

1 JULY 2023 - 30 JUNE 2024



# TRUSTEE ANNUAL REPORT

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**Charity no:** 107583

**Company no:** 653491

**Date registered:** 23/10/2020

**REGISTERED ADDRESS:**

26a Downshire Place  
Banbridge  
Co. Down  
BT32 3DF

**REGISTERED BANK:**

Santander  
Newry Street  
Banbridge

**TRUSTEES SERVING DURING REPORTING PERIOD:**

Barbara Anne Gamble (resigned 1 August 2023)  
David James Gamble (resigned 1 August 2023)  
Cheryl Elizabeth Hackett (resigned 9 October 2023)  
Hilary Leathem (resigned 8 November 2024)

**CURRENT TRUSTEES:**

Mike Bambrick (appointed 1 July 2023)  
Lena Bambrick (appointed 1 August 2023)  
Jane Carr (appointed 1 September 2023)  
Dave Orr (appointed 8 November 2024)

**The trustees have had regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit in managing the activities of the charity.**

## **PUBLIC BENEFIT:**

The direct benefits flowing from the organisation's purpose are: - an improved sense of wellbeing for those attending the outworking of a moral framework in which service-users can be good citizens and the spiritual, moral and intellectual development. - the beneficiaries, as identified in purposes, receive sufficient food to provide a nutritious diet for their families for a period of days. Pastoral support for families deemed to be a risk or suffering food or fuel poverty and signposting to relevant agencies for ongoing support. - opportunity to engage in sports and fitness and the associated health benefits. Social skills, team-building and problem-solving coming from being involved in team sports and the reduction of isolation and lack of physical activity. - increased life expectancy, reduction in self-harm, suicide and in the need for prescription medication. - an increased sense of community cohesion, a collective approach to community issues and an equipping off the people of the area in which we live. - increased employment and further education opportunities, improvement in literacy and numeracy skills and increased confidence in education for those lacking in qualifications. - an opportunity for every person within the area to avail of services regardless of personal circumstance and a sharing of knowledge right across the area without the issue of cost. - increased opportunity of gaining employment, reduction in mental health problems due to unemployment, reduction in those requiring support to feed families and an upping of the skills base within the Banbridge area. The benefits flowing from all of the above will be evidenced in feedback from our service-users taken in the form of conversation, online surveys and day to day engagement. There is no harm arising from any of the purposes of the J29 Project. Adequate numbers of trained staff and volunteers are present and risk assessments are completed on a daily basis. The charities beneficiaries are those within the Banbridge area who avail of the services provided. The vast majority of service-users, although not exclusively, are families with young children. The services offered are open to all within the Banbridge area free of any charge. There is no private benefit flowing from any of these purposes.

## **WHAT THE ORGANISATION DOES:**

The charity carries out its purposes by a variety of means based within the J29 Project premises. (1) Four mornings per week the building is opened and accessible to children aged 0-3 and their carers. These mornings are well-attended and service-users come from the Banbridge district and beyond. Children and carers are provided with a safe,

well-equipped and modern place to play, snacks are served for both children and adults. A variety of singing, dancing and story-telling also takes place within these sessions. (2) Pastoral meetings are also offered within the J29 building. These take the form of 1:1 counselling sessions and are held within the quiet room. Suicide intervention and addictions support is also offered by J29 Project staff. (3) Families within the Banbridge area can avail of food provision, home heating oil and clothing during times of acute financial hardship. (4) Weekly football sessions with teenagers deemed to be at risk of antisocial behaviour and displaying low engagement within education. (5) Facilitating local community groups and other charitable organisations by providing a modern premise for meetings, courses and various training. (6) Equipping volunteers and those currently unemployed or not in full-time education with the necessary skills and training in order to serve within the charity and also put these skills to use in gaining employment or the furtherance of education. (7) Ensuring all and every activity provided by J29 is free of charge to all service-users. (8) By providing service-users with access to Christian literature, music and teaching. Prayer and Bible study weekly provided within the J29 building.

## **CHARITY ACTIVITIES REPORT**

The reporting period has been a highly successful time for J29 Project and as a charity we have seen considerable growth across all areas of the work.

### **COMPASSION**

As part of our compassion programme we have offered hundreds of 1:1 sessions with people who have simply needed a listening ear, a word of encouragement or a hug when no words would make a difference. These meetings have taken place in the building, homes, hospital wards, prisons or in local coffee shops. The help that has been provided with material provision has literally put food on the tables and heat in the homes of families and individuals in our community. The long term impact of the compassion ministry has been even more significant, in some cases being the difference between life and death. There are those who would openly testify that they simply would not be here if they had not of received the help and support of the compassion ministry at J29. This is undoubtedly one of the biggest honours of our charity and one we don't take lightly, we are so thankful for the people that have been placed in our path. As part of the compassion work J29 Project are involved in advocacy support for numerous individuals and families, working alongside a range of other statutory and voluntary services we help to ensure the most vulnerable and isolated in our community have their voice heard and are given a hand up out of their current situation to help them reach their full potential. J29 Project are also involved at both local and national levels with focus groups and steering groups to help make this country of ours and even better place for people to grow and thrive.

### **DAY-TO DAY**

Our adult and toddler group has continued to thrive and we regularly hear attendees refer to it as their 'lifesaver' in the week. We have made significant investment in equipment for the sessions and we believe what we offer free of any charge is off a high standard. Again we have seen many refugee families come along to the sessions and this has led to a wonderful sense of natural integration with local families.

One of our major highlights has been the number of additional volunteers who have come on board with the charity. We have volunteers now from 15 to 66 years old and we are delighted to offer service-users a multi-generational support-base. One of our service-users who would be a frequent visitor and who has received considerable support over the year has recently secured employment in a local cafe and this has been the cause of some celebration for us. In addition to this we have been in the wonderful position to watch as one of our beneficiaries progressed on to volunteer with our Board of Trustees. The input we have received as a result of this had been invaluable, with the insight knowledge that we are being afforded alongside a range of other skills that are coming through.

Our men's Bible study has seen almost 100% growth in terms of numbers attending with our most senior member of 78 years joining the group on a Monday afternoon. The class is a crucial social outlet for many of those attending and we regularly hear heartfelt thanks from the men and how much the opportunity for social engagement means to them.

One of most successful community programmes is our Community Lunch every Tuesday. This is an opportunity for anyone to join us from 1.30-3pm for a free lunch and some conversation. The lunch has grown in number and our Christmas lunch had 70 attending. We see a range of people coming along from refugees to local folk and also a range of people with varying levels of additional needs. We regularly welcome those coping with dementia and many of the folk who attend live alone and see the lunch as a real high-point in their week. We have been very blessed with the support of several local businesses in running the event and we are very thankful for their generosity.

The Refined Ladies group continues to run every Thursday and has proved a key element to the charity. We have a core group of 30 ladies who meet every Thursday for breakfast followed by an hours Bible teaching. The age range of the group is from 15 to 75 and again this brings a wonderful richness to the group.

In the past calendar year we have ran an Alpha course to explain the fundamentals of the Christian faith and we are currently on our second Grow Down discipleship course. Both of these courses were at capacity and we have seen some fantastic 1:1 opportunity with folk on the back of attending these events.

Opportunities for connections in the evenings for those isolated within our community were created in the building and proved to be very successful. A number of movie nights were held in the IMC cinema alongside craft classes and other meet-ups.

In June 2024 also launched a new craft/mixed media programme entitled Heart. This has been a tremendous addition to the operational activities and has seen over 40 ladies engage in a range of art-based activity including a knitting and sewing programme. This has been led by Louise McKinstry who has been employed to lead the craft element of the ministry.

#### **ETHNIC MINORITY WORK:**

The various educational sessions have all seen an increase in those attending and also in the variation of ethnicities present. We have seen service-users from right across the local community but also Ukraine, Russia, Pakistan, Syria, Armenia, Spain and several other nations. This has richly added to the vibrancy of the charity and we have seen improvement and substantive change in the personal circumstances of many attendees. Our conversational English class has become a focal part in the week of many of the Syrian and Ukrainian refugees here in Banbridge and several family friendships have formed as a result of attending the group.

#### **SUMMER:**

The Summer of 2023 saw us host a number of trips and days out for the local community. We enjoyed some wonderful visits to Ballyards Castle, Newcastle, Gosford Forest and Belfast Zoo. These proved a real success and were a real blessing to many local families. Again the multi-generational aspect of this charity is clear for all to see on these trips with some of the oldest in our community enjoying a day away with some of the youngest. There is a wonderful sense of belonging and unity amongst those who attend the summer programmes, looking out for one another and celebrating each others successes. To see people from all different cultural and religious backgrounds socialising together outside of the J29 building, hearing each others stories a little more and making lasting friendships is a huge blessing to the team, making any lengthy bus journey more than worthwhile.

#### **BASEMENT PROJECT:**

Our Basement project for local young people has exploded with three youth work charities all operating from the floor below us. These charities provide crucial youth provision to hundreds of at-risk young people within the Banbridge area. Many of these young people are involved or engaging in anti-social behaviour and the Basement project offers them a viable alternative from harmful activities. One of these charities led two groups of local young people on mission trips to Spain and Romania where they assisted local children read and write.

#### **TRUSTEES:**

At trustee level we have welcomed three new members and we are delighted to report all four have made significant impact despite their short tenure. All four new trustees are local people and have a keen interest in the local community and share a passion to see lives changed for the better.

### **Financial review for year ending 30 June 2024:**

The results for the year are set out in the statement of financial activities.

The charity recorded a net loss for the year ended 30 June 2023 of (£40,110).

The fund balance at 30 June 2023 was £94,382.

This leaves total reserves of £54,272 of which £39,908 are restricted funds.

### **Grants received during the year 23/24:**

£1,900 from Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Council Community Dev Grant for rent, heat and light costs and a further £2,100 for furniture.

£8,490 from Clanmill Housing Association for summer programs

£7,000 from TBF Thompson and £7,382 from Benefact Trust for staff wages.

£8,500 from Halifax Foundation for rent, core costs, furniture and craft supplies.

Income was also received through other Trusts and donations.

Wage costs increased due to the addition of a further member of staff and increased hours for a part time staff member.

Further costs incurred were the construction of a new store in the building to allow for more efficient space management and health and safety considerations.

### **RESERVES:**

It is the policy of the Board of Trustees to hold at least 4 months running costs in reserves.

### **PROPERTY & PREMISE:**

During the reporting period due care and attention was paid to the maintenance of the premises. All necessary health and safety certifications were updated including PAT testing, food hygiene and fire safety.

### **GOVERNING DOCUMENT & CONSTITUTION OF THE CHARITY**

The Charity is governed by the Memorandum and Articles of Association dated 31st August 2018.

### **COMPLIANCE WITH PUBLIC BENEFIT**

The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 with respect to accounting records and the preparation of accounts.

In setting our objectives and planning our activities for the year the trustees have given careful consideration to the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland's guidance on public benefit to ensure the activities have helped achieve the Charity's purposes and provide a benefit to the beneficiaries.

The Charity trustees have complied with the duty to have due regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission under section 4(b) of the Charities Act (public benefit statutory guidance.) Details of the main activities of the Charity to further the charitable purposes for the public benefit have been detailed in 'Achievements, Performance and Public Benefit' on page 2.

**ENDS**