

Company Number

NI631599

Charity Number

NIC103924

Charity Name

Hope 4 UR Life

**HOPE 4 UR LIFE LIMITED**

(Limited by Guarantee)

Report of the Trustees and Unaudited Financial Statements

For the year ended 30<sup>th</sup> November 2023

# HOPE 4 UR LIFE LIMITED

For the year ended 30<sup>th</sup> November 2023

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## HOPE 4 UR LIFE LIMITED

For the year ended 30<sup>th</sup> November 2023

### Information

#### Trustees

Sandra Wright – Chair  
Emma McCormack – Dep Chair  
Alan D Nixon  
Nathaniel Hamilton  
Stephen Greyston  
Bronagh Duggan  
Marie Therese O'Neill  
Cara Taylor

#### Trustee Secretary

Stephen Greyston

#### Registration Number

NI631599

#### Charity Number

NIC103924

#### Registered Office

1,2 & 5 North City Business Centre  
2 Duncairn Gardens  
Belfast  
BT15 2GG

#### Accountants

D W McKillen & Co  
32 Enterprise House  
Enterprise Crescent  
Lisburn  
BT28 2BP

#### Bankers

Danske Bank  
Donegall Square West  
Belfast  
BT1 6JS

## **HOPE 4 UR LIFE LIMITED**

**For the year ended 30<sup>th</sup> November 2023**

### **Trustees Annual Report**

The Trustees present their report and financial statements for the year ended 30<sup>th</sup> November 2023.

### **Aims, Objects, Benefits and Activities**

#### Aims

Hope4Life NI - our aim is to serve our community locally with integrity and excellence, to help those who need supported with their mental health and wellbeing to offer practical tools and techniques for them to cope better with life's challenges; to engage, equip and empower individuals with mental ill-health with a wellbeing framework of programmes that mentor and support them with what they need to recover and stay well. The fundamental aim is to supply a pro-active, early intervention approach to reducing the unsustainable and rising levels of mental ill health within all areas of our society. We believe that through the delivery of our primary intervention training and mentoring programmes we can and will affect significant change.

#### Objects

The charity's objects are to provide support in relation to mental health issues. The policies adopted in furtherance of these objects are to provide education in respect of mental health issues to both adults and children.

The objects of the organisation are the advancement of education and the advancement of early intervention mental health and wellbeing programmes for children, young people and adults. Through the provision of our early intervention programmes for the prevention and recovery from stress, anxiety and depression. To educate and develop strong role models, mentors and key supporters to help in further developing and supporting those suffering from mental health issues, socially vulnerable and those most at risk within our society.

#### Benefits

1. Delivering specialist wellbeing training for mentor schemes for young people, adults, clergy and the elderly within our society.
2. Promote cross-community alliances to deal with low self-esteem, stress, anxiety and depression, involving Teachers, Parents, Community Youth Workers, Churches and Community Associations.
3. To develop positive mental health and wellbeing in young people to enable them to engage appropriately within schools, third level education and the world of work; to assist them in leading and contributing to effect positive change within their communities; to train them to understand how they can resolve misunderstandings, tensions or conflict within their local communities.
4. Providing specific wellbeing training within the workplace environment to raise awareness and reduce the high levels of stress, anxiety and depression to help diminish the high rates of absenteeism and the increasing drain on our local economy through lost revenue.
5. To work alongside Local Authorities, Charitable Organisations, Community Housing Groups and Care Homes to support and deliver training to the following minority groups:

- Asylum-seekers and refugees
- Gay, lesbian, bi-sexual or transgender people
- People suffering from mental health problems
- Gypsies and Travellers
- Migrant workers
- Offenders and ex-offenders
- Older people who feel isolated within the community
- People who have experienced violence or abuse



6. Where relevant and advantageous we will work with other training providers to further develop or enhance our programme delivery and outcomes; making these available for all within our local communities.

7. Developing referral schemes in partnership with Local Authorities, Charitable Organisations and Community Youth Teams.

The organisation exists to benefit individuals within our society who are suffering from mental health issues to develop individuals to become emotionally resilient and to encourage strong role models for the socially vulnerable and at risk within our communities, we aim to impact on the increasing number of people suffering year on year.

#### Activities

The trustees have paid due regard to guidance issued by the Charity Commission in deciding what activities the charity should undertake.

Our focus is on primary intervention rather than focusing on purely recovery models. We deliver 2 prescriptive programmes called WRAP® – Wellness Recovery Action Plan and MHFA – Mental Health First Aid, both of these programmes have been adapted to include additional practical, fun and engaging elements to assist retention recall and implementation. In other words, we work with real situations, in the real world of a working environment with practical solutions and positive outcomes. We deliver the 2 day, level 1 and 5 day, level 2 WRAP® programme, and also the MHFA level 1 – these programmes are delivered by the Advanced Level Facilitators in NI.

We also deliver bespoke training programmes, from stress management to supervision and reflection, these are designed and delivered by highly trained clinicians.

In 2016 we created and designed a new programme, based on the findings of local young people who were struggling to find a resource to better explain mental illness and how to recognise earlier those triggers and early warning signs to combat and overcome mental ill health.

The programme was called Uberheroes – we used Heroes to teach the foundational characteristics of wellbeing and the Villains to represent the characteristics of many of the issues facing our young people today – issues such as anxiety, isolation, depression, fear, grief, self-harm, abuse, suicide and more... This programme was designed by young people for young people and has been a great success in reducing mental illness, offering hope and support to overcome mental ill-health.

Our Uberhero comics are all real stories of local children and young people across Northern Ireland. We interview local kids to let them share their experiences of mental health issues covering many topics, these children and young people are given the opportunity to use their voices to share their experiences with thousands of others through our work with schools and other partnerships we have reaching thousands of children and young people each year.

Our Uberheroes Comics never show any recognisable images of these children or their geographical surroundings, each comic character is also given the chance to decide on a pseudonym for the comic, this can be a name using the Capital letter of their own name or something completely different. Our recordings are only heard by the people from our organisation who interview them, and these are deleted once the comic is complete.

All our comics are delivered by highly experienced facilitators who come from a clinician or teaching background. We offer the children a unique and safe environment to discuss mental health issues that focus on the facts not the fears told in a comic format but based on real experiences of local children. This is followed by a facilitated session where the children learn about triggers and those early subtle changes in thoughts and behaviours as well as uncovering ways to create action plans or strategies to develop resilient thinking, to recognise symptoms earlier and to manage or avoid future mental ill health.



Our programmes have been delivered to over 28,000 children and young people who have been supported through our engaging, educational, interactive and fun workshops, ensuring that the children have a high level of retention recall of the subjects and the comic characters which has and will work to their benefit as they grow and develop into teenagers and young adults.

We also train our Youth Ambassadors in a programme called IPS - Intentional Peer support, put simply, this is a person who can offer support by virtue of the fact that they can empathise and can relate to others who are now in a similar situation. That is also referred to as "lived experience". Young people who have similar experiences [for example: self-harm, suicidal thoughts, abuse, the loss of a parent or sibling etc], can better relate and can offer more authentic empathy and validation than those without a shared experience. They are often able to offer each other practical advice and suggestions for change that "trained professionals" may never have considered.

### **Achievements and Performance**

The charity obtained significant funding during the year, and it is hoped that, going forward, similar levels of funding can be obtained.

The charity was contacted by over 6000 children through our online advice section called "Ask an Uberhero a question" on our website. The charity, through the help of freelance clinicians and counsellors were able to work with these children and young people to directly help them or to get them in to see counsellors within 10 days of contacting us or to signpost them onto other charities who we knew would be able to support their individual needs.

We ran our 3rd in person "Uberheroes Acts of Kindness Awards" ceremony in a local hotel with 270 guests including our 30 Finalists chosen from the hundreds of entries. These children and young people were nominated for their selfless acts of kindness to siblings, parents, neighbours, community incentives [foodbanks and homeless projects] these entries were so inspiring to read. We asked local businessmen and women, and those involved in community groups to be on the judging panel. They had the unenviable job of picking only 30 finalists who were able to join us with 2 family members for a night where they were the stars of the show. This has been so well received by the finalists, parents and sponsors and we are now organising next year's Awards.

We are launching a new programme "Uberheroes – My Origin Story" – this programme has been devised by young people for young people, prior to general health questionnaires completed at each of the school sessions we attend with the Uberheroes comic sessions. We were able to assess that at peak times across the P6 and especially in the P7 year groups in November, February & May. We have been working with children & young people through our network of Primary and Secondary Schools across NI to ensure that we are really hearing what is going on. We engaged with hundreds of children and young people to seek their advice and listen to their personal experiences of P7 and Y8.

We intend to deliver this programme to approximately 30 – 40 Schools visiting the pupils in each year group 6 times throughout the academic year, following each group from P6 into P7 and following them to their new school in Y8 & Y9 to support them through the challenges and vulnerabilities of transitioning from Primary and Secondary education.

We will be able to help and support them building their confidence, self-belief, ability to communicate their feelings, problem solving and resilience building at this challenging time in their young lives.

### **Notable Achievements for 2022- 2023 financial year**

- ➡ Our response to the data collated from the general health questionnaires highlighting the issues being faced by the children in P6, P7 & Year 8.



- Ran additional focus groups data conducted across the aforementioned year groups and including Y9, covering many of the specific issues facing these children. Their honest and sometimes raw reflections on how they are feeling and their experiences of transitioning.
- We ran a series of meetings with P6, P7 & Y8 teachers, head of year, Principals and Vice Principals too, their views, reflections and recommendations were invaluable.
- Workbooks, covering topics and issues covered in each of the respective year groups, along with the Teacher's Manuals are now printed.
- We have tested some of the transitioning sessions with this years P7's to help support them with tools and techniques and has also offered us real learning for this new programme.
- We have delivered Uberheroes workshops to 8,837 children this academic year across 289 schools.
- We also delivered 5 face to face Adult training programmes to approx 196 people.
- We were named charity partner for PwC and trained 45 PwC staff as volunteer facilitators (around 30 of whom came out with us)
- We welcomed new connections with the following for Kindness Awards and other collaborations with - Used Cars NI, EY, Noted Ireland, Zen Orthodontics - Christmas donation in addition to Kindness Awards, 1 Stop Auto Shop, Power NI, Terry Bradley, USEL & Clanmil Housing.
- Further developed links with, Movie House Cinemas, Charles Hurst Jaguar, Core Impact, Quo Pro Recruitment, Fish City, Synapse and Hastings Group.
- Nadia leading the Batton of Hope campaign in NI – H4L hosted the finishing celebration.
- We further developed links with Ulster University with a second student placement Megan McNeill
- Made connection with QUB one lecturer
- Applied for QUB Masters Students to do placement with us – come to fruition this year Placement student, Jessica Caldwell from Stranmillis
- Nadia received training at a Youth Suicide Conference
- Meetings with Naomi Long Minister of Justice
- Meetings with Michelle McIlveen Minister of Education and Robin Swan Health Minister
- Met with Laura Small from Belfast Giants and opened a relationship, one of their players came to Batton of Hope event and they have donated numerous tickets for us to distribute.
- Creating a UK License with the support of PwC
- Summer programmes with Belfast Exposed and Saints Youth Centre, Dunmurry
- One Yong World Conference, Nadia made a lifetime Ambassador
- Invited to Queens Empower Event on Children's Mental Health.
- We also had the opportunity to directly engage with parents, who were so delighted with their children's interaction with us post the pandemic and how we have really helped to reduce their child's anxiety and fear levels.
- Our "Ask an Uberhero a question" is still helping 100's of children.
- Our website traffic increased by 11,000 weekly views.
- Our social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter & Instagram) all increased by an additional 8,000 + reach and interactions.

## **Impact and Benefits**

The charity meets the public benefit requirement by providing support and education to children and adults in relation to mental health issues. The charity has engaged with a number of key political parties and members, community leaders and other third sector organisations in furtherance of these objects.

The charity has delivered, in partnership with a number of schools, community groups and charitable organisations, services for Young People to provide early intervention mental health and wellbeing programmes to help children, young people and adults to recognise and prevent mental health issues such as self-harming, abuse, anxiety, stress & depression, fear, grief or suicidal thoughts, offering them educational support services to help prevent these issues arising. The charity also works with organisations who provide support services for children with additional needs such as Autism, DSD, Asperger's Syndrome and ADHD, suicide & self-harm prevention services helping to support the young people they work with, their parents and wider family circle.

The charity primarily works with schools and community groups highlighting the mental health issues that many of our young people are struggling to understand, manage and seek the support they need to help them recover.

The charity was contacted by over 500 children on the online advice section of the "Ask an Uberhero a question" website. The charity, through the help of freelance clinicians, were able to help many children and young people to get the help they needed to prevent them suffering from mental health issues.

The charity is supported by the National Lottery Community Fund, via their EYP programme; this enables them to support 3 full-time members of staff throughout 3 years as well as enabling the team to continue delivering the Uberheroes programmes. This funder is the largest contributor to our work.

In all of this the Trustees have regard to the Charity Commissions public benefit requirement guidance.

## **Conclusion**

In conclusion, this trustee report reflects the dedication, passion, and hard work of our Hope4Life staff team and volunteers in making a positive difference in the lives of individuals facing mental health challenges across Northern Ireland. We are immensely grateful for the unwavering support of our donors, volunteers, staff, and community partners who have stood by us in our mission to promote mental health and well-being.

As we look towards the future, we remain committed to expanding our reach, enhancing our programs, and advocating for greater awareness and support for mental health issues. With your continued support, we are confident that we can make even greater strides in improving the mental health outcomes of those in need.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to everyone who has been a part of our journey and invite you to join us in our continued efforts to create a mentally healthier and more compassionate community. Together, we can make a lasting impact on the lives of those affected by mental health challenges. Thank you for your trust, commitment, and partnership.



## Financial Review

It is the policy of the charity that un-restricted funds that have not been designated for a specific use should be maintained at a level equivalent to between three to six month's expenditures. The trustees consider that reserves at this level will ensure that, in the event of a significant drop in funding, they will be able to continue the charity's current activities while consideration is given to ways in which additional funds may be raised. This level of reserves has been maintained throughout the year.

## Structure and Governance and Management

We have 3 Full time posts, with 2 part-time posts and 6 Free-lance facilitation posts as well as a group of 6 volunteers.

Our CEO, Relationship Development Manager and Youth Development Manager are the 3 full time positions, with our Finance Manager and Youth Development Officer being part-time positions.

We use the Charity Commissions Code of Good Governance and have in place the necessary personnel from our staff team and board to help with adherence to this code.

We have an external Independent Accountant and an internal Management Accountant to help with the financial reporting and monthly management accounting.

## Trustees



Trustees who served during the year were as follows;

Sandra Wright – Chair  
Emma McCormack – Dep Chair  
Alan D Nixon  
Nathaniel Hamilton  
Stephen Greyston  
Bronagh Duggan  
Cara Taylor

## Declarations

The Company has taken advantage of the small companies exemption in preparing the report above.

The Trustees declare that they have approved the Trustees report.

Signed:		
Print Name:	<u>SANDRA WRIGHT</u>	<u>EMMA MCCORMACK</u>
Position:	<u>Trustee</u>	<u>Trustee</u>
Date:	<u>15<sup>th</sup> April 2024</u>	