

DEVELOPING HEALTHY COMMUNITIES (DHC) LIMITED

(A company limited by guarantee)

Trustees' Annual Report (including Directors' Report & Strategic Report) for the year ended 31 March 2025

The trustees present their report and the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2025. The trustees, who are also directors for the purposes of company law and who served during the year and up to the date of this report are set out below. This report is prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting By Charities: Statement of Recognised Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019).

Introduction

The Trustees of Developing Healthy Communities (DHC) are pleased to present our Annual Report and Financial Statement for the year ended 31 March 2025. This report outlines the achievements and contributions of DHC during the period 1st April 2024-30th March 2025 and is testament to the organisation's ongoing commitment to improving population health, in partnership with funders, statutory bodies, and the wider community and voluntary sector.

As a strategic organisation within the Derry and Strabane district, DHC is dedicated to fostering cross-sector partnerships aimed at tackling health inequalities and improving health outcomes.

Structure, governance and management

Governing Document

DHC is a charitable company limited by guarantee and does not have a share capital (company registration number NI640806). It is recognised as a charity by HM Revenue and Customs and is registered with the NI Charities Commission (registration number NIC105780). The organisation operates under its Memorandum and Articles of Association.

Organisational Structure

The company is governed by a Board of Directors who also serve as the charity's trustees. Trustees are selected based on their professional backgrounds and skills to ensure diverse and experienced representation. The names of those who served during the year are listed on page 1, alongside details of the registered office and professional advisors.

The Board meets quarterly to oversee performance and make decisions related to financial and operational matters. Additional meetings are held as required to address urgent governance issues. The Board operates in accordance with the charity's constitutional objectives.

Appointment and training of trustees

DHC is committed to equity, diversity and inclusion and therefore openly advertises vacancies on the Board in order to attract a range of people with diverse skills and experience which will benefit the people and communities we serve. The Board is committed to providing support and training for Board members to help them to fulfil their role, including for people who have not served on a board before. New trustees are nominated by current trustees.

Induction and training of new trustees is provided the Chief Executive and Chairperson who provide new members with information on the role and function of DHC, Terms of Reference for Board members, Annual Reports and Minutes of previous meetings. Most trustees, due to their experience and backgrounds, are already familiar with the work of the charitable company.

Principle risks and uncertainties

Management have conducted a review of the major risks to which the charitable company is exposed and systems have been established to mitigate those risks. The trustees continually monitor their exposure to financial risk. Given the size of the charitable company, the trustees have not delegated the responsibility of monitoring financial risk to a sub committee.

Risks identified, such as the financial viability and sustainability of the charitable company, have been reviewed to ensure that a level of funding is maintained that is necessary for the charitable company to continue to meet its objectives. The trustees continually strive to source additional or new funding sources.

DEVELOPING HEALTHY COMMUNITIES (DHC) LIMITED
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Trustees' Annual Report (including Directors' Report & Strategic Report)
for the year ended 31 March 2025

Business, cyber and financial risk are managed by ensuring the company have appropriately qualified staff equipped with the necessary skills and experience and that effective and secure ICT systems are in place.
Internal risks are minimised by the implementation of controls and procedures for the authorisation of all transactions.

Organisational Management and Staffing

Developing Healthy Communities (DHC) Limited is managed by the Chief Executive Edel O'Doherty. She is responsible for overseeing the activities carried out by the charitable company. Her responsibilities include the management of all staff and their duties, the provision of a full range of administrative and clerical duties and for the preparation of financial reports to the Board of Directors and Funding Bodies.

Developing Healthy Communities (DHC) Limited is an equal opportunities employer committed to positive policies on recruitment, training and career development for staff members regardless of religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation.

Key management remuneration policy

The key management personnel of the charitable company are the directors (trustees) and senior management. The trustees are not remunerated for their services and did not receive and were not reimbursed for expenses during the year. The remuneration of senior management is set by the trustees and reviewed annually and is normally increased in line with inflation. The benchmark used in setting remuneration is based on the remuneration of other key management personnel in similar comparable organisations.

Directors

The directors (also the trustees) who served the charity during the period were as follows:

Emma Kevitt	Claire Mulrone
Diane Marshall	Sharon Williams
David Kelly	Will Ennett
Michele Murphy	
Mary MacIntyre (appointed 27th June 2024)	
Leona McNicholl (resigned 28th November 2024)	

DEVELOPING HEALTHY COMMUNITIES (DHC) LIMITED

(A company limited by guarantee)

Trustees' Annual Report (including Directors' Report & Strategic Report) for the year ended 31 March 2025

Objectives and activities

The principal objectives and activities of the charity during the year continued to be the promotion of health improvement and reduction of health inequality throughout Northern Ireland by the provision of training, support and awareness projects carried out on a multi-sectoral partnership basis.

Public Benefit-

In setting these objectives the trustees' have considered the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland's guidance on public benefit to ensure that its activities have helped to achieve its principal objective of public benefit for its beneficiaries.

Developing Healthy Communities (DHC) Limited is a charitable organisation registered with Northern Ireland Charities Commission.

The company commenced activities on 1 April 2018 on which date all assets and liabilities of 'The Derry Healthy Cities Project' were transferred to the company.

The company is a charitable company limited by guarantee. It is governed by a memorandum and articles of association.

During the year, the charity carried out a number of activities and projects in the furtherance of its objectives:

1. DHC continued to lead Derry City and Strabane's designation to the World Health Organisation's European Healthy Cities Network.
2. DHC's CLEAR Project administered small grants on behalf of the PHA to build health and wellbeing capacity within small community organisations, in support of the NI Mental Health Strategy and the NI Suicide Prevention Strategy 'Protect Life'. The Clear project also delivered training to improve mental health and emotional wellbeing and prevent suicide. Through this project DHC also continued to oversee the PHA's quality standards for the delivery of services in this field.
3. DHC's Health@WorkNI 'Work Well, Live Well' programme delivered a diverse range of health interventions including training, health promotion campaigns, health checks, etc to workplaces across the Western Trust area, aiming to improve the health and wellbeing of the adult workforce. This work reflects best practice as set out by the World Health Organisations 'healthy settings' approach.
4. DHC facilitated the Families Voices Forum through our regional Bereaved by Suicide project, which enables family members bereaved by suicide to contribute effectively to discussion and decision making in relation to suicide prevention.
5. DHC coordinated and administered the Neighbourhood Health Improvement Programme (NHIP) grants on behalf of the PHA to six local community groups.
6. DHC worked in partnership with the NW Community Network and Ulster University as part of the UK wide 'Ideas Fund' to support a range of mental health and wellbeing projects in local communities within the Derry and Strabane Council area.
7. DHC contributes to the DCSDC and Community Foundation for Northern Ireland's Acorn Farm project by delivering on the 'I Can Cook' strand of the project.

DEVELOPING HEALTHY COMMUNITIES (DHC) LIMITED

(A company limited by guarantee)

Trustees' Annual Report (including Directors' Report & Strategic Report) for the year ended 31 March 2025

DHC'S Vision and key objectives

DHC is a strategic organisation committed to fostering intersectoral partnerships for health and harnessing our collective assets to tackle health inequalities and improve the quality of life of the population. Our work is set firmly within the WHO Healthy Cities and Regions Framework, and we play our part in the implementation of several NI Regional Government Strategies such as Health and Wellbeing 2026: 'Delivering Together' (DOH), the NI Public Health Strategy 'Making Life Better' and the DCSDC's Community Plan and Strategic Growth Plan.

In 2023 DHC launched our new three-year strategy setting out our vision until 2026 ie "We want people to achieve a healthy and happy life, so that they can thrive in the place they call home".

To achieve that vision we focus on five guiding principles:-

- Place based working
- Collaboration and partnership
- Building community capacity
- Demonstrating impact
- Research and innovation

As part of this process, Developing Healthy Communities works to; -

- Advocate and build capacity for health and wellbeing by facilitating events and sharing knowledge and administration of small grants.
- Lead on the delivery of innovative projects including training, community development for health and sustainability.
- Foster strategic intersectoral alliances within the Derry and Strabane district to address the wider social and economic determinants of health, adopting a holistic approach based upon the WHO Phase VII framework.
- Facilitate consultations with local people on health, wellbeing and sustainability which shape policy, practice investment and delivery.
- Monitor and evaluate our progress and impact in delivery of programme.

Strategic Report

Achievements and performance (including principal risks and uncertainties, development and performance and key performance indicators)

This report highlights a transformative year for Developing Healthy Communities (DHC) in 2024-2025, a period marked by intensive activity across our diverse project portfolio. We built capacity and momentum through focused programmes delivered in partnership with leaders from multiple sectors. DHC operated at both strategic and grassroots levels, influencing statutory policy and practice while also delivering practical, community-based health interventions with measurable outcomes.

Through innovative collaborations with international, regional, and local stakeholders, we continued to share best practice to promote healthier lifestyles and confront deep-rooted health inequalities. Guided by a clear vision and a steadfast commitment to health equity, the DHC team not only met all Key Performance Indicators but also broadened our influence, strengthened partnerships, and cemented our role as a catalyst for positive change in the region.

The following represents the work of DHC during the period from 1st April 2024-25.

DEVELOPING HEALTHY COMMUNITIES (DHC) LIMITED

(A company limited by guarantee)

Trustees' Annual Report (including Directors' Report & Strategic Report) for the year ended 31 March 2025

Events and Conferences

- **Derry and Strabane Healthy City & District Annual Conference - 'Reimagining Systems: Mobilising the Creative Arts for Healthier Lives' (Sept 2024)**

Held on 4th September, the annual Derry and Strabane Healthy City & District Conference brought together over 110 delegates for a dynamic and inspiring event that explored the transformative role of the creative arts in promoting health and wellbeing. Titled 'Reimagining Systems: Mobilising the Creative Arts for Healthier Lives', the conference showcased a robust evidence base for creative health and featured best practice examples from across the UK and Ireland.

The programme included powerful video presentations that celebrated the vibrant creative talent within the Derry City and Strabane District Council area. These visual stories highlighted how creative arts are being effectively harnessed to support the health and wellbeing of local communities demonstrating both innovation and impact in this growing field.

- **Workplace Health Champions Celebration Event (Feb 2025)**

As part of DHC's ongoing commitment to promoting health and wellbeing in the workplace, a special Workplace Health Champions Celebration Event was held to recognise the dedication and impact of local workplace champions. The event, attended by 35 Health Champions from a range of organisations, celebrated efforts in advancing health promotion within their respective workplaces.

These champions were acknowledged for their role in supporting colleagues to make healthier lifestyle choices, fostering positive workplace environments, and embedding the principles of wellbeing into daily working life. Each participant received an award in recognition of their contribution to the Workplace Health Programme.

The event was supported by the Public Health Agency (PHA), whose representatives commended the champions and the wider programme for its role in supporting the regional public health agenda. The celebration also provided an opportunity to share success stories, network across sectors, and reaffirm the importance of peer-led health promotion in the workplace.

- **Clear Project - Building Hope in the West**

As part of Developing Healthy Communities' commitment to raising community awareness around mental health, well-being, and available support services within the Western Health and Social Care Trust (WHSC) area, a dedicated event was held at the Strabane Enterprise Agency in December 2024. The forum was attended by 35 participants and featured presentations from a diverse range of statutory, voluntary, and community-based organisations, all of whom deliver vital mental health and suicide prevention services in the region.

DHC Programmes and Projects

WHO Healthy Cities - Derry and Strabane Healthy City and District

DHC continues to lead on the intersectoral approach to improving health and wellbeing through its coordination of the World Health Organisation's Healthy Cities Programme in the Derry and Strabane District. Through strategic leadership within the Healthy Cities Leadership Group, DHC brings together representatives from business, community, and public sectors to elevate health as a core priority on the local agenda.

Our work is guided by the WHO Healthy Cities Phase VII Framework, which adopts a place-based, equity-focused approach to addressing health inequalities through six interconnected themes: People, Place, Planet, Prosperity, Peace, and Participation.

DEVELOPING HEALTHY COMMUNITIES (DHC) LIMITED

(A company limited by guarantee)

Trustees' Annual Report (including Directors' Report & Strategic Report) for the year ended 31 March 2025

In 2024-25, the Healthy City and District initiative made significant progress in embedding these principles into local policy, planning, and service delivery. The Healthy Cities Leadership Group, chaired by the Public Health Agency, provided strategic oversight and strengthened multi-sector collaboration to drive sustainable improvements in population health.

As the WHO Healthy Cities Programme is a politically led global movement, DHC reinforced local leadership by engaging Mayor Seenoi Barr in October 2024. This engagement culminated in a formal presentation to the Council's Community and Health Committee in November, securing strong political endorsement for Derry and Strabane's application to WHO Phase VIII, due to open in June 2025. The upcoming phase will expand to include an additional theme 'Preparation' in response to the global challenges and instability of geo-political, environmental, economic and health systems bringing the total to seven.

DHC also completed the formal Phase VII Evaluation, highlighting key strategic developments, outcomes from 2020 to 2025, and examples of good practice to inform future planning.

Additional milestones included:

- Advancing the Whole Systems Approach to Obesity
- Establishing a Creative Healthy Cities Taskforce
- Participating in the WHO Wellbeing Economy pilot, aligning health with sustainability and economic policy
- Contributing to the Western Area Integrated Partnership Board, focused on integrated, preventative models of health and social care

Community-based initiatives progressed across the following priority areas:

- **Whole Systems Approach to Obesity:**
Launched in partnership with local stakeholders. DHC has joined the Leadership Group, with funding proposals underway for a dedicated Project Manager.
- **NI Protect Life (2) Implementation Group:**
DHC played a central role in suicide prevention activities, reporting on bereavement support, training, grants administration, and adherence to Public Health Agency (PHA) quality standards.
- **Western Diabetes Group:**
Monthly diabetes awareness sessions were introduced, with plans for a formal Diabetes Education Programme commencing in 2025.
- **Skeoge Health Inequalities Group:**
In collaboration with Ulster University, a Community Health Needs Assessment will be conducted in early 2025 to guide targeted interventions in one of the region's most deprived areas.
- **Creative Healthy City & District Initiative:**
A dedicated Taskforce was established following DHC's Annual Conference. The initiative has secured mayoral endorsement and will align cultural engagement with local health strategies.
- **Cross Border Mental Health Group - (VEEP) Voice, Equality, Experience, and Power (VEEP):**
DHC are part of the VEEP project which aims to understand the structural root causes of inequality and its ties to mental health and social wellbeing, beyond the scope of traditional medical care. The project seeks to build community development approaches to Mental Health, Poverty and Inequality on an all-island basis.

DEVELOPING HEALTHY COMMUNITIES (DHC) LIMITED

(A company limited by guarantee)

Trustees' Annual Report (including Directors' Report & Strategic Report) for the year ended 31 March 2025

With increasing political support, enhanced partnerships, and strong community engagement, the Healthy Cities Programme continues to serve as a leading model for inclusive, sustainable, and system-wide health leadership across the Derry and Strabane District.

DHC Clear Project

Small Grants Funds

In 2024-25, the Small Grants Fund continued to grow, with DHC administering the programme on behalf of the Northern Ireland Public Health Agency (PHA) in support of the region's Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Strategies. The fund aims to empower local community organisations to deliver initiatives that promote mental health and wellbeing, aligned with the PHA's Five Ways to Wellbeing framework.

During this period, the Clear Project distributed a total of £1,504,138.49 through short-term funding programmes across the five Health and Social Care Trust areas. This funding supported 475 community groups, with Level 1 grants of up to £1,000 and Level 2 grants of up to £5,000.

As a result, 38,868 individuals participated in PHA/Clear-funded programmes, while 2,177 volunteers contributed over 31,268 hours to support the delivery of grassroots services, demonstrating a significant community-led effort to improve mental health and wellbeing across Northern Ireland.

Clear Sports Grants

Through the CLEAR project, a total of £25,936.60 was distributed in small grants ranging from £300 to £500 to local sports clubs to support the purchase of sports equipment. As part of the funding conditions and in alignment with the Northern Ireland Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Regional Strategies, 179 sports coaches took part in Suicide Awareness and Mental Health training. The objective of this training was to equip coaches with the knowledge and skills to recognise signs of poor mental health and intervene appropriately when individuals may be at risk. The training delivered included six safeTALK sessions and Sport NI's Mental Health and Wellbeing programme.

Clear Project - Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Training

Through DHC's CLEAR Project, 14 training programmes focused on mental health, emotional wellbeing, and suicide prevention were delivered to 192 individuals working within the community and voluntary sector. The training aimed to build capacity and confidence among frontline staff and volunteers in responding to mental health challenges.

Courses delivered included:

- Mental Health First Aid (2 sessions, 77 participants)
- Self-Harm and Autism (2 sessions, 34 participants)
- The Person Behind the Behaviour (2 sessions, 32 participants)
- Alcohol Management and Relapse Prevention (9 participants)
- Motivational Interviewing (15 participants)
- Self-Care (13 participants)
- Anger Management (12 participants)

Participants reported positive outcomes across all courses, including increased skills, enhanced knowledge, deeper understanding, and greater confidence in managing mental health and suicide-related issues within their communities.

DEVELOPING HEALTHY COMMUNITIES (DHC) LIMITED

(A company limited by guarantee)

Trustees' Annual Report (including Directors' Report & Strategic Report) for the year ended 31 March 2025

Clear Project - PHA Quality Standards

DHC provides a leadership and assessment role for the PHA Quality Standards for community-based services promoting mental and emotional wellbeing and suicide prevention.

As part of this work during 2024-25, the DHC Clear Project undertook 2 independent assessments of the Quality Standards within organisations chosen by the PHA and produced detailed reports with recommendations for service improvement for each agency. Between March 2024 -2025, 138 community organisations had registered onto the QS portal for self-assessment against the PHA Quality Standards.

Health at Work - Work Well, Live Well Programme

"Health@Work NI" is a Public Health Agency's regional initiative to target workplaces where health inequalities are likely to be most prevalent, including those with a high proportion of low paid, manual, male, sedentary and migrant workers. DHC delivers the "Work Well, Live Well" (WWLW) on behalf of the PHA within the WHSCT area.

In 2024-2025, forty-one new workplaces signed up to the Workplace Health Support Service, accessing information, and support to develop a healthier workplace. This included thirty two new Workplace Health Champions trained online through the Work Well Live Well Programme. The DHC WWLW programme provided consultancy and mentoring to fifteen workplaces to complete health and wellbeing needs assessments and action plans.

DHC's 'Work Well, Live Well' programme worked in partnership with WHSCT, AWARE, HSENI, Menopause NI, Diabetes UK, Money Advice Service and many others to deliver training and health promotion campaigns to workplaces at all levels of the programme. In 2024-25, thirty employees completed Mental Health First Aid Training online, approximately 25 participants attended Menopause Awareness Workshops/Events. 21 Organisations attended line manager workshops on Managing Mental Health. 17 Organisations attended Diabetes Awareness Sessions and Financial Wellbeing Workshops.

15 Workplaces were supported and mentored to deliver on the organisations wellbeing plans and supported to plan and deliver a range of health promotion activities within there own organisations to include Health Checks, Cancer Awareness, Healthy Eating, Physical Activity, Stress Management.

Health Champions were given support and access to a range of wellbeing training opportunities and programmes.

Health Champions were celebrated at a Celebration Event attended by 35 Health Champions attended to received awards at an event attended by PHA.

Since April 2024 a total of 668 employees have participated in Health Checks across 22 workplaces in the Western Trust region. These interventions are in line with the World Health Organisation's focus on workplace 'settings' to improve health by providing workers with personalised information on their health status and changes to lifestyle.

DEVELOPING HEALTHY COMMUNITIES (DHC) LIMITED

(A company limited by guarantee)

Trustees' Annual Report (including Directors' Report & Strategic Report) for the year ended 31 March 2025

Bereaved by Suicide - Families Voices Forum (FVF)

Families Voices Forum (FVF) Northern Ireland | April 2024 - March 2025

The Families Voices Forum continued to strengthen its work supporting those bereaved by suicide over the last year. The Forum held a successful engagement event at the Everglades Hotel, Derry, in March 2025, showcasing local services and placing a spotlight on the importance of the voice of young people in suicide prevention and mental health discussions.

The Forum has grown to 88 members, supported by approximately 15 core volunteers who contributed an estimated 700 hours this year. Weekly 1:1 sessions and subgroup meetings provided continued support, with four full Forum meetings held.

New promotional materials were developed and accessibility was improved through hybrid meeting formats and a newly developed Families Voices Forum website hosted on the DHC platform.

Work continued with Ulster University to evaluate the Forum's impact, with findings due in Summer 2025. The Forum also provided feedback on bereavement protocols within the NI Prison Service and continued to engage in high-level strategic work, including the Towards Zero Suicide Advisory Board and local Protect Life Implementation Groups across all Trust areas.

The Forum has made efforts to increase representation from underrepresented groups including youth, LGBTQIA+, and the Travelling community. These groups were specifically targeted through social media outreach, community networking and events. A youth-focused event was held to elevate young voices in the suicide prevention landscape and work is underway to formalise their involvement within the Forum.

Families Voices Forum remains actively involved in regional suicide prevention strategy and policy shaping, including representation on the Regional Protect Life Steering Group, SD1/CRP meetings and partnership work with other organisations.

Work has also begun on continuing an on-hiatus campaign to work toward publishing "If Only I Could Tell You: Letters of Hope and Compassion". Meanwhile, development of a revised induction process and training plan is underway, with a commitment to quarterly training sessions going forward, ensuring appropriate engagement, accessibility and purpose from the beginning.

Ideas Fund - Community Research Collective

In 2024-25, DHC continued its active participation in the Community Research Collective, a collaborative initiative that evolved from the Ideas Fund project. Led by the NW Community Network and Ulster University, and supported by representatives from the community sector, the Collective aims to consolidate learning and extend the impact of the Ideas Fund. Its core focus is on dismantling barriers to public health research and strengthening meaningful, equitable partnerships between Ulster University and community organisations. This phase of work was supported by £91,286 in funding from the Ideas Fund, enabling the Collective to build on the valuable insights gained through individual community-led projects.

DEVELOPING HEALTHY COMMUNITIES (DHC) LIMITED

(A company limited by guarantee)

Trustees' Annual Report (including Directors' Report & Strategic Report) for the year ended 31 March 2025

The Ideas Fund, delivered by the British Science Association and funded by Wellcome, has supported the development and implementation of innovative community-led research projects across the Derry and Strabane District Council area since 2021. In its first round, the scheme awarded £343,000 to eight community groups, followed by £429,000 to seven groups in the second round. These projects primarily focused on engaging under-represented communities, including people with disabilities, young people, and residents of rural areas.

Building on this success, the Ideas Fund has selected three projects from the DCSDC area to receive an Evidence Building Grant of up to £150,000 each. These grants are designed to support the generation of robust evidence and to share the broader impacts of community-researcher collaboration-particularly its influence on public health research and on the communities involved.

Acorn Farm

DHC remains a key delivery partner in the Acorn Farm project, a flagship initiative led by Derry City and Strabane District Council in partnership with the Community Foundation. As part of this collaboration, DHC is responsible for delivering the 'I Can Cook' strand, which aims to engage up to 1,000 families across the district in growing and cooking healthy, sustainable food.

Activity under this programme increased significantly during 2024-25, building on pilot sessions delivered in the previous year. Highlights included participation in major community events and expanded outreach through targeted community engagement.

As part of Open Farm Weekend, DHC delivered educational food activities to 128 participants over two days, including 87 schoolchildren. These sessions focused on exploring taste, food preferences, and the journey from seed to plate. Similar activities were also delivered at FestHiveal at the Gasyard Centre, reaching 49 participants, including 24 children.

Community-based sessions were held in collaboration with Currinierin Community Association and The Conservation Volunteers at Brooke Park. In addition, the inaugural Acorn Farm Stew Fest was delivered across ten community venues, where facilitators prepared traditional stews and led discussions on the relationship between traditional foods, health, and seasonality. This event reached over 100 participants.

Feedback from Stew Fest was overwhelmingly positive: 96.5% of the 92 respondents reported gaining new skills or knowledge related to growing food, cooking, and healthy eating. More than 85% rated the venues, activities, and delivery as 'very good.'

Neighbourhood Renewal Health Improvement Project (NHIP)

DHC administered the NHIP funding (£36,358) on behalf of the PHA to 6 community groups in areas of deprivation. This funding is designed to support grassroots capacity building for health and wellbeing and is used for a broad variety of local programmes to engage local people in health and wellbeing events. This funding is matched by the Department for Communities to sustain local community development within the DCSDC area.

In response to DHC's work on Pre-Diabetes/Diabetes Prevention (Western Diabetes Group), agreement was secured during 2024-25 from representatives of the Neighbourhood Health Improvement Project to test out community-based education for those at risk of diabetes. Sessions were held across several locations and feedback was positive. Work is ongoing to develop a community-based education programme to be rolled out across the WHSCT in the coming months.

DEVELOPING HEALTHY COMMUNITIES (DHC) LIMITED

(A company limited by guarantee)

Trustees' Annual Report (including Directors' Report & Strategic Report) for the year ended 31 March 2025

Challenge and Solutions

Despite a year marked by both achievement and challenge, DHC has continued to demonstrate resilience, adaptability, and impact. While funding constraints and staffing capacity posed ongoing pressures, the organisation remained financially and operationally stable throughout 2024-25. We are actively addressing these challenges through sustained engagement with funders and a strategic focus on securing additional investment to strengthen our core capacity and enable future growth.

The dedication of our team has been central to our success. In 2024-25, DHC not only met all key performance indicators across our funded projects but also made significant contributions to collaborative efforts with a range of partner organisations. Through our events, publications, and active participation in cross-sectoral initiatives, we have extended our reach and influence locally and beyond.

Looking ahead to 2025-26, we do so with optimism and a renewed commitment to our mission.

Benefits to the end users and wider society

- The directors are satisfied that the performance of the company during the year as detailed in the foregoing paragraphs, in terms of both financial and operational results, is in line with the charity's constitution and key objectives.

Financial review (including reserves policy)

The net income for the year was £24,209 (31 March 2024 - net expenditure £50,611). The net income for the year will be added to the funds brought forward. Total funds and reserves at the end of the financial year were £376,526.

The charity aims to ensure that liquid funds held at any point in time are sufficient to cover expenditure equivalent to 6 months core running costs and all winding up liabilities.

At the year-end date, the charity held cash at bank (on current or short-term deposit accounts) of £707,805. Total expenditure for the year was £2,391,032 (excluding depreciation). Expenditure included ring fenced funds of £1,556,218 which were distributed in small grants. The charity, therefore, has adequate funds in line with its reserves policy. The directors are satisfied with this outcome and will continue to prudently review the level of reserves held by the charity in line with current levels of funding and operating costs.

Plans for future periods

Looking ahead to the forthcoming financial year the directors will continue to govern the company in line with the constitution to achieve DHC's objectives. The directors will continue to focus on diversifying income sources to support the long-term sustainability and consolidation of the organisation. We will also strengthen our partnerships with local agencies and expand our reach to more rural and underserved areas.

Statement of Trustees' responsibilities

The trustees, who are also the directors of the company for the purposes of company law, are responsible for preparing the Annual Report and the 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 incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP 2019 (FRS 102),
- make judgements and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;

DEVELOPING HEALTHY COMMUNITIES (DHC) LIMITED
(A company limited by guarantee)

Trustees' Annual Report (including Directors' Report & Strategic Report)
for the year ended 31 March 2025

- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements, and
- 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 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.

Statement of disclosure of information to auditors

We, the trustees of the charitable company, who held office at the date of approval of these financial statements, each confirm, so far as we are aware, that:

- there is no relevant audit information of which the charitable company's auditors are unaware; and
- we have taken all steps that we ought to have taken as trustees in order to make ourselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the charitable company's auditors are aware of that information.
- we have taken all steps that we ought to have taken as trustees in order to make ourselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the charitable company's auditors are aware of that information.-

Auditors

A resolution proposing that McDaid McCullough Moore be reappointed as auditors of the charity will be put to the Annual General Meeting.

Small company provisions

This report has been prepared taking advantage of the small companies' exemption of section 415A of the Companies Act 2006.

In approving the Trustees' Annual Report, we also approve the Strategic Report included therein, in our capacity as company directors.

On behalf of the Board


Emma Kevitt (Chair)
Trustee

6 November 2025