

The Honorable Sophia Ward Charitable Trust

Northern Ireland · Charity number 102976

Details

Status	Received
Registered	2015-07-03
Register	View on the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland register

Contact

Address 26 Castleward Road
Strangford
Downpatrick
County Down
BT30 7lu
BT30 7LU

Phone 07818667449

Activities

Purposes: The following is a direct quote from page 11 of the 19 page Will of the Hon. Sophia Ward. "And as to and concerning the remaining one equal tenth part or share of the residue of my said personal estate and effects upon trust to pay and apply the same to or for the relief and benefit of such poor and indigent persons in the parish of Ballyculter in the Co. of Down in Ireland at such times in such proportions and manner and to such objects as they my said trustees or the survivors or surviving of them or the exors or admors of such sur. shall in their or his discretion think fit and proper." The charity's purpose is the relief and benefit of poor and needy persons in the parish of Ballyculter, County Down.

What the charity does: The prevention or relief of poverty

How the charity works: Relief of poverty

Who the charity helps: Older people,Unemployed/low income

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2024-12-31	£1,405	£1,550	£0	0

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
Dr Ralph Forbes		
Mr John Crea		
Mrs Joanna Walsh		

The Honorable Sophia Ward Charitable Trust

Northern Ireland - Charity number 102976

Accounts

The Honorable Sophia Ward Charitable Trust

Northern Ireland - Charity number 102976

Accounts

The Honorable Sophia Ward Charitable Trust: NIC Number 102976

Accounts for 2023

The charity's current account is with Danske Bank, Donegall Square West, Belfast.

Credit balance at 31 December 2022	11,566.28
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Bank fees	20.12 & 2.50 x 11	Total	47.62
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Quarterly bank interest	31/03/2023	2.85
	01/07/2023	2.93
	29/09/2023	3.07
	29/12/2023	3.00
	Total	11.85

DFC Investment income	01/06/2023	638.80
(Department for Communities)	01/12/2022	766.56
	Total	1,405.36

Cheque cash withdrawal	04/12/2022	1,750.00
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Credit balance at 31 December 2023	11,185.82
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Ralph Forbes 05/10/24

The Honorable Sophia Ward Charitable Trust

Northern Ireland - Charity number 102976

Annual report

The Honorable Sophia Ward Charitable Trust: NIC Number 102976

Report for 2023.

This is a very small, extremely local charity that throughout its many years of existence has quietly and discreetly run, usually benefiting around 10 to 12 people in the approach to Christmas each year. The charity has been in existence since 1836, and under the terms of its establishment is, and always has been, restricted to deserving poor and needy residents of any denomination living in or very close to the Church of Ireland parish of Ballyculter, Co. Down. The parish includes the area immediately around Strangford and Kilclief villages and the Castleward estate.

Since 2008 the typical grant made by the trust to a recipient has been between £130 and £200. The latter figure was thought possibly a little too generous in previous years, and in 2017 it was decided to reduce all the grants being given to £150, which has been the standard figure given out since then. The three trustees reviewed the appropriate sum for grants in November 2022, and in view of the great leap in the cost of energy, heating oil and the still rising cost of food, it was agreed to make the normal grant £200 for 2022, and to review the scale of grants again in November 2023.

Since 1990 the number of recipients each year has varied between 6 and 16. Very occasionally, individual additional grants are made (within the same limited geographic area) when circumstances arise that merit the trustee's special consideration and assistance. This has occurred some years ago when a needy individual applied for support to pay educational fees for a dependant young person to study, and in another case, asked for help after a very damaging house fire.

In recent years the Trust was administered by two active trustees, Mr Leslie McCullough and Dr Ralph Forbes, both associated with Ballyculter Parish Church. As a courtesy, Viscount Bangor was named as a trustee. However, since he lives in London and only visits Castleward for a fortnight in August, he did not attend the church and played no active part in the running of the Trust. In 2019 Viscount Bangor indicated that he wished to resign and this was accepted. His place as a trustee was replaced by Mr John Crea, a local farmer and parishioner of Ballyculter church. In 2022 Mr Crea first participated in the decisions regarding the annual distribution of grants, and thus the Trust now has three active trustees all living within the locality.

The income of the Trust is ***solely and entirely*** met by the sum gifted by the Honorable Sophia Ward in her 1835 will. This is now invested in 3194 shares in the Northern Ireland Central Investment Fund for Charities administered by the NI Department of Social Development. At the January 2014 share price of 1161.69 this represents a capital of £371,043.78 belonging to the Honorable Sophia Ward Charitable Trust.

The income from the Honorable Sophia Ward Trust's capital is distributed by the Department for Communities twice a year in June and December. **The respective figures in 2023 were £638.80 and £766.56, making a total annual income for the**

year of £1,405.36. This is a reduction of £31.94 in total income received compared with both 2021 and 2022.

The Honorable Sophia Ward Charitable Trust has a Belfast Current Account with Danske Bank in Belfast into which investment income is directly paid. This account attracts a small amount of interest and modest bank charges. The balance in the Trust's Current Account as at 31 December 2023 after the annual Christmas payments made to clients was **£11,185.82**.

Clearly the trust's income has outstripped its outgoings for a considerable period allowing the current account to grow to the extent it has. The current trustees have borne this fact in mind in recent years when making decisions regarding the number and scale of the grants being paid. The circumstances of each potential recipient are carefully considered before any decision is taken, and up-to-date independent advice is taken from a respected member of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul living in the district who has a wealth of local knowledge and experience from working with poorer people living in our parish.

On 1st December 2023, Dr Forbes, after consultation with Mr McCullough and Mr Crea contacted two Strangford area representatives of the Saint Vincent de Paul Society for advice regarding potential recipients of the annual Christmas grants. Consequently at a meeting the same day in Mr McCullough's house, the trustees of the Honorable Sophia Ward Charitable Trust decided to make grants to 11 individuals that varied from £100 to £200. **The total expenditure for the year 2023 was £1,750.** This total annual outlay is slightly above the Trust's annual investment income, which is the figure the trustees like to keep in mind as a guide. However, the Trust's funds remain very healthy, and the trustees are pleased that funds are available to allow help to be given where it is needed.

Dr Forbes wrote the letters to go out with the Christmas grants on 1st December 2023 and drew one cheque for the total grants made out to himself. The cash was brought to Mrs Mary Kearney of the St Vincent de Paul Society who distributed the grants to the 11 recipients.

In view of its recent registration with the NI Charity Commission, since 2018 the Hon. Treasurer of the Trust has written each year to the grant recipients requesting that they indicate on a return slip acknowledging the grant, the use they intended putting it towards. Returns were received from all eleven recipients. The uses declared included provision of heating, food, local rates and Christmas gifts for relatives.

The three trustees took no payment, and no expenses were incurred.

As far as the current trustees are aware, the Trust has never in its almost 200 years of existence kept minutes. There is no minute book, the trustees preferring to maintain a discreet silence about their deliberations and decisions.

Ralph S. Forbes, Hon. Treasurer

30 September 2024.

The Honorable Sophia Ward Charitable Trust

Northern Ireland - Charity number 102976

Annual return

Independent Examiner's Report to the Charity Trustees of Honorable Sophie Ward Trust

I report on the accounts of Honorable Sophie Ward Trust for the year ended 31st December 2023, as attached.

Respective responsibilities of charity trustees and examiner

As the charity's trustees you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008.

It is my responsibility to:

- Examine the accounts under section 65 of the Charities Act
- Follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Commission under section 65(9)(b) of the Charities Act
- State whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of Independent Examiner's Report

I have examined your charity accounts as required under Section 65 of the Charities Act and my examination was carried out in accordance with the general Directions given by the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland under section 65(9)(b) of the Charities Act.

My examination included a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also included consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as charity trustees concerning any such matters.

My role is to state whether any material matters have come to my attention giving me cause to believe:

1. That accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 63 of the Charities Act
2. That the accounts do not accord with those accounting records
3. That the accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements of the Charities Act
4. That there is further information needed for a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Independent Examiner's Statement

I have completed my examination and have no concerns in respect of the matters 1-4 listed above and, in connection with Directions of the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland, I have found no matters that require drawing to your attention.

Name: Gillian Crozier
Gillian Crozier

Date: 8-10-2024

Address: 14 Chapel View
Ardglass
Co. Down
BT30 7WT

Accounts

The Honorable Sophia Ward Charitable Trust: NIC Number 102976

Accounts for 2022

Credit balance at 31 December 2021	12,746.54
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Bank fees	2.96 & 2.50 x 11	Total	30.46
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Quarterly bank interest	31/03/2022	3.14
	30/06/2022	3.22
	30/09/2022	3.37
	30/12/2022	3.22
	Total	12.95

DFC Investment income	07/06/2022	638.80
	01/12/2022	798.50
	Total	1,437.30

Cheque withdrawal	02/12/2022	2,600.00
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Credit balance at 31 December 2022	11,566.28
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Ralph Forbes, 10 October 2024.

The Honorable Sophia Ward Charitable Trust

Northern Ireland - Charity number 102976

Annual report

The Honorable Sophia Ward Charitable Trust: NIC Number 102976

Report for 2022.

This is a very small, extremely local charity that throughout its many years of existence has quietly and discreetly run, usually benefiting around 10 to 12 people in the approach to Christmas each year. The charity has been in existence since 1836, and under the terms of its establishment is, and always has been, restricted to deserving poor and needy residents of any denomination living in or very close to the Church of Ireland parish of Ballyculter, Co. Down. The parish includes the area immediately around Strangford and Kilclief villages and the Castleward estate.

Since 2008 the typical grant made by the trust to a recipient has been between £130 and £200. The latter figure was thought possibly a little too generous in previous years, and in 2017 it was decided to reduce all the grants being given to £150, which has been the standard figure given out since then. The three trustees reviewed the appropriate sum for grants in November 2022, and in view of the great leap in the cost of energy, heating oil and the still rising cost of food, it was agreed to make the normal grant £200 for 2022, and to review the scale of grants again in November 2023.

Since 1990 the number of recipients each year has varied between 6 and 16. Very occasionally, individual additional grants are made (within the same geographic area) when circumstances arise that merit the trustee's special consideration and assistance. This has occurred when a needy individual applied for support to pay educational fees for a dependant young person to study, and in another case, help after a very damaging house fire.

In recent years the Trust was administered by two active trustees, Mr Leslie McCullough and Dr Ralph Forbes, both associated with Ballyculter Parish Church. As a courtesy, Viscount Bangor was named as a trustee. However, since he lives in London and only visits Castleward for a fortnight in August, he did not attend the church and played no active part in the running of the Trust. In 2019 Viscount Bangor indicated that he wished to resign, and this decision was accepted. His place as a trustee was replaced by Mr John Crea, a local farmer and parishioner of Ballyculter church. In 2022 Mr Crea participated in the decisions regarding the annual distribution of grants, and thus the Trust now has three active trustees all living within the locality.

The income of the Trust is ***solely and entirely*** met by the sum gifted by the Hon. Sophia Ward in her 1835 will. This is now invested in 3194 shares in the Northern Ireland Central Investment Fund for Charities administered by the NI Department of Social Development. At the January 2014 share price of 1161.69 this represents a capital of £371,043.78 belonging to the Honorable Sophia Ward Charitable Trust.

The income from the Honorable Sophia Ward Trust's capital is distributed by the Department for Communities twice a year in June and December. **The respective figures in 2022 were £638.80 and £798.50, making a total annual income for the year of £1,437.30.** This is exactly the same total income as was received in 2021.

The Honorable Sophia Ward Charitable Trust has a Belfast Current Account with Danske Bank in Belfast into which investment income is directly paid. This account attracts a small amount of interest and modest bank charges. As shown in the accompanying Accounts pdf document, the balance in the Trust's Current Account as of 31 December 2022, after the annual Christmas payments made to clients, was **£11,566.28**.

Clearly the trust's income had outstripped its outgoings for a considerable period allowing the current account to grow to the extent it has. The current trustees have borne this fact in mind in recent years when making decisions regarding the number and scale of the grants being paid. The circumstances of each potential recipient are carefully considered before any decision is taken, and up-to-date independent advice is taken from a respected member of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul living in the district who has a wealth of local knowledge and experience from working with poorer people living in our parish.

On 1st December 2022, Dr Forbes, after consultation with Mr McCullough and Mr Crea contacted the Strangford area representative of the Saint Vincent de Paul Society for advice regarding potential recipients of the annual Christmas grants. Consequently at a meeting in Mr McCullough's house, the trustees of the Honorable Sophia Ward Charitable Trust decided to make 13 grants of £200 each. **The total expenditure for the year 2022 was thus £2,600**. Two of the grants were made to Ukraine refugee families recently moved to the district as a result of the 2022 war in their home country. This total annual outlay is well above the Trust's annual investment income, which is the figure the trustees like to keep in mind as a guide, but the background prevailing financial circumstances are most unusual for recent years, as fallout from the Ukraine war, and it is hoped that the additional outlay in 2022 remains a temporary and unforeseeable anomaly. In any event, the Trust's funds stay very healthy, and the trustees are pleased that sufficient funds remain available to allow help to be given where it is needed.

Dr Forbes wrote the letters to go out with the Christmas grants on 1st December 2022 and one cheque for the total grants was written to R & M Cull of the St Vincent de Paul Society, who distributed the 13 grants to the agreed recipients.

In view of its recent registration with the NI Charity Commission, since 2018 the Hon. Treasurer of the Trust has written each year to the grant recipients requesting that they indicate on a return slip acknowledging the grant, the use they intended putting it towards. Returns were received from 10 of the 13 recipients. The uses declared included provision of heating, food and Christmas gifts for relatives.

The three trustees took no payment, and no expenses were incurred. As far as the current trustees are aware, the Trust has never in all its almost 200 years of existence, kept minutes. There is no minute book, the trustees preferring to maintain a discreet silence about their deliberations and decisions.

Ralph Forbes, Hon. Treasurer

12 October 2024.

The Honorable Sophia Ward Charitable Trust

Northern Ireland - Charity number 102976

Annual return

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My examination included a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also included consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as charity trustees concerning any such matters.

My role is to state whether any material matters have come to my attention giving me cause to believe:

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Independent Examiner's Statement

I have completed my examination and have no concerns in respect of the matters 1-4 listed above and, in connection with Directions of the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland, I have found no matters that require drawing to your attention.

Name: Gillian Crozier
Gillian Crozier

Date: 8-10-2024

Address: 14 Chapel View
Ardglass
Co. Down
BT30 7WT