

# THE JUNCTION: COMMUNITY RELATIONS AND PEACE BUILDING

COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT (INCORPORATING THE DIRECTOR'S REPORT)

(continued)

YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

## Objectives and activities

The Junction was founded in March 2000 by a group of community relations and peace building activists in partnership with Derry City Council, to support community relations and peace building. The organisation was named as *The Junction* because of its ambition to be a comprehensive service provider for peace building work. Formerly a Peace Building Centre with a Resource Library, The Junction created a safe and mutually respecting space for groups and organisations to come to discuss highly sensitive and contentious issues. The Junction continues to build upon its sound foundational work and a track record in peace building, with an outreach across Ireland, North and South and further afield.

## Our Strategic Aims

- The Junction has five core strategic aims, which are informed by an integrative peace-building model.
1. To provide accessible and inclusive community relations education and training with high quality resources and training materials for wide dissemination.
  2. To promote and support civic engagement and dialogue around the themes of peace building through local, national and international outreach.
  3. To share critical analysis pertaining to community relations and peace building with policy and decision makers.
  4. To develop and deliver community relations and peace building 'products' that generate unrestricted income.
  5. To build a strong, relevant, and sustainable organisation.

## Achievements and Performance

The financial year 2022-2023 has been a year of transition for The Junction, as its two core and long-standing staff members Maureen Hetherington and Richie Hetherington retired. The Junction have a new core staff team, appointing Kerona McDowell as Financial Administrator (November 2022) and Ruth Gonsalves Moore (Feb 2023) as CEO. The new team has undertaken a settling-in period, bringing all reporting up to date and are actively leading out on delivery and forward planning. The Junction continues to contract and engage a number of Associate Consultants and Affiliate Facilitators in our planned programme delivery, through our core work and additional contractual tender opportunities. Craig Barr and Helen Henderson both supported the work of The Junction as CEO/Acting CEO for interim periods through the year.

A cornerstone of The Junction's work is building the knowledge and skills base of key stakeholders in civic society through the development and delivery of a wide range of training programmes, workshops, and seminars. The Junction continued to work hard to respond to the good relations and peace-building needs of the community and across the community and public sector through 2022/2023. Through the year we outreached to community groups across Northern Ireland, engaging 403 individuals in peace building education and learning supported by core and project funding from DFA (Reconciliation Fund, Strategic Partners Funding), TEO and Core Funding from CRC and Derry City and Strabane District Council core funding. Our engagement also includes delivery undertaken in partnership with the Rural Community Network and Fermanagh Omagh District Council's District Council Good Relations programmed.

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Achievements and performance (continued)

Informed by our inclusive and ethical storytelling approaches, and with awareness of the far-reaching impact of person-centred peer approaches, The Junction commenced a dedicated peer enquiry project, supported by The Ideas Fund, around mental well-being support needs in a post conflict society. The Junction contributes to support the policy informed public arena and through a tendered opportunity undertook the Causeway Coast and Glens Good Relations Strategy 2023-2026. The Junction continues to engage associate consultants, trainers and educators, and as a result there continues to be an ongoing demand for our highly informative, Community Education/Learning programmes, and in particular learning around 'partition', and 'imperialism' and 'Patriarchy' as intersecting themes underlying contemporary peace needs. It remains important to The Junction that every individual who engages with The Junction is valued, whether embarking on a personal journey of self-discovery and learning, delivering, or receiving training, or indeed wishing to challenge us in any aspect of our work.

## Community Relations and Training

The Junction continues to deliver focused, uniquely themed educational programmes, informed by critical literacy principles and the evolving needs for sustainable and integrative peace building. Having previously engaged Johnston McMaster to research and write two new publications as a part of our Ethical and Shared Remembrance projects: i) *Partition: What Did It Do For Us* in response to our centenary year addressing the difficult and sensitive subject matter to partition, and ii) *Living With Imperial Legacies: Empires, Racism, Slavery and Colonialism addressing an emerging global yet local theme*. The Junction continued to deliver both partition-themed dialogue-based learning programmes e.g. *What Happened After Partition* in Enniskillen and Omagh, and a series of *Living with Imperial Legacies* learning and dialogue programmes across Northern Ireland, including in Castlederg, Glengormley, Derry Londonderry and Mid Ulster.

The Junction expanded its catalogue of Resources with the publications of three new peace-building Resources and texts; namely, *Is there a Common Good* by Cathy Higgins, *Recovering the Social Foundations of the Common Good* by Johnston McMaster and the Script of *Beyond Belief* by Damian Gorman as a new tool and resource for writers engaging with words and language in the writing about peace and these publications have been disseminated widely to participants within learning programmes.

As in previous years, The Junction has maintained linkages internationally, informing research undertaken by Pacific Lutheran University.

## Civic engagement/dialogue/positive encounter work around Peace-building

Informed by principles core to The Junction's programmes such as Ethical and Shared Remembrance and understanding the value of 'storytelling' we have recognized the applicability of this work within an integrative peace model, recognizing the short, medium and longer impacts of mental well-being for individuals and communities emerging from conflict. On this basis, The Junction utilised its networks and partnership linkages, and engaging the University of Ulster spearheaded and commenced a new programme *Changing The Story I tell Myself*. The programme commenced with a series of residencies, and thematic workshops leading on to the design of formal research and the design of a new community resource. The project engages a core cohort of 14 individuals and professionals prioritising mental well-being and will lead to the publication and launch a new community resource or Toolkit towards the end of 2023.

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#### Policy Development for Peace

Building on previous policy development work The Junction submitted and were awarded a contract to undertake the Good Relations Strategy 2023-2026, supporting the Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council in fulfilling their statutory remit. This programme of work involved consultation, review of the policy context, leading to analysis and setting out recommendations for existing and new projects addressing good relations across the CCGBC District.

#### Financial review

The net incoming resources for the year were £170. The company reserves at the year end were £112,504 (2022 - £112,334) of which £66,847 relates to unrestricted funds and £45,657 relates to restricted funds. The trustees aim to have a reserve covering at least three months expenditure at any given time.

#### Plans for future periods

The Junction is in its twenty-second year and its work in particular our Ethical and Shared Remembrance programme is widely regarded as making a significant impact on shaping peace work in Northern Ireland and the border counties. The Junction is continuously grateful to be able to engage are grateful for Johnston McMaster and Cathy Higgins as Senior Research Writers and Educators with The Junction. Recent publications addressing pertinent themes will continue to be central to The Junction's work next year and in the incoming years, as well seek to broaden and deepen our engagement, developing the curriculum and the methodologies through which we engage individuals and groups, alongside developing our associate and affiliate facilitator team enabling a widening and deepening of our networks. The Junction continues to be cognisant of evolving needs in Northern Ireland and the intersecting issues of sectarianism sexism and racism, as well as intersecting equality and human rights issues. We will continue our focus on Ethical and Shared Remembrance as we seek ways to remember the Troubles, equipping and support civic society to build inclusive and sustainable peace for future generations.

The Junction is looking forward to working through existing and new partnerships at local and regional levels, in the development of tailored learning programmes around a number of integrative peace-themes (enabling cultural diversity, addressing the recovery of women's voices) through new opportunities afforded by European Peace Plus funding.

We look forward to the development of a new resource addressing mental well-being and exploring its roll out across community and educational spaces for the betterment of mental well-being on a post conflict society.

The Board has formally recognised the work of Maureen Hetherington and Richie Hetherington for their many years of dedication to The Junction and shaping our programmes to adapt the work of the Junction to meet community relations needs in the community, which are diverse and often complex and indeed we are fortunate to be able to continue to engage Maureen Hetherington as an Associate Consultant through 2022-2023, alongside Associate Consultants and Affiliate Facilitators who bring significant knowledge and insights, including Seamus Farrell, Cathy Higgins and Deirdre MacBride. The Board is delighted to have a new team at the helm of The Junction.

I would also like to thank each of our experienced and committed Board members, for their ongoing support to The Junction, which as a result continued to deliver a wide challenging and important work in a professional and ethical manner, reflected in the quality and demand for the work, locally, nationally and internationally.

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*(continued)*

**YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023**

**Small company provisions**

This report has been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies entitled to the small companies exemption.  
The trustees' annual report was approved on 04<sup>th</sup> December 2023 and signed on behalf of the board of trustees by:



**Roisin McLaughlin**  
Trustee

**Carolyn Anne Moffett**  
Trustee

