

**Charity Registration No. NIC103563**

**Company Registration No. NI037588 (Northern Ireland)**

**Ards Development Bureau  
& Community Network**

**Company Limited by Guarantee**

**Trustees' Report and Unaudited Accounts**

**Year Ended 31 March 2024**

# **Ards Development Bureau & Community Network**

## **Financial Statements**

**Year Ended 31 March 2024**

### **Contents**

	<b>Page</b>
Charity Reference and Administrative Details	3
Trustees' Annual Report	4-7
Independent Examiner's Report	8
Statement of Financial Activities	9
Balance Sheet	10
Notes to the Financial Statements	11-18

## **Ards Development Bureau & Community Network**

### **Charity Reference and Administrative Details**

**Year Ended 31 March 2024**

<b>Charity registration number</b>	NIC103563
<b>Company number</b>	NI037588
<b>Trustees</b>	D W McAlonan K Johnston J Gill D Hawthorne A Osman
<b>Secretary</b>	Cathy Polley
<b>Registered office &amp; Business address</b>	55-55A Frances Street Newtownards Co. Down BT23 7DX
<b>Independent examiner</b>	Guardian Chartered Accountants 2 William Street Newtownards Co. Down BT23 4AH
<b>Bankers</b>	Ulster Bank 22 Frances Street Newtownards Co. Down BT23 7DP

# **Ards Development Bureau & Community Network**

## **Trustees' Annual Report**

### **Year Ended 31 March 2024**

The Trustees present their report and the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2024. The trustees have adopted the provisions of the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) "Accounting and Reporting by Charities" (FRS 102) in preparing the annual report and financial statements of the charity.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in notes to the accounts and comply with the charity's governing document, the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008 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).

#### **Structure, governance and management**

The charity is a company limited by guarantee.

The trustees, who are also directors for the purpose of company law, and who have served during the year and since the year end were:

D W McAlonan  
K Johnston  
J Gill  
D Hawthorne  
A Osman

The company actively promotes a board of trustees which includes a range of skill, experience and knowledge in keeping with the pursuance of its Objects and to this end it is entitled to advertise and interview eligible candidates to be potential trustees of the board.

The Board consists of 8 members. In addition to the Board meetings there are two sub-committees which meet regularly. The sub-committees ensure the day to day running of the project. A full briefing of these sub-committees takes place at the Board meeting. All feedback including recommendations and all decisions are considered and put to the full Board for approval.

The finance sub-committee and finance administrator hold regular meetings. All cheques and BACS payments are passed for payment at monthly Board meetings and signed by at least 2 directors.

The staff committee and policies and procedures committee also meet regularly ensuring that a full management structure is in place for this project.

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.

New trustees are invited and encouraged to attend a series of short training sessions to familiarise themselves with the charity and the context within which it operates. These sessions cover the obligations of trustees, the main documents which set out the operational framework for the charity, resourcing and the current financial position and future plans and objectives. New trustees are also referred to the Charity Commission's guide "The Essential Trustee".

The Trustees have assessed the major risks to which the charity is exposed and are satisfied that systems are in place to mitigate exposure to the major risks.

# Ards Development Bureau & Community Network

## Trustees' Annual Report

Year Ended 31 March 2024

### Objectives and activities

The principle activity of the company continued to be setting up and provision of advice, training and support in a neutral venue for community and voluntary organisations in the Ards and North Down Borough and to address issues of weak community infrastructure by the provision of support in the form of a community development support network.

Core activities for the year included:

Capacity Building/Training Programmes  
Skills Training  
Community Development Events & Activities  
Personal Development Programme

Health & Well-being Programmes  
Community Network Sessions  
Support Services for community and voluntary sector  
Provision of facilities – Conference Facilities, Internet Access, Office Hire, Administration and Secretarial Services

Securing Funding & Resources  
Dissemination of Information Advocacy and Local Policy Development Work  
Peace Building  
Good Relations Programme

The Key objectives of the Charity are:

- i the relief of poverty;
- ii the relief of unemployment;
- iii the advancement of education, training or retraining, particularly among unemployed people, and providing unemployed people with job skills;
- iv the provision of financial assistance, technical assistance or business advice or consultancy in order to provide training and employment opportunities for unemployed people in cases of financial or other charitable need through help: (i) in setting up their own business, or (ii) to existing businesses;
- v the provision of recreational facilities for the public at large or those who by reason of their youth, age, infirmity or disablement, poverty or social and economic circumstances, have need to such facilities;
- vi the development of the capacity and skills of the members of socially and economically disadvantaged communities in the area of benefit in such a way that they are better able to identify, and help meet, their needs to participate more fully in society;
- vii to promote any other charitable purpose at the discretion of the Directors of the Company with the object of improving the conditions of Life of the inhabitants of the area of benefit.

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

### Financial review (including reserves policy)

The accounts have been prepared for the year ended 31 March 2024. The results are set out on page 9 of the financial statements. The charity had recorded net deficit of £6,548 for the year. This was added to reserves brought forward to leave total reserves of £1,353,235 at 31 March 2024.

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 months 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.

# **Ards Development Bureau & Community Network**

## **Trustees' Annual Report**

**Year Ended 31 March 2024**

### **Risk Identification and Management**

The Board of Trustees has assessed the major risks to which the Bureau and Network is exposed, in particular they have highlighted those related to the short-term revenue funding leading to insecurity. This is a risk faced by most voluntary and community organisations. The board proactively work towards self-sustainability by developing the income generating services and facilities provided within the new premises. The Board are satisfied that systems are in place to mitigate exposure to the major risks.

### **Employee involvement**

The charity's policy is to consult and discuss with employees, through unions, staff councils and at meetings matters likely to affect employees' interests.

Information on matters of concern to employees is given through information bulletins and reports which seek to achieve a common awareness on the part of all employees of the financial and economic factors affecting the charity's performance.

### **Disabled persons**

Applications for employment by disabled persons are always fully considered, bearing in mind the aptitudes of the applicant concerned. In the event of members of staff becoming disabled, every effort is made to ensure that their employment within the charity continues and that appropriate training is arranged. It is the policy of the charity that the training, career development and promotion of disabled persons should, as far as possible, be identical to that of the other employees.

### **Compliance with Public Benefit**

The company has given careful consideration to the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland's guidance on public benefit to ensure that the activities entered into during the year have helped to achieve the charity's objectives and activities, as well as providing public benefit.

### **Trustees' responsibilities**

The trustees are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the accounts in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the trustees to prepare accounts 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 accounts, 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 accounts; and
- prepare the accounts 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 accounts comply

**Ards Development Bureau & Community Network**

**Trustees' Annual Report**

**Year Ended 31 March 2024**

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.

On behalf of the board of trustees

J Gill  
Trustee



D W McAlonan  
Trustee & Chair



4/12/24

Dated: 4 December 2024