

HOME-START ANTRIM DISTRICT

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

The directors, who are also the trustees, present their report and financial statements for the year ended 31st March 2024.

The trustees have adopted the provision of the Companies Act 2006 and Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable in the UK and Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2015) in preparing the annual report and financial statements for the charity.

Reference and administrative details

Registered Office	12b Market Square Antrim BT41 4AW
Secretary	Sharon Caldwell
Trustees	Mary Mayrs Philip Scott (Treasurer) Joan McDermott Barbara Irvine Valerie McGlaughlin Paul Livingstone Brian O'Neill (Chairperson) Elizabeth McConnell
Independent Examiner	Amanda Harbinson FCA Corrigan CA Limited 24 Greystone Road Antrim BT41 2QN

Resigned 2 June 2023

Structure, governance and management

The charity is a company limited by guarantee.

None of the trustees have any beneficial interest in the company. Each of the trustees are members of the company and are liable to contribute an amount not exceeding £1 towards the assets of the company in the event of liquidation.

The company is a registered charity with the Charity Commission in Northern Ireland.
Registration number: NIC105760

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TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Objectives and activities

The principal activity of the company is the promotion of child welfare in the Antrim District.

The Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 requires organisations to meet two criteria i.e. 'Charitable Purpose' and 'Public Benefit'. In relation to the 'charitable purpose' the Memorandum and Articles of Association of Home-Start Antrim District states that the organisation meets a number of the charitable purposes as set out in the regulations i.e. 'the prevention or relief of poverty, the advancement of health or the saving of lives' and 'the relief of those in need by reason of youth, age, ill-health, disability, financial hardship or other disadvantage'.

Home-Start Antrim District meets the public benefit test, as the organisation provides services, which can be accessed by members of the public who are in need of such services.

Achievements and Performance

Home-Start Antrim has been offering support to parents with young children in Antrim, Randalstown, Toomebridge, Crumlin, Templepatrick and Parkgate since October 1990. Volunteers are recruited, trained, and supported to provide support to families with children under 5 in three specific areas. Home support volunteers provide one-to-one weekly friendship to individual families, providing compassionate and confidential support in whatever way they can. Other volunteers run our weekly family group nurturing supportive relationship and community in a family friendly environment. Another team of volunteers engage with different families each week providing practical assistance through provision of valuable resources at our weekly baby bank.

Our three service deliveries are outlined briefly below: -

Home-Support

It had been a challenge to rebuild our home support after Covid with volunteer numbers being low and families more reluctant to accept one to one support, especially within the home. I am pleased to be able to report that things have changed for the better. After a successful recruitment drive and volunteers' preparation course where 7 out of the 15 participants chose to volunteer in this area. We now have a strong home support team and our capacity has increased. There has also been a noticeable change in parents' willingness to accept this kind of support. This is very much the core of what we do at Home-Start Antrim District, so it is very encouraging to see this service growing in strength and impact again.

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TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Family Group

Our weekly family group is a happy and noisy place. We have over 40 families on our register and a healthy attendance every week. We use the large sports hall as well as we can to provide an ideal environment for play, parent and child activities and importantly friendship. We have seen valuable relationships being built between parents and with volunteers too. Thanks to a very committed and hardworking team of volunteers this has become a wonderful place full of fun and activity for everyone. This year we introduced story time again and we were also able to offer two short courses for parents in baby massage and mental health. It has been great to welcome a few new volunteers to the team and all in all a valuable sense of community has been established.

Antrim Baby Bank

This project has increased in capacity and efficiency. We are now supporting the same number of families in a week that we once helped in a month. On average 12-15 families receive practical support from the Baby Bank every week. We have been able to employ a project Co-Ordinator for 14 hours per week who has risen to the task and is already developing this project and building a strong team of volunteers. I am grateful for this project that began in a time when much was impossible, it has now become a valuable connection point for families in our community.

Governing Document

The charity is controlled by its governing document, a trust deed, and constitutes a limited company, limited by guarantee, as defined by the Companies Act 2006.

Appointment of Trustees

Home-Start Antrim District's process on the recruitment and appointment of trustees is underpinned by the Memorandum and Articles of Association.

Trustee Induction and Training

New trustees are briefed on their legal obligations under charity guidelines, the Charity Commission guidance on public benefit, the content of the constitution, the committee and decision-making process, the strategic and operational plan, and the recent financial performance of the charity. The trustees attend relevant training events.

Financial Review

The financial statements are presented in the standard format required by the Charities SORP and cover the activities of Home-Start Antrim District. The Statement of Financial Activities (SOFA) on page 6 shows the gross income from all sources and the split of activity between restricted and unrestricted funds. 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 around 6 months expenditure. 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 activities while consideration is given to ways in which additional funds may be raised.

The charity's main source of income is grant funding and donations.

Total income of the charity during the year ended 31 March 2024 was £85,309, compared to £72,917 in 2023.

Expenditure during the year has decreased from £70,788 in 2023 to £70,070 in 2024. The overall result is that the charity reported a surplus of £15,239 in 2024 compared to a surplus of £2,128 in 2023.

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**TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

Reserves Policy

The trustees would aim to have in hand an amount equal to six months regular expenditure as free reserves to meet future shortfalls in income an unexpected expenses. Their desired level of reserves is £35,024. The balance of free reserves as at 31 March 2024 was £48,352 (£42,838 in 2023). This is more than the desired level.

Future Plans

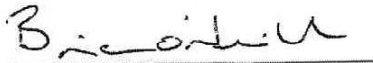
As we now have two staff members and an increasing volunteer team the future feels very positive for our charity.

We continue to network with other community groups such as Muckamore Parish Development Association, Antrim Foodbank, Sure-Start, Women's Aid, Rutledge Training, Network Personnel, Parenting NI, Family Hub, Motherhood Collective, Aware NI, Antrim Community Fridge, Employers for Childcare, Gems, Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council and several of the local churches. The need to support local families will always be there and working together with other services is most definitely the most effectove way to make a real and permanet difference in our community.

Volunteers

The charity made use of 35 volunteers and without their assistance the charity would not have been able to assist the number of families and children that it did. The trustees wish to acknowledge their deep appreciation to those who helped the organisation voluntarily throughout the year.

Approved by the Board on 12 June 2024 and signed on its behalf by:



Brian O'Neill
Chairperson