

**NEW BELFAST COMMUNITY ARTS INITIATIVE
(TRADING AS COMMUNITY ARTS PARTNERSHIP)
STATEMENT OF THE TRUSTEES REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023**

The Directors have pleasure in submitting their annual report together with the financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2023.

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

New Belfast Community Arts Initiative is a company limited by guarantee whose objects are recognised as charitable by HM Revenue & Customs.

New Belfast Community Arts Initiative trading as Community Arts Partnership is a registered charity (XR 36570) and a company limited by guarantee (Northern Ireland NI 37645) and is registered with the Northern Ireland Charity Commission (NIC 105169).

Our Mission is:

To lead in the promotion, development, and delivery of community arts practice to affect positive change.

Our vision is:

To foster a just, inclusive, peaceful, and creative society where diversity is embraced, and participation is valued.

We maintain a two-fold approach to arts development:

- Supporting access and participation through advocacy and leadership.
- Promoting authorship and ownership via active engagement in projects and programmes.

Key Programmes and Activities in 2023:

- 73 groups across 4 art form areas on our community programme.
- 15 groups on our inter-community programme.
- 23 groups places on our inter-ability Side by Side programme.
- 55 schools places programmed on our Poetry in Motion in Schools programme.
- 22 Poet in residence projects on our Poetry in Motion Community.
- over 5,500 workshop and event participants and 7,800 support responses made

Community Arts Partnership continues to:

- Serve as the central point of contact for the community arts sector.
- Advocate for the sector, engaging with government, councils, and arts organizations.
- Provide and grow research and information dissemination.
- Develop new local, regional, and international partnerships.

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Advocacy

CAP remains committed to its advocacy role in Northern Ireland, continuing to promote the profile and status of the community arts sector. In 2023, we:

- Engaged with government, policy makers and councils on a range of policy and strategic consultations, eg:
 - Arts Council's 10 year strategy, ACNI as host and umbrella organisational lead.
 - Peaceplus programme development, BCC as consultative member.
 - Embrace a Giant Spirit Culture & Heritage Experience Programme Tourism NI, as consultee
 - Ministerial Culture, Arts And Heritage Strategy Taskforce, DfC as member.
 - NICVA's Good Governance Group, as member.
 - ACNI Minority Ethnic Arts Deliberative Forum, as member.
- Continued to host and update the ArtsMatterNI campaign.
- Provided information and research on the positive impacts of community arts to over 450 organisations and schools.
- Participated in and hosted a range of additional informal events to foster networking and experience-sharing.

Information Services

In 2023, CAP's Information Unit further expanded its reach, producing weekly and monthly e-news bulletins that grew to over 2700 subscribers on average per month. The total hits on our website exceeded 12 million, reflecting a continued increase in engagement.

This information is available through:

- The Weekly (CAW) newsletter.
- The Monthly online features based e-zine.
- The Captain's Blog.
- On-line news pages.
- The Directory, an artist/community online directory.
- Our funding and advice surgeries.
- On-site and on-line library of community arts theory and practice.

Research

Our research efforts in 2023 focused on mapping our current and future services with community. We collaborated with over 120 community organisations to ensure relevance and integration with existing research activities. This research has led to assisting more than 12 supported applications to various funders.

Platforms for networking and sharing experiences

In 2023, CAP organised consultation for a, across a range of issues, partnering with either statutory agencies or community partners (or both) drawing participation from local, national, and international practitioners and professionals.

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Partnership Working

Our commitment to partnership working remained strong in 2023, leading to collaborations with a range of new partners, both locally and cross border. These partnerships include:

- Forget Me Nots, Dublin; dementia inclusive choir, supported by Creative Ireland.
- Mears UK, refugee expressive arts.
- Forthspring, expressive arts intercommunity programme.
- Belfast and District Trades Union, May Day event exhibitions and walking tour development.
- Irish Congress of trades Unions, May Day event development.
- Northern Health and Social Care Trust; poetry pod programming.

The ARC

The ARC continued to serve as a vital resource in 2023, offering a safe and well-provisioned space for creativity. In 2023 face-to-face activities saw a huge resurgence and with that a range of new partners hiring our variety of space at much higher frequencies. However, with planning approved for the redevelopment of the site on which our HQ is located, CAP is now exploring means to secure the building as a dedicated community arts centre.

Governance & Management Structure

Ms K McFarlane
Mr P Campbell
Mr J McCann

Management Committee:

In 2023, the Management Committee continued to provide strategic direction and governance for CAP. The committee was comprised of 3 trustees and a company secretary. John McCann (Chair), Karen McFarlane (Vice-Chair), Philip Campbell (Finance) and Conor Shields (CEO and Company Secretary) respectively.

Day-to-Day Operational Management:

Under the leadership of Chief Executive Conor Shields, CAP's operations continued to thrive. In 2023, personnel levels were maintained across core operations and indeed, project coordinators and freelance arts and creative producers.

Risk Assessment

CAP's maintains ongoing and constant review of risk and its management via our central risk register. We have a traffic light system in place to identify and manage risk across governance, operations, finances, and external factors, ensuring that CAP remains resilient and adaptable. Additional large scale events off-premises has seen the development of new risk assessment protocols. Similarly, all artist in resident programmes have a new risk assessment tool (online) as well as training and induction in its implementation.

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Financial Review

The Statement of Financial Activities describes New Belfast Community Arts Initiative (trading as Community Arts Partnership's) income and expenditure and funds for the year. The Income of £379,866 was significantly higher than the previous year, with significant capital subventions and much appreciated donations accounting for the rise. Overall expenditure of £292,581, decreasing from the previous year.

In year, our principal funder, the Arts Council of Northern Ireland (ACNI) again agreed to contribute £211,144 through its Annual Funding Programme through a range of core and programme funding.

CAP also received significant capital investment for equipment from its principal funder.

Belfast City Council agreed to contribute £36,250 in a new cycle of Core Multi-Annual Grant aid, along with various projects through Community Festivals funding.

The year reflected the ongoing pattern of programming across the year and the region.

Reserves

Cash at hand: As of December 2023, our cash at hand stood at £109,769, allowing for reserves to be retained to address ongoing contingent liabilities and thus ensuring organisational stability.

Contingent liability is always of concern: CAP has 3 permanent employees and 6 part time freelance co-ordinators. This presents an additional contingent liability in terms of potential redundancy approaching over £60,000. Suggested best practice around the retention of reserves by ACEVO and indeed NICVA is 3/4 months turnover. (At this time, we have no significant pension liabilities to report. However, we currently do not command adequate fund reserves to mitigate our contingent liabilities and the organisation is struggling to augment its ability to fund these financial risks and indeed a range of risks that cannot be foreseen, as has been highlighted by the impact of the global pandemic on our day to day working).

Public Benefit

In 2023, CAP continued to deliver on its charitable objects, advancing public education in the arts, fostering community development, and providing facilities for creative engagement. All assets were used in support of these objectives, with services offered free at the point of contact.

- New e-minibus for transportation of both equipment and participants / staff. *
- New podcasting equipment for professional and community access,*
- Updated presentation and digital film making equipment including cameras, projectors and laptops.*
- Mobile air purifying systems.*
- Scoping new arts resource centre to enhance community and professional offer.

* - supported by Arts Council of Northern Ireland Health and Safety capital grant

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Future Development

Looking ahead to 2024 and beyond, CAP plans to seek greater and more diverse investment from both an expanded rollcall of funders to support core operational sustainability and partner in new and exciting project work in community settings.

Public Benefit

New Belfast Community Arts Initiative t/a Community Arts Partnership identifies its charitable objects as:

(1) To advance public education and stimulate and educate interest in the Arts for the benefit of the public and communities in N Ireland and elsewhere (the "area of benefit"), particularly but not exclusively, by any or all of the following means:

- (a) promoting, organising and publicising cultural and arts activities, events, performances, workshops, initiatives and exhibitions;
- (b) encouraging appreciation for and the participation in community arts and the creative arts by people in the area of benefit through the provision of information, publications, advice, support, training and facilities
- (c) providing advocacy on behalf of the arts sector, particularly relating to community arts

(2) To advance community development by engaging with and assisting such groups and organisations, that have a genuine interest in furthering the Objects of the Charity, to organise and participate in cultural and arts projects and initiatives.

(3) The provision of facilities and amenities for recreation and other leisure-time occupation within N Ireland with the object of improving the conditions of life of members of the public having need of such facilities by reasons of their age, sex, youth, disabilities, poverty and social and economic circumstances.

(4) To promote such other charitable purposes as may from time to time be determined.

All the charity's assets are used for charitable purposes in support of these objects. Board/Management Committee members do not receive any monetary benefit for their role in governing the charity. In the event of any winding up of the charity its remaining assets shall be transferred to another charitable body with similar objects via cy pres. We strive to offer all services free at the point of contact.

Future Development

We will continue to grow and support current and new initiatives including local, national and international symposia, progress local strategy development around community arts practice, advocate for better processes for cultural producers and develop new training and support programmes for artists and communities and with developing our regional workshop and project offering.

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Statement of Statement of the Trustees responsibilities

The Trustees, who are also the directors of New Belfast Community Arts Initiative for the purpose of company law, are responsible for preparing the Statement Of The Trustees Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company Law requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements 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 financial statements, 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 financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements 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 financial statements 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 and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

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Disclosure of information to auditor

The Trustees who held office at the date of approval of this report confirm that, to the best of their knowledge, there is no relevant audit information of which the charity's auditors are unaware. Each Trustee has taken all necessary steps to ensure that they are aware of any relevant audit information.

Auditor

AAB Group Accountants Limited have expressed their willingness to continue as auditors for CAP, and in accordance with Article 382 of the Companies Act 2006, a resolution proposing their reappointment will be submitted at the next General Meeting.

Approval

This report was approved by the Directors and signed on their behalf.



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Mr C Shields
Company Secretary
Dated: 31/10/24