

The following is the Trustees' Report for The Edge for the financial year April 2023 – March 2024. The Edge is registered with the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland, number NIC100853. Address is PO Box 18, Windmill Street, Ballynahinch, Co Down BT24 8YT. It is a voluntary organisation governed by a voluntary Board of Trustees.

The vision of The Edge is to:

“...Empower young people and the wider community to achieve their full potential spiritually, mentally, socially and physically”.

Over the year we have continued to go into the local primary schools to deliver provision { Listening Space } with the P6 – P7 classes. The project continues to be a support to the teachers and Principals as we strive to help kids through challenging moments in their lives. We have also started going back into the 2 local high schools during their lunch breaks. This stopped over Covid and then staffing prevented us from restarting the support. During the lunch breaks we walk around the schools delivering detached youth work and building relationships with the students.

The centre-based youth work continues to be important as we run 2 drop-in sessions for juniors aged 10-13, then another 1 drop-in session for seniors aged 14-18. Alongside that we deliver sessions for girls and guys groups looking at topics that are relevant to their needs at the time, such as, anxiety, stress due to exams or relationships and not feeling that they can cope. During the summer months delivered detached outreach, walking around the town and chatting with groups of young people. We received positive feedback from the community as they continued to see us about. This is something we plan to run again with the clocks change.

During the summer months we delivered activity weeks for both our juniors and seniors and a mission week that was made up of a team of 44 volunteers that ran a week to engage with over 140 kids and young people. This continues to be an important part of the youth provision delivered by The Edge.

The women's group continued to grow this year, and we have been able to recruit 2 ladies from the group to step into a leadership role, and they are thriving. The issues remain to be the same for the ladies as they face loneliness and isolation, and they find The Edge a safe space to meet others for support and company. This project continues to be a positive aspect of The Edges community work in Ballynahinch.

One of the challenges over the year for the centre-based programmes has been retaining volunteers, and this has meant at times, some sessions being cancelled due to safeguarding ratios.

A key highlight of the year was the successful recruitment and onboarding of a new Youth Worker to support the Centre Manager in delivering youth programmes, particularly to girls. Across the voluntary sector and all sectors, recruitment is difficult and took us a long time, however the position was filled in September this year. We have been able to re-ignite the girls work in particular, keep our women's group operating successfully and have more valuable support for our centre manager in the daily operations of The Edge.

Both income and expenditure in the year ended 31st March 2024 were very similar to the comparative figures in the year ended 31st March 2023 and despite the reduction in grant income from previous years each of those two years ended in a small surplus. That was in part due to the faithful generosity of local people and churches and also because we only had one full time youth worker for six months of each year, with the consequent savings in salary costs. However, we are mindful of the need to obtain increased income moving forward to now cover the salaries of two full time youth workers.

A final and significant point of note is that we were gifted a property during the year which has been included in our Accounts at a professional valuation of £150,000 and we are excited about the potential that building provides. The building was previously owned by the Christian Workers' Union in Ballynahinch and its members wanted The Edge of have the building following their decision to conclude their activities in the town. We are very grateful for this gift, and are investigating potential uses and future plans.

Charity trustees in March 2024 were as follows:

Trustees:

- Mrs Erin Nixon
- Mrs Wanda Rodgers
- Mr Terry Hilland
- Mrs Helen Clarke
- Mr Joshua Martin
- Mr Dave Brown
- Mr Peter Crory
- Mr Ken Foster
- Mr Philip Roy



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Erin Nixon, Chairperson

17 March 2024

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Agreed by trustees on