Equality Period Limited

Northern Ireland · Charity number 108424

Details

Known as	Equality Period
Status	Received
Company number	679140
Registered	2022-01-18
Register	View on the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland register

Contact

Address	110 Coast Road Larne 110 Coast Road Drains Bay Bt40 2lf BT40 2LF
Phone	07526821824
Email	equalityperiodni@gmail.com
Website	www.equalityperiod.co.uk

Activities

Purposes: The Charity seeks to advocate for menstrual equity, aid accessible and inclusive menstrual health education and reduce the level of period and hygiene poverty in Northern Ireland. The Charity will help reduce levels of vulnerability for those in conditions of financial need, hardship, disability, ill health or distress in particular but not exclusively by : (1) the direct provision of period products, hygiene essentials and toiletries et cetera that will improve the conditions of life and prospects for such people; (2) by assisting other Northern Ireland based charities and organisations who are preventing or relieving financial need, hardship or distress with the provision of period products, hygiene essentials, toiletries et cetera. The charity seeks to positively affect change by raising awareness of inequality and encouraging a better understanding amongst all ages and all genders of menstrual health and wellbeing through public engagement, research and collaboration with other projects throughout the world.

What the charity does: The relief of those in need by reason of youth, age, ill-health, disability, financial hardship or other disadvantage

How the charity works: General charitable purposes,Relief of poverty

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Who the charity helps: Addictions (drug/solvent/alcohol abuse),Asylum seekers/refugees,Carers,Children (5-13 year olds),Ethnic minorities,Ex-offenders and prisoners,General public,Homelessness,Learning disabilities,Men,Mental health,Older people,Parents,Physical disabilities,Preschool (0-5 year olds),Sensory disabilities,Specific areas of deprivation,Travellers,Unemployed/low income,Voluntary and community sector,Women,Youth (14-25 year olds)

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-02-11	£1,000	£1,348	£0	0

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
Miss Shannon Taylor		
Miss Tracy Marie Mcclean		
Mrs Suzanne Oag		

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Equality Period Limited

Northern Ireland - Charity number 108424

Accounts

EQUALITY PERIOD LIMITED

Income and Expenditure Account for year ending 11th February 2025

A/C No:17865478

INCOME		**EXPENDITURE**	
- Bal b/f	£369.15	Bank Charges	£0
Reserved funds:		Fees & Registrations	£48.39
Larne Foodbank Partnership:	£1000	Events & Materials	£115.94
		Training & Materials	£56.60
		Volunteer Expenses	£30
		Hygiene Products - including single use & reusable period products	£1097.74
		Total:	£1348.67
Free Reserves:			
Donations:	£0		
Total:	£1000		

Balance c/f: **£12.87**
Petty Cash c/f: **£7.61**

Signed:

Audited:

Equality Period Limited

Northern Ireland - Charity number 108424

Accounts

EQUALITY PERIOD LIMITED

Income and Expenditure Account for year ending 11th February 2024

A/C No:17865478

INCOME		**EXPENDITURE**	
- Bal b/f	£1231.91	Bank Charges	£0
Restricted funds:		Fees & Registrations	£35.19
BF Grant (LARNE ONLY)	£500	Events & Workshops	£149.17
Foodbank Partner Grant	£1000	Equipment	£1463.98
National Lottery Computer Equipment Grant	£2000	BF w/Surestart	£252
		Volunteer Expenses - includes travel @0.40p/m	£172.63
		Hygiene Products - including period products	£3287.41
		Outreach Support	£51.75
		Total	**£5412.13**

Free Reserves	
Donations	£0
A Clark Community Award	£1000
Amazon Smile	£13.41
Total	**£4513.41**

Balance c/f:	**£369.15**

Signed:

Audited:

Equality Period Limited

Northern Ireland - Charity number 108424

Annual report

Equality Period Limited

Annual Report for the period ending February 2024

Equality Period Limited
Charity No: NIC108424
Address: c/o Coast Road, Drains Bay, Larne BT40 2LF

Equality Period is a limited company, registered as a charity, that exists on a 'Not-for-Profit basis to carry out charitable purposes that benefit the community rather than private shareholders.

TRUSTEES
Suzanne Oag
Colleen Gardner
Shannon Taylor
Tracy McClean

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

We recognise the trauma, stress and anxiety caused by not having access to the products of appropriate knowledge needed to manage our periods, menstrual, sexual and peri-menopausal health. We work to create menstrual equity within society by providing those pulled into poverty, homelessness or otherwise displaced people and their dependents with access to free period products of their choice as well as any other essential hygiene and personal care products.

We recognise that hygiene poverty is not a standalone issue. We work in partnership with a varied range of statutory and voluntary organisations in Northern Ireland who have appropriate safeguards and ongoing comprehensive supports in place. This includes but is not limited to Health and Social Care Trusts; Primary and Post-Primary Schools, Youth Groups; Trussell Trust and independent Food Banks; Women's Aid; Simon Community Northern Ireland; Libraries Ni; Refugee services and Family Support Programmes.

Feedback from our network of community partners and testimony from beneficiaries tells us that the ability to access period products and other essential hygiene items via the organisations that clients and service users are already involved with or are familiar with makes a huge difference to their overall wellbeing.

ACTIVITIES FEBRUARY 2023 – FEBRUARY 2024

We continued to support our community partners working with people affected by the legacy of the pandemic and continuing cost-of-living crisis. We provided on average 300 individual care packages per month across our community partner network.

Equality Period pride ourselves on making a big impact with a small budget. We are entirely volunteer-led and volunteer run. We don't have office space or storage facilities as minimum overheads means maximum support for beneficiaries.

- **Small budget BIG impact**
  During the final week of August, we packed 48 care packages for Larne Foodbank; each containing period products, shampoo, shower gel, deodorant, soap, toothbrushes and toothpaste. Purchasing these items from high-street retailers would cost £575.82 -- Thanks to the partnerships we have built over the last 3 years were able to reduce this by more than £450; partnership working also avoids our charity directly contributing to the issue of hygiene poverty by reducing availability of essential hygiene products in stores.

- **Plastic Promise**
  In 2021 we made a pledge to reduce the amount of pads and tampons containing plastic that we distributed and increase the availability of sustainable, reusable products for everyone. Thanks to grant funding and building brand partnerships we have ended our reliance on public donations of period products. Since March 2023 95% of period products distributed by Equality Period have been plastic free or reusable.

- **Period Product (Free Provision) Act NI 2022**
  Legislation received Royal Assent in May however as Northern Ireland has no working Assembly progress cannot not be made regarding implementation.
  November 2023 Northern Regional College student union contacted us for help as period products were no longer being provided under the Department for Communities pilot scheme. Over 800 packs of pads and a range of reusable sensory friendly products were provided for students.

- **Period Dignity**
  Despite 'Period Dignity' launching in September 2021 schools and parents continued to reach out to Equality period and projects within The Hygiene Bank NI network requesting period products for pupils.
  Lack of promotion, poor communication and barriers faced by pupils trying to access products led to unclaimed an unspent budgets. In May funding for the Period Dignity scheme was cut by 40%

- **National Teen Self Esteem Month (Rathcoole Library)**
  Thanks to an award from Arnold Clark Community Fund we were able to partner with Libraries NI and provide hygiene essentials and well-being packs for teenagers in Rathcoole and Glengormley

- **Period Parade – Menstrual Health Day**
  Laura and Erin joined campaigners and 17 charities from across the UK for the #EveryPeriodCounts march through Westminster to raise awareness of period inequality. Hundreds of period stories, including many contributions from Northern Ireland were delivered to 10 Downing street.

- **Computer Equipment Grant – National Lottery Awards For All**
  Thanks to TNL Community Funding Equality Period have a computer and laptop which allow us to create and deliver improved Period Positive workshops both remotely and in-person. Grant underspent: TNL NI approved repurposing remaining funds for charitable objective.

- **International Women's Day & OCN Stress management**
  Equality Period were invited by Women's Aid ABCLN to deliver a series of in-person empowerment workshops with service users in Larne and Carrickfergus. Feedback was very positive. We hope to maintain this partnership with Women's Aid ABCLN over the next year.

- **'Here if you need'**
  We continue to pro-actively encourage local businesses, workplaces and hospitality venues to include period products within their washroom provisions.
  Council-run pilot
  Mid and East Antrim Borough Council's 'Here if you need' pilot scheme was deemed "well received". Council have agreed Period Products will be included in existing washroom supplies budget for council owned community centres in Larne, Whitehead and Carrickfergus as well as visitor attractions in Ballygally and Islandmagee. The scheme is also to be extended to council owned community centres in Ballymena.

- **Community Cluster Event**
  Fantastic public engagement at Larne Market Yard. The team loved being able to have frank and open conversations about periods and menstrual health in a public space.

- **December – 1099 people supported.**
  In partnership with Larne Foodbank and Christians Against Poverty we provided a total of 692 people (328 adults and 364 children) with 480kg of hygiene and personal care essentials.
  Larne Foodbank Committee awarded Equality Period a partnership grant of ringfenced funds to provide hygiene essentials specifically for Larne Foodbank
  In addition to this a further 407 individuals were supported by contributions made to agencies working with local families as well as adults and young people experiencing crisis, homelessness and displacement.

- **Professional Development**
  Thanks to a previous Brighter Futures Training grant Suzanne has completed CPCAB Level 2, CPCAB Level 3 and a HE Certificate in Counselling. In-line with Equality Period's longer-term goal of being able to provide counselling services for those experiencing menstrual health conditions that impact mental and emotional wellbeing, she has progressed to study FdSc Integrative Counselling with Ulster University.

- **PickUpMyPeriod App**
  New locations across Mid and East Antrim created on the PickUpMyPeriod App in partnership with Hey Girls. Volunteers continued promotion of the app and restocking pick up points as and when needed.

- **Brighter Futures w/ Sure Start**
  Brighter Futures at Larne Football club provided a £500 grant to help us maintain an on-site hygiene pantry as well as provide menstrual health packs and fresh food vouchers for service users at Horizon Sure Start, Larne.

SPECIAL THANKS

Equality Period are incredibly grateful to Larne Football Club and their supporters, Prestige Flooring & Bathrooms and the team at Danny Donnelly's constituency office for their assistance with December Hampers.

We also would like to express our gratitude to the committee at Larne Foodbank; our 'Here if you need' partners at The Hygiene Bank Moira and The Arnold Clark Community Fund for their continued support.

CONCLUSIONS

We move forward into the new year once again hopeful that the Period Product Free Provision legislation will be implemented and reduce our need to exist in a product provision capacity.

We also hope our continued partnership with Hey Girls and improving our Period Positive workshops will reduce the use of single use plastic period products in Northern Ireland.

Project duplication continues in the Larne area however, we have still to see this translate in any reduction in need from our community partners.

As co-founder and chairperson I would like to extend my gratitude to Colleen, Shannon and Tracy once again for their roles as volunteer trustees – never underestimate the difference you are making, not just at a local level but as part of a global menstrual equity movement.

This report was approved on behalf of the trustees at a meeting on 8/3/24 **and signed on it's behalf by:**

Mrs Suzanne Oag
Trustee Equality Period Limited

Equality Period Limited

Northern Ireland - Charity number 108424

Annual return

Independent examiner's report to the charity trustees of Equality Period Limited

I report on the accounts of the Trust for the financial period 12th February 2023 to 11th February 2024, which are set out on attached pages.

Respective responsibilities of charity trustees and examiner.

As the charity's trustees you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008.

It is my responsibility to:

- Examine the accounts under section 65 of the Charities Act
- Follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Commission under section 65(9)(b) of the Charities Act
- State whether particular matters have come to my attention

Basis of independent examiner's report

I have examined your charity accounts as required under section 65 of the Charities Act and my examination was carried out in accordance with the general Directions given by the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland under section 65(9)(b) of the Charities Act.

My examination included a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also included consideration of any unusual items of disclosures in the accounts and seeking explanations from you as charity trustees concerning any such matters.

My role is to state whether any material matters have come to my attention giving me cause to believe:

1. **That accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 63 of the Charities Act**
2. **That the accounts do not accord with those accounting records**
3. **That the accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements of the Charities Act**
4. **That there is further information needed for a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.**

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination and have no concerns in respect of the matters (1) to (4) listed above and, in connection with the following the Directions of the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland, I have found no matters that require drawing to your attention.

Signed:

Name: L. Craig
Address: c/o 21 Dunluce Street, Larne

Date: 25/04/24

Equality Period Limited

Northern Ireland - Charity number 108424

Accounts

EQUALITY PERIOD LIMITED

Income and Expenditure Account for year ending 11th February 2023

A/C No:17865478

INCOME		**EXPENDITURE**	
- Bal b/f	£286.73		
		Bank Charges	£0
Restricted funds:			
		Fees & Registrations	£55.08
BF Education Grant:	£500		
		Events & Materials	£141.40
Human Kind Foundation:	£100		
		Training	£503
December Hamper Bags:	£90		
		Travel Costs	£130.80
		Hygiene Products - including single use period products	£2303.69
		Reusable Period Products	£110.85
		Total:	£3244.82

Free Reserves:

Donations:	£300
Brighter Futures Grant:	£500
Belfast Marathon Fund:	£2200
A Clark Community Fund:	£500
Total:	£4190

Balance c/f: **£1231.91**

Signed Suzanne O'Cay

Audited

Equality Period Limited

Northern Ireland - Charity number 108424

Annual report

Equality Period Limited
Annual Report for the period ending February 2023

Equality Period Limited
Charity No: NIC108424
Address: c/o Coast Road, Drains Bay, Larne BT40 2LF

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Colleen Gardner
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Tracy McClean

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

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Feedback from our network of community partners and testimony from beneficiaries tells us that the ability to access to period products and other essential hygiene items via the organisations that clients and service users are already involved or familiar with makes a huge difference to their overall well-being.

ACTIVITIES FEBRUARY 2022-FEBRUARY 2023

There was little prospect of a calm after the pandemic storm. The cost-of-living crisis was building, and immediately after the 2021 December hamper project our team began preparing for a difficult year.

Each month we provided on average between 300-324 individual care packages across our community partner network. In winter months we saw this spike to over 500 per month.

Despite the deep and relentless crisis 2022 was also a groundbreaking milestone year for Equality Period and menstrual activists right across Northern Ireland. The collective efforts of our trustees, Ulster University Students Union VP Grace Boyle, Youth Activist Ellie Massey and Menstruation Matters

campaign leads Homeless Period Belfast, finally saw The Period Product Free Provision Bill pass through the Assembly with full support on 24th March. This legislation sees the provision of period products in public buildings, including schools, finally locked into law.

Overall, despite this legislative progress on period product provision 2022 has been exceptionally challenging. The ongoing effects of the pandemic, rise in the cost of living and lack of a functioning government in Northern Ireland has greatly impacted our community partners, their service users as well as our ability to source and purchase certain products.

- **Pop Up-Space** - Supported by Eden Project Communities, we took a week's residency in a Mid and East Antrim Council managed Pop-Up space in Larne. This provided the first post-pandemic and lockdown opportunity for our team to be public facing. This event coincided with the passing of the Period Product legislation and was a very positive, celebratory experience.

- **'Here if you need'** - We continued this initiative encouraging local businesses, workplaces, and hospitality venues to include period products in their existing washroom provisions. Working in partnership with volunteers from The Hygiene Bank Moira we have been able to extend 'Here if you need' to areas in Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council as well Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon.

- **MEA Council Pilot Scheme** – Disappointed by opposition to the original motion for the provision of free period products in council facilities, our team took a proactive approach and delivered over 4000 surplus vending machine period products to Mid and East Antrim Borough Council offices. Community Planning staff agreed to use these products to implement a pilot 'Here if you need' scheme in council run community centres in Larne, Whitehead and Carrickfergus as well as visitor attractions in Ballygally and Islandmagee.

- **Hygiene Poverty** – Inflation has led to rapid increases in retail costs of period products as well as basic hygiene essentials like toothpaste and shampoo. As well as regular contributions across our community partner network we equipped the projects experiencing the highest levels of need; Horizon Surestart, Larne High School and Access Employment Limited; with on-site hygiene pantries designed to promote client autonomy, reduce shame and stigma. Staff are then able to provide feedback to our volunteers which products are needed most by their service users.

- **Menopause Café** – We partnered with Menopause Café (SCO48435) and Barbara Ann's Victoria Road Larne to facilitate the first in-person Menopause Cafe in the local are; an event we are keen repeat.

- **Training** - Suzanne and Tracy completed accredited training with ACET NI and Split Banana in Sexual Health & Contraception as well as Relationships and Sexuality Education Facilitation.

- **Workshops** – We ran 12 online period education and breast health workshops as well as 4 in-person events with our community partners at NHSCT and Women's Aid ABCLN.

- **Guest Speakers** – Equality Period were invited to speak at the 14th Onus Annual Awards Ceremony held at Stormont about our role as Community Safe Place Advocates in Mid and East Antrim. We raised awareness of the links between menstrual inequity and domestic abuse and explained how 'Here if you need' and Safe Place work together to make information on services for anyone affected by domestic violence or abuse accessible.

  Suzanne was invited to speak at Larne Foodbank AGM to highlight the continued close partnership between Equality Period and the Foodbank and raise awareness of our work to alleviate hygiene poverty. A total of 57 direct referrals were made by Equality Period to Trussell Trust Foodbanks across Northern Ireland this year.

- **December Hampers** - We contributed over 3500 hygiene products plus 240 packs of nappies for babies and children and 384 period products to the December Hamper project in partnership with Larne Foodbank and CAP

RINGFENCED GRANTS

A training and education grant was awarded to Suzanne by Brighter Futures at Larne Football Club to continue CPCAB (Counselling and Psychotherapy Central Awarding Body) training in line with Equality Period's long-term goal being able to offer counselling sessions and menstrual mental well-being support within the community.

The Human Kind Foundation awarded a grant to help cover fuel expenses when delivering care packages to our community partners which was very much appreciated.

SPECIAL THANKS

Equality Period are incredibly grateful to Carrie Ingram who raised an astonishing £2200 by running the Belfast Marathon. These funds allowed us to provide care packages to organisations supporting refugees, mental health in-patients at Shannon Ward and individuals in crisis accommodation as well as meeting the menstrual care and hygiene needs of 548 individuals as part of the December hamper project with Larne Foodbank.

CONCLUSIONS

We move forward into the new year hopeful that the Period Product Free Provision legislation will eventually reduce our need to exist in a product provision capacity. We also hope our partnership with Hey Girls will greatly reduce the volume of single use plastic period products we distribute.

Although I wish our organisation did not need to exist I am incredibly proud of the impact we have made. Not having overhead costs for storage, office space, amenities etc allows us to maximise the impact every penny has on practical supports to alleviating hygiene poverty and menstrual inequity.

Currently the level of need greatly outweighs the volume of public item donations received by Equality Period via The Hygiene Bank Larne. We are exceptionally thankful to all our funders and any monies donated directly to us by the public. The relationships we have built with brands and suppliers since we began this project, as well as our link with In Kind Direct allowed us to turn a £50 donation for

December's hampers into 170 essential hygiene products that could be spread across up to ninety households. Purchasing the same quantity of identical brand items from retailer would have cost us an eyewatering £420; it would also have directly contributed to the issue of hygiene poverty by reducing the availability of essential hygiene products in stores.

We are aware of recent project duplication in the Larne area however, we have not seen this translate into any reduction in need from our community partners, as such our efforts to tackle menstrual inequity and hygiene poverty will continue.

As co-founder and chairperson I would like to extend my gratitude and thanks you to Colleen, Shannon and Tracy for their roles as volunteers and trustees. This team and the work we do means so much to our community partners and those in need. You are the backbone of this organisation and without your time and commitment there would be no Equality Period – never underestimate the difference you are making.

This report was approved on behalf of the trustees at a meeting on 29/3/23 **and signed on it's behalf by:**

Suzanne Oag

Mrs Suzanne Oag
Trustee Equality Period Limited

Equality Period Limited

Northern Ireland - Charity number 108424

Annual return

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Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination and have no concerns in respect of the matters (1) to (4) listed above and, in connection with the following the Directions of the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland, I have found no matters that require drawing to your attention.

Signed:

Name: Lorraine Craig
Address: c/o All Saint's Church of Ireland Linn Road, Craigyhill Larne.

Date: 7/4/23