



REPORT AND  
STATEMENT OF ACCOUNT

YEAR ENDED 31<sup>ST</sup> MARCH 2023

COMPANY NUMBER: N.I. 063696



**Year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023**

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**COMPANY INFORMATION**

- Directors:**
- Mr Stephen Acheson (Chairman)
  - Mrs Jill Harkness (Company Secretary)
  - Mr Nigel Beattie (Treasurer)
  - Mrs Susan Hamilton
  - Mr Scott Jamison (did not stand for re-election at AGM, Nov 22)
  - Mr Clifford Lyons
  - Mr Alan R. Taylor
- Registered Office:** 18 Monkstown Village Centre  
Newtownabbey  
BT37 0HS
- Bankers:** Ulster Bank Limited  
2 Farmley Road  
Glengormley  
Newtownabbey  
BT36 7QU
- Independent Examiners:** Tony Clarke  
53 Andersonstown Road  
Belfast  
BT11 9AG
- Status:** **Monkstown Village Initiatives is:**  
A Company Limited by Guarantee **(NI063696)**  
Approved by the NI Charity Commission June 2015  
**(Charity number NIC102393)**  
  
Recognised as charitable by the Inland Revenue  
**(Reference number XR29636)**



**TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT (INCORPORATING THE DIRECTORS' REPORT)  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31<sup>st</sup> MARCH 2023**

**Structure, governance, management and ethos**

The organisation is a charitable company limited by guarantee, incorporated on 4<sup>th</sup> December 2009 as The Care Centre (Monkstown). A name change, to Monkstown Village Initiatives, was registered with Companies House on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2011 and registered as a charity with HMRC on 17<sup>th</sup> October 2012. Monkstown Village Initiatives was registered with the Northern Ireland Charity Commission on 1<sup>st</sup> June 2015. The company was established under a Memorandum of Association which established the objects and powers of the charitable company and is governed under its Articles of Association. Monkstown Village Initiatives is an organisation motivated by Christian principles and values, seeking to embody these through the programmes and services it provides/offers.

In the event of the charity being wound up, members will contribute an amount not exceeding £1.

**Recruitment and appointment of Directors**

- Article 31 (i) Unless otherwise determined by the charity in general meeting, the number of directors shall not be more than 12 or less than 5.
- Article 33 The directors shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) by the members present (in person, or through an authorised representative or by proxy) and also once a year before the AGM one minister from each of Abbey Presbyterian Church, Monkstown Baptist Church and the Church of the Good Shepherd (Monkstown) will be invited to serve as directors for the coming year.
- Article 34 subject to Article (33a & 36) Directors may hold office for a period of 3 years and shall retire in rotation with the longest serving one third to retire at each AGM, or if it is not possible to determine that, then the third to retire shall be determined by drawing lots. On retirement members will be eligible for re-nomination and election.

Subject to Article 35, The Directors shall

- (i) Have the power at any time and from time to time to appoint any person to be a Director to fill a casual vacancy. Any Directors so appointed shall hold office only until the next following Annual General Meeting and shall then be eligible for re-election.
- (ii) Have the power at any time to appoint as additional Directors up to but not exceeding a number equivalent to one third of the elected Directors for the time being. Directors so appointed shall hold office only until the next Annual General Meeting and then be eligible for re-appointment.

All Directors give their time voluntarily and received no benefits from the charity. Any expenses reclaimed from the charity are set out in the notes of the accounts.

**Directors' induction and training**

Directors should be familiar with the work of the charity and the community. New Directors are advised of the obligations of Trustees, the Memorandum and Articles of the charity, resourcing, and the current financial position as set out in the latest published accounts, and any future plans and objectives. They are made aware of our policies and procedures which include Child and Vulnerable Adults Protection, Data Protection, Health & Safety Policy and Financial Management.

**Risk management**

The major risks to which the charity is exposed, are identified and reviewed by the Directors monthly.

**Organisational structure**

The charity commenced this period with 7 directors and concluded it with 6. One director did not stand for re-election at the Annual General Meeting in November 2022 and therefore was removed from the register at Companies House and with the NI Charities' Commission. The Board of Directors meet regularly and are responsible for the strategic direction and policy of the charity. All major decisions are undertaken by the

**TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT (INCORPORATING THE DIRECTORS' REPORT)  
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Board, while line management of staff and day to day responsibility for the provision of services rests with the Development Manager of Monkstown Community Forum. The Board are responsible for ensuring that the charity delivers the services specified and that key performance indicators are met.

**Purposes and activity**

This charity's purposes, as set out in the objects contained in its Memorandum, are for the advancement of education and the protection of health, in the Monkstown area and its environs of Newtownabbey. The aims of this charity are to provide opportunities to address disadvantage. In particular, lowered attainment and poor aspiration. Activities will provide enhanced educational, social and skills outcomes, contributing toward improving the emotional health and well-being of people in Monkstown and the surrounding area. To enable connections, the charity will provide excellent facilities for a range of local groups of different ages and interests. These aims fully reflect the purposes that this charity was set up to further.

We review these aims, objectives and activities each year. This review looks at what has been achieved and the outcomes of the work undertaken in the previous 12 months in order to ensure our aims, objectives and activities remain focused on our stated purposes.

Our main objectives for the year continued to be:

- To deliver mentoring and follow-up drop-ins along with the Educational & Personal Development for young people co-operating with the local schools and in-centre;
- To provide mental health therapy, support and education to the local community;
- To deliver our StressBEAT programmes in the local schools;
- To grow our Flourish group, a mental health and wellbeing group for over 60s; and
- To continue to transform the Community Garden, at the rear of Monkstown Village Centre, to be used by the community, local schools, community groups and individuals.

Monkstown Village Initiatives (MVI) held its Annual General Meeting for to the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022, at 7.00pm on Monday 21<sup>st</sup> November 2022 in Monkstown Village Centre.

**MVI 5-year strategic plan update**

This strategy maps out how MVI will seek to develop community infrastructure across Monkstown and surrounding areas. Feedback is encouraged by directors and staff and an action plan based on High Level Outcomes agreed. A Strategy Review was carried out on the 18th January 2020 with discussion based on excellent presentations from staff.

**Directors' meetings**

There were 8 directors' meetings held during the year. The last meeting of this period was on 10th March.

Monkstown Village Initiatives continues as a member of Monkstown Community Forum and has an historic and fruitful strategic partnership with that organisation.

**Reviews**

- Reviews of MVI policies and financial procedures and changes are carried out on a routine basis.
- The MVI Policies and procedures regarding General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) was adopted in May 2018.
- Risk assessments are carried out for all activities when necessary and reviewed yearly.
- MVI Child Protection Policy is up to date. Colin Barr is the MVI designated person and Susan Hamilton the Board's designated person. Police checks for all staff and volunteers has been obtained.
- Public liability insurance is £10m.

## Monkstown Village Initiatives – Company Number: N.I. 063696

### TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT (INCORPORATING THE DIRECTORS' REPORT) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31<sup>st</sup> MARCH 2023 (continued)

#### **Finance**

This year Monkstown Village Initiatives had a deficit of £8,871. Monkstown Community Forum makes contributions toward MVI's Youth Works, Gardening and re:think/re:act projects.

The Directors have examined the charity's requirements for reserves in light of the main risks to the organisation. A reserve of £20,000 has been set aside to protect the charity's work in event of a shortfall in income and to plan for a minimum of two months' continuity should major funding streams cease.

Homecare's license with Monkstown Village Initiatives was not renewed and so their use of the building concluded at the end of November 2022. Their monthly payments however continued and to that end £1,800 was returned to Homecare in April 2023.

#### **Membership**

The company currently has 31 members.

#### **Staff**

- Alan Johnston manages MVI facilities, projects and staff as part of his duties as Development Manager in Monkstown Village Centre.
- Deborah Smyth continues as part-time Caretaker/Cleaner for the community accommodation.
- RoseAnne (Rosie) Donnelly is employed, full-time, as a Cognitive Behavioural Therapist in the re:think/re:act service.
- Colin Barr is employed, full-time, as a senior youth worker. A monthly contribution for this post is received from Monkstown Community Forum.
- Robyn Harris is employed 20 hours per week as a part-time youth worker. (Robyn will go on maternity leave at the end of April and plans to return in March 2024. A monthly contribution for this post is received from Monkstown Community Forum.
- Bryan Scroggie, Jodie McCord and Ben Thompson are currently sessional youth workers with MVI Youthworks.
- Margaret Connolly was employed part-time as Garden Manager/Grower. She retired at the end of this reporting period (31<sup>st</sup> March) and the post was continued with the employment of Aine Gilchrist. A monthly contribution for this post is received from Monkstown Community Forum.
- Roy Millar, of Monkstown Community Forum, is paid to provide gardening support, in Monkstown Village Centre and other sites, where necessary.

**Pensions** are set up with NEST (National Employment Savings Trust) for those for whom it is a statutory requirement.

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**Public Benefit to the community**

To ensure compliance of Public Benefit, we have a policy of open and inclusive access to MVI's accommodation and programmes.

**Purpose (1)** *'To involve young people (9-25yr olds) in discovering and living out their full potential and to develop supportive initiatives.'*

**MVI Youth Works**

**Youth Club**

Once again, we have had a great year at youth club. We have had a record number of children wanting to be part of the club, with 60 children registered. And yes, not all those children turn up each week, and some of those only came for a couple of weeks. On a weekly basis we would have around 35-40 children over the 2 sessions that we still run. Which, again when I think back to the beginning of my time here is a massive increase.

I would like to take the opportunity to thank the staff/volunteers for their commitment each week and the efforts they make towards making the evening a great time for the children who attend.

Each week takes a similar format with computer games, pool, table football, air hockey, tuck-shop and a wide variety of board and card games to entertain. To add some variety, we put on a special activity, which rotates around, art, craft, baking and then the special nights were we either forgo the technology and all play board games, St Patrick's beetle drive, laser tag and pizza with Parents and the Peelers. The pizza night was an opportunity for us and the community police to get to know the parents and to share with them some key points from a community perspective of the need for parental support and encourage good behaviour and attitude. We look forward to hopefully running the same next year.

We were also pleased to be awarded funding from James Brown & Sons Funeral Directors under their community grant to the value of £1000. This was given for the purchasing of new air hockey and football tables. These were a great hit straight away, especially with the lights and sound of the air hockey table.

**IMPACT Girls Group**

This has been a great 1st year for the girls' group, they have covered a very varied program, ranging from an open session of games and chat through to having visiting speakers from Made For More, Action Mental Health and Ascertain Targeted Life Skills. Over the year the girls have looked in depth at the need to maintain a good level of mental health and the reasons behind things not going so well with our mental health. One of the highlights seems to have been from their afternoon of relaxation and self-regulating session. A comment from a parent was 'could they do this every week?', as her daughter was so much calmer.

It was great to have the support of Abbey Presbyterian's Community Evangelist, Michaela Tuccillo, throughout the year. Next year we will hopefully have her support again, also we will have Connie Bamford on the team by then.

**Junior Youth Challenge**

Another very enjoyable year at JYC. Although numbers are not the mark of success, it was great to see them staying up in the teens again. It was also great to see several young people from the surrounding homes coming to join us. By the end of the year some of the regular young people had decided to stop coming, and it seemed that the behaviour and attitude of local children didn't fit in with their idea of what they wanted from JYC. Hopefully next year we can encourage them back again and if we can get the local kids back, they may develop a better understanding 'acceptable' behaviour.

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This year our topic was God's Way – The Way to God, Living God's Way and a Final Challenge. Our most interesting night was when we (Phil Agnew) were to take the talk on having a 'Quiet Time', reading the Bible, spending time in prayer, listening to God. That night not too many of the children who we would have expected turned up, but 6 to 10 children came who probably had no idea of what the term meant. Very quickly we re-jigged and spoke about the benefits of reading the Bible and why we pray. The look on Phil's face at the start explained so much more.

#### Mentoring

This year saw us continue mentoring in Hollybank Primary School using the Transforming Lives for Good (TLG) model and in Abbey Community College. Along with our team of core mentors (Bryan, Colin and Robyn), we were joined by Alan Johnston (Glenabbey), Gary Huntley (COGS), Jenna Goodman (Ballycraig Congregational). As usual when it comes to getting access to schools there are the normal checks to be completed. Some of these taking longer than others. Gary Huntley unfortunately had issues with getting his application passed and before he was cleared, he had moved post within his company and therefore was no longer available to help.

It has been a wide selection of students from Abbey Community College that have been referred and some have been kept on longer than the usual 6-week sessions. Also, with number of referrals for Y8 & 9 girls increasing, we tried to encourage the year heads to consider sending the girls they felt would benefit from friendship support along to Impact Girls' Group.

Regular space is a challenge within Hollybank PS. If it continues that there is not enough space for everyone who is coming in to help pupils in mainstream classes, our level of service will need to be reviewed.

#### Learning Hub

This year at Learning Hub, we have noticed quite a significant lack in ability in students across all year groups. Even though we are not aiming to make academics out of them, it is quite hard to try and cover topics like: time, angles and addition/subtraction when there seems to be such a gap in their learning.

We have had plenty of opportunity to provide experiences that the children possibly would never get. We were able to avail of an artist (Trisha) from Play Resource, for a few weeks, and as always, the kids love the better ideas that a proper artist come up with.

It is always good to try and push the kids to try something that may not be their thing. We invited a drama company called 'Play it by Ear' to come and to put them through their paces. This was an enjoyable 4 weeks for both the leaders and the kids. It was nice to see them starting to feel less embarrassed when being silly or acting out and being increasingly able to work together as a group.

We also continue to take opportunity to encourage the children to consider the environment that they live in through doing litter picks twice a year. These times always show the enthusiasm that the children have to make a difference in their community.

#### Summer Scheme

Funding 2022 scheme came largely from an EA grant. This year saw us take on an animal theme for two weeks. Two of our trips saw us going to Belfast Zoo and The Ark Open Farm, Conlig. What a variety of animals to see, from elephants, giraffes, rhinos, gorillas to rabbits, goats, ducks, dinosaurs and even reindeer (whose hooves make a clicking noise as they walk). Two brilliant days and lots of fun for all. We also had a visit from a local animal expert, Wee Critters, which allowed the children to get up close and personal with some wonderful animals. It tested some nerves to see, cockroaches, giant toads, parrots, barn owls and a very friendly tarantula. A wonderful experience for all. We also took full advantage of our community garden and

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even savoured some of the wonderful produce grown by Margaret and the team and it was good to even get the children to taste and enjoy the soup. The weather was in our favour at the end of the 2 weeks for what will have to be an annual event. We had permission from Abbey Presbyterian Church to use their car park for a water fight, which Alan Carson even found the time to join in with. Not sure who had the most fun, leaders or kids but everyone was well soaked by the end.

#### SPARK Newtownabbey

This was our first year back after the setback of Covid restrictions and we were unsure how things would go and who would be part of the team. Our concerns were purely human as God had everything pre-planned and all worked out throughout the week. We had a team of 38 from a variety of churches from around Newtownabbey. As with other years we took on the jobs of gardening and general clean-up of the area, alongside this we ran a 5-day club in the Church of the Good Shepherd and used the facilities at Monkstown Pavilion to play sports with a great group of young people. Each event was focused with sharing the gospel in as many ways and with as many people as possible. The evening time was spent working alongside the teenagers of the area and again sharing with them why we believe what we believe and why we feel these events are vital to God's great commission.

We finished the week off with a family fun night held at the Church of the Good Shepherd. We had bouncy castle, slides, wrecking ball, face paints, balloons, tattoos, food van and ice-cream van. It was a great opportunity to get to talk to some of the parents of children that we had had the pleasure of working with.  
Summer activities

#### Staffing

We will have a few changes within the Youth Works staff. Robyn will leave at the end of April to have her second baby (Sofia was born in May). We have been successful, this time, in appointing a maternity cover for this position. Connie Bamford will be joining us later in the year (July, onwards) to help with most of Robyn's tasks and to take some of the other daily responsibilities. I will be taking over as coordinator for TLG for the rest of 2023 and part of 2024 until Robyn returns.

As part of my role transition, we have appointed Ben Thompson as a youth worker, which allows me to hand over part of the organisation of activities to others in the team.

Alongside those who have come on board to be part of the TLG mentoring, we have to say a big thank you to Bryan and Jodie for their continued support and enthusiasm here in the Youth Works department. Jodie has been working extremely hard with her university course, and still manages to maintain the commitment she has shown from day one. Bryan continues to be a sounding board whenever some things just don't seem to be fitting and his experience is always very worth listening to.

It was great to be able to have a couple of extra helpers along during our Easter scheme. We had 25 children signed up and the 3 extra bodies definitely made a difference to the smooth running of all the activities. So, thanks again to Caitlin Coid, Mark Hegarty and Valerie Brown for their support.

Thank you all for your support and interest which you show in the youth work within Monkstown Village Initiatives.

Bryan, Ben, Jodie, Robyn and Colin

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**Monkstown Village Garden**

This was to be Margaret's final year with us. She concluded employment with Monkstown Village Initiatives, after five years, at the end of this period (March 2023). We wish her well and hope to see her regularly, as a volunteer. Aine Gilchrist joined the project in a part-time capacity during March 2023 to ensure a smooth hand-over. Previously Aine had been a volunteer in the garden.

The year started with filling the polytunnel beds with tomato and courgette plants and rotavating the area to the back of the large polytunnel to sow cut flowers and more vegetables.

**Volunteers**

Duke of Edinburgh volunteers (Scarlett, Ben, Toby and Darcia) were facilitated during the year. Regular Monday morning volunteers are George, Hug, Andrea, Margaret and Ron. These are usually joined by others on an occasional basis. There is also a consistent volunteer group meeting on a Monday evening during the March to October period. Volunteers enjoyed a coffee morning at Creative Gardens during July and purchased a stone seat, bird bath and sun dial with our prize money from the Garden Ireland event (see below)! The Cedar Foundation have been able to place a few of their clients with us during the year. A contact in the Northern Trust resulted in a lady from Thailand now regularly volunteering. George has made (and enabled other volunteers to make) planter and flower boxes production for the garden programmes along with picnic tables and other garden items. A community work day, to help fill our new raised beds with soil/compost, was well supported.

**Networking/Partnerships**

Meeting with Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough Council (A&NBC) Tackling Deprivation Co-ordinator.

Attended Climate Clever Communities Summit.

Attended Food for Thought webinar.

A Rocha (UK) conversations initiated for what would lead to a partnership arrangement in 2023.

Local walking groups start to call into the garden area.

Organised a garden-related activity for the Church of the Good Shepherd Fun Day in August and craft activities for their Thursday morning group during the Autumn.

Some newcomer/asylum-seekers have enjoyed short-term volunteering in the garden.

Various volunteer group events were held in the run-up to Christmas both during the day and in the evening.

Belfast Live covered the garden as a result of publicity from the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE) Community Involvement Grant (see below).

Attended a Healthy Lifestyle programme organised by A&NBC and hosted at Monkstown Village Centre.

**Grants**

A&NBC, Queen's Platinum Jubilee event (A&NBC grant made to MCF, delivered in the garden area).

Enkalon Foundation Team Challenge grant.

Belfast Harbour Community Award, completed.

Community Involvement Grant from NIHE to 'grow' a Market Garden area behind the polytunnel. George and Hugh made these raised beds and added climbing frames onto the beds, giving additional growing space. (Grant made to Monkstown Community Forum and delivered in the garden area.)

Soil Association grant for food-related project with Hollybank Primary School.

Monkstown Community Forum provides funding for the employment of the Garden Manager.

**Training**

Online courses from Groundwork and Meet the Funder.

Online course 'My Food Community', a programme running for five months, four hours each week.

Training organised on how to look after fruit trees, in partnership with Social Farms & Gardens.

Cook and Share, Action Learning, Food Citizenship, Food for our Planet and Big Lunch networking were attended during the Autumn/Winter period.

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**Events**

A four-week GROW course for SureStart mums in May was organised. There was very positive feedback about the Garden area and the facilitation of the programme.

The Queen's Platinum Jubilee was marked in the polytunnel with knitted flags, made by the Knit & Knatter group at Monkstown Jubilee Centre, afternoon tea and a commemorative etched vase 'craft'.

MVI's Flourish programme met for cheese and biscuits during the Summer.

Two workshops during July and August as part of MVI Youth Works summer programme along with a 'Grow it, Eat it' facilitated during the Autumn months.

Christmas events, were organised in the run-up to Christmas.

A Mother's Day event and a further outreach event at the Church of the Good Shepherd were organised along with an Easter Fun Day for children.

**Awards**

First prize for our hobbit garden at Ireland Garden Show in Antrim Castle Gardens, where we were awarded a beautiful trophy and £600 in vouchers to spend in Creative Gardens. The hobbit house has found a home in the wildlife section of the garden.

Green Flag award was received at the end of July marked by a visit from the Mayor of A&NBC, Stephen Ross and the Parks Development Officer to commend the work that has been carried out in the garden.

**Purpose (2)** *'To provide a modern, comfortable and inviting meeting place at the centre of the Monkstown Community.'*

**Accommodation**

MVI holds a 900+ year lease for the accommodation on a significant portion of the first floor of Monkstown Village Centre. This accommodation includes Meeting Rooms 1, 2 & 3; Kitchen; Youth Area and Resource Rooms 1 & 2. This is managed by Alan Johnston (Development Manager, Monkstown Village Centre).

*Licensees and other users*

Abbey SureStart use MVI's Upper Rooms, under license, on a daily basis. They have been with us since moving into the building in 2007. Homecare Independent Living who were also long-term license-holders, moved premises during November 2022. Newtownabbey Pilates, another long-term 'tenant', occupies one of the rooms on Monday, Wednesday and Thursday evenings. St John Ambulance (NI) is under license for Tuesday night for their Cadet programme and selected weekends for training. A knitting group has developed since lockdown and meets on a Wednesday evening. A scrapbooking group along with Junior Youth Challenge meet on a Thursday evening along with Senior Youth Challenge meeting monthly on a Saturday evening. Ad hoc/regular users complete this vital source of income for Monkstown Village Initiatives.

The re:think/re:act project has been using the boardroom for its sessions since re-engaging face-to-face with clients.

During the summer months, MVI partnered with Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough Council to provide a School Uniform Re-Use scheme. Uniform donations were received during July and distributed during August. Thanks to Irena and Susan who were involved from start to finish. It is anticipated that this scheme will run again in the summer of 2023.

Thank you to facilities' staff and volunteers, in particular, Dorothy Robinson, who has regularly closed up the building, at the end of evening programmes, for a number of years. Debbie Smyth opens and closes at other times, keeping the community space and offices clean, tidy and smelling great! David Graham and Roy Millar (Forum staff) assist with room preparation and clearance.

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We aim to ensure all people feel welcome. Accommodation has been found to be excellent by our users, and our facilities show a high level of demand from business, statutory, leisure, fitness, health and care-providing organisations.

A Premises grant was received from Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough Council during the 2022-2023 year. An application, for three years, was made to A&NBC for Facilities, Garden, re:think and Youth Works projects

**Purpose (3)** *'To develop and provide mental health promotion and support programmes.'*

**re:think/re:act (Cognitive Behavioural Therapy Service)**

This past year has just flown by. Maybe I'm getting old, but it doesn't seem like twelve months since I was writing an end of year report or perhaps it reflects how busy this year has been! The world has opened up again and Covid almost feels like a bad dream. I say almost because within the various MVI projects and re:think in particular we are still dealing with many of the long-term effects of the pandemic.

1-to-1 CBT sessions continue to make up the bulk of my week. I have had the privilege of working alongside a number of folk ranging in age from 13-67 who have been experiencing difficulties with their mental health. Over the past year there has been an increase in the number of young people referred to the project most of whom are dealing with anxiety-based disorders; either caused by or exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic. One of the biggest joys in my job is seeing any client, but especially a young person, learn how to manage anxiety and regain their enthusiasm for life and hope for the future.

Unfortunately, the one problem, challenge, downside of this year has been the ongoing issue of funding. Due to the legacy of Covid and the current economic crisis we have struggled to secure the finance necessary to cover the cost of individual CBT sessions. This has meant that we have had to make changes to how the service operates. In the past we were able to offer therapy free at the point of delivery. Adult clients were made aware that MVI is a charity, and some chose to donate to offset the expense of their treatment. As of January 2023, all new clients will be asked to make a regular contribution toward the costs of their therapy. The amount will be decided by the client and based on what they feel above to afford.

Once local schools began opening their doors to visitors again, I was able to deliver a Stress BEAT programme in Hollybank Primary School. Because it was near the end of the school year, we had to do a truncated version, but it was great to be back out in the community again. I also facilitated an abridged version of Stress BEAT in Newtownabbey Educational Guidance Centre as well as a one-off wellbeing workshop for the New Dawn group in Monkstown Baptist church.

It has been a real delight for me this year to be able to facilitate our over 60s group, Flourish, back in its regular monthly slot. I have been ably assisted each month by our volunteer Dot who is very enthusiastic and has a real passion for ensuring that retired folk get all the help and support that they are entitled to. Over the year we organised a variety of speakers and activities all of which were loosely based around the 5 Steps to Wellbeing. Flourish has a membership of approximately 40 and each month we have about 20 attendees. Our members are a lovely, friendly bunch who are always appreciative of whatever activity we organise however I think the highlight for everyone was the special Christmas event. Thanks to some funding from A&NBC we were able to host a delicious afternoon tea catered by Sarah from Ten Coffee Shop served on traditional china cups and saucers borrowed from Monkstown Baptist Church. In addition, we had a Christmas themed quiz and sang some well-known songs and carols thanks to a musical accompaniment from Dr Natalie Montgomery. I am grateful to Dot, all our speakers and everyone who made Flourish possible this past year.

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During the first lockdown I began a Facebook page called Keep Calm and Boost Your Wellbeing. In order to prevent people trying to sell or advertise on the site I had to set it up as a private page, but it is open to anyone who requests admittance. I have kept this going as it has proved a useful way of disseminating information and resources to those interested in looking after their mental wellbeing.

Thank you for taking the time to read this report. If you would like to know more about any of the services offered by the re:think/re:act project please do not hesitate to contact me.

Rosie

(Some funding for 1-to-1 CBT, and the Flourish and Stress BEAT programmes came through Monkstown Community Forum's Mosaic Project, an Areas at Risk programme from Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough Council/Department for Communities. The Service also benefitted through the purchase of client sessions by Monkstown Community Forum on behalf of the Monkstown community.

**Organisation-wide funding information**

Monkstown Village Initiatives are engaged to deliver programmes within Monkstown Community Forum's Mosaic Project through its Youthworks, rethink/react (including Flourish) and gardening departments. Mosaic is an Areas at Risk project funded by A&NBC and the Department for Communities. This continued up to 31st March 2023.

Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough Council (A&NBC) funding was received in the form of Premises Grant during this period.

Glenabbey (Church) contribute financially (monthly) to the ongoing work of Monkstown Village Initiatives and some of its members have been involved in volunteering roles, mostly within MVI Youthworks.

Using Stewardship.org we offer a facility to receive gifts and donations through the MVI website.

**Plans for the future**

The charity intends to continue the activities outlined above in the future. The Directors and staff are mindful of the challenging times we are in and will continue to review/assess opportunities which will further the charity's goals of: addressing educational underachievement, mental health issues and encouraging people to make connections with each other.

**Statement of Trustees' responsibilities**

The Trustees (who are also directors for the purposes of Company Law) are responsible for preparing the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and regulations. Company law requires the Directors to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity as at the balance sheet date and of its incoming resources and application of outgoing resources, including income and expenditure, for the financial year. In preparing those financial statements, the Directors are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is not appropriate to assume that the charity will continue on that basis.

**TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT (INCORPORATING THE DIRECTORS' REPORT)  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31<sup>st</sup> MARCH 2023 (continued)**

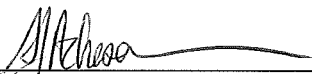
The Directors are responsible for maintaining proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the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

**Statement of disclosure of information to Independent Examiners**

We, the Trustees of the charity who held office at the date of approval of these Financial Statements, as set out above, each confirm so far as we are aware that:

- there is no relevant information of which the charity's independent examiners are unaware; and
- we have taken all the steps that we ought to have taken as Trustees in order to make ourselves aware of any relevant information and to establish that the charity's independent examiners are aware of that information.

The Board of Directors approved this report on 26<sup>th</sup> October 2023



Stephen Acheson, Director/Chair  
Company Registration Number: NI06396

