

The Churches' Trust Limited

Company Limited by Guarantee

Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Directors' Report)

Year ended 31 March 2024

The trustees, who are also the directors for the purposes of company law, present their report and the unaudited financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2024.

Reference and administrative details

Registered charity name	The Churches' Trust Limited
Charity registration number	NIC105253
Company registration number	NI027217
Principal office and registered office	11 Limavady Road Waterside Derry/Londonderry BT47 6JU

The trustees

Mrs D Rudd - Chair	
Mr M Agnew - Treasurer	
Mr B Bell	(Retired 21 September 2023)
Rev Canon S R Boyd	
Rev Fr M Canny	
Mrs J Hetherington	
Rev C Jones	
Mrs J Miller	
Mr D McGowan	
Mr J O'Kane	
Mr A Rowan	
Deacon M Skuce	

Member Trustees

Bishop Andrew Forster
Bishop Donal McKeown
Rev Stephen Skuce
Rev Susan Moore

Chief Executive Mary Holmes

Independent examiner Donaldson & Thompson Chartered Accountants
3 Limavady Road
Londonderry
BT47 6JU

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Structure, governance and management

The organisation is a charitable company limited by guarantee, incorporated on 9th February 1993 and accepted as a charity by HM Revenue & Customs under reference NI01212 and registered with the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland on 24th May 2016 under charity number NIC105253. 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 £5.

The Directors are appointed by the Member Trustees, the leaders of the Church of Ireland, Methodist Church, Presbyterian Church, and Catholic Church in the North West area. Each Member Trustee appoints one clergy and two lay people to serve as Directors on the Board.

The Directors are responsible for the strategic direction, and the overall management and accountability of the organisation. The Board meet every six to eight weeks. Board membership is diverse in its representation across communities and has a broad skills and expertise base, including financial management, PR, Health & Safety and various community & voluntary sector roles.

The Directors delegate responsibility for day-to-day operations to the Chief Executive and staff team. The Chief Executive provides direct line management for staff employed.

The organisation has developed robust systems and procedures for monitoring and evaluating its work, primarily shaped by the reporting and accountability obligations defined by funding bodies, regulatory organisations and various stakeholders. These systems include mechanisms for ongoing review and evaluation and feed directly into reports to the Board of Directors, which include the following:

- Financial management (including monthly management accounts)
- Performance results against targets
- Stakeholder relationship development
- Regulatory, audit and compliance matters
- Policy and procedure development and approval
- New initiatives
- Human Resource and other organisational matters
- Project / service evaluation and review

Prior to the commencement of the financial year, the board approves a budget that defines the financial parameters and the performance targets for the year. This document is a critical part of the management, monitoring and evaluation of the organisation's performance. The organisation has extensive expertise in managing and claiming grants both of a capital nature and a revenue nature.

Objectives and activities

The principal activities and objects of the charity as per the company's Memorandum is 'to promote the benefit of the inhabitants of the North West of Ireland without distinction of sex or political, religious or other opinions by associating the local authorities, churches, voluntary organisations and inhabitants in a common effort to relieve poverty, sickness and distress and to advance education so as to improve the conditions of life for the said inhabitants...'

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Year ended 31 March 2024

Objectives and activities *(continued)*

Our Vision is: A cohesive community without discrimination, disadvantage, or division where people from all communities and backgrounds can equally contribute. Our Mission is: Utilise the strength and determination of local communities to identify, challenge and tackle the causes and impact of discrimination, disadvantage and division reflecting an ethos of peace, trust, humility and hope which are central to our Christian values.

Our work is underpinned by a Trauma Informed Approach and an awareness of Adverse Childhood Experiences, Adverse Community Environments, and Atrocious Cultural Experiences (ACEs). During the last year we have focused on embedding this approach into our work, our staff training, and our service delivery. We believe that this is a transformational approach to Peace & Reconciliation, and to building stronger, resilient, and more cohesive communities.

Specifically, The Churches' Trust Limited aims are:

- To promote a more united, shared and cohesive society working in collaboration with churches, schools, and community and voluntary sector organisations in the area.
- To develop and provide quality services that tackle deprivation and disadvantage focusing on social inclusion, equality of opportunity, and improving community relations.
- To pro-actively enhance and support the economic, social and cultural development of all our communities within the North West region.

Church leaders acknowledge that deprivation and disadvantage are key barriers to building a united community, equality of opportunity and good relations. They recognise their role in presenting a united voice to help change attitudes and ultimately contribute to moving our community on from conflict to peace. The commitment to addressing issues of social injustice and inequality shapes the main activities of The Churches' Trust Limited.

The Churches' Trust Limited through years of experience and through established networks of churches and schools, understand the challenges facing the communities we support. We are committed to addressing issues of justice and inequality. Our work transcends all communities. In the interests of a shared and better future for all we undertake various projects and activities that bring communities together, and that encourage healing, understanding and respect.

The charity's trustees have had regard to the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland's guidance on public benefit.

Achievements and performance

The organisation's activities are shaped by:

- Identifying, challenging and tackling sectarianism and racism through the delivery of good relations and cohesion programmes.
- Recognising the ongoing impact of poverty and disadvantage, supporting people and families in need, tackling social determinants of health inequalities and empowering communities.

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Year ended 31 March 2024

Achievements and performance *(continued)*

Our performance and achievements are summarised as follows:

Youth training and development programmes focusing on personal and skills development, improving mental health and wellbeing and enhancing life chances. This includes working with marginalised young people who struggle in formal education structures by providing alternative opportunities through creative pathways, outdoor learning, and personal development programmes.

Developing Women training and support programmes which focus on building self-esteem and confidence, strengthening family supports, and empowering women to take on leadership roles in the community.

Interfaith, inter-church community education projects which focus on the theme of 'Celebrating Commonality'. These projects aim to build a sense of shared community recognising what we have in common as opposed to focusing on what divides us.

Low level intervention care services for older people across the city and rural areas of the Derry City & Strabane District Council. The service is designed to address isolation and promote independence in the home. On average we provided 620 support hours per month. Services provided include befriending, chaperoning, reminiscing, shopping, domestic duties, dealing with correspondence and appointments.

Care & Repair -Maintenance/Handyperson service provided at low cost, affordable rates targeting Older People, low-income families and individuals in areas of deprivation. The service includes cleaning, decluttering, gardening, power washing, fencing decorating, guttering, grave maintenance - in summary those tasks that are difficult to source from mainstream maintenance services but that significantly enhance the mental health and well-being of those in receipt of the service.

Addressing food poverty - The Pantry Project and Social Supermarket. The Pantry Project foodbank provides a crisis response to people experiencing food poverty.

We work with an established network of over 30 churches and 12 schools generating food donations through community giving.

We work in collaboration with community hubs who work intensively to address the underlying root cause of the crises and signpost people to appropriate services.

During this financial year we provided food for over 7,500 people. We have developed our approach to addressing food poverty through our Social Supermarket, working with people on transformative solutions that move people from food insecurity on to addressing the determinants of food poverty.

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Financial review

The results contained within the Statement of Financial Activities disclose a Net deficit for the year of £38,891.

The Churches' Trust Limited continues to broaden its income portfolio by strengthening collaborative working arrangements with partner organisations and other funding agencies. Public funds and grants received through the financial year included The Executive Office, Department for Communities, Community Relations Council, Derry City Strabane Council, Northern Ireland Office, Department of Foreign Affairs (Ireland), Education Authority, and Public Health Agency. We are seeking to extend our income portfolio by building relationships with charitable trusts and now include Charities Aid Foundation, Inner City Trust, SSE Airtricity, Julia and Hans Rausing Trust, Garfield Weston Foundation, Benefact Trust, The Honourable The Irish Society and Enkalon Foundation as supporters of our work.

In January 2024, The Churches' Trust Limited relocated its main administration office from 121 Spencer Road to 11 Limavady Road, Waterside, Derry/Londonderry, BT47 6JU. The impact of this move on the financial results for the year ended 31 March 2024 was £19,590. This includes Capital Costs and Running Costs and contributed to the deficit reported for the year. Recurring costs resulting from relocation will be factored into annual budgets going forward. This office move represents a strategic opportunity to present a more inclusive and accessible core facility with capacity to provide training and development, expand programme delivery, and have a more significant impact on the lives of those most marginalised in our community.

Small company provisions

This report has been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies entitled to the small companies exemption.

The trustees' annual report (incorporating the directors' report) was approved on 17 October 2024 and signed on behalf of the board of trustees by:



Mrs D Rudd - Chair
Trustee



Mr M Agnew - Treasurer
Trustee