

**Our Social Space Ltd**  
**Company Limited by Guarantee**  
**Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report)**  
**Year ended 30 September 2024**

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The trustees, who are also the directors for the purposes of company law, present their report and the unaudited financial statements of the charity for the year ended 30 September 2024.

**Reference and administration details**

<b>Registered charity name</b>	Our Social Space Ltd	
<b>Charity registration number</b>	NIC108664	
<b>Company registration number</b>	NI655540	
<b>Principal office and registered Office</b>	74 Sunnyside Street Belfast BT7 3EY	
<b>The Trustees</b>	Mr Seamus Young Dr Richard Turner Mr Philip Whyte Dr James Gallagher Ms Helen McKenna Dr Mark Johnson	(Resigned 20 June 2024) (Appointed 20 June 2024) (Appointed 20 June 2024)
<b>Company secretary</b>	Carrie Montgomery	
<b>Independent Examiner</b>	Mickey Ghanni 24 Ayrshire Lodge Lisburn BT28 2YZ	
<b>Bankers</b>	Santander Bootle Merseyside L30 4GB	

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### **Structure, Governance & Management**

Our Social Space Ltd is a company limited by guarantee with charity status. It was incorporated on 7 September 2018. It has been registered as a charity with the Charities Commission Northern Ireland since 22 February 2022.

The company is governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association dated 29 January 2019 (amended). In the event of the company being wound up members are required to contribute an amount not exceeding £1.

### **Recruitment and Appointment of Trustees**

The directors of the company are also charity trustees for the purposes of charity law. Under the requirements of the Articles of Association the number of trustees shall not be less than three appointed by the board. The initial term of office will be two terms of three years. Upon satisfactory completion of two terms Trustees are eligible for further terms at the Board's request. The trustees of the company have a mix of skills. In the event of particular skills being lost due to retirement or resignation, suitable individuals are approached to offer themselves for appointment as trustees.

### **Trustee induction and training**

Most new trustees are already familiar with the work of the charity. New trustees are encouraged to attend suitable training courses to familiarise themselves with both the work of the charity and their responsibilities as directors.

### **Risk Management**

The trustees have carried out a review of the major risks to which the charity is exposed, and where appropriate have put in place systems and controls to mitigate the effects of those risks.

### **Key management**

During the year in review the day to day running of Our Social Space Ltd was overseen by the CEO reporting to the Board of Trustees.

### **Objectives and activities**

#### **Why are we here?**

To create space for social connections within local communities, with a vision that no one feels lonely or socially isolated.

We are a group of local residents who value: strong communities creating a sense of belonging; passion and drive to inspire each other; accountability to do what we say we'll do; communication and building trust and; environmentalism.

#### **The Charity's objects ("Objects") are to:**

Promote the benefit of residents of the Ballynaveigh/Ormeau Area without discrimination, in an effort to provide (or assist in providing) facilities in the interests of social welfare, for health, recreation and leisure time occupation, with the object of improving the conditions and quality of life for the entire community to help in supporting those most socially vulnerable within our community.

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### **Achievements and performance**

This year marked a significant period of growth and reflection for Our Social Space Ltd. As we continue to navigate a complex social landscape shaped by rising loneliness and disconnection, our mission to build stronger, more connected communities through inclusive social dance has never felt more urgent - or more impactful. Our Socially Active Communities - a project that has become the beating heart of our work.

### **Our Flagship Project: Our Socially Active Communities**

Supported by the Halifax Foundation – Community Flex, *Our Socially Active Communities* project has continued to flourish as the cornerstone of our community work. These beginner-friendly, social dance classes and workshops have created a vital lifeline for people at risk of isolation - particularly older adults, solo parents, carers, neurodivergent individuals, and those undergoing major life transitions.

Set to the joyful rhythms of swing, jazz, and blues, the sessions are grounded in a zero-pressure ethos where connection, not perfection, is the goal.

### **What participants told us:**

- "I didn't think I'd have the confidence to do something like this - I feel like I've found a piece of myself again."
- "My mental health has improved so much since joining - this is my happy place."
- "It's rare to find a space that feels truly inclusive, but this is it."

### **Key Outcomes:**

- **Improved self-confidence and self-expression**
- **Better physical and mental wellbeing**
- **Strengthened sense of inclusion and belonging**
- **Expanded social networks and meaningful friendships**

Participants consistently reported feeling uplifted, empowered, and reconnected—not just to others, but to themselves. These outcomes reinforce what we know to be true: **that inclusive social dance is a powerful tool for personal and community transformation.**

### **Strategic Planning: Why Social Dancing?**

In 2024, we embarked on a year-long strategic planning process to guide our vision through 2028. Central to this strategy is a commitment to **"Why Social Dancing?"** - our response to one of the most pressing public health issues of our time: **social isolation.**

Social isolation is as harmful to health as smoking 15 cigarettes a day and increases the risk of early death by up to 26% (Holt-Lunstad, 2015). In the UK, over 7 million people live with chronic loneliness.

Those most affected are also the most marginalised facing economic hardship, caregiving responsibilities, neurodiversity, or life transitions that erode social routines. While physical and mental health receive substantial investment, **social health** - our ability to build relationships and feel part of a community - remains under-recognised and underfunded.

At Our Social Space, we believe **social dance** offers a unique and joyful solution:

- It fosters connection without requiring conversation.
- It helps people develop confidence, routine, and shared experience.
- It offers immediate emotional uplift while building long-term social support.

Dance, especially in group social formats, is an artform that transcends language, age, background, and ability. It is both expressive, connective and democratic practice.

Our approach uses the expressive power of dance to make art more accessible, breaking down the barriers that prevent many from engaging with traditional cultural spaces. We are proud to contribute to the wider creative landscape of Northern Ireland through inclusive, community-centred programming.

We remain driven by our founding belief: that **no one should feel alone**, and that **everyone deserves spaces to connect, belong, and thrive**. As we look ahead, we do so with gratitude, purpose, and renewed energy for the work to come.

### Financial review

It is the view of the Board of Directors that Our Social Space Ltd operated prudently and effectively within the parameters of the financial resources which were available.

### Reserves Policy

The Charity's policy is to retain a level of unrestricted funds that are needed to provide funds which can be applied to specific projects to be undertaken at short notice and to cover the running costs of the Charity for a limited period, should there be a significant shortfall in projected income.

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The Trustees consider it prudent that unrestricted reserves should be sufficient to avoid the necessity of realising fixed assets held for the Charity's use and to cover six months unrestricted expenditure. The level of unrestricted funds needed for these purposes are shown as designated funds.

The Boards strategy is to build reserves to ensure the Charity's obligations are met and also to build surpluses which can be reinvested in developing further services. The Charity will continue to monitor compliance with this policy on a regular basis and the Board will review the appropriateness of the policy annually.

**Trustees' responsibilities statement**

The trustees, who are also directors for the purposes of company law, 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). Company law requires the charity trustees to prepare financial statements for each year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, for that period. 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 applicable Charities SORP;
- make judgments and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in business.

The trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the charity's transactions and 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 Companies Act 2006. 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.

**Independent Examiner**

Each of the persons who is a trustee at the date of approval of this report confirms that:

- so far as they are aware, there is no relevant information of which the charity's independent examiner is unaware; and
- they have taken all steps that they ought to have taken as a trustee to make themselves aware of any relevant information and to establish that the charity's independent examiner is aware of that information.

**Small company provisions**

This report has been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies entitled to the small companies exemption.

The trustees' annual report was approved on 12 June 2025 and signed on behalf of the board of trustees by:

Dr R Turner  
Trustee

