



# Trustees Annual Report and Consolidated Financial Statements

for the Financial Year ending  
31<sup>st</sup> March 2024

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Head Office, 18 O'Neill Road, Newtownabbey, BT36 6WB

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## Message from Chair and CEO

It is our great privilege to present the 2023/24 Annual Report.

This year, we celebrated a significant milestone: 40 years of delivering exceptional palliative care to our community. This achievement reflects the passion, commitment, and dedication of our staff, volunteers, and supporters, both past and present. We extend our deepest gratitude to everyone who has played a crucial role in providing specialist and compassionate care, making a real difference to patients and their families year after year.

Every year, Northern Ireland Hospice cares for more than 4,000 babies, children and adults living with life-limiting conditions or facing the end of their lives. Our care not only wraps around our patients but also their families and loved ones with services such as bereavement counselling and other aspects of social care. The nature of the demands served by our charity are also changing with increasing medical and social complexity, along with an ageing population and later diagnoses. This presents ongoing challenges that we have risen to by innovating and adapting our services to meet the needs of patients, their families and loved ones.

Our services are provided free at the point of use, yet unlike the NHS, we do not receive full state funding. While some government funding supports our work, most of our adult and children's services are funded by the generosity of our community, local businesses, trusts, foundations, and philanthropists locally and internationally. Reflecting on the past year and the previous four decades of remarkable progress, we must also acknowledge the challenges we have faced. The current cost-of-living crisis, an intricate economic and political landscape, and the reduction in statutory funding for our Children's Hospice services have made our work even more challenging.

In Northern Ireland, specialist palliative care can be difficult to access for both children and adults, resulting in considerable unmet need. Too many people are unable to receive the care they deserve. In Northern Ireland Hospice we are committed to advocating for change that ensures equity of access to specialist palliative care. We are engaging with local government and political parties to secure the recurring funding necessary to sustain our vital services.

To secure the sustainability of our Hospice services, we introduced a new five-year strategy in 2023/24, focusing on growing income and ensuring the long-term financial stability of the charity in order that we can continue to serve those who need our services. The first phase of this strategy is dedicated to achieving financial stability while maintaining our existing services and building the capacity for future development. Our plan outlines a path to transition into a more sustainable financial model that allows us to invest in improved and new services for those in need of palliative care. This will be achieved through a series of strategic interventions, including a cost transformation programme, clearer service definitions, and enhanced cost management. We are pleased to report that, as of March 31, 2024, we achieved our planned financial targets a year ahead of schedule, thanks to improved income and effective cost-saving measures.

To support our strategic goals, we embraced digital technologies to enhance our service delivery and improve patient outcomes. Our expanded retail business reflects our commitment to sustainability and community support and is a key enabler in our new strategy.

Our educational initiatives, research contributions, and partnerships, such as those with the All-Ireland Institute of Hospice and Palliative Care, further our mission. We are dedicated to sharing our expertise

and improving palliative care standards across the region.

As we review the financial outcomes of the past year, we want to address the de-recognition of a pension asset from our balance sheet, in compliance with updated accounting standards. This adjustment contributed to the operational deficit reported for 2023/24, but it was necessary to ensure our financial reporting remains accurate and transparent. By making this change, we are reinforcing the integrity of our financial position, allowing us to focus on our mission with renewed strength.

Looking ahead, we are filled with optimism. The strategic plan not only guides us toward financial stability and service growth but also reinforces our mission to provide exceptional care to more individuals in need. By leveraging our strengths, embracing innovation, and advocating for necessary change, we are confident in our ability to meet the growing needs of our community.

The success of Northern Ireland Hospice and Children's Hospice is a collective effort. It is made possible by our dedicated staff, volunteers, and the unwavering support of our donors and community partners. Your generosity and commitment enabled us to continue our vital work, and for this, we extend our heartfelt thanks.

As we move forward, we will remain steadfast in our dedication to enhancing the quality of life for our patients and their families. Thank you for being an integral part of our journey.

With sincere gratitude,

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**Dr. Gerry Millar MBE, Chairman**  
**Trevor McCartney, Acting CEO.**

## Trustees and Other information

### Company Details

**Company Number:** NI014817      **Charity Number:** NIC102337  
**HMRC Number**      XN45696      **VAT Number:**      308367790  
**Registered Office:**      18 O'Neill Road, Newtownabbey, BT36 6WB

#### President

Paul Clark MBE

#### Board of Trustees

**Dr Gerry Millar MBE**

**Ian Sheppard**

**Garth Calow (Resigned 6 April 2024)**

**Martin Murphy**

**Alan Dickson**

**Dr Russell Houston**

**Janice Smyth**

**Andrew Talbot (Term ended 25 August 2023)**

**Adele Martin**

**Joanne Ramsay**

**Patrick O'Hagan**

**Steven Cockcroft**

**Paul Terrington CBE**

#### Chair

**Vice Chair (Chair Elect from 27 June 2024)**

**Treasurer (until 6 April 2024)**

**Treasurer (from 9 May 2024)**

**Three committees of the Board have been operational from April 2024.**

#### Finance & Business Committee (FBC)

Martin Murphy (Chair), Alan Dickson, Paddy O'Hagan

#### People and Culture Committee (PCC)

Adele Martin (Chair), Janice Smyth, Ian Sheppard

#### Care Quality Committee (CQC)

Dr Gerry Millar MBE (Chair), Dr Russell Houston, Janice Smyth, Joanne Ramsay

Northern Ireland Hospice  
Trustees Report and Consolidated Financial Statements  
For the Financial Year Ended 31 March 2024

### Company Secretary

Myles McKeown (until 31 July 2023)

Gillian Wright (1 August 2023 to 9 May 2024)

Michael Mawhinney (appointed 9 May 2024)

### Principal Bankers

Danske Bank, Donegall Square West, Belfast, BT1 6JS

### Solicitors

Edwards & Co Solicitors, 28 Hill Street, Belfast, BT1 2LA

### Auditors

Finegan Gibson Ltd, Chartered Accountants & Statutory Auditors, Causeway Tower, 9 James St S,  
Belfast, BT2 8DN

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## Report of the Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees presents this report together with the audited consolidated financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024.

We are Northern Ireland Hospice

Northern Ireland Hospice is a local charity providing specialist palliative care to babies, children, and adults living with life limiting and life-threatening - illnesses. Our holistic approach focuses on enhancing quality of life, managing symptoms, and providing emotional and spiritual support – not just for patients, but also for their families.

We do this through:

### Our Hospices

We have two specialist Hospice units, Somerton House, our Adult In-Patient Unit and Horizon House, our Children's In-Patient Unit, which is the only children's hospice in Northern Ireland. Our multi-disciplinary teams provide high-quality patient-centered specialist palliative care as well as compassionate emotional and spiritual support, wrapping our care around the entire family unit.

### Our Community Services

We have seven teams of Specialist Community Nurses that deliver care across Northern Ireland. These nurses support children, adults, and their families by working closely with social workers, GPs, District Nurses and community pharmacies to identify each person's needs and develop personalised care plans which reflect individual choice.

Our Hospice at Home service provides one-to-one nursing care during the day, evening, or night to allow family members to have a break and look after their own well-being.

As the largest Hospice care provider in Northern Ireland, we deliver bespoke, high-quality education programmes and contribute to research as a member of the All-Ireland Institute of Hospice and Palliative Care and the Palliative Care Research Network Northern Ireland. This enables us to share our expertise for the betterment and furtherance of specialist palliative care for children and adults. Strategy 2023-2028.

Northern Ireland Hospice, like many UK hospices, faces significant challenges ahead. Increasing inflationary costs, particularly in wages and medical expenses, coupled with the intricate political and economic climate in Northern Ireland, places a strain on our finances. In 2004 the government committed in a written agreement to fund hospice services to at least 50% of their care costs. This agreement has never been met, exacerbating the financial challenges for hospice services.

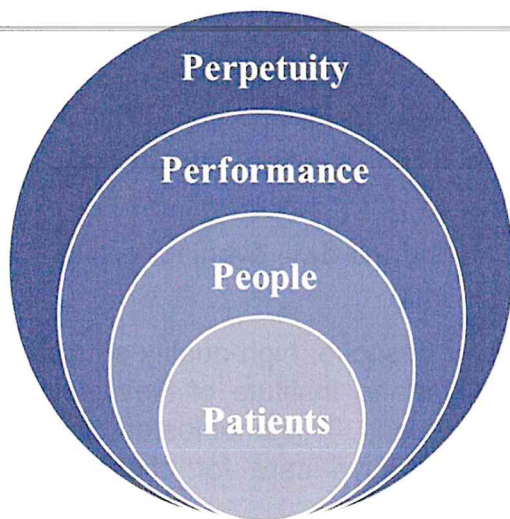
The demand for specialist palliative care services continues to increase, with the average age of a patient now under 65 and our patients are clinically more complex. There are many factors that have caused this shift, such as late diagnosis to name but one, however, unique specialist services in Northern Ireland have the skills, facilities and clinical expertise to deliver a service that meets these needs. Our services, however, remain undervalued as a key partner to our NHS here in Northern Ireland, particularly given the scale and diversity of our services, not least of which are the 13,833 community visits from our 7 specialist clinical community teams in the province who care for our patients

in their own homes. Our services are diverse, especially our children's service, which offers both respite and specialist end-of-life care. Furthermore, there has been a notable shift in the place of death, with more deaths occurring at home, accelerated by the Covid-19 pandemic but part of a longer-term trend. As already mentioned, this has increased the demand for home-based care from our community teams. The development of community and outreach services continues to be a key strategic intent for the charity.

In this context, we have developed a robust five-year strategic approach focused on sustainability and growth with a relentless focus on providing specialist palliative care across the province to everyone with a life limiting condition. The first two years aim to achieve financial break-even while retaining our capacity for future service expansion. Following this, a three-year growth phase will expand our services to meet the increasing demand for palliative care in a sustainable manner.

As always, we rely on the continued support of the communities we serve and our partners to advocate for and deliver sustainable palliative care services. Despite the challenges, we are dedicated to sustaining and growing our services for those who need us most.

## Our Strategic Intentions



<b>Perpetuity</b>	We will support the delivery of our services with reliable income streams that can grow in line with cost and we will ensure we govern and operate the charity in line with all compliance, legal and regulatory standards.
<b>Performance</b>	We will ensure our performance, both operational and financial, is explicitly described in order to deliver an insightful, and transparent view of our organisation.
<b>People</b>	We will ensure our people have the skills and support across the organisation to enable the delivery of this care whilst operating as efficiently as is possible.
<b>Patients</b>	It is our intention to continue to provide specialist palliative care to our patients within the funding available.

## Charitable Purpose

Northern Ireland Hospice provides specialist palliative care services and support at no cost to patients with life-threatening and life-limiting illnesses, their carers and families.

The objects of Hospice are:

- To promote comfort and relieve the suffering caused by illness of children, young people and adults living with advancing progressive conditions and their families by delivering specialist palliative care services and support (including but not limited to physical, social, spiritual and psychological support) in Northern Ireland in particular, but not exclusively, through a range of facilities including in-patient hospice units and community services.

- To advance health and well-being, in particular palliative care services and support, through the provision of training for healthcare professionals as well as staff, volunteers and others, and to conduct, or promote or encourage evaluation and research into the care and treatment of persons suffering from advancing progressive conditions in Northern Ireland and in any part of the world and to disseminate the results thereof.

As the largest provider of children's and adult's specialist palliative care in Northern Ireland we will continue to work across all available networks to influence funding and improve delivery of palliative care services.

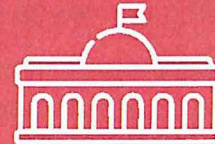
# Our Year in Numbers



# Our Challenges

1

**Government Funding:** Despite commitments since 2004 to fund at least 50% of hospice costs, this goal has never been fully realised. Inadequate government funding remains a significant challenge, covering only a small % of our overall charitable activities.



2

**Rising Costs:** Escalating costs, particularly in wages, continue to strain our finances. The current cost-of-living crisis further exacerbates these challenges, increasing operational costs and impacting the financial stability of our services.



3

**Sustaining Fundraising Efforts:** Maintaining and growing our fundraising efforts amidst economic instability is a continuous challenge. Innovative fundraising campaigns and community engagement are vital to bridging the financial gaps.



4

**Complex Medical Needs:** The demand for specialist palliative care services is rising, with patients presenting younger and with more complex cases. Delays in diagnosis and treatment contribute to the increasing complexity of medical and social needs among our patient population. In Children's Services, children are living longer with more complex healthcare needs.



5

**Staff Recruitment and Retention:** Recruiting and retaining skilled staff remains a challenge, particularly in the current economic climate. Ensuring we have the right people with the right skills is crucial to maintaining the high standards of care we provide.



## Adult Services

### Adult In-Patient Unit Services

Our 18-bed In-Patient Unit is based within Somerton House in Belfast. Here, we provide holistic and expert palliative care for people living with progressive life-limiting illnesses, and who require the help and expertise of our specialist multi-disciplinary team to get symptoms under control and return home, as well as people who are approaching their last days of life.

This year our consultant-led multi-disciplinary team facilitated 230 admissions and provided specialist end-of-life care for 151 people and their families.

Bed occupancy peaked at the highest level in four years and the average length of time that people stay in our In-patient unit increased, reflecting the increasingly difficult physical, social, and psychological needs of people in our care. The proportion of people admitted that are under 65 has increased significantly over the last five years, which has increased the demand and level of support required for multi-generational family members and the rising numbers of children and young people.

We were delighted to welcome inspection visits from the Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority (RQIA) and the Department of Health Pharmacy Inspection team. The findings from both agencies were commendable across a broad variety of inspection areas, with the RQIA summarising that the care provided and delivered by Hospice was of an excellent standard.

We have one chance to get it right and we are committed to continuously improving the care we provide. Our in-patient quality initiative highlights include an increased focus on staff huddles to optimise communication, patient safety and responsive care delivery, and a refresh of nursing record-keeping to improve patient-centred care plan recording and communication with team members.

We have focused on developing a flexible workforce to meet the changing needs of our population, patients, and service delivery by introducing Advanced Nurse Practitioner (ANP) roles, both qualified and in-training, and implementing non-medical prescribing practices. Having ANPs at Hospice increases continuity of support to both the nursing and medical teams.

### Adult Community Services

We know that most people we care for want to remain at home, in the comfort of familiar surroundings and the presence of loved ones. To help meet these wishes, our specialist community nursing teams provided specialist palliative care to 3,884 patients and their families, wherever they call home, across four Health & Social Care Trusts in Northern Ireland. We helped 1922 patients fulfil their wishes to die at home, supported by our specialist nurses in partnership with GPs and District Nursing, family members and carers and our Hospice at Home team. Our specialist nurses made 13,833 home visits and our Hospice at Home team provided 3,211 hours of direct care to people within their own home.

We enhanced cross-team working to help provide the most responsive care and introduced a quality initiative to improve focus on, and recording of, advance care plans to best capture patient wishes.

Following changes to service delivery during the COVID-19 pandemic, we have maintained our outreach services from Consultants, Doctors, Physiotherapy and Occupational Therapy responding to urgent need, preventing crises and avoidable admissions to hospital for those we care for at home.

We continued to advance our work to enhance holistic and specialist multi-disciplinary palliative care at home through funding from the Cancer Charities Support Fund up to March 2024. During this project we provided more encompassing care through a multi-disciplinary approach, at home, to improve the quality of life of people with cancer.

We increased Specialist Nursing and Medical care in addition to providing new Complementary Therapy and Social Work services, supporting families, carers including children and young people, to navigate the journey of dealing with death, dying and bereavement. Overall, this service enhancement delivered an additional 5,635 interventions from the team and provided valuable learning and service-user feedback to inform future care provision.

## Bereavement

Our Social Work team provided post-bereavement support services to families and carers through 589 individual and group sessions. This year, we introduced a new initiative – our Bereavement Café service, a monthly drop-in group aiming to connect people, provide mutual support and encouragement to anyone experiencing grief and loss. This safe space has provided people with an opportunity to talk openly about the pain of loss and find courage and strength knowing they are not alone.

## Learning and Development

We continue to develop a culture of continuous improvement across our services, learning from incidents, complaints, and service user feedback to shape what we do and how we do it.

In promoting sharing of knowledge, our adult care staff have supported the delivery of the European Certificate in Essential Palliative Care and advanced communication skills training. This training is delivered for all healthcare staff working in palliative care.

Across our in-patient and community services, we have helped improve others' knowledge and experience of palliative care by facilitating educational opportunities for pre- and post-graduate nursing students, doctors in training, Medical, Paramedic and Pharmacy students and specialist palliative care staff from external and partner organisations.

## Going the extra mile

We understand that how people truly live during their final weeks is paramount to them and the memories of those who live on. In addition to our specialised multi-disciplinary care, wherever possible, we strive to enhance the quality of life for our patients and their families by creating special experiences that bring joy, comfort, and lasting memories. This year, our Special Activities Team, comprised of staff working directly with patients, has facilitated weddings, anniversaries, vow renewals, and family movie nights, among other events. We are actively seeking sustainable funding opportunities from our local business community to ensure we can continue to offer and maximise this support.

## Engagement

We have continued to seek and build upon engagements with commissioners, government and key partners to effect change that develops and secures our service. We have clearly demonstrated the impact and benefit of our work and the need for sustainable investment in service delivery.

We continue to participate in the Belfast Palliative Care in Partnership locality boards, “Single Point of Access for Palliative Care Project”, moving towards a more seamless cross-provider approach to service delivery to best meet service user needs. Our Physiotherapy service has led the way in this project, participating in a pilot of collaborative provision of specialist palliative care physiotherapy services to community patients residing in the Belfast area.

## Children’s Services

At the Children's Hospice, we focus on providing the full remit of paediatric palliative care, providing physical, emotional, spiritual, and social support for the entire family unit. Our goal is to enhance quality of life by creating opportunities and experiences for each child and their family. We strive to meet these at the point of need with the appropriate care and support, at the right time.

We deliver our care in our 10-bed in-patient unit – Horizon House, and in the homes of our patients, through our Hospice at Home and Hub services.

2023/24 presented significant challenges for Children’s Hospice Services, impacting our operations and service delivery. One major challenge was the withdrawal of funding for our one-hour plus bed. This bed was specifically funded to support children living more than an hour away from our in-patient unit, allowing for extended stays that made the journey worthwhile for both the children and their families.

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The loss of funding for the one-hour plus bed had a broader impact beyond just the financial aspect. It affected the duration of stays for all the children we care for, increased our overhead costs, and necessitated a review and adjustment of our service model and staffing arrangements.

In response to these challenges, we realigned our in-house service model to provide contracted nights only, at higher occupancy rates. During the 23/24 financial year this funding reduction resulted in our service running six beds from Monday to Friday and three beds on weekends.

This funding change runs contrary to the PHA 2023 review “Needs Assessment of Children with Life-Limiting and Life-Threatening Conditions in Northern Ireland” that clearly identifies there is a high level of unmet need in Northern Ireland and that the majority of this need is in fact met by The Northern Ireland Children’s Hospice. This becomes more counter intuitive given the Children’s Hospice has an additional four beds available that are not operating due to lack of government funding. If funded, these beds would allow us to distribute our fixed costs over more beds, making our service more cost effective, and thereby delivering more of the service that the report identifies as a significant unmet need.

We also reviewed the staffing model for both in-house and community services in detail. While in-house services now operate with a reduced daytime staffing establishment, changes to team structures ensure we maintain one-to-one care for children with higher needs and share care for less dependent children.

This transformation has been challenging, particularly impacting staffing requirements and leading to a redundancy process where six part-time staff moved on to new roles outside the organisation.

The media attention we received due to these changes provided an opportunity to showcase the importance of our service, highlighting our continued dedication, the essential care we provide, and the importance of a sustainable funding model in the future.

## Hub Services

Our community services have been evolving gradually, and in 2023, Northern Ireland Children's Hospice fully transitioned to a Hub caseload system. This system ensures a more streamlined and coordinated approach to care, with the Hub Nurse serving as a central point of contact, improving continuity and consistency in the care journey for families.

This approach reduces stress on families and provides a reliable support network, allowing for more personalised care plans, better resource allocation, and quicker response times to changes in a child's condition.

## Tiny Horizons Antenatal Service

We supported 21 antenatal mothers from across Northern Ireland who had received a diagnosis of a potentially life-limiting or life-threatening condition for their baby, an increase of 23.5%. Our Hub Nurse ensured that the care and support mothers, their babies, and their families received at diagnosis and through their antenatal care informed them about choices, advised them about the benefits and risks of each option, and assisted them, as a family, to plan for any possible outcomes.

## Hospice at Home.

In 2023, we provided 1,242 episodes of care and 6,221 hours of care to 50 children.

Feedback from parents tells us that this is an invaluable service helping them to manage daily life around their child with complex needs, this service is run in partnership with the trusts.

## Palliative and Life-Limited Service (PALLS)

Our PALLS team continues its vital support in the regional hospital for sick children with one PALLS Nurse based there. The PALLS Nurse has advanced this role to the Advanced Clinical Practitioner level, including non-medical prescribing and ensures that referrals are made early.

The PALLS role ensures that the acute services are supported in transitioning the focus of care by supporting breaking bad news, advanced care planning, and providing options around location of care.

## Family Support

At Children's Hospice, we understand the impact a life-limiting illness can have on everyone in the family circle. Our Family Support Team provides emotional, practical, and social support to the whole family, including siblings and grandparents. We also offer specialised bereavement support to families living with the loss of their child. While the challenges these families face are unimaginable, we are honoured to be a part of their journey, offering them essential support and care every step of the way.

## Horizon Bereavement Project

This project is also facilitated by the family support team providing bereavement support to families who have experienced the unexpected death of a child often in traumatic circumstance. In the 3rd year of this project as funded through helping hands charity and will run to Oct 2024.

## Commitment to Research and Strategic influence.

We continue to influence the region on broader issues surrounding paediatric palliative care by facilitating a research project on decision-making around end-of-life care and the location of death. As active members of the paediatric palliative care network, we review critical issues such as advanced care planning and 24-hour on-call cover for the region.

## Fundraising

Despite challenges like the cost-of-living crisis and economic instability, 2023/24 saw significant fundraising success. Income from donations and legacies grew by 7.4%, rising from £8 million in 2022/23 to £8.6 million in 2023/24. Donations saw a positive increase from £5.06 million to £5.69 million, a figure that includes £200,000 generated through the heightened media attention on our Children's Services. This increased visibility has brought greater awareness to our work, inspiring further support and enabling us to continue making a meaningful impact.

Managing the costs of generating income remains a challenge. In 2023/24, fundraising costs were £2.2 million, a significant decrease of £652K from the previous year. It should be noted that £301K of this difference was due to a one-off campaign in the prior year Elmer's Big Belfast Trail. Continued improvement in the return on investment for fundraising activities is crucial for long-term sustainability.

Our focused efforts on acquiring grants from Trusts and Foundations paid off, securing significant funding for specific projects and initiatives. These grants have been pivotal in supporting our specialised services and expanding our outreach.

Innovative campaigns like the Virtual Challenge Series allowed supporters to participate in virtual runs and walks, raising funds through social media. These efforts engaged existing supporters and attracted new donors.

Enhanced donor communication through personalised updates, Connect Magazine, and thank-you campaigns increased donor retention and encouraged higher donation levels, fostering a deeper connection to our mission.

In our 40th year, we continued staple campaigns like Big Coffee Break, Kindness Counts, Lights to Remember, and the return of the Dragon Boat Race. These events were successful in both fundraising and community engagement.

We enhanced donor communication with personalised updates, Connect Magazine, and thank-you campaigns, which increased donor retention and encouraged higher donation levels, fostering a deeper connection to our mission.

## Retail

We are delighted to report that our retail operation, with 24 Hospice Shops across Northern Ireland, generated an impressive £3.2 million in income in 2023/24. This remarkable achievement is due to the unwavering dedication and passion of our 532 staff and volunteers, who tirelessly work to generate vital funds for our care services.

Our commitment to growth and innovation is clear with the recent opening of new shops in Shankill and Finaghy in Belfast, and Enniskillen. This expansion highlights our dedication to enhancing our retail offerings to better serve our community.

## Retail Strategy 2023-2027

Northern Ireland Hospice has launched a retail strategy for 2023-2027, employing a Triple Bottom Line (TBL) methodology. This approach balances economic, social, and environmental goals to ensure sustainable growth and meaningful impact.

Our objectives align under the themes of People, Planet and Profit and in aligning our objectives to these, our strategy not only enhances retail operations and improves financial stability for our charitable cause, but also fosters community well-being and promotes environmental stewardship, perfectly aligning with our mission to effectively serve the local community.

## CARECYCLE Donation Stations

Additionally, we introduced our innovative CARECYCLE donation stations, strategically positioned across Northern Ireland. These stations aim to collect unwanted textile donations, promoting waste reduction and resource conservation while raising invaluable funds to support local people and their families.

Through these initiatives and our comprehensive strategy, Northern Ireland Hospice continues to support and serve our local community effectively, ensuring long-term sustainability and impactful growth.

## Corporate Services

Throughout 2023/24, our Corporate Services teams have played a crucial role in supporting and enhancing the operations of Northern Ireland Hospice. These teams, encompassing People and Organisational Development, Governance Risk and Performance Management, Estates and Facilities, IT, and Volunteer Services, have worked diligently to ensure the smooth and efficient running of our organisation.

We have made significant strides in streamlining our internal workflows to improve service delivery and performance. We are proud of our continued success in meeting statutory compliance and RQIA standards, while consistently implementing value-for-money initiatives across the organisation.

A key achievement this year was attaining cyber security accreditation, reflecting our commitment to safeguarding our digital infrastructure. In 2024, we will further strengthen our cyber security posture by achieving Cyber Essentials certification. This involves reviewing and upgrading our current systems and processes to incorporate best-in-class products and services that protect our organisation from cyber threats.

Additionally, we continue to review our IT estate to identify cost savings, ensuring our resources are used efficiently and effectively. Our commitment to sustainability is also reflected in our efforts to reduce our carbon footprint. We are actively working on a long-term plan to optimise the management and development of our estate, aligning it with the charity's service and business needs.

This includes our Estates Strategy, which focuses on managing risks related to compliance, statutory regulations, RQIA requirements, backlog maintenance, and capital expenditure. By addressing these areas, we aim to ensure that our facilities are not only safe and compliant but also environmentally responsible.

## Our People

Northern Ireland Hospice continues to recognise the professionalism, commitment and dedication of its people who are critical in its ability to deliver excellent care and are at the heart of the delivery of its objectives.

In support of this, a People Strategy was developed to set out key people priorities for the 5-year period from 2023 to 2028.

This strategy aims to ensure Northern Ireland Hospice has the right people with the right skills, the right experience and the right knowledge working collaboratively in a positive, supportive, and inclusive culture to deliver their best. Northern Ireland Hospice wants its people to feel they belong, are valued, empowered and where they are happy at work whilst responding adeptly to the external environmental challenges and supporting overall organisational performance.

The People Strategy focuses on five key interrelated, interdependent and complimentary themes, placing people firmly at the centre to support the full lifecycle.

- People Planning and Development
- Wellbeing Matters
- Shaping Culture
- Inspiring Leaders
- Engaging Volunteers

Northern Ireland Hospice, as part of its strategy over the last year, has developed a People and Culture Committee and working group supported by Trustees from our Board along with employee representatives across the organisation to help shape the culture of the organisation.

A Training Academy has also been set up to deliver face-to-face training for managers and staff on 15 different topics to support them in both career and personal development whilst also equipping them with the skills needed as managers. 324 employees have attended the training academy courses. Average compliance for the year for mandatory training is 72.11% and 2,885 courses completed.

One of our key initiatives was to review and implement a new Personal Development Review (PDR) process. Recognising the need for a more efficient and effective process, a streamlined approach was introduced to ensure PDRs were more focused, time-efficient, and aligned with the strategic goals of the organisation. This refinement of the PDR process supported our people and their managers to have regular meaningful conversations, ensuring that employees receive constructive feedback and support for their career growth and personal development.

Recognising the value of long-term commitment, Staff Long Service Awards were introduced. These awards celebrated and honoured employees who have dedicated many years to the organisation,

demonstrating the Northern Ireland Hospice's appreciation for the loyalty and hard work our people exhibit every day.

As part of our commitment to our people, Northern Ireland Hospice implemented a new Menopause Policy and Guidance, coupled with the introduction of a new Menopause Cafe which serves as a safe space for employees to share experiences and seek advice, fostering a supportive community within the workplace.

Building on the success of the previous year, this year has seen the conclusion of year one of our Wellbeing Strategy and the continuation into our second year with the introduction of a 2024 Wellbeing Calendar, offering a structured plan of activities and initiatives aimed at promoting physical, mental, and emotional wellbeing throughout the year.

## Volunteers

Our volunteers underpin all our work, enabling us to provide specialist palliative care to local patients and their families. We are immensely grateful for the support of over 700 passionate volunteers who dedicate more than 118,472 hours across the organisation. Their roles span the Children's Hospice, Adult Hospice, Reception Areas, Retail, Fundraising, Corporate Services, and our Hospice Café. The value of their time equates to over £1.35 million at the current minimum wage, a remarkable contribution to the charity as a whole.

In 2023/24 volunteer recruitment increased, thanks to a focused recruitment campaign, website updates, and an online application process. Enhancing our presence on social media and strengthening our networking with various stakeholders has also contributed to this success. These efforts would not have been possible without continued support and collaboration across the organisation.

In 2023/24, we received 245 online applications, with 185 volunteers progressing to support various services. Many volunteers now support multiple areas, allowing them to experience different aspects of volunteering within Northern Ireland Hospice. Post-COVID, roles such as hairdressing and complementary therapy for adults have returned. New roles, like fundraising drivers and increased support in reception, have been introduced to enhance our services. We were delighted to see the return of increasing numbers of volunteers to our in-patient unit, where their impact has been invaluable in supporting both patients and care teams.

The Patient Sitter Service in our Adult Hospice and the adapted Babysitting Role in the Children's Hospice have provided much-needed personal support to patients and their families.

At Northern Ireland Hospice, we recognise that our ability to provide these vital care services is primarily due to the support of our committed and loyal volunteers. These individuals bring dedication, passion, enthusiasm, and a genuine desire to make a real difference. We aim to develop a diverse range of volunteer roles, attracting and retaining individuals with various skills and experiences in a safe, supportive, and rewarding environment. Volunteers are integral to our organisation, and we fully appreciate the invaluable contributions they make to our service delivery and community reach.

## Celebrating Volunteers

To acknowledge the incredible support and contributions of our volunteers, we hosted long-service recognition celebrations during Volunteers Week (1-7 June). Volunteers were presented with certificates and badges, with some receiving recognition for up to 30 years of service.

This year, the prestigious League of Mercy Award for 2023/24 was awarded to Yvonne Fitzsimmons, a long-serving Children's Hospice reception volunteer. To date, Northern Ireland Hospice has nominated 11 volunteers for this award, with Yvonne being the 9th recipient.

By recognising and celebrating our volunteers, we affirm our gratitude for their unwavering support and contributions, ensuring Northern Ireland Hospice continues to provide exceptional care to those in need.

## Our Future Plans

As we navigate the challenges of 2024/25, our focus remains steadfast on delivering exceptional palliative care across Northern Ireland. The evolving landscape of healthcare, marked by financial pressures and increasing demand for our services, requires a strategic approach to ensure sustainability and growth.

### *Strategic Focus on Sustainability and Growth*

We have developed a robust five-year strategic plan to guide our efforts. The first two years concentrate on achieving financial sustainability, ensuring that we can continue to provide our essential services without compromising quality. Following this, we will enter a growth phase aimed at expanding our services to meet the well documented increasing demand for specialist palliative care across Northern Ireland.

### *Enhancing Service Delivery*

We are committed to continuously improving the care we provide. This includes the development of a flexible workforce, with initiatives such as the introduction of Advanced Nurse Practitioner (ANP) roles and non-medical prescribing practices. These roles will enhance the continuity and quality of care across our services. We will also continue to focus on integrating digital technologies into our operations. This will streamline service delivery, improve patient outcomes, and allow us to reach more individuals who need our care.

### *Adapting to Wage Increases*

Looking ahead, we are preparing for the potential financial impact of the anticipated 5.5% pay increase proposed by the new Labour Chancellor, Rachel Reeves. While this increase is important for supporting our dedicated staff, we are committed to carefully planning and implementing strategies to absorb this expense while still achieving our financial objectives. Our focus remains on maintaining the quality of our services and ensuring that we continue to meet our obligations without compromise.

### *Advocating for Fair Funding*

Securing sustainable funding remains a critical priority. We will continue to engage with local government, political parties, and key stakeholders to advocate for the essential role of hospice care in our community. Our goal is to secure recurrent funding that reflects the true value and impact of our services.

### *Expanding Community and Volunteer Engagement*

Our volunteers are the backbone of our organisation. In the coming year, we will focus on expanding our volunteer base and enhancing the roles available to them. This will not only support our service delivery but also strengthen our connection with the communities we serve.

### *Innovating Retail Operations*

Our retail operations have been a significant source of income, and we plan to build on this success. We will continue to expand our network of shops and introduce innovative initiatives like the CaReCycle donation stations. These efforts align with our commitment to sustainability and will contribute to the financial stability of our organisation.

### *Commitment to Education and Research*

We will further our role as a leader in palliative care by continuing to invest in education and research. Our partnerships with educational institutions and research networks will ensure that we remain at the forefront of palliative care innovation, sharing our knowledge and expertise to improve care standards regionally and nationally.

### *Building a Supportive Work Culture*

Our people are our greatest asset. Over the next five years, we will continue to implement our People Strategy, focusing on professional development, wellbeing, and fostering a positive and inclusive work culture. This will ensure that our staff are supported, valued, and empowered to deliver their best.

### *Shaping the Future of Palliative Care*

In the face of economic and social challenges, we are committed to shaping the future of palliative care in Northern Ireland. By focusing on sustainability, innovation, and community engagement, we aim to extend our reach and impact, ensuring that every individual who needs palliative care receives it with dignity, compassion, and respect.

With these plans in place, we are confident in our ability to navigate the challenges ahead and continue our mission of providing exceptional care to those who need it most.

We are deeply grateful for the continued support of our community, volunteers, and partners as we embark on this journey.

## Financial Review

The consolidated financial statements comprise the results of Northern Ireland Hospice and Northern Ireland Hospice (Trading) Limited, together they are known as the 'Group'.



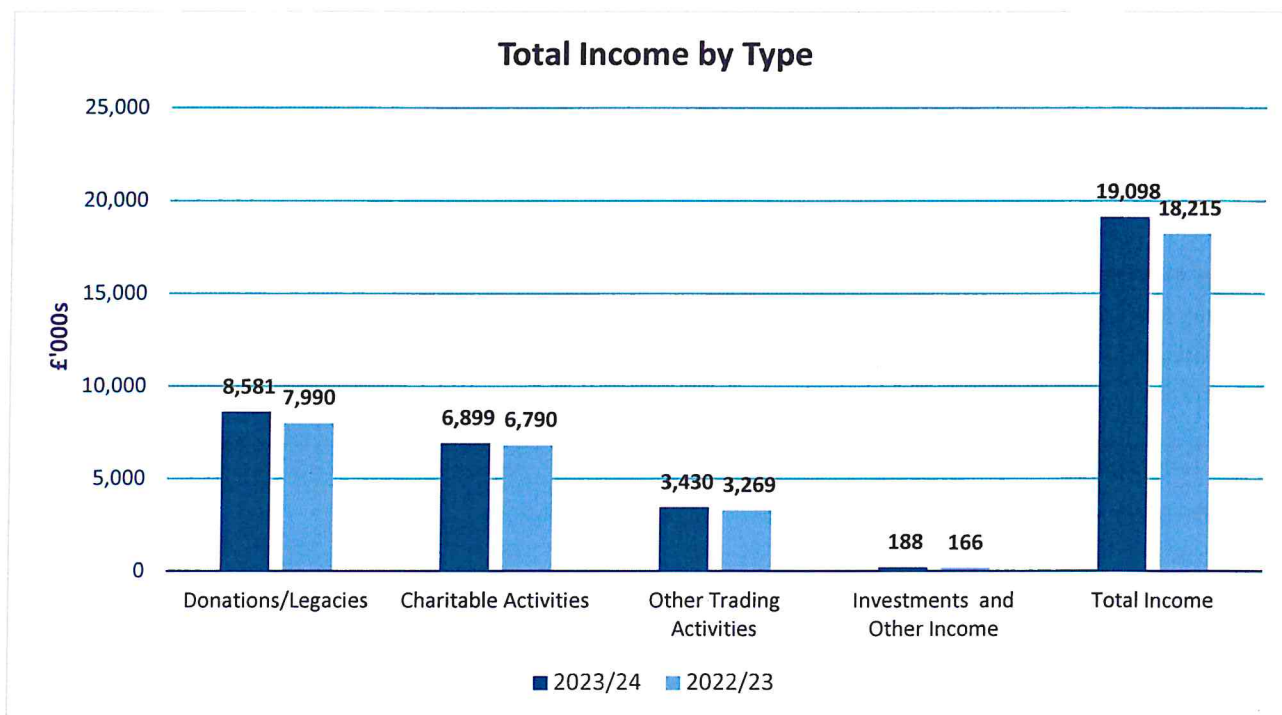
Northern Ireland Hospice owns 100% of the issued share capital of Northern Ireland Hospice (Trading) Limited, the results of which have been consolidated with the financial statements of Hospice on the basis of net profit before taxation.

The Consolidated Statement of Financial Activities for the financial year ended 31 March 2024 and the Consolidated Balance Sheet at that date are set out on pages 42 and 44, respectively. The net movement in funds for the financial year, after depreciation and other recognised gains and losses, amounted to a £2.4M net expenditure (2022/23: net income £3M). This arises due to a net expenditure of £0.4M coupled with the de-recognition of the prior year pension scheme asset valuation of £2.2M and gains on investments of £0.2M. Work continues to address the underlying net deficit.

### Income

The main sources of income are from donations and legacies and from statutory grants. Overall, Group Income has increased by 4.6% from £18.2M in 2022/23 to £19.1M in 2023/24, primarily due to a £0.6M increase in Donations.

	2024	2023	Change
	£'000	£'000	£'000
<b>Group Income</b>			
Donations and legacies	8,581	7,990	591
Charitable activities	6,899	6,790	109
Other trading activities - retail shops	3,430	3,269	161
Investment and other income	188	166	22
<b>Total Group Income</b>	<b>19,098</b>	<b>18,215</b>	<b>883</b>



## Donations and legacies

Income received from donations and legacies has increased by £0.6m or 7.4%, from £8m in 2022/23 to £8.6M in 2023/24. This is primarily due to an increase in Donations received from £5.06M in 2022/23 to £5.69M in 2023/24.

## Charitable activities

Income from charitable activities increased by £0.1M, from £6.8M in 2022/23 to £6.9M in 2023/24.

The £0.2M related to the statutory contracts and equated to a 3.5% increase, reflecting contract uplifts on the previous year, combined with over performance against targets and funding for cost pressures in year. This increase was partially offset by the cessation of two contracts (WHSCCT & DHSS), that led to a year-on-year decrease of £0.1M against the aforementioned contracts. As noted previously, current funding levels are not sustainable and we are working with our Health Service partners to address this.

## Other trading activities - Retail Shops

Northern Ireland Hospice (Trading) Limited's retail income increased £0.16M, from £3.27M in 2022/23 to £3.43M in 2023/24, driven by changes in consumer behaviour due to the Cost of Living crisis and ethical purchasing.

## Investment and other income

Other income increased in the year from £0.17M in 2022/23 to £0.19M in 2023/24. This is due to additional investment income in the year related to higher interest rates.

## Expenditure

Overall, Group Expenditure has decreased by £0.6M or 3%, from £20.1M in 2022/23 to £19.5M in 2023/24.

	2023/24 £'000	2022/23 £'000	Change £'000
<b>Group Expenditure</b>			
Raising funds	2,143	2,795	(652)
Charitable activities	14,531	14,693	(162)
Expenditure before retail shops*	16,674	17,488	(814)
Other - retail shops	2,820	2,624	196
<b>Total Group Expenditure</b>	<b>19,494</b>	<b>20,112</b>	<b>(618)</b>
<i>Further analysed as follows:</i>			
Pay costs	14,807	14,382	425
Operating costs	4,030	5,073	(1,043)
Depreciation	657	657	-
<b>Total Group Expenditure</b>	<b>19,494</b>	<b>20,112</b>	<b>(618)</b>

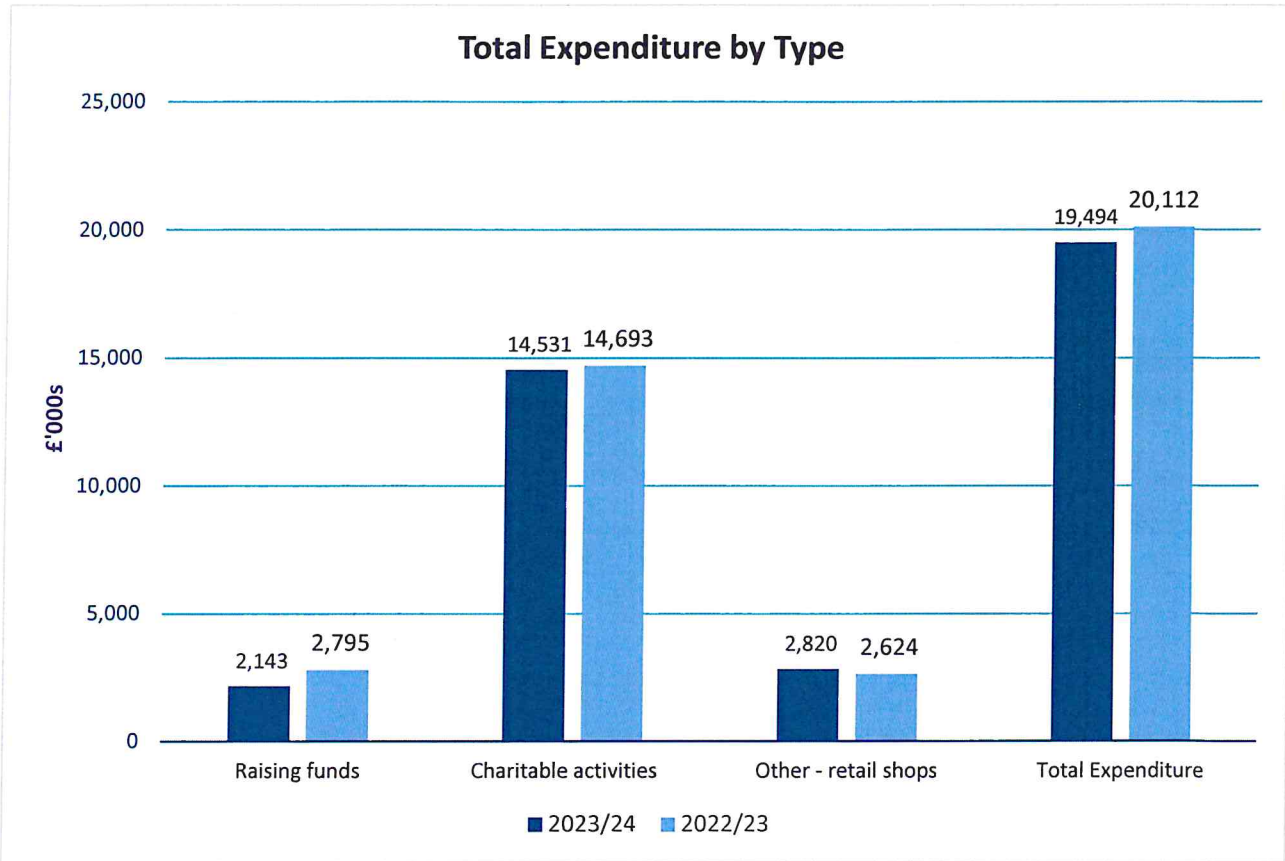
\*Excludes the intercompany management charge of £191K (2022/23: £142K)

It cost £19.5 million to operate the Hospice in 2023/24, a decrease of £0.6 million or 3% from the previous year. The reduction in operating costs by £1.043 million is primarily due to the de-recognition of the NILGOSC pension asset and related costs (£0.7 million) and the absence of the prior year's one-off Elmer campaign expenses in Fundraising (£0.33 million). However, this decrease was partially offset by an increase in pay costs of £0.4 million, driven by a 5% rise in Agenda for Change pay rates and a 9.8% increase in the National Living Wage.

The cost to operate the retail shops increased by £196K in 2023/24, primarily due to a £120K increase in pay costs related to the rise in the National Living Wage.

The net expenditure for 2023/24 was £0.4M, a £1.5M improvement on the 2022/23 net expenditure of £1.9M.

After considering the in-year one-off savings in operating costs, the risk of rising costs, primarily through wage pressures, continues to be of concern. Coupled with the constraints on statutory income contracts, via public sector budgetary cuts, has led to the deficit position in 2023/24. We continue to address this by cost controls, working with our Health Service partners on statutory contracts, exploring new fundraising avenues.



## Balance Sheet

The Group Balance Sheet is presented in the table below.

	2023/24 £'000	2022/23 £'000	Change £'000
Fixed assets	20,272	21,407	(1,135)
Net current assets	3,154	2,401	753
Non-current assets/(liabilities)	-	1,979	(1,979)
<b>Total</b>	<b>23,426</b>	<b>25,787</b>	<b>(2,361)</b>
Restricted funds	307	338	(31)
Unrestricted funds	23,119	25,449	(2330)
<b>Total</b>	<b>23,426</b>	<b>25,787</b>	<b>(2,361)</b>

## Fixed Assets

Tangible fixed assets have decreased by £457K in the year. Additions of £203K offset with depreciation of £657K and disposals of £15K. Investments have decreased by £680K to £5.3M primarily due to draw downs to facilitate operational cashflow. Intangible assets of £60K relate to website development work.

## Net Current Assets

Net current assets have increased by £753K from 2022/23. The main drivers of this increase are as follows:

- Increase in cash of £2.8M linked to the reduction in Trade Debtors & Legacies (noted below) and £1M drawdown from Close Brothers investment
- Decrease in legacies of £874K due to the settlement of a large legacy from March 2023
- Decrease in Trade Debtors of £419K relating to statutory funding
- Decrease in Gift Aid Recoverable £193K
- Increase in Prepayments and Accrued Income £57K
- Increase in Accruals £846K
- Decrease in Trade Creditors £156K

## Non-Current Assets/Liabilities

The Non-current asset relating to the NILGOSC pension scheme (£1.979M 2022/23) has been de-recognised in accordance with accounting standard FRS102 and has a nil value at 31 March 2024.

## Reserves Policy

The Board of Trustees recognises the requirement for reserves and aims to have a level of free reserves equivalent to three months' future running costs. At 31 March 2024, Northern Ireland Hospice has free reserves of £8.1m, which covers 5 months of our planned operating expenditure going forward. These reserves help to ensure that the finances of the hospice remain in a sustainable position.

Our reserve position is heavily impacted by our high asset base which includes specialist hospice properties which the Board have no intention of selling. The Trustees monitor our reserves position and the cash in bank balances on a regular basis to ensure there is no immediate risk to the Hospice.

## Investment Policy

Northern Ireland Hospice has invested in short-term bank deposits with Danske Bank during the year, in line with the organisation's operational cash flow requirements.

We have continued an investment portfolio with our investment advisors Close Brothers during 2023/24. Close Brothers have been instructed to maximise the return on the funds invested within the constraints of a medium risk portfolio.

The investment position of the organisation is reviewed by the Finance Committee on an ongoing basis throughout the year. Close Brothers report annually to the Board on the performance of the portfolio.

## Going Concern

The financial statements have been prepared on the going concern basis.

The Trustees have reviewed Northern Ireland Hospice's financial position and consequently believe there are sufficient resources to manage any operational or financial risks. The Board considers there is a reasonable expectation that Hospice has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for at least 12 months from the date of signing of the accounts and the Board are unaware of any additional material uncertainties related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt upon Northern Ireland Hospice's ability to continue as a going concern.

## Risks and Uncertainties

Due to the historic structure of statutory income and the pressure of increasing costs, the group has been incurring an underlying deficit. Exacerbated by current economic and other external factors. Trustees are concerned about the underlying deficit risks and significant work to address these challenges and improve this position continues.

The Trustees have taken into consideration the existing and anticipated effects of these risks and uncertainties on the organisation's activities and finances in its assessment of the appropriateness of the use of the going concern basis. We continue to adapt our fundraising plan to take account of the changing landscape and have reviewed and updated our strategy and related plans to deliver the best outcomes possible within the available resources. Management continues to carefully monitor the situation and evaluate its options during this time. No adjustments have been made to these financial statements as a result of this uncertainty.

The Board therefore considers there is a reasonable expectation that Northern Ireland Hospice has adequate resources to continue in operational existence. The Board is aware that should circumstances

change service levels will have to be revised in line with the income available.

## Post Balance Sheet Events

There have been no significant events affecting Northern Ireland Hospice since the financial year end that would result in the adjustment of the financial statements or inclusion of a note therein.

## Principal Risks and Uncertainties

The Board of Trustees and Corporate Leadership and Management Team, through the corporate governance framework, identify and manage the risks to which the charity is exposed. Our Board and Corporate Leadership and Management Team have monitored the activity of the organisation both in terms of service delivery and quality as well as financial reporting. We are satisfied that our continued vision for the people we support is to provide comfort and quality of life for our patients, whilst supporting their families and relieving fear and suffering associated with loss. Our work, which is based on the values of respect and acceptance, compassion, courage, and integrity, and being pioneering, professional and accountable, is very much in evidence from our activities during the financial year.

The Board established our risk appetite. This identifies potential risk events that may affect the charity and seeks to manage those risks. It also seeks to provide reasonable assurance regarding the achievement of our strategic objectives. It is the role of Trustees and the Corporate Leadership and Management Team to assess the risk and define our operational objectives, assigning responsibility throughout the organisation to each manager and employee responsible for the appropriate management of risk.

Directors and senior staff are accountable for strategic risk management within areas under their control including the devolution of the risk management process to operational managers. Senior staff are accountable to the Chief Executive for implementation, annual reporting on the status of the Risk Register, ongoing maintenance of the Risk Register and ensuring compliance with risk assessment procedures. The Chief Executive is responsible for maintaining the Risk Register and for reviewing it bi-annually including proposing any changes to the Board for approval.

Risk Management is a standing agenda item for all Board meetings. A comprehensive planning process, together with established systems and procedures, enables Trustees to assess and address risks associated with governance, strategy, clinical, health and safety, reputation, finance, operations, other external factors, and the future capacity to deliver services.

## Operational Risks

Operational risk is the risk of loss resulting from inadequate or failed internal processes, systems, or human factors. Operational risk can manifest itself in various ways including shortage of key skills, clinical incidents, inappropriate behaviour of employees, failure to comply with applicable laws and regulations or failure to perform in line with contractual arrangements. These events could result in financial losses, litigation, and regulatory fines as well as other damage to the organisation.

The principal operational risks identified by Northern Ireland Hospice and the mitigating actions are noted below:

Operational Risk	Mitigating Actions
Staffing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regular focused engagement with the Department of Health on regional workforce planning and recruitment.</li> <li>• 3-year workforce planning in development with greater focus on succession planning.</li> <li>• Future medical workforce planning reflects a hybrid model of trainee and non-trainee posts, reducing dependency on locums whilst retaining the Hospice status as a training centre.</li> </ul>
Finance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finance committee established with particular focus on budget and control.</li> <li>• Regular management updates on budgetary position. Contingency planning scenarios developed with a focus on financing.</li> <li>• Fundraising communications focused on online events, moving away from traditional fundraising activities.</li> <li>• Ongoing discussions with SPPG and Department of Health on financial and material support through government grants and contract reviews.</li> <li>• Ongoing planning of strategic income initiatives.</li> </ul>
Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of Cyber Essentials to provide assurance on Hospice IT Security and compliance of standards.</li> <li>• UPS configuration upgraded in main server room (Horizon) to include all IT infrastructure, phones and switches. Key software servers also upgraded.</li> <li>• Engagement with staff on cyber risks has increased with improved vigilance.</li> <li>• Telephone system development.</li> </ul>
Clinical Incidents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policies and procedures in place to prevent incidents as well as management of incidents and implementation of learning.</li> <li>• Bi-monthly reporting of incidents to Board as well as the ability to report serious incidents immediately if required.</li> <li>• Risk and Dashboards monitored by clinical teams and Governance Committee.</li> <li>• Incident reporting software now embedded and development continues to maximise use of analytic features.</li> <li>• Quality audit of incident reporting completed by Governance Team.</li> <li>• Adherence to regulatory requirements (RQIA and Charity Commission).</li> </ul>

The principal operational risks identified by NI Ireland Hospice and the mitigating actions are continued below:

<p>Governance and Hospice Reputation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Effective policies and procedures put in place to ensure compliance with health and safety and other regulatory requirements.</b></li> <li>• <b>Corporate Quality Governance Committee continues with active Board oversight.</b></li> <li>• <b>Review of risk register process with established format and presentation of Strategic Corporate Risk Register. Engagement with external regulatory bodies around service delivery and performance (e.g., NIPSO, RQIA, Fundraising regulator, Charities Commission).</b></li> <li>• <b>Achievement of ISO Standards 9001 and 45001 for Estates department Quality Management and Safety Management activities including capital works, maintenance and asset management.</b></li> <li>• <b>Development and roll-out of risk management software ongoing.</b></li> </ul>
<p>Data Analysis &amp; Management</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Review of systems available to ensure data is managed effectively and to improve report functionality.</b></li> <li>• <b>Consideration of internal Quality Improvement Programme to regularly review data accuracy and systems to ensure that the data is SMART.</b></li> <li>• <b>Independent assessment of data including analysis of statistical information.</b></li> <li>• <b>Quality Indices reports completion and review.</b></li> </ul>

## Management and Governance

### Board Members and Structure

As Trustees of a charitable company, all Trustees are the company directors. Trustees are from diverse backgrounds in health, business, and professional life. This ensures a broad range of experience and skills are brought to Board deliberations.

A minimum of eight to a maximum of fourteen Trustees can be on the Board. Six members of the Board are elected from and by the members of the charitable company. Up to six Trustees are invited by the Board. The Board has the option to co-opt up to a further two Trustees. Both 'elected' and 'invited' Trustees may serve for a maximum of two terms of four years each, following which, they must stand down for a minimum of two years.

The office bearers of Chair, Vice-Chair and Treasurer are chosen from within the Board. The office bearers can remain in office for up to three years and this can be extended for a further three years.

Induction is provided to new Trustees and training is provided as required in areas such as risk, safeguarding, child protection, and other relevant charity governance matters. Trustees adhere to a Code of Conduct and a Declaration of Interest is completed annually.

Trustees are not in receipt of any remuneration for their services to Northern Ireland Hospice but are reimbursed for any incidental expenses claimed. There were no expenses claimed in this financial period.

The Board is responsible for the strategic direction and governance of Northern Ireland Hospice. The Board's principal responsibilities include determining the overall strategy, policies, direction, and goals of Northern Ireland Hospice; protecting and promoting the identity and values of Hospice; fulfilling their statutory responsibilities.

A scheme of delegation is in place and the Board delegates the day-to-day operation of the organisation to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) supported by the Director of Care and Quality Governance, the Director of Corporate Services, the Director of Finance and the Director of Commercial and Brand Development. Together they form the membership of the Corporate Leadership Team. The Corporate Leadership Team and the medical lead(s) attend Board meetings but have no voting rights.

There are clear distinctions between the role of the Board and the Corporate Leadership Team. The Corporate Leadership Team is responsible for preparing policy, strategic planning, budgets, financial reports, and risk registers, which are approved by the Board. The Corporate Leadership Team implements the policy, plans, and budgets and leads all operational aspects of the charity with the Board continually monitoring these.

The Corporate Leadership and Management Team, comprising of the Corporate Leadership Team and Department Heads, work collectively to lead and manage the various functions of Hospice with an emphasis on effective engagement, working in partnership, and valuing the contribution of all of our people in a supportive environment.

In the 2023/2024 financial year, the Board was supported by five Committees, in the areas of Finance, Remuneration and Board Governance, Corporate Quality Governance, IT & Digital Governance, and People and Culture. Following a comprehensive governance review this was streamlined to three committees effective from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024 (details of the current structure can be found on page 5).

## NORTHERN IRELAND HOSPICE BOARD GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

Board of Trustees and Company Directors:		Andrew Talbot, Invited Trustee (term ended 25 August 2023) Alan Dickson, Invited Trustee Janice Smyth, Invited Trustee Adele Martin, Invited Trustee Paddy O'Hagan, Invited Trustee Steven Cockcroft, Invited Trustee	
Chair - Dr Gerry Millar MBE, Elected Trustee Vice Chair - Ian Sheppard, Elected Trustee Garth Calow, Elected Trustee (Treasurer) (resigned 6 April 2024) Dr Russell Houston, Elected Trustee Martin Murphy, Elected Trustee (Treasurer from 9 May 2024) Joanne Ramsay, Elected Trustee		Corporate Quality Governance Committee: Co-Chairs – Dr Russell Houston & Heather Weir	
Finance Committee: Chair – Garth Calow	Remuneration and Board Governance Committee: Chair – Dr Gerry Millar MBE	IT & Digital Governance Committee: Chair – Patrick O'Hagan	People & Culture Committee: Chair – Adele Martin
Trustee Membership	Trustee Membership	Trustee Membership	Trustee Membership
Dr Gerry Millar MBE – Chair & Elected Trustee Garth Calow – Treasurer (Chair of Committee) & Elected Trustee Alan Dickson – Invited Trustee Martin Murphy – Elected Trustee	Dr Gerry Millar MBE – Chair & Elected Trustee Andrew Talbot – Invited Trustee Joanne Ramsay – Elected Trustee Garth Calow – Treasurer & Elected Trustee Janice Smyth – Invited Trustee	Patrick O'Hagan – Invited Trustee	Adele Martin – Invited Trustee Janice Smyth – Invited Trustee Helen Lockhart – Independent Advisor
Staff In attendance:	Staff In attendance:	Staff In attendance:	Staff In attendance:
Chief Executive Officer Director of Corporate Services Finance Director Director of Commercial & Brand Development Director of Care & Quality Governance Head of Finance	Chief Executive Officer (Co-Chair) Director of Corporate Services Finance Director Director of Commercial & Brand Development Director of Care & Quality Governance Head of Adult Services Head of Children's Services Head of Governance, Risk & Performance Management Head of Estates	Director of Corporate Services Finance Director Director of Commercial & Brand Development Head of People & Organisational Development Head of Adult Services Head of Children's Services Head of Commercial Marketing & Support Head of Governance, Risk & Performance Management Head of Transformation & ICT Executive Office Manager	Head of People & Organisational Development Head of Retail Finance Manager Team Leader (IPU) Hospice Nurse Specialist Care Team Manager (Childrens IPU)
Secretariat: Executive Office	Secretariat: Executive Office	Secretariat: Executive Office	Secretariat: Executive Office

## Finance Committee

The Finance Committee (FC) is responsible, on behalf of the Board for ensuring that all the finances of Northern Ireland Hospice are appropriately applied in securing the objects and strategic objectives of the charity and that its assets are properly safeguarded.

The Committee is made up of at least two Trustees with relevant financial experience. The Chair of the Committee is also the Treasurer and reports to the Board at the subsequent Board meeting.

## Remuneration and Board Governance Committee

The Remuneration and Board Governance Committee (RBGC) is responsible for ensuring the appropriate composition of the Board of Trustees and that appropriate governance procedures are in place in Northern Ireland Hospice. The Committee keeps under review a skills matrix and a succession timetable for Trustees plus a succession process for the Corporate Leadership Team roles.

## Corporate Quality Governance Committee

Corporate Quality Governance Committee (CQGC) is responsible, on behalf of the Board for ensuring all functions in the Charity are compliant with legislation and regulations. The committee focuses on ensuring a culture of quality improvement and learning in the Charity, providing assurance, and escalating risks to quality when necessary to the Board, Regulatory Bodies and Commissioners.

## People and Culture Committee

The People and Culture Committee is responsible on behalf of the Board to ensure the culture, values and employee experience are upheld with a focus on health, well-being, and personal growth. The Committee shall consist of not less than two Trustees appointed by the Board. This can include the Chairperson.

## IT and Digital Governance Committee

The IT and Digital Governance Committee is responsible for reviewing the IT and Digital Services that currently operate within the organisation and for making recommendations to the Board on changes and improvements that meet the needs of Hospice now and in the future.

## Remuneration Policy

Clinical staff remuneration is in line with Agenda for Change pay scales. Medical staff employed or engaged as consultants in Hospice are remunerated in line with National Consultant Terms and Conditions.

Non-clinical staff remuneration is set within a policy that is appropriate for each specific role. This allows Northern Ireland Hospice to be externally competitive and internally fair in how it rewards its staff for non-clinical roles. The remuneration framework establishes an appropriate and relevant market-informed salary range for each role. This is in keeping with relevant industry benchmarks. It does however seek to promote development and encourage and reward excellence where performance is exceptional.

The Corporate Leadership Team remuneration is recommended to the Remuneration and Board Governance Committee by the CEO. The CEO remuneration is reviewed by the Chair and recommended to the Board Governance and Remuneration Committee. The Committee considers a

number of matters in arriving at its decisions, including performance and benchmarks with other healthcare charities and sectors.

Northern Ireland Hospice operates an equal opportunities policy.

## Regulatory Environment

In addition to all legal requirements, Northern Ireland Hospice operates in a regulatory environment, governed by the Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority (RQIA) and the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland. Northern Ireland Hospice also voluntarily subscribes to the requirements of the Fundraising Regulator.

## Subsidiaries

### Northern Ireland Hospice (Trading) Limited

Northern Ireland Hospice owns 100% of the issued share capital of Northern Ireland Hospice (Trading) Limited. The principal activity of Northern Ireland Hospice (Trading) Limited is the sale of donated goods and giftware. It operates a network of 24 retail shops in the local area and the Old Schoolhouse Cafe and generates income for Hospice services. The Trading Company donates qualifying charitable donations (covenanted donations) to Hospice under company gift aid rules.

In addition, gift aided donations made to the Trading Company are accounted for in the books of Northern Ireland Hospice.

### Related Parties

In addition to a register of interests held, declaration of conflicts of interest is a standing item on the agenda for all Northern Ireland Hospice Board, and Board Sub-Committee meetings. There were no conflicts identified that required further action.

### Ex-Gratia Payments

There were no ex-gratia payments made during the financial year ended 31 March 2024 or prior financial year ended 31 March 2023.

## Public Benefit

In setting our objectives and planning our activities for the year, the Trustees have considered the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland's guidance on public benefit to ensure that the activities have helped to achieve the Charity's purposes and provide a benefit to the beneficiaries.

## Directors' Responsibilities in Relation to the Financial Statements

Company law requires the Board of Trustees (the Board) to prepare financial statements for each year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Hospice, and of its profit and loss and cash flows for that year. In preparing those financial statements, the Board is required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently,
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent,
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP,
- State whether applicable 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 Hospice will continue in business.

The Board is responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Hospice and to enable it to confirm that the accounts comply with the Companies Act 2006. It is also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Hospice and for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

### Disclosure of information to auditors

In the case of each of the persons who are Trustees at the time the Trustee's Report and Financial Statements are approved:

- there is no relevant information, being information needed by the auditor in connection with preparing their report, of which the group's auditor is unaware, and
- the Trustees, having made enquiries of fellow Trustees and the Group's auditor that they ought to have individually taken, have each taken all steps that he/she is obliged to take, as a director in order to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditor is aware of that information.

### Auditors

The auditors, Finegan Gibson, has indicated its willingness to continue in office, and a resolution that the firm be re-appointed will be proposed at the Annual General Meeting.

Approved by the Board of Trustees and signed on its behalf by:

  
Dr Gerry Millar MBE (Chair)

Date: 5/9/24.