

**Damask Community Outreach**  
(A company limited by guarantee, not having a share capital)  
**TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT**  
for the financial year ended 31 March 2024

The trustees present their Trustees' Annual Report, combining the Directors' Report and Trustees' Report, and the unaudited financial statements for the financial year ended 31 March 2024.

The financial statements are prepared in accordance with the Companies Act 2006, FRS 102 "The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland" and Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their financial statements in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102).

The Trustees' Report contains the information required to be provided in the Trustees' Annual Report under the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) guidelines. The trustees of the charity are also charity trustees for the purpose of charity law and under the charity's constitution are known as members of the board of trustees.

In this report the trustees of Damask Community Outreach present a summary of its purpose, governance, activities, achievements and finances for the financial year 31 March 2024.

The charity is a registered charity and hence the report and results are presented in a form which complies with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 and, although not obliged to comply with the Statement of Recommended Practice applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland FRS 102, the organisation has implemented its recommendations where relevant in these financial statements.

### **Mission, Objectives and Strategy**

#### **Mission Statement**

##### **Objectives and aims**

Damask Community Outreach was formed in July 2011 to work primarily in the community of East Lisburn. The mission statement of Damask Community Outreach is "Dedicated to providing safe, inclusive and challenging opportunities that are changing lives and building futures in our community." The key purpose and services provided by Damask were established in response to an audit carried out in the community. The public benefit delivered by Damask provides support for older people, parents and carers and young people through a range of activities and programmes, together with advice services and support to those experiencing health problems, loneliness, unemployment, age related problems, poverty and financial difficulties.

Damask Community Outreach is a Christian faith-based organisation, working in partnership with Seymour Street Methodist Church, but is open to all and committed to equality of opportunity for all people, regardless of religious belief, political opinion, race, age, marital status, sexual orientation, gender, disability or dependency. Damask is committed to building partnerships in the community with statutory agencies and with other relevant groups and organisations to ensure that it can offer a wide range of services that match the needs of the community and help with the personal development of individuals.

##### **Ensuring the work delivers the aims of the company**

The aims, objectives and activities are reviewed throughout the year at Damask Board Management meetings held bi-monthly. These meetings review what has been achieved and the outcomes of the work. The effect of each key programme and service and the benefits they have brought to the community and the groups are reviewed systematically. This process helps ensure that aims, objectives, programmes and services remain focused on the stated purposes. The Board refers to the guidance contained in the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when reviewing its aims and objectives, and in planning its programmes and services.

##### **Overview of activities**

The Advice Service operated throughout the year until February 2024. Counselling support has continued to be provided by Ricky Keag.

The youth programme continued to run until the end of January 2024, led by Rebecca Wills and the Seymour Street Youth Pastor, Ashleigh O'Sullivan. The youth work was supported with grants from Victoria Homes and Policing and Community Safety Partnership.

The Damask Wellbeing Programme has successfully continued to run a Tuesday morning programme with a well-attended Pilates Class and indoor bowls followed by a social time with tea and coffee. Local Councillor Gary Hynds attends the social time providing an opportunity to discuss housing problems and any local issues. From February 2024 this year the programme was expanded to include a variety of activities organised fortnightly. The activities were funded by a grant from Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council Hardship Fund.

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A Coronation Party was organised in May 2023 funded by Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council.

The Toddlers group continued its weekly meeting.

Fund raising through regular Car Boot Sales carried on throughout the year. Although they could not be held every month, they still made an important contribution to Damask funds. Damask with help from Seymour Street Methodist Church continue to gather food donations for the Lisburn Food Bank.

#### **Volunteers**

Volunteers continue to provide a vital backbone to our activities. The Damask Board, which is made up of voluntary members continued to provide management and administration via meetings. We held seven car boot sales during the financial year which depends on voluntary support, as does the Toddlers. The Wellbeing group has voluntary leadership as does the Advice Service, and the youth programme depends on young volunteers who have come up through the group.

The below shows the volunteering hours from April 2023 to March 2024 with Damask Community Outreach:

Youth Projects	756
Advice Service	160
Wellbeing Group	250
Toddlers Group	576
Management & admin	290
Car Boot Sale	343
Food Bank collection	50

Total	2425
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#### **Paid Staff and Sessional Workers**

At the end of March 2024 Damask had no contracted staff or sessional workers.

#### **Grant applications and donations**

The Damask programme over 2023/24 has been supported by a range of funding bodies and we are grateful to these bodies for their grants. These include Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council, The Education Authority, Lisburn and Castlereagh Policing and Community Safety Partnership and Victoria Homes. We have received donations from Seymour Street Methodist Church as well as private individuals. The Wellbeing programme is also funded through weekly donations from those attending and the toddlers group is funded through a small weekly subscription by those attending.

#### **Objectives for 2023/24**

The main objectives for 2023/24 were to continue the Advice Service particularly with regard to supporting victims of Domestic Violence as we received PCSP funding for this aspect of the work and to build on the successful Wellbeing Programme. We also aimed to continue the after-schools club and an evening drop in for a girls group.

### **Structure, Governance and Management**

#### **Structure**

##### **Governing document**

The charity is controlled by its governing document, a deed of trust, and constitutes a limited company, limited by guarantee, as defined by the Companies Act 2006.

Damask Community Outreach is a charitable company limited by guarantee, incorporated on 22 July 2011 and registered as a Charity by the Charity Commission Northern Ireland NIC102073 on 6 March 2015. It is recognised by HMRC as a charity for tax purpose. The company was established under a Memorandum of Association, which established the objects and powers of Damask as a charitable company, and it is governed under its Articles of Association.

The Articles of Association were amended by a Special Resolution of the Company at a Special General Meeting held on 31 October 2013.

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**Organisational Structure**

The Damask Community Outreach Board of Directors, who met every 6 to 8 weeks during the year, is responsible for the strategic direction and policy of the charity.

A scheme of delegation through an established management structure is in place.

**Induction and training of new trustees**

Trustees are encouraged to familiarise themselves with the obligations of membership of the Board of Directors. They are also encouraged to be aware of charity legislation, to attend training relevant to their position and be aware of the current financial position, resourcing, future plans, objectives, policies and procedures of the company.

**Review of Activities, Achievements and Performance**

The Damask Response to the needs of the Community during 2023/24

**Advice Service**

Maya Lazarenko ran the Advice Service from April to June 2023 and continued to offer support to Ukrainian refugees in the Lisburn area in addition to our usual local clientele, which we felt was very much in line with the aims of Damask Community Outreach.

Febbie Francis returned as the advisor from July 2023 to the end of February 2024. Support was provided for welfare benefits, and we continued to receive PCSP funding to enable us to support clients who were victims of Domestic Violence.

The Advice Service was open 26 hours each week. The Friday appointments were held in the Lisburn Foodbank. Approximately 40 clients were helped on a monthly basis.

Due to Febbie leaving Damask for a full time position, the Board took the decision to close the Advice Service and to develop the Wellbeing Programme looking for new ways to support the local community.

**Youth Programme**

The main programme during 2023/24 was the after-schools programme for 10 to 14 year olds called Fusion with up to 40 children attending on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons. The after schools clubs closed at the end of January 2024.

An evening group for older girls aged 13 to 18 ran to June 2023,

The youth work was supported with grants from Victoria Homes and Policing and Community Safety Partnership

With the support of the Policing and Community Safety Partnership grant, Damask Youth Summer Scheme ran the last week in July and the first week in August 2023.

On average 40-45 attended each day. They were made up of church children, children from the local area and some new children also joined who had not previously attended Fusion or Evolve. There was a varied programme including games, crafts, workshops and free time. The highlights of the scheme were the two day trips. One was to Portrush when 52 kids attended, and the other trip was to Black Mountain.

The leaders worked very hard to provide an interesting programme.

**Queen Elizabeth II, 70th Platinum Jubilee Coronation Celebration Event**

Damask Community Outreach applied for, and were successful in gaining, a grant of £500 from Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council in order to mark the celebration of the 70th Platinum Jubilee coronation of Queen Elizabeth II.

Damask held the event in Seymour Street Methodist Church Halls on Thursday 11th May 2023.

The event involved young people from the local community coming together for the celebration. Included in the afternoon programme – a BBQ, bouncy castles and a talk about the Coronation in 1952 by a local historian. The young people were also given a commemorative mug to remind them of this historic event.

Around 40 young people attended as did local councillors and those with community connections.

The event helped those present to really appreciate the place of the monarchy in our society and better understand the immense achievement of 70 years in this role.

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Toddlers Group

Our Toddlers Group runs on Wednesday mornings from 10.00 am – 11.30 am and is open to all pre-school children and their carers.

On an average morning 25-30 children and 20 adults attend.

Our programme is usually a time of free play, a craft, followed by snack time for the children and then the adults. We finish off with song time.

We have a team of four volunteer helpers who give up not only their Wednesday mornings, but also preparation time for crafts and baking/shopping for snacks. Everyone would spend on average 3-4 hours per week.

Toddler Group is enjoyed by everyone - children, carers and volunteers!

#### Wellbeing Programme

On a Tuesday morning the Wellbeing Programme continued to run with the Pilates Class. Sessions ran from April to June 2023, September to December 2023 and January to March 2024 with a regular attendance of 15 to 20. We also had short mat bowls in the main hall with an average of 6 bowlers. This was followed by a coffee time.

We used the Autumn months to plan extra events for health and wellbeing to expand and grow our Wellbeing Group and from February to March 2024 we had five extra additions to our programme of which all included refreshments. This was supported by the Hardship Grant from Lisburn City Council.

The workshops ran every other week and covered Indian Food, pancake Tuesday, a book swap and a health talk and healthy snacks with a nutritionist giving a talk about food intolerance and how to make healthy treats. These events brought approximately 25 to 35 people to each session.

Local Councillor Gary Hynds from Lisburn Council also joined us from October 2023 for an hour each week during the coffee time and he encouraged the local community to "drop in" for advice and help that he could provide through the council. From getting a household bin replaced, to street lights getting fixed, pot holes fixed, local housing shortages, graveyards not being cared for and dog bins being provided. Gary spoke to at least one or two people each week on these matters.

The overall programme has become a well-supported and valued addition to the Damask activities bringing together a wide mix of people from the local community and church and has the potential to be further developed with a wider range of day-time activities.

#### Walks for Wellbeing

We held three Walks for Wellbeing during the summer months, and these were attended by 15 to 20 people.

#### Damask Board and other aspects of Damask

The Damask Board continued to meet approximately bi-monthly.

The Car Boot sales continued to be an important fundraising event, and community activity of Damask generally raising £400 per sale, and £125 to £150 from refreshments. Most donations are coming from Church members and their support in this way is greatly appreciated.

Damask has continued to support the Lisburn Food Bank by collecting donations from Church members and others and passing them on.

#### Financial Review

The results for the financial year are set out on page 11 and additional notes are provided showing income and expenditure in greater detail.

#### Financial Results

At the end of the financial year the charity has assets of £45,193 (2023 - £40,223) and liabilities of £7,936 (2023 - £1,591). The net assets of the charity have decreased by £(1,375).

#### Principal Risks and Uncertainties

The Board continue to review the major risks to which the charity is exposed and they endeavour to maintain control procedures and systems to mitigate those risks

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**FUTURE PLANS**

The Board are researching the operation of a Community Fridge with a planned start date of November 2024.  
The Wellbeing Programme will continue to run the Pilates, bowls and coffee time weekly with a planned programme of speakers/activities twice a month and Wellbeing Walks in the Summer months.  
The Youth Programme is under review with a summer scheme to be run in August 2024.  
The Toddlers Group will continue to run on a Wednesday,

**Trustees**

The trustees who served throughout the financial year, except as noted, were as follows:

Mr James Edward Irwin  
Rev David Lee Turtle  
Miss Jennifer Michelle Baird  
Mr John Harold Baird  
Mrs Shirley Anne Carrington  
Mr William Donald Kinghan  
Ms Anne Teresa Maxwell  
Mr William Eric Rainey  
Mrs Janet Adrienne Stewart  
Dr David Lindsay Easson (Resigned 27 June 2023)

**Compliance with Sector-Wide Legislation and Standards**


The charity engages pro-actively with legislation, standards and codes which are developed for the sector. Damask Community Outreach subscribes to and is compliant with the following:

- The Companies Act 2006
- The Charities SORP (FRS 102)

**APPRECIATION**

The Damask Board wish to place on record our deep appreciation and thanks to all our Volunteers who give of their time so freely; to the staff who provided the Damask Advice and Counselling, the Community activities and leading the youth programme and to those who give donations regularly and generously to support the work of Damask Community Outreach.

Approved by the Board of Trustees on 22 October 2024 and signed on its behalf by:



Mr John Harold Baird  
Trustee



Miss Jennifer Michelle Baird  
Trustee

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# **STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES**

for the financial year ended 31 March 2024

The trustees, who are also directors of Damask Community Outreach for the purposes of company law, are responsible for preparing the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and regulations.

Company law requires the trustees as the directors to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under that law the trustees have elected to prepare the financial statements in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice (United Kingdom Accounting Standards and applicable law) including FRS102 "The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland". Under company law the trustees must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the net income or expenditure of the charity for that period.

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

- select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether the financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the relevant financial reporting framework, identify those standards, and note the effect and the reasons for any material departure from those standards; 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 confirm that they have complied with the above requirements in preparing the financial statements.

The trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the charity's transactions and 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.

Approved by the Board of Trustees on 22 October 2024 and signed on its behalf by:



**Mr John Harold Baird**  
Trustee



**Miss Jennifer Michelle Baird**  
Trustee