

**REGISTERED COMPANY NUMBER: NI021741 (Northern Ireland)**  
**REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER: 106451**

**Report of the Trustees and**  
**Audited Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2024**  
**for**  
**Northern Ireland Women's Aid Federation**  
**Limited**  
**(A Company Limited by Guarantee)**

Lynn Drake & Co Ltd  
Statutory Auditors  
1st Floor  
34 B-D Main Street  
Moira  
Co. Armagh  
BT67 0LE

**Northern Ireland Women's Aid Federation  
Limited**

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for the Year Ended 31 March 2024**

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**Northern Ireland Women's Aid Federation  
Limited**

**Reference and Administrative Details  
for the Year Ended 31 March 2024**

<b>TRUSTEES</b>	Patricia Frances Lyness Eleanor McGuckin Claire Allen Jane Elizabeth Kremer Adele O'Grady Catherine McMinn Niamh O'Maolain Traci Kimber Kerry Anne Malone Hilda Elizabeth Hope Ruth McAdam
<b>COMPANY SECRETARY</b>	Eleanor McGuckin
<b>REGISTERED OFFICE</b>	The Annex 30 Adelaide Park Belfast BT9 6FY
<b>REGISTERED COMPANY NUMBER</b>	NI021741 (Northern Ireland)
<b>REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER</b>	106451
<b>AUDITORS</b>	Lynn Drake & Co Ltd Statutory Auditors 1st Floor 34 B-D Main Street Moira Co. Armagh BT67 0LE
<b>SOLICITORS</b>	McCartan Turkington Breen Chancery House 88 Victoria Street Belfast BT1 3GN
<b>BANKERS</b>	AIB (NI) 11-15 Donegall Square North Belfast BT1 5GB

**Northern Ireland Women's Aid Federation  
Limited**

**Report of the Trustees  
for the Year Ended 31 March 2024**

**OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES**

**Northern Ireland Women's Aid Federation  
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**Reference and Administrative Details  
for the Year Ended 31 March 2022**

**CHIEF EXECUTIVE  
OFFICER**

Sarah Mason

**Northern Ireland Women's Aid Federation Limited**

**Report of the Trustees for the Year Ended 31 March 2024**

**OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES**

The trustees who are also directors of the charity for the purposes of the Companies Act 2006, present their report with the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2024. The trustees have adopted the provisions of 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).

**Women's Aid Federation Northern Ireland (WAFNI)**

This year saw significant progress for Women’s Aid Federation NI (WAFNI) against all six high level outcomes ( big ideas) presented in the strategic plan, Unlocking Potential, Building on Success, Road Map of Change 2022-2025 which was launched in 2022. The strategic plan seeks to build on strengths, harness opportunities and provide clear direction to the organisation in line with changes in the external environment including government policy, legislation and funding constraints. This was another busy and productive year where we continued to strengthen our collective approach and worked collaboratively in response to government policy, education and training and public awareness campaigns.

Referrals to services continued to increase this year across all eight Local Women’s Aid Groups. WAFNI worked to build capacity internally through the Centre for Training Excellence including through the development of new online training modules. Externally, WAFNI developed and rolled out training to increase understanding of domestic abuse among key organisations to enable them to risk assess and respond, in line with the Domestic Abuse and Civil Proceedings Act Northern Ireland (2021). The year also saw the continued development of exciting projects including the See, Hear, Act project funded by Comic Relief and the hugely successful SAY (Social Action Youth) project, funded by Children in Need. As always, all work was informed by the voices of lived experience through our survivor engagement group and young people involved in the SAY project.

**Structure, Governance and Management**

Northern Ireland Women's Aid Federation is a registered charity with the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland, NIC 106451, and a company limited by guarantee, registered in Northern Ireland, NI 021741. The organisation was established in 1978 and was built upon our long rich heritage of campaigning and has developed to become the lead expert voluntary organisation addressing domestic abuse in Northern Ireland. WAFNI has a membership of eight autonomous Local Women's Aid Groups across Northern Ireland as outlined below:-

ABCLN Women's Aid	Fermanagh Women's Aid
Armagh Down Women's Aid	Foyle Women's Aid
Belfast & Lisburn Women's Aid	North Down & Ards Women's Aid
Causeway & Mid-Ulster Women's Aid	Omagh Women's Aid

**Northern Ireland Women's Aid Federation Limited**

**Report of the Trustees  
for the Year Ended 31 March 2024**

**OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES**

**Objectives and aims**

The Objects and Purpose of the Federation are outlined in the strategic plan “Unlocking Potential – Building on Success”. The Federation's aims and objectives are:

**Our vision**

The Women’s Aid NI vision for the 21<sup>st</sup> century is the elimination of domestic abuse.

**Our mission**

Women’s Aid exists to challenge attitudes, structures and systems which perpetuate domestic abuse. We seek through our work to enable women, children and young people to live life free from violence and abuse.

**Our history**

Women’s Aid is the lead voluntary organisation in Northern Ireland addressing domestic abuse and providing services for women and children. The Women’s Aid movement in Northern Ireland began in 1975 and is made up of eight local Women’s Aid groups and the Women’s Aid Federation Northern Ireland. Each local Women’s Aid group offers a range of specialist services to women, children and young people who have experienced domestic abuse. They are all members of Women’s Aid Federation Northern Ireland.

**Our Ethos**

*Our strong ethos has been built upon our rich heritage of campaigning to end domestic abuse, which began in the 70’s and continues to be based upon our working premise of: **for women, with women, by women** which is inherent in our service development and delivery.*

**Our principles are:**

**Survivor engagement:** Women, children and young people are at the heart of everything we do and we will ensure our work is informed by their voices and experience.

**Collaboration:** We will work collectively and collaboratively as a Women’s Aid movement, to bring about positive change.

**Empowerment:** We will encourage women, children and young people to access support which will develop their inherent strengths, helping them to make safe positive choices and determine their own futures.

**Equity, diversity and inclusion:** We are committed to equity, diversity and inclusion and will challenge all forms of discrimination.

**Trauma informed practice and quality standards:** We are committed to quality standards, trauma informed practice, and continuous improvement.

**Working with others to influence change:** We recognise domestic abuse requires a coordinated response and we are fully committed to working across society, with all individuals and organisations, to end domestic abuse.

**Our Core Aims:**

We will work collectively across Northern Ireland to:

**engage with women, children and young people**, to give them a voice and ensure they inform all aspects of service development and delivery.

**provide trauma informed specialised services** to women, children and young people who have experienced domestic abuse.

**deliver preventative education programmes** in schools and community settings to promote healthy non-abusive relationships and share key safeguarding messages.

**educate and inform the public, private, voluntary, statutory and community sectors** of the context and impact of domestic abuse.

**provide quality assured education and training** to a wide audience, to increase capacity to respond to domestic abuse.

**monitor, influence and respond to government policy and legislation** as a Subject Matter Expert, giving a voice to survivors of domestic abuse.

**work in partnership, sharing our expertise with all relevant agencies** to ensure a joined-up response to domestic abuse.

## **OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES**

### **Significant activities**

#### **Current Context**

Domestic and sexual violence continues to be endemic across Northern Ireland with PSNI during 2023/24 attending 32,763 reported incidents of domestic abuse. To put this figure into context the PSNI are attending a domestic abuse incident every 16 minutes of every day. These figures continue to increase year on year highlighting the need for services and interventions and ongoing public awareness, development work, partnership approaches and adequate funding for specialist services such as WAFNI deliver. This year saw continued roll out and implementation of the strategic plan and progressive work has been delivered across all six big ideas (overarching outcomes):

#### **Six Big Ideas (linked to 'Unlocking Potential – Building on Success' A three-year Strategic Plan)**

- 1. Work as a collective – Direct Service provision**
- 2. At the Heart – voices of women, children & young people**
- 3. Unlock Learning**
- 4. Create Social Change**
- 5. Our Brand – Our values**
- 6. Sustain and improve**

We cannot deliver this strategic plan without the support and collaborative working with our eight local groups. WAFNI continued to have regular remote and face to face meetings with local groups to work collectively to deliver on this strategic plan. To this end, we have continued a hybrid approach to regional meetings, which has resulted in regular use of online meetings, to make best use of busy diaries for the CEO's across the local groups.

Women's Aid is committed to working with Government to meet the needs of victims and survivors. This year we welcomed the return of our Executive to Stormont. The absence of a functioning Executive had huge implications for victims of domestic abuse including legislative delay and a lack of progress in areas of policy development and roll out. We are hopeful the return to Stormont will enable us to work together with all our Government Departments and MLAs to ensure domestic and sexual violence and abuse remain high on the public agenda.

In this reporting year, we continued to play a major part in the implementation of the current Government's seven-year strategy, Stopping Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse in Northern Ireland. The Stakeholder Assurance Group has continued to meet regularly, to ensure steady progress was made throughout this year.

We have continued to respond to consultation opportunities relating to the design and development of the new strategy to address Domestic and Sexual Abuse in Northern Ireland. This has included lobbying for a separate pillar of children and young people to ensure they are seen as equal victims of domestic abuse with their experiences and needs prioritised. WAFNI consulted with children and young people involved in the SAY group, who designed their own pillar for inclusion in the strategy. We have monitored progress in terms of the development of this strategy, to ensure the issues we raised are taken on board and the voices of women and children who participated in our Call for Views are taken on board in terms of priorities and focus areas. We look forward to the launch of this strategy and to playing our part, in collaboration with all relevant agencies and government departments in its implementation and roll out. This year WAFNI has continued to participate fully in the co design process of the Ending Violence against Women and Girls Strategy, taken forward by The Executive Office.

We have continued to work in partnership to influence and deliver change and have this year continued our successful partnership working with PSNI to deliver training in relation to the Domestic Abuse Disclosure Scheme. This training was hugely successful and following on from partnership discussions and feedback from our SAY group, we are already in discussion with PSNI to develop and deliver training in relation to responding to children and young people affected by domestic abuse.

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We continue to lobby for sufficient funding to be put in place to ensure implementation of any emerging government strategy and legislation, to ensure such developments are supported by effective service provision, training, and awareness. We continue to raise the 'chronic underfunding' of domestic abuse services in Northern Ireland. This predates the collapse of Stormont however the situation has undoubtedly been exacerbated by the lack of a functioning Executive. Northern Ireland was already significantly behind the rest of the UK and ROI when it came to funding, but the cost-of-living crisis has made this disparity even more stark.

The regional work with our membership has been extremely busy this year and we have continued to work collectively to affect change and highlight the issue of domestic abuse at all levels. This year we have continued to work together to deliver our innovative Strategic Plan – Unlocking Potential – Building on Success Road Map of Change (2022-2025). We have also developed and implemented clear messaging and communication through the work of our regional communications group.

Our WAFNI Board of Directors has continued to meet on a regular basis to oversee the work of the organisation, support management and monitor progress against the strategic plan. The WAFNI AGM, was held and had representation from all eight local groups. We also welcomed new Directors this year with ratification being formally agreed at AGM. We are satisfied that the Articles of Association are working to future proof and strengthen the regional work of WAFNI going forward.

**1. Work as a Collective – Direct Service Provision (Refuge/Floating Support Services)**

Demand for services continues to increase with groups working at full capacity in all areas of service provision including both refuge and outreach. This is reflected in the annual statistics which continue to rise. Groups are continuing to experience high levels and the challenge is balancing demand with capacity, this is achieved through initial triage and risk assessment process. Funding to increase capacity to deliver services continues to be a major issue that must be addressed if demand for services is to be effectively addressed. This is especially relevant to provision for services for children and young people. Women's Aid regionally does not receive any core funding for children's services with posts being subject to short term and "patchwork" funding. This has unfortunately resulted in the loss of key children and young people's staff and services which has devastating impacts for children and young people affected by domestic abuse. Refuge accommodation continued to run on a high-capacity level throughout this year with increased demand on floating support services across all local groups. Statistics clearly illustrate the high demand on all our eight local Women's Aid services during this reporting period which is reflected in the headline figures for the year:-

527 Women and 291 children and young people stayed in our refuges  
7,637 Women received community based support 5,293 children accessed outreach support  
45 women supported through pregnancy in refuge  
10 Babies born to women in refuge  
266 women supported through pregnancy in the community

We continue to work to sustain and develop our vital services. Our refuges remain at full capacity as do our floating support and trauma informed programmes. This is clearly evidenced by the increasing number of women who have been triaged and are waiting on vital support services

**1.2 Change Management**

The work with local groups to implement Change Management process in ensuring sustainability, quality assured good practice provision and development of refuge and floating support services continued throughout this year.

**1.3 IRIS Test & Review**

During this reporting period we entered year four of this project. It is funded by Department of Health and aims to implement IRIS (Identification & Referral to Improve Safety). This is a 'Test & Review' project in Northern Ireland and has been developed on a collaborative basis with MAP, NEXUS and Victim Support NI. This has been a really

## **OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES**

successful project with an external Evaluation being carried out during this period which has evidenced the need for the continuation and potential roll out of the project. The two IRISi sites are at full capacity in relation to signed up GP Practices and have exceeded the recommended population levels. The feedback from GPS and patients has been very positive.

### **1.4 See, Hear, Act**

The regional See, Hear, Act project entered its second year of delivery. The project works to implement elements of the WAFNI ten-year strategy for children and young people, See, Hear, Act which was launched in Stormont in 2019. The overall vision for children and young people affected by domestic abuse presented in this strategy is *“A society where all children and young people are safe, supported and surrounded by social guardians who will listen to them, build their confidence and encourage them to be the best they can be”*.

The See, Hear, Act project will work with staff from Women’s Aid groups to deliver 5 high level outcomes as follows:

1. Practitioners across all local Women's Aid NI projects are supported to embed models of excellence.
2. Practitioners working with families at risk of domestic abuse (including statutory services, teachers, and early years providers) have good professional awareness of the impact of domestic abuse on children and families and how to best provide trauma informed support.
3. A network of empowered, informed and motivated See, Hear, Act Champions exists across local Women’s Aid services in Northern Ireland.
4. Mothers of young children (0-5) engaged in Women's Aid services across NI are supported and empowered, through practical support and group work programmes, to help their children survive and thrive.
5. Mothers and young children (0-5) have access to good quality, evidence-based services designed around best practice.

The project works collaboratively with our 8 local Women’s Aid groups, Health and Social Care Trusts, Government Departments, Children's sector organisations, SBNI (Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland), Domestic and Sexual Violence Partnerships, Universities, Teachers and Early Years Providers including Sure start to affect both internal and external change and raise awareness of the needs of families affected by domestic abuse While external training and awareness raising remained busy, year two also focused on development and delivery of specialist training to Women’s Aid staff across Northern Ireland.

Planning and consultation conducted across Women’s Aid in the first year of the project highlighted an appetite to embed **Solihull training** and approach across Women’s Aid. **A total of 12 staff were trained in the Solihull approach.** Plans are in place for progression to Training the Trainer model in year 3. Building upon the pilots of sensory play delivered in year one, the project built capacity across Women’s Aid to understand and respond to trauma in young children. A full programme of training was developed which included, Levels one and two safeguarding Board Northern Ireland (SBNI) Trauma Informed Practice (TIP) training. Once staff had completed these two levels, they could participate in the **Connect to Calm** training, developed by Women’s Aid in partnership with Belfast Trust Speech and Language services. The training focuses on responding to and supporting children who have experienced domestic abuse using Bruce Perry’s Neuro-sequential Model. The combination of the **Connect to Calm training and the Solihull approach** training supported staff to not only focus on the child’s developmental experience, but also on the impact of trauma on young children and the impact of domestic abuse on the mother/child relationship.

Consultation and planning began in relation to development of new programmes including a complete revision of the Women’s Aid You and Me, Mum programme<sup>1</sup> (originally published in 2007) and the production of an Early Years version of the Women’s Aid Helping Hands programme in Primary Schools. A working group was established to review the You and Me, Mum programme with a view to producing a revised, and more up to date publication. The working

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<sup>1</sup> You and Me, Mum is a programme developed in 2007 by Women’s Aid Federation Northern Ireland to help mothers understand how living with a perpetrator of domestic abuse can affect children.

## **OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES**

group has representation from Women's Aid and specialist organisations such as Here NI and Disability Action. A creative thinking session was held, supported and hosted by Stranmillis University College to begin the process of developing Helping Hands into an early years resource. This event was attended by Early Years practitioners from within Women's Aid and externally from SureStarts. It was also attended by Early Childhood Studies students from Stranmillis University. Further development of both You and Me, Mum and Helping Hands for Early Years will be a priority for year 3 of the project.

### **1.5 Development of financial toolkit**

WAFNI worked in partnership this year with corporate partner Allstate NI to develop a financial toolkit for survivors of domestic abuse in Northern Ireland. 1 in 6 adults experience economic abuse from an intimate partner; yet few programmes exist which aim to tackle this specific type of harm. The Allstate Foundation (TAF) 'Moving Ahead' curriculum, is a US based financial toolkit which aims to empower survivors of domestic abuse through financial education. Using this framework, Allstate NI employees volunteered with WAFNI and collaborated with the survivor engagement group and expertise including banking, legal, and policy specialists, to create an NI Financial Wellbeing Toolkit. Workshops with the Survivor Engagement group drew on lived experience, creating content that was accurate, meaningful, region specific and user friendly. In-house resources at Allstate NI produced a vital, one-of-its-kind toolkit, for women in the aftermath of coercively controlling relationships. As a member of the Survivor Engagement Group said: *"Facing your finances head on, one step at a time and with the right support, will eventually be a relief and another step towards freedom. Financial freedom, freedom from worry, and even freedom from the control."* The resource was launched on 12<sup>th</sup> March 2024 and received media coverage including TV, radio and across social media.

## **2. At the Heart – voices of women, children & young people**

This strategic theme has a clear focus on amplifying the voices of women, children and young people to inform all other strategic themes. We continue to ensure that all government consultation responses and training programmes developed are informed by the voices of women, children and young people. This year WAFNI continued to facilitate consultations with the Survivor Engagement Group and led on the hugely successful SAY project.

### **2.1 SAY (Social Action Youth)**

The development of the SAY project has been one of the main achievements for WAFNI in this reporting year. Our vision for the SAY project was to bring together a diverse group of young people (of post primary age) engaged in Women's Aid services across NI, to help us drive forward change. The project had 3 clear outputs:

1. Facilitate young people's input into Government strategy.
2. Inform the development of a Learning and Development Framework for professionals working with children and young people affected by domestic abuse. (In partnership with Safeguarding Board NI).
3. Develop branding for educational resources for young people to raise awareness of Healthy Relationships.

The SAY project involved a series of regional fun filled productive workshops between Spring and Summer 2023. The workshops enabled young people from Women's Aid groups across NI to come together, have a say in issues affecting them and make a difference for other young people. The workshops were facilitated in partnership with Tinderbox Theatre Company. The project harnessed the valuable role young people can play as change agents. The young people involved worked on several social action projects including the development of a website to raise awareness of healthy relationships with young people and a trauma informed animation which introduces "SACC" a Social Action Children's Champion. This animation will be used as a training tool to empower professionals to respond to the needs of children and young people affected by domestic abuse. We look forward to launching both projects in the coming year.

The SAY group also worked in partnership with SBNI to develop a professional learning and development framework. They produced their own resource "Having our Say". The SAY project culminated in a celebration event on 23rd November 2023 at the Senate Chamber in Northern Ireland Parliament Buildings at Stormont Estate. This high-profile event, sponsored by the Speaker of the NI Assembly and attended by Government Department representatives and Head

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**OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES**

of Civil Service, Dr Jayne Brady, shone a light on young people's voices and ensured their voices were heard by key decision makers.

The SAY project brought about ripples of change at the most strategic levels. The development of SAY was timely with the imminent launch of two major Government Strategies relating to domestic abuse and ending violence against women and girls (EVAWG). It also aligned with plans announced by the Secretary of State relating to the teaching of RSE (Relationship and Sexual Education) in schools. The SAY group responded to all three Government strategies. Feedback from Government Departments has been extremely positive, highlighting the importance and effectiveness of co design with young people as experts by experience. On an individual level, the project brought about so many positive changes in the young people involved and a comprehensive evaluation highlighted the distance travelled. Comments from young people in relation to what the project meant to them included:

- *We are being heard and making a difference.*
- *It gave us the experience to meet other young people and learn more.*
- *It helped me find more like me.*
- *We talked about what the government needs to do.*
- *We came together as a community to share ideas.*
- *I met new people, people validated my feelings.*
- *It will help the future.*

WAFNI remains committed to securing longer term funding to enable the SAY project to continue and this will be a key priority for the forthcoming year.

**3. Unlock Learning**

Internal and external training continues to be a major focus as we aim to unlock learning and build skills and capacity both internally and externally. We are committed to maintaining our lead position as subject matter experts in relation to domestic abuse training.

**3.1 External Agencies**

This year we have seen continued increase in demand for WAFNI's expertise to develop and support external agencies with training requirements. This year we have developed and delivered training to a wide range of agencies including, PSNI, Childcare Partnerships, Stranmillis University Belfast, Queens University Belfast, The Attorney General's Office and the Education Authority. etc. This year saw the further strengthening and development of our partnership with PSNI. WAFNI worked with PSNI to develop and deliver a comprehensive training programme Increasing Safety – Reducing Risk - Making DVADS (Domestic Violence and Abuse Disclosure Scheme) work in Northern Ireland. This training programme was delivered to 76 PSNI staff over three full day sessions. The overall aim of the programme was to *Support PSNI staff to use the DVADS scheme to its full potential*. Feedback was very positive and showed that: **100%** participants felt their expectations had been met to varying degrees, **59%** felt they were fully met and **27%** felt they had been exceeded.

**91%** participants rated the structure and flow as either excellent (48%) or good (43%).

**87%** participants rated relevance to the workplace as excellent (45%) or good (42%).

**95%** participants rated content and materials as excellent (55%) or good (40%).

**95%** participants rated capacity to increase knowledge/understanding/confidence as excellent (52%) or good (43%).

**95%** participants rated the quality of delivery as either excellent (53%) or good (42%).

Ratings of *good* or *excellent* in the area of *Knowledge and understanding of Factors which hinder a victim applying to DVADS* increased significantly by **82%**.

Ratings of *good* or *excellent* in the area of *Knowledge and understanding of Safety planning in the DVADS* increased significantly by **80%**.

Ratings of *good* or *excellent* in the area of *Knowledge and Understanding of Recent changes in the DVADS* increased significantly by **77%**.

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### 3.2 Developing Social Guardians to Deliver Helping Hands - Primary School based preventative education programme

This year we continued to deliver our two-day teacher training programme “Developing Social Guardians to Deliver Helping Hands”. This two-day CPD accredited programme builds confidence and capacity among teachers to deliver our innovative Helping Hands programme in a classroom setting. The programme builds confidence and self-esteem among children and helps them identify the warning signs of abuse and know who to turn to if they need help. Through our capacity building training programme for teachers, we outline the context and impact of domestic abuse on children and create a shared language and tools to build capacity for teachers to support the children in their classroom. This year we worked in partnership with Women’s Aid groups to train a total of 71 teachers over 4 two-day events. Since the programme delivery began in 2010 the total number of teachers trained is 1,827. We reviewed and refreshed the two-day training programme to include updated research and statistics. The programme was evaluated with a pre and post evaluation approach to track learning and increase in confidence. A full evaluation report was produced with the following headlines:

- **100%** teachers rated the *trainer’s style and manner* as either *excellent* (99%) or *good* (1%).
- **100%** teachers rated the *course content and materials* as either *excellent* (97%) or *good* (3%).
- **98%** teachers rated *range of methods used* as either *excellent* (94%) or *good* (4%).
- **100%** teachers rated *working in groups* as either *excellent* (94%) or *good* (6%).
- **100%** teachers rated *time management* as either *excellent* (97%) or *good* (3%).
- **100%** teachers rated *venue and catering* as either *excellent* (91%) or *good* (9%).

Analysis of post-programme questionnaires assessed knowledge and understanding across a range of areas:

- **100%** teachers either *strongly agreed* (**94%**) or *agreed* (6%) with the statement: *The training increased my knowledge of the Helping Hands programme.*
- **100%** teachers either *strongly agreed* (**87%**) or *agreed* (13%) with the statement: *The training increased my knowledge of strategies to safeguard children affected by domestic abuse.*
- **100%** teachers either *strongly agreed* (**81%**) or *agreed* (19%) with the statement: *The training helped create a shared language and tools for myself and children in my classroom to discuss feelings/safety.*
- **100%** teachers either *strongly agreed* (**83%**) or *agreed* (17%) with the statement: *I will now feel confident to deliver the Helping Hands programme to children in my setting.*
- **100%** teachers *strongly agreed* (**91%**) or *agreed* (19%) with the statement: *The training increased my knowledge of Women’s Aid and the services they provide.*

Building on the success of the previous year, roll out of refresher training webinars for teachers who had previously completed the Social Guardian training continued. WAFNI delivered this Refresher Programme “Next Steps for Social Guardians” to 119 teachers via 4 online 3 hour webinars. Again, webinars were evaluated using a survey monkey approach and a full evaluation report was produced with the following headlines:

- **100%** teachers rated the *quality of delivery* as either *excellent* (84%) or *good* (16%).
- **99%** teachers rated the *structure and flow* of the webinar as either *excellent* (84%) or *good* (14%).
- **98%** teachers rated *capacity to increase knowledge and understanding and build confidence* as either *excellent* (78%) or *good* (20%).
- **99%** teachers rated *relevance to the workplace* as either *excellent* (84%) or *good* (14%).
- **99%** teachers rated *content and materials* as either *excellent* (79%) or *good* (21%).

Analysis of post-programme surveys assessed knowledge and understanding across a range of areas:

- **99%** teachers perceived themselves to have *excellent* (49%) or *good* (50%) understanding of *Current NI developments in relation to domestic abuse.*
- **97%** teachers perceived themselves to have *excellent* (59%) or *good* (38%) understanding of *Nature and*

## **OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES**

*complexity of coercive control.*

- **99%** teachers perceived themselves to have *excellent* (59%) or *good* (39%) understanding of *Impact of coercive control on children.*
- **97%** teachers perceived themselves to have *excellent* (54%) or *good* (42%) understanding of *Trauma resulting from domestic abuse.*
- **99%** teachers perceived themselves to have *excellent* (67%) or *good* (32%) understanding of *Helping Hands programme and success in Northern Ireland.*
- **92%** teachers perceived themselves to have *excellent* (62%) or *good* (30%) understanding of *Work of Women's Aid in Northern Ireland.*

### **3.3 'Women's Aid Centre of Training Excellence' - Qualification Centre**

One of our key deliverables under Unlock Learning was a 'Women's Aid Centre of Training Excellence' to build capacity and promote best practice. This was also focussing on a standardised approach to staff training across all eight Women's Aid groups. There was agreement reached with local groups that WAFNI would develop a three-tier training approach – Induction, Training, Qualification. We have successfully implemented all three levels with great progress in this reporting period.

During this reporting period we further developed our internal training to staff across Women's Aid groups to build capacity and develop knowledge and learning. Plans are in place for next year to continue the roll out of the Domestic Abuse Practitioner Advocate training to Women's Aid groups across NI, this is UK-Wide qualification under NOCN which we developed in partnership with Women's Aid England, Welsh Women's Aid and Scottish Women's Aid. There are four modules to this Certificate and a dedicated time commitment of a full year to complete the training.

WAFNI online e-Learning training platform has been hugely successful. This year a total of 172 learners from Women's Aid groups across Northern Ireland completed 534 courses. This year two additional modules were added to the suite of training available. These focused on non-fatal strangulation (in line with new legislation) and stalking. This means that during the reporting period the platform offered staff regionally **six training modules** as follows:

Welcome to Women's Aid: Induction Training  
Understanding Trauma & Vicarious Trauma  
Understanding Coercive Control  
Routes to Support: Induction Training (Women's Aid online bed space system)  
Understanding Non-Fatal Strangulation in NI  
Understanding Stalking in NI

These training programmes have been progressed as CPD programmes and have been extremely well received and attended by staff and statistics show 100% participation from eight local Women's Aid Groups since their introduction. We are very proud to hold both NOCN and CPD Centre status which is all part of Women's Aid Centre of Training Excellence goals.

### **4. Create Social Change - Policy & Campaigning**

WAFNI works to create social change in all its core activities including training and awareness raising and through effective partnership working. WAFNI leads regionally on powerful campaigns which are developed in partnership with the eight Women's Aid groups and informed by issues and needs identified through service delivery and the voices of lived experience. Campaigns aim to shift public thinking and raise awareness, not only of domestic abuse and VAWG but of the range of services available to ensure effective signposting and access to support. WAFNI has been instrumental in the development of government policy and strategic frameworks throughout the reporting period. The organisation has shared its unique expertise of over forty years working in this area and brought the voices of lived experience to the forefront in discussions and drafting of these key strategic frameworks. No other organisation can bring this unique insight and contribution.

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**4.1 Domestic Abuse & Civil Proceedings Act (Northern Ireland) 2021 (Coercive Control Legislation)**

WAFNI has continued to work in this reporting period to ensure professional awareness and understanding of this legislation and its implementation. This year we have continued to work closely with PSNI to monitor the implementation of this legislation and to continue to raise awareness of coercive control. WAFNI also was a key participant in the Criminal Justice Inspectorate NI's review of the legislation at the two year stage. This highlighted many recommendations and we particularly welcomed five recommendations in relation to children and young people, linked to the addition of a Child Aggravator included in the legislation. We continue to lobby for full implementation of legislation that will provide effective legal interventions and provisions to ensure victims of domestic abuse have the support and protection they need and deserve.

**4.2 Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse Strategy in NI for 2023 – 2030**

Led by Departments for Justice and Health, this strategy was initially formed around four key pillars of Partnership, Prevention, Support and Justice. Each pillar has its own expected outcomes and key priority areas. WAFNI lobbied for a separate pillar for children and young people and consulted with the SAY group to respond to design and shape the pillar based upon their lived experience, thoughts and hopes.

**4.3 Ending Violence Against Women and Girls Strategic Framework**

Up until 2021, NI was the only part of the UK and Ireland that did not have a specific VAWG strategy. On the 9<sup>th</sup> March 2021, WAFNI launched a Call for Action and petition for a VAWG strategy. The Assembly considered a motion to introduce a comprehensive strategy to address VAWG. This was the start of the journey. WAFNI was a fundamental driver, working in partnership with TEO to consult, share expertise and bring the voices of lived experience, including the Social Action Youth (SAY) group. WAFNI welcomed The Executive Office taking forward this initiative and committed time and energy to the co design process.

**4.4 Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHR)**

During this reporting period, Women's Aid NI continued to participate in Domestic Homicide Reviews. A Domestic Homicide Review (DHR) is a multi-agency review of the circumstances in which the death of a person aged 16 or over has, or appears to have, resulted from violence, abuse or neglect by a person to whom they were related or with whom they were, or had been, in an intimate personal relationship, or a member of the same household as themselves. Designed to promote key learning for statutory and voluntary organisations working to address Domestic Abuse, WAFNI had campaigned for DHR's for many years and welcomed the establishment of same during this year. WAFNI played a key role in recruitment of first DHR Chairs with the eight local Women's Aid Groups. Women's Aid staff attended the DHR Panel training and participate actively in panels. During this reporting period the DoJ carried out a review of DHR's which WAFNI welcomed and facilitated a full day review with all eight local group staff to review and assess the process. WAFNI presented our findings to DoJ officials. At the end of this reporting period the unfortunate truth is that we have 2 DHRs published but many more currently in process. This is a vital element in a bid to reduce the number of domestic abuse murders of women in Northern Ireland and WAFNI are committed to full participation.

**4.5 MARAC (Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference)**

In 2022, PSNI identified the need for (and commissioned) a comprehensive review of all MARAC operational processes in Northern Ireland. This review was delivered by independent consultancy, Leonard Consultancy, with research which will be undertaken during February/ March 2023. Women's Aid regionally held its own review, facilitated by WAFNI. Findings from the internal Women's Aid review were fed into the overall review. Women's Aid believes that MARAC has the potential to be an effective intervention to safeguard the adult victim of domestic abuse (and subsequently children involved in the household too) however, there are areas that are not currently working as effectively as they could be and there are several areas which require urgent attention and development, these include lengthy delays, repeat cases and lack of representation from key agencies. Women's Aid NI has been a committed member and active participant on MARACs in Northern Ireland since their introduction and establishment in 2009/10. Women's Aid NI has invested heavily in MARACs in terms of both time, expertise and resources. Women's Aid NI currently has a representative sitting on all MARACs operating in Northern Ireland. Women's Aid NI is also a key referral agency and

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currently is the main referral organisation from the voluntary sector.

**4.6 Non-fatal strangulation**

This year Women's Aid welcomed much needed legislation change in the form of a new offence of non-fatal strangulation. This offence, which is not retrospective, came into effect on 26 June 2023. It applies where strangulation or asphyxiation does not result in the death of the victim. The offence is created through Section 28 of the Justice (Sexual Offences and Trafficking Victims) Act (Northern Ireland) 2022. WAFNI welcomed this key legislative development, having always recognised the serious and potentially fatal consequences of nonfatal strangulation. WAFNI is committed to increasing knowledge and understanding of the signs and dangers of non-fatal strangulation in line with this legislation across a wide audience.

Up-skirting, down-blousing and cyber-flashing are crimes which can distress and humiliate a victim. The offences are also part of the Justice (Sexual Offences and Trafficking Victims) Act (Northern Ireland) 2022 and came into effect on 27<sup>th</sup> November 2023. Perpetrators could face up to two years in prison and up to 10 years on the Sex Offenders Register. Changes also include enhanced laws to deal with people who threaten to share private sexual images or impersonate children with the aim of grooming. Again, WAFNI welcomed this, having responded to the public consultation, informed by the lived experience of those who had experienced these crimes.

Women's Aid will continue to monitor the implementation of new legislation and will work in partnership with all relevant agencies to increase professional understanding and build capacity to respond. Internally we have developed new training modules covering these developments to ensure staff understanding and awareness.

**5. Our Brand – Our values – Regional Women's Aid Branding**

Promoting a consistent, collective image and brand to ensure clear messaging is inherent in our collective working. We are committed to consistent messaging and regional branding for all Women's Aid comms and promotional campaigns. We believe that standardised marketing for Women's Aid will provide clearer and more efficient pathways to support for women accessing our services. Within our Strategic Plan WAFNI is committed to: Implementing regular regional awareness raising campaigns across all social media platforms. This is a key deliverable which we have consistently delivered on throughout this reporting period.

The implementation of Regional Branding Guidelines is important to ensure consistent messaging and use of design, colour and image. Regular regional communication group meetings and correspondence took place during this reporting period with regular consultation through monthly Forum meetings to ensure clear messaging, social media etc. The result has been a unified consistent brand across Women's Aid NI that is recognisable and has impact.

At the end of this reporting period all branding is in place and with all social media channels have the same messaging which has created a major impact. WAFNI lead by posting on social media and it is then resent/liked/commented on by our 8 local Women's Aid Groups, increasing our reach across Northern Ireland. The success of our consistent branding messaging is clearly evidenced by our increased social media activity which during this reporting period saw a Facebook reach of 82,000 and an Instagram reach of 57,300.

**6. Sustain and improve**

As the funding situation in Northern Ireland becomes more challenging, WAFNI CEO with Board of Trustees ensured that strong governance and effective board infrastructure was in place again this year to meet all due diligence requirements and ensure organisation fit for purpose.

Monthly Board of Trustee meetings continued throughout the year (12 in year) together with subgroup meetings to review Finance & Fundraising, staffing issues and policy. Scoping for potential funding opportunities is ongoing throughout the year.

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There is a Risk Register which is reviewed by Board of Trustees on a regular basis. The Board are very happy to conclude this report with the knowledge of a robust financial position securing the work of Women's Aid over the next few years. We also continue to income generate to support regional projects for local Women's Aid groups.

**6.1 Partnership Working**

WAFNI realises the elimination of domestic abuse requires the combined efforts and commitment of a wide range of agencies including government departments and voluntary and statutory organisations. Partnership work is prioritised and has continued to be developed and nurtured across all aspects of the organisation's work. Throughout the year we have supported a range of new partnerships as well as maintaining our established work in this area with all partnership meetings such as Safeguarding Board Northern Ireland, Stakeholders Assurance Group, Police Service Northern Ireland, Probation Board Northern Ireland etc.

This year we entered into the fourth year of our Ambitious Corporate Partnership with Allstate NI. This progressive partnership has been hugely successful and has formed a strong connection with a clear vision and ethos, stretching far beyond monetary value and reflecting a genuine commitment to collaborate and drive awareness of domestic abuse in NI. The Hear Her Voice Conference in the Crowne Plaza Hotel Belfast in November 2021, was the culmination of fellowship for Year One. In year two the focus centred on support at the refuges throughout NI. With funding from the Allstate Foundation, the ANI Corporate Fund and employee donations, the priority was improvement projects and fun activities for the women and their children. Support in year four focused upon the development of the Financial toolkit and supporting the SAY project. Allstate NI worked with the SAY group to develop their branding and provided venue and catering for SAY workshops. Allstate NI and Women's Aid are committed to sustaining this partnership throughout the year ahead. Plans currently underway include working together through policy review and training development and delivery to ensure Allstate NI is Safe Leave ready in line with the Domestic Abuse (Safe Leave) Bill. This Bill makes provision for an entitlement to paid safe leave for victims of domestic abuse, and for connected purposes.

This partnership is an outstanding example of how industry and charity can work together to bring real and lasting social impact to communities.

**Public benefit**

The trustees confirm that they have had due regard for the guidance produced on public benefit by the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland and are pleased to report that during the year the charitable company has continued to provide public benefits through the programmes and services we offer. In particular, the directors consider how planned activities will contribute to the aims and objectives they have set out.

**Overview**

WAFNI challenges attitudes, beliefs and behaviours that perpetuate domestic, sexual and gender-based violence and abuse; and, through the provision of safety, support and prevention services and the promotion of healthy and non-abusive relationships, works to end gender-based violence locally and globally. The work of Women's Aid Federation Northern Ireland provides a strategic focus on membership development, policy development and review, training provision, preventative education and lobbying and liaison with a wide range of statutory and voluntary bodies.

**Vision**

The Women's Aid Federation Northern Ireland vision for the 21st century is the elimination of domestic abuse.

**Northern Ireland Women's Aid Federation Limited**

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**FINANCIAL REVIEW**

**Financial position**

The detailed financial results for the year ended 31 March 2024 are shown on pages 23 and 24 of the financial statements which accompany this report. In summary incoming resources were £1,263,375 an increase of £670,953 on the previous year. Total resources expended increased by £281,617 to £753,458 for the year. This resulted in a net surplus position of £509,917 for the year ended 31 March 2024.

**Reserves policy**

Northern Ireland Women's Aid Federation Ltd maintains a prudent level of reserves to enable the organisation to manage financial risk and deliver on our commitments. The objective is that the organisation would be able to carry on its work, even if faced with a combination of difficult circumstances, and have the time to adjust its strategy to meet these changing circumstances. Our reserves policy is set therefore to ensure that there is no disruption to our services at short notice, due to a lack of funds, an unforeseen reduction income or an increase in expenditure, while at the same time ensuring that reserves are no higher than necessary and not retained longer than required. This gives time in the event of a drop in funding, to seek alternative funds, restructure and cut costs whilst continuing to provide current services.

The charity's policy is to retain a level of free reserves, which matches the needs of the organisation, both at the current time and in the foreseeable future. The reserves required should be sufficient to meet committed grant expenditure, personnel and overheads for a period equivalent to six months annual expenditure. The charity will continue to monitor compliance with this policy on a regular basis and the Board will review the appropriateness of the policy annually.

**Principal risks and uncertainties**

**Risk Policy and Internal Control Framework**

Northern Ireland Women's Aid Federation Ltd has established a comprehensive risk register process, which seeks to ensure that the organisation manages and mitigates risk in line with the agreed risk appetite of the organisation. The Risk Analysis Matrix is regularly reviewed and thoroughly assessed at various levels in the organisation and takes account of uncertainty, the nature of that uncertainty and how it can be addressed. Having primary responsibility for risk management, the Board regularly consider the main strategic, business and operational risks facing the organisation. The directors confirm effective controls and reporting systems are in place to lessen these risks:

The principal risks and uncertainties facing Northern Ireland Women's Aid Federation Ltd are as follows:

**Financial Stability:**

The principal financial challenges facing the organisation are in the areas of income generation. Northern Ireland Women's Aid Federation Ltd is primarily reliant on the goodwill of Governmental, relevant partner agencies and the public. The trustees are acutely aware of the significant financial and other challenges that lie ahead for the organisation and the people it supports. The fundraising environment remains very challenging, uncertain funding and some projects continuing to be at risk of short-term funding continues to make future planning extremely difficult. The immediate challenge is to secure core funding from Government Departments. Much work has been progressed in this area, with targeted lobbying, partnership building and development of comprehensive business plans. We are also progressing all identified opportunities for funding from relevant partner agencies that will sustain projects and posts into the future, together with a commitment to focus on income generation through Centre of Training Excellence. The organisation will also be working to reduce and control costs and also ensuring that its processes and procedures get the best value for money in all expenditure. Increasingly, to deliver public services there is a requirement to enter into the tendering process which necessitates the need to be fully prepared for the potential challenges which lie ahead.

**Governance and Management:**

Northern Ireland Women's Aid Federation Ltd has governance structures and procedures in place to ensure appropriate

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decision-making and implementation. As the external environment increasingly changes, any organisational change initiatives and projects are reviewed regularly by senior management and the Board has structured oversight of operations and regularly reviews risk. Northern Ireland Women's Aid Federation Ltd staff members are the key to success and the organisation prioritises building strong relationships with staff by ensuring regular performance management and continuing staff development training.

**Operational:**

The personal security of staff and safety of beneficiaries is Northern Ireland Women's Aid Federation Ltd highest priority. The organisation has comprehensive policies to ensure that this risk is appropriately managed such as adherence to Data Protection, Health & Safety, and Protection from Abuse Policies, Lone Working arrangement and procedures are in place to safeguard Adults and Children in the delivery of its services.

**Information Security and Continuity:**

At all times Northern Ireland Women's Aid Federation Ltd strives to ensure that we operate a secure environment in relation to data security. We are dependent on IT and communication systems for processing and storing our data. To prevent disruption to operations due to damage to systems or unauthorised access to data Northern Ireland Women's Aid Federation Ltd has developed robust information security and data recovery measures.

**Compliance and Regulation:**

Significant damage to Northern Ireland Women's Aid Federation Ltd reputation could be caused due to non-compliance with laws regulations or codes of best practice. Northern Ireland Women's Aid Federation Ltd implements well-established policies and procedures and adheres to the sector's recommended codes of practice (such as Statement of Recommended Practice - SORP) to ensure compliance with applicable regulatory and legal standards.

**Environmental and External Risks:**

Northern Ireland Women's Aid Federation Ltd monitors the external environment in order to anticipate political, social or economic risks, so that plans can be put in place to minimise any negative impact on organisational activities or the reputation of the organisation. We have robust procedures to assess and implement effective measures to reduce the likelihood and the potential impact of risks occurring.

We have confidence in the need for our support services, the effectiveness in our approach and the backing of our partners and we will endeavour to make every effort to continue to provide sustainable, responsive, high quality and effective services that meet the needs of our beneficiaries. We will continue to negotiate with government departments to extend their commitment to ensure that our core work can effectively continue and secure the sustainability of all our projects.

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**FUTURE PLANS**

Future Plans for 2024/2025 will be in line with a strategic review of 'Unlocking Potential – Building on Success' Three-Year Strategic Plan. This strategic review will build upon strengths of the current strategic plan, identify new opportunities and present clear deliverables identified over an agreed timescale.

**STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT**

**Governing document**

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

**Charity constitution**

Northern Ireland Women's Aid Federation Ltd is a registered charity with The Charity Commission for Northern Ireland, registration number NIC106451.

**Governance of the Charity**

**Directors and Trustees**

The Directors of the Company, as at the year-end are listed below, and are also charity trustees for the purpose of charity law and under Company's Articles are known as members of the Board. The Board comprises of not less than 3 and a maximum of 14 members who meet every month and are responsible for the strategic direction and policy of the charity. Under the requirements of the Articles of Association the Directors are elected to serve for a period of 4 years by an election of the Federation Members of the Charity at AGM. At AGM Trustees who have served four consecutive years shall retire from office. A Trustee who retires in accordance with this Article, if willing to act, shall be eligible for reappointment for a further term of up to four consecutive years. The Directors' liability is limited by guarantee. The term of office (Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer and Secretary) of a Federation Trustee may not be held for more than a maximum of four consecutive terms.

**The trustees who have served during the year were as follows:**

Patricia Frances Lyness (Chair)  
Eleanor McGuckin (Secretary)  
Claire Allen (Treasurer)  
Jane Elizabeth Kremer (Vice-Chair)  
Catherine McMinn  
Niamh O'Maolain  
Traci Kimber  
Kerry Anne Malone  
Adele O'Grady  
Hilda Elizabeth Hope  
Ruth McAdam

**The following Trustees were appointed after the year end:**

Catherine McMinn (appointed by Board members 13<sup>th</sup> June 2024)

During 2023/24, there were no new appointments and no resignations from the Board during the year. Board members participate in sub-committees, which meet regularly to ensure that operations policies,

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**STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT**

procedures and systems incorporate sound management and financial controls in keeping with current best practice. All recommendations made by the sub-committees are subject to ratification by the Board in accordance with documented procedure.

**Organisational structure**

The sub-committees are as follows:

" Finance & Fundraising (F&F) - to support the achievement of the strategic objectives and operational targets, the F&F has responsibility for ensuring the effective and efficient use of the Organisation's financial and other resources. In particular, the F&F ensures that, the internal controls and the financial management systems are adequate to discharge corporate governance responsibilities; there is effective and efficient planning, controlling, monitoring and reporting of resources; full compliance with internal policies and procedures and applicable accounting policies and regulations are adhered to. The F&F is chaired by Treasurer and attended by other members of the Trustee Board.

" Human Resources & Policy (HR&P) - The HR&P review employment related issues and make recommendations on employment related decisions such as Contracts of Employment and changes to internal Policies and Procedures. Members may also participate in recruitment of staff and participate in disciplinary/grievance proceedings as required.

" Policy & Research (P&R) - The P&R review the Organisations consultations processes and responses to external policy and legislative amendments which are submitted by the Organisation on behalf the Federation Members. Members may also participate in supporting consultation process.

On occasion the Board also has the powers to set up ad-hoc time limited sub-committees for a particular purpose should the need arise. The Trustees of WAFNI adhere to the Code of Good Governance, the standards for governance in the sector, which sets out the principles and practices of good governance for the boards of voluntary and community organisations.

The Trustees and Board are the custodians of WAFNI's vision, mission and values; they approve strategy, structure, annual plans and budgets and ensure the organisation is effective and accountable. A scheme of delegation is in place and day to day responsibility for the delivery of services in line with approved plans and budgets rest with the Chief Executive Officer, supported by members of the senior management team. The Chief Executive Officer and senior management staff regularly attend Board meetings but have no voting rights.

The senior management team currently consists of Chief Executive Officer, Support Services Manager, Strategic Support and Finance Manager.

**Governance of the Charity**

The Board of Northern Ireland Women's Aid Federation Ltd meets monthly. It is responsible for the strategic direction of the organisation and oversees the management of the organisation. The day-to-day management and operation of the activities are carried out by a staff team, led by the CEO and the Senior Management Team, who also report regularly to the Board. Directors are appointed according to the specific skills required by the organisation to fulfil its responsibilities as outlined in its Strategic Plan.

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**Members**

The members of the company at 31 March 2022 were as follows: -

ABCLN Women's Aid  
Armagh Down Women's Aid  
Belfast & Lisburn Women's Aid  
Causeway & Mid-Ulster Women's Aid  
Fermanagh Women's Aid  
Foyle Women's Aid  
North Down & Ards Women's Aid  
Omagh Women's Aid

**STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES**

The trustees (who are also the directors of Northern Ireland Women's Aid Federation Limited for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Report of the Trustees and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice) including Financial Reporting Standard 102 "The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland"

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 incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that period. In preparing those financial statements, the trustees are required to

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charity SORP;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company 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 charitable company and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

In so far as the trustees are aware:

- there is no relevant audit information of which the charitable company's auditors are unaware; and
- the trustees have taken all steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditors are aware of that information.

**AUDITORS**

The auditors, Lynn Drake & Co Ltd, will be proposed for re-appointment at the forthcoming Annual General Meeting.

This report has been prepared in accordance with the special provisions of Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

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Approved by order of the board of trustees on 9<sup>th</sup> November 2024 and signed on its behalf by:

.....  
Patricia Frances Lyness - Trustee