

# Lisburn Outlook

Registered with the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland, NIC 103202.

Registered postal address:  
5 Richmond Mews, Lisburn, Co. Antrim BT28 2AW.

Report to Charity Commission for the year from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023

## Governance

Lisburn Outlook was established at a general meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> September, 2012, at which the current constitution was adopted. It became a registered charity with the Northern Ireland Charity Commission in August 2015.

This is the seventh annual report submitted by the Charity to the Northern Ireland Charity Commission. We continued to submit reports and accounts annually even when there was some uncertainty over the legal requirement to do so.

The Charity is governed by its Constitution, adopted at its inception in 2012 and submitted to the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland as part of the registration process in 2015. No changes have been made since then.

The Charity's objects are to assist persons who are blind or partially sighted and live in Lisburn and its environs (the "area of benefit") by:

- (a) organising cultural, social and recreational events and activities for their benefit;
- (b) providing advocacy and support, and promoting better integration into society of blind and partially sighted people and, in particular, working with other organisations and agencies to make public events and facilities accessible;
- (c) fostering cross community integration among those who are blind or partially sighted.

The Constitution stipulates that at least two of the people filling the roles of Chair, Secretary and Treasurer must be blind or partially sighted. All three offices had been held by blind or partially sighted individuals since the Charity's inception until December 2022, when a sighted person was appointed to the post of Treasurer.

Trustees are appointed at the Charity's Annual General Meeting. The trustees elect office bearers at their first meeting after each Annual General Meeting.

The trustees and office bearers during this reporting period, in alphabetical order, were:-

Anne Cosgrove (from November 2022, resigned March 2023))

Liz Goodman

Audrey Kempton (Treasurer until December 2022, remaining trustee throughout the year under review)

Alberta Kenwell

Mark Kincaid (until September 2022)

Samantha Kincaid (Treasurer from December 2022, trustee throughout the year under review)

Deborah Maginness

David Mann (Secretary)

Margaret Mann

Paul Rodgers (Chair)

The Annual General meeting was held at the Haslem Hotel, Lisburn, on 19th November, 2022. This was earlier than the previous few years, as the annual accounts had been prepared much more promptly. As usual, reports were received, trustees appointed and future activities discussed.

Paul Rodgers was re-elected Chair at the Trustees' first meeting following this AGM. Samantha Kincaid was appointed Treasurer at the same meeting.

The trustees met on nine occasions during the year under review, by Zoom video conferencing in all cases. Eight of these meetings were regular Committee meetings, whilst the ninth, held on 31<sup>st</sup> January, 2023, was an opportunity to review more informally our strategy and plans for the future.

Several trustees took part in a governance training session on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2023 delivered by NICVA.

The Charity has no office premises of its own. Its registered postal address is the Secretary's private residence.

## **Public Benefit**

The Charity's Statement of Public Benefit is as follows:-

"The Charity's activities mitigate the isolation and lack of social contact which frequently accompany sight loss.

"The charity offers peer support, information exchange and confidence building amongst its members.

"By organising bespoke tours of places of interest and visits to audio described theatre and cinema performances, for example, the charity promotes social inclusion and provides a richer appreciation of culture and history amongst its members than would otherwise be available to them.

"By organising recreational activities such as tandem cycling and walking, the charity offers an opportunity for physical exercise and fresh air which might otherwise not be available through mainstream activities.

"By arranging bespoke classes, for example dancing classes, the charity provides learning opportunities that would not be easily available to a blind or partially sighted person in a mainstream context.

"By exerting influence on the providers of social, cultural, commercial and recreational facilities, the charity also ensures in a more general way that facilities and services in the area of benefit are run in a more inclusive manner.

"Sighted people who are members of the charity or who volunteer with it learn guiding and describing skills and gain a greater awareness of the challenges and barriers faced by people who are blind or partially sighted."

In planning the Charity's activities, trustees have had regard to the Commission's Public benefit requirement statutory guidance.

Membership subscriptions fall due in January of each year. As of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023 around 45 people had paid subscriptions, including both blind and partially sighted people and sighted volunteers. The Committee has resolved that anyone who has not paid by 31<sup>st</sup> May 2023 can be removed from membership and distribution lists.

## Activities and Achievements

All our activities seek to reduce social isolation and exclusion. They promote peer support, information exchange and fellowship.

In March 2023 we set up a new walking group, meeting fortnightly. This will undertake relatively easy walks in the immediate area.

We have held monthly coffee mornings throughout the year under review. These are held in different cafés in and around Lisburn.

We now pay from our funds for light refreshments at coffee mornings, on walks and during tandem rides.

We had planned to repeat our 2019 attendance at the sight Village exhibition in Birmingham in June 2022. However, two weeks before we were due to do so, Easyjet cancelled our flights. To re-book would have proved too expensive, and so the trip was cancelled. All our financial outlay was refunded.

Our monthly book group, meeting by Zoom, continued throughout the year.

Other activities were:-

Participation in Mayor's Quiz, Lisburn Civic Centre, 28<sup>th</sup> April 2022; (not subsidised from our funds, as proceeds go to other charities);

Picnic in the park to mark our tenth anniversary, Sir Thomas and Lady Dixon Park, 9<sup>th</sup> July 2022 (subsidised from our funds);

Visit to Odeon Cinema, Belfast to see audio-described showing of The Railway Children Return, 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2022 (travel costs subsidised);

Attendance at performance of Bread Boy at the Lyric Theatre, 31<sup>st</sup> July (travel costs subsidised from our funds);

tandem festival, 20<sup>th</sup> August, 2022 (see below);

    bowling evening, 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2022 (subsidised from our funds);

Christmas dinner at Gowdy's Restaurant, 15<sup>th</sup> December 2022 (part subsidised from our funds);

Participation in "Health Fair" organised at Lisburn City Library, 24<sup>th</sup> February, 2023.

## **Tandem Riding**

We held a tandem festival on 20<sup>th</sup> August to mark our tenth anniversary. Riders attended from Belfast and Newry as well as Lisburn, and some new pilots were inducted. A number of former pilots returned for the occasion. Riders had a choice of routes of up to 30 miles, followed by a celebratory lunch. Refreshments and hire of premises were funded by the charity.

We purchased an e-tandem, which we feel will help some of our pilots and stokers. We started to use it in March 2023. In addition, our normal Saturday morning and Thursday evening rides continued.

## **Value of Volunteers**

Many of our normal activities would not be possible without the support of sighted volunteers, and this remained true during the year under review in respect of our tandem riding and our new walking group.

## **Health and Safety**

We continue to require new volunteers to undergo Access NI enhanced disclosure processes. The Atlas Centre in Lisburn provides us with administrative support for this process. We insist that everyone in our tandem cycling group wear an armband containing medical information which first responders may wish to know. We have issued guidance as to what information to include. We have also urged everyone attending any of our events to carry similar information with them. We have a specific set of health and safety procedures relating to tandem cycling. Our health and safety policy is on our website and available in hardcopy on request.

## **Communications**

We continue to produce a monthly newsletter, distributed by email and on audio CD. We continue to operate a Facebook page and a web site.

## **Safeguarding**

Trustees are aware of their responsibilities to respond to any indication of the abuse of vulnerable people and to report any incidents or suspicions to the appropriate authorities.

Some of our trustees and some tandem pilots underwent safeguarding training in November 2022. We have radically revised our safeguarding policy to bring it more into line with current requirements.

## **Financial Statement**

The accounts for Lisburn Outlook have been independently examined by Philip Boyd (IFA) and his sign off is associated with this report on the Charity Commission web site.

With income of £16137 and expenditure of £16042, Lisburn outlook ended the financial year 22/23 with a surplus of income over expenditure of £95. Restricted funds expenditure was £1700. The charity does not hold any investments. The main income drivers were LCCC Community Support Grant £1700 and Talking Newspaper donation £7817, Dr H A Ennis donation £1000, as well as a donation from Knit & Natter £104, membership fees £662. Expenditure this year consisted mainly of monthly coffee mornings £585, E-Tandem purchase £4980, Ten year anniversary tandem event £1360, Promotional cycling tops and fleeces £2190, Bowling/Picnic in Park/Theatre trips and Christmas Dinner £946. Insurance costs for the year were £1015.

The main assets held by the charity relate to the provision of tandem riding for blind or partially sighted members. These include 1-ETandem, 8-tandems, a bicycle-tricycle combination, a tandem trailer and a lock-up container. The total value of these assets is estimated for insurance purposes to be £20100.

Section 4 (2) of our Constitution authorises trustees to claim reasonable expenses incurred when acting on the Charity's behalf. Any payments made from the Charity's funds to individual trustees have been

authorised and recorded in the minutes of the appropriate Committee meeting. They have been paid only on submission of receipts.

David Mann  
Secretary