

West Bann Development

Company Limited by Guarantee

Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report)

Year ended 31 March 2023

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

Reference and administrative details

Registered charity name	West Bann Development
Charity registration number	NIC101549
Company registration number	NI044974
Principal office and registered Office	8 Killowen Court Coleraine BT51 3TP

The trustees

Lindsay Gibson (Resigned 1 November 2022)
Columb Henry
Barney Gilmore
Margaret Dinsmore
Patrick McFeely
Jeremy Thompson
Nuala Hollinger
Harry McGill
Bernie Cosgrove
John Pollock
Kevin McWilliams
Brendan Magee
Daniel Fisher
Catherine Ann Taylor (Appointed 11 August 2022)
Claire Sugden (Resigned 31 August 2022)

Auditor Paul A Taylor & Company
Chartered accountant & statutory auditor
Unit 4
12 Spittal Hill
Bushmills Road
Coleraine
BT52 2BY

Bankers First Trust Bank
33 The Diamond
Coleraine
BT52 1DP

Ulster Bank Ltd

West Bann Development

Company Limited by Guarantee

Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report) *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2023

Structure, governance and management

Governing Document

The organisation is a charitable company limited by guarantee, incorporated on 13 December 2002 and recognised as a Charity by the Inland Revenue on 9 January 2003. Registration with the NI Charity Commission took place on 22 October 2015. The company was established under a Memorandum of Association which established the objects and powers of the charitable company and is governed under its Articles of Association. In the event of the company being wound up members are required to contribute an amount not exceeding £1.

Board of Directors

The Directors of the board of management at 31st March 2023 are listed on page 1.

Organisational Structure

The West Bann Development Board of Directors meets bi-monthly and is responsible for the strategic direction and policy of the charity. At present the Committee has 13 members from a variety of backgrounds relevant to the work of the charity.

Delegation

A scheme of delegation is in place and day to day responsibility for the provision of services rest with the Centre Manager. The Centre Manager is responsible for ensuring that the charity delivers the services specified and that key performance indicators are met. The Centre Manager also has responsibility for the day to day operational management of the Centre, individual supervision of the staff team and also ensuring that the team continue to develop their skills and working practices in line with good practice.

Objectives and activities

Purposes and Aims

Our charity's purposes as set out in the objects contained in the company's memorandum of association are:

To promote the benefit of the inhabitants of the Causeway Coast and Glens Area and its environs (the "area of benefit") without distinction of age, gender, sexual orientation, nationality, ethnicity, political or religious opinion and in particular to:-

- (1) Advance education by delivering community education and vocational training programmes.
- (2) Promote health and well-being by organising healthy recreational activities and information for residents living in the area of benefit.
- (3) Relieve those in need by reason of age, ill-health, disability or other disadvantage by providing a telephone care, alert and support service.

Relieve unemployment and poverty by the creation of training and employment opportunities through

the provision of incubation business units for use on favourable terms

Promote community development for the public benefit by providing:

Facilities and amenities for, and promoting co-operation and joint activities between, community and voluntary groups and organisations;

An accessible early years' service, including training, support, signposting and networking, for families living in the area of benefit;

Opportunities to foster good community relations and social cohesion

Ensuring our work delivers our aims

We review our aims, objectives and activities each year. This review looks at what we achieved and the outcomes of our work in the previous 12 months. The review looks at the success of each key activity and the benefits they have brought to those groups of people we are set up to help. The review also helps us to ensure our aim, objectives and activities remained focused on our stated purposes. We have referred to the guidance contained in the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when reviewing our aim and objectives and in planning our future activities. In particular, the Directors consider how planned activities will contribute to the aims and objectives they have set.

How our activities deliver public benefit

Who we try to help and our main activities are described below. All our charitable activities focus on residents of the Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council Area particularly the Churchlands Area in Coleraine and are undertaken to further our charitable purposes for the public benefit. The trustees have paid regard to the public benefit guidance published by the Charity Commission.

Who used and benefited from our services?

Residents from the Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council Area and residents of the Churchlands NRA in Coleraine are our primary organisational focus. The Churchlands area is better known locally as the Heights and Killowen areas. According to the most recent census (NINIS 2015) there are 3129 people who live in the Churchlands NRA.

Strategic report

The focus of our work

Our main objectives for the year continued to be the provision of services, activities and facilities for local residents. To ensure the work of the organisation is still meeting the needs of the local population an audit of community need was carried out in the autumn of 2015. The findings of this audit have informed the direction of travel for the organisation over the period since the audit. The strategies used to meet these objectives are listed in the principal activities and review of activities and developments below. The covid-19 pandemic has meant that the way some of the organisation's activities have been delivered have been revised and adapted to take account of the changing situation. As the pandemic waned we reviewed our delivery of programmes.

Principal Activities

The statement of financial activities for the year is set out on page 14

West Bann Development was formed in 1998 to address the social and economic disadvantages on the west of Coleraine town, in the Churchlands Ward. To meet these needs we have devised and delivered a variety of projects with the local community including an Early Years Programme, Community Education Programme and various social events. However our key aim has been to address economic disadvantages in the area and to this end, the Company has accessed the resources to establish a community owned Enterprise Centre with community space, in an area identified as suffering dereliction and in need of physical regeneration.

Review of activities and developments

The Regeneration Project, this project encompasses and allows the development & management of all the activities delivered and promoted by the organisation. The project aims to develop and coordinate a range of social and economic actions in the Churchlands Neighbourhood Renewal and wider CC&GBC Area to meet the health, education and training needs of the local community. The project further aims to facilitate the delivery of a range of support services for the benefit of the NRA residents through collaboration and partnerships with other community, voluntary and statutory agencies.

Community Education Programme the provision of this programme for initial learning and further improvement of computer and employability skills was provided with the primary aim of empowering those living in the area with the attributes and self-confidence to better meet the needs of the local labour market. The programme continued despite the pandemic as noted above and adapted delivery to circumvent the difficulties created because of people being cautious about mixing with others. We continue to work in partnership with both the NRC and NWRC colleges to deliver accredited training for the benefit of the community. A parallel programme designed to reach those furthest from the labour market was also delivered. Tuition in City & Guilds and OCN NI qualifications were delivered and accreditations achieved.

Early Years Programmes continue to be delivered to provide parents/carers and children with the opportunity to develop to their full potential. The need for this support is greater now than ever and we are seeing the effects of confinement and isolation manifest itself in the children's behavior and delayed development. To support this endeavor we provide onsite crèches as well as a weekly Parent and toddler group part funded by the Pathway Fund. Collaboration continues with Coleraine Sure Start Partnership in the delivery of the DE Developmental Programme for 2-3 year old's. The partnership with NRC continues at the Centre for the delivery of the L2 & L3 Diploma in Children's Care Learning and Development along with supporting crèche.

Low Cost Business Units this provision is designed to encourage the formation of new businesses in the area in an effort to create self-employment and employment and to reduce unemployment and poverty. Two residents from the immediate area run their businesses from the centre with another two causeway coast and glens area residents operating their businesses at the centre. The units are also a means of generating revenue for the organisation.

West Bann Development's other activities include:

Churchlands Community Supporting Families through Learning, this project is delivered in partnership with three local schools, Killowen P.S., St. John's P.S. & Kylemore N.S.. It is an inter schools and community collaborative approach. It is a joined up, longitudinal approach to support family learning. It is in place to identify children from the Churchlands Neighbourhood Renewal area who are at risk of low achievement due to social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. The programme uses a child-centred approach to support these children to ensure the maximum potential for their inclusion in mainstream education from as early an age as possible. The programme aims to develop individual children's social, emotional and behavioural skills, encourage healthy lifestyles, improve their educational experience, reduce the number of children on the special needs register and those with statements. Given the vital role parents have to play in education the programme aims to assist the development of appropriate parental skills to support all our children.

The Health & Wellbeing Project, the project has specific objectives of improving health, reducing stress and promoting better lifestyle and health options' by providing podiatry treatments to the people of the Churchlands NRA in Coleraine. Podiatry works to improve the mobility, independence and the quality of life of individuals by providing care, diagnosis and treatment of a wide range of problems affecting feet, ankles and lower limbs. This service delivers foot and lower limb care to over 100 local NRA residents through weekly clinics.

Good Morning Causeway telephone support service, the project supports older and vulnerable people across Causeway Coast and Glens and aims to alleviate loneliness and isolation, by being a friend on the phone. Calls are made five days a week by a group of dedicated volunteers supported by the Good Morning coordinator. Clients are encouraged to engage with local services thereby helping to improve service user's mobility and re-engage with society. Clients have the opportunity to complete a personal Wellbeing plan with a Wellbeing plan officer, the plan focuses on their physical, emotional and mental health, with personal goals including interests' hobbies/volunteering. The service will support the client to reach their goals visiting twice over a three month period. The programme is funded by the Community Fund through or Partnership with C.O.A.S.T. The organisation for Older People, Good Morning Causeway (West Bann Development) and Good Morning Ballycastle (Ballycastle Churches action).

The Wednesday Morning Club is a weekly activity programme for local senior citizens which West Bann Development provides each Wednesday morning (11am to 12.30pm). The club comprises a range of activities designed to improve and maintain the health and well-being of residents whilst at the same time improving local community relations.

West Bann acknowledges that there is a significant older population in the area. The major benefits of this activity stem from the social interaction enjoyed by this cross community group and include:

- Avoids depression
- Fosters and builds friendships
- Provides a reassuring support network
- Permits access to West Bann partner organisation services
- Promotes community integration & independence instead of isolation

Complementary Therapies/Physical Activity, Physical and Mental Well Being is promoted through exercise classes and complementary treatments which are offered by West Bann Development and complement the Wednesday Morning Club in tackling the health-related issues of NRA residents. The exercise classes and treatments will attract a cross section of young people, the elderly, men and women with a view to: increasing the level of residents physical activity; improving mobility; independence and quality of life; reducing the number of people with levels of stress related illnesses; promoting personal and social development; providing diversion via a complementary healing process and enhancing self-esteem and bring about a reduction in marginalization.

The Learn2Earn Project aims:

- To combat poverty and enhance social inclusion to benefit people who are unemployed, underemployed, long term unemployed and/or economically inactive.
- To deliver direct employability skills and NVQ Level 1 training qualifications across the Causeway Borough to empower and benefit those unemployed and/or economically inactive
- To provide personal development soft skills tutoring and supportive mentoring to build the confidence of people who have been out of work for years
- To offer actual live work placements in the thematic area pursued by the client to build their CV and gain valuable work experience
- To reduce economic inactivity, increase skills base and offer a working future for participants.

Causeway Learn2Earn is responding to needs in the Causeway area where unemployment levels and economic inactivity are above the national averages: the project targeted the Unemployed and Economically Inactive. The project was delivered by three organisations working in partnership across the Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Area: 1. West Bann Development; 2. BCW Training Ltd and 3. Roe Valley Community Education Forum Ltd., the Causeway Learn2Earn (ESF Funded) employability programme and a youth development programme.

Youth Work

At West Bann we work with young people to give the opportunity of learning and recreational activities and to give them a voice as they often feel they are underrepresented and ignored by wider society. To accomplish this we seek the financial resources to allow this to happen and we collaborate and work with other groups for the delivery of programmes.

Provision of Facilities at the Centre, the Centre is open for use by the Local community and voluntary groups promoting good relations and improving social inclusion. The Centre is also a venue which provides for the delivery of training and additional services by Statutory, community and voluntary agencies. The West Bann Centre is a welcoming venue in the heart of the community and accessible to the whole community.

Strategic report

The following sections for achievements and performance and financial review form the strategic report of the charity.

Achievements and performance

West Bann have found a pronounced change in the mind-set of a section of the population post the pandemic. From the targets and activities established to meet the needs of the people in the area and monitored by a variety of statutory and other agencies, some have been met or partly met. There has been a reduction in the engagement with regard to some activities in some instances. This has resulted in some of the projected targets having to be revised down. We are working hard to encourage residents to engage and participate in planned initiatives. In an effort to achieve this West Bann have redoubled their efforts to promote activities, keeping residents informed of what is available at the centre through social media postings, email campaigns and word of mouth as a means of encouraging residents to get involved. Securing Tutors from the FE Colleges has been more difficult than previously was the case. This can present a challenge at times when we have interest in the community for courses but can't secure a tutor.

We continued to work in partnership with C.O.A.S.T. (Causeway Older Active Strategic Team) to deliver the Connected Age Project and operated the Good Morning Causeway Call support service. Throughout lockdown and since most of the volunteers making the calls have worked from home. The coordinator working from the Centre continues to recruit volunteers some of whom are now working from the office in the Centre. We saw the demand for the service skyrocket with a host of new referrals and increased demand from existing beneficiaries. Home visits to the elderly and vulnerable as part of the Connected Age project aim to encourage clients to take part in activities in their local area and assess and address any needs identified.

Financial review

DfC

Securing sufficient funding for the delivery of projects and programmes is still foremost on the minds of the board at West Bann. Without adequate funding the delivery of services to the community would not be possible. Insecurities over long term funding still remains and causes difficulties in terms of planning or developing a long-term strategy. Continued core funding from the Department for Communities, Early Years, Sure Start, Big Lottery coupled with self-generated funds allows the company to show a net surplus in funds for the year of (£10,878).

DfC funding for the following three projects delivered by West Bann Development was secured for the period April 2022 to March 2023, the Regeneration Project, Health and Well Being Project and Churchlands Community Supporting Families through Learning Project. West Bann was the lead organisation and responsible for the funding for the Churchlands Community Supporting Families through Learning Project (CCSFTL) which enabled the two primary schools and nursery schools in the West Bann Neighbourhood Renewal Area to provide additional support for the children with the most need. However, continued funding in its present form from DfC is uncertain, with a review of Neighbourhood Renewal underway. NR was designed to be a 10 year programme and it has now been running for a considerably longer period. Consequently, the directors feel that it is of utmost importance that alternative and/or additional funding options are explored and secured. This will ensure that current operational levels can be maintained if funding streams are lost or diminished.

Sure Start

Funding from the Department of Education had also been secured through Sure Start for the 2022/2023 financial year, which safeguarded a large portion of the Early Years activities (i.e. Sure Start Developmental Programme for 2 – 3 Year Olds). This is a pre pre-school programme designed to provide early learning, intervention and support where most needed. This programme prepares children for the transition to nursery school. The evidence is that children who attend this programme have less difficulty making the transition and settle better.

Pathway Fund

Early Years the Organisation for Young Children provided funding for the programme secured from the Department for Education. These funds are a contribution towards the costs associated with the delivery of the Early Years programme delivered by West Bann. A substantial part of the cost of this programme for the 2022/2023 financial year is covered by West Bann from their own self-generated funds. This programme supports parents and their families through the provision of crèches, parent and toddler groups and other support services delivered by West Bann's professionally trained staff.

Community Fund

West Bann as a partner in the C.O.A.S.T. (Causeway Older Active Strategic Team) partnership secured funding from The Big Lottery (Community Fund). The 4 year (2022-2026) Connected Age project supports older people across Causeway Coast and Glens to engage with local services i.e. (Good Morning Call service) etc. helping improve clients mental health and decrease social isolation. Each person is offered a Personal Wellbeing Plan designed to assess their needs and encourage and facilitate more social inclusion.

ESF

The Causeway Learn2Earn project was funded through the European Social Fund. This funding was for 4 years 2018-2022, due to the pandemic the project was extended to the end of March 2023. This project was delivered in partnership with Roe Valley Community Education Forum in Limavady and BCW training in Ballycastle. The project targets the unemployed, underemployed and the economically inactive with a view to providing training, mentoring and confidence building activities. Assistance with CV writing, mock interviews and work placements are an integral part of the programme.

CC&GBC

The partnership has also secured additional (match) funding for The Causeway Learn2Earn project from Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council.

PCSP

The Policing & Community Safety Partnership provided funds to allow diversionary activities to be delivered with local youth. It also allowed the local community safety officers to engage with the youth helping to break down barriers that may exist between the youth and the PSNI. Activities for the elderly were also facilitated which gave the opportunity for messages of reassurance to be delivered to alleviate any fears about PSNI availability in local areas.

Radius Housing

Funding secured from Radius Housing facilitated a range of activities for local children during the summer months. Without this funding local children would have been at a loose end over the summer months. The activities provided by West Bann Youth team engaged the local children in activities which contributed to better physical and mental health for all the children involved. Radius are heavily involved in supporting community groups and activities within a five mile radius of their housing developments. This engagement is beneficial to their tenants and integrates them into the wider community. They are to be commended for their community spirit and forward thinking. Other organisations would do well to take a leaf out of the Radius Housing book.

BYTES

This is an organisation based just outside Belfast which deliver youth programmes in many local towns. Bytes state, Our mission is to help young people achieve their full potential and overcome any barriers they may face. Bytes provided funding which allowed the West Bann Youth team to work with Bytes to deliver local youth activities utilising the West Bann youth HUB a fantastic resource developed in the heart of the community.

Principal Funding Sources

Aside from the income generated by the rental of units, office space and meeting facilities, the principal funding sources for the charity are currently by way of grant/contract income from the following sources:

- The Department for Communities
- Early Years – The Organisation for Young Children (DE Funded - Pathway)
- Coleraine Sure Start Partnership (DE Funded)
- C.O.A.S.T. (Community Fund)
- ESF (Causeway Learn to Earn)
- Causeway Coast & Glens BC
- Radius Housing

Investment Policy

Aside from retaining a prudent amount in reserves each year most of the charity's funds are to be spent in the short term so there are few funds for long term investment. Having considered the options available, the board of directors have decided to invest in a fixed term investment account. Although the overall return on this investment is low, this is weighed against a conscious decision by the directors to hold residual funds in a medium which is easily and quickly accessible. This decision stems from the current uncertain nature of the funding landscape.

Reserves Policy

The Board of Directors has examined the charity's requirements for reserves in light of the main risks to the organisation. It has established a policy whereby the unrestricted funds not committed or invested in tangible assets held by the charity should equate to 12 months of expenditure. The reserves are needed to meet the working capital requirements of the charity and the Board of Directors are confident that at this level they would be able to continue the current activities of the charity in the event of a significant drop in funding. The reserve target includes a designation of £18,000 which has been set aside for the purchase/replacement of Computer Hardware and software, for the Community Education Programme alongside a sum of £12,250 for replacement of the floor in the main community space.

The present level of reserves available to the charity however falls significantly short of the target level. Although the strategy is to continue to build reserves through planned operational surpluses, the Board of Directors is well aware that it is unlikely that the target range can be reached for at least five years. In the short term the Board of Directors has also considered the extent to which existing activities and expenditure could be curtailed, should such circumstances arise.

Implications of Covid 19

During the global pandemic West Bann activities were adapted and the delivery of those programmes which could continue did so in a safe manner. As we emerge from the pandemic and commence normal operations all organisational activities were fully risk assessed and adapted to ensure safety of clients and staff. An appropriate protocol was operated in the centre with social distancing adhered to, this has been adjusted over time. Our funders were kept fully up to date in relation to possible activities and the services which could be accommodated.

Plans for Future Periods

The Charity plans continuing the activities outlined above in the forthcoming years subject to satisfactory funding arrangements.

Trustees' responsibilities statement

The trustees, who are also directors 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).

Company law requires the charity trustees to prepare financial statements for each year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, for that period.

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 applicable Charities SORP;
- make judgments and accounting 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;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in business.

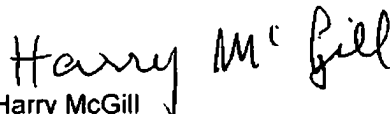
The trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the charity's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies 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.

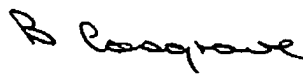
Auditor

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

- so far as they are aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the charity's auditor is unaware; and
- they have taken all steps that they ought to have taken as a trustee to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the charity's auditor is aware of that information.

The trustees' annual report and the strategic report were approved on 13 December 2023 and signed on behalf of the board of trustees by:


Harry McGill
Director


Bernie Cosgrove
Director