

AGÉ north down & ards

Trustees' Report

Trustees and officers

The trustees and officers serving during the year and since the year end were as follows:

Trustees:

James Steven Johnston

Paul Leathem

Mr Gavin Walker (resigned 7 July 2022)

Heather Mason

Adrianne Brown (appointed 30 August 2022)

Margaret Knox (appointed 7 September 2022 and resigned 30 November 2022)

Mr Gerard O'Boyle (appointed 30 August 2023)

Secretary:

Dorothy Willis Beatie

The trustees, who are also directors for the purposes of company law, have pleasure in presenting their report and the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2023.

Structure, Governance and Management

Governing document

AGÉ north down & ards (AGÉnda) is a company limited by guarantee governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association. It is recognised as a charity by HM Revenue & Customs.

Recruitment and appointment of trustees

The trustees of the charity are also directors for the purposes of company law. Under the terms of the Memorandum and Articles of Association the directors retire every three years by rotation at the Annual Meeting. None of the trustees receive any remuneration from the charity.

The trustees are a blend of senior business professionals and social/voluntary sector skills. As and when certain skills/experience are lost due to natural rotation, active steps are taken to secure successor Trustees from within the business/voluntary sectors.

Trustee induction and training

Most trustees are already familiar with the work of the charity and have an affinity with the vision, purpose, and values. All new Trustees will undertake comprehensive induction to ensure they are familiar with their legal responsibilities as a Trustee of AGÉnda. This induction is normally carried out by a suitably qualified external consultant and is framed around the Principles of Good Governance developed by the Governments Developing Governance Group (Revised 2016) and is also a practice recommended by Charity Commission for Northern Ireland.

Organisation

AGÉnda is a limited company which has developed its capabilities and reputation in the Ards and North Down area, covering both urban and rural situations. Together with a strong committed team coupled with sound financial management, these provide a platform to progress its strategy over the next years.

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AGENDA has developed the necessary systems, structure, policies, and procedures to manage finances, staff, and volunteers. This includes good financial control and monitoring and evaluation procedures. AGENDA has a 3-year strategic plan for 2023 – 2026 and an outcome based operational plan to be reviewed annually.

AGENDA's work is carried out by a team comprising of 8 part time paid staff and over 30 volunteers. Led by a voluntary Board of Trustees, the staff complement is funded from grant aid to deliver a range of services to local people. As in other voluntary charitable organisations, a substantial volume of work is carried out by people who are committed to working with older people and give their time willingly without recompense. The Board of AGENDA greatly value the work of the volunteers and continually strive to ensure this contribution receives suitable recognition.

AGENDA complies with all public sector directives and legislation relating to working conditions, health, and safety at work and equal opportunities. The charity is also committed to comply with all current equality and human rights legislation.

Over its 24 years as a limited company, AGE north downs & ards has provided direct support e.g., Good Morning Call Service, Floating Support Service, Support and Signposting, to ensure older people in the Ards & North area are comfortable with growing old.

Relationships

AGENDA has strong working relationships with a wide range of organisations and agencies that have a mandate for the delivery of services to older people.

Risk management

The major risks, to which the Charity could potentially be exposed as identified by the Trustees, is kept under constant review.

Objectives and activities

Charity's Aims

The principal activities of the company are to advance the interests and be for the benefit of the elderly in the area known as North Down and Ards, and to assist others in the pursuance of these activities. The AGENDA Strategy 2021 - 2023 sets out the following.

Vision

Ards and North Down celebrating older people living healthy and fulfilling lives.

Purpose

To support and encourage all older people to live well and become active, engaged and influential members of the community.

Mission

To provide person-centred and caring programmes that keep people safe, well, connected and independent.

Our Values

To be Collaborative.

To be Open and Transparent.

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Treating all with Dignity & Respect.

To be Inclusive & Accessible.

Achievements and Performances

Strategy Review

In 2022, we developed a new 3-year strategic plan for 2023-2026. This was shaped and led by older people in our local community.

We completed an intensive consultation with older people and stakeholders including 70 survey respondents, 14 stakeholder interviews, a focus group with 20 participants from a range of organisations and a telephone consultation with 21 users.

The feedback highlighted an increasing need for enhanced levels of social opportunities for older people and more spaces for them to not only socialise but to interact, engage and speak to statutory agencies such as the PSNI, NI Fire and Rescue and the NHS, as well as expanding their knowledge and skillset on issues such as budgeting, navigating and accessing services, technology, cooking, scams and advice on housing, benefits and financial security through speaking to experts in that field etc.

As a result, we agreed the following priorities for action for the next 3 years.

Priorities for action 2023 – 2026

1. To sustain and extend a free, confidential, telephone service.
2. To sustain and extend floating support services of help and advice in a person's home to make it easier to maintain their independence in the home and community.
3. To create additional support to people who are isolated and lonely.
4. To enable people to access the support they need to live healthy and independent lives.
5. To organise events that give people an opportunity to connect, learn, access services and support each other.
6. To continue to build the capacity and long-term sustainability of the charity.

Services

Our main services in this year were:

Good Morning Call service –a free confidential daily telephone call service for those over 65 in our council area, which encourages communication among older people. This year the number of successful calls made to support older people were 20,988.

Floating Support Service – which provides short term advice and helps encourage independence among older people at home and in their community.

Support & Signposting - which is a listening ear to those who need reassurance and support. If AGENda can't help the clients, they pass them on to the person or organisation who can support them.

AGENda acts as a "Hub" in the local area, focusing on delivering services to older people from 65 years of age. AGENda provide assistance to individuals contacting via email, telephone and website.

According to the 2021 Census, Ards and North Down has the oldest age profile in Northern Ireland. The percentage of the population who are aged 65 or more has increased over the last ten years from 17.7% in 2011 to 22.1% in 2021.

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Ards and North Down Borough Council have over 33,000 over 65-year-olds. AGEnDA recognises that one organisation cannot possibly deliver services to all older people in need throughout the local area. AGEnDA is therefore committed to working in Partnership to ensure older people get the services they need.

AGEnDA has established and supports the Ards and North Down Older Persons Partnership which has over 75 local representatives. The Older Persons Partnership works as a partner to AGEnDA organisation. The role of the committee is to improve the services to Older People within Ards & North Down.

Financial review


Results for the year

The total income for the year was £103,523 (2022: £127,281) and the overall net deficit was £6,286 (2022 surplus of £9,856). The surplus on unrestricted funds was £4,796 (2022 unrestricted deficit £27,654). The principal funders for the year were NIHE – Supporting People and the South-Eastern Health & Social Care Trust. The charity also received grants from the John Moores Foundation and Ards & North Down BC as well as various donations.

Reserves policy

The Trustees have examined the charity's requirement for reserves in light of the main risks to the funding of the organisation. Unrestricted free reserves at the year-end were £62,344 (2022 £55,668) which represents 6 months of operating costs. Free reserves are needed to sustain the day-to-day operations of the charity. The Trustees consider that the ideal level of reserves to meet the running costs for a period of 6 months to be in the region of £60,000. The Trustees consider that the free reserves will be needed to sustain the charity as future funding opportunities are explored.

Approved by the trustees of the charity on 15 November 2023 and signed on its behalf by:


James Steven Johnston
Trustee

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Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities

The trustees (who are also the directors of AGE north down & ards 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), including FRS 102 "The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland".

Company law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under company law the trustees must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards, comprising FRS 102 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 charitable company will continue in business.

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records that can disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company 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 charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the charitable company's website. Legislation governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

Approved by the trustees of the charity on 15 November 2023 and signed on its behalf by:



James Steven Johnston
Trustee