

NEW LODGE ARTS

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NEW LODGE ARTS

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

The trustees present their annual report and financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024.

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 charity's Memorandum and Articles of Association the Companies Act 2006 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) (effective 1 January 2019)".

Objectives and activities

New Lodge Arts is a thriving arts organisation delivering community arts projects across North Belfast. The organisation has a strong community focus and a passion for supporting the needs of young people from disadvantaged communities, New Lodge Arts continues to make a positive impact in the local area.

New Lodge Arts ensures their programmes are appealing and appropriate to local people. The diverse range of activities include a year round sustained programme of activity including dance, drama, visual arts, film making and youth leadership, volunteer development programme and event management. Additional programmes are delivered on a cross-community basis aimed at promoting physical regeneration and shared space.

New Lodge Arts has four main aims:

- Fostering creativity and skills
- Promoting Good Relations and a Shared Future
- Building capacity to be a sustainable organisation
- Marketing and communication

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

Achievements and performance

New Lodge Arts continued to strengthen and develop their annual arts programme, offering a diverse range of initiatives for people across north Belfast. These programmes continue to enrich the lives of participants, helping them to grow and develop, to reduce isolation and encourages them to become active citizens within their community.

Arts Academy (weekly classes)

The Arts Academy remains at the core of our work. Throughout the past year we delivered 19 weekly classes to 250 participants. Our programme included a range of creative activities including guitar lessons, craft classes, drawing classes, drama, hip hop, ballet, visual arts and youth theatre, continue to stimulate creativity, build self-esteem and develop confidence of participants. The classes make a huge impact on the participants. Here is a quote from an adult on our guitar lesson:

'The class has helped me to relax at home as I practice the guitar. I would recommend this class to anyone. Any age, any ability. Scott is amazing at what he does and is very patient and encouraging. The group are all very friendly and welcoming.'

The Arts Academy provides performance opportunities throughout the year, giving participants an opportunity to share what they have learned.

DFA Funded Programme – Build Positive Change

Young people from New Lodge Arts and YWIC (Youth Work in Communities - EA @ Woodvale) involved in the TBUC Creative Voices Programme have moved on to Build Positive Change, funded by DfA. The group has participated in several design-based workshops facilitated by Steve Hunter (formerly Fablab Belfast) to design and build a portable pod that will be used to record local peoples' experiences. The group surveyed attendees of the Spring Family Fun Day about the types of questions they propose to ask visitors to the pod and, from the responses, have created a set of interview questions. Working with Steve they have built pod prototypes and their work has been documented on film. This film was launched in Aug 2023.

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ArtEz

Four resident artists from ArtEz, University of the Arts, Netherlands, were based with New Lodge Arts from April-Jun 2023. The artists in residence are studying at Masters degree level and exploring the role of socially engaged practice and artistic research that puts art to work in the name of equality and social justice. Currently all four are exploring the development of the Studio space. Ayham Ali worked with young people from New Lodge Youth Centre exploring shared space through the use of 3D printing. Clara Lee worked with the New Lodge Arts senior youth group to explore symbols. The group designed and created symbols representing their identity that were produced as temporary tattoos and stickers. They have also produced symbols for the Studio Space. Stephanie Hatzis looked at the functionality of the Studio – what is being used and how it is being used. Pompadó (Z.R.) Martha explored the creation of a cyber-learning space for digital and audio visual media in The Studio.

Summer Programme

The summer season in North Belfast just got a whole lot more dramatic, thanks to the annual Summer Drama Camps hosted by New Lodge Arts. With three camps catering to different age groups – Tinys, Junior, and Senior – these camps have become the highlight of the summer for aspiring young actors and theatre enthusiasts alike.

This year, the summer drama camps welcomed over 50 children, each bringing their unique talents and passion for the performing arts. From budding actors to future Broadway stars, these camps have nurtured young talent and provided an exceptional platform for creativity and self-expression.

Tinys Camp: A Partnership with C21 Theatre Company

The Tinys Camp, in partnership with the esteemed C21 Theatre Company, was a fantastic showcase of young talent with the theme of Backwards Fairytales. Under the guidance of experienced theatre professionals, these young thespians developed their skills and showcased them in a memorable performance at Girdwood Community Hub. The showcase was a testament to the power of collaboration and the boundless potential of young performers.

Junior Camp: A Heart-warming Production of 'Annie'

The Junior Camp, a group of talented young actors, delivered a heart-warming and memorable production of the beloved musical 'Annie.' The audience at the North Queen Street Community Centre were left in awe as they watched these young stars bring the timeless tale to life. The dedication and passion of the junior cast shone through in every scene, leaving not a dry eye in the house. Their performance was a true testament to the power of youth and the magic of theatre.

Senior Camp: 'The Little Mermaid' Makes a Splash

The Senior Camp, the crème de la crème of the summer drama experience, dazzled audiences with three sold-out shows of 'The Little Mermaid' at The MAC. This group of talented young teenagers not only delivered an incredible performance but also showcased stunning vocals that would be the envy of any West End production. The Senior Camp demonstrated what can be achieved through hard work, dedication, and a love for the arts.

The Summer Drama Camps offered participants more than just the chance to perform on stage. They provided a safe and nurturing environment for children and young adults to build self-confidence, develop communication skills, and make lasting friendships. The camp experience goes beyond the final bow, leaving participants with memories and skills that will last a lifetime.

The Agency

A collaboration with Battersea Arts Centre and Contact Theatre Manchester in 2023/2024 has secured the delivery of The Agency, a project that supports young people (aged 15-25), as social entrepreneurs, to make a difference and transform their local area in a way that they think is best (<https://bac.org.uk/get-involved/the-agency/>). We see The Agency as a progression opportunity for young people with a passion effecting social change in their communities.

In September, 18 local young people has the opportunity to participate in an award-winning creative entrepreneurship programme providing an opportunity to effect lasting change in their community.

The Agency programme was originally conceived by theatre maker, journalist and activist **Marcus Faustini** in the favelas of Rio de Janeiro. New Lodge Arts is working in partnership with Battersea Art Centre, London, Contact Theatre, Manchester, Storyhouse, Chester and Energize Me, Southampton. The programme aims to empower young people aged 15-25 to become creative leaders and catalysts for change in their communities.

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FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Over the first 12 weeks, the young people developed projects and business ideas through a creative, theatre-based methodology. All projects must include a social action component that gives back to the community. The panel was greatly impressed by the project ideas and their presentations.

The three projects selected for funding were Abi Flannagan's 'From Seed 2 Plate' (supported by Aoife Teer and produced by Tp Ward); Sophie Rossbotham's 'Rise Above the Ashes' (supported by Grace Rogan and produced by Matt Faris); and a joint project by Maggie and Natalia called 'New Heights' (produced by Amy Smyth).

The young participants successfully executed their projects, engaging young people from communities across north Belfast. The funded projects offered a variety of activities, including hiking, gardening, journaling, and drama workshops.

Orla Hawkins, Project Coordinator of The Agency Belfast, said: *'New Lodge Arts is delighted and proud to deliver The Agency Programme in Belfast. The programme aligns perfectly with our belief that young people should be at the heart of social change, mobilized around the social issues they care about. As a community-based organization operating in North Belfast, we are excited to see the creative and innovative projects our young people will develop and the positive impacts these projects will have on their areas. Being part of a national network like The Agency amplifies the voices and ideas of young people, creating a collective force for systematic change.'*

The Agency stands as a shining example of how the programme ignites the passion for entrepreneurship and social change among young people. With its track record of success and its ongoing impact on the community, The Agency is a testament to the power of youth-driven initiatives in driving positive change.

North Belfast Lantern Festival

The North Belfast Lantern Festival's family fun day successfully unfolded amidst challenging weather conditions, attracting approximately 500 people. Held in Alexandra Park, the event featured a diverse array of activities, including arts and crafts, games, music, dancing, and live performances, creating a vibrant and engaging atmosphere for attendees of all ages. The festival also showcased its commitment to community engagement through an outreach programme that involved over 20 local groups and schools, fostering a sense of unity and collaboration. Despite the weather, the North Belfast Lantern Festival provided a joyful and inclusive experience for families, highlighting the resilience and spirit of the community.

Unfortunately due to a torrential downpour at 4pm, the park was flooded and the evening event was cancelled, which was hugely disappointing. Due to health and safety, there was no way we could proceed with the event.

New Lodge Arts Christmas Panto

This year, New Lodge Arts presented a fabulous production of "Snow White and the Black Forest Gateau," a delightful twist on the classic fairy tale, written by Maire Campbell and adapted by the talented Debra Hill. From the 12th to the 14th of December at Boys Model School, this Panto provided a magical experience filled with laughter and joy.

The heart-warming tale of Snow White takes an unexpected turn in this adaptation, bringing a scrumptious twist to the narrative with the inclusion of the Black Forest Gateau. Maire Campbell's creative genius, combined with Debra Hill's adaptation skills, adds a delectable layer to the beloved story, ensuring a unique and memorable experience for attendees.

One of the highlights of this production is the fabulous cast, comprised of talented young individuals from across North Belfast. These budding stars bring energy, enthusiasm, and a fresh perspective to the stage, infusing the performance with a vibrant and dynamic atmosphere. The witty dialogue, playful interactions, and clever comedic moments ensure that everyone in the audience, regardless of age, will find themselves thoroughly entertained. It's the perfect recipe for a joyous and festive evening out.

Girdwood – Christmas Event

Our Junior Youth Theatre group were delighted to spread some festive cheer of Girdwood Hubs' Christmas Event on Saturday 16th December 2023. With a shared passion for community involvement, they eagerly set up stations for arts and crafts, marshmallow snowmen, card making, inviting children to unleash their imagination. Dressed as Santa's faithful elves, they guided eager children through the festivities, supporting Santa as he gave out the selection boxes to the excited children. We were hugely proud of our young people and looking forward to getting them back again to help at future events.

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TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Girdwood Half Term Camp

From 12th-14th February 2024, we delivered a 3-day camp in partnership with the Girdwood Shared Space Group (Let Youth Lead, TAMHI, CCRF & BCC). 60 young people participated in a range of drama, arts & crafts and sport. We hope to build on this programme and provide additional activities during school holidays.

Spring Awakening

The annual event took place on Saturday 23rd March 2024. The event included a range of youth led activities, arts and crafts, games, music, dance and performances. Despite the weather, over 300 people attended.

Funding and support

New Lodge Arts is widely supported by a range of statutory and charitable sources including Arts Council NI, Belfast City Council and The Executive Office. Support from Trusts & Foundations is key to the delivery of our annual programme and we are very grateful to Tudor Trust, Garfield Weston, Henry Smith Charity and Halifax Foundation for their support.

Financial review

At 31 March 2024, the total funds of the charity amounted to £101,573 (2023 - £86,700) comprising £61,880 (2023 - £43,691) of restricted funds and £39,693 (2023 - £43,009) of unrestricted funds.

Reserves policy

The directors retain funds in the charity in order to provide sufficient working capital to facilitate the ongoing activities. The current level of free reserves is sufficient to meet approximately 2 months salary and running costs. The target for unrestricted reserves is six months support costs in cash at bank.

Major risks

The directors have conducted a review of the major risks to which the charity is exposed. Where appropriate, systems or procedures have been established to mitigate the risks the charity faces. Internal control risks are minimised by the implementation of procedures for authorisation of all transactions and projects. Procedures are in place to ensure compliance with health and safety of staff, volunteers, clients and visitors to the premises. These procedures are periodically reviewed to ensure that they continue to meet the needs of the charity.

Structure, governance and management

New Lodge Arts is a charitable company limited by guarantee, incorporated on 28 July 2010. It is governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association. It has no share capital and the guarantee of each member is limited. In the event of the company being wound up members are required to contribute an amount not exceeding £1.

The trustees, who are also the directors for the purpose of company law, and who served during the year and up to the date of signature of the financial statements were:

Mr N Privilege
Ms M Wylie
Mr R Davison
Ms C Crothers
Mr S Hackett

The directors of the company are also charity trustees for the purposes of charity law. Under the requirements of the Memorandum and Articles of Association the directors retire by rotation and being eligible offer themselves for re-election.

Individuals are invited to serve as directors on the basis of their abilities and background so as to achieve a balance between those from the business and charity sectors.

New Lodge Arts has a Board of directors who meet regularly and are responsible for the strategic direction and policy of the charity.

A scheme delegation is in place and day to day responsibility for the provision of the services rest with the manager, Anne Delaney.

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TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Statement of trustees' responsibilities

The trustees, who are also the directors of New Lodge Arts for the purpose 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 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, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company 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 UK 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 adequate 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 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.

Auditor

In accordance with the company's articles, a resolution proposing that GMcG BELFAST be reappointed as auditor of the company will be put at a General Meeting.

Disclosure of information to auditor

Each of the trustees has confirmed that there is no information of which they are aware which is relevant to the audit, but of which the auditor is unaware. They have further confirmed that they have taken appropriate steps to identify such relevant information and to establish that the auditor is aware of such information.

Small Companies Exemption

In preparing this report, the directors have taken advantage of the small companies exemptions provided by section 415A of the Companies Act 2006.

The trustees' report was approved by the Board of Trustees.



Mr R Davison
Trustee

Date: 14.01.25