

YOUTH INITIATIVES (NORTHERN IRELAND)

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

The trustees present their annual report and financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024.

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 fulfills 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 2024, Youth Initiatives (NI) ('YI'), continued, developed and expanded its work through the following projects:

YI East Belfast

YI East Belfast Hub plays a crucial role in supporting and empowering young people in the community. With a dedicated team of six staff members, the Hub is supported by a vibrant group of seventeen youth volunteers aged 15-18 and three adult volunteers. These individuals are integral to the operation of two key sites: Strand Road and Ballymac.

EA Funded Programmes: The Hub continues to deliver valuable programs funded by the Education Authority (EA) at two locations. At the Ballymac Friendship Centre, sessions are held twice a week on Mondays and Fridays. These sessions provide a safe and welcoming space for young people to engage in various activities, receive support, and develop new skills. Similarly, at the Strand Road Hub, programs are offered on Wednesdays and Thursdays, focusing on personal, social, and educational development. These programs are designed to meet the diverse needs of the youth, offering structured activities that promote growth, learning, and community engagement.

Outreach and Detached Youth Work: Outreach is a cornerstone of YI East Belfast's work, aiming to connect with young people where they are—on the streets and in schools. The team conducts weekly street-based outreach, establishing a presence in the community and building relationships with young people in their own environments. This approach is complemented by four school-based group sessions each week, where the team engages students through group work focused on various issues relevant to their lives. Additionally, four mentoring sessions are conducted within schools each week, providing one-on-one support to students who may need extra guidance.

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

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

The Area Leader plays a pivotal role in connecting YI East Belfast with broader networks, ensuring the Hub is deeply embedded in the local youth work ecosystem. Active involvement in the East Belfast Youth Practitioners Forum, EA Local Advisory Group (LAG) which the area leader now chairs, Churches East Belfast Network, and Street Workers Forum is essential for expanding the Hub's impact. These partnerships enable the Hub to signpost young people to other services when needed and receive referrals from partner organisations. Notably, the Hub has participated in joint street work initiatives with the EA detached team over the past year. These collaborations have been particularly important during times of tension within East Belfast, where the team's presence on the streets has helped defuse situations and provide support. A highlight of this work was the coordinated street work session on July 1st, where YI East Belfast partnered with six other community/youth organisations to ensure young people had the assistance they needed during a potentially volatile time.

NUTS project

Focus on Early Adolescents: The NUTS Project focuses on younger adolescents, aged 10-14, with the aim of providing early intervention through weekly outreach activities. This project is designed to engage these young people in a positive manner, helping them develop essential life skills and fostering a sense of belonging. The weekly programme, focuses on Personal, Social, and Spiritual Development (PSSD), and is a core component of the NUTS Project. Through these sessions, participants are encouraged to explore their personal values, build resilience, and develop a strong moral foundation.

Single-Gender Groups (15-18 year olds)

Addressing Unique Challenges: Recognising the unique needs and challenges faced by young men and women, YI East Belfast has developed single-gender groups for 15-18-year-olds. Currently, there are 24 young people participating in these programs, which are tailored to address the specific issues relevant to each gender. The boys' and girls' programs provide a safe space where participants can discuss sensitive topics, build supportive peer networks, and develop skills that are particularly pertinent to their experiences. These groups also focus on leadership development, encouraging participants to take on roles that empower them to positively influence their peers and communities.

Volunteer Program

Youth Volunteer Program: Volunteering is at the heart of YI East Belfast's approach, with a robust Youth Volunteer Program that nurtures young leaders. Recently, the Hub successfully recruited five new young volunteers, while twelve previous volunteers returned to continue their service. Each volunteer participated in the Summer Academy program, where they received comprehensive training that prepared them to contribute effectively to the Hub's outreach and summer schemes. This training covers essential aspects of youth work, including communication skills, safeguarding, and leadership development. The dedication of these young volunteers is evident, as four of them are currently completing their OCN Level 2 in Youth Work—a recognized qualification that will enhance their ability to make a meaningful impact in their roles. Furthermore, three of these volunteers have demonstrated such a strong commitment to their work that they have applied for YI internships, indicating their desire to continue growing within the organisation.

Link-d Project (15-18 year olds)

Holistic Youth Development: The Link-d Project is another key initiative targeting 15-18-year-olds, providing a holistic approach to youth development. The project includes weekly outreach and drop-in sessions where young people can access support, build relationships, and engage in meaningful activities. The personal, social, and spiritual development (PSSD) program is a central feature, helping participants to grow in all aspects of their lives. The project also includes single-sex groups, similar to those mentioned earlier, as well as a volunteer leadership team that offers young people the opportunity to take on leadership roles within the project. This structure not only supports the personal growth of participants but also strengthens the overall impact of the project by empowering young people to lead and inspire their peers.

YOUTH INITIATIVES (NORTHERN IRELAND)

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

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Summer Schemes and Special Projects

Two Weeks of Summer Schemes: This year, YI East Belfast successfully ran two weeks of summer schemes, each tailored to different age groups. The first week was dedicated to the 10-14 age group, providing a range of activities that encouraged creativity, teamwork, and personal development. The second week focused on the 15-18 age group, offering more advanced activities that challenged the participants and helped them further develop their skills and confidence.

Collaboration with Grace Foundation: During the summer, the Hub also had the privilege of hosting a group of 30 young people from the Grace Foundation in Northamptonshire. This collaboration was a remarkable opportunity for cross-cultural exchange and community service. Together with 20 of our own young people, the group from England participated in various community-focused projects across East Belfast.

Creating a Mural at Glentoran Football Stadium: One of the highlights of this collaboration was the creation of a YI mural in the grounds of Glentoran Football Stadium. Both the 10-14 and 15-18-year-olds were actively involved in this project, which not only beautified the area but also served as a lasting symbol of their teamwork and creativity.

Community Service Activities: In addition to the mural painting, the young people engaged in a variety of other community service activities. They participated in litter picking to help keep the local area clean, distributed "packs of kindness" to spread positivity and support within the community, and took part in gardening and painting projects to enhance public spaces. These activities were not only valuable for the community but also provided the young people with a sense of accomplishment and pride in their contributions.

Mentoring

Mentoring Outside of School Settings: In addition to the structured programs, YI East Belfast staff provided mentoring to eight young people outside of regular program hours and school settings. This mentoring is crucial for those who may need extra support due to personal circumstances or challenges. The mentoring process is highly individualised, allowing staff to build strong, trusting relationships with these young people. Through regular meetings, the mentors helped the young people set and achieve personal goals, navigate challenges, and make positive choices in their lives.

Faith Development

Central Role of Faith in YI East Belfast's Work: Faith development remains at the core of YI East Belfast's mission. All the work carried out at the Hub is underpinned by a commitment to nurturing the spiritual lives of the young people it serves. This is reflected in the variety of faith-based activities that are integrated into the weekly programs. For instance, YI East Belfast took a group of 27 young people to the YI Regional Summer Camp, an event designed to deepen their faith and provide a supportive environment for spiritual growth. Additionally, the Hub regularly organises and participates in various faith events that encourage young people to explore their beliefs, build a strong moral foundation, and connect with a community of peers who share their values.

Leadership and Funding

Area Leader's Role and Focus on Mental Health: The coordination of YI East Belfast's activities is spearheaded by the Area Leader, who plays a vital role in building and sustaining a vibrant youth community hub. This leadership position is crucial for ensuring that all the programs are aligned with the Hub's mission and are delivered effectively.

National Lottery Empowering Young People Programme: The Area Leader's work is supported by funding from the National Lottery Empowering Young People programme, which enables the Hub to continue its essential work in East Belfast. The focus of this Big Lottery-funded work is led by the "Take Five" mental health initiative, a critical component of YI East Belfast's broader mission to support the well-being of young people. This initiative, which operates outside of the EA-funded time slots, is designed to promote mental health awareness, encourage positive mental health practices, and provide young people with the tools they need to manage stress and build resilience. The Take Five initiative is based on five key principles: Connect, Be Active, Take Notice, Keep Learning, and Give. These principles are integrated into the Hub's programs, offering young people practical ways to enhance their mental health and well-being. This funding is not only a testament to the importance of the Hub's work but also provides the resources needed to expand its reach and impact even further.

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FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

YI Downpatrick

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. Our work with our single gender programmes (Spark and Constructed) has led to an increase of 15-20 more young people coming to our 15-18s programme Ignite. Through Peace Plus, Strive has begun again in our HUB giving us an opportunity to reach out to new young people as we recruit for the Strive Project.

Youth Initiatives has continued its 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 Wednesday afternoon drop-in programme for pupils we've engaged with in school to come to our centre. Doors have continued to open for us to do work in De La Salle and St. Patrick's Grammar school which we hope to continue next year as the schools amalgamate with St. Mary's creating Lecale Trinity Grammar School. We also provided one of 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, the Education Authority, and recently Peace Plus.

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 on implement YI Faith Development Model which outlines our faith-based work and our ecumenical work. We began a 3 year "Missing Youth Project" funded by the Benefact Grant. Year 1 of the project focused on why young people aren't engaged in faith and church putting together a report to build upon for year two and three. Regionally, we had termly meetings with the faith champions across our six YI areas to support one another and develop strategies to share faith with YI young people while delivering on the Benefact Grant. This past year YI also ran 4-day summer camp in July 2024 where 250+ young people heard the Gospel Message of God's love through main stage, testimonies, small groups, night prayers, and prayer times.

In West Belfast, 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. The West Belfast Faith Development project is financially supported by the Ardbarron Trust, Koch Foundation, Benefact Grant, local parishes, St. Colm's High School and other donations.

YI Derry/Londonderry

YI Derry has now been running for over 10 years. The team now consists of Jonny, Aoife and Caoimhe Mahony. 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 2023, we ran our 4th TBUC camp alongside Planned Intervention. Our partnership with the Franciscan Friars continues, allowing us to have a base & space in the Galliagh estate at St Pio House developing different programs for 10-18's. This year we have seen encouraging growth of our young leaders & volunteers and continue to provide safe spaces for those more on the periphery.

We continue looking at how we develop young leaders for the future through our volunteering and young leadership programme. We continue to build good relationships with a number of schools in the city. 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 deeper relationships form and to see what being a consistent presence in the lives of young people can achieve.

The work of YI Derry / Londonderry was funded by Peace Plus, TEO Central Good Relations grant and by generous YI donors.

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FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

YI Lisburn

YI Lisburn continued to work in the Lisburn North area over the past year, primarily out of the "Exodus" and Bridge community centres. We have provided programmes for 11-14s, including a Young Men's Group and Young Women's Group for those in that age bracket.

YI Lisburn has continued to develop our relationship with the nearby Fort Hill Integrated College, with whom we have worked over the past 6 years. We have developed our "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 began to engage with the Year 13 students as part of their Enrichment programme, running school-based sessions focused on Personal & Social Development & Good Relations.

We were successful in our bid for Peace Plus funding and will now be running the Empower2Transform (E2T) programme in Lisburn over the next 4 years. This will allow young people aged 15-18 to engage in a programme that focuses on key themes such as Personal & Social Development, Good Relations, Citizenship and Employability. We have already started to recruit for this through the work we have been doing with the Year 13 group at Fort Hill.

YI Lisburn has continued working in Lisnagarvey High School, providing 1-1 sessions with students in need of support staying in school.

We have continued to work 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 2023 was attended by over 20 young people across a 5 day period at the school, and this summer we will again be running our Summer Schemes there.

The work of YI Lisburn was funded by Peace Plus, the Garfield Weston Foundation, the Ardbarron Trust, the Police & Community Safety Partnership, TBUC, the EA Small Grants Programme, EA generic provision grant and by a variety of YI donors.

YI Banbridge

This has been a year of change in YI Banbridge with the departure of our Area Leader and staff transitions within the wider partnership (for YFC). And yet alongside all of this, it has been another great year for establishing and growing connections with young people in centre based, schools and street-based youth work. YI Banbridge has been in existence since 2009 and is a well-established presence in the town.

In February 2024, we recruited an additional full time youth worker as part of the anticipated Peace Plus programme although funding was still being processed.

We continue to use the Basement at J29 as our youth work hub for junior and senior drop in and have maintained our school's delivery in Newbridge Integrated and St Patricks.

In summer 2023, we ran a TBUC Good Relations programme for juniors (aged 10-14) and a Planned Intervention programme for seniors (aged 15-18). We also ran a Summer Academy for volunteers who then served on our summer scheme in August.

From September 2023 to March 2024, we have delivered the following programmes at the Basement:

- Completion of TBUC and Planned Intervention in September/October.
- Single gender groups on Mondays & Tuesdays (Year 8+).
- Wednesday Lunch-time detached at St Patrick's College (12-1:45pm).
- Wednesday Night 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 Detached from 7-9pm.

There are still large numbers of young people connected with approx. 60-70 young people attending our Wednesday Night Project alone! We continue to recruit new volunteers to support us in our work and currently have a volunteer team of 7 or 8. Planning began in terms of Peace Plus programme delivery, and it is encouraging that this funding will be in place until 2027.

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FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Crosslinks

Crosslinks has continued to work in partnership with Diverse Youth. We welcomed two new staff members as part of this partnership, 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 60 young people together to engage in team building and good relations workshops exploring the theme 'New Voice' through summer programs, arts workshops and a training residential. Crosslinks' team of 15 youth peer mentors received leadership training and helped design and deliver the program. This culminated in a live theatre performance that the young people wrote, composed, choreographed and designed - 'Spray n Tell' which explores the negative stereotypes young people face and challenges the audience to have a more positive outlook on young people and their contribution to society. 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, and CRCNI.

YI Belfast

Nuts 11-14's

The YI West Belfast programme for 11 - 14's 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 on Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday in Poleglass where young people can explore their creativity, identity and spirituality. We also offer themed game nights for young people to build relationships with each other and have fun. Lastly, given the current circumstances in regards to the cost of living crisis we have begun operating a family dinner night where young people can come up and receive a hot meal to enjoy with friends around our family dinner table.

Flare - Girl's project

West Belfast 11-14's girls' project creates a safe space for young women to come into on a weekly basis and explore themes that relate to being a young woman. This year Flare focused on the things that young women should be standing up for in our communities. This year the programme has also taken time to build relationships with young women across the whole of YI through the young women getting to know girls from other areas.

Wired – Boys project

West Belfast 11-14's boys' project creates a safe space for young men to come into on a weekly basis and explore themes that relate to being a young man. This year Wired focused on themes relating to young men such as money management, masculinity and addiction. The programme has also explored different themed nights that the young people can relate to such as a dungeons and dragons quest night where young men had to work together to problem solve and make their way through a storyline.

Lifeline 15-18's

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 as a response to the pandemic and the alienation this has fostered among a generation of young people. We want to create a family-like environment that then flows into their day to day lives.

Through weekly centre-based sessions, small groups, 1-1 meetings, day trips, residential and local outreach, we help young people to step out of their comfort zones, try new things and to 'join the dots' between different aspects of their lives by providing a wide base of support.

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 youth work sessions.

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Young Men's work

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.

Young Women's GLOW project

West Belfast 15-18's girls outreach programme 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 particularly focused on building up the self-esteem of the young women in the programme through a small grant funded project that allowed the girls to try things they have never done before, boulder, axe throwing or going to the farm. The focus was on developing good positive relationships between the young women through learning new skills, confidence building programmes, outdoor adventures and the creative arts.

Regional

Volunteering

The Volunteer/Leadership Development Programme: With Covid restrictions finally removed the YI Volunteer Programme continued on the annual pattern of summer recruitment for volunteers at summer schemes. With more than 130 volunteers signed up across NI they came together for training, fun and building relationships. Of the 130 that were involved in summer 100 took up the commitment to volunteer weekly throughout the year. September 2023, due to limited funding volunteers gathered locally to look at good relations and cultural sensitivity training, working with others, what does it mean to be a volunteer and how to create welcoming environments. In January 2024 they attended a training weekend in Mullartown House, Annalong which focused on Stories - depicting my story, hearing other stories and the power of stories in youth work. 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 4 hrs per week.

The YI Volunteer Leadership Development Programme was funded by the Community Relations Council and the T:BUC camp programme and a variety of YI donors.

T:BUC

Together: Building a United Community Camps: Across the YI youth community hubs 9 different camp 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.

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FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

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 17 to 32. The charitable company returned net deficit for the year of £17,410 (2023 – £115,492).

At 31 March 2024, the total funds of the charity amounted to £805,751 (2023 - £823,161) comprising restricted funds of £671,275 (2023 - £656,634) and unrestricted funds of £134,476 (2023 - £166,527). 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, 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.

The Trustees have decided that the level of the reserves should ideally be the equivalent of three to six months' personnel and overheads costs (£197,510 to £395,020 in 2023/24), 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 2024 the free reserves of the charity amounted to £123,286. 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 2024-25 we want to reimagine the way we approach every challenge and every opportunity. We call our staff, interns and volunteers to be innovators, catalysts for change who transform lives and communities. We want to cultivate a spirit of possibility where every young person can see a future full of promise and potential shaped by their own hands. Our theme for this upcoming year is 'Called to Innovate'.

In addition to this theme, we plan to implement the second year of our strategic plan, with a focus on further investing in our staff, interns, and volunteers. We will also review our youth community hubs to explore strategies to better resource and equip these spaces.

We plan to review the purpose of our meetings and explore ways to improve communication and information sharing across the organisation. This will allow our team to dedicate more time to vision-building and creating space for innovation.

YOUTH INITIATIVES (NORTHERN IRELAND)

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FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

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	(Resigned 19 June 2024)
Mr K Humphrey	
Mr R McFadden	
Ms D McNally	
Mr S McVitte	

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 2023-2024 Youth Initiatives employed a staff of 34 plus 1 intern 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.

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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.

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.


Mr R. McFadden
Trustee

Date: 30/9/24