

South Antrim Community Transport

Trustees' Report

The trustees, who are directors for the purposes of company law, present the annual report together with the financial statements of the charitable company for the year ended 31 March 2023.

Trustees

Mr H Marron, Chairman
Mrs E A Bell MBE, Treasurer
Mr R Armour
Mrs M P Bogle
Mr J M A Farquhar
Mr H Gribbin
Mr J Greer
Mrs H C Hendry
Mr V Robinson
Mrs D Hopper

Objectives and activities

Purposes and Aims

Our charity's purpose as set out in the objects contained in the company's memorandum of association is to:

Reduce social isolation by providing a community transport service for such of the inhabitants of South Antrim and its environs ("the area of benefit") who are in need of such a service because of age, sickness or disability (mental or physical), or poverty, or because of a lack of availability of adequate and safe public passenger services, without distinction of sex, race or political, religious or other opinion as set out in Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1988

Ensuring our work delivers our aims

We review our aims, objectives and activities each year. This review looks at what we achieved, and the outcome of our work in the previous 12 months. The review looks at the success of each key activity and the benefits they have brought to those individuals and groups of people we are set up to help. The review also helps us ensure our aim, objectives and activities remained focused on our stated purposes. We have referred to the guidance contained in the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when reviewing our aim and objectives and in planning our future activities.

The focus of our work

Our main objectives for the year continue to be the provision of accessible and affordable transport in the South Antrim area to individuals and groups living in South Antrim and its environs ("the area of benefit"), particularly people with reduced mobility.

How our activities deliver public benefit

Our main activities and who we try to help are described below. All our charitable activities focus on the provision of accessible and affordable transport in the South Antrim area to individuals and groups living in South Antrim and its environs ("the area of benefit"), particularly people with reduced mobility.

South Antrim Community Transport

Trustees' Report

Who used and benefited from our services

South Antrim Community Transport is a membership only organisation which provides an affordable, accessible transport service to individuals and groups from within our designated area that have difficulty accessing conventional forms of transport.

For the year April 2022 to March 2023, South Antrim Community Transport provided the following services:

- Dial-a-lift service for our individual services.
- Community Wheels service, allowing individuals to travel outside the operational area.
- Group Transport Service
- Door-to-Door service on behalf of Disability Action in the urban towns of Antrim and Larne.

We achieved this with the financial services from Department of Infrastructure (DFI), the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA), Disability Action (DA), and The National Lottery Community Fund for Northern Ireland.

During the financial year, we provided these services with the assistance of volunteer drivers who have registered with us to provide transport for our clients. Equal access to our services is an important issue for us. We have monitored access to our services by recording gender, disability, marital status, ethnicity, sexual orientation and religion of our clients. We believe equal access to our services is vital to our success. All information provided by our clients is covered by the Data Protection Act 1988.

Financial Review

Our continued success in the past year has been due to the continued sound financial management and the support of both staff and volunteers. The directors 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. They are responsible for safeguarding the assets of the company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention of fraud and other irregularities. The directors have secured new funding for the year 2023 - 2024 as outlined below.

The directors can confirm the Department for Infrastructure grant has been used solely for the purposes for which it was provided.

Principal Funding Sources

Aside from the income generated by our Group Transport Service provision, the Directors have secured funding from the Department for Infrastructure until June 2023. In addition to this, funding has also been secured from Disability Action, a subsidy from the Department of Agriculture Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA). Again, this funding has only been secured until June 2023. We also receive funding from The National Lottery Community Fund for Northern Ireland, and we have a new funding stream from Motability UK from July 2023 to June 2026.

Reserves Policy

The Management Committee has examined the charity's requirements for reserves in light of the main risks to the organisation. It has established a policy whereby the unrestricted funds not committed or invested in tangible fixed assets held by the charity should be 3 months. These reserves are needed to meet the working capital requirements of the charity and the Management Committee is confident that at this level they would be able to continue the current activities of the charity in the event of a significant drop in funding.

The reserves required in March 2024 are £281,109. Our net assets on 31st March 2023 are £377,235.

South Antrim Community Transport

Trustees' Report

Plans for the Future

South Antrim Community Transport aims to continue providing an affordable, accessible transport service to individuals and groups from the South Antrim area and its environs ("the area of benefit") that have difficulty accessing conventional forms of transport.

To achieve these aims we propose the following goals in order to adapt our services to meet the changes that challenge us all, while continuing to provide a valuable service to our current members.

For the year April 2023 to March 2024 South Antrim Community Transport will again provide a Dial-A-Lift service on behalf of the DFI and DAERA through the smart pass scheme (funding has only been agreed up to 30 June 2023). The Community wheels project is funded by the National Lottery until June 2025. We have successfully been awarded funding from Motability UK from June 2023 to June 2026 which will increase our service provision for persons with a disability throughout our schemes.

Other services to be provided include Group Services for members and South Antrim Community Transport have a service level agreement with Disability Action to provide an urban 'Door to Door Service' for the Antrim and Larne areas.

Structure, governance and management

Governing Document

The organisation is a charitable company limited by guarantee, incorporated on 3rd June 2004 and recognised as a registered charity by HM Revenue and Customs. The company was established under a Memorandum of Association which established the objects and powers of the charitable company and is governed under its Articles of Association.

If upon winding-up or dissolution of the Company there remains, after the satisfaction of all its debts and liabilities, any property whatsoever, the same shall not be paid to or distributed among the members of the company, but shall be given or transferred to some other charitable institutions having objects similar to the objects of the Company, and which shall prohibit the distribution of its or their income and property to the extent at least as great as is imposed on the Company under or by virtue of Clause 5 hereof, such institution or institutions to be determined by the members of the Company at or before the time of dissolution, and insofar as effect cannot be given to such provision, then to some other charitable object.

Recruitment and Appointment of Management Committee

The directors of the company are also charity trustees for the purpose of charity law and under the company's Articles are known as members of the Management Committee. Under the requirements of the Memorandum and Articles of Association the members of the Management Committee are elected to serve for a period of three years after which one third of the directors shall retire from office but can put themselves forward for re-election on a rotational basis. All members of the Management Committee give their time voluntarily and received no benefits from the charity. Any expenses reclaimed from the charity are set out in note 10 to the accounts.

Trustee Induction and Training

Most trustees are already familiar with the practical work of the charity. Additionally, new trustees are invited and encouraged to attend a short governance training to familiarise themselves with the charity and the context within which it operates.

South Antrim Community Transport

Trustees' Report

Organisational Structure

The Management Committee of 10 members meets bi-monthly and is responsible for the strategic direction and policy of the charity. At present the committee has ten members from a variety of professional backgrounds relevant to the work of the charity. The secretary also sits on the committee.

A scheme of delegation is in place and day to day responsibility for the provision of the services rest with Manager. The Manager is responsible for ensuring that the charity delivers the services specified and that key performance indicators are met. The Manager is responsible for the day to day management of the Service, individual supervision of the staff team and also ensuring that the team continues to develop their skills and working practices in line with good practice.

Risk Management

The Management Committee conducted a review and updated the risk assessments for the office premises and drivers.


Reappointment of auditor

In accordance with section 485 of the Companies Act 2006, a resolution for the re-appointment of TB Millar & Co as auditors of the charity is to be proposed at the forthcoming Annual General Meeting.

Small companies provision statement

This report has been prepared in accordance with the small companies regime under the Companies Act 2006.

The annual report was approved by the trustees of the charity on 25 May 2023 and signed on its behalf by:


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Mr H Marron
Trustee