



**NI Charity Ref: 107118**

**TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT**

**YEAR ENDING MARCH 2025**

## **1.0 Introduction**

This Annual Report relates to the year April 2024 to March 2025 which has been a strong year of operation and delivery for Walking Free. The Receipt and Payment accounts have been presented in the attached documents.

Walking Free was constituted in August 2018 under a Constitution and Governing document which is provided in Appendix 1.

## **2.0 Walking Free Purpose**

WALKING FREE was set up in Northern Ireland UK in August 2018 with a remit across the UK and Ireland to raise awareness of addictions and provide assistance and support to people who are suffering from life controlling issues by helping them detox, get ready for rehabilitation, undertake rehabilitation. We provide a range of resources both online and books as well as one to one personal mentoring to addicts to get free from their addiction.

This leads to the second purpose as Walking Free supports former addicts to stay free from their addiction, to find a job, career, further study or education and to develop skills for life such as managing finance and relationships. Some of this is done directly and some through referrals to other faith based organisations and churches who offer specific courses and training.

The third purpose provides one to one support in an effort to increase the abilities, life skills and self-confidence of such communities in the area of benefit. We work with those affected by life controlling issues such as alcohol and drug addiction, self-harming etc and provides support directly to these individuals on a face to face basis, as well as live streaming to help them to get free from these addictions and to stay free.

The fourth purpose to raise awareness is primarily carried out through school visits to Schools in Northern Ireland, England, Scotland, Wales and Republic of Ireland) to raise awareness of the distress caused by drugs and alcohol and to share stories of former addicts who are now free to encourage school kids to make great life choices.

## **3.0 Key Achievements**

The charity has had a strong year of delivery of support and training to those in addiction and facing life controlling issues. The charity continued many of its operations online via Recovery Groups and live streaming. Several hundred individuals were supported remotely via regular phone calls, some were referred to other ministries or rehabilitation centres for specialist support.

Walking Free Radio Station (Recovery Radio International) [www.recoveryradiointernational.com](http://www.recoveryradiointernational.com) continues to provide content and programming with testimonies, interviews with Rehabilitation centres, advice on Recovery from a Christian perspective and much more.

Walking Free is continuing to support the churches in Limerick and Tullamore with development and outreach into their communities. Limerick continues to see growth and great unity and fellowship, they had their 'Fire Conference' in June 2024 which was a great success.

Recovery Retreats continue to take place in Scotland with circa 100 attendees at each event, at Inchinnan Bible centre near Glasgow Airport.

John has continued to undertake a range of speaking engagements across the UK and Ireland and he and Trish moved to be based in Tipperary, Ireland in August 2023 as part of the agreement he is providing support to the rehab. His involvement in the rehab has grown significantly to the degree that we are influencing the programme to a large degree.

Two churches in Limerick and Tullamore receive regular practical support from John and both churches are doing well. Limerick church is growing quickly, they are on the streets 5-6 days a week and are leading many to Christ. (Over 3500 in last year)

John is also writing a new book Reflection on Recovery. Walking Free livestreaming on Facebook live and YouTube has proved a great means of reaching more people, thousands are tuning in and it's proving to be a fantastic way of reaching our and helping people all over the world.

Planning is well underway for a Walk from the north point to south point in Ireland which will take place commencing in June 2025, training people to support addicts and recording content for the radio station.

#### 4.0 Public Benefit requirement

The Trustees confirm that all activity undertaken in the reporting year fulfilled the obligations as set out in the public benefit statement. Many people have been helped, impacted and supported in a positive and beneficial way in line with the public benefits. Walking Free provided a range of benefits which flow from its charitable purposes which are for all of the public within the area of benefit and all benefits are beneficial. In the case of relieving the needs of people who are lost and hurting, the public benefit was the advancement of health and in some cases saving of lives, individuals becoming well again as a result of the intervention.

#### 5.0 Financial Overview

The Receipts & Payments Accounts for the period set out details of the income and expenditure. As at March 2025, Walking Free generated a net unrestricted surplus of £20,572.00

The Trustees agreed this equates to the reserves policy that requires a minimum of 3 months operating expenditure of the charity, which would equate to approximately £18,000 in the current reporting period.

#### 6.0 Trustees

The following Trustees served as Trustees in the period April 2024 to March 2025.

Dr George McIlroy  
Mr Trevor Johnston  
Ms Natalie Clarke  
Mr Greg Turnbull  
Mrs Janet Johnston

No Trustee received any emoluments during the period of this report, nor were there any expenses claimed by Trustees in their capacity as Trustees during this reporting period.

7.0 Confirmation

This report was adopted by the Trustees at its annual general meeting on 3 December 2025

Signed

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Trevor Johnston', written over a horizontal dashed line.

**Trevor Johnston**

**Chair**

# **WALKING FREE**

## **Constitution and Governing Document**

**1. NAME**

The charity's name is WALKING FREE.

**2. MISSION**

WALKING FREE seeks to help people in Northern Ireland who are struggling in brokenness, poverty, life controlling issues and addictions, loss of friends and family members through suicide; homelessness, sickness and all kinds of other social problems.

**3. THE PURPOSES OF THE CHARITY ARE:**

- to relieve the needs of people who are lost and hurting in society locally, nationally and internationally, in particular those suffering from life controlling issues such as drug and alcohol addiction, and assist them in their spiritual, physical, educational and emotional journey to freedom and to a life of meaning, purpose and productivity
- to relieve suffering and promote the well-being of those people and their families in the area of benefit (Northern Ireland, Republic of Ireland, England, Scotland and Wales) who are suffering or experiencing mental or emotional distress and anguish as a result of mental illness, drug and alcohol addiction, suicide, social and/or economic circumstances, domestic abuse and/or violence and difficulties in their personal lives by the provision of education, development projects and projects that develop life skills for all individuals in the area.
- to promote or assist in promoting one to one support for beneficiaries within the area of benefit who have need of such assistance as a result of their youth, age, disability or infirmity, or social and economic circumstances, in an effort to increase the abilities, life skills and self-confidence of such communities in the area of benefit.
- to raise awareness of addictions and life controlling issues through engagement in projects and in the provision of resources, training and financial support to assist those in poverty, suffering and distress.

**3. TRUSTEES**

- (1) The charity shall be managed by a committee of trustees who are appointed at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the charity.
- (2) A trustee may not appoint anyone to act on his or her behalf at a meeting of the trustees.
- (3) No one may be appointed a trustee if he or she would be disqualified from acting as a trustee under the provisions of clause 4.

#### **4. DISQUALIFICATION AND REMOVAL OF TRUSTEES**

A trustee must cease to hold office if he or she:

- (1) is disqualified from acting as a trustee by virtue of section 86 of the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008 (or any statutory re-enactment or modification of that provision);
- (2) in the written opinion, given to the trustees, of a registered medical practitioner treating that person, has become physically or mentally incapable of acting as a charity trustee and may remain so for more than three months;
- (3) resigns as a trustee by notice to the charity (but only if at least two trustees will remain in office when the notice of resignation is to take effect); or
- (4) is absent from meetings without the permission of the trustees from all their meetings held within a period of six consecutive months and the trustees resolve that his or her office be vacated.

#### **5. CARRYING OUT THE PURPOSES**

In order to carry out the charitable purposes, the trustees have the power to:

- (1) raise funds, receive grants and donations
- (2) apply funds to carry out the work of the charity
- (3) co-operate with and support other charities with similar charitable purposes
- (4) approve spending plans in line with the charitable objectives
- (5) employ staff
- (6) do anything which is lawful and necessary to achieve the charity's purposes.

- (7) introduce addicts and hurting people to the 4 step process of recovery so they can be set free from their addiction.

## **6. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING - AGM**

- (1) The AGM must be held every year, with 14 days notice given to all members telling them what is on the agenda. Minutes must be kept of the AGM.
- (2) There must be at least 3 members present at the AGM for there to be quorum.
- (3) Every member has one vote.
- (4) The trustees must present the annual report and accounts.
- (5) Any member may stand for election as a trustee.

## **7. TRUSTEE MEETINGS**

- (1) Trustees must hold at least 4 meetings each year. At their first meeting after the AGM they will elect a chair, treasurer and secretary. Trustees may act by majority decision.
- (2) At least 3 trustees must be present at the meeting to be able to take decisions. Minutes shall be kept for every meeting.
- (3) If trustees have a conflict of interest they must declare it and leave the meeting while this matter is being discussed or decided.
- (4) During the year, the trustees may appoint up to 2 additional trustees. They must stand down at the next AGM but are eligible to stand for election at the AGM.
- (5) The trustees may make reasonable additional rules to help run the charity. These rules must not conflict with this constitution or the law.

## **8. WRITTEN RESOLUTIONS**

A resolution in writing signed by all the trustees shall be as valid as a resolution passed at a trustee meeting.

## **9. MONEY AND PROPERTY**

- (1) Money and property must only be used for the charity's purposes.



- (2) Trustees must keep accounts. The most recent annual accounts can be seen by anybody on request.
- (3) Trustees cannot receive any money or property from the charity, except to refund reasonable out of pocket expenses or when connected with a business where full disclosure has been given, unless permitted by law.
- (4) Money must be held in the charity's bank account. All cheques must be signed by 2 trustees.

## **10. GENERAL MEETINGS**

If the trustees consider it is necessary to change the constitution, or wind up the charity, they must call a General Meeting so that the membership can make the decision. Trustees must also call a General Meeting if they receive a written request from the majority of members. All members must be given 14 days notice and told the reason for the meeting. All decisions require a two thirds majority. Minutes must be kept.

- (1) **Winding up** - any money or property remaining after payment of debts must be given to a charity with similar purposes to this one.
- (2) **Changes to the Constitution** - can be made at AGMs or General Meetings. No change can be made that would make the organisation no longer a charity. A copy of the amended constitution and resolution adopting the changes must be sent to the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland.
- (3) Trustees may also call a General Meeting to consult the membership.

## **11. SETTING UP THE CHARITY**

This constitution was adopted December 2017 and amended on 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2018 by the people whose signatures that appear below. They are the first members of the charity and will be the trustees until the AGM, which must be held within one year of this date.

