



## **Lagan Village Youth & Community Group**

15 Ballarat Street - Belfast – BT6 8FW

Tel: 02890 452748

Charity Number: NIC 102306

### **Trustees Report 2024 - 2025**

#### **Message from the Chair**

Our community services have evolved over the years to meet demands and residents' priorities in providing the best support and opportunities available to them. Our aims have always been to serve those who need it the most, residents' children, young people and those who feel isolated or excluded.

Our community development opportunities have always been fundamental to our strategic direction, with the support our services now also prioritise other age groups, including some of the most vulnerable residents such as those with SEN, and aim to address key issues for the local community such as social isolation, food insecurity, physical and mental wellbeing and employment. All these contributing to making people's lives better for all in the community. These services are a positive impact delivered by our centres staff, with the support of many dedicated and essential volunteers and residents.

We are very grateful to those who have supported our projects and programmes for their significant financial support without which we would find it very difficult to provide the services we do. Thank you to all of them for their vital funding over the year. The Board also wants to thank first-time funders and the many individual people who donate time and energy, many who give regularly to our community activities and services.

As always, I would like to thank our staff and volunteers for their hard work and commitment, as well as my fellow Trustees for their time and invaluable skills that ensure Lagan Village Community Centre continues to be a thriving asset for many in our community.

Dr John Kyle

Chairperson

#### **Structure, Governance and Management Governing document**

##### **Status**

- Lagan Village Youth and Community Group is a charitable company limited by guarantee.
- Lagan Village Youth and Community Group is governed by an elected Management Committee /trustees and are elected at the Annual General Meeting held each year.

- Lagan Village Youth and Community Group is a registered charity and is governed under the regulations of the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland.

#### Governing document

The group was established under a Memorandum of Association which established the objects and powers of the charitable company and is governed under its Articles of Association.

Company number: NI622581

Charity number: NIC102306

Registered Address: 15 Ballarat Street, Belfast BT6 8FW

Bankers: Ulster Bank

#### **Directors and Trustees**

The Directors of the Charitable Company (“the Charity”) are the Trustees for the purposes of Charity Law and throughout this report are collectively referred to as the “Trustees”.

#### **Appointment of Trustees**

When a vacancy arises, Trustees analyse the strengths and weaknesses of the existing Trustees, and through personal contact seek local candidates with skills and experience which will add to the range of Trustees’ expertise. Once appointed the Trustee retains office until the next AGM when he/she will be required to stand for election.

#### **Trustee Induction and Training**

New Trustees are given copies of the Memorandum & Articles of Association, the most recent Annual Report and recent minutes of the meetings of Trustees. Potential candidates receive a briefing pack about the roles and responsibilities of a Trustee and could attend a Board meeting and visit Lagan Village Community Centre to understand its work before offering themselves as a committed board member. In addition, they are directed to the Charity Commission website to view the “Essential Trustee” and their attention is drawn to other information available on the Charity Commission website (or downloaded hard copies are offered). The staff team, Chair and/or Vice Chair provide help and assistance to facilitate familiarisation with procedures.

#### **Organisational Structure and Governance**

The Board of Trustees is responsible for overall strategy and management of the organisation. The day-to-day management of the charity, including staff and all financial matters. Everyday work matters are delegated to the Community Development Officer, Administrator and our Youth Workers. Our volunteers fulfil other roles in the organisation with their support and help in many of the day-to-day activities. The Board of Trustees meets approximately every month and including the

annual AGM meeting which is attended by a broad selection of people from across the community

### **Annual Risk Assessment**

The Trustees periodically undertake a review of the major risks to which the charity is exposed to. Each year when considering the operating budget and strategic plan, the Trustees review the associated organisational risks. The senior management team also review operational systems and procedures and service area risk assessments to manage risks that are in place. We review and update our risk assessments, business continuity and emergency contingency plans annually.

### **Reserves Policy**

The Trustees have examined the Charity's requirements for reserves in light of the main risks to the organisation. A policy has been established whereby unrestricted funds, not committed in tangible fixed assets held by the Charity, should cover at least 6 months of the budgeted expenditure. Such reserves are needed to meet the working capital requirements of the Charity. The Trustees are confident that at this level they would be able to continue the current activities of the Charity in the event of a significant drop in funding in the short term, which is a prudent policy especially during these difficult economic times.

### **Our Vision**

Our Charity 's vision is for everyone in the local community around the wider area of the Woodstock ward of East Belfast to have a better quality of life through access and participation in key services and activities, which build cohesion, a stronger and more resilient local community for all to live and exist in both peacefully and in safety.

#### **We are dedicated to:**

1. Providing inclusive and flexible services for families, children and young people, as well as the wider community.
2. Delivering a meaningful and positive influence on the local community, contribute to improving people's quality of life and provide practical support. In welfare benefits, housing, education, job opportunities, personal development and health and wellbeing.
3. Meeting the needs of the local community, especially people those with higher needs such as those who are most vulnerable, SEN and our senior citizens.
4. Through our community-based approach - acting as a community hub and service delivery that we can connect residents to everyday practical support and new opportunities.

At Lagan Village Community Centre, we facilitate opportunities to bring people together through several opportunities to improve wellbeing and reduce social isolation. We were delighted to organise several community events at which more people participate in a range of activities over the past year.

## **Services and activities**

Our impact is evidenced by the large and growing number of people we see attending our projects and programmes throughout the year. Our footfall increases each year which demonstrates that our activities and services meet needs and demands of our local community.

We also offer a space for other groups and individuals to use for their own activities, events and courses. Some groups have been operating at our centre for many years, but new activities start each year. We are careful that all services and activities in the centre complement each other to offer a wide range of activities for the wider community.

### **Some of the other main activities on offer:**

- Aerobics class - a very dynamic and friendly class open to all.
- After School Club.
- Seniors Club — over 50's lunch club with chair yoga classes and social activities open to all every Wednesday. Community Yoga - a weekly wellbeing class, every Tuesday morning.
- After school clubs for children — daily after school activities including cooking, IT and dance.
- Food Hub — provision of food and essential items to residents and families.
- Holiday Summer scheme - a popular holiday provision for children age 7 to 18 YEARS
- IT training and employability programme – run for people to gain qualifications and secure employment
- Sports - multi sports sessions for all.
- Dance - a weekly energetic dance class to make you healthier.
- Youth club - open to all young people age 7 to 18 years old, led by young people themselves.

## **Future plans**

Our community is growing and benefiting more people and many more groups. Our community centre services are broadening its opportunities by going beyond the walls of our centre- and its team's reach to ensure that we do not only offer access activities to all but also create opportunities which will be life changing for the people we work with.

We refer to other services, work in collaboration with like-minded organisations to increase our impact, find solutions for individual and community issues, engage with people who do not yet access our services and have developed a stimulating programme that caters for people from 0 to 99.

Our priority for the coming financial year is to continue to diversify and to prioritise fundraising so we can sustain our services, as well as pilot and deliver new ones adapting to and caring for our local community. We will do all we can to keep our most popular services (e.g. childcare provision, wellbeing activities and Food Hub) but are fully aware that we need to identify new ways of delivering some of these

services, while running costs continue to rise as well as challenges for many of our community members.

Through community organising, our aim is to find out what are the key issues affecting people and find solutions together to address them. Our Community Team will continue to deliver a range of services for some of our most vulnerable neighbours. Our Childcare and Youth Team will also focus on providing a safe and fun space for local children and young people, so parents and carers can work, train or study, and young people learn and thrive.

Lagan Village Management Committee

September 2025