

## **TRUSTEE REPORT FOR FINANCIAL YEAR 1<sup>ST</sup> April 2024 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025**

Causeway Down's Syndrome Support Group

Registered Address is 178c Loughan Road, Fish Loughan, Coleraine, BT52 1UD

NIC No 101226

Trustees are: Mrs Mary Hunter, Mrs Jill Gurney, Mrs Karen Allen, Mrs Gwen Doak, Mrs Sally Martin, Mrs Deirdre Logan, Mrs Ame Arnscheidt and Mrs Connie Kearney.

Our meetings are held every two months at the Elite Connected Offices, 17 Queen Street, Ballymoney, Co Antrim, on the second Tuesday of every other month excluding July and August. We, the trustees have had regard to the charity commissions public benefit for this financial year.

Our focus for this financial year was to try and secure additional external funding for essential services. We secured three grants from the National Lottery (£20,000), DEARA (£1700) and Kerry Foods (£500). We continue to ask families availing of specific services such as weekly speech and all-stars to contribute 25% of the cost to ensure buy in and consistent attendance.

It is important to mention that we received a substantial monetary gift in lieu of flowers following the death of Mr Ryan Gurney to the value of £1200. We are incredibly grateful to Ryans family and friends who supported our local charity.

Work continued at the 'Garden of Eatin' our allotment in Dervock. This allotment continues to be a fantastic hub which is open to all our families and provides a space to enjoy the outdoors, learn new skills and grow some tasty fruit and veg. Events were planned through the year including a very successful hanging basket sale in May 2024. The DEARA grant secured by the Moore family will provide toilet facilities on site. Unfortunately, the storm in the Spring caused significant damage to the polytunnels so new plans are in place to be back bigger and better. The Moore family also facilitated a pumpkin seed planting session in May and a summer BBQ in August and a fantastic Halloween event too.

During the summer we ran four balance-ability sessions across Coleraine and Ballymena to support our young children to learn to ride their bike. This was a fantastic first attempt at this type of specialist service and helped to teach parents the skills to help their children achieve this milestone.

A huge thanks goes to Philip Tweedie & Company Estate Agent Coleraine who donated £9188 over the year. We are very grateful to Philip and his team for making Causeway Downs Syndrome Support Group their nominated charity partner for this financial year.

The social highlight of the year was the Christmas Party held on the first Sunday in December in the Royal Court in Portrush. A wonderful celebration of what makes our group unique and special.

**Fundraising Activities:**

- World Downs Syndrome Day was supported by three local primary schools – Damhead PS, Straidbilly PS and St Patricks Rasharkin who raised £200, £116 and £215 consecutively with odd socks days!
- Cara Gurney donated £20 to the group with sales of her paintings.
- The Honk Tonk Angels had a sponsored sea dip in March raising several hundred pounds.
- Nevin Family Farm donated £780 from the sale of some animals.

This income has allowed us to continue to preserve, protect and improve the health, education and wellbeing of individuals with Downs Syndrome in the Causeway Area, by way of music therapy sessions, speech and language sessions, multi skills classes (physical exercise and games) as well as supporting each other through the highs and lows of schooling, toileting, health promotion or the ability to signpost to existing services.

We are governed by our constitution dated 11<sup>th</sup> March 2008 – no amendments have been made during this period. Our financial position is as follows with a balance of £32388.70 in our current account and a further £7535 in our savings account.

Signed: Frances-Ann Archibald. Treasurer 03/01/2026