



Mae
Murray
Foundation

Creating Change Together

Annual Report

2023-24





Welcome to our Annual Report – our 8th year of operations and a very busy year indeed!

Sharing our knowledge and members' lived experiences has always been a key objective for Mae Murray Foundation in the hope that more inclusive environments can be created by others, as a result of our learning. 2023 was a monumental step towards that goal with the publication of two guides on building and sustaining inclusive environments. Our membership, as ever, was at the heart of this co-design and it was a proud moment to watch our Youth Panel launch ADAPT my Play at Stormont Parliament Buildings with confidence and flare. Special thanks to Alan Herron and the team at Playboard who have been working in partnership with us for several years on this project and whose vision to deliver on the right to play for every child knows no bounds.

Our ambition and ability to create change is only possible due to the dedication of our amazing but small staff team, our volunteers, board of directors, member committees, partners, and of course our fabulous funders and supporters. Thank you all for your combined efforts and for your belief in our vision of a society where everyone can take part and be recognised to be of equal and inseparable value.

Alix Crawford
Chairperson



Background Information

8 staff

(5 part-time,
3 full-time),
based in Larne



Operating
regionally
across
Northern
Ireland



**40
sessional
staff**
working at
events

Over
80
volunteers

We at Mae Murray Foundation are proud to be a lived-experience, membership led organisation which strives to make it possible for people of all ages and abilities to experience the world together, take part in activities and build friendships in environments which are genuinely inclusive.

We recognise one another to be of equal and inseparable value, regardless of physical or learning ability, sensory, medical or undiagnosed condition, age or caring role. We are particularly focused on making sure that people with more complex needs, whose requirements are often overlooked, are able to participate fully.

We run a comprehensive range of innovative and inclusive projects for children, teenagers and adults. Crucially, we draw on our members' lived experiences to work together to design and implement permanent changes in everyday environments, like beaches and play parks, so that everyone can participate together.

Vision, Mission and Values

Our *vision* at Mae Murray Foundation is to create an inclusive society with true participation for ALL in leisure and social settings, regardless of age or ability.

Our *mission* is to improve quality of life, through participation of all-abilities, together.

Our core values define, guide, and underpin our work.

We will always:



Listen

The voice of lived-experience leads our work and we support the rights of everyone, including those who are non-verbal, to be heard.

Include

We are committed to constantly learning, adapting and improving, to ensure we deliver true inclusion for all and to empower each individual's potential.

Partner

We are committed to working in partnership with other organisations and stakeholders.

Influence

We strive to influence others and create fundamental change together.

Deliver

We aim to deliver sustainable solutions and best practice models for a better, inclusive, shared society.

Participation, Opportunity and Resources

We support people of all ages and abilities to take part in social and leisure settings throughout Northern Ireland. Here are some of the highlights from the past year.

- **5 Summer Schemes** – 90 children attended independently.
- **Teenage Kicks (age 13-19)** – 24 events in which 65 young people took part.
- **The Overs (a social group for young adults)** – 20 events in which 35 young adults took part.
- **5 Inclusive Beaches** – 2800 people participated during Summer 2023.
- **Music and Drama Workshops** – 24 events in which 40 families took part.
- **Surfing** – 2 locations where 200 people participated.
- **Family Events** – Over 1000 people were supported to take part in various outdoor activities in different locations.
- **Early Years Powered Mobility**
8 chairs were provided to young children.
- **Gym Programme** – 24 sessions across 2 locations at which 20 adults got active.
- **Resource Library** – over 300 loans of equipment to members, to date.

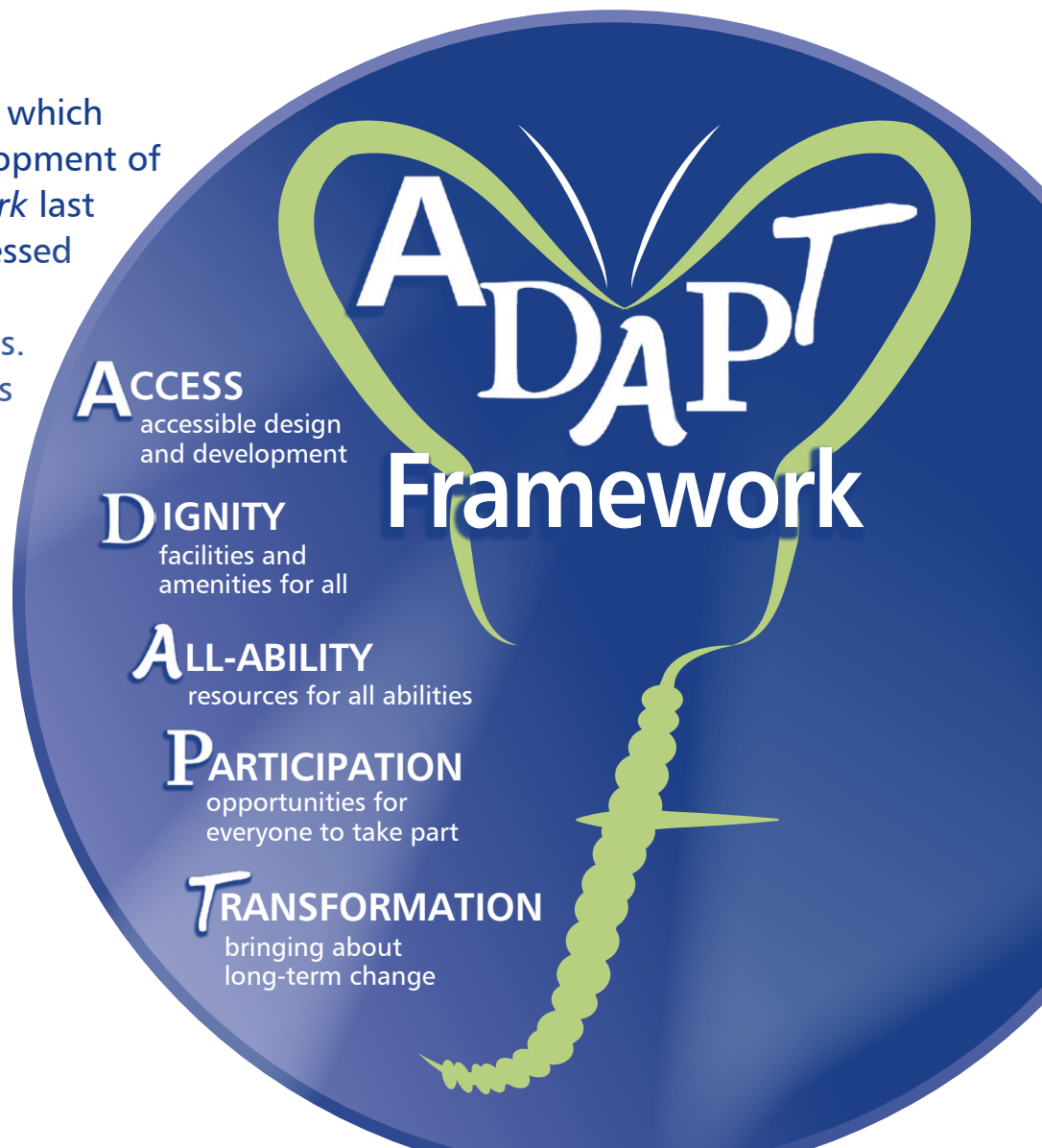


Our members' lived-experience is driving change

All Mae Murray Foundation projects are co-designed with members who share their lived experience to help develop solutions to the barriers they face.

Our Board of Directors is made up of 8 people with varied skillsets, the majority of whom have personal experience of being socially isolated or excluded due to disabling or unwelcoming environments. All members have the opportunity to provide feedback through surveys, focus groups and at our Annual General Meeting and we are especially focused on listening to children and young people. We are delighted that more than 40 members also volunteer their time on Advisory Committees to our Board and as part of our Youth Panel.

This collective effort, which resulted in the development of the *ADAPT Framework* last year, has now progressed to the publication of two important guides. *ADAPT my Beach* was launched in May 2023 and *ADAPT my Play* followed in March 2024.



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ADAPT my Beach is a guide and toolkit to support others throughout the UK and further afield to benefit from our learning and develop their own inclusive beach. We highlight the challenges and benefits we have faced in our journey with our beach operating partners and share our documentation and training resources. We are delighted to say the guide has already benefited organisations from England to Australia! The launch took place on East Strand Beach in Portrush.



ADAPT my Play, which was jointly produced by PlayboardNI, was launched at Parliament Buildings, Stormont. The aim of this guide and toolkit is to support play park providers in the development of genuinely inclusive play parks across Northern Ireland.



Creating Change in the Community

Everyone has the right to participate in their own community. The UK ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1991 and the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2009. Mae Murray Foundation, together with our partners, aim to progress these rights, creating long term solutions and creating change within communities. We are proud of what we have achieved so far.

1999

Talia McDowell is born, the daughter of our chairperson and founder, Alix Crawford. Diagnosed with quadriplegic Cerebral Palsy, both Talia and Alix found themselves socially excluded and isolated as a result of Talia's complex needs.



2015

Determined to make a difference to others facing the same barriers, Alix established Mae Murray Foundation in 2015, named after her late mother, Mae Murray, who embodied a positive, can-do attitude and a passionate commitment to inclusivity.

2016

Mae Murray Foundation embark on the first project; supporting 30 teenagers to enjoy a short break, many staying away from home for the first time.

2017

First Inclusive Beach in Northern Ireland is launched, in partnership with Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council.

2018

Mae Murray Foundation establish Water Safety Forum in partnership with RNLI, beach operators and water activity facilitators, to lead the way in water safety at Inclusive Beaches.

2018

Cranfield Inclusive Beach launched in partnership with Newry, Mourne and Down District Council.

2018

Early Years Powered Mobility Loan Scheme introduced to Northern Ireland for the first time in partnership with Meru.

2019

Mae Murray Foundation supports local councils – Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council and Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council, to pilot the first council-led All-ability Summer Schemes, supporting children with complex needs to attend independently.

2019

Wizzybug Loan Scheme introduced to Northern Ireland, an outdoor wheelchair loan scheme for infants.

2020

Mae Murray Foundation lead the way in getting back to providing support throughout the pandemic, supporting other organisations to return to providing support safely.

2021

Inclusive Beach in Groomsport is launched, in partnership with Ards and North Down Borough Council.

2022

Let me Play is published in partnership with Playboard NI, a study to evidence unmet need in outdoor fixed play environments.

2022

Play leaders, UK Play Safety Forum and Children's Play Policy Forum, support Let me Play findings.

2022

Ulster University, together with Mae Murray Foundation, take part in research programme Neurofit, a study which highlighted the need for wheelchair users to get active in a community gym.

2022

Community Resource Service established in Newcastle in partnership with YMCA Greenhill.

2022

Mae Murray Foundation supports 2 community-led Summer Schemes in partnership with Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council and Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council.

2022

2 new Inclusive Beaches created at Portrush East Strand in partnership with Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council and Portstewart Strand in partnership with National Trust.

2023

Collaborative PhD in partnership with Queen's University Belfast commences.

2023

ADAPT my Beach, a guide to create, sustain and improve an Inclusive Beach is launched.

2023

Mae Murray Foundation increases provision to support 4 Community-led Summer Schemes in Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council and Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council.

2023

Mae Murray Foundation Youth Panel launch their lived experience podcast.

2024

Mae Murray Foundation and Playboard NI launch ADAPT my Play.

Financial Review

In this section, we provide a summary of principal funding sources, for the year ending March 2024. Everything we spend aligns with our mission, charitable objectives and strategic priorities for the period.



Income and Expenditure

Our total income for 2023/24 was £331,444. £185,006 of this was restricted funds, which means they are pre allocated for a specific project or purpose. Total expenditure for 2023/24 was £361,658. For further information, our full see accounts can be provided upon request.

Thank you to our Funders and Supporters

We are very grateful to all our funders. The support we have provided would not have been possible, but for the generosity of our funders over the past year. We would also like to thank our supporters and members who help in so many ways by raising funds, boosting awareness and volunteering their time to bring about change.

Mid & East Antrim Borough Council
Hospital Saturday Fund
Rank Foundation
Public Health Agency
Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough Council
Lottery Community Fund
Department of Health
Halifax

Causeway Coast & Glens BC
AIB Bank
Garfield Western Foundation
The Community Foundation Northern
Ireland
BC & P
Northern Health and Social Care Trust



If you require this document in a different format, please get in touch.

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