

YOUTH INITIATIVES (NORTHERN IRELAND)

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

The trustees present their annual report and financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in note 1 to the financial statements and comply with the charity's Articles of Association, the Companies Act 2006 and "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019)".

Objectives and activities

The principal object of the charitable company is to, without discrimination on grounds of age, gender, disability, sexuality, nationality, ethnic origin and political or religious opinion, promote the physical, mental, spiritual and social welfare of young people in Northern Ireland through education, youth work, and volunteering, and to pursue other charitable purposes that the trustees shall decide.

Youth Initiatives NI is a cross community youth work charity which aims to awaken hope, inspire initiative, and mobilise youth to make a vital contribution to their community and to reconciliation in Northern Ireland, through the discovery and renewal of Christian faith in daily life.

The charitable company fulfils its objectives through projects jointly led by staff and young people aimed at the personal, social, physical, mental and spiritual development of young people.

The trustees have taken cognisance of the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland's guidance on public benefit as defined in the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008.

The trustees have paid due regard to guidance issued by the Charity Commission in deciding what activities the charity should undertake.

Achievements and performance

During the year ended 31 March 2023, Youth Initiatives (NI) ('YI'), continued, developed and expanded its work through the following projects:

NUTS (11-14'S): The YI West Belfast programme for 11 – 14's that has been made possible through funding from BBC Children in Need & The National Lottery Foundation. The NUTS programme, through a large team of youth volunteers provides weekly programmes in Poleglass with many young people attending outreach summer schemes in Poleglass and Twinbrook. Through these programmes it aims to help young people explore their personal, social and spiritual development through creative and interactive sessions while also providing both boys and girls after school programmes.

West Belfast 11-14s Girls Project (FLARE)- creates personal and social development where young women feel safe and comfortable to be themselves. Flare focuses on the self-development of the young women through using a range of different topics such as creativity nights, cultural exploration, exploring beliefs, self-care and exploration. This year we focused on the young women building relationships with each other and the differences that people experience in life. We also explored different cultures around the world to help to deepen the understanding of others.

Lifeline West Belfast: The National Lottery funded 15-18's programme in West Belfast creates a family-like environment where young people can journey together with each other and their youth Leaders, through personal and social development themes as well as engaging with community relations, citizenship, mentoring and skills learning. Through school work, detached street work and other forms of outreach, we engage with young people from the socially disadvantaged Colin Area to help them achieve their full potential. Our focus currently is on building mental, social and personal resilience in response to the pandemic and the alienation this has fostered among a generation of young people.

Through weekly centre based sessions, small groups, 1-1 meetings, day trips, residential and local outreach, we connect to over 100 young people a week and help them 'join the dots' between different aspects of their lives by providing a wide base of support.

YOUTH INITIATIVES (NORTHERN IRELAND)

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

Many of our West Belfast volunteers are young people who have journeyed up through Lifeline and are now giving back to their community by helping run the programmes and mentor other young people. They receive training, join in with team meetings and help to plan and deliver youthwork sessions.

In our West Belfast Young Men's 15-18's work: we run a weekly programme focused on building character, camaraderie, learning new skills, fostering a sense of adventure and tackling issues relevant to young men. With a backdrop of toxic masculinity, paramilitarism, third generation unemployment, poor mental health and a perceived lack of opportunities we walk with these young men to enable them to establish their own identity and make positive choices for their future.

West Belfast Girls Work Project (GLOW) - YI's West Belfast 15-18's girls outreach programme which aims to create positive relational environments where young women feel comfortable and safe. The Glow project focuses on the holistic development of the young women that participate and look at a range of topics over the year. This year we focused on developing good positive relationships between the young women we have looked at learning new skills, confidence building programmes, outdoor adventures and the creative arts.

Faith Development: YI's Faith Development project has continued engaging young people and helping them discover the hope found in Christ through programmes, mentoring, and one-off events. Sarah Nilles regionally coordinates our faith development work. At our all staff retreat in September the staff team received training in the YI Faith Development Model which outlines our faith based work. Regionally, we had termly meetings with all the faith based workers across all the YI areas to support one another and develop strategies to share faith with YI young people. In West Belfast, Daniel Byrne became a support worker alongside Christopher Donnan to oversee the faith development work.

YI delivered 50 personal, social and spiritual development classes at St Colm's High School, engaging with 420 students on a regular basis. The Well Prayer Youth Group, which runs weekly on a Sunday evening, has been a space for young people to explore and make personal faith choices. This autumn, the Well ran Depth Charge (Life in the Spirit Seminar) where 25+ young people engaged with questions about life and faith. The West Belfast Faith Development project is financially supported by the Ardbarron Trust, Koch Foundation, local parishes, St. Colm's High School and other donations.

Crosslinks: has continued to work in partnership with Diverse Youth. We welcomed Risa Basselin onto our staff team along with a number of new volunteers enabling young people from our East and West Belfast hubs to connect with young people from the wider BAME community and enjoy the richness that brings. Crosslinks brings over 70 young people together to engage in team building and good relations workshops exploring the theme 'Identity' through summer programs, arts workshops and a training residential OCN in Global Citizenship. Crosslinks' team of 15 youth peer mentors received leadership training and helped design and deliver the program. The culminated in live theatre performance that the young people wrote, composed, choreographed and designed - 'The Journey to the Red Door' where the audience follows the adventures of Rachel as she learns the 5 valuable lessons of respecting identity. This took place in Stranmillis Theatre to an audience of over 400 friends and family. Crosslinks was funded this year by Central Good Relations Fund, TEO, Belfast City Council & Dept of Foreign Affairs.

YI's East Belfast Hub has five staff team members, twelve 15-18-year-old volunteers, and two adult volunteers assisting with our Strand Road and Ballymac sites.

YI ran EA funded programmes at the Ballymac friendship centre on Mondays and Fridays and at our Strand Road Hub on Wednesdays and Thursdays.

Outreach/detached: Weekly street based outreach and four schools based sessions a week. Area leader is also involved with the East Belfast Youth Practitioners Forum, EA LAG Group, Churches East Belfast Network and Street Workers forum. This has helped us to expand our impact and signpost young people to other services when needed and receive referrals from partner organisations.

NUTS Project: 10-14 year olds- weekly outreach, Impact programme (weekly PSSD programme)

15 to 18s Single Gender Groups: GIRLS and BOYS single sex programme currently have 16 young people participating.

YOUTH INITIATIVES (NORTHERN IRELAND)

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

YI East Youth Volunteer Program: We recruited six new young volunteers with six more returning. Each volunteer completed volunteer training within our summer academy program and helped deliver our outreach summer schemes. 15 young people completed their Level 1 in Youth work through our partnership work with Youth Action. 15 Young people are currently taking part in a OCN Level 1 in Peer mentoring.

Link-d project: 15-18 year olds - weekly outreach, drop-in, personal, social and spiritual development programme, single sex programmes for young men's and young women, and a volunteer leadership team.

Mentoring: YI East staff are currently mentoring five young people.

Faith development: Continues to be central to all the work that we do weekly in East Belfast. We have taken young people to a number of faith based events, for example, Crown Jesus Ministries' One Way event.

The coordinating work of YI East Belfast's Area Leader in building a YI youth community hub is funded by the National Lottery Empowering Young People programme.

YI Banbridge has continued to see momentum build in the last year which we are very excited about! Partnership continues to be key for our work in Banbridge as we work alongside other organisations at "The Basement". Our partnership with YFC in delivering our core programmes together has become more established as both organisations have learnt better how to work alongside one another and discussed at times how our partnership requires compromise or clarity as we have become "better together"

Summer 2022

In summer 2022, we had 30 young people in total attend YI camp (July) and YFC camp (August). This was a great opportunity for our young people to hear about our respective organisations, spend time doing Good Relations workshops and grow in faith. We also ran a T:BUC Good Relations programme which included trips to Derry, to Craigavon Watersports, and joining with other YI areas at "Summer Olympics" in Antrim and then a social action project in which we made window boxes for a local nursing home. We ran one week of summer scheme for 40 young people. We also ran drop in's throughout the summer to keep young people connected.

September 22-June 23

From September 2022, we have ran the following programmes at the Basement:

- Primary Programme on Mondays from 3-4:15pm (P5-P7)
- Youth Alpha on Mondays from 4:30-5:30pm from Sept-Dec (Year 8+)
- Plugged In single gender groups on Mondays & Tuesdays (Year 8+)
- Wednesday Lunch-time detached at St Patrick's College (12-1:45pm)
- Wednesday Nite Project from 7-8pm (Year 8-Year 10) and 8:30-9:30pm (Year 10+)
- Friday Lunch-time drop in's at Newbridge Integrated College (12-2pm)
- Friday Drop in from 3:30-4:30pm (Year 8+)
- Friday Detached from 7-9pm

We have seen our numbers dramatically increase in the last year with approx. 60-70 young people attending our Wednesday Nite Project alone! We continue to recruit new volunteers to support us in our work alongside our Moorlands student Zac Carlisle.

The work of YI Banbridge is funded by the Ardbarron Trust, TBF Thompson, House of Vic Ryn and general donations – plus an EA generic local support grant.

YI Downpatrick Project: Our Youth Community Hub based in the centre of the town works alongside 10-14 year olds and 15-19 year olds through a variety of centre based, school based and street based provision. Included are drop-ins, content-based programmes, faith development events, single gender activities and one to one mentoring. This year we had a team of 3 paid staff and one local intern who took part in the Job Start Project. This past year, we have continued to grow in the number of young people engaging with 15-18s and our 10-14s programme. We have particularly seen growth and a sense of community in our Spark and Constructed single gender after school's programme.

YOUTH INITIATIVES (NORTHERN IRELAND)

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

YI has continued its partnership with Blackwater Integrated College providing drop ins and lunch time clubs. We began a new partnership with Down High School working 10 hours per week as the school's youth workers delivering personal social development classes, lunch time outreach, and mentoring sessions. Our work in Down High has led to a new Wednesday afternoon drop in programme for pupils we've engaged with in school to come to our centre. We began new work with De La Salle High School supporting pupils through weekly sessions each term. We also provided one off sacramental prep sessions for local primary schools. YI was generously funded by individuals and churches in the community. It is also funded by Tudor Trust, Newry, Mourne, & Down Council, Koch Foundation, and the Education Authority.

YI Derry/Londonderry: YI Derry has now been running for nine years. Our staff team saw a number of changes this year with John Robinson moving back to Belfast and Rachel McLaughlin moving on. The team now consists of Jonny, Aoife and most recently Caoimhe Mahoney. Artbridge continues to run a creative good relations project for 11-16, funded by Donors & TEO CGR. This year we continued our regular pattern of an art Exhibition of young people's work in 'The Playhouse'. In the summer of 2022 we ran our 3rd TBUC camp, heading to Ganaway in July with all other areas of YI, with the most we have ever taken to a YI camp from Derry. The exciting development of partnership with the Franciscan Friars continues, allowing us to have a base & space in the Galliagh estate at St Pio House particularly developing a 10-14's programme and drop-in sessions. This year we have seen encouraging growth of young people connecting to the safe places we provide.

We continue looking at how we develop young leaders for the future through our volunteering and young leadership programme, a number undertaking a level 1 qualification with the EA. This year our NUTS volunteer team won the Connect award at our annual YI volunteer awards dinner. We continue to build good relationships with a number of schools in the city, one of those allowed us to re-run the Re-Ignite programme with an entire new year 8 group over 6 weeks. Another school invited us in to run a 6 week programme with 10 young men around managing emotions & anger. We value the unique relationships we are building with the young people in the city of Derry and the privilege it is to be invited into their worlds and journey alongside them. It has been exciting to see encouraging growth despite the staff changes.

The work of YI Derry / Londonderry was funded by the Garfield Weston Foundation, the Ardbarron Trust, a TEO Central Good Relations grant and by generous YI donors.

YI Lisburn: During the past year we concluded our partnership with Damask Community Outreach after 7 successful years engaging with 100s of young people in the local community. As part of this we ran our 3rd and final year of the *BBC Children In Need funded 10-14s "GO" programme* which saw us exceed our target of working with 70 young people across 3 years, especially significant since the COVID pandemic happened right in the middle. BBC CIN were highly complimentary of our efforts throughout. As we transitioned away from working with Damask on the Seymour Street premises two of our team- Rebecca Wills and Rebecca Ringland took on posts with Damask Community Outreach and continue to provide the same youth services to support those young people and families in the Hilden community.

YI Lisburn has developed our relationship with the nearby Fort Hill Integrated College, with whom we have worked over the past 5 years. We have piloted a "Youth Workers in Schools" programme where staff spend a full day on the premises, providing ad-hoc support to students and teachers, as well as 1-1 and targeted intervention programmes with small groups of students. We also started running an after schools programme on the premises which has had a very positive response. This work has been primarily with junior school students (year 8-10), and we have also recruited several new 16 year olds to our Volunteer Leadership Programme. Next year we will extend this to additional students, as well as start to provide an enrichment programme for those in year 13 & 14. YI Lisburn has also started working in Lisnagarvey High School, providing 1-1 sessions with students in need of support staying in school. This will also be extending to provide additional targeted intervention sessions with small groups of students.

We have worked in partnership with Exodus and Lagan Valley Vineyard to provide additional short term projects in schools such as Alpha and the SOAR (Self Leadership) programmes to 14-16 year olds. Our **Summer Scheme** in 2022 was attended by over 40 young people across a 2 week period, and this summer we will be running our first Summer Scheme at a new venue.

The work of YI Lisburn was funded by the Garfield Weston Foundation, the Ardbarron Trust, BBC Children in Need, an EA generic provision grant and by a variety of YI donors.

YOUTH INITIATIVES (NORTHERN IRELAND)

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

The Volunteer/Leadership Development Programme: With Covid restrictions finally removed the YI Volunteer Programme returned to the normal pattern of summer recruitment for volunteers at summer schemes. With more than 150 volunteers signed up across NI they came together for training, fun and building relationship. Of the 150 that were involved in summer 120 took up the commitment to volunteer weekly throughout the year. In September they attended a training weekend in Ballintoy which focused on Creating a Culture - including Outreach youth work, creative youth work and creating positive relational environments. Throughout the year the volunteers continued to grow in their skill, ability and character in terms of volunteering and leadership. Serving alongside staff and supporting our weekly programmes on average each volunteer gives 4hrs per week. In January 2023 due to funding changes and cost increases for residencies we delivered a non-residential training programme across 2 days. The first of which was locally focused and based in each youth community hub. The second day Brought together the 6 youth community hubs for training focused across the 5 levels (Rookie, Apprentice, Pro, Master, Legend) and the afternoon focused on team building. With a Cross City Belfast challenge teams had to make it from the hub in West to the hub in East Belfast for dinner and then on to spend the evening at a Belfast Giants game.

The YI Volunteer Leadership Development Programme was funded by the Tudor Trust, the DFA Reconciliation Fund, the T:BUC camp programme and a variety of YI donors.

Together: Building a United Community Camps: Across the YI youth community hubs 7 different camps programmes took place running pre and post camps activities. For the residential aspect of the programme all camps came together and were hosted at YI at Ganaway, Millisle, with over 300 young people from across Northern Ireland present. The cross community Camps brought together young people aged 11-18 years old for a 5 day summer camp, community relations workshops and recreational activities, with pre and post camp activities across the youth community hubs. The T:BUC camps are funded through TEO and administered through the Education Authority.

YI Regional Strategic Work: Youth Initiatives NI is a recognised Education Authority funded Regional Volunteer Youth Organisation (RVYO) giving governance, quality assurance and youth work delivery support to smaller voluntary youth organisations. From 2021-23 we supported 10 member groups including our own 6 YI Hubs and expanded the network to 30 member organisations by March 2023.

Financial review

The charitable company receives its income mainly from grants and donations. The expenses of the charity were incurred in the running, staff and programme costs of the projects.

The results for the year are set out in detail on pages 15 to 31. The charitable company returned net deficit for the year of £115,492 (2022 net deficit – £12,439).

At 31 March 2023, the total funds of the charity amounted to £823,161 (2022 - £938,653) comprising restricted funds of £656,634 (2022 - £718,940) and unrestricted funds of £166,527 (2022 - £219,713). The Trustees expect to apply the reserves to continue and expand the work of the charitable company.

The charitable company works closely with organisations such as; DfC Belfast Regeneration Office, Garfield Weston Foundation, Paul Hamlyn Foundation and the Education Authority Regional Strategic Grant, who all supported the core costs of YI during the year.

Reserves Policy

The Board of Directors have decided that Youth Initiatives should hold financial reserves for the following reasons:

1. YI has no long term funding sources and is entirely dependant for income year on year on short term grants and donor funding, which is inevitably subject to fluctuation.
2. YI requires protection against, and the ability to continue operating despite, fluctuations in income or events threatening to the organisation.
3. YI requires the ability to continue to employ workers and continue youth work projects in between periods of grant funding.

YOUTH INITIATIVES (NORTHERN IRELAND)

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

The Trustees have decided that the level of the reserves should ideally be the equivalent of three to six months' personnel and overheads costs (£167,395 and £334,791 in 2022/23), calculated and reviewed annually, and have decided that reserves should be built up to the desired level in stages consistent with the charitable company's overall financial position and its need to maintain and develop its charitable activities. At 31 March 2023 the free reserves of the charity amounted to £143,571. The Trustees continue to give consideration to how this level of reserves can be increased.

The trustees have assessed the major risks to which the charity is exposed, and are satisfied that systems are in place to mitigate exposure to the major risks.

Going Concern

After making appropriate enquiries, the Trustees have a reasonable expectation that the charitable company has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. For this reason they continue to adopt the going concern basis in preparing the financial statements. Further details regarding the adoption of the going concern basis can be found in the accounting policies.

Plans for future periods

In the 2023-24 year we will take the particular focus of 'Through our Lens' – doing what we do through our distinctive YI approach. We will press into the heart of youth work and how we can continue to serve the many communities we work alongside. We will build upon raising up a new generation of leaders by developing a new Leadership bespoke curriculum and training program. We will implement year one of our new 5-year strategic plan – developed after significant review and planning by the YI management team and trustees. We are excited to continue building our Youth Community Hubs and supporting the many other voluntary organisations with our YI Network.

Structure, governance and management

The charity is a company limited by guarantee and was set up by a Memorandum of Association on 9 January 2014. It is registered with the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland under charity number NIC100849.

The principal object of the charitable company is to, without discrimination on grounds of age, gender, disability, sexuality, nationality, ethnic origin and political or religious opinion, promote the physical, mental, spiritual and social welfare of young people in Northern Ireland through education, youth work, and volunteering, and to pursue other charitable purposes that the Trustees shall decide.

The trustees, who are also the directors for the purpose of company law, and who served during the year and up to the date of signature of the financial statements were:

Mr F Dick

Mr K Humphrey

Mr R McFadden

Ms D McNally

Mr S McVitte

Mr P Morrison

Ms K Willis

(Resigned 16 May 2022)

YOUTH INITIATIVES (NORTHERN IRELAND)

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

Organisational Structure and Decision Making

The governance of the charitable company is the responsibility of the Trustees who are elected and co-opted under the terms of the Articles of Association, which state that a person willing to act as a Trustee may be appointed by ordinary resolution or by a decision of the Trustees. Trustees are briefed on their duties and issued with an induction pack prior to their appointment.

The directors have delegated the management of the work of the charitable company to a four-person Management Team. The Chief Executive Officer, Mr Tony Silcock, oversees the day to day running of the organisation. In 2020-2021 Youth Initiatives employed a staff of 35 plus 10 interns and over 120 youth volunteers.

Risk Management

The Trustees have responsibility for maintaining a sound system of internal control that supports the achievement of the policies, aims and objectives of the charity. The system of internal control is designed to manage rather than eliminate the risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives, it can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness. In this regard, the trustees have assessed the major risks to which the charity is exposed, in particular those related to the operational and financial aspects of the Company. The Trustees are satisfied that appropriate risk management systems and processes have been put in place and that these evaluate the nature and extent of those risks and ensure that they are managed efficiently, effectively and economically.

Statement of Trustees' responsibilities

The trustees, who are also the directors of Youth Initiatives (Northern Ireland) for the purpose of company law, are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company Law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that year.

In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Auditor

In accordance with the company's articles, a resolution proposing that GMcG BELFAST be reappointed as auditor of the company will be put at a General Meeting.

Small companies exemption

In preparing this report, the directors have taken advantage of the small companies exemptions provided by section 415A of the Companies Act 2006.

YOUTH INITIATIVES (NORTHERN IRELAND)


TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

Disclosure of information to auditor

Each of the trustees has confirmed that there is no information of which they are aware which is relevant to the audit, but of which the auditor is unaware. They have further confirmed that they have taken appropriate steps to identify such relevant information and to establish that the auditor is aware of such information.

The Trustees' report was approved by the Board of Trustees.


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Mr R McFadden
Trustee

Date: 4/8/23
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