

GREATER VILLAGE REGENERATION TRUST LTD

DIRECTORS' REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

The directors present their report and financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023.

Objectives and activities

Using a holistic approach to urban regeneration, GVRT is involved in projects that touch every aspect of community life.

Thematic Areas of Concentration for GVRT:

- Community Safety: crime prevention initiatives, youth-diversionary programmes;
- Culture & Arts: public art, cultural murals, and history projects;
- Economic Development: supporting local businesses, providing business incubation units;
- Elderly: physical activity projects, inter-generational events;
- Employment: accredited training programmes, Job Matching Service, Careers Advice, one-to-one support;
- Environment: parks, allotments, graffiti removal, street lighting, bins, and clean-up campaigns;
- Health: accredited programmes and activities in the area to promote positive health and well-being messages;
- Housing: Village Urban Renewal Area, support for accessing grants / transfers / repairs, Housing Rights Advice service;
- Physical Development: working with statutory agencies and the private sector to encourage development of brownfield sites, derelict buildings and open spaces;
- Sport: working with schools, youth clubs, community organisations and new and existing sports clubs on different initiatives;
- Training: Construction skills, work experience in the community, Health and Fitness training;
- Youth: range of educational, cultural (inc. cross-community), sports and facility development programmes.

Achievements and performance

Housing, Environment & Physical Development

GVRT have continued to prioritize its work on housing, environment, and physical development. We continue to work alongside the Northern Ireland Housing Executive, housing associations and private sector organizations to resolve any emerging issues within the community and this year seen us proactively try to encourage and support the local community to get on the social housing waiting list and lobbied the NIHE to complete a latent demand survey of the area to try and evidence the need for additional social housing in this community.

Across the year we have worked alongside other relevant authorities regarding dereliction, environmental improvements, and planning. This year so a lot of work with developers trying to ensure that any new proposed developments were what the community needed, and this saw us have a few successes for additional social housing to be included in new schemes. Further work will take place across the next year to bring these plans to fruition.

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Community Safety

GVRT have worked on a range of community safety issues and organized a wide range of projects over the past year.

Funded by the Belfast City Council Community Activity Medium Grant we ran our Step Up and Take Notice project which sought to improve awareness within the community of safety issues which may affect them and to improve PSNI relations. From this grant we were able to organize a Tea Dance, wellbeing boxes and keep learning workshops which addressed issues such as sexual health, drugs and alcohol, mental health, and domestic abuse.

We also ran our Think Twice project which was funded by the Northern Ireland Housing Executive Community Safety Fund and As part of this project young people from the area who have been identified as being involved in anti-social behavior took part a range of educational workshops and diversionary trips.

We continue to work closely with the PCSP, PSNI and Northern Ireland Housing Executive to overcome and resolve any issues which may arise.

Economic Development

GVRT has continued to focus on developing our Richview Regeneration and this year seen us finally have all our business units rented out to businesses. We continue to support South Belfast Sure start who lease the bottom floor and they continue to thrive and help children and parents within the area with a range of programs and initiatives.

Our employment related advice service was extremely busy across the year providing support to residents with CV creation, Job Search and Job Application and we continued to build links with existing and new employers across the year.

Our TREE Training Centre has continued to grow and develop, with us getting a feasibility study drawn up so that we can move to try and secure capital investment funding in order to build a new and improved premises in the local community which will in turn allow us to provide more services and work with a greater number of residents.

Blythenfield Pitch

We continued to work with local teams and The South Belfast Youth League, and Linfield Football Club, who all use the facility. Alongside this we supported the local primary schools and youth clubs who all use the facility for

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Health and Well Being

We continue to receive funding from Public Health Agency and through this run various health related programs and initiatives for residents such as , Self-Love

Club , Cook it , Older and Active , Sole Sisters Walking Group , Zumba , Yoga.

Throughout the year we worked in the three local primary schools delivering our hugely successful Fitness 8 Programme which focuses on nutrition and physical exercise.

We ran our annual cycle to Lapland charity spin event in December , where all funds raised are donated to our Chosen Charity – Northern Ireland Cancer Fund for Children.

Financial Review

Greater Village Regeneration Trust , faced a difficult year , with the uncertainty of Government Funding and potential cuts across departments , however it continued to plan and deliver on its core outputs and made plans for development across some of its thematic areas.

Staff continued to work extremely hard to ensure that local residents were supported and that our programs and initiatives met their needs despite some challenging months across the sector.

Principal Funding Sources

GVRT continued to receive funding via Department for Communities Neighborhood Renewal Funding , which has been essential in supporting projects through staffing and running costs. In addition to this GVRT was also in receipt of funding from a range of other department such as :

Awards for All

Belfast City Council

Northern Ireland Housing Executive

PBNI

Public Health Agency

Social Enterprise Funding

We would sincerely like to thank all the personnel of the various funding organizations for their support throughout 2022/23.

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Structure, governance and management

Governing document

Greater Village Regeneration Trust is a charitable company limited by guarantee, incorporated in 1999 and reconstituted on 11 July 2001. The company was established under a Memorandum of Association, which established the objects and powers of the charitable company and is governed under its Articles of Association. In the event of the company being wound up members are required to contribute an amount not exceeding £1. Greater Village Regeneration Trust was established in 1999 in response to public concerns about housing issues in the area. However, there was local agreement that a more holistic approach to urban regeneration needed to be adopted, in that the housing problems could not be looked at in isolation.

Issues such as affordable and appropriate levels of employment, community facilities, learning and development opportunities and the physical condition of the area all required urgent attention. This pressure came due to the escalating decline in the locality, which was manifesting itself through increasing levels of social and economic deprivation among the residents.

As a result the Greater Village Regeneration Framework Plan was developed to address needs through a range of issues affecting the quality of life for local residents. Some of the key issues identified through cross-referencing with socio-economic data and consultation with residents and stakeholders are unemployment, lack of training opportunities, low education attainments, lack of economic activity and the need to generate derelict buildings to create greater community usage and benefits.

The principal role of the Trust Board is to galvanise local efforts to articulate and deliver sustainable regeneration in this community of the city of Belfast.

The directors who served during the year and up to the date of signature of the financial statements were:

Mrs P Stevenson
Mrs S Coulter Brown
Mr A M Connolly
Reverend R Moore
Mrs H Harold

Recruitment and Appointment of Management Board

The directors of the company are also charity trustees for the purposes of charity law and under the company's Articles are known as members of the Management Board. Under the requirements of the Memorandum and Articles of Association the members of the Management Board are elected to sit on the Board to serve for a one year period after which they must be re-elected at the next Annual General Meeting.

Due to the nature of the work of Greater Village Regeneration Trust its membership is made up of representatives from the local community, business, political and statutory sectors.

Organisational Structure

Greater Village Regeneration Trust has a Management Board made up of 5 members who meet 10 times per annum and are responsible for the strategic direction and policy of the charity.

All members have equal voting rights, with the Chairman having the casting vote.

The Management Board is supported at an operational level by sub-committees / working groups which were formed to develop the action plans for the Trust's development officers in line with the over-arching objectives of the Trust's Regeneration.

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Disclosure of information to auditor

Each of the directors has confirmed that there is no information of which they are aware which is relevant to the audit, but of which the auditor is unaware. They have further confirmed that they have taken appropriate steps to identify such relevant information and to establish that the auditor is aware of such information.

The report has been prepared in accordance with the special provisions for small companies under part 15 of the Companies Act 2006

The director's report was approved by the Board of Directors.

P. Stevenson

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Mrs Patricia Stevenson

Director

Dated: 19th Dec 23