

Derry Samaritans

Trustees' Annual Report for the Year Ended 31 March 2024

The Directors are pleased to present their annual report together with the financial statements of the Charity for the year ended 31 March 2024 which are also prepared to meet the requirements for a Directors' report and accounts for Companies Act purposes.

The financial statements comply with the Charities Act (NI) 2022, the Companies Act 2006, the Memorandum and Articles of Association, 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 (FRS102) (effective 1 January 2019.)

Structure, Governance and Management

Derry Samaritans was incorporated on 27 January 2016 and is a Private Company, Limited by Guarantee. The company is governed by a Memorandum and Articles of Association. The company number is NI 636051 and the registered office is 16 Clarendon Street, Derry BT48 7ET. The company is a registered Northern Ireland charity - reference NIC 106360.

Management, Internal Control and Risk Management

The day-to-day management of the Charity is the responsibility of the Trustees of the Charity, who are responsible for the implementation of Samaritans strategy and to support the work of Samaritan volunteers in the Charity. The trustees meet every 6-8 weeks and a minimum of 4 times per year.

The Trustees have the overall responsibility for the system of internal control for the Charity, including the safety of Charity assets and the integrity of the accounting procedures.

Directors and Trustees

The directors of the charitable company (the Charity) are the trustees for the purposes of Charity Law.

The trustees during the year end and at 31 March 2024 were as follows:

Rosemary O'Doherty	Giovanni Doran
Brian Logue	Eamon Fisher
Noella O'Neill	Jacqueline Ferris

Public Benefit Statement

Derry Samaritans offers support to those at risk of suicide by being there to listen and encourage the recognition and exploration of their options. By doing so we aim to help people find ways of coping with their distress without choosing to die by suicide. We also seek to support those whose distress is less acute, in the hope that they will not reach the point of feeling that they wish to end their lives. We make our support available in many ways, including by telephone, email, letter, and face-to-face.

Samaritans' service is open to people who are suicidal, despairing or are in distress. The branch provides a service primarily intended for the benefit of persons in Derry and the surrounding area. However, it also works with all Samaritan branches to ensure 24-hour availability of the service across the UK.

The Trustees confirm that they have referred to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit when reviewing the Branch's aims and objectives in planning future activities.

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Objectives and Activities

The objects of the Charity are:

- (a) to enable persons in Derry and the surrounding area (but without specific limitations as to area) who are experiencing feelings of distress or despair, including those who may be at risk of suicide, to receive confidential emotional support at any time of the day or night to improve their emotional health and to reduce the incidence of suicide.
- (b) to promote a better understanding in society of suicide, suicidal behaviour, and the value of expressing feelings which may otherwise lead to suicide or impaired emotional health; and
- (c) to collaborate with and support the Samaritans Central Charity and its affiliated branches in fulfilling these objectives.

Vision, Mission and Values

Samaritans' Vision is that fewer people die by suicide. We work to achieve this by making it our Mission to alleviate emotional distress and reduce the incidence of suicidal feelings and suicidal behaviour.

We do this by being available round the clock to provide emotional support for people who are experiencing feelings of emotional distress or despair, including those which may lead to suicide.

- Reaching out to high-risk groups and communities to reduce the risk of suicide.
- Working in partnership with other organisations, agencies and experts to achieve our Vision. Influencing public policy and raising awareness of the challenges of reducing suicide.
- We are committed to the following Values:
 - Listening Confidentiality
 - People making their own decisions
 - Being non judgemental
 - Human Contact

Achievements and Performance

Calls and Emails responded to :-

In the 12 months from April 2023 to March 2024 our volunteers responded to 18,236 calls by Telephone and Email, and 2,198 contacts outside the Branch at 23 events.

Face-to-Face, Outreach and Awareness Raising :-

We have continued supporting people through our telephone and email helplines, which remained open 24/7. However, we understand that some people prefer to talk to a Samaritans volunteer in person. We are working towards reintroducing the face-to-face service, but first we need to do some work to review and improve the way it is delivered. It's an important service and we need to make sure that it's as effective as possible for both the people who use the service and our volunteers.

We are delighted that we have been able to begin the Outreach events to local community organisations such as sports clubs, health awareness events and student events. These opportunities offer awareness of our service and how people can contact us for support or to volunteer.

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Volunteers

Derry Samaritans could not operate without the dedication and skill of our volunteers who lead the branch in every aspect of its work, and we thank every one of them for their continuing commitment to the needs of our callers. Our service continues to be delivered over the daytime and overnight hours.

At the 31st of March 2024 we had 65 Listening Volunteers who respond to our callers by phone and email and we had 8 volunteers on leave. We have 3 support volunteers who include our Treasurer and Martin who supports the Treasurer and other former listening volunteers who wish to continue supporting our work and take part in talks to external organisations and fundraising efforts.

We regularly recruit listening volunteers throughout the year, this year we offered three in-branch Core Development training courses.

This year the training team also supported various roles in the Branch by delivering training to:-

Leaders - who support volunteers during their duties with any issues that may arise or when safeguarding procedures are followed.

Interviewers - for applicants to train as listening volunteers

Outreach - for volunteers wishing to support outreach events or deliver emotional support outside the Branch.

Mentors - mentors for new Samaritans are trained several times a year

Volunteers are our largest asset within the Branch and the organisation. Our volunteers play an active role in the UK and Ireland wide organisation. We have one serving on the Strategic Advisory Board to Samaritans Ireland as the N Ireland representative, we have several volunteers working with some of the hubs delivering the email responses to callers and the listening-in service of the Quality Hub. And one volunteer who is active as a Regional Quality Development Officer supporting branches in the UK and Ireland.

Related Parties

Derry Samaritans is a recognised branch of Samaritans, a company limited by guarantee (No 757372), having its registered office at The Upper Mill, Kingston Road, Ewell, Surrey KT17 2AF.

The Charity works with the Samaritans Central Charity to promote a better understanding in society of suicide and suicidal behaviour. This includes support for and participation in organisation wide initiatives and activities at a local level.

Financial review

During the year income of £52,197 was received and total costs were £47,506. This left a surplus for the year of £4,691 which when added to opening reserves of £196,357 left the Charity with reserves at the year end of £201,048 at the year end.

The Directors were pleased with the results for the year. The unrestricted reserves at the year-end were £201,048.

Our volunteers were fortunate to have been given the opportunity to collect donations at the Millennium Forum and The Clanree Hotel, Letterkenny after the Sarah Millican Tour events in December.

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Principal Risks

The principal risks facing the branch are insufficient volunteers to keep the branch open, insufficient funds to run the branch and the possibility of breach of confidentiality.

- New volunteer recruitment is essential to ensure that we always have adequate cover. Through information sessions, a careful interview process followed by a comprehensive training programme, we have over the past year increased the number of volunteers by 8 at the year end.

- Fundraising is also essential to meet running costs as well as to pay a contribution to the central charity towards the costs of the services and systems, without which branches could not operate.

- A cornerstone of Samaritans' service is that all those who contact us are guaranteed a confidential and non-judgemental conversation with a trained volunteer. Policies and procedures, including DBS checks, continuous development training for all volunteers, are in place to ensure we deliver a safe service.

Reserves Policy and Going Concern

As branch income is heavily dependent on donations it cannot be guaranteed. The Trustees consider that around 18 months of annual expenditure is an appropriate level of reserves to maintain, to meet working capital needs. In addition, the Trustees set up a fund of £50,000 in designated reserves to cover the cost of future renovations to the premises to make them more accessible and suitable for growing our number of active listening volunteers.

Appointment of Trustees

Trustees are elected by the members of the Branch at the Annual General Meeting. Appointment of the Chair (Branch Director) is subject to approval by the Samaritans Central Charity. There have been no changes to the Trustees in this year.

16 Clarendon Street

In the last few years, we've considered the work that could be carried out to improve access to our building for all volunteers but have realised that completing that task is not possible and we have been looking at another option which is moving the Branch to another property and location. We are very fortunate that a group of volunteers had the vision to ensure our Branch had their own premises and went about purchasing and renovating 16 Clarendon Street over 30 years ago which means we have an asset to sell and help us fund the purchase of our next home. And the Trustees have been diligent in building a fund for moving and renovation works over the last few years which will allow us to carry-out the work to our new Branch premises without accumulating debt for the Charity.

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Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities

The Charity Trustees (who are also the directors of the Derry Samaritans for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing a Trustees' Annual Report and 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 charitable company and of the profit or loss of the company for that year.

In preparing these the Trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgements that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the organisation will continue in business.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the organisation. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the organisation and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

This report has been prepared in accordance with the special provisions for small companies under part 15 of the Companies Act 2006.

This report was approved by the Board on 27 January 2025 and signed on its behalf by



Ms Rosemary O'Doherty
Director