

Company Registration No: NI 010639
HMRC Charity No: XN 48510
Charity Commission NI No: NIC 102 523

THE HARMONY COMMUNITY TRUST
REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

31 March 2024

THE HARMONY COMMUNITY TRUST

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THE HARMONY COMMUNITY TRUST REPORT OF THE COUNCIL

The trustees present their annual report and the audited financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024.

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Charity name:	Harmony Community Trust
HMRC Charity registration number:	XN 48510
Company registration number:	NI010639
Charity Commission NI number:	NIC 102523
Registered office and operational address:	Glebe House, 23 Bishops court Road, Kilclief, Co. Down, BT30 7NZ
Auditors:	Baker Tilly Mooney Moore, 17 Clarendon Road, Clarendon Dock, Belfast, BT1 3BG
Bankers:	Ulster Bank Limited, 11-16 Donegall Square East, Belfast BT1 5UB
Solicitors:	Edwards & Co, 28 Hill Street Belfast

DIRECTORS AND TRUSTEES

The directors of the charitable company (the charity) are its trustees for the purpose of charity law and throughout this report are collectively referred to as the trustees.

The trustees who served during the year were:

Mr S Camplisson (Chairman)	Mrs Judith Thompson
Mrs S Heaney (resigned 17 January 2024)	Ms M E Ridgway
Mr D S Boyd	Mr R Sterrett
Mr Paul Thompson	Mr N Loughrin
Mrs EJ McDonald	Mr WB Osborne (resigned 29 November 2023)
Mr G Morgan	

Governing Document

The organisation is a charitable company limited by guarantee not having a share capital, incorporated on 8th April 1975 and registered as a charity. 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. In the event of the company being wound up members are required to contribute an amount not exceeding £1. The Memorandum and Articles of Association were updated in February 2016.

Appointment of Council

As set out in the Articles of Association, members of the trust are individuals who agree to serve on the Council or one of any other recognised committees (presently none). The Council consists of not more than 15 members and it can co-opt additional members to fill any vacancy up to that maximum. Co-opted members must stand for election at the next annual general meeting. Council members are elected for varying periods to ensure that one-third of members retire every year in rotation, so that no member can serve more than 3 years without re-election.

The charity's work focuses on Good Relations programmes with children, young people, adults and seniors. The Council seeks to ensure that the needs of this work are appropriately reflected through the diversity of the trustee body. The more traditional business and community work skills are well represented on Council.

Trustee Induction and Training

New trustees undergo an orientation to brief them on their legal obligations under charity and company law, the content of the Memorandum and Articles of Association, the committee and decision making processes and the business plan and recent financial performance of the charity. During this induction they meet key employees. Trustees are encouraged to attend appropriate external training events where these will facilitate the undertaking of their role.

THE HARMONY COMMUNITY TRUST REPORT OF THE COUNCIL (CONTINUED)

Organisation

The Council administers the charity and sets the strategic direction and policy of the charity, meeting around 6 times per year. A scheme of delegation is in place and day to day responsibility for the provision of the services rest with the centre manager together with the administration and programme managers.

Related parties

The charity has a close relationship with the Department of Health, The Executive Office and BBC Children in Need which have provided funding in support of the programmes.

Risk management

The trustees have a risk management strategy which encompasses:

- An annual review of the risks the charity may face;
- The establishment of systems and procedures to mitigate those risks identified in the plan; and
- The implementation of procedures designed to minimise any potential impact on the charity should those risks materialise.

This work has identified only a few minor new risks but it has resulted in better emergency procedures and contingency plans and has given the impetus for better planning. Particular attention has focused on non-financial risks arising from fire, health and safety of residents and staff and food hygiene.

A key element of financial risk is the setting of a reserves policy and its regular review by trustees.

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

The company's objects and principal activities are the:

- Promotion of mutual tolerance and understanding through the provision of cross-community programmes for children, young people and adults based at Glebe House;
- Improvement of social welfare, health and physical well-being and advancement of education through the operation of the residential centre.

The main objectives for the year focused on the provision of cross-community programmes for disadvantaged children, young people and adults including senior citizens. The trust is very involved in the community and is dependent on voluntary help in all aspects of its activities. Significant numbers of volunteers are involved in the management of the company and in the delivery of its programmes.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

Resilience and renewal

During 2023/24 the Trust dealt with a financial challenge that was unprecedented in its 48-year history, as described in the Trustees' report in the 2022/23 Accounts. Following the loss of significant funding from The Executive Office and others the Trust had to make all staff redundant in autumn 2023. The response of the charity and the growing number of very active friends and volunteers has not only kept Glebe House running but brought in abundant energy, good will and fresh ideas that demonstrate the potential of the Glebe House community to continue to make people's lives better. Throughout the 2023/24 financial year, HCT continued to deliver a vibrant programme of work at Glebe House, promoting community relations, social inclusion, health and wellbeing, creativity and fun, enabling participants to come together and overcome the barriers put up by poverty, disadvantage, social exclusion, rural isolation and sectarian divisions.

In March 2023 we had resumed our residential programmes post-pandemic and launched the Seedbed gardening and environment project at Glebe House. The newly established Strangford and District Men's Shed took up residence in an unused building on our site. Having strengthened our Council of Management, at the beginning April 2023 the Trust was in a good position to enrich and strengthen its programmes, and financially was in a break-even position.

Following the loss of funding and staff, to continue its operations the Trust sold assets, reduced its outgoings and generated funds from programme participants and visitors and by the end of the financial year was debt-free and had begun to build cash reserves. The Trust retains a site of approximately 8 acres together with our residential centre, offices, meeting rooms and a conference facility.

THE HARMONY COMMUNITY TRUST REPORT OF THE COUNCIL (CONTINUED)

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE (Cont'd)

In January 2024 the Trust established a Funding Applications Group to prepare bids in a strategic and coordinated manner to enable the Trust to rebuild and develop its programmes.

Whilst the loss of funding and staff meant the Trust had to pause its programmes for children and young people in summer 2023, the programmes for adults not only continued but grew and thrived. We also created and delivered new programmes.

In recent years the Trust has devoted particular efforts to establishing Glebe House as a hub for the local community. During 2023/24 many people from the Kilclief area, the wider Lecale peninsula and beyond came to Glebe House for the first time, found a welcoming and engaging place and have continued to come.

The HCT / Glebe House website and social media presence needed a fresh start. Thanks to a great deal of pro bono help from marketing and IT professionals, the Trust revitalised its online presence and is now in a much better position to promote its programmes and facilities and attract new participants.

A number of funders helped us to deal with the financial challenges, including the Community Relations Council and the Community Foundation NI. We are grateful for their understanding and the flexibility that they have afforded us. Funding from the Ireland Funds in 2023 helped us to manage the necessary changes and keep our doors open. Our thanks go to the Department of Health; the Public Health Agency; the Department for Communities; the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, and to Newry, Mourne and Down District Council, for their funding and support in 2023/24.

For financial and other support for the development of the Seedbed we are grateful to Community Foundation NI (Axa Parks), PowerNI, the Department for Infrastructure, and Cooperative Alternatives.

The Trust is grateful for the support we have had from elected representatives from all five major parties. At Newry, Mourne and Down District Council a motion in support of HCT was carried unanimously. It was heartening to see the strength of cross-community support for Glebe House and appreciation of the value of what we do.

Programmes

The Trust delivered a health and well-being programme for adults, funded by the Public Health Agency's CLEAR scheme.

In the autumn and the run-up to Christmas 2023 a number of dedicated, creative and energetic volunteers devised, planned and delivered a series of programmes for adults, which as well as continuing to fulfil HCT's mission and celebrating Glebe House, generated income for the charity. A series of wreath-making classes was so successful that additional sessions were organised.

The Seedbed gardening and environment continued to attract new members and to cultivate and extend the dedicated site. A large polytunnel was erected in spring 2023.

In November 2023 the Trust started a Singing Circle which has now meets every Wednesday.

Towards the end of 2023 a former member of staff proposed a baby and toddler group, in response to evidence of local need and a gap in provision locally. This kind of programme was a departure for the Trust. *Tots 'n' Teenies* now meets every week. Thirty families have registered with the group and average attendance is twelve families.

During 2023 the Trust continued to host a Ukrainian family in a cottage on the Glebe House site.

PLANS FOR FUTURE PERIODS

The major financial target for the Trust is to ensure sustainability for our programmes. With ongoing tightening of statutory funding availability and the short term nature of such funding, particularly the lack of funding for community relations programmes with young people, the trustees continue to develop programmes which will generate additional direct funding and attract grants from non-statutory sources. An important element of the

THE HARMONY COMMUNITY TRUST REPORT OF THE COUNCIL (CONTINUED)

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE (Cont'd)

Trust's efforts on this front is the realisation of our social enterprise potential. With guidance under the *Go Succeed* programme the Trust is preparing plans that will maximise the income that we can generate across the range of our assets and activities.

During 2023/24 the trustees made progress in reviewing and refreshing our strategy to focus on sustainability and draw up a new Strategic Plan. This Strategic Plan is now in place.

We are optimistic that in spite of the setbacks of 2023 we will continue to meet the challenges that lie ahead, ready to adapt to the changing position of the community in Northern Ireland, but only too aware that the demand for the services we offer is undiminished and indeed increased by the ongoing effects of the pandemic, even if changing in emphasis. The demand for Glebe House and our programmes and the ideas that have been incorporated into our future plans are indications that there is still an important role for Harmony Community Trust to play in the life of Northern Ireland.

As well as continuing our ongoing cross-community programmes with children, young people and adults in 2024/25, we will be developing the following initiatives to be implemented as and when possible:-

- rebuilding our staff team, on a leaner and more sustainable model than previous structures;
- expanding our programmes in the Newry, Mourne and Down Council area, as well as adjacent communities in Ards and North Down and Lisburn and Castlereagh, with a focus on promoting good community relations in a shared society;
- organising residential community relations programmes for children, young people and adults from disadvantaged communities;
- developing adult programmes including study seminars, workshops, work-study programmes and study tours;
- restoring a teenage programme with a focus on citizenship and volunteering;
- providing respite breaks for children from the Health and Social Care Trusts and umbrella care organisations;
- promoting the inclusion of the ethnic and national minorities in our community;
- recruiting and supporting more volunteers and providing leadership training;
- organising cross-community day events for seniors in Newry, Mourne and Down District and Ards and North Down;
- marketing Glebe House as a venue and encouraging the use of the facilities by self-programming groups supported by Glebe House staff and volunteers;
- further developing the Seedbed community gardening and environmental stewardship project;
- developing the natural habitat at Glebe House for environmental and educational projects and
- continuing to build on our fundraising and marketing strategy to increase our income generation.

Looking ahead

The demand and need for our services continues to grow and Glebe House has once more proved during the past year its value as a shared and safe venue for cross-community activities for all ages. The pandemic aggravated and highlighted many of the inequalities in our society: the people who have been most seriously impacted by the pandemic are, for the most part, the people who were already most disadvantaged economically and socially. Harmony Community Trust has a unique role to play in helping people to overcome these disadvantages.

Staff and volunteers

The Trust is indebted to the extraordinary staff that we lost in 2023. The positive feedback that the Trust has had from children and young people, from their families and from the participants in our adult programmes remains as a testimony to the dedication of our staff. Our aim is to maintain this ethos as we restore our staffing capacity.

Since Harmony Community Trust was founded in 1975, volunteering has been in the charity's DNA. Down the years we have relied greatly on our volunteers who have been essential to all aspects of our work. The Trust has always acknowledged and celebrated this, but the course of events in 2023/24, and the response by our growing number of volunteers, demonstrated the literal truth of this observation. The fact that Harmony Community Trust continues to operate and is rebuilding, is down to the incalculable contributions of time, energy, creativity, good humour and optimism from our volunteers.

THE HARMONY COMMUNITY TRUST REPORT OF THE COUNCIL (CONTINUED)

PUBLIC BENEFIT

The directors confirm that they have had due regard for the guidance produced on Public Benefit by the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland, and are pleased to report that during 2023/24 they have continued to meet the Public Benefit requirement by the provision of programmes and activities for adults and young people as described in detail above which expose the participants to different communities and cultures, offering educational workshops and opportunities for individuals in the local community to participate in a social environment.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with 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 the Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) – Charities SORP (FRS 102). Council reports that the Statement of Financial Activities reflects Net Outgoing Resources in 2023/2024 of £87,395 relieved by £87,635 received from the sale of some land.

Post April 2023 a significant funding cut was imposed and in September 2023 the decision was reached to make all staff redundant and reduce our programme activity to those that could be operated by our enthusiastic volunteers. The Trustees are looking into all means of generating funding to enable the Trust to continue to achieve its charitable objects, whilst at the same time containing running costs as necessary, so that the Trust may continue to operate within its available financial facilities to enable the Trust continue to meet its liabilities as they fall due.

Investment policy

In the present financial position, no investment policy is currently relevant.

Reserves policy

The reserves are currently invested in the property and free reserves are not anticipated to be available for a number of years. The trustees are currently negotiating and considering the disposal of assets which are surplus to requirements which will generate resources to create an adequate level of reserves. In achievement of this the trustees are concentrating on keeping tight control of costs whilst seeking additional sources of funding and fundraising opportunities.

THE HARMONY COMMUNITY TRUST REPORT OF THE COUNCIL (CONTINUED)

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE COUNCIL

Council is responsible for preparing the Annual Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and regulations.

Company law requires the directors to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under that law the directors have elected to prepare the financial statements in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice (United Kingdom Accounting Standards and applicable law). The financial statements are required by law to give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the company and of the Income and Expenditure of the company for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the directors are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- make judgments and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the company will continue in business.

Council is responsible for keeping proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with 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 the Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) – Charities SORP (FRS 102) and Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

AUDITORS

A resolution for the reappointment of Baker Tilly Mooney Moore as auditors of the Trust is to be proposed at the forthcoming Annual General Meeting in accordance with Section 485 of the Companies Act 2006.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

To everyone who volunteered their services, tribute is paid. The work of the Trust could not go on without their continued and dedicated efforts.

To everyone who generously contributed to our funds, grateful thanks are given. Due to the large number of donations, it is not practicable to record them all in this report. A list of donations of one hundred pounds or over is given in note 2 to the accounts.

To the all the Principal Funders listed in the Financial Review above thanks for generous grant-aid towards the operating costs of the Trust.

Glebe House
23 Bishopscourt Road
Kilclief
Strangford
Co Down
BT30 7NZ

Registered in Northern Ireland No: NI 010639

Seamus Camplisson

Seamus Camplisson (Dec 20, 2024 11:09 GMT)

By order of the Council

Mr S Camplisson
Chairman

20/12/2024