

Youthlife Limited

Trustees' Annual Report for the Year Ended 31 March 2023

The Directors are pleased to present their annual report together with the financial statements of the Charity for the year ended 31 March 2023 which are also prepared to meet the requirements for a Directors' report and accounts for Companies Act purposes.

The financial statements comply with the Charities Act (NI) 2022, Companies Act 2006, the Memorandum and Articles of Association, and Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102) (effective 1 January 2019.)

The company is governed by a Memorandum and Articles of Association dated 31/03/09. The company number is NI 72222 and the registered office is 23 Bishop Street, Derry/Londonderry, BT48 6PR. The company is a registered Northern Ireland charity - reference NIC 105568.

Directors and trustees

The directors of the charitable company (the Charity) are the trustees for the purpose of Charity Law.

The trustees during the year and at 31 March 2023 were as follows:

Ms Dorothy Hutchinson	Ms Lisa Archibald
Ms Paula Cunningham	Mr Alan McClure
Mr Giovanni Doran	Mrs Tina Fallon
Ms Catrina McFeely	

Chair's report

2022 - 2023 was a successful year for Youthlife realising their ambition of service delivery across the Western Trust with counselling delivered face to face from our Derry City Centre office and outposts active in Limavady, Omagh and Enniskillen on CAMHS behalf, as well as counselling online and over the phone. The small staff team have exceeded targets and reached a much higher number and, wider demographic of young people than expected this year and we hope to maintain this momentum.

We are especially pleased with the performance of the Waypoint and peer mentoring project, providing a wide range of training and therapeutic activity to 250 young people and, producing a theatre performance tackling the difficult topic of suicide. The project has been active in schools and the community offering advice and support during periods of transition and providing a pathway to counselling for those pupils in need. The personal and professional development of Youthlife's Youth Advisory Board continues to ensure a Youth-led organisation, by and for young people.

I want to sincerely thank each member of staff and the board for their continuing dedication to Youthlife and to express how much I appreciate their input, dedication and support throughout the year.

The board wish to thank the staff, counsellors and volunteers for their continuing support and hard work during the year.

Thanks also to our funders and supporters who have helped sustain Youthlife throughout 2022-2023.

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Our purposes and activities

The purpose of the charity is to support children and young people aged 5-25 years who have experienced bereavement, separation, and loss. Youthlife offer counselling, art, play and music therapies and peer mentor support.

In shaping our objectives for the year and planning our activities, the directors have considered the Charity Commissions guidance on public benefit requirement (PBR1). We endeavour to encourage a wide range of children, young people and their parents and carers to take advantage of our expertise and community signposting services.

Our Volunteers

The Charity is governed by a Board of Directors who are all volunteers; The Board of Directors oversee the financial affairs and administration and ensure the smooth running of the Charity's affairs in accordance with legal obligations, funders requirements and ethical standards. Youthlife promotes Youth-led services and has been establishing a Youth Advisory Board who are participating in training and projects to reinvigorate the Youthlife space. Our Volunteer Peer Mentors are young people aged 16-25 with lived experience of bereavement, separation and loss who undertake OCN qualifications and personal development workshops in order to help others. Thanks to Children In Need funding young people who require additional support upon exiting counselling can avail of Peer Mentor Support.

Thanks to volunteers Jacinta Bradley and Sean Doherty who volunteered their time and expertise offering therapeutic support to children, young people and their families.

Achievements and performance

Our main achievement continues to be the charities timely and effective response to all referrals Youthlife received April 22-March 23. During this period we have maintained our relationship and contract with WHSCT in relation to providing services for approximately 44 children and young people in the Northern sector of the Western Trust and continuing delivery of an additional contract offering services across the Western Trust reach reaching an additional 100 children and young people.

In addition Youthlife are pleased to have secured National Lottery Community Funding to secure a self-referral pathway to our services following bereavement; reducing CAMHS waiting list and ensuring children receive the right support at the right time. This project will last 4 years providing 640 counselling sessions per year. This has developed and strengthened partnerships across the Children and Adolescent Mental Health statutory, community and voluntary sectors. Our Virtual Youthlife service continues to reach geographically and demographically as many teenagers in particular feel more confident attending sessions online or on the phone. Youthlife have an outpost in Limavady and in 2022-23 extended face to face services into Omagh and Enniskillen.

In this period April 22 - March 23 Youthlife have engaged 244 children and young people in 1915 counselling sessions including 115 clients (704 sessions) delivered on CAMHS behalf. In addition,

250 young people engaged through the Waypoint project.

23 young people engaged in peer mentoring OCN training.

6 families enjoyed a day of equine therapy together.

27 young people enjoyed confidence building through dance and football.

15 young people learned healthy eating on a budget.

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Achievements and performance - continued

6 active Youth Advisory Board members.

22 young people from Oakgrove College participated in a Transitions programme.

50 young people from Longtower Primary school participated in a Transitions programme.

More than 100 young people were involved in personal development workshops and the production of Youthlife's Theatre project and performance 'If only they knew.'

5 children availed of un-time-limited Art therapy (48 sessions) through the Looked after Children's services, Children's courts and Youth Justice; our Art Therapy is highly regarded especially where talking therapies are not an option or due to trauma or communication difficulties.

Youthlife have retained a skilled team and our reputation for quality services and meeting mental health need continues to grow.

Youthlife performance is measured through SDQs (Strength and difficulties questionnaires) and Youthlife evaluations. The SDQ responses measure improvements over a range of indicators including emotional and physical symptoms and relationships with friends, family and peers. Response indicated Youthlife is an effective intervention, the majority of clients moving from 'abnormal' or 'borderline' category to 'normal' (SDQ terminology) levels over the range of indicators. Feedback from parents and clients is highly positive with noticeable improvements within the 8-10 week period.

Following 1:1 counselling:

- " 86% of recent participants have reported 'yes, counselling has helped me,' 14% still felt unsure.
- " 94% agree or strongly agree 'I am feeling more in control of my life.'
- " 87% agree 'I value and respect myself more.'
- " 88% 'I feel I can cope more with everyday life.'
- " 78% 'my self esteem has increased.'
- " 79% 'I have made plans for the future.'
- " 86% 'I am managing my relationships better.'

Financial review

Funding of £111,321 was secured during the year and donations and fundraising totalled £2,000. Direct costs including wages and programme costs were £130,939, administration overheads were £34,668 and depreciation of £461 was charged. This resulted in a deficit for the year of £52,747 which was funded from opening reserves of £120,079. At the year end the Charity had reserves of £67,332.

The Directors were pleased with the results for the year. The unrestricted reserves at the year end were £9,229.

Reserves policy and going concern

Reserves are needed to bridge the gap between the spending and receiving of income and to cover unplanned emergency costs. Due to the nature of the activities of the Charity no material unplanned costs are expected. The major costs are wages, programme costs and rent but funding is/will be in place to cover most of these costs. The Directors consider that a satisfactory level of unrestricted reserves to be in the region of £7,000.

The financial review above shows unrestricted reserves at the year end of £9,229. The Directors have reviewed the circumstances of the Charity and consider that these reserves are adequate to fund activities for the foreseeable future. The directors are of the view that the Charity is a going concern.

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Plans for future periods

Youthlife continue to offer counselling services face to face and remotely across Derry and Strabane council and wider Western Trust area. We will focus on delivering the extended CAMHS contract for the remainder of 2023/2024 and promoting our self-referral pathway and peer mentor support to those most in need.

Youthlife is focused on empowering young people have a trained and active Youth Advisory Board; feeding into Board decisions, advising our services and increasing the developments of the Youthlife community in centre and online.

Future plans include an increase in 'alternative therapies' including equine therapy, use of art, sport, dance and music to improve confidence and mental health. And, the reintroduction of our popular WAIN (Where Am I now?) programme delivered in schools and 'Managing grief' workshops offered within the community following a tragedy or loss.

An outline strategy has been developed and this coming year Youthlife board of directors will review again to create a comprehensive 3 year strategy including an action plan.

Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities

The Charity Trustees (who are also the directors of the Youthlife Limited for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing a Trustees' Annual Report and financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the profit or loss of the company for that year.

In preparing these the Trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- state whether applicable UK accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the company will continue in business.

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. 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.

This report has been prepared in accordance with the special provisions for small companies under Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006.

This report was approved by the Board on 3 November 2023 and signed on its behalf by



Dorothy Hutchinson

Chairperson

3 November 2023