



Annual Trustee Report 1st July 2022 - 30th June 2023 NIC101808

In setting our objectives and planning our activities for the year our trustees have given careful consideration to the Charity Commission of Northern Ireland's guidance on public benefit. We do this to ensure that the activities have helped to achieve the charity's purpose and provide a benefit to the beneficiaries.

The Purposes of the Charity

- The Group is established to advance education and to promote the arts for the benefit of all of the people of primarily the Lagan Valley area regardless of religion, nationality, ethnic identity or disability by means of planning, creating and designing a cross community amateur drama and/or musical project, culminating in a performance for the general public in the area of benefit.
- The Group and its property shall be administered and managed in accordance with the constitution (Last amended October 2019) by the members of the Management Committee.

What are we trying to achieve?

- The advancement of the arts, culture, heritage or science
- The advancement of education
- The advancement of human rights, conflict resolution or reconciliation or the promotion of religious or racial harmony or equality and diversity

Who do we help?

- Youth (14-25 year olds)
- Children (5-13 year olds)
- Volunteers
- Unemployed/low income
- Physical disabilities
- General public
- Learning disabilities

How do we do this?

- Arts
- Youth development
- Education/training
- Cultural
- Human rights/equality
- Sport/recreation
- Volunteer development

In furtherance of the above aims, but not further or otherwise, the group may:

- a. encourage participation in the amateur drama and/or musical project from as many people as practicable, in the area of the benefit;
- b. establish, maintain and equip premises and facilities in the area of benefit.
- c. provide or assist in providing classes, workshops, training, seminars, performances, lectures, discussions, exhibitions, outings and events
- d. procure to be written, printed and distributed reports, periodicals, books, pamphlets, leaflets, other documents or information
- e. recruit, train and employ volunteers with relevant skills, for the furtherance of the above aims f. co-operate to such extent as may be necessary with statutory authorities, churches, and other voluntary organisations in the furtherance of the objects or any of them.
- g. raise and accept money by ways of grants, donations, bequests, legacies or other lawful method,

provided that in the exercise thereof the group shall not engage in any form of permanent trading. h. purchase, take lease or in exchange, hire or otherwise acquire a property any rights and privileges necessary for the attainment of the said objects and construct, maintain and alter any buildings or edifices so necessary, as aforesaid.

- i. subject to such consents as may be required by law to sell, let, mortgage, dispose or turn to account all or any of the property or assets of the Group which shall be deemed necessary for the furtherance of the Group;
- j. employ, contract with and pay any person, not being a member of the Management Committee to supervise, organise and carry on the work of the Group and make all reasonable and necessary provision for the payment of remuneration to employees and contractors.
- k. do all other lawful things as are necessary for the attainment of the said objects.

Management of the Group

- The Group shall be managed by a Committee, consisting of a Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer, known as 'Named Officer Posts' and no more than 8 Members of the Group, elected by the Members of the Group, known as 'Committee Members'. Election of Named Officer Posts and Committee Members is to be in accordance with the Group Rules and Code of Conduct.
- The Committee is to elect a 'Vice Chairperson' who must
 - a. be one of the persons elected as a Committee Member and;
 - b. not be related to the Chairperson
- The Committee, so constituted, shall have the power to co-opt further members who shall be Members of the Group, or persons anywhere, who have skills or experience to offer the Group. The decision on whether to co-opt a person onto the committee will be a simple majority of those eligible voting Members present at a quorate committee meeting. There can be no more than three co-opted persons on the committee at one time.

Committee Members 2022 / 2023

Chairperson - Angela Manson

Vice-Chairperson - Patricia Glover

Treasurer – Donna Crawford

Secretary – Samantha Reilly

Designated Child Protection Officer – Annmarie Watson

Clair Williams

Annicea Haddock

Clare Adair

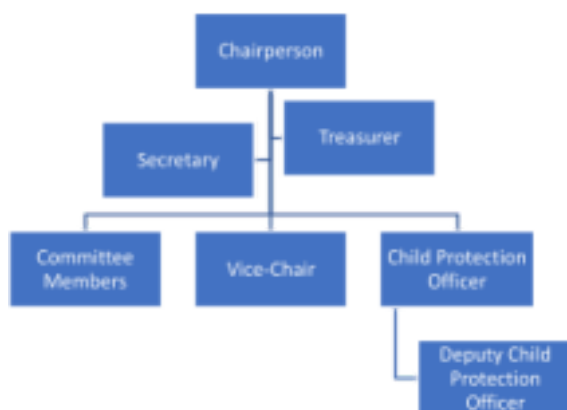
Carolee McLaughlin

Colleen Bell

Lisa Moran

Hannah Conlon (co-opted Nov 22 - resigned Sept 23)

Organisational Chart 2022 - 2023



What we do

Fusion Theatre is registered with the Charity Commission of Northern Ireland – copies of our current governing documents and accounts are available on their website. Fusion Theatre is linked to Youth Action who act as an umbrella group for Access NI certification and training and is also a registered member of NICVA.

The group is led by a committee of 11 volunteers who work alongside a professional Director, MD and choreographer.

As a not-for-profit organisation, run entirely by volunteers, any profit derived from a production allows us to offer enhanced drama and music workshops to a wider audience of young people including those who work behind the scenes. Currently we have around 30 volunteers including trustees who work in various sub committees looking after the running of the company and adding to the success of each performance.

The Group is established to advance education and to promote the arts for the benefit of all of the people of the Lagan Valley area, regardless of religion, nationality, ethnic identity or disability, by means of planning, creating and designing a cross community amateur drama and/or musical project, culminating in biannual performances for the general public in the Island Hall, Lagan Valley Island. Our primary aim is to enhance the drama, music and artistic standards of young people (between 8 and 24) in the LCCC area. Participation in theatre is known to be beneficial to physical and mental health, especially for young people. Through the medium of musical theatre, they can grow in confidence and develop their social skills. Drama develops communication and interpersonal skills thus impacting positively on their educational progress. Research has shown that keeping young people engaged in such a positive way can reduce the incidence of risk taking and anti-social behaviour. We currently have 59 members between 12 and 22. The cast also includes young people with Aspergers Syndrome, ASD and other learning difficulties. The group reflects the rich and diverse nature of the LCCC area.

Two cast representatives, who attend Committee meetings, provide a youth voice ensuring that cast are involved in decision-making processes. We promote an atmosphere of positive reinforcement so that all cast feel valued and supported. This ethos serves to promote high self-esteem and mental wellbeing.

Members and also parents of members under 18, have been surveyed and have reported significant improvements in areas such as performance ability, self-confidence and positivity. These surveys are carried out annually for all cast members so we can monitor our performance and ensure we are meeting our goals. Our committee members also complete a self assessment each year so we can set KPIs for the following year and ensure our vision and goal is current and relevant. Our AGM is advertised locally to attract new volunteers and we encourage and welcome new

cast members by advertising on social media and in the local press.

The people centred approach to the Arts is fully embraced by Fusion. We are ever mindful of serving the interests of the community and are committed to developing the arts within the LCCC area.

Each show is carefully selected to continuously extend the audience base and present the benefits of live theatre to new and varied groups including the deaf, as we have a signed performance of each production. The local area has pockets of deprivation and social and cultural extremism. Through successful marketing strategies and a policy of keeping ticket prices low, we endeavour to make our shows accessible to all which means that our audiences are equally diverse.

Fusion Theatre usually performs in the LVI (the size of venue and its facilities attract visitors from both in and outside LCCC) as well as carrying out smaller concerts in other local facilities such as Dobbies Garden Centre. We have permanent rehearsal space at Lisburn Enterprise Organisation. We work with local businesses that help with the transport of props and some aspects of set and local restaurants provide pre-theatre meal deals. Large audiences of over 2900 people (based on 2018/19 figures) bring local economic benefits to commerce, retail and hospitality within LCCC. Fusion supports the growth of the night time economy in Lisburn. Consequently, our shows attract audience members from a wider area, from previous surveys we have found audience members have travelled from all over the country including Donegal, Coleraine, Omagh, Dublin, Dundalk, Banbridge, Newry and Portadown to name a few.

Fusion is a reflective and evaluative company that utilises feedback from professional bodies to enhance future performance. Our productions are adjudicated by the National Operatic and Dramatic Association. A good indicator of future success is past performance. Fusion Theatre has received numerous awards and consistently produces professionally presented and challenging pieces of theatre. Awards include Best Female Voice, Best Male Voice, Best Choreography, Best Youth Show, Best Comedian, Best Director and Best Chorus. The AIMS and NODA adjudications will see Fusion compete against, mostly adult, local amateur societies across the Ireland and Wales. In terms of access to arts, we will use information on ticket sales (use of disabled facilities and family tickets in particular) to show achievement. Monitoring of social media provides evidence that local demand has been met, and we survey audience members at random on performance standard and local need.

Meeting our aims

- Our first post-covid production - 'The Addams Family' in October 2022 followed by 'Evita' in March 2023
- During this period of re-opening, we maintained a diverse cast with members from all sides of the community including both Roman Catholics and Protestants and those who belong to neither religion. We also had a mix of both male and female members, including those with learning difficulties.
- Our cast members ranged from aged 9 – 21 throughout the year and we had over 50 performers
- Being a cross community group Fusion feel very strongly on giving everyone the opportunity to be involved in the arts and are open to all this extends from our cast members, production members, volunteers and audience members
- We focus on making arts accessible to all in two ways.
 - o By keeping our membership fees low £25 per month and for members who are from a low income family or are going through financial difficulties we offer a subsidence for this, we also have a standing order mandate where they can pay their yearly fees on a monthly or in some cases a weekly basis
 - o By keeping our ticket prices low – tickets are priced £14 - £18 and we offer group discounts and family pricing depending on the show
- To ensure we continue to develop the youth's in our cast we run workshops on auditioning, dance and music as well as from time to time giving them a chance of having an external person coming in to work with them, including previous cast members now performing on the West End

Accounts 2022 / 2023

See accounts attached

Income - £51,211

Outgoings - £46,455

This year we received grant funding from

- Black Santa appeal - £850
- Arts Council NI - £3320 (Evita)

Other income was raised from;

- Membership fees
- Ticket Sales - Addams Family & Evita
- Donations / Fundraising

Made a decision to increase fees to support coming back from Covid and lack of grant funding which has allowed us to keep a similar show budget, cover rent and electricity etc and be able to continue to provide new opportunities. We also opened for auditions and took a number of new cast members to support this and continue our development aims. All further revenue is obtained through ticket sales/membership fees, Set/Prop and Costume Hire and through fundraising efforts

The Addams Family (Oct 22)

- 1137 tickets sold
- Loss - £1918
- Ticket sales and grants / sponsorship
- Saved £3411 on budget or would have been a much bigger loss

Evita (March 23)

- 1373 tickets sold - 89%
- Fri / Sat sold out
- Profit £739
- Set - over budget by over £1000
- Underspend in other areas to save this - £103
- Very short rehearsal time / turnaround from Addams

Workshops (Spring / Summer 2023)

- Mix of acting, dance and singing
 - Michael McEvoy
 - Sarah Jonhston
 - Keith Pyper
 - James Huish
 - Jillian Liggett
 - Laura Kerr
 - Adam Darcy
 - Kerry Rodgers
 - Wilfie Pyper
- Really good feedback
- Want to expand on these

Minutes of Fusion Theatre AGM 14/11/22 7.30pm

- Minutes of last AGM were approved

Review of Past Year

- Covid Recovery concert was held in March 2022. Production Team was made up of JHuish (director), J. Liggett (Choreographer) and M Quinn (MD) Concert was well attended and included guests from Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council
- Membership fees were increased from £10 per month to £15 per month in view of rising costs.
- Preparations got under way for our production of Addams Family

Finance

- Accounts for 2020-2021 showed a loss of £1400
- Accounts for 2021-2022 still with auditor
- We received funding from the National lottery, Co-operation Ireland, Black Santa and LCCC Covid Recovery Fund. We were able to purchase new chairs, a photocopier, clothing rails, storage boxes and a keyboard.
- We also generated funds by holding a Spring Fair

Future Plan

- Parent's meeting to identify skills and potentially organise sub-committees.
- Evita March 2023
- April-August 2023 Workshops
- Next show will be March 2024

Chairperson's Report

- Angela reflected on the year and thanked cast, parents, production team and Committee for their work and commitment throughout the year.

Election of New Committee

Named Officers

Chairperson – Angela Manson – Nominated by Anneica Haddock Seconded by Annmarie Watson

Secretary - Samantha Reilly – Nominated by Angela Manson Seconded by Annmarie Watson

Treasurer – Donna Grace – Nominated by Samantha Reilly Seconded by Jeanette Fitzpatrick

Committee Members

Anneica Haddock – Nominated by Donna Grace Seconded by Angela Manson

Carolee McLaughlin – Nominated by Clair Adair seconded by Patricia Glover

Clare Adair – Nominated by Annmarie Watson Seconded by Jeanette Fitzpatrick

Clair Williams – Nominated by Colleen Bell Seconded by Clare Adair

Annmarie Watson – Nominated by Anneica Haddock Seconded by Samantha Reilly

Colleen Bell – Nominated by Angela Manson Seconded by Anneica Haddock

Lisa Moran – Nominated by Colleen Bell Seconded by Samantha Reilly

Patricia Glover – Nominated by Samantha Reilly Seconded by Annmarie Watson

Patricia Glover chosen as Vice-Chairperson

Hannah Conlon – Co-opted

Anne McCleary to continue as Honorary President

Outgoing treasurer Jeanette Fitzpatrick was thanked for her dedication and hard work over the previous number of years

Cast Liaison Reps for incoming year

- Clodagh Haddock and Caoimhe Ryan

Meeting ended 8.15pm