

*NI Knights Wheelchair Basketball club is a charity that aims to improve the physical health and wellbeing of people with disabilities and their families in Northern Ireland through the sport of wheelchair basketball*



## NI KNIGHTS WHEELCHAIR BASKETBALL CLUB ANNUAL REPORT

**Prepared by:** Colin Davis  
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**Charity No.** 103381  
**Date:** Year Ending 31<sup>st</sup> August 2023

### Governance:

Knights WBC are members of Disability Sport Northern Ireland (DSNI), Irish Wheelchair Association Sport (IWA) and British Wheelchair Basketball (BWB). All of the aforementioned organisations act as governing bodies for our various teams.

We have a nominated child protection officer (Mrs Mary McCabe), a policy covering child protection and all of our coaches and committee members have had Access NI enhanced checks.

The Club has obtained the Clubmark Scheme Award.

### Committee for Year Ending 31<sup>st</sup> August 2023:

**Chair:** *vacant*  
**Hon. Treasurer:** Rev Colin Davis  
**Hon. Secretary:** Mr Mark Fenton  
**Members:** Mrs Mary McCabe  
Mr Luke Marshall  
Mr Justin McIlroy  
Mrs Sarah Beattie

### Foundation & Charitable Aims:

The Knights WBC was founded in 1990 and officially became a registered charity in 2017. It was set up to provide opportunities for disabled people to get involved in team sport. The Club promotes a healthy lifestyle for disabled people and encourage social inclusion. The Club also welcomes participation and inclusion of able bodied members as well. Through the sport of wheelchair basketball we aim to improve the physical health and wellbeing of people with disabilities and their families in Northern Ireland.

## **Report for Year Ending 31<sup>st</sup> August 2023**

Whilst fundraising takes place at a variety of times throughout the club's financial year, the actual playing season is usually September to May.

This past year we have continued where able to improve the physical health and mental wellbeing of our members by providing sporting and social opportunities. Training takes place each week at the Hammer Youth Centre, Belfast on Thursdays. This consists of two sessions, the first for junior and developing members and also new members. Those who simply want to try it out are always welcome too. The second session on Thursday evenings is for senior players and those who are playing competitively.

Following new requirements, the Club now has a Covid Officer and appropriate protocols need to be followed to minimise risk for Club members.

Being a disability sport club and given the nature of disabilities of our members, some are considered in the vulnerable category so it is imperative the Club takes this into account, whilst also providing every opportunity.

The Knights are no longer able to run a team in the BWB GB League, but Disability Sport Northern Ireland now run a NI Team in this League (through their additionally run performance training sessions) and some of our members participate in this. Following the decision during the 2019/20 season to withdraw from the IWA Irish League, this leaves the newly organised by DSNI, NI League as the main opportunity for competitive wheelchair basketball. Through high level training run by DSNI, some of our members have competed with great success at the 2022 Commonwealth Games in Birmingham, representing Northern Ireland and also at other national level competitions in both ladies and mens teams.

This along with previous members who have competed at the Olympics with the GB squad, won a World Championship and even gone on to play wheelchair basketball professionally are great examples to inspire members and show what is possible, if people have the talent and the dedication and wish to pursue such goals.

In the past the Club has had various social events, including an End of Season Awards. Members have also been nominated for and sometimes won other sports awards (e.g. Belfast City Council and Mary Peter's Awards)

As members develop there is also the opportunity to enhance their own organisational and life skills by serving on our Club Committee or hoping to organise some of our activities.

Our playing membership has ranged from as young as 8 to 60 and come from all sides of the NI Community. Club benefits can be enjoyed by everyone, regardless of age, religion, ethnicity or disability.

The Knights works closely in partnership with Disability Sport NI as won of their flagship organisations to promote disability sport, most recently to help promote the disability hubs being set up in the different council areas. We are also helping them to promote other Wheelchair Basketball Clubs within Northern Ireland with a view to having our own national league and providing more opportunities for people to participate in the sport.

A number of our members have attained their Level 1 & 2 Coaching Certificates and we also have some who are trained up through DSNI as Match Table Officials.



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Our fundraising events, whilst essential to enable the Club to run the teams and participate in the various competitions, also are very important in raising the profile of disability sport and wheelchair basketball in particular. This is very often our 'shop window' to attract new members, but also gives members a sense of responsibility and achievement away from the basketball court.

Over the years we have been fortunate enough to also have had various sponsors, whose generosity has helped with kit sponsorship, transport and tournament sponsorship.

During the past season the following companies and organisations have sponsored us in regard to both playing leisure kits:

- People Playbook

### **Financial Statement**

Due to a large donation six or seven years ago, the Knights has been in a secure financial situation and this continues to be the case. The withdrawal from the GB League three years ago has significantly reduced our annual expenditure and so although this year our expenditure was slightly higher than income, the Club remains in a very comfortable financial position.

Club Income & Expenditure accounts can be seen on the Charity Commission NI website, along with the inspecting accountant's statement.

Signed:



Completed on behalf of the Trustees by Rev Colin Davis (Hon. Treasurer), Knights WBC