

Charity Commission No: 100329



**ANNUAL REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st AUGUST 2023**

**FRIENDS OF AFRICA
ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST AUGUST 2023
CHARITY INFORMATION**

Board of Trustees

Ciaran McShane
Shannon Heffron
Aoife Heaney
Grainne Kelly
Martin Lynch
John Toner
Claire McGinn

Chair

Shannon Heffron

Secretary

Grainne Kelly

Registered Office

Accidental Theatre Company
12-13 Shaftesbury Square
Belfast
County Antrim
BT2 7DB

Principal Bankers

Danske Bank
PO Box 183
Donegall Square West
Belfast
BT1 6JS

Charity Commission Number

100329

**FRIENDS OF AFRICA
ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST AUGUST 2023
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FRIENDS OF AFRICA
TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st AUGUST 2023

The Trustees' present their report for the year ended 31st August 2023.

Objective and Activities

The objectives of Friends of Africa are:

- Educate the beneficiaries (beneficiaries refers to young people in Africa and Ireland) in any charitable way, but in particular by creating opportunities for young people in Ireland to take part in voluntary work in Africa on projects that will benefit young people in Africa;
- To assist the beneficiaries to help develop their physical, mental, and spiritual capacities so that they may develop to full maturity as individuals;
- To provide assistance to our beneficiaries so that their conditions of life may be improved and by developing qualities in our beneficiaries through service to the community in Africa;
- To promote racial harmony between young people in Ireland and Africa by promoting awareness of diverse issues, spirituality, and culture;
- To assist in the advancement of community development programmes for people living in Africa, which will enhance their future opportunities and conditions of life; and
- To support the means of voluntary work and financial assistance to various charitable projects for the prevention or relief of poverty, the advancement of education, and the preservation and protection of health in Africa.

Trustees

The following Trustees served during the year ended 31st August 2023:

- Ciaran McShane
- Shannon Heffron
- Aoife Heaney
- Grainne Kelly
- Martin Lynch
- John Toner
- Claire McGinn

Achievements and Performance

Friends of Africa celebrated 25 years, acknowledging the dedication of those involved in the organisation since 1998. We are proud to have 114 individuals giving their time and energy towards achieving our mission, of providing personal and social development opportunities for young people, here at home in Ireland and in our partner countries in Africa.

The Member's Weekend was held in Gortin, and launched a Standing Order Appeal where members were encouraged to get family and friends to sign-up to give a monthly donation to support FOA projects. Thanks to the success of this initiative, we now have annual donations, and can respond appropriately to the needs of our partners.

In January, FOA's Development Officer, was invited to Phokeng, South Africa to the Tsholofelo Community to deliver workshops on Youth Work to young adults who were selected to facilitate summer camps alongside FOA members in July. This training and planning added to the success of the first GSP in South Africa.

At our first Member's Meeting in January, we mapped out the year ahead and held an award ceremony for our 2020 and 2022 cohorts who completed their OCN Level 2 in Youth Work. Reporting 43% of our membership are now qualified in Youth Work, an essential pillar in ensuring success of youth work activities we facilitate.

A Well-being Weekend was facilitated in Corrymeela, Ballycastle, the 2-day retreat included Tai Chi, Art Therapy, and breathing exercises. The weekend provided an opportunity for members to take time out from their busy lives to relax, reflect, and recharge.

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The Law Centre NI hosted a very informative session on Migration and Asylum in Ireland. The shocking statistics presented helped educate our membership and put us in a better position to raise awareness, challenge negative narratives, and support those affected.

In May we hosted our first World Africa Day celebrations. The event allowed attendees to become immersed in African culture through dance, food, music, art, fashion, and the evening included inspiring quest speakers.

June 2023 the return of Member's travelling overseas to work with partners in South Africa and Tanzania, for the first time since 2019. FOA rebranded the volunteer programme as the Global Solidarity Project, with the attention on working in partnership with local youth leaders to deliver camps focusing on personal and social development. Extensive planning with partners was conducted pre-departure to ensure FOA were responding to the needs of the community. Following recruitment, training, and fundraising 7 members set off to Mwanza, Tanzania and 6 Member's to Phokeng, South Africa.

FOA applied and successfully received £9,900 from the Big Lotto Community Fund, which facilitated a 5-day summer scheme for young people of African origin who now call Belfast home. The week is filled with sports, games, day-trips, and new friendships.

Our Annual fundraiser in 2023 was The 4 Peaks Challenge, where 21 members and friends took on the highest peak in each province in Ireland over 3 days, to raise funds to support FOA projects.

The board continues to meet regularly and deal with all the legal and statutory requirements for charities.

The Trustees of Friends of Africa have complied with their duty to have due regard to the commission's public benefit guidance when exercising any powers or duties to which the guidance is relevant.

Financial Review

Reserves are at a level to meet the working capital requirements of the charity.

Neither during the year nor at the balance sheet date, was any fund in deficit.

Structure, Governance, and Management

The charity is governed by its constitution.

Trustees are appointed as required, and in accordance with the constitution.

Responsibilities of the Trustees

The Trustees are responsible for maintaining proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with applicable legislation. The Trustees 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.

Approved by the Trustees on 21/06/2024 and signed on their behalf by:

Grainne Kelly

Secretary

FRIENDS OF AFRICA

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES

ON THE UNAUDITED FINANCIAL INFORMATION

I report on the accounts of Friends of Africa for the year ended 31st August 2023, which are set out on pages 4 to 5.

Respective responsibilities of charity trustees and examiner

As the charity trustees you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of 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 Charity Commission for Northern Ireland under section 65(9)(b) of the Charities Act; and
- 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 our 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 or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as charity trustees concerning any such matters.

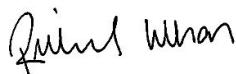
My role is to state whether any material matters have come to our attention giving us cause to believe:

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; and
4. That there is further information needed for a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Independent examiner's qualified statement

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

I can confirm that I am qualified to undertake the examination because I am a member of The Institute of Chartered Accountants in Ireland, which is one of the listed bodies.



Richard Whan FCA
Chartered Accountant

Date: 21/06/2024

FRIENDS OF AFRICA
STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st AUGUST 2023

	Note	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds 2023	Total Funds 2022
		£	£	£	£
Income and endowments from:					
Donations and legacies		13,965	4,000	17,965	15,696
Charitable activities		-	44,228	44,228	13,855
Other trading activities		12,105	-	12,105	9,101
Investments		-	-	-	37
Total		26,070	48,228	74,298	38,689
Expenditure on:					
Raising funds		10,086	369	10,455	3,699
Charitable activities	1	49,672	49,185	98,857	66,690
Total		59,758	49,554	109,312	70,389
Net income / (expenditure)		(33,688)	(1,326)	(35,014)	(31,700)
Transfers between funds		(1,326)	1,326	-	-
Net movements in funds		(35,014)	-	(35,014)	(31,700)
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward		121,978	-	121,978	153,678
Total funds carried forward		86,964	-	86,964	121,978

FRIENDS OF AFRICA
STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st AUGUST 2023

	31st August 2023	31st August 2022
	£	£
<u>Bank and cash balances</u>		
Danske bank current	83,835	118,850
BOI volunteer account	2,457	2,457
AIB account	672	671
Total	86,964	121,978

Approved by the trustees on 21/06/2024 and signed on their behalf by:

Shannon Heffron

Chair

Grainne Kelly

Secretary

FRIENDS OF AFRICA
NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st AUGUST 2023

Note 1 – Expenditure on charitable activities

	Unrestricted Funds 2023 £	Restricted Funds 2023 £	Total Funds 2023 £	Total Funds 2022 £
<i>Direct costs</i>				
Direct expenditure on projects	13,459	49,185	62,644	34,475
	<u>13,459</u>	<u>49,185</u>	<u>62,644</u>	<u>34,475</u>
	Unrestricted Funds 2023 £	Restricted Funds 2023 £	Total Funds 2023 £	Total Funds 2022 £
<i>Costs in support of charitable activities</i>				
Staff costs	27,260	-	27,260	24,459
Insurance	1,602	-	1,602	1,357
Website costs	527	-	527	15
Telephone and internet	694	-	694	438
Training	1,944	-	1,944	-
Rent	3,050	-	3,050	2,290
Audit and accountancy fees	-	-	-	2,154
Software	180	-	180	433
Printing, postage, stationery	648	-	648	769
Bank fees	308	-	308	286
General expenses	-	-	-	14
	<u>36,213</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>36,213</u>	<u>32,215</u>
Total expenditure on charitable activities	<u>49,672</u>	<u>49,185</u>	<u>98,857</u>	<u>66,690</u>