

SUMMER MADNESS (NI) LTD
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTOR'S REPORT)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022

The trustees present their annual report and financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2022.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in note 1 to the financial statements and comply with the charity's governing document, 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 (FRS 102)" (effective 1 January 2019).

Objectives and activities

Summer Madness exists to enthuse, equip, and engage the youth and young people of Ireland in their Christian faith so that they may be real change-makers in their churches and communities across the island. The principal object of the company is organising the Summer Madness Christian summer conference. Our aim is to support young people as they integrate life and work and faith in ways that benefit society more widely in improving their citizenship and social responsibility.

Summer Madness runs Ireland's largest Christian youth event. The camp was started by Church of Ireland Youth Department over thirty years ago and now attracts up to 2,000 visitors, many of whom camp on site for the duration of the conference. It usually takes place on the first weekend of July and runs from Friday to Tuesday and, for five years has been held at Glenarm Estate, Northern Ireland. In 2020 the camp was cancelled for the first time due to Covid restrictions. In 2021 we organised a very different style of festival with limitations on numbers and activities. In this year (2022) we re-located to a site in Portglenone, grazing farmland within the boundaries of the contemplative Cistercian community at Our Lady of Bethlehem Abbey (11 Ballymena Road, Portglenone, Ballymena, BT44 8BL).

One of the stand-out developments of this year has been the growing relationship with the monastery and Brother Aelred, who leads the community. The mutual feelings are that this is an arrangement that may have longevity in it. John Kee has been imagining something long-term here. Writing this report in 2023 I can safely say that this is a direction that will re-appear in next year's report.

John Kee's mantra for 2022 (and as part of his five-year strategy for long-term future Madness) was "Make it easier to organise and make it easier to attend." John is developing 'flat-pack' set-up plans that can be followed by others, thus not depending as much on his experience and nous. He has also been developing ways for agencies and campers to more easily access the festival online and in real-life. In a world where leadership volunteering is becoming more difficult to maintain or find the aim is to reduce the difficulties for groups in terms of supervision, camping, catering and participation in the festival. The MadApp is also part of this process, both at the festival and throughout the year.

This year's Festival returned to its pre-pandemic shape – five nights (Friday to Tuesday) and mostly residential camping over the weekend of school closing at the end of June. There were around 1,500 people participating. As a new green-field and farmland site there were many challenges – entrances and exits, access for heavy vehicles, parking, camping, utilities... the site crew did an incredible job of making it all safe, accessible, and a very positive experience for all who attended. There will be annual improvements as the years progress.

The 2022 theme was Pray Without Ceasing. Two things were exceptional.

- The first was the obvious connection with the monastery and their life of prayer. Father Aelred's contribution on mainstage on the first night was very warmly received by the young people.
- The second was the involvement of 24:7 Prayer throughout the festival. Their input was enthusiastic and accessible to all. Much appreciation to them.

Summer Madness has always been a collaborative enterprise and involves a range of 'partner' agencies, whose support and encouragement make the festival what it is today. Our partners who provide venues, activities, programme, and personnel did not hesitate to do whatever they could to bring the event together at Portglenone.

One much appreciated development on site for the campers was designating marquees to groups of groups from a Diocese or group of churches. They were then able to assist the catering and provide inter-active times and spaces for their groups. This appears to have worked well.

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In addition to the youth camp, Summer Madness seeks to provide a range of other opportunities to young people and leaders. Over recent years we have developed a number of projects such as StreetReach, the Youth Ministry Facebook Group, The 'Time Out' magazine publication of John's Gospel and of the Acts of the Apostles which has followed up this year with an online App that provides a selection of devotional reflections on the book of Psalms. Over recent years we have carried out several fundraising and advocacy campaigns, (Toilet Twinning, Haass Hope - Political awareness/ mobilization, Anti-Trafficking, Anti-Poverty work etc).

This process has continued and grown throughout 2022. Both church and statutory networks have been trying out the app and have begun to buy it.

Statement of Compliance

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

In the Autumn of 2022 we have reviewed and upgraded our understanding and processes of GDPR. There will now be awareness training available online.

Achievements and performance

We have much evidence over the years of the effectiveness of our work in supporting young people as they benefit society.

In addition to running Summer Madness, the charitable company has lent its expertise to the development of similar initiatives on the whole of Ireland in partnership with other agencies.

As a charity with a small core staff, we make extensive use of volunteers, a reduced number at the festival this year. The experience of volunteering with Summer Madness gives those volunteers skills and experience which they take into the rest of their lives. The innovation of the year was the introduction of Silver Servers. This is mainly office work and preparation for the Festival programme. As the name suggest, it is targeted at early-retired. A number of people are now working regularly in various part-time capacities throughout the off-season months.

Financial review

The Financial Statements deal with all the income and expenditure of the charitable company, as well as its financial position at the year end. The results for the year and the financial position were considered satisfactory by the trustees.

At 31 December 2022, total charity funds were £146,209 (2021: £282,966).

Principal funding sources and how they support key objectives

For our ongoing work we are funded by ticket sales at festivals, regular monthly donors, one-off donations, tax refunds on gift aided donations and grant support from Public bodies. For special projects we seek funding from supportive organisations and individuals.

The charity is currently in possession of Education Authority Funding in relation to the MadApp project, the project was originally planned for 2 years and funding was provided on this basis with a repayment clause for unspent funds included as part of the provisions of the grant. Works have been extended into a third year and the Charity remains in contact with the Education Authority regarding an extension and we hope that the Authority's support will remain in place for the additional year and the remaining funds can continue to be applied to the project.

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Risks and uncertainties

The Board continues to support the need for a 'reserve policy'. This would also bring the company in line with the Charities Commission advice on reserves.

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 six month's support costs. 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. Reserves at 31 December 2022 amounted to £146,209 (2021: £282,966) which includes designated funds of £5,000 for costs in relation to the quest for a permanent site for the annual festival.

Plans for future periods

The trustees plan to keep a tight control of expenditure and continue efforts to increase donations, the support base of the charitable company and the promotion of the conference 2022.

Two flows of thought during 2022:

- For several years there has been a sense of needing to consider a permanent site for the festival. A variety of venues for such a thing have been considered in a casual way. These discussions and hopes have continued in 2022, almost exclusively now directed to Portlengone, the monastery, and their leasing arrangement with a local farmer. We negotiated space and time with him for this year's festival. The negotiations include longer-term arrangement with him and the monastery.
- The aims and objects of the company/charity. It has been many years since Summer Madness was officially constituted. There is a growing feeling that we need to make sure our constitution is fit for purpose and that we have some agreed protocols around 1. terms of office for Directors and office holders and 2. finding new directors with appropriate expertise. So far these have been casual conversations, but this will become Board business very soon.

Structure, governance and management

The charity is a company limited by guarantee and is constituted under a Memorandum of Association dated 24th June 2005 and is recognised as a charity by HMRC, charity number XR83441 and by the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland, charity number NIC104975.

The trustees, who are also the directors for the purpose of company law, and who served during the year and up to the date of signature of the financial statements were:

Mr D Johnston

Mr N Gilbert (Resigned 31 May 2022)

Mr F McMorrow

Rev Adrian McCartney

Mr D Wilson

Mrs R Alderdice

Mrs J Russell

The Venerable B Forde

Mr J Hayes

Mr J Currie (Appointed 8 November 2022)

As required on ad hoc basis the trustees discuss the appointment of potential new trustees for appointment to the Board. Suitable people are approached and if they are willing to serve on the board their nominations is put forward for approval by the Board. The trustees are appointed for three years and are available for re-election. New members receive the relevant governing documents and the annual financial report. In practice all trustees stand for re-election each year at the AGM.

The chief executive officer of the charity is Mr John Kee.

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The Board of Trustees is responsible for all aspects of corporate governance within the charitable company. It meets a minimum of six times a year to define and agree strategic priorities for the charity, monitor progress and review the resources available to sustain the charitable company. The day to day running of the charity is carried out by the Chief Executive. John Kee.

Risk management

The trustees have assessed the major risks, to which the Charity is exposed, in particular those related to the operations and finances of the charitable company. The trustees are satisfied that systems are in place to mitigate any exposure to major risks.

Public Benefit statement

Trustees have complied with the duty to have regard to the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland's statutory guidance on the public benefit requirement, issued under the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008.

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

Rev Adrian McCartney
Chairman

21 September 2023