

**NORTHERN IRELAND SAFETY GROUP**  
**YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022**

**Trustees Report for year ended 31 December 2022**

The Trustees present their Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2022

**Reference and Administrative Details**

Northern Ireland Safety Group  
13 De Courcy Avenue  
Carrickfergus  
BT38 7LJ

Registered Charity in Northern Ireland (NIC 100743)

**Charity Trustees/Directors**

The Charity Trustees who served during the year or who were trustees at the date of this report were

Wilson Lambe (President)  
Ashleigh Birkett (Chairperson)  
Wendy Beatty (Vice-Chairperson)  
Jimmy Fenton (PRO)  
John Thompson (Immediate Past Chair)  
Ernie Spence (Secretary/Treasurer)  
Nicola McCracken (2nd Secretary)  
Tom Stephenson  
Jim Leitch  
David Cooke  
Priscilla Woods  
Heather McKinstry  
Mandy Nelson  
Wendy Moore  
Lyndsey Thompson  
Ian McIlveen  
Declan McLogan

**Status**

The Charity is registered with the NI Charities Commission under reference NIC100743

The Charity has also been accepted as a charity by HMRC under HMRC number URN number 0115305845 and as such no provision for taxation has been made.

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**Structure & Management**

Northern Ireland Safety Group is a charity which is governed by its Constitution.

The organisation is primarily managed by an Executive Committee made up of the Office bearers, 8 other committee members and 4 technical advisors on the committee.

There are no employees. However, 2 members of the Executive Committee function as Secretaries and tender for their services on a 3-year contract.

Through the period the payments to the two Executive Committee members were:-

Ernie Spence	£32,006.52
Nicola McCracken	£ 6,584.76

**Description & Purpose**

The principal aim and objective of the Charity is to promote occupational health and safety amongst all people in the workplace and as such raise awareness of the reduction of work-related fatalities, workplace incidents and cases of ill health in Northern Ireland for the public benefit.

**Activities & Objectives**

This is carried out by running monthly meetings which allow health and safety practitioners (and other interested parties) to network together, share ideas and in general strive to improve the overall health and safety of and for the workforce and those who come into contact with them.

The Trustees are greatly appreciative of all their funders and the continued support of their members, without whose help the charity could not fulfil its charitable aims and objectives.

Other activities carried out by the Group include the running of seminars, running of a safety quiz, running of a Safety Conference, management of a Safety Awards scheme (in conjunction with the National Irish Safety Organisation), and the promotion of health and safety to those in secondary education about to embark on work placement.

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**Achievements & Performance**

2022 was another busy year for the organisation. We recognised early on in the year that it would be a year of transition to a new normal in terms of our meeting activities following COVID.

As such, the year witnessed three different types of meeting. It began with webinars (until restrictions allowed us to meet in person again), followed by a few hybrid meetings, and the year finished with the inclusion of in-person meetings.

A total of twelve meetings were held and the stats below show the numbers for the various meetings.

Month	Meeting type	Attendees In-person	Attendees online	TOTAL
Jan	Webinar	n/a	107	107
Feb	Webinar	n/a	n/a	Cancelled
Feb	F & B Webinar	n/a	58	58
Mar	Webinar	n/a	92	92
April	Webinar	n/a	122	122
May	Hybrid	12	74	88
May	Hybrid (HSENI)	13	120	133
June	Hybrid	4	48	52
Aug	Hybrid	11	33	44
Sept	In person	111	n/a	111
Oct	Webinar	n/a	90	90
Nov	In -person	63	n/a	63
Dec	Webinar	n/a	29	29

A survey was carried out in November to ascertain what type of meetings suited those that attend them. It showed that the major benefits of webinars were: -

- Saving travel time.
- Saving cost on fuel.
- The ability to attend a meeting online if something crops up at the last minute.
- Reduces an attendee's carbon footprint.

Another benefit of webinars was that they are recorded, edited, and uploaded to our website for those that couldn't make the meeting and this added to the reach they had.

The only element that is missing from online meetings is the networking aspect that comes with in-person events.

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The survey indicated that members preferred a blended approach with a mixture of online and in-person meetings. Tracking our numbers and outcomes (that we have done since the start of the year) will put us in a great position to shape our meetings for the future. The committee as a whole is behind our search for the best way to provide value to our members and beyond.

A total of 8 meetings were recorded during the year. In addition, we also recorded a presentation with National Energy Action when their NI Training Officer spoke about ways to save money on heating and electric bills. We asked our membership to distribute this to their contacts and it became the most watched recording of the year with 582 views. Interestingly the average view time was 55 minutes and 28 seconds showing that viewers watched to the end.

Our e-zine continues to be the mainstay of how we communicate to those that interact with us. Our subscriber list witnessed real growth through the year (see below).

Subscribers at start of year	802	Subscribers at end of year	919	Net increase of subscribers	14.5%
The actual number of new subscribers was 142 but we had 25 un-subscriptions over the year.					

Open rates for the e-zines were well up on the year before. We achieved open rates in the high 20 and lower 30 percentages. This compares exceptionally well when benchmarked against the likes of Mailchimp and HubSpot who show in their research an open rate in the low 20% range for similar industry groups. In simple terms our e-zine is opened by one in every 3.5 people on our database.

Membership numbers increased slightly for the year to 282.

Our first in person event during the year was our annual health and safety quiz which took place in the Wellington Park Hotel in February. It was great to see people attending events again.

We were delighted that a number of our members entered the annual All Ireland Occupational Health & Safety Awards, scoring very well against organisations Ireland wide.

Our John Gordon Safety Person of the Year was hotly contested this year with more entries than ever. Winners were announced in the non-H & S person category and the H & S professional category.

We entered the Safety Groups UK Recognition Award for Excellence among Safety Groups and walked away with the top prize, the Alan Butler Award. Several committee members attended the Awards ceremony in Manchester.

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We also promoted the Safety Groups UK's Innovation in H & S Award and were delighted when this was won by one of our members - Adman Civil Projects Limited.

Our Farming sub-committee was active through the year with attendance at the Clogher Valley Show and at the Winter Fair alongside HSENI.

In addition, our other sub committees including Development & Governance, Driving, and Education continued to meet during the course of the year.

A new sub-committee was formed during the year to plan for next year's 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration.

Last year's work in collaboration with others continued through the year and is now firmly embedded in many of our activities. The Mental Health in the Construction Sector Initiative carried on and is now known as the Building Mental Health Alliance. This initiative was launched in October. We also continued to play an active role in the Workplace Health Leadership Group.

Work began at the end of the year on bringing the website back to where it was pre COVID with most information being held in the members only portal section.

Overall, it has been a busy year for the organisation, and we look forward to 2023 with a clear mission to promote occupational health and safety across all of Northern Ireland.

**Public Benefit Statement**

The Northern Ireland Safety Group meets the public benefit requirement as follows:

The direct benefits which flow from the purpose are the improvement of safety and health knowledge in the workforce leading to the reduction of accidents/incidents and ill health at work. These benefits are evidenced through the increase in Group membership, the numbers who attend monthly meetings, feedback from Conferences and seminars that the organisation run, the growing number of subscribers to the organisation's e-zine, the increasing numbers who attend the Annual Safety Quiz and the increased numbers of organisations who enter the All Ireland Safety Awards. There is no harm from the activities pursued by the organisation. The Charity's beneficiaries are Safety Group members and the wider safety and health profession in

Northern Ireland and those people working for or with them be they employers, employees, self-employed or sub-contractors and young people who will be entering the workforce in the future.

The Trustees confirm that they have complied with the requirements of section 4 of the Charities Act 2008 to have due regard to the public benefit guidance published by The Charity Commission for Northern Ireland

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**Financial Review**

The Financial Statements show a Deficit for the period of £1,764 (2021: surplus £3,020).

Reserves Policy

The Trustees of the charity have established a policy whereby the unrestricted funds not committed or invested in tangible fixed assets ('the free reserves') held by the charity should amount to between 2 and 6 months' worth of the resources expended which equates to between £9,445 and £28,337 in general funds. At this level, the Trustees feel that they would be able to continue the current activities of the charity in the event of a significant drop in funding; however, it would obviously be necessary to consider how the funding would be replaced or activities changed. At present the free reserves (which exclude designated reserves), amount to £28,919 and are just outside the Trustees' target range. The Trustees continue to work towards maintaining their free reserves target.

Designated reserves for Workplace Health (promotion) was reduced from £20,265 to £12,290

Plans for the future

The charity plans to continue the activities outlined above in the forthcoming years subject to satisfactory funding arrangements.

**Statement of Trustees Responsibilities**

The Trustees are responsible for the preparation of Financial Statements for each financial period which give a true and fair view of the surplus or deficit arising in the period and of the assets and liabilities of the Charity as at the end of the financial period.

The Financial Statements are to be prepared on a going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to assume that the Charity will continue in operation for at least 12 months following the period end date.

The Trustees are responsible for the maintenance of proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy the financial position of the Charity at any given time.

They are responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Charity and for taking all necessary steps for the prevention or detection of fraud and other irregularities.

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**Signed on behalf of the Trustees:**



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Ashleigh Birkett (Chairperson - Trustee)

Dated: 23 January 2023



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Ernie Spence (Secretary/Treasurer - Trustee)

Dated: 23 January 2023