

Dungannon Enterprise Centre

Trustees' Report

For Year Ended 31st March 2023

The Trustees, who are the Directors for the purposes of company law, present their annual report and financial statement for the year ended 31 March 2023.

Principal activities

The mission of Dungannon Enterprise Centre is to strengthen the economy of the area by encouraging economic development and supporting entrepreneurs to create and grow competitive, profitable and wealth generating enterprises. It does this by providing rented workspace accommodation at favorable terms, office support services, business training and mentoring, hands-on digital marketing social media and mobile movie making support.

Structure, governance, and management

Dungannon Enterprise Centre operates as a limited company by guarantee (Company No. NI18557) and obtained registration with the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland on 23 March 2019 (Charity No. 107227).

The company was founded based on a Memorandum of Association, outlining its charitable objectives and powers, and operates in accordance with its Articles of Association.

The selection of directors adheres to the provisions stated in the charity's Articles of Association. According to these provisions, directors elected to the Board for a three-year term must retire from their positions at each Annual General Meeting. However, they remain eligible for re-election.

Financial Review

The results for the year are set out below, which the Directors consider to be satisfactory.

The reserves of the Company are held for advancement of its charitable purpose, other than restricted reserves which are held for a designated purpose.

Directors

The Directors who held office during the year and up to the date of signature of the financial statements were as follows:

Dominic Molloy
Walter Cuddy
Ralph Brown
Claire Murray
Andrew Trotter
Robert Milligan
Moya Stringer
Catherine Martin (Retired 6th April 2022)
Stephen Mohan
Catherine McHugh
Yvonne Mitchell
Michelle Donnelly (Joined 6th April 2022)
Caoimhe Lowe (Joined 6th April 2022)
David Campbell (Joined 6th April 2022)

Objects and activities

Dungannon Enterprise Centre's primary mission is to advance economic and community development while promoting urban and rural regeneration in Dungannon and its surrounding areas. We fulfill this purpose through a comprehensive range of services, including:

Providing business units and meeting facilities on favorable terms; Offering funded enterprise support programs and initiatives, such as pre-start programs, start-up programs, and business development programs for established businesses; Delivering practical advice and mentoring to established businesses, enabling them to thrive; Implementing employability and enterprise support initiatives specifically tailored for local schools; Providing office and secretarial services to small businesses under favorable conditions; Offering project and property management services, along with advice and support to community and voluntary organizations throughout the district.

By delivering these services, Dungannon Enterprise Centre actively contributes to the growth and prosperity of the local community.

Achievements and performance

Property

During the year the occupancy level within the Business Park has remained steady at an average of 98% and 75 tenants. The Enterprise Centre continued to promote its incubation space, Dungannon Evolve and package of support for fledgling businesses. It also expanded into the provision of storage space for tenant businesses – 19 steel containers located at the rear of the Business Park.

During the year the Centre sold 3 acres of land, at the rear of the business park, to Mid Ulster District Council.

It was a goal of the Enterprise Centre to have a presence in Dungannon town centre to bring footfall to the town and help it to flourish. In August 2022, the Centre agreed to rent a derelict space, adjacent to the Market Square and owned by Mid Ulster Council. The plan was to create an event /market space from recycled steel shipping containers where events could be run to attract footfall to the town. “The Space@Market Square” opened in September 2022 and provided accommodation to hold a market and public entertainment events, such as a pop-up cinema, street food events, a Halloween and Christmas festivals, charity events and schools’ enterprise markets.

The Dungannon Enterprise Centre has consistently overseen the management of Aughnacloy Development Association's property, known as "The McCreedy Mill," which has maintained full occupancy year-round. Alongside this, the Centre provides an industrial letting service to local private property owners and extends its support in letting the workspace owned by the community group Dungannon West Renewal Ltd., known as the "Ballysaggart Business Complex.

Business Start-up Support

The Centre continued to invest surpluses in providing support to new entrepreneurs considering self-employment with additional business training and intensive mentoring. The organisation’s own branded business startup support service, “Launchpad”, comprises of business startup advice and one to one mentoring and is offered free of charge to budding entrepreneurs. Despite a significant interruption to its normal services as a result of the Covid 19 pandemic, **133** were supported with startup advice. **55** new entrepreneurs received further confidential business mentoring.

Dungannon Enterprise Centre delivers projects in the Mid Ulster area for Enterprise Northern Ireland, in particular, the Co-Innovate Programme and the Exploring Enterprise Programme (EEP). During the year, 30 participants were supported through EEP.

Businesses were also supported through a range of networking such as the Business Boost Breakfast, Rise and Shine event series and the Ecafe Lunch and Learn held in May 2023 impacting over 150 participants.

DEC delivered the first Mid Ulster Hackathon with 5 local schools from across the district supporting over 50 Year 9 students at this event. This was replicated with approximately 60 additional Year 11 students as part of a Junito Apprentice Challenge. Other schools outreach included Interview Skills days held at 2 local secondary schools with over 100 pupils.

The team has continued to develop “Evolve Dungannon”, the collaborative programme of support to help people solve problems associated with launching a start-up by providing a space to work and advice to succeed. Support is provided through the critical stages helping young businesses to flourish. During the year, 4 incubatees were supported through this incubation programme and 1 incubatee grew out of their space to larger accommodation.

Erasmus + Funded Initiatives

Dungannon Enterprise Centre was project lead on 3 European Erasmus+ projects along with its European partners. Two of the projects were completed in January 2023 with the final project to end in August 2023.

- SHINE - a programme to develop a toolkit for educators and curriculum content to support and develop leadership skills for females in the third sector across Europe. Partners from UK, Ireland, Sweden, Italy.
- ECafe - a programme to develop curriculum and workshop content for organisations to use to support and teach adults starting businesses across Europe. Partners are from UK, Ireland, Finland, Germany, Turkey.
- CSI EU – a programme to develop a toolkit and curriculum of concepts and methodologies used in the cultural sector to drive social innovation and digital transformation across Europe. Partners are from UK, Ireland, Hungary, Greece and Italy.

Purple Dot Media

Dungannon Enterprise Centre promotes the brand "Purple Dot Media," through which it offers video production and training services. Despite encountering substantial obstacles post pandemic, Purple Dot Media effectively maintained its progress over the course of the year. Acknowledging the increasing need within the realm of small businesses for generating social media content, the team extended their offerings to accommodate micro businesses as well.

Moreover, the team was committed to crafting a series of virtual training and mentoring sessions, motivating owners of micro enterprises to integrate video into their digital marketing strategies. Their efforts resulted in 110 attendees spanning 9 workshops and seminars. These events were not confined solely to Northern Ireland and Ireland; they also managed to draw participants from various regions within the British Isles.

Throughout the year, the Purple Dot Media team effectively created 29 promotional videos, further underscoring their dedication to fulfilling Dungannon Enterprise Centre’s clients' requirements.

The team persisted in producing and distributing concise online tutorials for mobile movie-making tips through LinkedIn and Instagram, without charge. From April 2022 to March 2023, these tutorials

received substantial interaction, amassing 33,109 accounts reached, 46,618 post views and 350 additional followers.

Likewise, the content from Purple Dot Media garnered favorable responses on Instagram, accruing 3,209 likes and an impressive 190,911 views within the designated timeframe. The team's unwavering commitment to delivering valuable guidance on mobile movie-making struck a chord with the online community, effectively demonstrating the achievements of their outreach endeavors.

Community and Social Responsibility

The core mission of Dungannon Enterprise Centre continues to revolve around fostering economic development by promoting and supporting self-employment initiatives. In the past year, the company actively invested funds and dedicated staff time to collaborate with local organizations sharing a similar vision. One notable collaboration involved working closely with secondary schools in the South Tyrone area to raise awareness about entrepreneurship and advocate self-employment as a viable and fulfilling career path. Through these efforts, the Enterprise Centre is actively contributing to the cultivation of an entrepreneurial spirit within the community.

Over the course of the year, Dungannon Enterprise Centre remained committed to its mission of fostering self-employment and raising awareness about entrepreneurship. The organization diligently reinvested its surpluses and staff resources into various initiatives aimed at promoting these objectives. Notable programmes such as the LaunchPad Programme, Exploring Enterprise Programme, Evolve Dungannon, and Purple Dot Media were key components of these efforts.

These initiatives encompassed training programmes and mentoring opportunities on self-employment, providing aspiring entrepreneurs with the necessary tools to succeed. The cumulative impact of these endeavors was evident, with a remarkable total of **561** occasions where individuals actively participated in and benefited from these programs throughout the year. Dungannon Enterprise Centre's unwavering dedication has played a significant role in encouraging and empowering individuals to explore self-employment and entrepreneurship.

Product/Service	Impact
Property owned or managed by DEC	75 tenant businesses
Events run in The Space@Market Square	21 events
Exploring Enterprise Programme	30 participants
Evolve Dungannon	5 incubatees supported
Launchpad (Business Startup support)	188 potential entrepreneurs
Business Boost Breakfast, Rise and Shine event series	150 people attended
Mid Ulster Hackathon	110 young people participated
Finance Resilience Programme mentoring	3 mentees
Online Purple Dot Media tutorials	237,529 views
Impact Occasions	561 Impact occasions