

Outdoor Recreation (N. Ireland)

Trustees Report for the Year Ended 31 March 2023

The trustees, who are directors for the purposes of company law, present the annual report together with the consolidated financial statements and auditors' report of the charitable company for the year ended 31 March 2023.

Structure, governance and management

The organisation is a charitable company limited by guarantee. 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.

Recruitment and appointment of management committee

The directors of the company are also charity trustees. The directors are elected to serve for an initial three year period. The directors give their time voluntarily and receive only out of pocket expenses from the company with the exception of Caro-Lynne Ferris whose post as Company Secretary of Outdoor Recreation (N. Ireland) is paid.

Risk management

The directors have conducted a review of the major risks to which the charity is exposed. Internal control risks are minimised by the implementation of procedures for the authorisation of all transactions and projects. Procedures are in place to ensure compliance with health and safety of staff volunteers, clients and visitors to the centre. These procedures are reviewed to ensure that they continue to meet the needs of the charity.

Organisational structure

A scheme of delegation is in place and the day to day responsibility for the provision of services rests with the company secretary and the administrative team.

Outdoor Recreation NI commissioned a consultant to carry out an exercise with one overarching objective, to ensure its structures, and people processes are not only fit for purpose today, but more importantly are ready and prepared for the organisations ongoing success and growth. This project, named 'Fit for the Future' comprised a set of activities to examine and explore three key organisational strands, namely:

Strand A: Structure

A review regarding the effectiveness of the current organisation structure, to ensure it is positioned to deliver on both current and emerging business priorities.

Strand B: Remuneration

A review on the adequacy of ORNI's staff remuneration package, to ensure it is in line with current responsibilities and comparable sector rate.

Strand C: Culture

A review on the ORNI workplace culture, to develop further the ORNI employer brand and ensure it continues to be a great place to work.

Focusing specifically on Strand A, a new organisation structure was put in place in September 2022 to:

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- Enable the organisation to retain its position as market leader, by giving time and resource to stakeholder engagement, strategic development and research;
- Be fully aligned and resourced against its strategic priorities;
- Provide a structure that enables the right balance and definition between Project Management and Line Management;
- Have a senior management structure that is fully supported to deliver team management, programme management, project mentorship, organisational leadership, and business development responsibilities;
- Have a project delivery team structure that allows projects to be allocated based on a set of defined criteria to include current skills and specialisms, but also personal and career development opportunities; and
- Ensure a fully resourced 'business support' presence, covering all matters that enable optimum functioning of the internal organisation to include Finance, HR, IT, Facilities, Procurement.

Tangibly, this established four new teams, Strategic Projects, Place Shaping, Communications and Training and Business Support.

Trustees and officers

The trustees and officers serving during the year and since the year end were as follows:

Trustees:	Ms F Kane (appointed 9 December 2022)
	Mr D Stelfox
	Ms E Trainor (appointed 9 December 2022)
	Dr C Ferris
	Mr D Hughes (appointed 9 December 2022)
	Mr R Magowan
	Mr J Hewitt (appointed 9 December 2022)
	Mr B Murphy (resigned 9 December 2022)
	Mr J Porter
	Mr R Millar
Chairman:	Mr D Stelfox
Secretary:	Dr C Ferris
Treasurer:	Mr R Millar

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Objectives and activities

1. CHAMPIONING THE OUTDOORS

Strategic aim:

There is increased awareness of the benefits that outdoor recreation brings to individuals, communities and Northern Ireland as a whole and increased focus on the importance of outdoor recreation within policy and practice at both national and local levels.

Achievements

Key achievements for the year are summarised as follows:

- Engaged in regular meetings with EMFG, NIEA, eNGO Sector;
- Attended All Party Working Group on Cycling, DoH Obesity Group, Women in Sport, Belfast Healthy Cities;
- Two formal partnership agreements imminent - SLA with the Outdoor Partnership relating to the provision of financial administration services for the Opening Doors to the Outdoors UK Programme and UK Trails Project led by Developing Mountain Biking in Scotland;
- Acted in an advisory role, provided support and offered advice to numerous organisations on a wide range of subjects e.g access, trail signage, trail infrastructure, MTB signage etc;
- Deep dive analysis done of POMNI- (People in the Outdoors Monitor for NI) research - including impact of deprivation on outdoor recreation participation, rural/urban disparity in greenspace access and people with a disability and outdoor recreation participation. Individual Council factsheets prepared;
- Greenspace Mapping project complete - delivering an authoritative online map of all publicly accessible greenspace and off-road trails in Northern Ireland; and
- Acted as Secretariat to the National Outdoor Recreation Forum (NORF). Met once during the year.

2. DELIVERING TRAINING AND SHARING BEST PRACTICE

Strategic aim:

The outdoor recreation sector is better equipped to plan, deliver, manage and promote outdoor recreation initiatives to a high standard. There is an increasing focus on innovative, sustainable and participant-led approaches to outdoor recreation.

Achievements

Key achievements for the year are summarised as follows:

- Acted as the Secretariat to the UK and Ireland Outdoor Recreation Network (ORN);
- Acted as the Secretariat to the UK and Ireland Visitor Safety Group (VSG);
- Outdoor Recreation HUB Established <http://www.outdoorrecreationni.com/hub/blogs/>; 20 news/blogs published, 6 e-zines distributed. Regular LinkedIn and Twitter Updates;
- Delivered 2 webinars and 1 conference: Social Prescribing Evaluation Toolkit, Cave Hill Natural MTB Case Study Walk and Talk, ORNI Conference 2023 - 100+ in attendance;

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- Outdoor Event Steering Group expanded and seminar organised for spring 2023; and
- Review on-going of Principles and Standards for Trail Development.

3. PLANNING AND DEVELOPING QUALITY EXPERIENCES

Strategic aim:

A wide range of high quality, sustainable and participant focused outdoor recreation experiences allowing people to connect and engage with nature are in place across Northern Ireland.

Achievements

Key achievements for the year are summarised as follows:

Completed

- Castle Caldwell Development Plan - FODC;
- Ring of Gullion Way Scoping Study- NMDDC;
- Cave Hill MTB Trail Pilot - BCC;
- Angling Development Report and Action Plan for the Erne System - FODC;
- Trail prescriptions for 8 trails in Binevenagh, Ballycarton, Grange and Downhill area - Binevenagh LPS;
- Maghera (Mullagh Road) Local Hub Masterplan - MUDC;
- National Outdoor Recreation Strategy for Ireland - support services - CnT;
- Beara Breifne Way Technical Trail Audit - FI;
- Roscommon Outdoor Recreation Strategy - Roscommon County Council;
- Ballina - Enniscrone Recreational Trail Feasibility Study - Mayo CoCo;
- Donegal Outdoor Recreation Strategy - Donegal County Council;
- Peatlands Eco Tourism phase 2 and phase 3- FI;
- Glenmona House Cushendun - NT;
- Inclusive Beach Access Study - NMDDC;
- Newcastle Harbour Open Water Swimming Review - NMDDC;
- Mourne Strategic Framework - Mourne Partnership;
- Blueways Vision and Action Plan - Blueways Partnership led by Sport Ireland;
- Mourne Park Visitor Experience Plan - Woodland Trust; and
- Glas-na-braden Visitor Experience Plan - Woodland Trust.

On-going

- Strangford Lough Blueway Feasibility Study - ANDBC;
- Feasibility Study for the development of a multi-use trails in NMDDC - DAERA;
- Silent Valley Masterplan - NI Water;
- Masterplans for Woodburn Forest, Portglenone Forest and Glenarm Forest;
- Camlough Mountain Masterplan -NMDDC;

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- Camlough Mountain Masterplan -NMDDC;
- Ring of Gullion Visitor Management Plan - NMDDC;
- Slieve Beagh Feasibility Study - FODC, Cavan CC Monaghan CC; and
- Mote Park Development Project - Roscommon CoCo.

Community Trails

- Feasibility studies complete for 2 community trails - Bright GAC, Teconnaught GAC (NMDDC) with work progressing on a further 2 - Inch Abbey and Tipperary Wood;
- Feasibility study complete for Saul to Lough Money (SportNI); and
- Feasibility studies complete for community trails in Lisnagarvey Hockey Club, Clogher Valley, Larne, Ballyclare and Ballymena RFCs.

Water-Based Recreation

- Arney River Canoe Trail - complete.

Other

- Faughan Valley Sculpture Trail -trails and car park complete - final sculptures to be installed.

Research

- Participation figures gathered on a quarterly basis for Castleward, Divis, Gosford and the Community Trails in; Cloghey, Tobar Mhuire, Bunkers Hill, Saul GAC, Ballynahinch Rugby Club, Drumkeeragh Forest, Tievenadarragh Forest, Corry Wood, Seaforde Plantations, Carnagh Forest, Slan's Graveyard and Darkley Forest;
- Impact survey (Social Return on Investment) of one Community Trails (Arney) completed; and
- Social Value Assessment - Divis and Black Mountain complete.

4. INCREASING AWARENESS

Strategic aim:

A consistently high level of accurate information on outdoor recreation is widely available, leading to an increase awareness of outdoor recreation opportunities by both the local population and visitors to Northern Ireland.

Achievements

Key achievements for the year are summarised as follows:

- Phase 2 of OutmoreNI.com on-going;
- Phase 1 of 'Get Out More' marketing campaign complete - phase 2 on-going. Phase 1 secured 66k+ video views, established 6k+ social media followers, generated 39k+ website visits and over 20 media articles;
- Work on-going to make keep WalkNI, CanoeNI, MountainbikeNI, OutdoorNI up to date and consumer friendly;

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- 12 Environmental messages posted on WalkNI through a combination of e-newsletter features, news articles and social media posts;
- E-news distributed to 375 underrepresented groups twice in the year;
- Responsible Use of the Outdoors Marketing campaign - complete - evaluation showed 100k video views, 425k reached on social media, 408k website visits, 71 newspaper articles, 2 radio interview and 1 TV piece;
- New Ulster Way website - complete;
- C.460,000 unique visitors to the websites WalkNI, MountainbikeNI, CanoeNI and OutmoreNI;
- C. 36,000k followers of WalkNI through social media channels of Facebook, Instagram and twitter;
- C.31,000k followers of MountainbikeNI through social media channels of Facebook, Instagram and twitter;
- Right Side of Outside Campaign - Phase 2 delivered to reiterate key messages to encourage responsible use of the outdoors. Campaign secured 25+ media articles, generated 39k+ website visits and reached over 200k people on social media;
- Get Wet - 11 water sport clubs offered 15 events and participation programmes; and
- Get Wet Stay Safe - 612 people attended courses between June and September. SUP most popular activity.

5. WIDENING, INCREASING AND SUSTAINING PARTICIPATION

Strategic aim:

The number of people participating in outdoor recreation in NI continues to rise.

Achievements

Key achievements for the year are summarised as follows:

- Peace + funding programme opened in March - work on-going on preparing a concept note.

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Financial review

The Charity has generated a positive financial outcome for the year with a net increase in funds of £99,553 (2022: £389,596) as a result of total income for the year of £1,876,210 (2022: £2,192,687) and total expenditure for the year of £1,776,657 (2022: £1,803,091).

Statement of trustees' responsibilities

The trustees (who are also the directors of Outdoor Recreation (N. Ireland) for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the trustees' report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice), including FRS 102 "The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland". The report and accounts have been prepared in accordance with the provisions in the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

Company law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under company law the trustees must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they 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 its income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards, comprising FRS 102 have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- 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 that can disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and 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.

The trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the charitable company's website. Legislation governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

Disclosure of information to auditor

Each trustee has taken steps that they ought to have taken as a trustee in order to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the charity's auditor is aware of that information. The trustees confirm that there is no relevant information that they know of and of which they know the auditor is unaware.

Reappointment of auditor

The auditors RBCA Limited are deemed to be reappointed under section 487(2) of the Companies Act 2006.

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Trustees Report for the Year Ended 31 March 2023

The annual report was approved by the trustees of the charity on ^{26 Oct 2023}..... and signed on its behalf by:

Lara Kane

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Ms F Kane
Trustee

D Stelfox

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Mr D Stelfox
Chairman and Trustee

Edel Trainor

.....
MS E TRAINOR
Trustee

Caro-lyne Ferris

.....
Dr C Ferris
Company Secretary and Trustee

David Hughes

.....
Mr D Hughes
Trustee

Reg J Magowan

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Mr R Magowan
Trustee

John C. Hewitt

.....
Mr J Hewitt
Trustee

J Porter

.....
Mr J Porter
Trustee

R Millar

.....
MR R MILLAR
Treasurer and Trustee