

PEOPLE'S KITCHEN BELFAST

TRUSTEES REPORT Year ended 31 March 2024

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT (INCLUDING TRUSTEES' REPORT AND STRATEGIC REPORT)

The Trustees present their report and the unaudited financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31st March 2024. The trustees have adopted the provisions of the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) "Accounting and Reporting by Charities " (FRS 102 Section 1A) in preparing the annual report and financial statements of the charity.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in notes to the financial statements and applicable accounting standards, 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 issued in October 2019, the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102 Section 1A), the charity's governing document, the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008, Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2013, The Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 and UK Generally Accepted Practice.

TRUSTEES OF THE CHARITY

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

Mr P McCusker Chairperson
Mrs L Duffy Secretary
Mr T McQuillan Treasurer
Mr D McNairney
Mrs H Connolly

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

The registered name of the charity is People's Kitchen Belfast, charity registration number: NIC 108172

Trustees	Mr P McCusker Chairperson Mrs L Duffy Secretary Mr T McQuillan Treasurer Mr D McNairney Mrs H Connolly (Appointed 13 December 2023)
Manager	Mr P McCusker
Registered Office	1 Antrim Road Belfast BT15 2BE

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Independent Examiner

Hopper & Co
Chartered Accountants and Registered Auditors
6 Doagh Road
Ballyclare
Co Antrim
BT39 9BG

Bankers

Ulster Bank
City Centre (B) Branch
PO Box 232
11-16 Donegall Sq. East
Belfast
BT1 5UB

STRUCTURE AND MANAGEMENT

The People's Kitchen Belfast began life as St Patrick's Soup Kitchen, in April 2017. The project started with volunteers who wanted to support those experiencing homelessness and poverty, serving warm drinks and sandwiches from a tea trolley in a doorway. The soup kitchen grew as the need in the City was increasing and we had to enhance our services to respond to the need and now operate 7 days a week.

People's Kitchen, Belfast has received approval by the Charity Commission NI in July 2021 as a charity, reference number NIC 108172.

People's Kitchen, Belfast conduct is governed by its Constitution.

The Board of Trustees is responsible for the policy and strategy of the charity along with the financial and legal probity of the organisation and the appointment of members. The Board meets on at least a bi-monthly basis and receives regular management and financial reports.

Members are recruited to ensure that representative skills and experiences are in place to deliver the charity's vision and that the mission and objectives are achieved. There are two classes of membership; individual and; affiliate. Any person can apply for individual membership of the Company, providing they are not an employee. Application to become an individual member is open to anyone and is subject to approval of the Board of Trustees. Any organisation active within the area of benefit, whether voluntary or statutory, which subscribes to the Objects of the Charity can become an affiliate member. Potential

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Trustees are considered by the membership and elected at a general meeting or Annual General Meeting of the charity. The Trustees have the power to co-opt additional Trustees with particular skills, who need not be members of the Charity.

The project is managed by a Volunteer Co-Ordinator, supported by a series of Team Leaders who coordinate and organise a team of trained and experienced Volunteers.

ACTIVITIES AND OBJECTIVES

Providing a safety net for people at vulnerable times our objectives include:

- Engaging with people who are in need because of; loneliness or isolation; food or fuel poverty; homelessness or the risk of homelessness; people who are excluded from services or who are destitute or who have other similar needs
- Offering professional support and guidance provided by a team of trained and dedicated volunteers
- Creating a safe, warm, and welcoming place, available to all
- Delivering food, clothing, sleeping bags and other essential services both within the premises and through outreach
- Committed to building a positive and life affirming environment, promoting confidence, resilience and self esteem
- Working together with professional partners to signpost people in need towards essential accommodation and healthcare provider services
- Supporting people onto paths out of poverty and homelessness towards independent living
- Providing an open door to all people in need and treating everyone with equal respect and dignity

How we achieve our objectives:

- Homeless outreach – Our team responds to the needs of those who would be rough sleeping or at risk of rough sleeping in Belfast, attending to their basic needs and working with all agencies including Extern, NIHE, Belfast Trust and the PSNI to ensure those who require help are able to access it
- Food Bank – This service provided a response to those experiencing food poverty and volunteers worked hard to provide parcels throughout the week and making referral to the NBAP to help assist individuals out of poverty.
- Drop in service – Every Friday and Saturday, people experiencing poverty/homelessness can get access to a hot meal and emotional support and provided the opportunity to be referred to additional services if required

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ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

The project continues to operate from 1 Antrim Road as our current main base and people who need our help have become familiar with this location. As the need continues to grow, People's Kitchen will respond to that need and look to develop new services. In time that may mean looking for more suitable premises.

We have continued to see an increase in the need for our services as numbers of those presenting have doubled in six months, we had to adapt and review our teams to ensure we were able to continue to provide an important service.

At times we struggled to secure funding and worried about the financial stability of the project and without the generosity of the public we would not be able to continue to provide all of our services.

We have taken the lead in organising a number of marches and events to highlight the increasing deaths relating to drug addiction and mental health, we particularly were concerned about the amount of deaths on the streets and the public joined us in calling for more joint up services and an increase in access to services for those experiencing homelessness, addiction and mental health issues. Peoples Kitchen took the lead also in organising a round table discussion with all political parties in Stormont along with families who were impacted asking for their support to call for change. This work continues with the "Empty Shoes" Lost Lives" campaign. We continue with this campaigning through meeting with government departments calling on better services for those experiencing homelessness/addiction problems.

Our volunteers are provided with regular training which includes first aid, naloxone dispensing and working with vulnerable adults, our focus is always for the development of our volunteer team and we plan to offer more training in the new year.

Over the past number of years, we have been able to support several individuals to access rehabilitation in Liverpool and parts of England. It was fantastic to see the change with them as they started recovery, and some are now back volunteering at the project.

We have over fifty volunteers that provide support across all of our services and give their time generously to support those in need, we couldn't do the work without the commitment and dedication of them all and we aim to focus on more development of our teams.

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Throughout the year we have had a number of agencies/businesses that help support our work with volunteering that include Department for Communities, Extern, Ulster Bank etc.. – they have provided a lifeline at times when the project was under extreme pressure.

The People's Kitchen supports a number of people who experience issues across Belfast, and we provide services to people who are homeless or at risk of homeless including people experiencing addiction, people who are seeking Asylum or are Refugees, ex-offenders and prisoners, people from an Ethnic Minority, including people from the Irish Traveller Community, people with disabilities or mental health concerns, people with HIV/AIDS, people living in poverty or deprivation, irrespective of community location, including men, women and children, older and younger people, tenants and home owners, victims. We also provide advice and information on our work to the General Public, volunteers and our partners in the voluntary and community sector.

As a charity, we offer advice/advocacy/information, aim to find or refer to accommodation/housing provision, including emergency accommodation, though that is getting much harder: we provide counselling/support, education/training, general welfare/benevolent support. In our general charitable purposes, we are seeking to help alleviate poverty. We participate in research and evaluation of the lived experience of homelessness when required.

The Peoples Kitchen Belfast has been able to run a number of initiatives looking at education and working alongside local youth providers and have worked with over 2500 young people across the City looking at prevention, empowerment and some of these young people have been able to secure employment in the homeless sector. Our focus is on prevention and how we stop individuals from experiencing homelessness.

Particularly around winter months, there can be an increase in deaths of people who are living in homes that aren't warm, so its important people are aware of what support is available for them through Belfast City Council and the Housing Executive and through all those agencies who can provide assistance to stay warm.

One of the things we wanted to do was to get into the community and share that information but also bring a bit of joy to them. That is why we have a drop-in service every Friday and Saturday night because our homeless visitors get a dinner, they get a dessert and they are warm and can socialise.

People's Kitchen is about reaching out to the people in the community who are isolated and feel detached from services.

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Year ended 31 March 2024

The following is a breakdown of numbers of those people who have used the service during 2023/24,

Outreach contacts on the streets – 21,840

Food parcels – 27,500

Drop in meals – 24,200

People who used our services benefited from the People's Kitchen in several ways including,

- Securing suitable accommodation for those at risk of street sleeping through an outreach programme who also have the training to administer lifesaving medical treatment to those on the street.
- Provision of a drop-in service for those at risk of homelessness and poverty to access advice and support that they require.
- Alleviating poverty through the provision of food, clothing and welfare advice with a view of assisting the individual out of poverty and ensuring they have access to the appropriate services.
- Liaising with the Belfast Trust and addiction services to sign post and refer those at risk of substance misuse and self-harm into support
- Improving the lives of those who use our service to assist to a more independent and healthier life.
- Helping individuals sustain their tenancy and providing a multi-agency approach to ensure those who use our service receive tailored support to meet their needs.
- Identifying those at risk of homelessness and poverty to prevent them from reaching a crisis situation and reducing the stress of those individuals. Benefits from the above purposes are measured over time by the census, other regional housing and economic statistics, research, studies and surveys along with regular and long-term measures of health and wellbeing measuring health equity and inequalities and government publications showing government targets.
- All volunteers have the professional training provided by People's Kitchen and our volunteers benefit those who are homeless, Families in need, Asylum Seekers/Refugees, those experiencing poor health and addiction issues, Ex-offenders and prisoners, Ethnic Minorities, Unemployed/low income, Young People, Older People, Victim Support, Isolated and lonely, People with physical and learning disabilities and experiencing mental health problems.

Our team of volunteers have been working extremely hard over the past number of years to support those in need and we couldn't do this without support from the public and businesses such as

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Hendersons, PRM and those who continue to donate financially or give their time to support the project.

PUBLIC BENEFIT STATEMENT

The Board of the People's Kitchen Belfast 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 charity has continued to provide public benefits through the programmes and services we offer. In particular, the trustees consider how planned activities will contribute to the aims and objectives they have set out.

Public Benefits:

Benefits from the Peoples Kitchen Belfast include,

- Securing suitable accommodation for those at risk of street sleeping through an outreach programme who also have the training to administer life saving medical treatment to those on the street.
- Provision of a drop in service for those at risk of homelessness and poverty to access advice and support that they require.
- Elevating poverty through the provision of food, clothing and welfare advice with a view of assisting the individual out of poverty and ensuring they have access to the appropriate services.
- Liaising with the Belfast Trust and addiction services to sign post and refer those at risk of substance misuse and self harm into support.
- Improve the lives of those who use our service to assist to a live a more independent and healthier life.
- Helping individuals sustain their tenancy and providing a multi agency approach to ensure those who use our service receive tailored support to meet their needs.
- Identify those at risk of homelessness and poverty to prevent them from reaching a crisis situation and reducing the stress of those individuals.

Benefits from the above purposes are measured over time by the census, other regional housing and economic statistics, research, studies and surveys along with regular and long term measures of health and wellbeing measuring health equity and inequalities and government publications showing government targets.

In providing medical treatment for those using our services there is unattended risk for the administration of Naloxone however this is rare and the benefits outweigh the harm.

All volunteers have the professional training Peoples Kitchen Benefits are provided to those who are homeless, Families in need, Asylum Seekers/Refugees,

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Those experiencing poor health and addiction issues, Ex-offenders and prisoners, Ethnic Minorities, Unemployed/low income, Young People, Older People, Victim Support, Isolated and lonely, People with physical and learning disabilities, Mental health There is no private benefit from this is more than incidental.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

The charity's incoming recourse for the year amounted to £166,946 (2023: £241,116). Principal sources of funding are from grants and donations. The outgoing expenditure for the year amounted to £203,910 (2023 £170,106) The net outgoings for the year amounted to £36,964 (2023: incoming £71,010).

The Charity is extremely grateful to all its donors, without whose support People's Kitchen Belfast would not be able to run a number of its activities.

GOING CONCERN

The activities of the trustees are dependent on ongoing contributions from its members. The Trustees are of the opinion that the trustees has sufficient resources at the date of approval of these financial statements to meet commitments which will arise in the year from the date of signing this report and subject to the continuing support from members to fund on an ongoing basis the trustee's current activities and other financial commitments.

RESERVES POLICY

The Trustees have established a policy whereby the unrestricted funds not committed or invested in tangible fixed assets ('the free reserves') held by the charity taking into account of current and ongoing commitments. It is the policy of the Trustees to hold between two and six month's normal expenditure this equate to between £31,459 and £94,377. At the year-end unrestricted 'free' reserves were £80,694 and are within the target level of reserves. The Trustees, however, consider it prudent to hold reserves at this level as the funding of its present activities is dependent of the ongoing financial support of its funders.

RESPONSIBILITIES IN RESPECT OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

The trustees are responsible for preparing the Trustees ' Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Charity 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 charity and of the incoming resources and application of

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resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charity for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP 2019 (FRS 102);
- make judgements and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue to operate.

The trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008 and Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2013 and Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the charity and financial information included on the charitable company's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

RISK REVIEW

A review of major risks has been undertaken by the Trustees and systems and procedures implemented to manage identified risks. The principal risks are in relation to the likelihood of reputational damage and financial risks associated with the expectation of ongoing financial support from funders. These risks are mitigated by the Trustees regularly monitoring the various activities of the charity at stated meetings and by reviewing available funding streams.

FUTURE PLANS

As we move into 2024/25 we hope to continue to develop the project and work on a 10 year strategic plan looking at the long term future to ensure the sustainability and to ensure we are meeting the needs of those who need our support. We are very thankful to all those who have support their support as we couldn't do it without your help and support

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Disclosure of Information to Independent Examiner

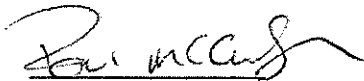
So far as each of the trustees in office at the date of approval of these financial statements is aware:

- there is no relevant information of which the charity's independent examiner is unaware; and
- they have taken all the steps that they ought to have taken as trustees in order to make themselves aware of any relevant information for the independent examination and to establish that the charity's independent examiner is aware of that information.

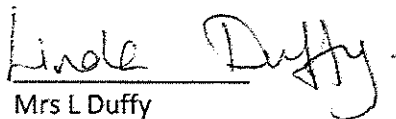
Independent Examiner

Hopper & Co., have indicated their willingness to remain in office and a resolution for their re-election will be proposed at the forthcoming Annual General Meeting.

Approved by the trustees at a meeting on 14 December 2024 and signed on its behalf by:



Mr P McCusker
Chairperson & Trustee



Mrs L Duffy
Secretary & Trustee