

Hope House
Registration Number: NIC100516
Annual Report for the year ended 31st December 2021

Structure, Governance and Management

Hope House Ireland is a charity registered with the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland and is governed by the terms of its constitution.

The Charity consists of Volunteers, Members and Trustees.

Individuals wishing to be involved with the operation of the charity will normally serve as a volunteer for a minimum of 12 months after which they may be invited to become a member of the charity.

Trustees will be elected from the membership at the Annual General Meeting.

The Trustees who served during the year were:

- Dawn McConnell
- Roy McConnell
- Jaqueline McCullough
- Jonathan Ogilby

Objectives

The Objectives of Hope House are to provide rest, recuperation and support to members of the Northern Ireland public who have received a cancer diagnosis and their families and carers.

We provide:

- Free accommodation in our house in Browns Bay, Islandmagee. The house and its seafront location enhance physical and emotional wellbeing, reduce stress and allow cancer sufferers to feel supported, cared for and valued.
- Respite for family and carers whilst knowing their loved one are in a safe, comfortable and relaxing location.
- Engagement with the local Cancer Charities such as Macmillan Cancer Care and Marie Curie.

Hope House is located by the sea and is a sanctuary in the storm of a cancer diagnosis.

Achievements

We have had many achievements this year despite Covid which continued to bring many challenges but we are delighted to have navigated very well. We purchased a fogging machine in November 2020 which is used between every booking. All of our guests have commented on how confident they have felt staying with us and had peace of mind that all regulations were being adhered to. Our housekeeper goes above and beyond to ensure the very highest standard of cleanliness is achieved for every guest, giving many voluntary hours on top of her paid time.

We were delighted to be able to continue with our services whilst many other cancer services had to close. This was especially appreciated by the terminally ill patients and their families for providing them with this support at a time when so little was available to them. We have received numerous testimonies and thank you letters from families saying how grateful they were to us for helping make their relatives last days precious by giving them quality time away from hospitals.

This year was particularly hard for our team as we felt the personal pain of losing a very special person. We met Lyndsey five years ago at the start of her cancer journey along with her husband Thomas and they became very dear friends & avid fundraisers for Hope House. It has been a privilege and honour to have been able to walk alongside them offering them much needed support at various stages of Lyndsey's journey. When Cancer Focus was making a book of her memories and asked where her favourite place was, she replied that it was "Hope House". We can place this comment from Lyndsey on our list of greatest achievements knowing that we made it possible for her to spend her last days at Hope House with her young family making memories in her favourite place. She will be greatly missed by us all and Lyndsey's story mirrors the effect that Hope House has had on many of our visitors this year.

We have continued this year with providing welcome packs of flowers and small gifts to our guests and where we know there is a financial need, we have also provided food vouchers.

Probably our biggest achievement this year was the addition of a fabulous second accommodation at the Browns Bay site which allows us to provide disabled access to those who couldn't navigate the stairs in the cottage. The work commenced in February to renovate the existing garage and we quietly opened the doors of the Alan Baillie Lodge in December thanks to our wonderful building team. Our Trustee, Jonathan Ogilby oversaw this project, giving a huge amount of his time and expertise totally on a voluntary basis. We were delighted to have a family stay in the new Lodge over Christmas providing them with gifts, a turkey & a food hamper.

Despite closing for 10 weeks due to the building works, we still managed to provide 210 people with a recuperation stay at Hope House between October 2020 to October 2021.

In June, we were chosen to be the beneficiary of £14,000 from local cancer charity 1in3 Cancer Support Group which was closing its doors. They wanted their remaining funds to go to a local charity that would be able to carry on with their great work within the community

so they chose us. We were truly honoured to receive this wonderful contribution to our new Lodge and the provision this would make to cancer patients. Also in June, our Chairperson Dawn McConnell was invited to speak at Carrickfergus Rotary Club where Jackie Stewart, OBE & Deputy Lieutenant of County Antrim was in attendance. Jackie was so impressed with what we were doing that she visited us in August to tell us that she was nominating our team to receive a Queens Award for Voluntary Service! The nomination alone is a fabulous honour and recognition of the work that we do.

In September, Dawn found out that she had also been nominated for a Pride of Britain Award for community service! Dawn was one of four finalists in the regional contest and came a very close second place. This provided us with a platform to share our work on UTV Live and following the publicity have been inundated with applications from palliative care patients.

We continued to enjoy guidance and support from MIS Claims, our long term sponsor, throughout 2021.

Public Benefit Statement

The Trustees of Hope House confirm that they have complied with their duty to have regard to the Charity Commissions guidance on public benefit and that the public benefit requirement has dictated the activities of Hope House in the Year to the 31ST December 2021.

The services provided by Hope House are available free of charge to any individual or family member who has been affected by Cancer.

Future Objectives

Due to the nature of the illness that our guests suffer from, it is a sad reality that some guests are unable to use our service due to the long waiting list.

It is our aim of the Trustees to expand the capacity of the service and acknowledge that this will require the purchase / construction of an additional property in due course.

Financial Review

The Charity remains in a strong financial position and enjoyed an income of £151,632 throughout the financial year.

This income was not only used to pay for the day to day running of the Charity but also to finance the completion of our second property.

The total cash holdings have risen from £119,235 at the end of 2020 to £120,392 at the end of 2021.

The work of Hope House can only happen with the financial support of everyone who donates to the charity each year. The Trustees would like to recognise and thank each and every individual who have generously supported cancer patients through the work of Hope House.

The Trustees of Hope House will continue to seek additional funding streams to allow the Charity to increase its capacity and help more Cancer Patients than ever before.

Service User Comments

The following are examples of the feed back that has been left by our guests -

I was exhausted when I arrived at Hope House but after just one night in this enchanting place I awoke refreshed. In great need of the private family time this home provided, the place surrounds you with tranquillity and peace. It is inspirational and should be used as a template across Northern Ireland for the huge number of people who are suffering due to a cancer diagnosis.

I can truly say this place is steeped in a peace that enables you to feel all your worries and cares wash away as you gaze out at the beautiful sea views. I don't think you realise the massive impact you are making to many people's lives, it is such a wonderful place to retreat from the overwhelming impact of chemotherapy treatments and constant hospital appointments.

Thank you for providing such a valuable place.

Thank you for coming up with this wonderful project that has been beneficial to so many people.

Over the last few years stress and anxiety have been with us daily due to the battle with cancer.

To be able to leave that behind even for a short while is a gift that money cannot buy. We are truly grateful to have had this special time of renewal that has helped us to gain the strength we need for the journey ahead.

Principal Operating Address

The operating Address of the Charity is:

1 Browns Bay Drive

Islandmagee

BT40

This Trustees annual report was approved on ##### and signed on behalf of the board of Trustees by:

.....Dawn McConnell

Dawn McConnell

.....Jonathan Ogilby

Jonathan Ogilby