

Holywell Trust Annual Report



**HOLYWELL
TRUST**

April 2023 - March 2024

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Chairperson's Report

2023-2024 was a challenging year for Holywell Trust. Alongside the delivery of our community focused programmes we faced up to the challenge of damage to our building which impacted on our ability, and that of our partners and tenants, to deliver services as well as we would like. The staff, and in particular Lisa Clements, deserve praise for their hard work and efforts to minimise adverse impacts and to remedy a difficult situation.

There were still a number of significant highlights during the year:

- Shared Space - despite the disruption caused by water ingress, our facilities were still booked for 1120 meetings for approximately 11000 participants.
- Investing in Community Leadership Programme/Future Leaders - through our Future Leaders programme 20 people completed their community leadership journey with us.
- Holywell Trust Conversations Podcast - Series 4 of our podcast series, containing 18 episodes on a range of topics, was released during the year.
- Garden of Reflection Programme - a series of 8 events was held during the summer of 2023 to animate the shared space attached to our building.
- Future Relationship Conversations - Phase II of the project got underway beginning a new set of conversations, expanding the knowledge and engagement on the constitutional future of this place.

Holywell continues to be a trusted advisor to many organisations, an important role. We also continue to work in partnership with like-minded people and organisations and are proud of our connections with Fermanagh Trust and Rural Community Network (through the Investing in Community Leadership Programme), the Peace Summit Partners, the groups based in the Holywell building and those that make use of our facilities.

As we all know there remains a need for the work of Holywell Trust as the hard-won peace in Northern Ireland is still a work in progress. We are committed to making sure that this place is fully reconciled and that strong relationships are built to sustain the pace into the future. We know that our programmes make a positive contribution in this space.

I thank all of my fellow trustees for their continued support and commitment to the Trust and the staff for all of their hard work over the last year. The year has been one of transition in terms of the governance of our charity. Our long-planned succession process was begun which resulted in a number of my fellow trustees stepping down after their long commitment to the organisation. I thank each of them for their hard work and look forward to their continued support into the future. The excitement of

new trustees and possibilities is something that we can look forward to as the succession process completes in 2024-2025.

As always the support of our funders has to be acknowledged. We would be unable to deliver for the community without the financial support of our funders, especially our core supporters Community Relations Council, Department for Foreign Affairs and The Rank Foundation. Over the last year we have also been supported by Inner City Trust, The Ireland Funds, and the National Lottery Community Fund for Northern Ireland.

Moving into 2024-2025 we are particularly excited about the potential change that we will realise through our new Dormant Accounts grant, through the National Lottery Community Fund for Northern Ireland. With this support we plan to revamp how we share the message of our work, to raise awareness of the work that we deliver but also to be more visible and vocal on issues that are important to our charity.

As Chair, I look forward to working with you all during the next year as we continue to work towards our vision, 'Working together towards a truly inclusive, shared future'.

Danny Bryce,
Chair, Holywell Trust,
January 2025

Charitable Purpose

The Trust is established to advance education and to promote the benefit of the inhabitants of the Derry/Londonderry city and urban areas and its environs of the North West of Northern Ireland (hereinafter called the 'area of benefit') without distinction of age, gender, disability, sexual orientation, nationality, ethnic identity, political or religious opinion, by associating the statutory authorities, community and voluntary organisations and the inhabitants in a common effort to advance education, and to provide facilities in the interests of social welfare for recreation or other leisure-time occupation, with the object of improving the conditions of life for the said inhabitants and in particular:

Aim: a) to maintain and manage or co-operate with any local authority in the maintenance of a centre or centres in the area of benefit for activities promoted by the Trust.

Aim: b) to advance education concerning and carry our research into local history by collecting and recording information, and in particular forming an archive of the works of the area of benefit.

Aim: c) to raise awareness and provide education among the community about environmental issues and to conduct programmes to protect the environment.

Aim: d) the recruitment, selection and sending out of volunteers for short term service within the area of benefit.

Our Public Benefit

Through the advancement of education Holywell Trust will enhance the knowledge and understanding of individuals participating in our training courses. The Trust will also, through providing facilities in the interests of social welfare, increase the sense of community pride, community activism and the development and leisure opportunities for individuals availing of our facilities and services. These benefits will be measured through formal and informal feedback and evaluation processes with individual participants and service users. No harm flows from these purposes. The Trust's beneficiaries are the inhabitants of the city of Derry-Londonderry and urban areas and its environs in the North West of Northern Ireland. Local businesses and identified experts that supply services may benefit privately from these purposes but these benefits are incidental and necessary aspects of delivering the Trust's services.

2022/2023 Activities & Programmes

In setting the objectives and planning the activities for the year the Trustees of Holywell Trust have given careful consideration to the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland's guidance on public benefit guidance to ensure that the activities have helped to achieve the charity's purposes and provide a benefit to the beneficiaries. The following is a summary of the work delivered during the period, the people who have benefitted and our achievements over the financial year. These are displayed under the relevant aims of the organisation and show progress against the achievement of these.

Aim: a) to maintain and manage or co-operate with any local authority in the maintenance of a centre or centres in the area of benefit for activities promoted by the Trust.

Programme Area/Activity: Shared space centre provision

Beneficiaries: In the financial year our shared building at the heart of the city centre was used for 1120 bookings which were attended by approximately 11000 people. These figures are less than our previous year due to the impact of water ingress to our premises. Internal processes were also improved during the year to ensure that we deliver the best possible services to the community.

Aim: b) to advance education concerning and carry our research into local history by collecting and recording information, and in particular forming an archive of the works of the area of benefit.

Programme Area/Activity: Partnership working

Beneficiaries: We have worked to maintain and deepen the partnership relationships that Holywell Trust has developed over recent years. As a relatively small charity we are aware that our impact is best amplified by working in partnership with other organisations that share our values. Over the year we have worked in partnership with The Junction (Core Funding); The John & Pat Hume Foundation (lead partner on the Peace Summit project); Investing in Community Leadership Programme with Fermanagh Trust and Rural Community Network.

Programme Area/Activity: Strategic Planning & Communications and Marketing

Beneficiaries: We are at the mid-point in the delivery of our current Strategic Plan and to date we are on target to deliver the programmes that we have planned for. We were successful in securing resources through the Dorman Accounts programme, managed by the National Lottery Community Fund NI, to improve our communications and marketing over the next three years.

Programme Area/Activity: Future Relationship Conversations

Beneficiaries: The second phase of the programme was started during the year. This next phase will have a number of core elements: community engagement, mythbusting sessions and research facilitation and report publication. We will continue to lead on the important constitutional future conversation to ensure that all voices are heard in the discussion.

Programme Area/Activity: Future Leaders - Investing in Community Leadership in the West

Beneficiaries: During the period 20 people completed their Future Leaders journey with the Trust. We also took the decision to pause and reimagine our leadership programme offering to make sure that we deliver a project that does not duplicate the work of others and that best meets the needs of the community in the North West. We also continue to support the work of our partners in the programme - Fermanagh Trust and Rural Community Network.

Programme Area/Activity: Holywell Trust Conversations Podcast

Beneficiaries: 18 episodes of the podcast were recorded and released during the period. This was a diverse range of conversations covering issues ranging from the environment to skills shortages in Northern Ireland. The podcasts were listened to by over 2000 people.

Programme Area/Activity: Informal Connections - Advocacy

Beneficiaries: Holywell Trust lobbied and advocated on behalf of the local community throughout the year. This included regular engagement with organisations such as NIO, National Lottery Community Fund, DFA, Social Change Initiative and NICVA. We also hosted a number of visits during the year by groups and individuals interested in the work of the Trust.

Programme Area/Activity: Good Relations Events

Beneficiaries: Five good relations events were held during the period including events for Good Relations Week and Culture Night. We continue to monitor our activities and plan to increase our community events over the coming financial year.

Aim: c) to raise awareness and provide education among the community about environmental issues and to conduct programmes to protect the environment.

Programme Area/Activity: Garden of Reflection

Beneficiaries: Holywell Trust continues to provide shared community space through our Roof Garden on the Holywell building, an accessible space for

community events. In addition, during the year, we delivered an 8-event Summer programme in the Garden of Reflection.

Aim: d) the recruitment, selection and sending out of volunteers for short term service within the area of benefit.

Programme Area/Activity: Trustees

Beneficiaries: Holywell Trust is governed by a group of 8 volunteers, each of whom give their time and expertise freely to the management of the organisation to ensure that it meets its charitable purposes. During the year our succession plan for the trustees was put into action which resulted in a number of trustees stepping away from their roles and new trustees being appointed.

Key Achievements

The following are the highlights from our work during the reporting period:

- Approximately 11, 000 people accessed events and services from our premises during the reporting period.
- We have supported 20 people through their community leadership journey, building capacity within the sector to create good relations.
- We secured resources to continue to support our staff in their professional development.
- We produced a new podcast series, examining challenging issues, cementing our reputation as a thought leader within the community.
- We have strengthened our relationships and partnerships with public, academia and community organisations enabling us to be well positioned to influence positive change in the future.
- We have developed relationships with new funders and strengthened relations with our existing supporters and continue to take innovative approaches to building relationships and peace building.
- Hundreds of people have taken part in the various programmes that we have delivered over the period and are committed to working with us again in the future.

Lessons Learned

We have learned a number of lessons through the delivery of our programme over the period:

- Through the development of our Strategic Plan for the next three years we realised the importance of communications and marketing to the long-term impact of our work. Securing resources to develop this work over the next 3 years was a significant step.
- We were reinforced in our belief that it is essential to move beyond ‘tick-box’ programmes to engage people in some of the most difficult challenges facing society. We were reassured that when engaged on challenging issues people are generous and creative with their solutions.
- There remains an appetite to participate in the programmes that we deliver and to address the issues that society faces. There is a growing frustration with the non-functioning of Northern Ireland both in terms of the day-to-day delivery of key public services to the lack of political leadership currently being demonstrated.
- There remains a challenge as an organisation that receives funding and support from multiple sources. Different funders have different requirements and this can be time consuming and impact on project delivery.

Notes on Public Benefit

As per the requirements of the Charity Commission for NI in their guidance on annual report preparation please note the comments in the following areas:

Restrictions on who can benefit - there are no restrictions on who can benefit from our programmes and activities. All activities, where possible, are free of charge and accessible by all.

Harm Mitigation - Holywell Trust Trustees have taken every precaution to ensure that no individual has been harmed through their involvement in our activities or through accessing services at our facilities. The Trust has strict health and safety policies which are adhered to and operates a 'do no harm' policy in relation to dealing with matters from the Conflict.

Private Benefit Protection - Holywell Trust Trustees ensure that any private benefit is incidental through the strict management of a conflict of interest policy and tight financial controls.

Governance

During the reporting period Holywell Trust was governed by a board of Trustees:

- Danny Bryce, Vice-Chair
- Catherine Cooke (Retired March '24)
- Seamus Farrell (Retired March '24)
- Maureen Hetherington, Chair
- Gemma Harkin (Resigned May '23)
- Jackie McColgan, Treasurer
- Barney McGuigan
- Roisin McLaughlin, Secretary (Retired, March '24)
- Georgia O'Kane (From March '24)

This report relates to the work of the charity during the financial year 1st April 2023 to 31st March 2024 as required by the Charity Commission for NI.