

YOUTH WORK ALLIANCE LTD

DIRECTORS' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

The directors present their annual report and financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2025.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in note 1 to the financial statements and comply with the charity's governing document, the Companies Act 2006, FRS 102 "The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland" and the Charities SORP "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 (FRS 102)".

Public Benefit Statement

The Board of Youth Work Alliance Ltd confirm that they have had due regard for the guidance produced on public benefit by the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland, and are pleased to report that during the year the charitable company has continued to provide public benefits through the programmes and services we offer. In particular, the directors consider how planned activities will contribute to the aims and objectives they have set out.

Public Benefits, Objectives and Activities

Youth Work Alliance is a membership body providing representation and advocacy, coordination and communication and direct support to its members.

Our key purpose is:

- Promoting, developing and supporting voluntary youth work providers in Northern Ireland for the benefit of children and in particular, to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of voluntary youth work providers, through the provision of training, information, guidance and representation.

Vision, Mission and Values

The Board has agreed the following Vision, Mission and Values:

Vision

We envision an inclusive community where *all* children and young people are safe, valued and achieve their full potential.

Mission

We support our members to deliver quality youth work to children and young people by providing training, information, guidance and representation.

Values

Passion	– for children and young people achieving their full potential.
Empathy	– for the challenges facing children, young people, youth workers and volunteers.
Advocacy	– with and for member organisations.
Collaboration	– within the broader youth work sector and related and relevant stakeholders.
Enablement	– of member organisations to effectively serve children and young people.

Our plan for 2024-25 was underpinned by a theory of change, structured around:

- What does Youth Work Alliance membership want from us? **NEED**
- How will it do this? **ACTIVITIES**
- What difference will this make? **IMPACT**

In developing the plan, the Board of Directors gave careful consideration to the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland's statutory guidance on public benefit to ensure that activities would help to achieve Youth Work Alliance's purposes and provide a benefit to the beneficiaries.

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Beneficiaries

Youth Work Alliance (YWA) is a membership body, established to deliver infrastructure support to local youth work providers across Northern Ireland. Our key beneficiaries are our member organisations, comprising voluntary management committees, managers, staff and volunteers and the children and young people they serve.

There has been no identifiable harm to any person through our activities and any private benefit gained (for example through transferrable skills development) is incidental and necessary to the achievement of Youth Work Alliance's purposes.

Achievements and Performance

Youth Work Alliance exists to serve its members. It is now seven years in existence, and we continue to strive to provide the best service to those members. It is with immense satisfaction that I present the Directors report for the Youth Work Alliance (YWA) for the year 2024-2025. This year has been a testament to the dedication and impact of our organisation in supporting and strengthening the youth work sector.

Expanding our Training and Development

We have made significant strides in providing a diverse range of training and development opportunities to youth workers. Our programmes have not only been extensive, reaching 1,272 participants across 67 sessions and programmes, but also impactful, covering vital areas such as safeguarding, youth work curriculum, workforce development, and specialized youth work training. This breadth and depth of training demonstrate our commitment to equipping youth workers with the necessary skills and knowledge to effectively support young people.

Fostering Collaboration through Member Engagement

Recognising the importance of collaboration, we have actively engaged with our members through 48 dedicated member engagement sessions. These sessions have provided a platform for valuable dialogue, feedback, and shared learning. Furthermore, our 28 representation engagements with key stakeholders, including the Department of Education, Education Authority, and political parties, have ensured that the voice of the youth work sector is heard and considered in policy and decision-making processes.

Providing Comprehensive Support Services

We understand that strong support systems are essential for the success of youth work organisations. Therefore, we have provided comprehensive support to our members in areas such as governance, compliance, safeguarding, and HR management. This support has been tailored to meet the specific needs of our members, including processing 89 AccessNI checks and offering bespoke support to 35 member organisations.

January 2025 saw the publication of a comprehensive evaluation by Queens University Belfast and a conference held in Derry on 20th January 2025 in which over 60 people attended to celebrate its successes at putting the voice of children and young people at the centre of violence prevention.

February 2025 saw the official launch of the 'Take 5 in Youth Work' resource at an event held in Belfast City Hall attended by Lord Mayor of Belfast, Ryan Murphy, and NI Mental Health Champion, Professor Siobhan O'Neill. A range of youth providers from across the city joined.

Earning Recognition through Positive Feedback

The overwhelmingly positive feedback we have received on our training and support programs is a testament to the quality and relevance of our work. With over 90% of participants expressing "very satisfied" with their experiences, we are confident that we are making a real difference in the lives of youth workers and the young people they serve.

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Charting the Course for the Future

Looking ahead, we will continue to build on our successes and address the evolving needs of the youth work sector. Our strategic priorities include:

- **Expanding our training and development offerings:** We will develop new programs that address emerging trends and challenges in youth work, ensuring that youth workers have access to cutting-edge knowledge and skills.
- **Enhancing member engagement:** We will deepen our relationships with member organisations, providing tailored support and fostering a strong sense of community within the youth work sector.
- **Advocating for the youth work sector:** We will continue to champion the vital role of youth work, advocating for policies and resources that enable the sector to thrive.
- **Building organisational capacity:** We will invest in our infrastructure and staff to ensure the long-term sustainability and growth of YWA, allowing us to continue serving the youth work sector effectively.

Expressing Gratitude and Looking Ahead

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to our exceptional staff, dedicated volunteers, and valued members for their unwavering commitment to YWA's mission. I also extend my thanks to our funders and partners for their invaluable support.

As we look to the future, I am filled with optimism for the continued growth and impact of YWA. We remain steadfast in our dedication to supporting and empowering youth workers and the young people they serve.

The team and I have been advocating and making representation on the real potential threat of the current funding model, with those of influence in Department of Education, EA, local councillors, MLAs, MPs and officials from across government.

The team have been advocating and making representation to those in influence within the DE, EA, local councillors, MLAs, MPs and officials from across government. These engagements allowed us to communicate feelings, thoughts and emotions, as well as highlighting the potential impacts that reductions will have on young people and the level of service available to them within the community moving forward.

The last year has shown YWA that the voluntary youth work sector is a proud and vibrant sector and has a lot of challenges facing it.

The levels of commitment, passion, and drive that YWA have seen from everyone this year has filled YWA with hope and admiration. The way in which our members are all dedicated to ensuring that it delivers a service that meets the needs of children and young people is completely inspirational.

YWA will continue to help build a stronger and more cohesive sector that will overcome this impasse. YWA stand with our members and we are committed to delivering a service that is valued, respected and funded in line with Priorities for Youth.

It is our goal to support our members to deliver a more inclusive, strength-based youth service that meets the needs of our children and young people. The team and YWA look forward to carrying on its work with each member group, their boards and most importantly the young people we serve.

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Financial review

Total income for the year was £463,569 (2024 - £503,787). Income from charitable activities amounted to £463,569 (2024 - £503,787).

Total expenditure for the year amounted to £426,483 (2024 - £476,306). The cost of charitable activities amounted to £426,483 (2024 - £476,306).

The net income for the year amounted to £37,086 (2024 – £27,481 net income) and has been transferred to accumulated funds.

The results of the financial year are set out fully in Youth Work Alliance's financial statements on pages 9 to 22.

Funding

The principal funding during the year was from the Education Authority and funds received are deemed to be restricted funds.

Reserves policy

The Funds held by the charity of £124,132 as at 31 March 2025 consist of £34,345 of restricted funds and £89,787 of unrestricted funds.

It is the policy of the charity to maintain free reserves which matches the needs of the charity both at the current time and in the foreseeable future. This provides sufficient funds to cover running costs which include management, administration and support costs. Free reserves are those unrestricted reserves not designated or invested in fixed assets which are available for general use.

The directors consider the company's financial position at the date of the balance sheet to be satisfactory and they are satisfied that the level of reserves is sufficient to continue the activities of the charity.

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FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

Structure, governance and management

Governing document

Youth Work Alliance Ltd is a charitable company limited by guarantee and does not have a share capital. It was incorporated on 26 January 2017.

The charity was established under a Memorandum of Association which established the objects and powers of the charitable company and is governed under its Articles of Association. The liability of each member is limited to an amount not exceeding £1.

Recruitment, appointment, induction and training

As set out in the Articles of Association, the number of directors is not less than 4 and not more than 10. The directors are elected by Youth Work Alliance's membership.

The directors have the power to co-opt members to fill specialist roles; directors so appointed shall hold office only until the next annual general meeting and shall then be eligible for re-appointment.

The directors of the company are also charity trustees for the purposes of charity law and under Youth Work Alliance's Articles are known as members of the Board of Directors. At each annual general meeting one-third (or number nearest to one-third) of the members of the Board of Directors must retire from office, but may be eligible for re-election.

All Youth Work Alliance members are circulated with invitations to nominate directors prior to the AGM advising them of the retiring directors and requesting nominations for the AGM.

There is no other person or body of persons permitted by the Youth Work Alliance Articles of Association to appoint one or more new trustees.

Appropriate training and induction is available to all directors.

Organisational structure and related parties

Youth Work Alliance's Board of Directors is responsible for policy, strategy, finance and organisational issues, and meets approximately 6-8 times per year.

Risk management

The members and directors have assessed the major risks to which the charity is exposed, in particular those related to the operations and finances of the charity and are satisfied that systems are in place to mitigate any exposure to major risks. Where appropriate, systems or procedures have been established to mitigate the risks the charity faces. Internal control risks are minimised by the implementation of procedures for authorisation of all transactions and projects. Procedures are in place to ensure compliance with health and safety of staff, volunteers, clients and visitors to the premises. These procedures are periodically reviewed at least annually to ensure that they continue to meet the needs of the charity.

Trustees of the Charity

The directors of the charitable company are its trustees for the purposes of charity law. The terms "director" and "trustee" are used interchangeably throughout the financial statements. The trustees who have served during the year were as follows:

Mr S McCready
Mr J McLaughlin
Mr S Mallet
Ms M Meehan
Mr M Roberts
Ms M Rowan

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FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

Plans for future periods

It is the intention of Youth Work Alliance to sustain its core funding allocations and seek to increase funding to ensure that Youth Work Alliance can provide the services and provision that enhances our ability to effectively support the needs of our members. Youth Work Alliance will continue to work with funders such as Education Authority - Youth Service, Big Lottery, and Children in Need to ensure we can deliver on the above for members.

Statement of Director's Responsibilities

The trustees (who are also the directors of Youth Work Alliance Ltd for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Directors' 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 directors 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 directors are required to:

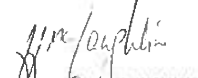
- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP 2019 (FRS 102);
- make judgements and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject 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 charitable company will continue in operation.

The directors are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006, Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008 and Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2013 and The Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Small companies' exemption

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

The directors' report was approved by the Board of Directors.


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Mr J McLaughlin
Director

Date: 12/08/2025
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