

# LIVING RIVERS TRUST

## TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT

### YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

The trustees have pleasure in presenting their report and the audited financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2023.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in notes to the accounts and comply with the charity's governing document, the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008, the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015, Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland issued in October 2019, the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and UK Generally Accepted Accounting Practice.

#### CHARITY ADMINISTRATIVE AND REFERENCE DETAILS

Charity name	Living River Trust
Charity registration number	NIC103314
Trustees who served the charity during the year	P Brady (Chairman) J McGowan C Watson Dr H Grahame-Smith
Director of operations	Dr H Grahame-Smith
Registered office	154 Camlough Road, Ballymena, Co. Antrim, BT43 7JW
Auditor	Jackson Andrews, Chartered Accountants & Statutory Auditor, 6 Mandeville Mews, Portadown, Co. Armagh, BT62 3NS
Bankers	Danske Bank, North Business Centre, 1-2 Broadway, Ballymena, Co. Antrim, BT43 7AA

#### PUBLIC BENEFIT STATEMENT

The trustees of Living Rivers Trust confirm that they have had due regard for the guidance on Public Benefit by the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland and are pleased to report that during the year the charity has continued to provide Public Benefits through programmes and services we offer. In particular, the directors consider how planned activities will contribute to the aims and objectives they have set out.

#### STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

##### Governing document

Living Rivers Trust is a charitable trust constituted under a trust deed dated 2 April 2001, which is registered as a charity with The Charity Commission for Northern Ireland.

##### Recruitment, appointment, induction and training

The present trustees have been involved in the charity for a number of years and so are familiar with its work. The trustees regularly review the requirements of the charity and the possibility of a need for additional trustees. Any new trustees would be appointed by resolution of a meeting of all the trustees passed by a majority of those present. Appropriate training and induction is available to all trustees.

##### Organisational structure and related parties

The trustees oversee the running of the charity.

The following individual organisations are constituted under Living Rivers Trust: Living Rivers Lighthouse Hostel 24-7 and Living Rivers Church. 3 of the 4 trustees of Living Rivers Trust as well as a close family member of a trustee are also trustees of Living Rivers USA operating as Millennial Church in Tulsa, USA which provides funding to Living Rivers Church. P Brady's mother, R Brady, is also a related party.

The trustees are directors and company secretary of Paul Brady Ministries (Company Limited by guarantee). Paul Brady Ministries was dissolved on 11<sup>th</sup> October 2022.

# LIVING RIVERS TRUST

## TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT *(continued)*

### YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

#### STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT *(continued)*

##### **Risk management**

The trustees have assessed the major risks to which the charity is exposed, in particular those related to the operations and finances of the charity, and are satisfied that systems are in place to mitigate any exposure to major risks. Where appropriate, systems or procedures have been established to mitigate the risks the charity faces. Internal control risks are minimised by the implementation of procedures for authorisation of all transactions and projects. Procedures are in place to ensure compliance with health and safety of staff, volunteers, clients and visitors to all of the charity's organisations. These procedures are periodically reviewed at least annually to ensure that they continue to meet the needs of the charity.

##### **OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES**

The objectives and principal activities of the charity are the advancement of the Christian religion and the relief of poverty through the provision of facilities in the interests of social welfare for recreation and other leisure time occupation.

##### **Volunteers**

The charity is grateful for the unstinting efforts of its volunteers who are involved in service provision and fund-raising. It is estimated that over 420 volunteer hours were provided during the year. If this is conservatively valued at the average minimum wage for workers aged 21 years and older for the year of £9.18 an hour the volunteer effort amounts to over £3,856.

##### **ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE**

Total income for the year amounted to £640,564 (2022 - £634,363). Income derived from donations and legacies amounted to £50,160 (2022 - £46,785); income from charitable activities amounted to £590,204 (2022 - £587,436) and income from investments amounted to £200 (2022 - £142).

Total expenditure for the year amounted to £599,567 (2022 - £589,239). The cost of charitable activities amounted to £599,567 (2022 - £589,239).

The net income for the year amounted to £40,997 (2022 – net income £45,124).

The Trustees would like to thank all volunteers, staff and all involved with the charity's activities this year. There has been public benefit to many from the activities of the charity.

Activities were less impacted by Covid-19 and there were no restrictions in place during this year. The main focus of activity has been the Lighthouse Hostel post Covid 19 and supporting service users, working with others, starting to further develop staff, and look at longer term planning for the Hostel.

The objectives of Living Rivers Trust continue to be:

- a) Advancement of the Christian Faith in accordance with the letter and spirit of the Trust's statement of faith;
- b) The relief of poverty;
- c) The provision of facilities in the interests of social welfare for recreation and other leisure time occupation of people who are in need as a result of their youth, age, infirmity or social and economic circumstances.

These have been carried out through our activities in:

- a) Living Rivers Lighthouse Hostel, Ballymena
- b) Support of other churches and ministries and holding online activities
- c) Prayer – for others and online prayer meetings
- d) Teaching of the Christian faith.

Through these activities there has been Public Benefit to individuals, their families, and communities.



## LIVING RIVERS TRUST

### TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT *(continued)*

#### YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

##### ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE *(continued)*

We have had in person visits and virtual meetings with other churches and Ministries. Online teaching of the Christian Faith has continued and also prayer meetings with others both in the UK and abroad. There has also been support of individuals who have contacted us for prayer and support.

In October 2022, the closure of Paul Brady Ministries was completed and financial assets transferred to Living Rivers Trust. The process of closure and merger with the Charities Commission has been completed.

This year, having come out of the major restrictions of Covid 19, the Lighthouse has operated at greater capacity. The year has seen 79 new clients with 79 departing over this period. Fifteen of these were a positive move on, whereby the client either returned to family or was able to acquire their own accommodation. Fifty one of the 79 new clients had addictions. A total of 59 clients had mental Health concerns.

The staff have continued to support clients, their families and to work with relatives, the community, and other stakeholders to deliver benefit to the public. There has been good feedback from clients and relatives during the year. During the year, we continued to have fewer full time staff than desired, requiring agency staff both for Support Worker posts and Kitchen assistant, and this continues to be addressed.

At the start of April we went, overnight, from holding five beds aside for isolation to full capacity. It took a good two and a half months for referrals and admissions to pick up and to increase the occupied rooms. This, along with a period later in the year where we had lower occupancy due to a mix of positive move on and clients having to be asked to leave and limited appropriate referrals has led to less income than budgeted for. We have worked closely with the local housing office and there have been visits by their staff to the Hostel and vice versa to give a shared understanding of some aspects of each other's working patterns and requirements. In addition, to the lower occupancy there were increased costs due to low staffing levels and the need to employ increased agency staff, amounting to almost 350% of budget by the year end. There have also been increased costs due to inflation and increased energy costs due to outside factors. We have adjusted budgets in year and made adjustments as we are able. Management have worked diligently to recruit staff, a challenge with the current level of pay and lower availability of people applying (a sector wide issue) and by October we had full Support Workers though two left in November needing further recruitment. We have continued to require a Kitchen assistant and this post is currently filled by an agency staff. We are not recruiting for this post currently due to possible developments in the future with the Hostel.

We have observed that a number of clients do not desire to come to Ballymena and that many are aware that if they turn down a bed they will be housed elsewhere in nicer accommodation. Some of the single homeless men continue to have complex support needs and the Hostel continues to be a necessary, strategically relevant service providing support and benefit.

During the year the Lighthouse Hostel successfully underwent re-accreditation (August) and passed the QMT – a two-day visit by Supporting People to look at the process, procedures, and support provided. We have continued to have a good relationship with Supporting People (our main funders). We continue to pursue the £35,142 we have previously made a case for. In December 2022 we heard that there will be an increase of funds, which will be recurring – this enabled us to give an in-year bonus to staff as well as helping with the predicted overspend in SP monies. In December 2022, we also successfully made an application for an increase in HB bed rents.

We have developed the recording of accounts on Excel this year, in liaison with the accountants, and management accounts have been monitored every month. This has been advantageous during the period of increased costs and decreased income to enable adjustments. Budgets for 23-24 have been reviewed. We have given Support staff a 9.9% pay for 2023-2024 and will look in year at increasing this.

# LIVING RIVERS TRUST

## TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT *(continued)*

### YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

#### ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE *(continued)*

We gave a bonus, in recognition of all the work done and support provided, early in 2023. We are thankful for all the commitment and work done by staff.

In April and May, the Hostel completed the decorating, carpeting and refurbishment works started last financial year and also completed the installation and functioning of the Wi-Fi throughout the Hostel, a computer suite, and introduced electronic Person-centred software management system. These have been major developments for clients and staff. The Wi-Fi throughout the Hostel allows clients to access Wi-Fi in their rooms. Protections have been built in, as far as possible and residents are reminded about dangers of certain sites. The computer suite has been used for work applications, attending court, and researching on the internet. The Person-Centred Software is helping staff in completing records with checks and alerts in the system and is enabling on the spot record upkeep and accuracy. We are continuing to develop this, and this was one of the areas that SP reviewed during their QMT visit. This continues to be reviewed over the next year in every aspect.

Other developments, over and above the normal service, this year have included:

Due to excess pressures the Northern Trust has funded a Grade 6 Homeless Nurse who will work exclusively with Homeless and asylum seekers. This was aided by work carried out through ICARE. The Nurse has made consistent visits to the Lighthouse building up a rapport with staff and residents. The nurse offers a basic check up for all new clients with information being shared with the Lighthouse and added to the person centred software and clients support processes giving a better quality of support. The nurse will also be conducting Sexual Health Clinics during the year.

The Lighthouse has welcomed two final year Occupational Therapist students from Ulster University who have completed their community placements with us. The students initially completed 2 days within the hostel in preparation and getting to know clients. Several clients took part in the six week programme held in ICARE which included art work and refurbishing furniture. Several clients with addiction issues remained abstinent for the duration of the course work but went back to old habits after the course was completed. This has shown a need for a full time OT and the LH has intensions along with ECHO to look at funding for a full time OT for the LH and other local providers.

ICARE continues to be closed, however, we have been in discussions with the Senior Lecturer of Optometry and Associate Research Director in Biomedical Sciences at Ulster University about their undergraduate optometry students also completing placements at ICARE with the possibility of them taking on the lead Optician role allowing the eye clinic in ICARE to restart and give longevity to the project. Should this prove successful it may lead into a new model whereby we tap into all medical sciences in both Ulster University and Queens University for their Undergraduate students to complete community-based learning and placements allowing for our clients to have a one stop shop of medical care.

Homeless Connect were contacted about membership with them which has allowed Mark Forsythe to speak at a conference at Stormont relating to the difficulties surrounding recruitment and retention of staff within the homeless sector. This conference was attended by MLA's, Senior Managers from NIHE and Housing Associations Community and Voluntary sector representatives.

Mark Forsythe and Louise Kitson were asked to speak to Paramedic students at Ulster University about the homeless sector and Health inequalities for homeless including mental health and addictions and the role of paramedics with homeless. This will become a yearly talk with each tranche of new students. There will also be the option for students to complete placements via ICARE.

The Lighthouse continues to be involved with ECHO (Enhancing Care for Homeless) with Mark Forsythe remaining as Vice Chair. Projects include medicine management, Admissions and Discharge policy for A&E and ward stays in hospitals, and a homeless aware nurse to be based in Antrim Area Hospital.



# LIVING RIVERS TRUST

## TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT *(continued)*

### YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

#### ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE *(continued)*

There have been occasional cases of Covid 19 during the year which clients and staff have dealt with appropriately. Covid 19 policies have continued to be updated during the year and appropriate measures remain in place, although on a considerably lower level than the previous two years. There have been no safeguarding or GDPR issues during the year.

The retrospective use of reserves (amounting to £35,142) awaited, and awaits, a decision and resolution by Supporting People. Until this is resolved our reserves position continues to be below our plans, though it has improved from last year.

The financial figures in these accounts show an improved position on the previous year.

#### FINANCIAL REVIEW

##### Reserves policy

It is the policy of the charity to maintain free reserves which matches the needs of the trust, both at the current time and in the foreseeable future. This provides sufficient funds to cover running costs which include management, administration and support costs. Free reserves are those unrestricted reserves not designated nor invested in fixed assets which are available for general use.

As at 31 March 2023, the charity has unrestricted general funds carried forward of £45,673 (2022 - £26,669), unrestricted designated funds carried forward of £4,658 (2022 - £2,571) and restricted funds carried forward of £141,008 (2022 - £121,102). Free reserves carried forward at 31 March 2023 are £34,445 (2022 - £12,326) after excluding designated funds of £4,658 (2022 - £2,571), unrestricted tangible fixed assets of £11,228 (2022 - £14,343) and restricted funds of £141,008 (2022 - £121,102).

The reserves remain below where the Trustees desire them to be, although they have improved. With continued support planned for the year 2023/2024 we expect that this picture will continue to improve further. The managing trustees consider that the Trust is in a satisfactory position to carry on its charitable activities.

##### Funding

The principal funding is from the Northern Ireland Housing Executive through its Supporting People's programme, donations from Living Rivers USA and tithes and offerings.

#### PLANS FOR FUTURE PERIODS

Living Rivers will continue to have prayer and teaching activities and working with other churches and ministries and offer prayer and support to individuals who contact us. A prayer tour of thirty people to Scotland and North West England occurred in May 2023.

The priority for the next period continues to be development of the Lighthouse Hostel. All usual activities will continue. We aim to appoint, and train a full staff complement. Last year there was a significant non-payment of service charge, which we will try and address.

We will be developing a planned programme to seek grants over the year.

We will continue to encourage the use of the client's computer suite. Use of the internet will also be developed and monitored log with the use of the Person-Centred software, used very successfully, by staff in client support.

We continue to pursue a significant opportunity, the Lighthouse, with full agreement by the Trustees. We are progressing a move from the current premises, hopefully, into individual apartments consisting of a bedroom, bathroom, kitchen, and dining / lounge area. We have support from Supporting People, Housing Executive, and the landlords for this move.

# LIVING RIVERS TRUST

## TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT *(continued)*

### YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

#### PLANS FOR FUTURE PERIODS *(continued)*

Steps are being made to set the Lighthouse up in its own Charitable Company. Both will be good for the Lighthouse Hostel allowing further development of the service, applying for grants currently not available due to the Christian nature of the Trust, and working with others. The new premises will be of considerable benefit to the clients and staff and is in line with the strategic direction for Homeless services. We will also be looking to provide some move on support for a period to clients who leave. At an appropriate time, we will also be looking at advice groups for clients, a dual diagnosis project, revisiting medicine management, and further developments to the ICare service.

#### RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE TRUSTEES

The charity's trustees are responsible for preparing the Trustees Annual Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

The law applicable to charities in Northern Ireland requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources of the charity for that period.

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

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records that 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 Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008, the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 and the provisions of the trust deed. The trustees 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.

In so far as the trustees are aware:

- There is no relevant audit information of which charity's auditors are unaware; and
- The trustees have taken all steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditors are aware of that information.

The trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the charity and financial information included on the charity's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

**LIVING RIVERS TRUST**  
**TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT** *(continued)*  
**YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023**

**AUDITOR**

Jackson Andrews offer themselves for re-appointment as auditor for the ensuing year.

Signed on behalf of the trustees



Dr Harvey Grahame-Smith  
Director of Operations

Date: 20/9/23

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