

RDA CAUSEWAY COAST & GLENS LTD

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

The Trustees present their annual report and financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024.

The accounts have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in note 1 to the accounts and comply with the charity's Memorandum and Articles of Association, the Companies Act 2006 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 (FRS 102 2019)."

Objectives and activities

The charity's objects are to promote the objects of The Riding for the Disabled Association incorporating Carriage Driving (registered company number 5010395 and a charity registered in England and Wales under charity number 244108) by providing disabled people with the opportunity to ride and/or to carriage drive to benefit their health and well-being in the Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council Area.

Our mission is to aid the personal development of riders. Working with horses is well documented to aid physical, mental and social and emotional development. We provide a platform for experience in working as a group, working with and helping to care for large animals, taking instruction, communicating with others, tactile development, and learning to recognise and take responsibility for another's wellbeing (horses, helpers), including safe operating practices. Riding also provides independent movement to wheelchair users – riding simulates walking.

The Centre seeks to develop clients to the extent of their ability, having riders competing annually in the RDA National Championships, Paralympics and Special Olympic events at regional, national and international levels. The overall experience promotes amazing confidence and life skills, and the achievements and developments of our riders generates respect from the wider community, as evidenced by the support the Group receives.

Riding can be a dangerous activity. However, all instructors and volunteers and staff are trained, and regularly assessed to standards determined by the National Riding for the Disabled Association. In addition the centre meets the standards and is licensed as a Riding School by the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs, and holds both British Horse Society and Pony Club UK approval as a recognised Equestrian Centre.

One of the aims of the group is to extend the capacity of volunteers to improve services to clients, and broaden their life experience. Incidentally this helps the ability in life skills, giving experiences and confidences not likely to be readily achieved elsewhere.

All volunteers are given basic training in equestrian issues, health & safety, safeguarding and protection issues and team working. In addition, young people are given the opportunity to undertake a range of qualifications to authenticate their experience, including the Young Equestrian Leaders Award and Millennium Volunteers.

The Trustees have paid due regard to guidance issued by the Charity Commission in deciding what activities the charity should undertake.

RDA CAUSEWAY COAST & GLENS LTD

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)(INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Achievements and performance

This has been a period of change for the charity, with a change of guard at board level.

Some long-standing board members were replaced with new trustees, whose qualifications and expertise better align with the charity's mission and goals.

There had been a lack of financial visibility and a disconnect around procedural propriety which led to a need for change.

The new board has put in place improved governance structures and enhanced transparency and accountability measures. Decision-making is effective and democratic and always in the best interests of the charity.

Financial management continued to be enhanced to include better budgeting, reporting and oversight.

The charity made three redundancies in this financial year. One of these was in September 2023, and the other two in December 2023. Redundancy payments totalling £11,902 were paid out in respect of these. The operational impact has been nugatory, with volunteers stepping up to bridge the gap, but the financial impact has been significantly to our benefit.

The charity now has a renewed and clear strategic direction, and the new board has made significant investment and improvements to increase our efficiency and effectiveness within the community. This has had a positive impact on our beneficiaries with improved infrastructure and increased service delivery.

We have built strong collaborative relationships with the community and other stakeholders, such as the local NHS multidisciplinary team, with whom, in partnership, we run a number of therapeutic programs for the young people in our community, an enhanced service which we can now deliver.

We continue to fundraise and to develop our resources, with particular attention to training and developing our volunteers.

We ensure compliance at every level from ethical to procedural and are committed to ensuring that our charity can continue to meet the evolving needs of our community.

Financial review

The company returned net expenditure for the year of £119,531 (2023 - £85,614). As at 31st March 2024 the total funds of the charity amounted to £824,622 (2023 - £944,153) comprising designated funds of £474,839 (2023 - £600,547), restricted funds of £30,323 (2023 - £23,870) and general unrestricted funds of £319,460 (2023 - £319,736).

Of the total funds reported above, £22,250 is made up of cash at bank and in hand, with bank debt of £11,071.

Risk

The Trustees have assessed the major risks to which the charity is exposed, and are satisfied that systems are in place to mitigate exposure to the major risks.

Reserves

The Trustees endeavour to maintain sufficient reserves to ensure that, in the event of a significant drop in funding, they will be able to continue the charity's current activities while consideration is given to ways in which additional funds may be raised.

Plans for the future

The charity plans to continue to grow and to aid the personal development of the riders as the finances of the organisation permits.

Structure, governance and management

The charity is a company limited by guarantee and is governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association.

RDA Causeway Coast & Glens Ltd registered with the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland on 18 July 2017.

The Trustees, who are also the directors for the purpose of company law, and who served during the year were:

Ms Christine Hankin

Mr Albert Clyde

(Resigned 30 June 2023)

Mr John Wisener

(Resigned 30 June 2023)

Ms Gail Downey

RDA CAUSEWAY COAST & GLENS LTD

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

Mrs Jennifer Campbell
Mrs Lauryn McAleese
Mrs B Robertson
Ms Shirley Reid

None of the Trustees have any beneficial interest in the company. All of the Trustees are members of the company and guarantee to contribute £1 in the event of a winding up.

The Trustees' report was approved by the Board of Trustees.

Ms Gail Downey
Trustee
Dated: 16 December 2024