



Trustees Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31st March 2024

The Trustees present their Annual Report and Audited Financial Statements for the year ended 31st March 2024 and confirm that they comply with the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2013.

Reference and Administrative Information

Charity Name: Queens Park Women's Group

Charity Registration Number: NIC 100552

Principal Office: 339 Antrim Road
Glengormley
Newtownabbey
BT36 5DZ

List of Office Bearers

Thomasina McTaggart	- Chairperson
Carolyn Nelson	- Secretary
Marsha Galbraith	- Treasurer

Committee Members

Sharon Castle
Kathy Wolff
Tamsin McTaggart
Katie Nelson

Accounts verified by -

Eileen Weir

**Good Relation Co-Ordinator
Shankill Women's Centre
151-157 Shankill Road
BT13 1FD**

Tel: 028 90 240642

Bankers

AIB First Trust Bank,
92 Ann Street
Belfast
BT1 3HH

Queens Park Women's Group Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2024

Structure Governance and Management

Governing Document

Queens Park Women's Group is constituted as a Charity, registered with the Charity Commission (Northern Ireland) in 2010, under Charity number XT34333.

Organisational Structure

The Office Bearers and Committee Members are entrusted with the control and management of the Group. Our Trustees generously offer their time without any remuneration or financial benefits. They gather as a collective each month, taking responsibility for decisions regarding the administration of the Group and its activities.

Recruitment and Appointment of Office Bearers and Committee Members

Office bearers and committee members are essential to our organisation. They are nominated at the Annual General Meeting. We seek individuals who regularly attend our events and are genuinely interested in our community initiatives. Those interested in these roles should be ready to collaborate, contribute ideas, and actively support our projects. Their involvement can significantly shape our future and enhance our community impact.

Induction and Training of Office Bearers and Committee Member

Following appointment, new Office Bearers and Committee Members are introduced to their new role, given a copy of the Group's Constitution and a guide to the policies and procedures adopted by our Group and receive induction from Office Bearers.

Risk Management

The Office Bearers and Committee Members have evaluated the risks that the Charity faces in relation to reporting public benefit. Insurance policies are in effect to mitigate these risks. Finances are reviewed and monitored on a monthly basis. Additionally, thorough background checks are conducted for everyone who works with children or other vulnerable groups at the Group's premises.

Aims, Objectives and Activities

Our Aims

Queens Park Women's Group is committed to establishing a community organisation that reflects the needs and aspirations of the residents of the Queenspark Estate and the Greater Glengormley area. We aim to empower individuals by providing access to essential resources and opportunities, fostering a stronger and more connected community for all.

Our Objectives

Queens Park Women's Group will achieve our aim through:

1. Creating an infrastructure to consolidate and develop the organisation to its full potential by introducing programmes of social, economic and environmental benefit.
2. Providing a range of development and training opportunities to enhance the skills and employability of local people, particularly young people.
3. Providing a range of opportunities for local people to participate in programmes which promote peace building, generate community and civil respect, life skills, conflict resolution, confidence building and community leadership.
4. Developing programmes of activities that will address the issues which impact on local people and their families, as well as the wider community to encourage reconciliation, Integration and Inclusion.
5. Developing a range of programmes that will deal specifically with women's issues.

Strategies

We are deeply committed to creating an inclusive and welcoming environment for everyone in our local community. Our Group's premises are open to all members of the public and to community groups from various backgrounds. To ensure that everyone can access our services, the main office is easily reached by either stairs or a specially designed disabled lift catering to individuals with disabilities.

In our mission to support those in need, our Group has been recognised as a 'safe place' by Women's Aid. We provide a supportive environment for women and families experiencing challenges, and we have trained volunteers available to assist them. Additionally, we are registered with The Food Bank Scheme, allowing us to refer clients to receive essential food assistance and other resources.

Our premises are a vibrant hub, hosting a diverse range of community groups that reflect the different segments of our community. We offer various courses and workshops designed to meet the needs of participants of all ages and abilities, from young children to seniors. Importantly, we foster an atmosphere where no religious obligations or political views are imposed upon anyone engaging with our center.

Strategically located in the heart of Glengormley, our premises act as a central hub for community events and activities. We organise a range of workshops and family-oriented activities aimed at reinvigorating the town's spirit. These initiatives enhance individuals, promote a sense of belonging, and encourage active participation within the community. Creating such opportunities can strengthen community ties and foster a more cohesive environment.

Use of Volunteers

Volunteers play a vital role in our community work. They participate in nearly all of our community activities, generously giving their time without expectation of payment. We conduct appropriate checks for anyone who works with children or other vulnerable groups within our organisation.

Achievements and Performance

The lack of accessible community facilities has been a challenge but also an opportunity for positive change. This situation prompted volunteers to set up Queens Park Women's Group in 2010, a beacon of hope that has since been instrumental in steering young people towards peaceful activities and away from antisocial behaviour.

These actions led to the establishment of the 50/50 project, a shining example of how mutual understanding and respect can be fostered. The project, delivered on a

50/50 basis between young people from the Protestant and Catholic traditions, has been a testament to the power of unity in diversity.

Of the young people who participated in the 50/50 project, almost 95% went on to gain employment or engaged in further education opportunities. The success of the 50/50 project is a testament to what can be achieved with the proper support. However, much more must be done to build on our fledgling work.

The evidence of our programme delivery over the past 14 years demonstrates our ability to manage a broad range of projects. The Group has managed a number of funded and community engagement programmes from a range of organisations, including:

- South Antrim Community Network
- Department of Foreign Affairs
- Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council
- Community Foundation for NI
- Education Authority
- PCSP
- St Stephens Green Trust
- NI Housing Executive
- PSNI
- Impact NI
- Co-op NI
- Probation Board NI
- IRC

Our women's and young women's groups have all participated in a number of cross community/ cross border events. We have delivered a range of programmes including:

- OCN Law & Order
- OCN Conflict Management
- OCN Understanding Diversity in Society
- Graffiti Art Programme
- NEELB Cross Community Programmes
- OCN Them and Us
- Anti-Social Behaviour
- PSNI facilitated workshops
- Bonfires and Beacons
- Drug and Alcohol Awareness
- Sexual Awareness programmes

We have also delivered the following programmes specifically for young people:

- Young Men's Group
- Young Women's Group
- Diversionary Programmes
- Labour Mobility Programme
- Young Entrepreneurs

We have delivered a homework club for children aged 8 to 11 years and we run a drop-in for teenagers.

Queens Park Women's Group has delivered a number of programmes within our women's Group, including crafts classes, mental health, well-being, fitness, and nutrition. Our Women's Group held its final event as part of our cross-community programme funded by St Stephens Green in February 2024. Due to the Pandemic, this funded project has lasted longer than the intended 3 years. The Programme has been very well attended and very successful. Although the funding is over, the friendships made continue, and cross-community work is still ongoing.

Queens Park Women's Group has successfully delivered several programs within our women's Group, including craft classes, mental health workshops, well-being sessions, fitness activities, and nutrition education.

We have collaborated with local individuals of all ages, including those with little or no qualifications, early school leavers, individuals grappling with substance abuse, those from problematic family backgrounds, and people who have been or are close to the criminal justice system. We have also supported individuals suffering from poor health, including mental health issues, and those coming from communities with a negative outlook on their future.

Our Group has worked closely with the Probation Board for Northern Ireland, allowing several men and women to complete their community service hours at our center. This initiative helps keep them out of the criminal justice system. These service hours have been spent on various tasks within our center and the Queens Park Estate, such as handyman work and gardening.

Additionally, we maintain strong relationships with the local high schools, providing work experience opportunities to pupils from several schools each year.

Throughout the year, our Group has continued to organise various events, including coffee mornings at our center, fun days for children in the Queens Park Estate, and community clean-up events held in the Queens Park Estate and Glengormley Town Centre, in collaboration with the Community Relations Forum.

Partnership Working

In developing our community programmes we are pleased to work in partnership with the Community Relations Forum, Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough Council, NI Housing Executive, PSNI, Glengormley High School, Shankill Women's Centre, The Greater North Belfast Women's Network, St Stephens Green Trust and all our local community groups all of whom have provided invaluable advice and support.

Future Plans

It's urgent that we provide continuity, practical support, and leadership to progress the work we are currently delivering to young people and families from Queenspark and the Glengormley area. This is crucial to break the cycle of anti-social behaviour and sectarian violence which has blighted the area for the past 40 years. Our Group will continue to work with statutory agencies for the betterment of our community as a whole.

We also want to continue our plans for our women's Group, grow our numbers, and add more volunteers to our centre. We will continue to pursue all funding sources available to fund programmes and training for all local people, ensuring that our community's needs are met and our programs can continue to thrive.

To this end, we are actively pursuing all Statutory Agencies that can help provide a permanent structure for our premises in the Queenspark Estate. This stability will enable our Group to provide more hands-on practical support to Local people who need it now.

Financial Review

Principal Funding Source

Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council

EA

St Stephens Green Trust

Room Hire

Donations

Statement of Office Bearers and Committee Members Responsibilities

The Office Bearers and Committee Members are responsible for preparing an Annual Report and Financial Statements in accordance with applicable law and Northern Ireland Accounting Standards. This requires the Charity Office Bearers and Committee Members to prepare financial statements for each year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Charity and of incoming funding and application of all funding for that period.

The Office Bearers and Committee Members are responsible for keeping proper accounting records that disclose the financial position of the Charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act (NI 2013) and all accounting regulations. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Charity and taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The Office Bearers and Committee Members for the purposes of Charity law who served during the year and up to the date of this report are set out on page 2.

Approved by the Office Bearers and Committee members and signed on behalf of the Group by:

Thomasina McTaggart (Chairperson)

Carolyn Nelson (Secretary)

22rd January 2025

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22nd January 2025