

Hope House Ireland

Charity Reference and Administrative Details

Year Ended 31 December 2023

Charity registration number

NIC100516

Trustees

Dawn McConnell
Roy McConnell
Jacqueline McConnell
Sam McCullough
Joan Crothers

Principal address

Hope House
1 Browns Bay Drive
Islandmagee
Larne
Co. Antrim
BT40 3RU

Independent examiner

Guardian
Chartered Accountants
2 William Street
Newtownards
Co. Down
BT23 4AH

Bankers

Danske Bank
Donegall Square West
Belfast
BT1 6JS

Hope House

NI Charity Commission registration number NIC 100516

Trustees Report for the year ended 31 December 2023

The trustees present their report for the above year.

Trustees

Trustees who served during the year were:

Dawn McConnell

Roy McConnell

Jacqueline McCullough

Samuel McCullough

Joan Crothers appointed 26 February 2024

Objectives

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

We provide

- FREE Self-Catering accommodation in two beachfront properties in Browns Bay. The properties and their location enhances physical and emotional wellbeing - reducing stress, enabling our service users to feel supported, cared for, and valued at a very vulnerable time. We bring HOPE!!
- Respite for family and carers, knowing that their loved-one is in a safe, comfortable, and relaxing location.

Hope House is by the sea – a place of sanctuary in the storm that living with a cancer diagnosis can bring into the lives of families navigating a cancer journey.

Achievements and public benefit activities

During the year, the following were achieved

- One of the highlights of the year was our founder and Chair Mrs Dawn McConnell was awarded the British Empire Medal (BEM) from His Majesty King Charles III. Dawn received the Honour in recognition of the work she did in establishing Hope House and to bring the charity to where it is today.
- The Charity was also honoured to receive another award - Dawn and founder member Mr Roy McConnell were presented with the 'Points of Lights Award' by the former Prime Minister Rishi Sunak. This award is given by the UK Prime Minister to recognise outstanding individual volunteers - people who are making a real change in their communities.

We are very proud of all these achievements and building on the honour of Hope House receiving our late Queens Award in 2022.

- Hope House was delighted to be chosen by two organisations as their 'Charity of the Year', they were:
 - Lady Captains Charity for Larne Golf Club
 - President's Captains Charity for Cairndhu Golf Club
- There was a significant increase in funds raised during the year due to Hope House being supported by many of our local businesses, such as Spar, Tesco, SuperValu, Eurospar, and also by local Schools & Sports Clubs. We applaud all our fundraisers, sponsors and businesses, and because of these collective endeavours - such as cycle rides, mountain climbs, marathons, swimathons and sponsored walks, this has helped to make this a very successful year.
- One of the developments this year has been to earmark new space that will give us two new purpose-built rooms. This will hopefully enable us to extend our services greatly and provide some much-needed office space. After the year end, we were delighted to obtain planning approval and hope to have this work completed by late 2024.
- The number of people accessing our service has grown significantly. We were able to provide 342 guests with recuperation breaks due to the addition of the Alan Baillie Lodge and the many contacts we have built with social workers, Cancer Centres, specialist nurses and Community nurses, e.g. Marie Currie, NI Hospice, and MacMillan. Because of the improved facilities we now provide, we have been able to offer more recuperation breaks to people who have received a terminal diagnosis.

For the family, carers and friends of patients - Hope House offers respite and peace, knowing that their loved-one is in a safe environment.

The facilities provide a comfortable and restful break in a beautiful setting, therefore creating a sense of calmness, hope and wellbeing.

Hope House is managed by local volunteers, all of whom have been affected by cancer. These volunteers offer their services FREE - meeting and greeting, providing transport, awareness raising, and fundraising etc.

Hope House helps very vulnerable individuals cope with their cancer journey. The growing demand for its services demonstrates the value placed on the services we provide. Hope House has had a significant impact in improving the lives of adults affected by cancer in Northern Ireland.

We regularly receive lovely letters and cards from families thanking us for the use of the Hope House facilities.

These notes from a very grateful service users really demonstrates all that we stand for and strive to achieve at Hope House:-

From Jane

"Myself & my husband have just had the most amazing, relaxed & soulful time at this outstanding house - HOPE is just what I needed following my diagnosis of breast cancer in June - surgery followed with chemotherapy & currently I am undergoing radiotherapy treatment.

This home provides a secure loving environment to aid healing & give adults the exclusive time they need at such a heartbreaking time in their life.

I cannot thank the team at Hope House enough for all they have done for me & my husband providing a warm, beautiful environment for us both to relax in & just take time to process all we have gone through as a family - Dawn is an inspiration to anyone who is lucky enough to meet her. Her passion & sheer determination to help others knows no bounds & during our stay at this beautiful home we felt the love from it & I personally felt it was hugging me & inspiring me on with positivity to enable me the strength to continue on my path.

A personal huge thank you to all who made this vision a reality & enabled us to avail of the time as a couple. We have 5 children & to just be able to reflect on my diagnosis & path so far together just us away was the heart-warming I needed to spur me on through my battle - thank you all so much."


Jane x

From Karen

"Sadly, my beloved husband passed away this year after a long battle with cancer.

We were extremely blessed to have found Hope House.

This amazing resource helped Dessie and me cope with the daily struggle and challenges facing us on our journey of managing our daily life with a cancer diagnosis.

Hope house provided a sanctuary for us, we found peace and tranquillity in this very special place in Browns bay. 

From the minute we arrived in Hope House until returning home, life was stress free and allowed us time together to make more very important memories.

We will never be able to thank everyone enough at hope house for providing this very unique facility.

Everyone will have a very individual story when they visit this special place, it was always our sanctuary and gave us so much strength"

Thank you for the precious memories."

Karen

This year we said goodbye to two of our members, Trustee Mr Jonathan Ogilby and Secretary Mrs Debbie Lennon who served the charity so well over the last five years.

We are so grateful and thankful to them both and MIS Insurance Group for their business advice, guidance, and funding support that has helped us grow the charity.

We were delighted to welcome two new Trustees to our board, Mr Sam McCullough and Joan Crothers into the roles of Treasurer and Secretary respectively, as we seek to implement the new strategies needed for the development and growth of Hope House.

Our heartfelt thanks to Mr Colin Stewart of Guardian Chartered Accountants and Registered Auditors for their ongoing support during 2023.

Financial Review

In 2023 income was £104,715 (2022 £105,688). Funds were raised through community fundraising, events, and donations from groups and individuals. We are actively seeking additional funding streams to maintain and build on the services we provide. At the year end, the charity had funds of £226,911 (2022 - £172,896) and no debt.



Dawn McConnell BEM

Founder Trustee – Hope House

16/10/2024

Registered Charity No 100516