the protection, conservation and enhancement of the environment, historic buildings and cultural heritage of the Mourne and Slieve Croob area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, for the benefit of the general public.

Results

The results for the year are set out on page 12.

Fixed Assets

The significant changes in fixed assets during the year are explained in note 8 to the financial statements.

Directors

The following directors have held office since 1 April 2004.

Dr A Mitchell – Chair

Ms I Hood – Vice Chair

H O'Neill – Company Secretary

J Saunders – Treasurer

G Douglas

Mrs I Adair

Mrs J O'Hare

W Burns

D Patterson

Mrs C O'Boyle

P Kelly

B Dovey

Mrs J Whatmough

W J Martin

Mrs R Chestnut

D Thompson

S Doyle

Ms M Killen

S McCarthy

J McGillen

I Hanna

Directors' Interests

The company is a company limited by guarantee and so has no share capital.

Auditors

In accordance with Article 393 of the Companies (Northern Ireland) Order 1986, a resolution proposing that McClure Watters be reappointed as auditors of the company will be put to the Annual General Meeting on 28th September 2005.

Directors' Responsibilities

Company law requires the directors to prepare financial statements for each financial year, which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the company and of the profit and loss of the company for that period. In preparing those financial statements, the directors are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the company will continue in business.

The directors are responsible for keeping proper accounting records, which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the company and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies (Northern Ireland) Order 1986. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

By Order of the Board



Director / Secretary
25 August 2005

Auditors' Report

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2005

We have audited the financial statements of Mourne Heritage Trust Limited on pages 4 to 12 for the year ended 31 March 2005 which have been prepared under the historical cost convention and the accounting policies set out therein.

This report is made solely to the Trust's members, as a body, in accordance with Article 243 of the Companies (Northern Ireland) Order 1986. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the Trust's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the Trust and Trust's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Respective Responsibilities of Directors and Auditors

As described in the statement of directors' responsibilities on page 2 the Trust's directors are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards.

Our responsibility is to audit the financial statements in accordance with relevant legal and regulatory requirements and United Kingdom Auditing Standards.

We report to you our opinion as to whether the financial statements give a true and fair view and are properly prepared in accordance with the Companies (Northern Ireland) Order 1986. We also report to you if, in our opinion, the Directors' Report is not consistent with the financial statements, if the company has not kept proper accounting records, if we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit, or if information specified by law regarding directors' remuneration and transactions with the company is not disclosed.

We read the Directors' Report and consider the implications for our report if we become aware of any apparent misstatements within it. Our responsibilities do not extend to any other information.

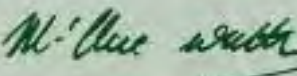
Basis of Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Auditing Standards issued by the Auditing Practices Board. An audit includes examination, on a test basis, of evidence relevant to the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. It also includes an assessment of the significant estimates and judgements made by the Trustees in the preparation of the financial statements, and of whether the accounting policies are appropriate to the Trust's circumstances, consistently applied and adequately disclosed.

We planned and performed our audit so as to obtain all the information and explanations which we considered necessary in order to provide us with sufficient evidence to give reasonable assurance that the financial statements are free from material misstatement whether caused by fraud or other irregularity or error in forming our opinion we also evaluated the overall adequacy of the presentation of information in the financial statements.

Opinion

In our opinion, the financial statements give a true and fair view of the state of the company's affairs as at 31 March 2005, and of its surplus for the year then ended and have been properly prepared in accordance with the provisions of the Companies (Northern Ireland) Order 1986.



McClure Watters
Chartered Accountants
& Registered Auditors
Number One, Lanyon Quay, Belfast BT1 3GP
25 August 2005

Statement of Financial Activities FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2005

	Notes	Restricted Funds £	Unrestricted Funds £	Total 2005 £	Total 2004 £
Incoming Resources					
Grants and donations		-	237,233	237,233	201,314
Sales Income		-	5,446	5,446	904
Sundry Income		-	1,904	1,904	3,041
Friends of Mourne		-	300	300	1,720
Ranger Service		1,210	-	1,210	11,212
Interpretative Strategy		-	-	-	5,704
TCCF		47,263	-	47,263	66,091
NRRTI		107,099	-	107,099	68,130
AONB Website		-	-	-	25,000
Italian Study Visit		50	-	50	2,054
Biodiversity Programme		21,087	-	21,087	10,086
EU Charter Application		13,500	-	13,500	10,000
Silent Valley Nature Trail		-	-	-	35,896
Visitor Monitoring		23,447	-	23,447	13,000
Pilot Green Accreditation		-	-	-	10,000
Built Heritage		151,234	-	151,234	205,167
Walk, Talk & Pedal		16,448	-	16,448	-
AONB Leaflet		7,000	-	7,000	-
Farmer Study Visit		13,200	-	13,200	-
Sustainable Tourism Training		50,000	-	50,000	-
Green Tourism Study Visit		8,333	-	8,333	-
NITB Signature Project		10,000	-	10,000	-
Mourne Homesteads		2,464	-	2,464	-
Interest		-	135	135	46
Total Incoming Resources		472,335	245,018	717,353	670,365
Resources Expended					
Direct Charitable expenditure	2.1	404,091	27,402	431,493	465,038
Fund raising and Publicity	2.2	-	9,611	9,611	3,526
Management and administration of the charity	2.3	-	196,567	196,567	169,073
Total Resources Expended		404,091	233,580	637,671	637,637
Net Movement in Funds		68,244	11,438	79,682	32,728
Balance brought forward at 1 April 2004		51,851	19,343	71,194	38,466
Balance brought forward at 31 March 2005		120,095	30,781	150,876	71,194

Income and Expenditure Account FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2005

	Notes	2005 £	2004 £
INCOME	3	717,718	670,319
Project and administrative expenses		(637,671)	(636,662)
Operating surplus/(deficit)	4	80,146	33,657
Other interest receivable and similar income	5	135	46
Interest payable and similar charges	6	(599)	(975)
Surplus/(Deficit) for the year	13	79,682	32,728

The income and expenditure account has been prepared on the basis that all operations are continuing operations. There are no recognised gains or losses other than those passing through the income and expenditure account. The notes on pages 13 to 16 form part of the financial statements.

Balance Sheet AS AT 31 MARCH 2005

	Notes	£	2005 £	£	2004 £
FIXED ASSETS					
Tangible assets	7		60,213		63,079
CURRENT ASSETS					
Stock	8	2,401		2,468	
Debtors & Prepayments	9	11,146		12,724	
Cash at bank and in hand		96,589		12,313	
		110,136		27,505	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	10	(5,483)		(3,444)	
Net current assets/(liabilities)			104,653		24,061
Total assets less current liabilities			164,866		87,140
Accruals and deferred income	11		(13,990)		(15,946)
			150,876		71,194
Capital Reserves					
Revaluation Reserve	13		11,630		11,630
General Funds	13		139,246		59,564
	14		150,876		71,194

These financial statements were approved by the Board on 25 August 2005.

Chairman

Director

Notes to the Financial Statements FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2005

The notes on pages 13 to 16 form part of the financial statements.

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

1.1 Accounting convention

The financial statements are prepared under the historical cost convention modified to include the revaluation of freehold land and buildings.

The company has taken advantage of the exemption in Financial Reporting Standard No.1 from the requirement to produce a cashflow statement on the grounds that it is a small company.

1.2 Turnover

Turnover represents grants and donations from the government and other bodies, and sundry income from certain activities undertaken by the company.

1.3 Tangible fixed assets and depreciation

Tangible fixed assets other than freehold land are stated at cost or valuation less depreciation. Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write off the cost or valuation, less estimated residual value, of each asset over its expected useful life, as follows:

- Land and Buildings Freehold
- 5% per annum on a straight line basis

- Plant and Machinery

- 15% per annum on a reducing balance basis

- Fixtures, fittings and equipment

- 15% per annum on a reducing balance basis

- Motor Vehicles

- 25% per annum on a reducing balance basis

1.4 Stock

Stock is valued at the lower of cost and net realisable value.

1.5 Pensions

The pension costs charged in the financial statements represent the contributions payable by the company during the year in accordance with FRS17.

1.6 Government grants

Grants are credited to deferred revenue. Grants towards capital expenditure are released to the profit and loss account over the expected useful life of the assets. Grants towards revenue expenditure are released to the profit and loss account as the related expenditure is incurred.

Notes to the Financial Statements

2. Notes to the Statement of Financial Activities

	Restricted Funds £	Unrestricted Funds £	Total 2005 £	Total 2004 £
2.1 Direct Charitable Expenditure				
Staff costs	94,587	27,402	121,989	105,097
Ranger	8,553	-	8,553	10,494
TCCF	72,111	-	72,111	38,864
NRRTI	11,381	-	11,381	36,618
Built Heritage	81,904	-	81,904	239,089
AONB Website	7,711	-	7,711	17,439
Italian Study Visit	-	-	-	10,100
Biodiversity Programme	27,810	-	27,810	7,337
Pilot Green Accreditation	13,109	-	13,109	-
Visitor Monitoring	10,485	-	10,485	-
Walk, Talk & Pedal	15,028	-	15,028	-
Farmers Study Visit	10,020	-	10,020	-
Tourism Training	45,195	-	45,195	-
Green Tourism	5,252	-	5,252	-
Mourne Homesteads	945	-	945	-
	<u>404,091</u>	<u>27,402</u>	<u>431,493</u>	<u>465,038</u>
2.2 Fundraising & Publicity				
Advertising & Publications	-	9,611	9,611	3,526
Hospitality	-	-	-	-
	<u>-</u>	<u>9,611</u>	<u>9,611</u>	<u>3,526</u>
2.3 Management & Administration of the Charity				
Staff costs	-	133,634	133,634	103,784
Motor and travel expenses	-	6,263	6,263	6,628
Professional fees	-	5,707	5,707	10,863
Insurance	-	5,863	5,863	3,040
Rentals	-	3,371	3,371	3,180
Office Supplies	-	4,725	4,725	2,173
Training and Workshops	-	3,314	3,314	2,136
Postage, Telephone & Electricity	-	8,785	8,785	10,647
Vehicle Exps, Equipment & tools	-	14,564	14,564	15,423
Interest payable	-	599	599	975
Other costs	-	(788)	(788)	556
Depreciation	-	9,390	9,390	9,668
Loss on Asset Disposal	-	1,140	1,140	0
	<u>-</u>	<u>196,567</u>	<u>196,567</u>	<u>169,073</u>

3. Income

The major source of core operating income is grants received from Department of the Environment - EHS. Other sources of core operating income include support grants from Northern Ireland Tourist Board, Newry and Mourne District Council, Down District Council and Banbridge District Council. Project funding is received from The Pilgrim Trust, Heritage Lottery Fund, DARD - EU Peace & Reconciliation programme, Rural Development Council, Northern Ireland Housing Executive, Co-operation Ireland, Architectural Heritage Fund, EHS - Listed Buildings Department and Esmeé Fairburn Foundation.

4. Operating Surplus/(Deficit)

	2005 £	2004 £
Operating surplus/(deficit) is stated after charging:		
Loss/(Profit) on disposal of fixed assets	1,140	-
Depreciation of tangible assets	9,390	9,668
Auditors' remuneration	2,438	1,704
	<u>12,968</u>	<u>11,372</u>

5. Other Interest Receivable and Similar

Bank interest	135	46
	<u>135</u>	<u>46</u>

6. Interest Payable and Similar Charges

Bank interest	599	975
	<u>599</u>	<u>975</u>

Notes to the Financial Statements

7. Tangible Fixed Assets

	Land & Buildings Freehold £	Plant & Machinery £	Fixtures, Fittings & Equipment £	Motor Vehicles £	Total £
Cost or Valuation					
At 1 April 2003	24,357	27,110	42,738	14,688	108,893
Additions	-	1,905	5,759	-	7,664
Disposals	-	-	(3,153)	-	(3,153)
At 31 March 2004	<u>24,357</u>	<u>29,015</u>	<u>45,344</u>	<u>14,688</u>	<u>113,404</u>
Depreciation					
At 1 April 2003	4,918	9,920	21,061	9,915	45,814
On Disposals	-	-	(2,013)	-	(2,013)
Charge for the Year	1,218	2,864	4,115	1,193	9,390
At 31 March 2004	<u>6,136</u>	<u>12,784</u>	<u>23,163</u>	<u>11,108</u>	<u>53,191</u>
Net Book Value					
At 31 March 2005	<u>18,221</u>	<u>16,231</u>	<u>22,181</u>	<u>3,580</u>	<u>60,213</u>
At 31 March 2004	<u>19,439</u>	<u>17,190</u>	<u>21,677</u>	<u>4,773</u>	<u>63,079</u>

8. Stocks

	2005 £	2004 £
Finished goods and goods for resale	<u>2,401</u>	<u>2,468</u>

9. Debtors

	2005 £	2004 £
Other debtors	10,029	10,008
Prepayments and accrued income	1,117	2,716
	<u>11,146</u>	<u>12,724</u>

10. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2005 £	2004 £
Bank loans and overdrafts	-	-
Trade creditors	3,542	1,494
Taxes and social security costs	-	-
Accruals and deferred income	1,941	1,950
	<u>5,483</u>	<u>3,444</u>

11. Accruals and deferred income

	2005 £	2004 £
Balance at 1 April 2004	15,946	17,902
Grants received in the year	-	-
Amortisation in the year	(1,956)	(1,956)
Balance at 31 March 2005	<u>13,990</u>	<u>15,946</u>

Notes to the Financial Statements

12. Pension costs

The company operates a defined contribution pension scheme. The pension cost charge represents contributions payable by the company to the fund and amounted to £ 19,398 (2004 - £17,631).

13. Statement of movements on funds

	Revaluation Reserve	Income & Expenditure Account
	£	£
Balance at 1 April 2004	11,630	59,564
Retained surplus/(deficit) for the year	-	79,682
Balance at 31 March 2005	<u>11,630</u>	<u>139,246</u>

14. Reconciliation of movements in funds

	2005 £	2004 £
Surplus/(Deficit) for the financial year - Restricted	68,244	24,346
Surplus/(Deficit) for the financial year - Unrestricted	11,438	8,382
	<u>79,682</u>	<u>32,728</u>
Surplus/(Deficit) for the financial year - Opening Funds - Restricted	51,851	27,505
Opening Funds - Unrestricted	19,343	10,961
	<u>71,194</u>	<u>38,466</u>
	<u>150,876</u>	<u>71,194</u>
Closing Funds - Restricted	120,095	51,851
Closing Funds - Unrestricted	30,781	19,343
Closing Funds	<u>150,876</u>	<u>71,194</u>

15. Contingent Liabilities

The company has a liability to refund grant monies received by it should it fail to comply with the relevant conditions as set out in the letter of offer.

16. Employees

	2005 Number	2004 Number
Number of Employees		
The average monthly number of employees (including directors) during the year was:		
Permanent Staff	13	13
N.I.Housing Executive Seconded Staff	-	1
	<u>13</u>	<u>14</u>
Employment Costs	£	£
Wages & Salaries	236,225	191,250
Other Pension costs	19,398	17,631
	<u>255,623</u>	<u>208,881</u>



COMPANY INFORMATION

Directors

Dr Arthur Mitchell - Chair
Ms Isabel Hood - Vice Chair
Mr Hugh O'Neill - Company Secretary
Mr Jim Saunders - Treasurer
Mr Gerry Douglas
Mr William Burns
Mr Seamus Doyle
Mr John McGrillen
Mrs Irene Adair
Mr Desmond Patterson
Mr Bernard Davey
Mrs Rosemary Chestnut
Ms Maureen Killen
Mr Isaac Hanna
Mrs Josephine O'Hare
Mrs Carmel O'Boyle
Mrs Jo Whatmough
Mr David Thompson
Mr Sean McCarthy

Secretary

H O'Neill - Company Secretary

Company Number

NI 32946

Registered Office

Number One,
Lanyon Quay,
BELFAST BT1 3GP

Auditors

McClure Watters
Number One,
Lanyon Quay,
BELFAST BT1 3GP

Registered Office

87 Central Promenade
NEWCASTLE, Co Down
BT33 0HH

Bankers

Bank of Ireland Ltd
19 Greencastle Street
KILKEEL, Co Down
BT34 4BH

Solicitors

McBurney & Co
5 Church Square
BANBRIDGE, Co Down
BT32 4AS



MOURNE



Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Mourne Heritage Trust

87 Central Promenade,
NEWCASTLE, County Down
BT33 0HH

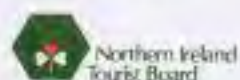
Tel: (028) 4372 4059

Fax: (028) 4372 6493

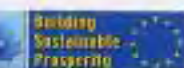
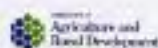
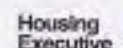
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www.mournefive.com

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