

JIGSAW COMMUNITY COUNSELLING CENTRE

TRUSTEE'S REPORT (including DIRECTOR'S REPORT)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

The Trustees present their report and accounts for the year ended 31st December 2023.

The accounts have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in Note 1 to the accounts and comply with the Charity's Memorandum and Articles of Association, the Companies Act 2006 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 (FRS102)" (as amended for accounting periods commencing from 1st January 2016).

Objectives and Activities

The Charity's objects as set out in its Memorandum and Articles are

- the preservation, protection and promotion of mental health & well being
- the relief of poverty and sickness
- the advancement of education

These objects are for the promotion of the benefit of the inhabitants of Northern Ireland and its environs of the United Kingdom without distinction of age, gender, disability, sexual orientation, nationality, ethnic identity, political or religious opinion.

The policies adopted in furtherance of these objects are to associate the local and statutory authorities, medical and other public health bodies, community and voluntary organisations, the private sector and the inhabitants in a common effort to advance education with the object of improving the conditions of life for the said inhabitants.

Public Benefit

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

Achievements & Performance

This year has been a particularly difficult year for Jigsaw as we have had a huge demand for our services and yet, not enough income to meet the demands of the local community. As a result, our waiting lists have grown considerably again leaving us with an agonising decision as to whether we need to close waiting lists for a period of time rather than having people waiting for long periods of time for help. This is difficult because our ethos has always been to offer help when people need it and not when it is too late, or the crisis has passed.

Contributing to the growing list has been the loss of funding for Healthy Happy Minds. This has put a huge pressure on schools who are constantly referring pupils to us. As well as this, we are seeing more and more people who were affected badly by the covid pandemic and are now struggling with their mental health as a result.

We are still waiting on new premises being built and as a result we are very limited to the rooms we have. We have been working alongside the local Elim church who have been supporting us by letting us use their rooms when necessary. We have also tried to accommodate as many people as possible by changing our working hours and opening later in the evenings for more people to be seen.

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This year we continue to provide placements not only for students wanting to work with adults but also students doing the CCYP training to work with young people. We pride ourselves on the excellent training and support we give to the students and in return we can see a number of children and adults free of charge because each student needs 100 hours of one-to-one counselling.

2023 was a year of increasing recognition for Jigsaw at all levels of our community, thanks largely to the skills and dedication of our many volunteers and hardworking staff, and the continuing support of our partner organisations, including an ever-growing number of local Community groups.

Jigsaw was formed to give the residents of Ballysillan and Upper Ardoyne access to high quality counselling by therapists who understand the local scene and culture. As this is an area of great economic and social deprivation, our community work has never been financially self-supporting, but heavily subsidised by grants, by the modest surpluses generated by our school-work, grant applications and by making full use of counsellors in training.

We are delighted to report that the Department for Communities (DFC) continued to make a substantial financial contribution to the cost of our community work from September 2013 and this remains in place until the end of March 2025. This allows us to see community clients free of charge at present and pay normal salaries.

Grateful as we are to the DFC and the other grant making organisations that support us, we are still under significant pressure to raise more funding to keep seeing the clients in the local community as the numbers are growing faster than we ever thought possible. Any money we receive is also for project costs and we have no money to cover day to day costs. The only satisfactory long-term solution is for Jigsaw to raise a fund of money (known technically as working capital) for this purpose, and we are exploring ways of doing so.

We celebrated Jigsaw's 13th Birthday in June 2023. We have had many laughs and seen many clients grow and flourish despite the struggles and stresses they faced, which in some cases included attempting suicide. Watching lives be transformed is a great privilege. Jigsaw couldn't survive without the support of its staff as well as our board of directors, who provide their help as well as their words of wisdom over the past year and longer.

Lastly, Jigsaw would like to thank Mr Derek Harkness for all his support over the last ten years as chairperson, who is due to leave the organisation shortly, and wish him every success for the future.

Future Plans

We continue to work closely with over 20 local community groups including social services, GP surgeries, churches, etc. We are particularly pleased that church and integrated schools are well represented among them, for it shows that they recognise our non-discriminatory policy and desire to work for reconciliation and integration within this troubled community, which is a positive experience because we know we are addressing huge needs in the community.

The primary focus of our community work is the advanced form of counselling called psychotherapy. In the last few months of their training, student counsellors must obtain considerable experience of providing psychotherapy for adults, under close supervision. Suitable training placements are in short

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supply; so well-trained students are keen to become involved in our community work as volunteer counsellors.

There is also a great need in this deprived part of Belfast for simpler types of support, so we now run drop-in sessions several times a week, where local residents can talk to an experienced listener about their personal problems, join a support group, book a course of psychotherapy or arrange for a mentor to help them improve their life skills, whether on a group basis, or one-to-one. We provide mentoring in such areas as parenting and/or basic catering for young mothers, or elder care for those with elderly relatives. For mentors, we use counselling students who are not yet ready to start providing psychotherapy, and mature volunteers with suitable life experience: by intervening in this practical way, mentors can supplement the psychotherapy provided by our counsellors, and in some cases, help clients to put their lives in order before they develop stress-related conditions that need psychotherapy. Currently we have eleven students doing placements with us and a further fifteen volunteers working either towards accreditation for counselling or volunteering in a mentor role with the organisation.

Financial Review and Reserves

Although the Charity made a deficit of £41,447 this, in conjunction with the surplus of £19,166 in 2022, created a deficit of £22,281 over the two years. Due to the ongoing negative impact of Covid, the Charity has concentrated on ensuring the waiting lists were managed as well as possible. This has resulted in an overall deficit in the reserves, mainly due to the Long Term BBLS Creditor, which will be repaid over the next 3 years. The Trustees remain confident that they are able to meet on-going operational requirements and working capital remains sufficient to meet outgoings as required.

It is still the policy of the Charity that unrestricted funds return to previous levels, maintaining reserves of between 3 to 6 months expenditure. At the year end the current bank account was £30,112 of which £9,527 was restricted funds, funding salaries for 3 months. The unrestricted balance of £20,585 is sufficient to fund the BBLS payments and overheads for at least 6 months. The Charity has therefore met its commitment to return to hitting this policy target in 2023.

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.

Structure, governance and management

Jigsaw Community Counselling Centre is a private company limited by guarantee incorporated in England and Wales registration number NI605511 and as a charity with the NI Charity Commission for NI number 103927 6th Oct 2016.

The registered office is 815 Crumlin Road, Belfast, Antrim, BT14 8AA.

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FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

The Trustees, who are also the Directors for the purpose of company law, and who served during the year were:

- Mr D Harkness
- Ms O MacShane
- Miss E Clarke
- Mrs D McCormick

Our Trustees are known as Directors and are recruited from appropriately qualified members of the local community who understand the needs and culture of North Belfast residents.

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 winding up.

A new strategic plan is being finalised for 2024 – 2027, which will include moving into the new premises and how this can be combined with the existing services to best meet the needs of the local community and achieve our ongoing policies and renew our objectives for the future.

Strategic decisions are made by the Board after reviewing and discussing recommendations made by the Chief Executive Officer, to whom the Directors delegate the day-to-day running of the Charity.

The Charity are currently seeking to recruit suitable new members, specifically individuals with local knowledge to bring further diversity to complement existing skills and experience.

Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities

The Trustees, who are also the Directors of Jigsaw Community Counselling Centre for the purpose of company law, 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 appropriate to presume that the Charity will continue in operation.

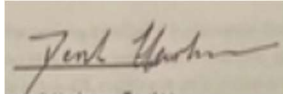
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The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Charity and enable them to ensure that the accounts comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention of fraud and other irregularities.

The Trustees' report was approved by the Board of Trustees.

A rectangular box containing a handwritten signature in cursive script, which appears to read "Derek Harkness".

Mr D Harkness, Trustee

Dated: 30th June 2024