

# **Down Armagh Rural Transport Partnership**

(A company limited by guarantee, not having a share capital)

## **TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT**

for the financial year ended 31 March 2023

The trustees present their Trustees' Annual Report, combining the Directors' Report and Trustees' Report, and the audited financial statements for the financial year ended 31 March 2023.

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 company are also charity trustees for the purpose of charity law and under the company's constitution are known as members of the board of trustees.

In this report the trustees of Down Armagh Rural Transport Partnership present a summary of its purpose, governance, activities, achievements and finances for the financial year 31 March 2023.

The company 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 (Charities SORP effective January 2015), the organisation has implemented its recommendations where relevant in these financial statements.

### **Financial Results**

At the end of the financial year the company has assets of £779,923 (2022 - £639,428) and liabilities of £245,590 (2022 - £33,023). The net assets of the company have decreased by £(72,072).

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### **Trustees**

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

John Spiers  
John Magennis  
Robert John Verner  
John Kane  
Alan Gilmore  
William Archer (Resigned 22 February 2023)

### **Objectives and Activities**

Down Armagh Rural Transport (DART) provides affordable, accessible, community transport services in response to the needs of people living in the Craigavon and Banbridge area. DART secures grants and donations to support provision of subsidized transport for beneficiaries. DART deliver services using community minibuses and volunteer 's cars. DART provides information and advice to enable people to avail of various means of travel to enable access to local services. DART works in partnership with other transport providers to ensure alternatives and linkages to other transport services are available for individuals and community organisations.

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

#### Governing Document

Down Armagh Rural Transport Partnership is a company limited by guarantee governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association. In the event of the charity being wound up, the liability in the respect of the guarantee is limited to £1 per member of the charity. The company is under the control of the directors who are, therefore, acting trustees for the charity.

#### Appointment of acting Trustees / Directors

As described in the Articles of Association a new director may be eligible for appointment if 21 days before the annual general meeting, written notice is deposited with the registered office of the intended proposal, signed by a member and signed by the person being proposed, so as to indicate his/ her willingness to be elected.

#### Trustee Induction and Training

New trustees are briefed on their legal obligation under charity and company law, the content of the Memorandum and Articles of Association, the Board and decision-making processes and recent financial performance of the charity. Trustees are encouraged to view the Charities Commission website so as to gain a full understanding of trustee roles and responsibilities.

### **Principal Achievements 2022-2023**

Down Armagh Rural Transport (DART) Partnership Ltd, has continued to provide, through this accounting period, a range of public benefits through the development and delivery of a range of community-based transport and training services which reduce social exclusion and increase the quality of life for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged in our community.

In terms of service growth, passenger trips are up 51% on the previous year with over 25,000 trips delivered as DART continues a well-established growth trend in respect of the post-Covid environment, with Dial-A Lift services back to post-Covid levels.

Accredited training services have grown by 300% with 100 people training to accredited standards in either a MIDAS qualification or CPC Minibus D1.

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The accounting year 2022-2023 has also seen DART attract major funding from the Motability Community Transport grant. This £600,000 funding subvention from Motability will allow DART to diversify into a range of non-core services such as delivering specialised transport intervention to disabled children to allow them to participate more fully in school extracurricular activities and facilitating broader access for disabled people to health and social events. All of these successfully funded services have been developed to meet some of the identified gaps in the accessible transport network.

The three-year funding provided through the Motability Community Transport Fund has also enabled DART to purchase two new accessible minibus vehicles to add to the existing DART accessible minibus fleet.

Additionally, DART Direct (DART's social enterprise arm) has been providing full D1 minibus training during the accounting period for community drivers, through a social enterprise approach which offers a newly designed and fully structured training pathway for candidates to attain the professional driving qualification.



As general concerns mount concerning the stability of Department for Infrastructure core funding streams for Dial-A-Lift (DAL) and the Disability Action Transport Service (DATS), DART is acutely aware of the pressing need to diversify further beyond core grant and reliance on annual grants into a more fully diversified social enterprise operation with an emphasis on creating sustainable income streams for transport and training services.

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

The company engages pro-actively with legislation, standards and codes which are developed for the sector. Down Armagh Rural Transport Partnership subscribes to and is compliant with the following:

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

#### Reserves Policy

The Reserves policy has been updated during the course of the current year by the trustees. A new free reserves target of £232,000, equivalent to six months running costs, has been agreed. The capital replacement reserve target is still £280,000, which the trustees feel would be sufficient for the replacement of fleet vehicles and accessible equipment as they reach the end of their natural life cycle. No change was made to the contingency reserve.

The Trustees feel that these levels of reserves are essential to enable the Charity to continue to provide its activities for the foreseeable future. The Reserves Policy is an integral part of the charity's planning, budget and forecasts.

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#### Public Benefit

In setting our objectives and planning our activities for the year the trustees have given careful consideration to the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland's guidance on public benefit to ensure that the activities have helped achieve the charity purposes and provide a benefit to the beneficiaries.

Down Armagh Rural Transport (DART) Partnership exists to develop, deliver and maintain not-for-profit accessible community transport options for the public benefit of our members.

Our public benefit provided through our transport services reduces social isolation and social exclusion by reaching the hard to reach and providing access to essential services and connections to the wider community.

Our services improve the quality of life and health and well-being for our users by enabling access to health and medical facilities.

DART's services also target social need by facilitating access to training and employment opportunities for our members.

Our organisation is committed to community development principles and we work in close partnership with other organisations and charities engaged in promoting the relief of persons who are in need through the provision of appropriate services.

Other direct benefits include the promotion of volunteering and training which provides public benefit to groups and communities and the provision of accredited driver training which enhances the skills and personal development of community volunteers.

#### Auditors

The auditors, Daly Park & Company Ltd, (Chartered Accountants) have indicated their willingness to continue in office in accordance with the provisions of Section 485 of the Companies Act 2006.

#### Certification Statement

We confirm that the DFI grant has been used solely for the purposes intended and in accordance with the terms and conditions of the grant.

Approved by the Board of Trustees on 27.6.23 and signed on its behalf by:

John Spiers  
Director



John Magennis  
Director



## Down Armagh Rural Transport Partnership

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### STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES

for the financial year ended 31 March 2023

The trustees, who are also directors of Down Armagh Rural Transport Partnership 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 company and of the net income or expenditure of the company for that period.

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

- select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP
- 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 company will continue in operation.

The trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the company's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006 and. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the company 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 (information needed by the company's auditor in connection with preparing the auditor's report) of which the company's auditor is unaware, and
- the trustees have taken all the steps that they ought to have taken as trustees in order to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the company's auditor is aware of that information.

Approved by the Board of Trustees on 27.6.23 and signed on its behalf by:

John Spiers  
Director



John Magennis  
Director

