

2023 Trustees Report

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Introduction

The purpose of this report is to inform the Charities Commission NI of the activities and achievements of Row the Erne during the financial year ended 31st December 2023.

Row the Erne Details

Name: Row the Erne

Row the Erne is governed by its constitution. It is included in Appendix 1.

Charity Registration No. NIC102251

Trustees 2023:

- Barbara Irwin
- Mairead Larmer
- Kathy Owens

Principal address:

12 Drumlin Heights

Enniskillen

Co. Fermanagh

BT74 7NR

Reporting period

The reporting period is 1st January 2023 to 31st December 2023

Review of financial position at the end of the year

Row the Erne operates a 'Receipts and Payments' approach to accounting. It does not have any debts owing at 31st December 2023. Its reserves are reflected in the closing bank balance of £7,503.57. It does not have a formal reserves policy.

Statement by the Trustees

The Trustees state that they have regard to the Commission's Public benefit requirement statutory guidance.

Purpose

Row the Erne (The Club) is a community-based organisations empowering people to build and row traditional craft primarily on the Erne Waterway System in County Fermanagh and throughout the island of Ireland too. The Club has the following purposes:

Purpose 1: To foster and promote the rowing and sailing of traditional boats for all abilities, provide opportunities for recreation and leisure to members of the public who may not, because of their social or economic circumstances, have access to the waterways.

Purpose 2: To provide the facility for boat building to members of the public in the interests of social welfare for recreation and leisure purposes and to improve the conditions of life of said persons by creating a natural and welcoming environment,

Purpose 3:

- To promote the maritime heritage of the Lough Erne waterway system and to advance the engagement of the community in the conservation and celebration of the maritime heritage.
- To realise social, environment, community development and educational benefits without distinction of age, gender, race, political, religious or other opinion, disability, sexual orientation, marital status or those with or without dependents by associating with relevant organisations and inhabitants in a common effort to support the conservation of maritime heritage through education, learning, conservation projects and recreational activities.
- To establish a range of community focused maritime activities and promote the heritage and use of the resources and any other facilities which would lead to further engagement by the community in maritime heritage conservation and be of benefit to the community.

Public benefits

The public benefits in relation to Row the Erne's purposes are:

Purpose 1: Row the Erne brings people together from all types of backgrounds and social groups to enjoy the waterways.

Purpose 2: The Club has created opportunities of improved health outcomes and reduced levels of stress and anxiety.

Purpose 3: The Club has engaged the public in developing boat building skills, so that the knowledge and activities will continue to grow and be passed on.

These benefits were demonstrated through feedback from the users of the currach through surveys, films and interviews. Many of these videos and pictures were shared on social media to let others know what we were up to and to come along. The charity's beneficiaries are people from all walks of life of all ages and abilities.

Summary of activities and achievements

The Trustees worked alongside members and volunteers of Row the Erne in a range of activities, events and initiatives that benefited the public in line with the Club's purposes.

This section lists the range of activities and achievements of The Club in 2023. It refers to the relevant purpose and public benefit linked to it.

- **Boat maintenance:** Took place when the currach was off the water in February and March.
- **Regular short rows:** Row the Erne ran regular evening and weekend rows from April through to early November when the currach was lifted off the water for a winter rest. This benefited the public under purposes 1 and 2. We introduced a whole new group to rowing to improve their physical and mental wellbeing, to have fun and to make new friends.
- **Taster rows:** The Club ran a day of taster rows as part of the Health Oceans Health Minds initiative in August. This provided many people with the opportunity to get out on the water and row a traditional craft for the first time. This benefited the public under purposes 1 and 2.
- **Long rows:** We ran several longer rows to challenge the public to push themselves, increase their fitness and invest more in developing their social connections. This benefited the public under purposes 1 and 2. We ran these rows on weekends in Spring, Summer and Autumn.
- **Heritage rows:** The club secured funding from Fermanagh and Omagh District Council to run an Ulster Scots project 'Approaching Planation Castles from the water'. This gave people a unique perspective of their heritage on and off the water,

including workshops from a local historian and expert in traditional boat building.
This benefited the public under purpose 3.

- **Heritage rows with children and young people:** The club worked with Fermanagh 14th Scouts, Derrylin to fulfil their 'Rowing and Ropes' project funded by the Policing and Community Safety Partnership. A series of rows were held over a number of weeks in Autumn for the children and scout leaders. The children learnt a range of boating skills including how to row a traditional currach and about our natural heritage and how to leave no trace. This benefited the public under purposes 1 and 3.
- **Expedition:** The club went on a sea expedition to Rathlin in May. This was the first adventure to sea for many of those involved. During the trip we invited the public to look at the currach and we explained how it was built. This trip benefited the public under purposes 1, 2 and 3.

Signed by:

Barbara Irwin

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Chair, Row the Erne