

# Comber Youth for Christ

## Annual Report & Statement of Accounts

For the year to 31 December 2022

Comber Youth for Christ, 49 Bridge Street, Comber, Newtownards, Co.

Down, BT23 5AT Registered charity no. 103460

[www.thenetyouthproject.org](http://www.thenetyouthproject.org)

## Annual Report for the year ended December 2022

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## **Annual Report for the year ended 31 December 2022.**

The Directors of Comber Youth for Christ are pleased to submit their report and accounts for the period 01 January 2021 to 31 December 2022.

It should be noted that this report is being submitted in retrospect to the serving chairperson, who having been a member of the board, has been undertaking this role on an interim basis since 13<sup>th</sup> May 2019.

Comber Youth for Christ exists primarily for young people in Comber and the neighbouring areas. We seek to empower young people and to educate and support them in their physical, emotional, physiological and spiritual development, with particular focus on their relationships, sexual health and well-being. We exist also to serve and support the local community and strive to promote a healthy and positive message regarding a young person's place in the community.

The Net Youth Project provides staff and volunteers with many experiences, which can be celebrated, but also learned from. As a result of this learning we have enabled staff to address our specific approach to a model of practice, which relates directly to the young people we regularly engage with: our key stakeholders.

Our focus is centred upon the 'whole-person' approach; simply put, we are about the physical, mental, emotional and spiritual development of young people. This is achieved and is encapsulated by relationship; a respect of young people who are valued for who they are and accepted where they are at.

In our experience, young people refrain from engaging in youth provision because there, to varying degrees, is an expectation of instant conformity - to rules, standards or cultural norms which are imposed, rather than learned. Therefore, in our initial engagement we meet young people where they are at, whether in behaviour, language or baggage - they find acceptance. Such an approach may be foreign to a young person, and it may be time-consuming and energy-sapping for the significant adult.

This process is vital to a young person finding acceptance in a positive community; if they don't find it here, we can be rest assured that it will be found in a less positive, less healthy environment. Our 2021 programme was impacted and shaped by the Covid-19 pandemic and the restrictions on group gatherings and social distancing. However, as restrictions were eased, we were able to adapt our programme, meet in smaller groups, and continue to support young people and families in the area. Pre-booking was in place for a number of programmes, to ensure numbers were limited in line with guidelines at the time. After the Easter break, staff were able to start re-opening the centre for a small number of targeted programmes. In 2021, we did a major redesign of our outdoor space which proved extremely valuable as groups were able to meet outside.

Here is a summary of our work over the past twelve months:

## **YOUTH PROGRAMMES**

Comber Youth for Christ exists to help young people reach their full potential. We have a number of programmes which are designed specifically to offer a safe space where young people can engage in conversation, ask questions and develop a sense of community with their peers.

**Primary Seven group:** After the school Easter holidays, staff ran two P7s sessions a week, with limited numbers in line with Covid restrictions. Staff felt it was important to connect with this age group as they prepared to finish primary school and move to secondary.

**Junior and Senior Drop In, and After Schools Programme:** Drop In was re-started towards the end of the year. Staff noted that these sessions gave them a chance to re-connect with the young people, having missed out on regular contact with them due to lockdown.

**Solo:** This is a drop-in session specifically run for young people with autism. The group is run in conjunction with the National Autistic Society. The group started meeting together again in Autumn 2021.

## **COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

**Community Support Fund:** Owing to the difficult circumstances faced by local families during the Covid pandemic, The Net set up a Community Support Fund. This involved offering practical support, such as food items, or financial support, such as a voucher for local shops/services.

**Engaging with local churches:** James McAllister, Centre Co-ordinator, continues to keep in touch with local churches, sharing news, prayer requests and events. Members of local churches are also encouraged to volunteer at the Net.

**Engaging with local schools:** Staff were able to re-connect with local primary schools in the Autumn term and took part in a number of online assemblies. **Connect Young Parents:** Throughout the pandemic, the Connect group remained very engaged with the Net. With this in mind, staff wanted to ensure they could offer the group something in-centre as soon as possible. Staff had stayed connected with the young mums and had met for walks and trips to the park trips where restrictions allowed but being able to hold something in-house was a welcome change. The budget allowed us to purchase

some new equipment that could be used outdoors in the newly developed garden area; we bought a playhouse, climbing dome and slide, along with some big garden games.

**Detached Work/Community safety:** This programme was started with the aim of making Comber a safer community for all its residents. A small team, made up of staff and volunteers, engage with young people in the community who gather in 5 areas known for attracting anti-social behaviour. The intention with the detached work is to engage young people in conversation, develop relationships and direct them to our centre provision. As Covid restrictions eased, detached work was a good way to re-connect with young people and engaging in them in conversation.

### **COUNSELLING & SUPPORT**

**Counselling:** Our counselling programme is another way in which we seek to offer services to support our local community. It has proven to be a valuable service to many young people. We will have a designated space for counselling in our new building, which been available since late 2022.

### **FAITH ACTIVITIES**

**Prayer:** As restrictions eased and outdoor gatherings were permitted, Prayer Walks were organised. This was an event open to anyone in the community, young people, families, local churches. A prayer week was also held at the beginning of the Autumn term.

### **VOLUNTEER DEVELOPMENT**

In every area of what we do, we seek to provide the best service to the young people we engage with; whether facilities, resources or programmes. In upholding this value, we also aim to offer the best that we can in terms of volunteer capacity.

We undertake the appropriate application process, provide training relevant to our context, and support volunteers through an induction process; all to ensure our team of volunteers are comfortable and confident in their role.

We have been fortunate to maintain 8 volunteers.

## Financial Performance

- Income	<b>2022</b>	<b>2021</b>
	£83,590	£72,891
- Expenditure		
	£94,203	£92,213

(See posted accounts for 2022 for further details)

Staff wages, tax and national insurance contributions continue to be the largest expenditure. As the programmes are run by the three members of staff. This is the main expense for all programmes. Programme expenses account for other costs associated with each programme.

### Regular Expenses include:

Mortgage: £7800

Electricity: £534

Gas: £817

Wi-Fi:£953

Water: £142

TV Licence: £158

Staff Wages: £44,782

### Major Risks

Based on this years accounts Comber Youth for Christ has no major risk concerns. The requirement for continued increased donations and grants to continue the funding of 3 staff members continues to be the priority.

**Comber Youth for Christ Limited**  
**Registered number: NI066947**  
**Balance Sheet**  
**as at 31 December 2022**

	Notes	2022 £	2021 £
<b>Fixed assets</b>			
Tangible assets	4	165,371	168,091
<b>Current assets</b>			
Debtors	5	2,495	7,214
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>30,594</u>	<u>29,496</u>
		33,089	36,710
<b>Creditors: amounts falling due within one year</b>	6	(9,433)	(7,800)
<b>Net current assets</b>		<u>23,656</u>	<u>28,910</u>
<b>Total assets less current liabilities</b>		<u>189,027</u>	<u>197,001</u>
<b>Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year</b>	7	(88,242)	(65,603)
<b>Net assets</b>		<u>120,785</u>	<u>131,398</u>
<b>Total Funds</b>			
General Funds	8	72,859	60,721
Restricted Funds	8	47,926	62,677
<b>Shareholders' funds</b>		<u>120,785</u>	<u>131,398</u>

The directors are satisfied that the company is entitled to exemption from the requirement to obtain an audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006.

The members have not required the company to obtain an audit in accordance with section 476 of the Act.

The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 with respect to accounting records and the preparation of accounts.

The accounts have been prepared and delivered in accordance with the special provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies regime. The profit and loss account has not been delivered to the Registrar of Companies.



Robert Dalzell  
Trustee

Approved by the board on 20 September 2023

## **Reference and Administrative Details**

### **Charity Name**

Comber Youth for Christ, also known as The Net.

### **Charity Number**

Registered Charity in Northern Ireland, no. 103460

### **Principal Address**

49 Bridge Street, Comber, Newtownards, County Down, BT23 5AT

### **Charity Trustees as of 31 December 2022**

Mrs Judith Hoey

Mr Robert John Dalzell

Mr Daniel Rosbotham

Mrs Naimh McElroy

Mrs Laura Kerr

Mr Kevin Finlay

Mrs Roberta Watson

Mr Michael Gibson

## **Structure, Governance and Management**

### **Governing Document and Constitution**

Comber Youth for Christ is governed by its memorandum and articles last amended September 2019. Comber Youth for Christ is run by the board and its staff and, as of December 2021, we had 3 members of staff and 8 board members.

### **Charities Trustee Selection and Management**

Comber Youth for Christ is managed by the board of directors (charity trustees).

Trustees are appointed by the board through nomination. In the year to December 2022 A total of 6 meetings took place. The meetings were held on 27th January, 31st March , 26th May , 24<sup>th</sup> October, 24<sup>th</sup> November and 18th December.

At each meeting a youth report was given by one of the members of staff, and any issues arising were raised by the chairman for discussion and input from the Board. During 2021 through to 2022, this involved much discussion around Covid-19 guidelines and limitations, and how and when The Net programmes could run. The Annual Report and Statement of Accounts are approved by the trustees.

### **Objectives & Activities**

To develop and deliver programmes to parents and carers in church and other community settings, addressing in particular teenage risk-taking behaviours through the

application of parenting skills and strategies. To train and resource those working with young people, including teachers and youth workers, around the physical, emotional, physiological and spiritual development of young people and their relational and sexual well-being. To engage with political representatives, government departments and statutory bodies in the development and implementation of holistic policy with regards to Relationships and Sexuality Education and Sexual Health Promotion. To support the Church and wider faith 10 community in actively addressing issues pertaining to relationships and sexuality. To engage with media in relation to project activity and the promotion of our vision. To network and partner with individuals, agencies and churches, locally and internationally, in the pursuit of our vision.

### **Public Benefit Statement**

The board of Comber Youth For Christ confirm that they have complied with their duty under section 17 (5) of the Charities Act 2011 to have regard to the charities Commission's guidance on public benefit and that the public benefit requirement has informed the activities of The Net in the year to December 2020.

### **Summary of Main Activities**

Comber Youth for Christ offers the following as their core activities:

- Junior and Senior Drop in
- After School programme
- Connect Young Parents
- Solo
- Detached work
- Mentoring
- Counselling
- Prayer meetings

Comber Youth for Christ offers these programmes to the community regardless of personal circumstances, race, gender and ability. We work in Comber, but people attend from the wider area. Our focus is centred upon the 'whole-person' approach; simply put, we are about the physical, mental, emotional and spiritual development of young people. This is achieved and is encapsulated by relationship; a respect of young people who are valued for who they are and accepted where they are at.

Approved and adopted on **15th November 2022** and signed on the board's behalf:

Kevin Finlay  
Trustee