

THE NORTHERN IRELAND HERITAGE GARDENS TRUST

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 28 FEBRUARY 2024

The Trustees present their annual report and financial statements for the year ended 28 February 2024.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in note 1 to the financial statements and comply with the Charity's governing document, the Companies Act 2006 and "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)" (as amended for accounting periods commencing from 1 January 2016)

Objectives and activities

The Charity's objects are:

- To educate and inform the public about the importance of Heritage Gardens and Demesnes.
- To monitor and preserve the NI Heritage Gardens for future generations.
- The development of greater interest and knowledge of the gardens and gardening in Northern Ireland.
- The continued promotion of the objectives of the NI Heritage Gardens Trust.

The Trustees have paid due regard to guidance issued by the Charity Commission in deciding what activities the Charity should undertake.

Achievements and performance

Our conference was held in the Mount Errigal Hotel, in Letterkenny on 5-7th October, 2023 with the title "Robinsonian Gardening. A Living Legacy."

It was a huge success with 100 attendees accommodated and catered for extremely well by the hotel. On both the Friday and Saturday afternoons we had garden visits.

Firstly we visited Glenveagh Castle Gardens, where Sean O'Gaoithin led us around the sumptuous planting on the shore of Lough Beagh.

The following day we went to Carrablagh at Port Salon, by kind permission of John and Jan Mulcahy, and were led by Brendan Little. Both are stunning gardens in their own right, enhanced by their geographical situations.

We held our Spring lecture via Zoom again in March and on this occasion Dr. Christy Boylan, landscape consultant and Dublin lecturer gave an interesting presentation of "The Parks and Gardens of Dublin", which is also the title of his recently published book.

Financial review

Net income of £8,712 was recorded in the financial year (2023: £7,281). The finances of the Trust remain in a very healthy state.

It is the policy of the Charity that unrestricted funds, which have not been designated for a specific use, should be maintained at a level equivalent to between three and six month's expenditure. The Trustees consider that reserves at this level will ensure that, in the event of a significant drop in funding, they will be able to continue the Charity's current activities while consideration is given to ways in which additional funds may be raised. This level of reserves has been maintained throughout the year.

Structure, governance and management

The Charity is a company limited by guarantee.

The Trustees, who are also the directors for the purpose of company law, and who served during the year and up to the date of signature of the financial statements were:

Ms Tracy Hamilton
Mr Trevor Edwards
Mr Terence Reeves-Smyth
Dr Mark Johnston
Mr Michael Burrows
Ms Jackie Harte

THE NORTHERN IRELAND HERITAGE GARDENS TRUST

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 28 FEBRUARY 2024

None of the Trustees has any beneficial interest in the company. All of the Trustees are members of the company and guarantee to contribute £1 in the event of a winding up.

Statement of Trustees' responsibilities

The Trustees, who are also the directors of The Northern Ireland Heritage Gardens Trust for the purpose 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).

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 Charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that year.

In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards 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 Charity will continue in operation.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Charity 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 Charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Plans for future periods

Plans are currently being developed for our annual conference in October 2023 in Letterkenny, Donegal on the subject Robinsonian Gardening, A Living Legacy.

Risk Management

We acknowledge our responsibility to both identify and manage risks, in particular at committee meetings, and at conference and lecture venues.

The process is as follows:-

1. Identify the hazards;
2. Decide who might be harmed and how;
3. Evaluate the risks and decide on precautions;
4. Implement findings; and
5. Review our assessment and update if necessary.

The Trustees' report was approved by the Board of Trustees.

Mr Michael Burrows
Director
Dated: 8 October 2024