

Trustees' report

The Trustees present their report and the audited financial statements for the year ending 31 May 2023 which have also been prepared to meet the requirements for a directors' report and accounts for Companies Act purposes.

The financial statements comply with charity and company law, the Memorandum and Articles of Association 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) (effective 1 January 2019).

Objectives and activities

Lagan Rivers Trust is a charity dedicated to the conservation and protection of the River Lagan, its tributaries and its surrounding countryside. The key aims and objectives, as set out in the Memorandum of Association are as follows:

- Conserve, protect, rehabilitate and improve the rivers, streams, watercourses and water impoundments of the catchment comprising the river Lagan and the rivers of Belfast Lough, including adjacent estuarine and coastal areas, for the advancement of environmental protection and improvement for the benefit of the public.
- To advance the education of the public, or any association, institution, voluntary organisation, company, local authority, administrative or government agency, public or representative body in:
 1. The understanding of rivers, river corridors and catchments, including the flora, fauna, biodiversity, economic and social value, and catchment management.
 2. The need for, and benefits of, conservation, protection, rehabilitation and improvement of aquatic environments.

Role of volunteers

The financial statements set out the results for the year but do not reflect the considerable and vital support given to Lagan Rivers Trust by volunteers who manage the charity and undertake all major project works and community outreach programmes.

Achievements and performance

a) Going concern

The Trustees have a reasonable expectation that the charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. For this reason, they continue to adopt the going concern basis in preparing the financial statements. Further details regarding the adoption of the going concern basis can be found in the Accounting Policies.

b) Review of activities

During the year, the charity continued its programme of river and woodland maintenance. This included removal of trees, maintenance of paths and clearways, removal of weirs and identification and removal of invasive species.

River cleaning and litter picking initiatives involving the local community continued and the charity continued its awareness campaign by engaging with local businesses and political representatives.

Financial review

a) Income and expenditure

Income for the year was £nil (2022: £32,114). Total expenditure was £704 (2022: £36,613) and gross expenditure on Charitable Activities was £441 (2022: £35,800).

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Detailed day to day management of the charity endeavours to keep the costs as low as possible without compromising the output and quality of the activities.

b) Investment powers and policy

The Trustees, having regard to the liquidity requirements of the charity have kept available funds in an easily accessible non-interest-bearing account.

c) Reserves

The Trustees review the reserves annually. There are two categories of reserves: restricted and unrestricted funds.

Restricted funds are funds subject to specific conditions imposed by donors. At the end of the year the total restricted funds were £nil (2022: £nil). *Unrestricted funds* at year end were £587 (2022: £1,291).

d) Plans for future periods

Volunteer expertise and skills will be utilised as much as possible to help maintain the activities of the charity. Priority will be given to the ensuring the river and associated paths and clearways are as assessable to as many groups as possible.

Structure, governance and management

a) Constitution

Lagan Rivers Trust was incorporated on 25 May 2012 and is a company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital. It is registered with HMRC as a charity with reference XT38474. It is also registered with the Charities Commission NI with reference number 103410.

b) Method of appointment or election of Trustees

The Trustees who served during the year and since the year end are listed on page 1.

As required on an ad hoc basis the members discuss the appointment of potential new board members for appointment to the board. Suitable people are approached and if they are willing to serve on the board their nomination is put forward for approval by the board. There is no maximum term of office.

No new Trustees were appointed during the year. An advisory group supports members and Trustees in professional matters. No remuneration or expenses have been paid to the charity's Trustees during the year.

Risk management

The Trustees have assessed the major risks to which the charity is exposed, in particular those related to the operations and finances of the charity, and are satisfied that systems and procedures are in place to mitigate exposure to major risks.

Trustees' responsibilities in relation to the financial statements

The charity Trustees (who are also directors of Lagan Rivers Trust for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing a Trustees' annual report and financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company and charity law requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial period which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of its financial position at the end of that period. In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

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- select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
- make judgments and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed subject to any 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 have overall responsibility for ensuring that the charity has an appropriate system of controls, financial and otherwise. They are also responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity 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 charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Small Company Provisions

This report has been prepared in accordance with the provisions in Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 applicable to companies subject to the small companies regime.

This report was approved by the board on 28 May 2024 and signed on its behalf.



GW Houston
Trustee