

Safer Waters Association

TRUSTEES' REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st October 2024

The Trustees of the Safer Waters (SW) Association present their report and the financial statements for the year ended 31st October 2024.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in note to the financial statements and comply with the Safer Waters Constitution, the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008 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)" (as amended for accounting periods commencing from 1 January 2016).

Objectives and activities

The principal objective of the Association is to ensure the safety and wellbeing of those who participate in organised sporting and community events on the sea and inland waters through, but not restricted to, the following activities:

- to participate in organised on-the-water sporting events;
- to provide a trained safety boat service;
- to advise and educate on safety on the water matters;
- to encourage community involvement in improving safety on the water;
- to offer relevant RYA (Royal Yachting Association) accredited training courses to members and the general public.

In managing the business of the Association, the Trustees have had due regard to the CCNI's public benefit guidance.

Achievements and performance

Events:

Safer Waters participated in twelve organised events over the last year for the public's benefit, with four further events being cancelled due to adverse weather. We were unable to support just one event owing to lack of availability of boats or crew and one other event was cancelled by the organisers. These events consisted of charity dips, community swims, an International Sailing Event, Coastal Rowing Events and safety cover for large council-run events (Sea Bangor).

Total numbers of participants covered: 2,103 in sporting events plus a further 30,000 (estimated) at Sea Bangor 2024. This required a total of 160 volunteer days to achieve, providing both on shore personnel and boat crews.

We additionally responded to requests from HM Coastguard to render assistance on four occasions, mainly attending disabled vessels and assisting them to safety. However, as we are not a "declared asset", we do not gain formal recognition for these actions.

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Training

During the year we carried out 7 RYA approved Powerboat Training courses, qualifying 25 candidates to Powerboat Level Two standard and 2 RYA approved Marine Radio SRC (VHF radio) courses enabling 8 candidates to receive their VHF radio licences.

Financial review

Income for the year was £26.6k made up of significant amounts from Charitable Activities, specifically training (£6.2k) and from Voluntary Receipts, in particular the Gala Ball (£9.8k), fundraising (£2k), donations (£2.9k) and membership fees (£2.6k). Expenditure was £28.9k and the significant costs included repayment of loans (£7.5k), training costs (£4k), asset purchases (£5.1k), boat maintenance (£3k) and Gala Ball expenses (£2.8k). This resulted in a net loss for the year of £2.3k which is viewed as entirely satisfactory given the exceptional nature of the loans repayment and the asset purchases.

Cash at bank at 31st October 2024 was £15,445 made up of £6.5k in Restricted Funds and £8.9k in Unrestricted Funds. The Restricted funds are held for specific expenditure and the Unrestricted Funds are held to cover operational costs during the winter and spring months and any unforeseen expenditure that may occur.

Factors affecting the financial position in future periods

The principal factors which will affect the financial position in future periods include the ability to retain existing members and attract new members, to continue to generate funds from the use of training resources, donations from event support and fundraising by members, whilst looking after the assets of the Association and maintaining a tight rein on expenditure.

Risk Factors

The Trustees are satisfied that the charitable purpose of the Association has been maintained, that all monies have been accounted for and that the assets are secure and have been used in the delivery of Safer Waters services to community-based events. The Trustees have assessed the major risks to which the Association is exposed and are satisfied that appropriate systems are in place to mitigate exposure to the major risks. It should be further noted that in order to mitigate the legal and financial risks to members, the Association has decided to become a charitable company limited by guarantee and hopes to make the change in early 2025.

Structure, Governance and Management

Safer Waters is an Unincorporated Association made up of Members who share the same values. There are three categories of membership, Adult, Family and Junior.

The structure, governance and management of the Association is clearly documented in the Safer Waters Constitution. In summary, the management of the Association is in the hands of the Trustees supported by a Board of Management.

The Board of Management is elected annually at the Annual General Meeting by the membership of the Association. The Trustees are appointed by the Board of Management.

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Board of Management (appointed Jan 2024)		Trustees (appointed/reappointed Jan 2024)	
Mr. Michael Meharg	Commodore (C/P)	Mr. Michael Meharg	
Mr. Mark McClughan	Secretary (co-opted)	Mr. Richard Barbour	
Mr. Richard Barnes	Treasurer	Mr. Allan Black	Retired in year due to ill health
Mr. Robin Gordon	Training		
Mrs. Jan Hollinger	Development		
Mr. Jonathan Mitchell	Events & Logistics		

Membership

The table below records the number of members of the Association compared to previous year:

Membership Category	2023/2024	2022/2023
Adult	21	21
Family	38	40
Junior	3	4
Total	62	64

The Trustees are indebted to the many members of the Association who give so willingly of their time, knowledge and expertise to manage the day-to-day activities, to carry out the main charitable activities of training and event support and to fundraise in so many diverse ways. Without this valuable contribution the Association would not have been able to achieve so much.

Reference and Administrative Details

Name of Charity: Safer Waters Association
Charity Registration Number: NIC 108273
Registered Address: Bregenz House,
5 Quay Street,
Bangor
BT20 5ED

Charity Trustees:
(during the period) Mr. M. Meharg
Mr. R. Barbour
Mr. A. Black

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Exemptions from Disclosure

None

Funds held as Custodian Trustee on behalf of Others

None

Mr. M. Meharg



Trustees

Dated: 8th January 2025

Mr. R. Barbour



Dated: 8th January 2025