

THE DUFFERIN FOUNDATION

TRUSTEES' REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 5 APRIL 2025

The trustees present their annual report and financial statements for the year ended 5 April 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 charitable trust's governing document, the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008 and 2013 and "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)" (as amended for accounting periods commencing from 1 January 2019).

Objectives and activities

The Foundation is limited to the undertaking of charitable activities but in terms of the charitable objectives has a focus on the following

The advancement of education in and the promotion, publication and dissemination of academic research for public benefit into the role of the Clondeboy Estate ("Clondeboy") and the family and descendants of the first Marquess of Dufferin ("Lord Dufferin") past and present.

The establishment and maintenance of scholarships, grants, allowances and prizes and other forms of financial support to be awarded to students or others as are engaged in any such research whether or not the whole or part of that research shall have been carried out at Clondeboy.

The support of and the education into and provision of palliative care in Northern Ireland, the United Kingdom or elsewhere in the world.

The preservation for the public benefit of the whole or such part of the buildings and their grounds and surroundings of Clondeboy as may be for any period vested in the Foundation or for which it may be responsible together with the preservation for public benefit of furniture pictures and chattels of any description that may be given to the Foundation and/or kept at Clondeboy or any other property in the United Kingdom or elsewhere.

The promotion and aid of such other purposes as are recognised as exclusively charitable by the laws of Northern Ireland, England and Wales.

Public benefit

The trustees have paid due regard to guidance issued by the Charity Commission in deciding what activities the charity should undertake.

Achievements and performance

Significant activities and achievements against objectives

During the past year, the Trustees of the Foundation have continued to grant aid certain key long term and strategic projects. It has continued to effect ongoing repairs to Helen's Tower – a listed building repairs that within the the Foundation's objective to preserve the buildings and grounds that form part of the grounds of Clondeboy for public benefit. The Tower is at the high point of the Estate and sits squarely as an important historical feature on that part of the Ulster Way that runs through the Estate. To continue with the development of this objective the Foundation has been engaging with the Local Authority and other (charitable) stakeholders about collectively developing public access to the woods and trails around Helen's Tower and to educate and better disseminate knowledge about the military history of the North Down area and Clondeboy in particular and its contribution to legacy of the Somme in particular and build links with the equivalent memorials to the dead in Northern France at the Somme Tower (a copy of Helen's Tower). This is a multi year project for which approximately £7m has been raised to date by way of funding through the various stakeholders.

To further the Foundation's objective of furthering education and its existing relationship with the separate charity (NIFSA) the Foundation has grant aided the construction of a new purpose-built facility for use as a Forest School to allow the education of children in the environment and have a greater understanding of nature in conjunction with the development of their understanding and practical application of the national curriculum. The Foundation also has funded an annual award to allow an educator to travel outside NI and learn appropriate ways of developing the Forest School and outdoor education generally. In the present year, the Foundation has facilitated lobbying with the Government to gain recognition of the importance of this sector to the provision of early years education.

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As a separate but connected initiative the Foundation has helped host the Council of Integrated Education – both the leadership group and a number of children's groups – all with a view to advancing the cause of Integrated Education across Northern Ireland. This has been seen as an appropriate use of the environment of Clandeboyne as a champion of the advancement of education generally.

These initiatives fit well with the continued relationship with the Woodland Trust (a charity based at Clandeboyne) in terms of restoring aspects of the historic woodland that comprises Clandeboyne – which itself is one of the largest areas of broadleaf woodland areas in Northern Ireland with origins dating back to some historic woodland dating to the 1600s. It is an important objective of the Foundation to repair, restore and maintain the historic landscape and built environment that make up Clandeboyne,

During the year, the Foundation has also worked closely with PRONI to develop a better understanding of the historic archives of the 1st Marquess of Dufferin and Ava and his impact on the world as a significant Victorian diplomat and as to how they might better be made available for public access and research. This has led to participation in a number of academic partnerships with various universities and with the National Trust in relation to the legacy of Lord Castlereagh. This is an ongoing project that will take a number of years to complete. It also leads to a possible celebration of the Irish/Canadian Axis. Considerable work has gone into collation of the archives and developing a strategy for their preservation and display. This has involved outreach to representatives of other public bodies such as the British Museum.

The Foundation has sought to develop the relationship with it and other museums and art galleries and have continued to develop its policy of lending of articles of historic and/or artistic merit throughout the UK and Ireland such as the Tate, The Fleming Foundation, the Holbourne Museum & Charleston – all for public exhibition.

During the accounting period the Trustees received an appointment of additional heritage assets in the form of a number of chattels that are historically associated with Clandeboyne and its history – all of which fall within the objectives in terms of the Foundation in terms of repairing and maintaining these together with the other assets which they already hold. [As part of an ultimate endowment to help them fulfil their objectives the personal representatives of the late Lady Dufferin appointed 50% of the (as yet unrealised) proceeds of sale of a real property. There have also been replacements of chattels where needed to facilitate public access.

Financial review

The Foundation has income arising from funds which have been gifted to it and which are invested. The attached statement of financial activities has been reviewed by the Trustees and is considered to be a fair and accurate representation of the transactions which have been conducted on behalf of the Foundation during the accounting period. The Trustees are currently involved in a 5 year plan to both increase the amount of available funds for investment in the Foundation to allow it to undertake the plans which are detailed below. The Foundation was initially endowed by the Marquess and Marchioness of Dufferin and Ava and to raise public awareness generally. The Trustees for their part have embarked upon a programme of investing and/or utilising those assets both to provide income but also to further the Objectives of the Foundation.

Reserves policy

It is the policy of the charity to maintain unrestricted funds, which are the free reserves of the charity, at a level, which equates to approximately six months unrestricted expenditure. At 5 April 2025 the level of unrestricted reserves exceeded this target.

Major risks

Risk assessment

The trustees have assessed the major risks to which the charity is exposed and are satisfied that systems are in place to mitigate exposure to the major risks. In general where it operates in partnership with other bodies it will seek to mitigate risks by ensuring the partner organisations have an appropriate policy in place for managing its risks.

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Plans for future periods

As part of a 5 year plan, the trustees have developed greater alliances with the Woodland Trust to ensure education, preservation and maintenance of native woodland species in light of the actual disease risk to native tree species such as ash – particularly trying to manage the impacts of ash die back. The Foundation is part-way through a woodland restoration plan covering almost 70 acres of historic woodland. The Foundation then proposes to ensure that the natural environment is utilised to its full advantage through the education programmes which are offered by the NI Forestry Schools Association. This programme has considerable support from the Education Authority and a large number of local authorities. The trustees also feel that their policy chimes well with general Government Policy which seeks to encourage the maintenance and development of woodland and the natural environment.

The Foundation has been developing closer relationships with North Down and Ards BC in relation to the Aspects literary festival. It also continues to sponsor the young musician academy which exists as part of the Camerata Festival held at Clandeboye each August and is heading towards its 25th anniversary.

A programme of restoration has begun with some of the legacy assets at Clandeboye. The preservation of Helen's Tower is ongoing as an important local historical monument – not just for the area but linking the area historically with the Somme and those who lost their lives in battle.

The Foundation has continued to support education and research into the achievements of the First Marquess of Dufferin and Ava and has developed associations with several academic institutions with a view to allow a better understanding of the collection. As part of that the Trustees continue to fund the restoration of certain historic artefacts which, given the costs involved, they do on a rolling basis. The intention would be to develop that rolling plan and accommodate it within recurring income where possible – deploying capital for major repairs when needed. There has been investment in making plans for the 200th anniversary of the 1st Marquess' birth in 2026 in conjunction with PRONI and the local council. It also has been in discussions with a view to attracting a major global literary festival to Clandeboye/the North Down area.

It is the Trustees' policy to make strategic alliances (some of which are referenced above) to better achieve its objectives. It has identified those separate public bodies (eg the Local Authority & PRONI), other charities (eg the Somme Association, Holbourne & Charleston) and educators (NIFSA and Integrated Education) which have common objectives and through by which each can leverage their respective objectives.

It is the Foundation's hope that its ability to do so will be enhanced as the estate of the late Lady Dufferin as one of the Founders come to the final stages of its administration - the Foundation being a major beneficiary.

Structure, governance and management

The Dufferin Foundation was formed by a charitable deed dated 27 May 1988. The charity is registered with HM Revenue and Customs as a charitable body for taxation purposes (HM Revenue & Customs Charity No XN76485). The charity registered with the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland on 22 March 2021 (CCNI No NIC108031). The governing instrument is the charitable trust deed, which states the objects of the charity and details the rules by which it will operate.

The trustees who served during the year and up to the date of signature of the financial statements were:

Sir I W Huddleston

Countess M T M D Gherardesca

Mr H F G Mount

Recruitment and appointment of trustees

The trustees of the charity are appointed by the existing trustees.

None of the trustees has any beneficial interest in the charity.

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Statement of trustees' responsibilities

The trustees are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

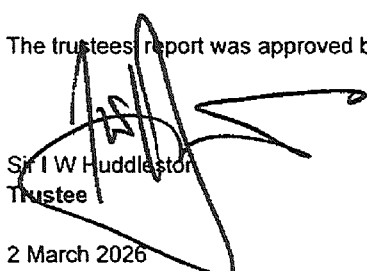
The law applicable to charities in Northern Ireland requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources of the charity for that year.

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;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable 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 charity will continue in operation.

The trustees are responsible for keeping sufficient accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008 and the provisions of the trust deed. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The trustees report was approved by the Board of Trustees.



Sir I W Huddleston
Trustee

2 March 2026