



TRUSTEE'S ANNUAL REPORT

For Year Ended 31 March 2023

ACCOLADE ALL COMMUNITIES ART COMMUNICATION
REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER N100345
REGISTERED ADDRESS: 23 OLD MANSE GREEN, BANBRIDGE BT22 4QY
EMAIL: committee@accolade.acad@gmail.com



Trustee's Annual Report for Year Ended 31 March 2023

1. Period Covered by Trustee's Annual Report

This is the Trustee's Annual Report of Accolade All Communities Art Communication (**Accolade**) for Year Ended 31 March 2023 and covers the financial period from 01 April 2022 to 31 March 2023 hereinafter referred to as Accolade in this Report.

2. Governance, Administration and Structure

Accolade is governed by its constitution dated 21 April 2013 as well as its supporting policies namely, Safeguarding Policy, Equal Opportunities Policy, Volunteer Policy, and Financial Policy (introduced post March 2017).

Copies of both the constitution and supporting policies are available on request in writing to the Charity Secretary at the registered address or alternatively by email to committee.accolade.acac@gmail.com.

The constitution has been updated to reflect amendments adopted at the Annual General Meeting held on 15 October 2019 following advice sought from the Charity Commission. In May 2018, the organisation reviewed the branding first used in 2013, consulted the membership and has rebranded all correspondence and promotional literature using the logo seen on this front of this Trustees report.

Accolade is managed and administered by its Trustees who meet on a regular basis at committee meetings. Typically, committee meetings take place once a month but may be more frequent as and when required. The Committee has resumed in person meetings in accordance with any remaining COVID 19 restrictions. The Annual General Meeting took place on 4 October 2022. A Special General meeting took place on 6 September 2022.

The Trustees are set out below. Where applicable resignations are listed, otherwise the Trustees were appointed at the AGM(s) and continued for the period covered by this Report:

Janet McAlister – Stood down after 6 years on committee.

Rosaleen Moore (Re-elected Chair October 2022)

Colin Barr Re-elected as Committee member October 2022 – Vice Chair and IT and Finance support.

Mary Cunningham – Stood down from committee after 6+ years.

Sandra Parker – Stood down after 6 years on committee

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Phelim Convery – Re-elected as October 2022

Dora South – Elected at AGM. Joint Charity Secretary

Josephine Campbell – Elected at AGM = Joint Charity Secretary

Karen Rafferty – Elected at AGM

Gerry Mulholland – Elected at AGM

Anthony McShane – Elected at AGM

3. Geographical Scope, Charitable Purpose, and Accolade Groups

Accolade is registered as a charity in Northern Ireland based in Banbridge, Newry and the surrounding South Down area.

Accolade is a community-based organisation which was formed to deliver arts-based programmes within an artistic, social, and educational context. In particular its charitable purposes through its various artistic mediums include, for the public benefit, the promotion of equality and diversity (to include work with ethnic minorities and cross sections of the community), the advancement and improvement of arts and culture, the advancement of education, the promotion and preservation of physical and mental health, and the promotion of community harmony.

Accolade's core groups include community choirs in Newry and until October, Banbridge, a community orchestra, and a ukulele group in Newry.

4. Special General Meeting – September 2022.

A special general meeting was agreed in advance of the Annual General Meeting to:

- share progress and challenges with members over the last 12 months following your request that groups continue.
- provide information about the role of a member of the management committee.
- discuss the possible change in structure
- seek input and support as to how the organisation could develop over the next 12 months and beyond.

At the meeting held on 6 September 2022 the critical need for members to come forward to fill vacancies on the Management Committee and develop sub-committees to support the organisation was emphasised.

The previous Management Committee's focus had been to deal with the immediate and short-term issues over the last year. A priority for the incoming committee was to determine the medium to long term future of Accolade and therefore the associated costs and appropriate funding streams to achieve this.

To do this it will be necessary to review the current activities of Accolade in terms of its purpose, aims and objectives in the constitution. **This should involve the input of all Accolade members.**

5. Membership

Current membership is 60. Steps were taken to increase the level of membership. These included displaying notices about the meetings for the three groups and the times and venues of those meetings, in libraries in Banbridge, Newry, Warrenpoint; in churches and supermarkets like Tesco in each of these places and in Portadown and Craigavon. This information was put on facebook and

our website too. A three metre long banner was made to recruit new members to the orchestra, and was displayed on the railings at Tesco in Banbridge, after attempts to display it in the town were foiled by the council removing it.

6. Funding.

Accolade continued to use unrestricted funds from April 2022 until the award of £10,000 following a successful application to the National Lottery Community Fund for a 12 month project entitled "Reconnecting People through Music. It was felt that with diminishing numbers and uncertainties about the future after covid, we would not be likely to get big lottery funding again and a funding application was made to the Arts Council. The amount granted was smaller than hoped for, £5000 was granted. This is supplemented by the weekly donations from members and the donations received from such events as the Concert in Loughbrickland church, in Buttercrane and in the nursing homes.

Funding covered facilitators, venue hire and monitoring and evaluation.

7. Activities and Performances

Social Event – June 2022 Thomas Davis Community Hub

The Thomas Davis Community Hub was the venue for another night of fun and music attended by Accolade members family and friends. There was a programme of music featuring each of the groups and two pieces which the choir, orchestra and ukulele group played together. Once again, an open mic session proved what a talented bunch of people we have with some unexpected performances including yodeling and poems. We all enjoyed supper provided by Courtneys and were pleased that there was an opportunity to record the evening for a **promotional video**. Press coverage was good.

Tom Moore was our compere/continuity artist for the evening. Suitably dressed and with some amusing and interesting musical facts he ensured the evening flowed so well. Sadly, no further social events were managed throughout the year.

Ukulele Group- Progress

The group was sorry to lose their leader in July 2022. This role had been undertaken by a member on a voluntary basis. An advertisement was placed for a new leader in August 2022 and a suitable appointment enabling the group to continue weekly sessions in September 2022. The group continues to meet on a weekly basis to develop new skills and learn new songs. After some difficulties in the group a decision was made to divide it into two groups to better suit the needs of players. Members of the group met to perform in nursing homes on several occasions where they were warmly welcomed and appreciated.

Community Choirs – Newry and Banbridge Progress

Unfortunately our Choir leader also advised that she would need to stand down due to personal commitments . The appointment of a new choir leader was particularly challenging and ultimately a new leader was appointed for the Newry Choir only. It was agreed that the choir would meet on a weekly basis with Banbridge choir members welcome to attend. This did not work out for Banbridge members as the Newry choir met on a night that clashed with some other activities that the Banbridge members attended. Sadly we lost the Banbridge Choir as a result. The Newry Choir performed in Loughbrickland Church on 14th December and again together with the Ukuleles in Buttercrane on 15th December. Both successful and well appreciated performances.

Community Orchestra - Progress

The Management Committee were pleased that the orchestra was able to continue under the same leadership as the previous year. The membership and associated costs of the orchestra had been a concern for the committee, however, the past year has seen an improvement in the situation. The overall sound of the orchestra was greatly impacted by the loss of our founder members and some of their advanced music students and other experienced musicians i.e facilitators. With perseverance and hard work 4 new members were recruited to the orchestra to great advantage. The orchestra, under its new leader, and with still low numbers, did not feel ready for a Christmas performance.

Bannside is still seen as a very accommodating venue for the weekly performances and any concerts. Collaboration with the other groups could be improved. Lack of communication has sometimes led to misunderstanding and possibly wrong conclusions. In view of this, and with Covid hopefully behind us, it was hoped that an occasional rehearsal night might be put aside for a social event where groups can mix and enhance relationships. This did not happen this year.

8. Challenges for 2022/23

The Challenges for 2022/23 included:

- An absence of long-term funding...this challenge still remains.
- Maintaining and increasing membership....some new members have joined the choir and orchestra and we continue to work on this.
- The induction and training of new members of the Management Committee.....Kate Hamilton delivered training to the committee in May.
- The absence of a dedicated administrative post.....this still remains a challenge.
 - The recruitment of new leaders for both the Ukulele group and Choirsmuch work went into finding new leaders for the choir and ukuleles and this has been achieved, with the groups and leaders adjusting to the inevitably different styles of working.
- Encouraging smaller groups of members to perform at local events especially in care homes.... This happened on several occasions, but with sometimes fewer members than hoped for.

9. Financial Position at Year Ended 31 March 2023

In summary, the financial position of Accolade at the end of the financial year was as follows:

Cash at bank was **£13,633**

This amount consists of unrestricted funds i.e., funds not attributed to specific funded projects (which is made up of voluntary donations and membership fees).

Unrestricted funds totalled **£13,633**

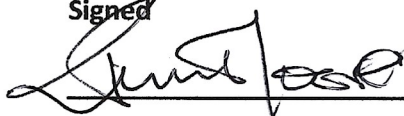
Restricted funds £0

In preparing this Report the Trustees have had due regard to their statutory obligations under the Charities Act and have had due regard to the guidance prepared by the Northern Ireland Charity Commission on public benefit.

The Trustee Report and Annual Accounts were adopted by the Management Committee

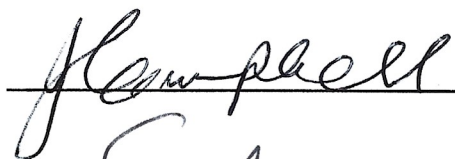
on 19.12.23

Signed

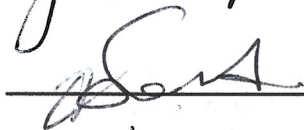


Rosaleen
Rosemary Moore (Chair)

Dated: _____



Josephine Campbell (Joint Charity Secretary)



Dora South (Joint Charity Secretary)

Dated: 16.12.23