



BELFAST AND LISBURN COMMUNITY PROJECT

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Belfast and Lisburn Community Project Trustees' Annual Report for the Year Ended 2nd July 2024

Chair's Statement

It is with a profound sense of resilience and gratitude that I present this report for **2024**, a year that presented our charity with one of its most significant operational challenges, yet also showcased the incredible strength and dedication of our trustees, volunteers, and supporters.

The year began under considerable strain following extensive water flood damage at our previous premises. This unfortunate event necessitated an urgent relocation—a process fraught with stress and difficulty. Our primary challenge was securing a new location that remained accessible and familiar to the vulnerable members of our community who rely on our services. We were acutely aware that moving too far could severely disrupt the vital support networks we have built.

After an intensive search, we were successful in finding suitable new premises. This, however, marked the beginning of a new phase of hard work. The Board of Trustees came together to strategise how to start afresh and develop the new space to meet our operational needs. We faced the daunting task of fitting out the premises with limited resources.

We were extraordinarily fortunate to receive the generous support of a local building company, *The BEAM*, who stepped in to assist. Their expertise and pro bono work enabled us to complete the majority of the construction work, for which we are eternally thankful.

Throughout this period of upheaval, our commitment to the community never wavered. **Critically, we did not suspend any of our services.** Our food bank, perhaps our most essential service, continued to operate without interruption, ensuring that those in crisis received consistent support even while our own organisational foundations were being rebuilt.

The effort to prepare the new home was a true team endeavour. Trustees and volunteers worked tirelessly, day and night, to paint, clean, organise, and prepare. This monumental effort culminated in our successful move-in during May 2024. The official opening of our new premises stands as a testament to what can be achieved through collective determination and community spirit.



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Review of Activities and Achievements

Despite the disruption, our core activities persisted:

- Continued provision of our **Food Bank** service throughout the relocation period.
- Successful **relocation and establishment** of a new, fit-for-purpose community premises.
- Maintenance of **key support services** for our beneficiaries, minimising disruption to their lives.
- Strengthening of partnerships with local businesses and community groups.

Financial Review

The financial implications of the flood and move were significant. The insurance company did not give or settlement or covered a portion of the losses, BUT for the in-kind donations of labour and materials that kept our refurbishment costs manageable. A detailed account is provided in the accompanying financial statements, which show a year of exceptional expenditure related to the re-establishment of our operations.

Acknowledgements

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, I extend our deepest thanks:

- To the dedicated **volunteers** whose unwavering efforts kept our services running and made our new premises a reality.
- To the **local company** whose incredible generosity saved this project.
- To our **staff, trustees, and members** for their resilience and adaptability.
- To the **wider community** for their patience, donations, and continued trust during this transition.

Looking Forward

As we settle into our new home, our focus for the coming year is on consolidation, developing our refreshed space into a vibrant community hub, and expanding our services with renewed energy. The trials of 2024 have strengthened our resolve and proven that with strong partnerships and community at our heart, we can overcome any obstacle.



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Signed,

Jennifer Wootton

Chair of the Board of Trustees
Belfast and Lisburn Community Project

Date: 20th June 2025

****Trustees****

Jennifer Wootton
Gloria Hughes
Perla Kotlkarova
Gold Imoukhuede

This report reflects the period from 3rd of July 2023 to 2nd of July 2024. Data is based on internal records and reports.