

Citizen Sea Trustees Report Year Ended 31 July 2023

The Trustees of Charity Citizen Sea presents its directors' report and audited financial statements for the year ended 31 July 2023.

Directors Mr Randy Repass Junior
 Mr John Campbell
 Mr Jonathan Houghton
 Mr Justin Judge
 Ms Gala Podgornik
 Ms Joyce Anderson
 Mr Joe Breen

Company Number NI663277
NI Charity Commission

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Accountant DDJ Coulter
 Clements Hill
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Our Aims and objectives

Purposes and Aims

Our charity's purposes as set out in the objects contained in the company's memorandum of association are to: encourage participation in the love, protection and appreciation of the marine environment.

Activities

The Charity's vessel, a classic wooden Scottish ring-netter named the Seabird is berthed in Belfast Harbour Marina in the Abercorn Basin, at the back of the W5. It continues to be very visible and a focal point in the year 22/23 for various activities:

A number of key events involving the Seabird included:-

- Queen's University Marine Lab Open Day. This marine life interactive and educational workshop on board Seabird was supported by Healthy Oceans Healthy Minds Campaign and Live Here Love Here.

- International Coast Cleanup in September launched the caption 'Sea the Need' and an art competition for children to complete.
- This event was followed by 2 more in quick succession Tide and Turf in Portavogie supported by Ards & North Down Borough Council
- Climate Craic in Belfast.

In 2023, the condition of Seabird, our iconic traditional wooden vessel caused concern to the Board, volunteers, and Belfast Harbour with the result there was much discussion on its future which is still ongoing now that she is out of the water.

Wasteshark

In September 2022 the Wasteshark from RanMarine Technologies in Germany, funded by Keep NI Beautiful arrived. This remote controlled drone is powered by electricity and collects the debris in the water in its inner basket.

The Charity purchased a trailer and had it logo'd up to enable it to be transported around the coast to various Festivals and Events. In February 2023 It was showcased at Belfast Harbour Commissioners Harbour Office at the Live Here Love Here Big Spring Clean Opening. After this event it was stored in a secure compound at the Lagan Lookout near the weir and a ramp was duly built to enable it to be launched by the volunteers.

The Volunteer CoOrdinators organised weekly Wasteshark information evenings in Bangor for the volunteers and it was relocated to the Bangor Marina for safekeeping and access.

The Wasteshark attended a number of events in Londonderry, Portavogie, Newcastle and Belfast Maritime Festival. Following the launch at Portavogie, the Ardglass Harbour Master wished to engage the Wasteshark in the cleanup of the Harbour. Unfortunately it was not possible due to the prevailing weather conditions and high winds.

Traditional Boat Skill Training

In November 2022 and March 2023 a number of volunteers travelled to Newry to participate in the Charity Silverlight Sailing Traditional Boat skills training day. This was a prerequisite to participate in the proposed 3 day sailing event on their 131 year old Brixham Cutter, Leader. However due to circumstances beyond both Charity's control the volunteers enjoyed 1 day sailing on board the vessel instead of 3.

Other Volunteers activities included:

- First Aid Training
- Access NI registration with STEM
- Weekly cleanup of the Marina from Seabird in the summer of 2022.
- Involvement with the Centre for Environmental Data and Recording (Cedar) with Wasteshark and the Big Bangor Coastal Path cleanup in monitoring the litter collected.
- The making of a professional video by Swimming Head Productions funded by Forciss Mara Marine Institute.
- The Chairman attended the Fairsea's Conference in June 2023.

The establishment of our Google Drive with Mail Chat and chat groups for various levels of engagements with volunteers continues to be our main communication channel with volunteers. Volunteers continue to come through Volunteer Now and directly through the web-site and events.

Directors

In early 2022, the Chairman, Randy Repass identified a number of potential Directors for their specific knowledge and skills. John Houghton Professor in Marine Biology at Queen's University; John Campbell, originally a Volunteer and assisted with the Google Drive and had previously managed the IT department at Belfast Harbour Commissioners

before moving to his current post in 2022; Marine Biologists, Gala Podgornik and Justin Judge both with a wealth of knowledge regarding DAERA, WOW, Ulster Wildlife etc. Joyce Anderson who previously ran the Lagan Boat Tours in the Harbour and the Charity Lagan Legacy on the Belfast Barge and Joe Breen, retired DAERA official and Yachtmaster.

Throughout the year the Directors held a monthly Zoom meeting to discuss a variety of issues from Recruitment, Volunteers, Events, H&S, Finances, Seabird and Funding Opportunities.

Due to an overtaxing of personal duties following his retirement, Joe Breen stepped down from being a director in October.

Employment Opportunities

Project Coordinator

Following the appointment of the Project Coordinator, Monica McCard at the end of July 2022, she made a significant impact on the volunteers and activities of the Charity. It was with regret that she stepped away from the Charity with no notice or communications with the Chairman or Board in October 2022. The Charity sought legal advice and wrote a number of letters to Monica requesting an update on her health, inviting her to meetings. There was no response from Monica.

General Manager

The post of General Manager was advertised and potential candidates selected, interviewed and a job offer was made to a suitable candidate but he declined the opportunity to join the Team due to a better offer from his employer. No other candidates were deemed suitable for the post at this time.

Volunteer CoOrdinators

Two volunteer CoOrdinators selected from the Volunteer pool were appointed to increase the number of volunteers, engage with them, organise and attend events with the Wasteshark Max and update social media.

Funding

Financial assistance from the Repass Rogers Foundation continues, along with many generous donations and small contributions for attending events.

The Danske Bank Account was opened in May 2023 and all online payments are set up by Joyce Anderson and authorised by Randy Repass Jr.

Funding and cash flow are always of concern to the Chairman and the Board and we are actively seeking suitable grants to cover our current requirements.

Accountant

Dean Coulter was appointed as the Charity's Accountant in late August 2022. Completion of the Year Ending 31 July 2023 occurred in March 2024/early April 2024, with approval and sign off by the Chairman and Secretary on the 19th April 2024.

