

REGISTERED COMPANY NUMBER: NI028769 (Northern Ireland)
REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER: NIC102384

Report of the Trustees and
Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2025
for
Shankill Womens Centre

Lynn Drake & Co Ltd
Statutory Auditors
1st Floor
34 B-D Main Street
Moira
Co. Armagh
BT67 0LE

Shankill Womens Centre

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for the Year Ended 31 March 2025**

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Shankill Womens Centre

Report of the Trustees
for the Year Ended 31 March 2025

The trustees who are also directors of the charity for the purposes of the Companies Act 2006, present their report with the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2025. The trustees have adopted the provisions of 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) (effective 1 January 2019).

Shankill Womens Centre

Reference and Administrative Details
for the Year Ended 31 March 2025

TRUSTEES	Laura Bell Veronica Brown (resigned 30/7/2025) Deborah Cowan (resigned 30/7/2025) Amanda Kitchingham Carol Lawley Nicola McCullough Margaret Smith (resigned 24/9/2024) Naomi Thompson Pamela McNulty (appointed 9/10/2024) Kathleen Gilliland (appointed 9/10/2024)
COMPANY SECRETARY	Nicola McCullough
REGISTERED OFFICE	Shankill Shared Womens Centre 3 Mayo Link Belfast Co. Antrim BT13 3BD
REGISTERED COMPANY NUMBER	NI028769 (Northern Ireland)
REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER	NIC102384
AUDITORS	Lynn Drake & Co Ltd Statutory Auditors 1st Floor 34 B-D Main Street Moirá Co. Armagh BT67 0LE
SOLICITORS	Thompson Crooks Solicitors 325 Shankill Road Belfast BT13 1FX
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER	B Carlisle

Shankill Womens Centre

Report of the Trustees **for the Year Ended 31 March 2025**

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

Organisational Background

Shankill Women's Centre Mission Statement:

"Providing an accessible resource and development support for women in the Greater Shankill and beyond"

Shankill Women's Centre was formed in 1987 by a small group of women interested in running women only education classes and by 1998 it had obtained new shared premises with North and West Belfast Health and Social Services Trust.

This year (2024) seen a major event in the Centre's history. Following 15 years of hard work the Centre moved into its new state of the art building -

Shankill Shared Women's Centre.

This is a new era for the Centre and it will enable it to extend its work throughout all the projects and attract new women on a cross community basis.

This shared Women's Centre ensure the safety of women who come together from cultural and religious backgrounds for sustained periods of time within a neutral space.

This meaningful, purposeful contact will lead to a more cohesive community, enabling women to be the peace builders within their communities. It will also help heal generational trauma from the conflict, fostering hope and positive change

The Shankill Women's Centre work consists of:

The Health and Wellbeing Project - takes a holistic approach to the prevention of social isolation.

We do this by covering an array of topics including emotional and mental health, physical health, and social wellbeing classes. All classes are cross-community and intergenerational. Emotional and Mental Health classes allow women a safe environment to explore and express their feelings in positive and healthy ways. Physical Health classes provide a range of different activities ensuring that women with all abilities and disabilities can participate in exercise classes. Social wellbeing and recreational classes help with hand-eye co-ordination, maintaining and learning new skills, supporting their peers while making new friends preventing social isolation. These classes also help to improve not only their mental health but their physical health.

A range of classes The Health & Well-Being Project provided are:

Emotional and Mental Health

- Positive Vibes
- Women's Emotional Health
- Kintsugi Hope
- Personal Development
- Mental Health Resilience
- Arts and Crafts
- Rochet and chat
- Knitting and Natter

Shankill Womens Centre

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Physical

Bootcamp
Zumba
Chair based Activity
Aqua Aerobics

Social Well-being and Recreational

Stitching Sisters
Art Group
Allotment

As well as regular classes The Health & Well-Being project also provide one off workshops and information days on topics such as Mindfulness and Mental Health. SWC also provides alternative therapies.

Childcare Unit

The child-care facility within the centre provides an invaluable resource to the parents through the provision of high-quality care for their children it is also there to help and support parents either if they are working or taking part in Education/ Health Project. All staff are qualified, and this is a safe and nurturing environment where children learn and develop through play. We work in partnership with parents to ensure children's needs are paramount. The child-care programme is organised by a Child-Care Manager. A Child-Care organiser who runs the facility on a day-to-day basis and a team of qualified staff.

The Childcare Facility is registered as Full Day Care with North & West H.S.S. Trust. Opening hours are Monday to Friday 8.30am - 5.30pm.

The staff have completed a number of courses - child development, health and safety, safeguarding children and child protection to add to their continuous development to ensure we help all the children in our care meet all their areas of development.

High Scope Ongoing

The childcare project within the Shankill Women's Centre implements the High-Scope Programme which is an early learning plan for pre-school children. The programme is based on the idea that children learn best from activities that they plan and carry out themselves. High-Scope is based on a balance between activities initiated by the children and those arranged by the adults. It is important to build on children's strengths, interests and abilities and to develop their self-esteem and problem-solving skills and to help them to understand and accept differences in a wider social setting.

Media Initiative

The childcare is continuing to use the Media Initiative for Children Respecting Difference Programme. The children would use this resource each week whether with the puppets or the story books. Major research has found evidence that the programme is effective in improving outcomes in young children in relation to their social and emotional development and awareness of and attitudes towards cultural differences.

Shankill Womens Centre

Report of the Trustees **for the Year Ended 31 March 2025**

Project Objectives

With the resources in place the project will be able to monitor the development of the children's intellectual, verbal, cognitive, social and emotional skills. Children will also gain confidence and independency. The Childcare facility will provide the children with the social contact of other children that will be crucial to their individual development.

- (a) To provide a quality child focused environment in which children feel secure and safe.
- (b) To foster and develop each child's sense of self-value and esteem.
- (c) To welcome all parents and their children regardless of their religion, race, marital status, sexual orientation or disability.
- (d) To provide child-care which embraces social policy and legislation in respect of children (Children NI Order 1998).
- (e) To promote equal opportunities and ensure that all children are encouraged to participate.
- (f) To be sensitive of the wishes and feelings of parents whose children are in our care.
- (g) To implement the High Scope Programme.
- (h) To provide a structured programme that will enable children to develop socially, emotionally, intellectually, verbally and physically, encouraging children to learn and explore and develop.
- (i) To recognise and meet the developmental needs of each child and to offer choices to involve them in all decisions affecting them, to seek their opinion at all time opportunities.
- (j) To help raise awareness in the children of attitudes towards cultural differences and respecting those differences. This will in turn improve effective outcomes in the young children which they will take home to their families. Staff are all trained to deliver this programme and ensure all children are valued and respected in a safe and nurturing environment.

Welcome Space/ Drop-in Area

The Shankill women's Centre provides a welcome space/ drop in facility for all women irrespective of religion or culture. This is a female only, secure, safe and welcoming environment. This facility is a way for women to meet others, socialise and find out more about the women's centre and the work that is carried out there, without the commitment of signing up to any classes or services. This is a "warm space" that is available to all the women throughout the winter months as a space that is continually heated and where hot water, tea and coffee are available. This provides an alternative to women sitting at home using their heating and absorbing the subsequent cost.

Shared Education

Connect for Women Project

This comprises of a three-partner project: -

Women's Tec
Glow Womens Group
Shankill Womens Centre

It delivers throughout North and West Belfast and is focused on skills, employability, education and confidence building.

The project engages women in a journey of personal development, training in essential skills, trade skills and confidence building.

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Report of the Trustees **for the Year Ended 31 March 2025**

This is a five-year funded project. The longevity is productive as we can engage and progress participants from a basic level to GCSE and Counselling L2 then further progression unto L3.

Movement between the 3 organisations is promoted and encouraged, enabling the participant to gain an all-round wrap around service and benefiting from everything the project has to offer.

Women Breaking Barriers Project

Delivered by a collation of Women's Centres and led by Women's Resource and Development Agency.

This project offers an introduction to education and training in employment, including self-employment. It helps participants gain qualifications, develop and improve skills, achieve Maths/ English qualifications and provides courses which will improve participants personal circumstances and offer a better opportunity to gain employment.

Courses provided: -

- Increased basic skills (English, Maths, Digital and ESOL)
- Personal development - Goal Setting
- Cultural awareness/ "Women's journey through the years"
- Emotional wellbeing/ Resilience Training
- Genealogy Basic - L1 & L2
- OCN L3 Working with Children and Young Persons with Disabilities
- Therapy Training
- Menopause information sessions
- Cost of living workshops
- Sexual violence and abuse awareness training
- Personal development/ Resilience Training

North Belfast Good Relations Programme

This programme focuses on Good Relations and Personal development which will progress the individual, the family and the wider community towards an all-inclusive society.

The project offers:-

- Personal Development - Goal setting
- Cultural Awareness/ "Women's Journey through the years"
- Emotional Wellbeing/ Resilience Training
- Genealogy Basic - L1 & L2
- OCN L3 Working with Children and Young Persons with disabilities
- Therapy Training
- Sign Language Paediatric 1st Aid
- Sign Language Level 1 and Level 2
- History Group
- Construction Skill Register (CSR)
- Autism Awareness L2

The project also offers Classroom Assistant L3. For many students this course helps build social capacity and many students give their time back to their local communities.

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Participants enrolled in the Classroom Assistant L3 course must have a placement in a school environment. On completion of the course 85% of the participants are offered a full-time job by the placement provider.

The centre also offers support and mentoring to help students through the process of transition into studying at a higher level.

Volunteer Programme

Volunteers are engaged on a weekly basis with check in phone calls or texts and are invited in on a monthly basis to meet with each other and catch up on the work they've been doing. Eight new volunteers have been recruited since moving to the new building, two more on site counsellors, one reflexologist and one facilitator, the others have signed up for befriending when needed.

Two volunteers are currently taking part in a leadership OCN with Tides training to expand their skill set.

Two volunteers and two staff who are walk leader are trained and are leading walks through various locations.

Volunteers meet every Tuesday afternoon to check in and share information and to organise different awareness sessions such as, menopause, domestic violence, coercive control and autism awareness.

The volunteer advice worker continues to come into the Centre when needed.

The volunteers finished a 'cook it' programme and they will continue be able come in and prepare hot nutritious meals throughout the winter for service users.

Change Makers Project

Change makers is a project to support women who live in either North or West Belfast to increase their understanding and awareness on Community Development and Politics. Funded through Department of Foreign Affairs as one of their strategic partners and delivered over several elements as follows: -

- Participants can work towards three OCN Level 2 accreditation in Community Development, Civic Leadership, Mediation and Facilitation.

- Workshops are offered throughout the length of the programme, examples of which could be a conversation with elected representative (meet your MLA), welfare advice, gender identity etc.

- Four site visits to political institutions - Belfast City Council, Stormont, The Dail/ Senate, Westminster. These visits are an opportunity to put learning into practice and view how politics really operates.

- Six Change seminars that will run throughout the year and offer an opportunity to bring women together to have their voices heard on issues affecting them, their families, or the wider community arena.

- 4 x week short programme is offered and explores current political voting system, mediating challenging conversations, exploring political manifestos and the workings of the local assembly.

Outcomes which were met:

Empowerment - Our women have gained knowledge about political processes and systems empowers women to assert their rights, advocate for themselves and their communities and become more confident in expressing their opinions.

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Report of the Trustees **for the Year Ended 31 March 2025**

Informed Decision-Making - Understanding political issues enables women to make informed choices in elections and civic engagement, helping them evaluate candidates and policies critically and align their actions with their values.

Skill Development - Engaging with politics helps women develop valuable skills such as public speaking, critical thinking, negotiation and advocacy. These skills are transferable to various aspects of life, including careers and community involvement.

Increased Civic Engagement - Knowledge of political systems encourages women to participate actively in their communities, whether through voting, attending community meetings or joining advocacy groups, leading to a greater sense of belonging and agency.

The Greater North Belfast Network Project

Brings women together across Belfast. By connecting these local groups we create a space whereby issues can be raised and solutions offered. We offer training and support, and we amplify women's voices to ensure they're heard by decision-makers, helping communities shape a brighter future together.

Empowering Young Women

Empowering Young Women puts young women at the heart of their growth. Through a needs-led approach, they co-design their journey with accredited and non-accredited training, one-to-one support, and fun activities that spark confidence and self-belief, unlocking their full potential.

STRATEGIC REPORT

Financial Review

Currently SWC is in a unique position having secured funding from various government departments and depending on the fulfilment of target outcomes, could be in the position to secure further funding. This is due to sound financial management, forward thinking and strategic planning.

Principal Funding Sources

DfC - Core Staff & Health Project
DfC/ (WCCF) - Childcare Project
DfC/ Developing Women (Fresh Start)
DFA - Network Co-ordinator
BCC - Revenue
TEO - North Belfast Strategic Good Relations
Lottery/ Prosperity Fund/ CRC - Shared Community Education
Pathways Fund - Childcare Project
The National Lottery - Empowering Young Women
SEUPB - New Build Shared Women's Centre/ Programme Money
Dept of Foreign Affairs - Reconciliation Fund (CM)

Financial Position

The company had net incoming resources for the year of £206,810 (2024: net outgoing resources of £32,530), which reflected the increase in trading activities during the year. Unrestricted funds increased by £92,959, while restricted funds increased by £113,851.

Shankill Womens Centre

Report of the Trustees
for the Year Ended 31 March 2025

STRATEGIC REPORT

Financial review

Reserves policy

Shankill Women's Centre delivers a range of programmes and services and has been successful in obtaining funding from a variety of sources. All of these grants, however, are in the form of restricted funds. Non-restricted income amounts to less than two per cent of total income.

The Directors have reviewed the charity's need for reserves and consider that these are necessary:

(a) to protect the charity against:-

Late payment of grants by funders;

Non-renewal of existing grants and so ensuring continuity of services while alternative sources of funding are sorted or to allow a smooth and gradual wind-down of one or more services; or

(b) in circumstances where there is a proportionately high number of redundancies:-

The equivalent of four months annual revenue costs is considered by the Directors to be a reasonable target.

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Directors.

This figure is based on the number of staff

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Governing document

The charity is controlled by its governing document, a deed of trust, and constitutes a limited company, limited by guarantee, as defined by the Companies Act 2006.

Recruitment and appointment of new trustees

Trustees/directors are appointed by nominations made in writing by any existing director. At the General Meeting nominated directors are appointed by election.

Organisational structure

The Board of Trustees, which can have between 6 and 8 members, administer the charity. The Board meets six times each year. It sets strategic direction for the organisation, which is implemented by the employed staff, through an annual operational plan.

The CEO, Betty Carlisle, the Finance Officer, and the Directors of Services are responsible for the day to day running of the organisation and have devolved authority to take decisions between Board meetings.

Induction and training of new trustees

New Trustees are provided with full information to brief them on their legal obligations under the charity and company law. Three new trustees were appointed during the year, using the flexibility provided by the Articles of Association

Shankill Womens Centre

Report of the Trustees **for the Year Ended 31 March 2025**

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Related parties

WCRP

The Women's Centres Regional Partnership (WCRP) is a partnership of four lead regional women's organisations linking with fourteen frontline women's organisations across Northern Ireland. This partnership emerged from and has been ongoing, from the report of the Review Group on women's organisations providing support and services to disadvantaged areas.

TWN

Training for Women's Network is a regional network who delivers higher level courses for women. They are also a lead in producing information and services for the Women's Sector in NI.

GSPB

The Greater Shankill Partnership Board was established in 1995 with the aim of producing and delivering a strategy for the social and economic regeneration of the Greater Shankill area. The CEO represents the Women's Centre on this board and is also the acting chair at present. It also acted as a delivery agent for a number of programmes which assist in the regeneration process and in particular Neighbourhood Renewal through Department for Communities.

WSN

The Women's Support Network is an umbrella organisation for women's groups, centres and projects which are women centred and community-based or adopt a community development approach. It is a charitable and feminist organisation, which operates in the Greater Belfast area while maintaining strong links with women's projects and networks regionally and nationally. The Women's Support Network plays a unique role in co-ordinating and networking with community-based women's organisations and facilitating joint lobbying to challenge inequity and promote positive policy change.

North Belfast Contract Holders - Is a grouping which meet monthly and receive funding from The Executive Office (TEO) - This is the primary unit for promoting and providing good relation projects across North Belfast. The Centre has 2 representatives on this group.

EVENTS SINCE THE END OF THE YEAR

Information relating to events since the end of the year is given in the notes to the financial statements.

TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITY STATEMENT

The trustees (who are also the directors of Shankill Womens Centre for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Report of the Trustees and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice) including Financial Reporting Standard 102 "The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland".

Shankill Womens Centre

Report of the Trustees
for the Year Ended 31 March 2025

TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITY STATEMENT - continued

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

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charity SORP;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in business.

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

In so far as the trustees are aware:

- there is no relevant audit information of which the charitable company's auditors are unaware; and
- the trustees have taken all steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditors are aware of that information.

AUDITORS

The auditors, Lynn Drake & Co Ltd, will be proposed for re-appointment at the forthcoming Annual General Meeting.

Report of the trustees, incorporating a strategic report, approved by order of the board of trustees, as the company directors, on 29 September 2025 and signed on the board's behalf by:



Nicola McCullough - Trustee

Report of the Independent Auditors to the Trustees and Members of Shankill Womens Centre

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Shankill Womens Centre (the 'charitable company') for the year ended 31 March 2025 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Statement of Financial Position, the Statement of Cash Flows and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice), including Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland'.

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2025 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland'; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditors' responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charitable company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The trustees are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the Annual Report, other than the financial statements and our Report of the Independent Auditors thereon.

Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact. We have nothing to report in this regard.