



**Ulster Baseball and Softball Club**  
***Trustee Annual Report 2023***

Charity Registration Number: 107746



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## Organisation Overview and Purpose

Ulster Baseball and Softball Club is a charity registered with the Charities Commission in Northern Ireland. The Club is affiliated to the national governing bodies Baseball Ireland and Softball Ulster and is led by a voluntary committee (the trustees).

In setting our objectives and planning our activity for the year the trustees have considered the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland's guidance on public benefit. This is to ensure that the activities have helped to achieve the charity's purposes and provide a benefit to our beneficiaries namely the members of Ulster Baseball and Softball Club who live in Northern Ireland.

Club Objectives:

- to promote and further the interests and practice of baseball and softball in Ulster Province

The trustees are appointed on an annual basis at the Annual General Meeting.

Trustees	
Eadaoin Hamill	Neil Boyd (appointed 15.3.2022 resigned 30.6.2023)
Diane Mallon	Jose Santos (appointed 15.3.2022 resigned 03.04.24)
Sinead Shackley	



## Ulster Baseball and Softball Club Activities 2023

The club consists of:

- ❖ Two adult baseball teams
  - Belfast Northstars, and
  - Belfast Bucs
- ❖ One softball team
  - Belfast Angels, and
- ❖ An academy, aka Little League, for younger players under 13
  - Belfast Badgers

Adult training commences on in late January/ early February indoors and moves outside to the purpose built Hydebank facility once the clocks change. Academy, (also known as Little League), training is outdoors from April- September. Training is open to anyone and taster day adverts on social media are prompted throughout Jan-Mar. The club provides training and coaching for all who attend and caters for all players, whether they choose to play to be competitive, social, fitness or fun are new or veteran.

The baseball teams and academy team participate in the Baseball Ireland (BI) leagues and the softball team participates in the Ulster Softball League.

The beginning of the 2023 season saw a good return of the existing base of club members. Adult winter training was held at a local leisure centre on alternate Saturdays in January and March. Recruitment posts were posted on club social medias for tryout sessions and several new players attended. April saw training move to Hydebank, and enough interest was shown for sessions on Tuesdays and Thursdays throughout the season. The decision was made to register 2 baseball teams in the BI Adult B League: Belfast Northstars, a competitive team in the B1 division and Belfast Bucs, a development team in the B2 division.

Throughout the reporting year the Coaching team continued to engage in learning and development opportunities to provide excellence in the coaching of our players.

During the 2023 reporting period the Club was successful in securing a grant from the Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council Sports Accelerator fund allowing for Winter Training in the New Season 2024 to take place weekly in the hope of retaining interest in new attendees and for cages for storage in the current container at Hydebank. This has been a valuable asset for the club making training and game prep and tidy up much easier. The club would also like to thank Matplas from whom the club received sponsorship for the Badgers.

## Team Activity

### Baseball

#### Bucs

The Bucs continued in Baseball Ireland's B2 division. The team consisted of a couple of new rookies that joined the club during winter training, our experienced veterans and players that have been with the team for a few years that are still learning new positions



and skills. Training sessions were well attended with a majority of Bucs players training every week.

With 3 wins the team matched the total from their previous season which was disappointing but expected considering the previous year's Player of the Year, Terry Rosbotham, being unavailable for the majority of the season due to focusing attention on coaching the Belfast Badgers little league team. We are confident that the playtime in new positions that was allowed due to this means that our players gain confidence next season to push that win total higher.

### **Northstars**

The Belfast Northstars had a very successful 2023 league season. Building on a very respectable 2022 league season where the Northstars progressed to the Irish National playoff semi-finals, the Northstars went one step further in 2023 and made it all the way to the final. During the regular season the club played 15 games, winning 14 and losing only one. The Irish National playoff final saw the Northstars face off against the Cork Renegades in what was an extremely competitive match up, contested over a best of three tie. Having shared a win each, it went to a deciding weekend and the Northstars just came up a little short and finished runners up in 2023.

The Northstars will continue to develop their squad and try and improve to secure a national championship in the coming years.

### **Angels**

From a difficult season in 2022 developing new players & recruitment being a focus along with skills development, the Belfast Angels stormed the 2023 season going undefeated in all 10 games & winning the Softball Ulster B League Title with 3 games still to play. The decision to build the team, recruit players & focus upon skills saw recruits from our Stars & Bucs Baseball teams join the Angels to learn new skills & styles of playing in softball.

The Team consistently had a full roster of available and skilled players & each win was spread over multiple different team formations, which is a testament to the leadership, coaching, captaincy & resiliency of the Team. The Angels were promoted to the A League for the 2024 Season, following their League Title win.

### **Badgers**

The Badgers took full part in the 2023 Irish Little League campaign, we played the full 12 games with a strong veteran team along with a few new players. We were weak as usual away from home due to lack of players travelling to Dublin but fought well with most of our losses being walk offs in bottom of the last inning. Home games been very different with sometimes 20 players fighting for game time. Some good wins and unfortunately some players aging out (as is the norm). The Badgers again were supported with a sponsorship payment from Maplas and we are very grateful for the continued support. We also had a donation from Baseball United to assist in buying equipment for the Badgers. Overall another good season for Badgers.



## **Financial Commentary**

The Club accounts and Independent Examiners Report are submitted alongside this report. Income was £7,505 with Expenditure being £8,057 leaving an overspend for the year of £552.

Income for 2023 was generated from membership fees and fundraising with a very successful quiz night and the game day shop. The shop is staffed by our dedicated volunteer and supporter Eadaoin Hamill who also organized the Quiz night. The Club acknowledges and much appreciates the work she does to raise funds every year. Giftaid was claimed for the second time this year and the club intend to continue using this revenue stream. New uniforms were purchased for the Stars and Angels.

## **Declaration**

In preparing this report the Trustees of UBSC have had due regard for the guidance on public benefit from the Northern Ireland Charity Commission and other documentation produced by the Commission and are of the view that the Club is operating in full compliance with its duties as a charity.

Signed on behalf of the Trustees:

**Diane Mallon**

Ulster Baseball and Softball Club Treasurer