

North West Lifelong Learning Limited
Trustees Annual Report

North West Lifelong Learning

The trustees, who are also directors of the charity for the purposes of the Companies Act 2006, present their report with the unaudited financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2024.

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Company No. NI603130

Charity No. NI104592

Principal Office

Roe Valley Support & Advice Centre
32 Main Street
BALLYKELLY
County Londonderry
BT49 9HS

Registered Office

32 Main Street
BALLYKELLY
County Londonderry
BT49 9HS

Directors and Trustees

The Directors of the charitable company are its Trustees for the purposes of charity law.
The following Directors and Trustees served during the year:

Elizabeth Ferguson
Mary McMahon
Matthew Ferguson

Company Secretary

Elizabeth Ferguson

Accountants

Vale Accountants
11 Thorndale Terrace
BALLYMONEY
County Antrim
BT53 7AZ

Bankers

Unity Trust plc
4 Brindley Place
Birmingham
B1 2JB

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

The purpose of North West Lifelong Learning Ltd is to advance the education of the inhabitants of the North West of Northern Ireland and other parts of the United Kingdom as from time to time determined by need, with the object of improving the conditions of life for said inhabitants, in particular offering education and associated support freely to those to those in its community who are unemployed or who need to acquire new skills for either work purposes or for increased social interaction by associating with statutory authorities, local agencies and community/voluntary organisations.

In the Financial Year 2023-24, NWLL Ltd provided: 1. Online learning and assessment e-portfolios (electronic portfolios) to allow study from either home, work or a classroom. 2. An open exam centre for anyone taking electronic exams in any subject across Northern Ireland, Ireland & the UK. 3. Free educational advice and networking support for educational advancement for unemployed & employed beneficiaries; 4. A support and advice centre registered with Advice NI to assist those aged 60+ with networking advice for pensions and benefits information. For the fourth year running, the biggest increase in this fiscal year has been those undertaking study courses with the Association of Accounting Technicians (AAT). Three trained invigilators are provided by Ceres Europe (NI) Ltd which still shares admin accommodation within the building at 32 Main Street Ballykelly. Pearson Vue exams, which have been a core for NWLL since 2003 are still an essential part of the facility at NWLL and take place on dedicated days per month, providing extra income for the charity in terms of rental income. It must be stressed again that NWLL Ltd is still an essential part of the exam structure private provision in Northern Ireland, especially in the North and North West and is still the only truly open exam centre for those wishing to take their professional and compliance exams for workplaces and industry. The exam rooms have been inspected again in 2023 and approved for suitability for exams. The Ceres Europe invigilation staff have been commended on their willingness to accommodate both AAT & Pearson clients at short notice and work closely with NWLL Directors to ensure the building structure remains in good condition. An additional part-time worker was present at the most recent inspection and was commended on his interaction and assistance to the Inspector. NWLL directors invest in volunteers who remain a strong part of the main charity shop.

The charity remains committed to providing educational advice and open exam access for anyone wishing to carry out their self-study courses. Limavady was chosen in 2018/19 as a medium town for the roll-out of Universal Credit (UC), and once again in 2024, NWLL Volunteer Advisers pin-pointed a gap of information for older rural residents who have been isolated from main benefit centres in Londonderry and Coleraine. NWLL in Ballykelly is centrally positioned in the village of Ballykelly with other centres almost 20 miles away in either direction. The lack of knowledge of pension requirements and the need to create a Government Gateway account for access to HMRC services has still not been addressed sufficiently in this rural area and NWLL, with its superb knowledge of how to work with older learners still remains to the fore and Trustees have remained with our original purpose of improving the ICT capability of those who are not computer or Internet savvy. NWLL, as the leaseholder, still accommodates both Ceres Europe (NI) Ltd (Community Education) and Roe Valley Ancestral Researchers (a history group) to share the location and they both provide staff and volunteer support to complete Admin duties. This sharing of costs towards heat, light and power bills is still very welcome, and indeed essential, in this year of rising fuel costs and has played a key role in maintaining the viability of all 3 organisations.x

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

May 2023: NWLL supported one volunteer through Level 3 Diploma for IT users. May and August 2023: NWLL has provided to their exam centre 3 invigilators, 2 were volunteer invigilators and 1 was an employed invigilator. One of the volunteer invigilators has now gained employment being an invigilator 4 days a month when requested. June 2023, NWLL put all volunteers through a safeguarding familiarisation course and their basic Access NI Checks. August and September 2023 - two volunteers put through their Level 1 Food Hygiene and Safety, one volunteer put through Level 2 food Hygiene and Safety. August and November 2023: Five persons (female) aged between 25-40 were signed up to complete a course on employability skills and personal development so that they could develop courses and training for others in this rural area that are starting out as volunteers. Two of this group have progressed to study for their assessor award, with one unit complete and currently they are still engaged with the programme developed by Ceres Europe (NI) Ltd and funded by NWLL. February 2024: a Keeping Adults Safe course was completed by one of our Admin members and subsequently was signed up for completing the assessor award. February and March 2024: NWLL has helped and assisted 50 people from the local community to avail of a Bryson Emergency Relief Cost of Living Grant towards electricity in the months of February and March; NWLL advisors managed to get the assistance they needed in the current cost of living crisis and these 50 people availed of £200 each, resulting in a total of £10,000 out into the local community. March 2024: NWLL completed a Land Based Skills Recruitment Event with funding from Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council. NWLL continues to mentor the small craft group that operates from the building on a Thursday evening, the craft club availed of grant assistance from social connections that NWLL applied for on their behalf. Shop volunteers completed over 300 hours each for the year and are being assisted by a NWLL Director to record their hours and receive certification for their volunteer work.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

The trustees consider the financial performance by the charity during the year to have been satisfactory. Shop takings are now collected digitally, reducing actual cash in the shop and easier for accounting purposes. The trustees have examined the charity's requirements for reserves in the light of the main risk to the organisation. The working capital and future funding are dependent on establishing further reserves going forward.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

North West Lifelong Learning Ltd is a Company Limited by Guarantee and registered with both HMRC and the Northern Ireland Charity Commission. Presently it has 3 Volunteer Trustees (2 female, 1 male).

The charity invests heavily in establishing reliable and trustworthy long-term volunteers. This would be the base from which to recruit further volunteers and potential Trustees. Existing Trustees would recommend, interview and select whom to appoint. A new Director has been mentored from amongst our volunteer base and chosen as an addition to the list of Trustees for the year 2024-25.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records that 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. The Trustees are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The above report has been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies regime as set out in Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 and in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102).

North West Lifelong Learning Limited
Trustees Annual Report

Signed on behalf of the board

Elizabeth Ferguson
Company Secretary
31 March 2024

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Elizabeth Ferguson MBE". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'E' and a distinct 'J' at the end.