



**1<sup>st</sup> Trustee Annual Report January 2017**



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## INTRODUCTION

This is Shelter Northern Ireland's first Trustee Annual Report as required by the Charity Commission NI. This relates to the financial year 1<sup>st</sup> April 2015 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2016.

This document has been prepared based on guidance provided by the Charity Commission and trustees have had regard to the Commission's Public benefit requirement statutory guidance.

Signed on behalf of Trustees: -

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ray Cashell', written in a cursive style.

Ray Cashell  
Chair

## LEGALITIES

The company is registered as a charity in the name of Shelter Campaign for the Homeless (Northern Ireland) LTD, it is also described as Shelter Northern Ireland but is most commonly known as Shelter NI.

Shelter NI is registered with the Charity Commission NI under the number NIC100767.

The company registration number is NI014542

The Company principal address and the address of its registered office is: -

**58 Howard Street**

**Belfast**

**BT1 6PJ**

<b>Trustee Names</b>	<b>On 26th January 2017</b>	<b>Served During 2015/2016</b>
<b>Hugh Cox</b>	Yes	Yes
<b>Michael Fenton</b>	Yes	Yes
<b>Catriona Holmes</b>	Yes	Yes
<b>Richard Walker</b>	Yes	Yes
<b>David McCallum</b>	Yes	Yes
<b>Ray Cashell Chairperson</b>	Yes	Yes
<b>Austin Heron</b>	Yes	Yes
<b>Robert Mahaffy</b>	Yes	Yes
<b>Sarah Laverty</b>	Yes	From September 2015

### Constitution and Purpose

Shelter NI is a charity governed by a Memorandum and Articles of Association as a Company limited by Guarantee having no share capital.

The Company is established to play a creative part in the life of Northern Ireland by relieving human suffering irrespective of colour creed or class or religion and for the following purposes: —

- a. To relieve hardship and distress among the homeless and among those in need who are living in adverse housing conditions.

- b. To make moneys available to housing associations and other bodies (whether corporate or not) whose aims being charitable are the relief of such hardship and distress.
- c. To relieve poverty and distress.

## **Trustee Appointments**

Trustees must become shareholding members of the company before they can be considered for Trusteeship. Only individual members can become Trustees, it is not open to corporate members.

Applicants complete an application form for membership of Shelter NI and submit that for approval by the existing Trustees. Once this is approved, a member can put forward his or her name as a nominee to become a Trustee by election at an Annual General Meeting, or in exceptional circumstances, the Trustees may decide to co-opt a member as a Trustee.

## MAIN ACTIVITIES TO FURTHER PUBLIC BENEFIT

To relieve poverty and distress Shelter NI focuses on households who cannot obtain a home because they are poor. Our work benefits people 1/ with or without a home of their own whose income is so low that they have to depend on the State 2/ who live in unsuitable housing whose income is so low that they cannot afford to bring their home up to a decent standard without State assistance or where the landlord will not improve the home to a decent standard and the occupier cannot afford to move to alternative decent housing 3/ who have no home, no income and who are excluded from State support.

The benefits from this purpose include the following outcomes:

- Households in poverty living in decent affordable suitable warm housing with improved safety, long term security of tenure and consequently sustainable neighbourhoods with the opportunity for improved quality of life and health and well-being.
- A more equitable, balanced, fair and peaceful society.

The benefits of housing are demonstrated through Article 25(a) of the United Nations Universal Declaration on Human Rights (UN, 1948). Housing is regarded as a necessity for improved quality of life, for good health and well-being and for reducing inequalities according to the World Health Organisation through their Commission on the Social Determinants of Health (CSDH) (2005-2008) and its final report 'Closing the Gap in a Generation': Health Equity through Action on the Social Determinants of Health (July 2008) Government is promoting housing as a contributor to sustainable neighbourhoods and to a more equitable, balanced, fair and peaceful society. The NI Executive has 5 priorities to deliver peace, prosperity, fairness and well-being in the Programme for Government 2011-2016. Priority 2 refers and it includes the 'increased provision of decent, affordable, sustainable housing' We do not believe there are any private benefits to the relief of poverty.

To relieve hardship and distress among the homeless and among those in need who are living in adverse housing conditions. Government accepts that Homelessness is an extreme form of social exclusion (DSDNI Including the Homeless Promoting Social Inclusion report July 2007). Recorded homelessness here is the highest in the UK and its level is expected to grow. Shelter NI's beneficiaries encompass everyone living in NI who is, or who is at risk of homelessness and/or living in unsuitable or substandard housing conditions. The benefits which flow from the relief of this need include the following outcomes: Households dwelling in unsuitable or substandard housing or households who are homeless or at risk of homelessness living in decent affordable suitable warm housing with long term security of tenure, improved safety and consequently more sustainable neighbourhoods with the opportunity for improved quality of life and health and well-being Private benefits from this purpose could include for example, contractors improving properties owned by clients to make them suitable will make profit from their work. These benefits are incidental and necessary to meet this need.

To make moneys available to housing associations and other bodies (whether corporate or not) whose aims being charitable are the relief of such hardship and distress. The purpose is to make funds available to other charities where they propose to relieve hardship and distress; providing the beneficiaries are within the same groups as identified above. We do not believe there are any private benefits to this purpose.

We believe there is no harm associated with any of the above benefits. 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 well-being measuring health equity and inequalities and government publications showing progress against Programme for Government targets.

## Review of Public Benefit Outcomes 2015-2016

Shelter NI has adopted 5 strategic themes against which to describe the public benefit to its 3 charitable purposes

<p><b>Public Engagement</b></p>	<p><b>Outcome:</b> Effective awareness raising of the risk of homelessness and its prevention by engaging with the public and other stakeholders seeking their support.</p> <p><b>Activity:</b> during the year staff and Trustees participated in a range of promotional events about homelessness and preventing homelessness, across NI. Venues included schools, university colleges, multiple stakeholder events open to the public, multi-agency meetings.</p> <p>SLATE has been part of different events such as Homeless Awareness Week 2015 in Enniskillen and Omagh; they also presented the Project different estate agents in Omagh.</p> <p>GABLE has attended six Policy Forum events; 2 Local Adult Safeguarding Partnership events; 3 Red Cross Events; 5 Community information events and others.</p> <p>We organised the annual Barney Filor lecture with national and international speakers around homelessness and a workshop on rent setting policy.</p> <p>We participated in television and radio programmes about homelessness Throughout the year, we promoted information on homelessness via advertisements on buses and point of sale across NI.</p> <p>On specific issues, we released press statements, both locally and regionally.</p>
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	<p>We organised regular events with the public primarily to encourage donations, but always taking the opportunity to educate and inform the public about homelessness.</p> <p>We make extensive use of social media.</p>
<p><b>Promoting and Delivering Housing Solutions</b></p>	<p><b>Outcome:</b> Promote multiple high quality housing solutions and housing related services both temporary and permanent; innovate and encourage self-develop housing solutions directly and in collaboration with others.</p> <p><b>Activity:</b> Through the SLATE project, we delivered temporary housing and support services to 12 young homeless people aged 16-25 and assisted 10 residents to move on to live independently.</p> <p>We expanded the SLATE project to provide a floating support service to young homeless adults aged 18 to 25 who are seeking or who have found their own accommodation but need support to ensure they can successfully maintain their tenancy.</p> <p>SLATE services include support for residents and non-residents with managing their money, with basic life skills, support to access education, training and jobs, support with any emotional issues, support to achieve their aims and ambitions, support to healthy living, all aimed at securing stable tenancies and reducing repeat homelessness.</p> <p>During the year, SLATE continued with service users to renovate the 11 flats, including new décor and replacement of items such as furniture, fittings and white goods. SLATE has attended the South West Homeless providers quarterly meetings, they also have partnerships with: South West Regional College, PBNI, PSNI, Omagh Leisure Centre and others.</p> <p>Through the GABLE project we worked with 452 older and disabled people, reducing their risk of homelessness by assisting them to adapt their homes with a Disabled Facilities Grant: - both SLATE and GABLE are funded by the NIHE's Housing Related Support programme.</p> <p>GABLE met or exceeded the performance standards set by the funders. Satisfaction rates with GABLEs service is over 90%.</p> <p>GABLE runs a Trusted Trader Service, this involves building contractors and architects signing up to a code of conduct. We believe this provides reassurance</p>

	<p>to older people if they choose anyone from the TTS; we are convinced that it saves money for each household.</p> <p>We embarked on new services based in the GABLE office in Strabane, during the last 5 months of the year, we supported 74 older and disabled people with urgent repairs or other minor adaptations, enabling them to reduce the risk of homelessness and we can supply aids to daily living. This programme has been developed in collaboration with local partners such as North West Aging Well Together, Red Cross, Be Safe Be Well, Electrical Safety First and the Western Health and SC Trust.</p> <p>We have been concerned about the low supply of affordable housing, so Shelter NI is collaborating with Cooperative alternatives and Co-Housing NI to promote cooperative housing and self-help housing production here; in that respect, we have met and are working with many individuals and groups moving towards their own housing solutions.</p>
<p><b>Campaign Ready</b></p>	<p><b>Outcome:</b> Provide evidence based campaigns in support of Strategic Themes; research, evaluate and respond to proposed government legislation and policy.</p> <p><b>Activity:</b> we responded to and/or participated in workshops and consultations by DsD/DfC; NIHE; Assembly: - on Tenant Participation and the Regulation of social housing as part of the Social Housing Reform Programme; participated in the review of the role of the Private Rented Sector; responded to the Charity Commission NI consultation on accounts and reports; participated in the DsD/ DfC Housing Related Supporting People Policy Review.</p> <p>We joined with colleagues in the Council for the Homeless, the Committee Representing Independent Supporting People Providers in responding collectively to a range of additional consultations.</p> <p>We contributed to the health and homelessness interface at quarterly meetings chaired by the Public Health Agency.</p> <p>We initiated a review of the Lettings Fees in NI to test the legal position.</p>
<p><b>Resource and Governance Sound</b></p>	<p><b>Outcome:</b> Ensure financial/ fundraising action to underpin achievement of Strategic Themes; create the most effective highly skilled and motivated staff resource both paid and unpaid; share and collaborate with other likeminded agencies; enable Trustees to fulfil their responsibilities through good governance.</p>

## **Activity Financial Environment**

### Income

Most income arises from contracts with the NIHE Housing Related Support Services, this amounts to almost £360k per year. The fact that the contract sum from the NIHE has remained without any cost of living increase for 9 years is a continuing risk. Gross Income from rented property depends on the levels of vacancy, but is usually over £30k per annum and in 2015/16 it was over £35k. Fundraising from donors and events varies from year to year: in 2015/16, it amounted to £23k including some small grants. We charge a small fee for the work done under Helping Hands, but it is too soon to estimate its value in a whole year.

### Expenditure

Overall expenditure increased by £52k, mostly salaries £30k. We also opened an additional office in Omagh.

Efficiencies in heat and light and leasing costs were found in moving the GABLE project to a new location and these will continue.

Overall the financial outturn ended with a £29k deficit, compared to a small surplus in the previous financial year.

The introduction of the autoenrollment pension scheme from April 2017 will need careful management unless the NIHE contracts are increased to make allowance for the cost of living and the pension scheme. Future welfare reforms are a risk factor to our supported housing flats.

### Human Resources

We are committed to ensuring a highly trained and knowledgeable workforce. Staff go through a rigorous and fair recruitment process. Staff are then inducted and trained in the service they will be delivering.

Staff undergo training and refresher training and specialist training where needed.

Volunteers sign a voluntary contract and are provided with appropriate training.

Staff are involved in contributing to all aspects of the organisation.

SLATE was subject to a Quality Assessment by the NIHE where staff and residents demonstrate their knowledge and experience of their work. The result was positive and a service improvement plan has been agreed to enhance the service delivery.

	<p><u>Governance</u></p> <p>In collaboration with Queens University, we reviewed our governance arrangements against the Code of Good Governance. This resulted in a firm action plan including establishing a general purposes subcommittee. The Trustees met 9 times during the year, including one emergency meeting called at the time of the deaths of people sleeping rough on the streets of Belfast.</p>
<p><b>Reducing Poverty and Social Exclusion</b></p>	<p><b>Outcome:</b> Working with and supporting socially excluded people to act to create pathways out of poverty and encourage greater choice and control over their housing and neighbourhood services; and to achieve greater equality of opportunity and wellbeing.</p> <p><b>Activity: -</b></p> <p>There is a significant overlap between homeless people and people in poverty. Most of the people for whom we provide services are in poverty.</p> <p>In recognition of a rising concern about substance misuse and mental ill health among young people generally, which resulted in deaths on the streets of Belfast, we find a level of ill health and addiction among the service users in Omagh, which is not fully met by support from statutory health services.</p> <p>During the year, staff were given specialist training to enable them to recognise the symptoms of addiction and mental ill health to enable them to signpost the service users to a suitable course of action.</p> <p>We collaborated with other individuals and groups to encourage a greater level of self-building and co-operative housing developments, across 6 different locations.</p> <p>We initiated a review of the local legislation around lettings fees; this legislation was brought about to enable the costs of securing a private tenancy to the affordable minimum.</p>

## Review of the Financial Position at the end of the Year

The financial statements year ended 31 March 2016 are prepared under FRS102 – the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland.

The year ended with a £29k deficit. Overall the net effect on the balance sheet was that the reserves dropped by £29K. Income was down slightly on 2015 and overall resources expended increased by £52K, £30K of which related to staffing costs.

After 9 years, not taking account of the rise in the cost of living, the organisations’ expenditure has reached its most efficient point, further cuts in the budget would begin to harm services.

Over the last decade, Shelter NI was the beneficiary of significant legacies which has enabled it to invest in new service development.

In addition to fundraising, contracts and philanthropy the development of new services appears to be the future for attracting more funding as well as becoming more self-sufficient with for example the successful Helping Hands scheme and the sale of goods for daily living aids at the Gable office.

Looking at risks, the introduction of the autoenrollment pension scheme from April 2017 will need careful management unless the NIHE contracts are increased to make allowance for the cost of living and the pension scheme. Future welfare reforms are a risk factor to our supported housing flats.

#### Reserves Policy

- To maintain a level of cash reserves to meet current liabilities in the event of a catastrophe
- To meet statutory, regulatory and employer liabilities
- To sustain Shelter NI and enable the organisation to achieve its aims and objectives

The policy is to maintain a mix of restricted and unrestricted reserves for between 3 and 6 months running costs.