

Dominican Fathers Newry

Trustees' report

The Trustees of the Dominican Fathers Newry present their annual report and non-statutory financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2023.

Principal activities

The Dominican Fathers Newry is a Community of Friars living in Dominic Street, Newry and having a Priory Church that is open to the public for participation in religious services or quiet prayer or reflection. The Dominican Fathers Newry is part of the Irish Province of the Dominicans (Order of Friars Preachers). The Dominicans were founded by St Dominic de Guzman in 1216 with the purpose of preaching the Gospels.

The principal activity of the Dominican Fathers Newry is the advancement of religion and education to the public in Northern Ireland. The Dominican Fathers Newry achieve this objective by adapting to the needs of the Christian Community in order to raise awareness and understanding of religious beliefs and practices.

Community members are involved in a broad spectrum of religious and social activity including Chaplaincy, missionary work, teaching, and literary work such as writing, publishing and research. Community members participate in Charitable works and groups, and are available to individual members of the public who wish to consult them on matters of faith, spiritual life or social issues. In this way the Dominican Fathers Newry ensure a real religious, social and educational benefit to a broad range of people.

Public benefit

A direct Public benefit comes from the Charity to the spiritual, physical and mental wellbeing of the Catholic and wider Communities in the Newry area. Public benefit is supported and served by the Dominican Fathers who conduct Religious services such as masses and other worship, with a special emphasis on the promotion of Confession, and Religious Education through retreats, novenas, bible meditation and other courses or lectures. Members of the public are encouraged to participate in daily masses, Eucharistic adoration, bible studies in the newly built Lectio centre and various prayer groups. The Community is mindful of those unable to attend Church through age, infirmity or being away from Newry and their involvement is facilitated by an "on-line" broadcast of Church ceremonies. The Dominican Fathers Newry can also facilitate the public through individual Religious ceremonies such as baptisms, marriages and funerals. Members of the Community are available to a person in need of moral support or comfort to deal with life's difficulties in bereavement, illness or misfortune. The importance of the Charity within Newry is evident from the number of people willing to volunteer their time and participate in Religious practice, and active involvement is to everyone's benefit.

The Dominican Fathers Newry hold a charitable objective and in addition to involvement in social and other works make or organise significant donations to a number of good causes locally and abroad. These include holding a special collection each Monday for a nominated charity, and regular donations to worthy causes.

Financial review

The statement of financial activities for 2023 is contained on page 9. This discloses income of the Charity at £483,689 (2022: £439,802). Expenditure in 2023 totalled £426,699 (2022: £543,389).

The balance sheet for the Dominican Fathers Newry is on page 10. This discloses a financial base, largely comprising bank accounts, investments and property. The Charity's reserves amount to £844,804 (2022: £753,292).

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Trustees' report (continued)

The Dominican Fathers use these reserves to support the furtherance of their mission to preach the Gospel by funding its charitable, preaching, education, care and other obligations.

Statement that the Trustees have had regard to the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland public benefit requirement statutory guidance

The Trustees confirm that they have complied with the requirements of Section 4(6) of the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008 to have due regard to the public benefit guidance published by the Charities Commission for Northern Ireland in determining the activities undertaken by the Charity. Throughout this Annual Report the Trustees seek to demonstrate that the aims and objectives of the Dominican Fathers Newry are for the public benefit.

Structure, governance and management

The operations of the Dominican Fathers Newry are overseen by the Trustee Board. Trustees are appointed by the Community of Friars in Newry and the Provincialate of the Dominican Order in Ireland. Trustees are Dominican Friars and recruitment is based upon their knowledge, skills and experience necessary for overseeing the affairs of the Charity to ensure it is solvent, well run and achieves the purposes for which it was established.

Risk management

The Trustee Board actively reviews all major strategic and operational risks to which the Charity is exposed and confirms these have been reviewed and that strategies and systems are established to manage exposure to these risks. The main risk areas for the Dominican Fathers Newry comprise:

- Compliance with Health and Safety and listed buildings legislation
- Safeguarding
- Maintaining Church income in the modern Society
- Reduction in reserves due to maintenance of buildings
- Impact of aging in Community Membership and congregations

Safeguarding

The Dominican Fathers Newry adheres to best practice child protection and vulnerable adult safeguarding practices which is overseen by the safeguarding office of the Dominican Order in Ireland. This safeguarding office is managed by a lay person who is a qualified and experienced social worker. The role of the safeguarding office is to develop, implement and oversee best practice children and vulnerable adult safeguarding procedures for the Province which includes the Dominican Fathers Newry. This is done in accordance with the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland's (NBSCCCI) Standards and Guidance document.

Future plans

The Dominican Fathers Newry will continue the activities detailed already in this report and seek to develop further, particularly promoting involvement in Lectio Devina. The Community has property, namely the Church, Priory, Lectio Centre and other ancillary buildings. These need careful maintenance due to their age, historical significance and availability for worship to the general public. A fundraising Committee continues valuable work on raising funds for essential renovations. In a relatively short time period, substantial monies have been raised without which renovations would be impossible. Our thanks to all persons contributing to the fundraising and the volunteers on the Committee for their dedication.

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Trustees' report (continued)

Persons involved with the Charity

The Dominican Fathers Newry acknowledges with gratitude the support of the people of Newry who mean so much to our Community. It would be very difficult to continue our Mission in Newry without the many people who give their time in such a variety of ways to the Charity and to our dedicated Staff whose input to the Charity is so important and valued.

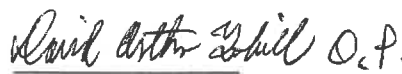
Disclosure of Information to Auditor

Each person who is a trustee at the date of approval of this report confirms that:

- there is no relevant audit information (information needed by the charity's auditor in connection with preparing the auditor's report) of which the charity's auditor is unaware, and
- the trustees have taken all the steps that they ought to have taken as trustees in order to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the charity's auditor is aware of that information.

Approved and authorised for issue by the Trustees on 24/4/24 and signed on its behalf by:


Trustee


Trustee