

Blackie River Community Groups

Report of the Trustees **for the Year Ended 31 March 2024**

The trustees who are also directors of the charity for the purposes of the Companies Act 2006, present their report with the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2024. The trustees have adopted the provisions of 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) (effective 1 January 2019).

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

Objectives and aims

Blackie River Community Groups is a registered charity which seeks to empower the residents of the Blackie River by facilitating and developing community development activity which enables them to celebrate their creativity and culture, develop their skills, enhance their self-esteem, play a full and equal role in society, and secure the social and economic regeneration of their area.

Significant activities

The Blackie River Community Groups aims:

To promote the benefit of the inhabitants of the Blackie River area and the environs of the Greater Belfast area (hereinafter described as the "area of benefit") without distinction of age, gender, race, political, religious or other opinion, by association statutory authorities, voluntary organisations and inhabitants in a common effort to advance education, relieve poverty and to provide facilities in the interest of social welfare for recreation and leisure time occupation, with the object of improving the conditions of life for the said inhabitants;

To promote cooperation between local community groups with the object of improving the conditions of life for the inhabitants in the area of benefit.

To promote and coordinate community development by enhancing the local social infrastructure through: support, training and resource provision.

Blackie River Community Groups

Report of the Trustees for the Year Ended 31 March 2024

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

Public benefit

Purpose A

The direct benefit which flows from purpose A includes improved education outcomes reduction in poverty, and to provide facilities in the interest of social welfare for recreation and leisure time occupation, with the object of improving the conditions of life of residents within Blackie River Area (Beechmount ward) and the wider Greater Belfast area. These benefits are evidenced through our programmes, initiatives and services being monitoring and evaluated by all participants. The purpose of the charity may lead to the following harm of personal injury through some of our educational programmes, daycare provision and health programme but we can demonstrate that this harm is greatly reduced through our risk management policy and procedures and the benefits to the service users outweigh any of the risks. The charities beneficiaries are the inhabitants of the Beechmount ward, Greater Falls area and the environs of the Greater Belfast Area. The only private benefit flowing from the purpose is the skilling up of staff and the salary which they receive and this is incidental and necessary to run an organisation which operates to the childcare standards, education skills authority, funding requirements.

Purpose B

The direct benefit which flows from purpose B includes promoting cooperation between local community groups with the object of improving the conditions of life for the inhabitants in the area of benefit. These benefits are evidenced through engagement with local residents through surveys, canvasses and questionnaires. It is further evidenced through the participation on local and regional forums and partnerships. The purpose of the charity may lead to the following harm of misrepresenting an individual but was can evidence that all the information which we discuss in forums comes from analysing the data which we have collected. The charities beneficiaries are the inhabitants of the Beechmount ward, Greater Falls area and the environs of the Greater Belfast Area. The only private benefit flowing from the purpose is the skilling up of staff and the salary which they receive and this is incidental and necessary to run an organisation which operates to the childcare standards, education skills authority, funding requirements.

Purpose C

The direct benefit which flows from purpose B includes promoting and coordinate community development by enhancing the local social infrastructure through: support, training and resource provision. These benefits are evidenced through engagement with local residents through surveys, canvasses and questionnaires. The purpose of the charity may lead to the following harm of misrepresenting an individual but was can evidence that all the information which we discuss in forums comes from analysing the data which we have collected. The charities beneficiaries are the inhabitants of the Beechmount ward, Greater Falls area and the environs of the Greater Belfast Area. The only private benefit flowing from the purpose is the skilling up of staff and the salary which they receive and this is incidental and necessary to run an organisation which operates to the childcare standards, education skills authority, funding requirements. Blackie River Community Group works with local residents to ensure that quality and conditions of housing within the local area are up to standard. In the past we successfully lobbied for new housing as there was a substantial amount of houses with outside toilets and environmental issues. We successful got the area vested and new 21st century housing built. We run a variety of educational classes which both upskills people and also combat social isolation. We have successful run a level 5 Childcare management course which means that there are now 14 local people who can now manage a day-care setting.

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Report of the Trustees **for the Year Ended 31 March 2024**

STRATEGIC REPORT

Achievement and performance

Charitable activities

Our charity found itself again like many others in difficult financial times this year due to the current Cost of Living Crisis rising energy costs and increase in salaries due to minimum wage increases. We have been applying for external funding to alleviate financial pressures in which we were eventually successful in receiving £20k from Council to help with running costs. While the charity has not yet undertaken any public fundraising initiatives, we have been successful in seeking and receiving grant funding amounting to £1,081,855 for this year ending March 2024. The breakdown of restricted grants funding can be seen on Note 3 of the accounts.

The funding received assisted the charity in continuing with our aims and objectives, offering vital services in our community such as: providing first class affordable child care, supporting child development, providing support to children with additional needs, promoting Community led education through lifelong learning, providing cultural and arts programmes, working on the regeneration of the area and working with our community partners in the Greater Falls Neighbourhood Partnership Area.

Reserves Policy

The charity's policy is to retain a level of free reserves, which matches the needs of the organisation both at the current time and in the foreseeable future. The charity has developed a plan to establish and maintain this agreed level of free reserves. The charity will continue to monitor compliance with this policy on a regular basis and the Board will review the appropriateness of the policy annually.

Financial review

The company had net outgoing resources for the year of £105,613 (2023: net outgoing resources of £54,017), which reflected the completion of a number of projects during the year. Unrestricted funds decreased by £85,313, while restricted funds decreased by £20,300.

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STRATEGIC REPORT

Future plans

The biggest challenge for us is going to be sustaining ourselves through this current cost of living crisis, inflationary and energy increases. The strategic priority will be sustainability. We aim to continue to improve our business / finance model and community development outcomes, to continue to develop a strong board and to inspire and professionalism to our staff.

In terms of sustainability we have:

- a) Secured the third tender and extension for the West Belfast Health & Wellbeing Programme.
- b) Sought funding for an extension.
- c) Secured planning permission for our car park and are in the process of Vesting the land and securing funding to renovate it.
- d) Working with local asset holders to secure the tenure of additional infrastructure that will enable the organisation to expand our services.
- e) We aim to continue to provide first class services to the
- f) community in the fields of child-care, education, art and culture, health, youth and older services and have secured the status of Centre of excellence.

For the strategic priority of infrastructure: We aim to improve the service available in the Beechmount area by lobbying for the improved facilities.

- a) Examples of this are: The development of St James Farm, The contained lobbying for; the Beechmount Triangle site, the car park and the extension to the Blackie River Community Group.
- b) Extra provision of alley gates.
- c) Working with the Davitts GAC to provide indoor sports provision.
- d) Assisting Willowbank FC with a new 3G pitch.
- e) Establishment of a Social Supermarket, delivering food vouchers and wraparound support to 270 families.
- f) Sourcing additional floor space for expansion of our charity.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Governing document

The charity is controlled by its governing document, a deed of trust, and constitutes a limited company, limited by guarantee, as defined by the Companies Act 2006.

Governance of the Charity

During the period under review the directors met bi-monthly. Trustees/directors are appointed by nominations made in writing by any existing director. At the General Meeting nominated directors are appointed by election.

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STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Risk management

The principles of good governance are embedded within all aspects of Blackie River Community Group Limited operations with management and staff being keenly aware of the Boards responsibility of ensuring that the organisation protects itself from financial exposure and reputational damage, A close working relationship is maintained between the Board and management to ensure that operationally staff are aware of the standards required of them by the Board and the Board are always in a position to provide guidance and support to management in the discharge of their duties. This two way relationship is the key feature of Blackie River Community Group Limited governance arrangements and is a key strength in the company.

A conscientious approach to ensuring that contractual project requirements are achieved has been maintained at all times both in the accounting period being reported on and since Blackie River Community Group Limited establishment. Very tight financial controls on expenditure and all financial commitments are maintained at all times and project staff have been trained and have become experienced in budgetary controls. In both these areas ie Project delivery and financial controls management all staff have established close working relationships with funding organisations to ensure all mandatory standards are consistently achieved. Board representatives also actively engage with funding bodies.

The Board, management and staff are fully aware that the nature of the work in which Blackie River Community Group Limited is involved can bring with it a high level of scrutiny to ensure that all activities are fully compliant with funding requirements and, therefore, beyond reproach. The Board of Blackie River Community Group Limited is, therefore, greatly reassured of the company's compliance with the highest of standards of governance on the basis that all monitoring and evaluation of project delivery demonstrates achievement of all funders objectives and that funders' audits and vouching of financial expenditure and the statutory audit confirm compliance with both probity and regularity in the use of monies received.

EVENTS SINCE THE END OF THE YEAR

Information relating to events since the end of the year is given in the notes to the financial statements.

STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES

The trustees (who are also the directors of Blackie River Community Groups for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Report of the Trustees and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice) including Financial Reporting Standard 102 "The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland".

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 charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that period. In preparing those financial statements, the trustees are required to

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charity SORP;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in business.

Blackie River Community Groups

Report of the Trustees
for the Year Ended 31 March 2024

STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES - continued

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company 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 charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

In so far as the trustees are aware:

- there is no relevant audit information of which the charitable company's auditors are unaware; and
- the trustees have taken all steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditors are aware of that information.

AUDITORS

The auditors, Lynn Drake & Co Ltd, will be proposed for re-appointment at the forthcoming Annual General Meeting.

Report of the trustees, incorporating a strategic report, approved by order of the board of trustees, as the company directors, on 1 October 2024 and signed on the board's behalf by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sean Quinn', written in a cursive style.

Sean Quinn - Trustee