

## **TRUSTEES REPORT FOR YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

**Charity Name:** Walkway Community Association

**Charity Reg No:** 103713

**Public Address:** 1-9 Finvoy Street, Belfast, County Down, BT5 5DH

### **Trustees:**

The following served as charity Trustees during the year and up to the date of this report:

- Mr Stephen McDonald
- Mrs Nuala Symington
- Mrs Violet Hudson
- Mrs Mandy Lee
- Mr Colin Simpson
- Mr Andrew Steed
- Mrs Ann Grierson
- Ms Whilma Harvey
- Mrs Arlene Llewellyn
- Mrs Janice Hill
- Mrs Catriona McCabe

**Responsibilities:** The Trustees are responsible for overall strategy and management of the organisation. The day-to-day management of the charity, including staff and financial matters. Everyday work matters are delegated to the Centre Manager, Support Worker and Youth Workers. Our volunteers fulfil other roles in the organisation and help in many day-to-day activities. The trustees meet every month including the annual AGM meeting.

### **Objectives and Activities:**

Walkway Community Association is founded to provide a range of activities and services to residents of the Ravenscroft/Bloomfield area. Aiming to build a stronger, safer, resilient community. Walkway Community Association provides local community development support through programmes and activities such as youth work, young mothers and toddlers, women's groups, senior women's group. We also work with local nurseries and creche providers to support local families.

- The advancement of education
- The advancement of health or the saving of lives
- The advancement of citizenship and community development
- Contribute to improving peoples quality of life and provide practical support and signposting to services in areas such as housing, benefits, personal development and health & wellbeing.

### **Who Walkway Community Association helps:**

- Adult training
- Carers
- Children (5-13 years)
- Community safety/crime prevention
- Ethnic minorities
- General public
- Interface communities
- Men
- Mental Health
- Older people
- Parents
- Preschool (0-5 years)
- Specific areas of deprivation
- Unemployed/low income
- Voluntary and community sector
- Volunteers
- Women
- Youth (14–25 years)

### **How we help:**

- Advice/advocacy/information
- Community development
- Cross border/cross community
- Education/training
- Playgroup/after schools
- Relief of poverty
- Volunteer development
- Youth Development

### **Chairpersons Remarks**

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, I am pleased to report that Walkway Community Association has continued to deliver high-quality programmes and services throughout the year, despite ongoing financial pressures and rising operational costs. Our team has remained focused on our strategic objectives, ensuring that resources are used effectively to meet the needs of our community. We have seen increased engagement across all areas of our work, reflecting both the relevance of our services and the growing demand within the community. The Trustees remain committed to strong governance, transparency, and accountability, and we are grateful to our staff, volunteers, and partners for their continued dedication and support.

Stephen McDonald

## **Achievements and Performance:**

The past year 2024-25 has been another year of outstanding achievements and success for Walkway Community Association, its staff and volunteers. We continue to co-design and deliver programmes in the Bloomfield/Ravenscroft area and the wider community in East Belfast. In this recording period we achieved more than the agreed targets and were able to implement programmes at short notice in response to emergent community needs. Walkway Community Association is committed to delivering under community development and capacity building therefore much of the activity relates to delivering this objective.

The organisation has been able to deliver a comprehensive programme despite the many challenges for the organisation and the community, dealing with inflation and the cost-of-living crisis. We are experiencing higher running costs and recognise that there are limited opportunities for funding to meet the increasing needs of the community.

Walkway Community Association continues to deliver programmes and projects designed to meet the needs of our members and residents. We prioritise the family support working with children, young people and their parents/family members. Our strategic direction is to help those most in need and to provide services, resources and support in order to improve the quality of life of our residents. We will continue to develop our programmes and strategies to help the most vulnerable in area.

Our Vision:

**To work towards making Walkway a community that people feel part of, and play their part in.**

Our Aims:

- Implement the aims and objectives of the Strategic Plan for 2022-2025
- To provide and develop services for families and members of our community.
- To provide programmes, support and resources that meet the needs of our community.
- To advance education and training.
- Work with other agencies and organisations to promote good community relations, religious and racial harmony, equality and diversity.
- We continue to host a range of support organisations to enable local access to much needed services, preventing the need to travel outside the area so that people are not excluded from support through lack of means or access to transport.

## **Programmes and Activities 2024/25**

- Seasonal Events/Programmes – Valentines, St Patricks, Easter, Summer, Family Fun Day, Halloween, Christmas Family Event, Carol Service, Carol Singing, Clean Ups Walkway Community Association organise and deliver these community bonding events in order to improve wellbeing and reduce social isolation. More than 1800 people participated in these events/activities during this year.
- Trinity Theatre Arts – Dance Classes
- Centre for Health & Well Being – Complimentary Therapies
- Counselling Services
- Ravenscroft Nursery School – Gym classes and events
- Happy Hookers – Senior Ladies Crochet & Knitting Group – reduces isolation, health & wellbeing programmes

We also accessed funding from Live Here, Love Here. Sophie, with support from volunteers and staff from BCC, worked on designing and building our Community Garden. This programme continues to develop, we are looking forward to the future and implementing the plans for the garden.

### **Youth – Supported by Education Authority**

- Health & Wellbeing Programmes including Mental Health/Sport
- Community Relations, Equality and Diversionary programmes – New Lodge YC, Single Identity Programme
- Social Action Projects – Clean Ups, Seniors Christmas Tea, Walkway CREW
- Personal Development Programmes
- Community Safety Projects – PSNI/PCSP/NIFRS/Lagan Rescue/NIAS
- Pop-Ups – Diversionary Programme
- Outreach/Detached Sessions
- Residentials
- SKYE Programme – Education Authority
- Summer Programme
- Seasonal Events

### **Women's Group**

- Take 5 Health & Wellbeing Project
- Arts & Crafts Sessions
- Women's Health Information Sessions
- Community Relations with Short Strand Women's Group
- Community Event Support
- Christmas Fair
- Organised breakfast clean-up

### **Young Mum's Groups supported by East Belfast Sure Start & Apex Housing**

- Provide creche facilities for up to 16 children
- Programmes for 20 young mums
- Health & Wellbeing
- Reduce Isolation
- Cross Community Project
- Job specific training
- Paediatric First Aid Training
- Ending Violence Against Women and Girls

### **Parent & Tots – In partnership with East Belfast Sure Start**

- Sensory Activities/Experiences
- Stay and Play
- Independent Play
- Parent & Child/Child & Parent bonding sessions
- Facilitated sessions, early years professionals
- Speech & language
- Sound bath therapy

This is just a sample of the work being carried out by Walkway Community Association, it touches on the key elements of the projects. We continue to support vulnerable people and families in their time of need and those who are suffering hardship. Assisting at Christmas with hampers, toys and contributions for utilities, school uniforms and accessories. Providing meals and lunches during seasonal programmes when children are not at school and providing food vouchers. We work in partnership with local churches to facilitate a hardship programme to address the issues of those most in need.

We are seeing an increase in numbers for our services and in those who participate in our programmes and events. The increase in footfall shows that the resources and activities provided are meeting the needs and demands of the community. The organisation works in collaboration with other local groups to ensure that we increase our impact and find solutions to the issues we face. Our volunteers are the backbone of the organisation and some of them have been with us from the inception of the organisation in 1992.

Walkway Community Association is represented on boards and committees throughout East Belfast and beyond. We also participate in conferences/consultations, think tanks and community planning events aimed at developing future programmes for the delivery of community development initiatives. The organisation will further develop relationships and partnership working opportunities with local agencies and community organisation to reduce duplication and ensure effective service delivery in the area.

This annual report was approved on Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> August and signed on behalf of the board by:

Stephen McDonald .....  
Chair

