

Hope House (HH)

Trustees' Annual Report

Year Ended 31 May 2023

The Trustees present their report and the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 May 2023. The trustees have adopted the provisions of the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) "Accounting and Reporting by Charities" (FRS 102) in preparing the annual report and financial statements of the charity.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in notes to the accounts and comply with the charity's governing document, the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008 and Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102).

Structure, governance and management

The charity is a company limited by guarantee and was incorporated on 8 May 2014.

The trustees', who are also directors for the purpose of company law, and who have served during the year and since the year end were:

N Brabham
L Brabham
J McCarrol Waite

The company actively promotes a board of trustees which includes a range of skill, experience and knowledge in keeping with the pursuance of its Objects and to this end it is entitled to advertise and interview eligible candidates to be potential trustees of the board.

None of the trustees has any beneficial interest in the company. All of the trustees are members of the company and guarantee to contribute £1 in the event of a winding up.

New trustees are invited and encouraged to attend a series of short training sessions to familiarise themselves with the charity and the context within which it operates. These sessions cover the obligations of trustees, the main documents which set out the operational framework for the charity, resourcing and the current financial position and future plans and objectives. New trustees are also referred to the Charity Commission's guide "The Essential Trustee".

The Trustees have assessed the major risks to which the charity is exposed and are satisfied that systems are in place to mitigate exposure to the major risks.

Objectives and activities

Hope House (HH) is committed to the following:

- to providing refuge, mentoring, counselling, education in life skills, and whatever other means may be appropriate and available for the personal development and physical, emotional and spiritual benefit of women aged over 18 and over who are or have been the victims of domestic abuse and/or sexual exploitation; and
- to advance any other exclusively charitable purpose as the trustees may, from time to time, decide in accordance with the law of charity, and with the provision that any such purpose does neither distract from nor conflict with the primary objects of the charity.

The trustees have paid due regard to guidance issued by the Charity Commission in deciding what activities the charity should undertake.

Hope House (HH)

Trustees' Annual Report

Year Ended 31 May 2023

Achievements

The charity, having gone through difficulty since Covid restrictions, continues to strive to provide a safe, welcoming and homely atmosphere for the benefit of our clientele which helps them to develop a more normal attitude to community life as it would seem more like a home and normality rather than as a "refuge".

As previously mentioned, 2019-2022 were extremely challenging years with fall out from a connected organisation's internal issues causing the loss of the majority of its volunteers as well as a Trustee and the accounts manager.

With the arrival of Covid 19 in 2020, a decision was taken by the Trustees that, whilst maintaining the premises in a state of immediate readiness, applicants would only be accepted in the case of immediate emergency or danger to physical safety. This situation continued throughout into 2020-21 until finally the relaxation of some of the regulations has enabled the organisation to restart the operational functionality with a drive to obtain and train up new volunteers.

The previously mentioned potential of a partnering situation with another like-minded charity organisation for whom Hope House could provide safe and secure accommodation for their clientele was explored and became a reality during the 2021-22 financial period.

On the 9th November 2021 Hope House entered into a formal working agreement with alike-minded charity working in the realm of "People/Sexual Trafficking" to not only refer possible clients for homing for various periods but also to utilise the premises of Hope House for team building meetings. This has proved both a beneficial and fruitful relationship and the fledgling relationship blossomed into a mutually beneficial relationship.

This working agreement has led to onward progression and as a result Hope House has accommodated one client since August 2022 and another from the beginning of 2023. Both these clients have been accepted under the terms of the articles of association and objectives and activities of Hope House and fully meet the criteria of those terms. Both clients have settled in well and find the provision of accommodation, security and support a great benefit to their situation as they await proper classification of status and government housing allocation.

At this point both are settled and just awaiting the various regulatory bodies input as to their onward movement, at which time Hope House will hope to receive further referrals. No time scale has been placed or imposed upon the process.

The situation has had an obvious beneficial impact upon Hope House accounts and therefore means that the annual repayment of the purchase loan has been maintained without huge impact on the functionality budget and that all operational outgoings are now covered despite the recent increase in utility prices. Hope House is now looking to source a funding income that will enable a managers salary to be payable to the person in charge of the day to day oversight of operations.

Financial review (including reserves policy)

The accounts have been prepared for the year ended 31 May 2023. The results are set out on page 8 of the financial statements. The charity had recorded a net surplus of £3,014 for the year. This was added to reserves brought forward to leave total reserves of £45,547 at 31 May 2023.

It is the policy of the charity that unrestricted funds which have not been designated for a specific use should be maintained at a level equivalent to between three and six months expenditure. The trustees consider that reserves at this level will ensure that, in the event of a significant drop in funding, they will be able to continue the charity's current activities while consideration is given to ways in which additional funds may be raised. This level of reserves has been maintained throughout the year.

Hope House (HH)

Trustees' Annual Report

Year Ended 31 May 2023

Risk Identification and Management

The Board of Trustees has assessed the major risks to which the charity is exposed, in particular they have highlighted those related to the short-term revenue funding leading to insecurity. This is a risk faced by most voluntary and community organisations. The board proactively work towards self-sustainability by developing the income generating services and facilities provided within the new premises. The Board are satisfied that systems are in place to mitigate exposure to the major risks.

Compliance with Public Benefit

The company has given careful consideration to the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland's guidance on public benefit to ensure that the activities entered into during the year have helped to achieve the charity's objectives and activities, as well as providing public benefit.

Trustees' responsibilities

The trustees are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the accounts in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

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

In preparing these accounts, the trustees are required to:

- * select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- * observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- * make judgements and 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 accounts; and
- * prepare the accounts on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the accounts 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.

On behalf of the board of trustees



N Brabham
Trustee

Dated: 3 October 2023