The trustees who are also trustees of the charity for purposes under the Companies Act 2006 are pleased to present their report with the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2018. The trustees have adopted the provisions of the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) 2015.

**Principal Activities**

Groundwork Northern Ireland is a “not-for-profit” organisation and an independent Trust; one of many Groundwork Trusts operating throughout England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Groundwork Northern Ireland’s vision is **Sustainable, safer and healthier communities living in peace with each other**, and its mission is ‘**To work with all communities across Northern Ireland and beyond to transform their living spaces and change people’s lives for the better**’

**Reference and Administrative Details**

**Registered Office**

63-75 Duncairn Gardens  
Belfast  
BT15 2GB

**Registered Company Number**

NI 25852

**Registered Charity Number**

NIC100017

**Trustees**

Thomas McKenna (Chairperson)  
Jane Holmes  
Leonard Sproule  
Alan Moneypenny  
Ronan Corrigan  
Bob Van Geldere  
John McConnell  
Anna Gray  
Conor Canning

**Senior Management Team**

Chief Executive Officer  
Paula Quigley

Director of Corporate Services / Company Secretary  
Heather Pollock

Director of Business Development and Communications  
Gillian Orr
GROUNDWORK NORTHERN IRELAND

Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2018

Auditors
PKF/FPM    ASM Howarth
1-3 Arthur Street    20 Rosemary Street
Belfast    Belfast
BT1 4GA    BT1 1QD

Bankers
Danske Bank    Ulster Bank
P.O. Box 183    Belfast City Office Branch
Donegal Square West    11-16 Donegall Square East
Belfast    Belfast
BT1 6JS    BT1 5UB

Structure, Governance and Management

Governance Document

The Trust is a registered charity and a company limited by guarantee governed by its Articles of Association, which were last amended and adopted by Special Resolution on 6th March 2014. The liability of each member is limited to an amount not exceeding one pound (£1). The company has been recognised as a charity by the Inland Revenue.

Governance

Groundwork Northern Ireland is governed by a Board of Trustees and is comprised of elected members who are either individual members or representatives of affiliate members; all trustees are unpaid. Trustees are elected at Annual General Meetings for a period of three years, on retirement members are eligible for re-nomination and election provided that no Director serves more than three consecutive three-year terms on the Board. The Board of Trustees can co-opt as additional Trustees with particular skills and/or knowledge, up to one third of the elected Trustees. Co-opted trustees hold office until the next Annual General Meeting and are then eligible for re-appointment. The Chairperson of the Board is elected at the Annual General Meeting for a period of one year unless re-elected by the Board.

The trustees do not have any beneficial interest in the charitable company.

Groundwork Northern Ireland is a member of the Federation of Groundwork Trusts. This relationship is formalised within a Membership Agreement, which is a bilateral agreement jointly signed by the Trust and the Federation, setting out the guiding principles of the Federation, and the services, roles and responsibilities that the members and the Federation will provide to each other.
GROUNDWORK NORTHERN IRELAND

Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2018

Board Induction

New trustees are invited to attend an induction day where they are briefed on the role and responsibilities of trustees, the Board, sub-committees and the decision-making processes, the Trust’s vision and values, staff structure, key activities and finances.

The induction day also provides new trustees with the opportunity to meet Trust staff and to visit Groundwork projects on the ground. New trustees are provided with a copy of the Trust’s Articles of Association, the most recent financial statements, governance policies and committee Terms of Reference.

Organisational Structure

The Board is responsible for major strategic and policy decisions and has ultimate responsibility for the conduct and financial viability of the Trust. The trustees meet four times per year to review the strategic and operational plans and budgets. The Finance & Personnel, Governance and Audit and Strategic Business Development Sub-Committees meet four times per year and deal with functions delegated by the Board of Trustees. Each committee is chaired by a Board member and all committee members are appointed by the Board. Terms of Reference for each of the committees set down their delegated authority from the Board and limitation to that authority. The full Board of Trustees ratifies the Committees’ decisions.

The Board delegates the day to day financial and managerial control of the Trust to the Chief Executive Officer, and the senior management team, who meet on a monthly basis to review the financial and operational status of the Trust.

Trustees

The Trustees who served during the year are as stated below:

Paul Priestly (Chairperson)
Jane Holmes
Nicola Murray
Harry Smith
Leonard Sproule
Thomas McKenna
Alan Moneypenny
Ronan Corrigan
Bob Van Geldere
John McConnell
Anna Gray
Conor Canning

Risk Management

The Board fully accepts its responsibilities for ensuring that the major risks to which the charity is exposed are identified and reviewed, and that there are systems in place to mitigate them. Major risks are those that have a high probability of
occurring, and would if they occurred, have a severe impact on either operational performance or achievement of purpose, or could damage Groundwork NI's reputation. The Chief Executive Officer is expected to report to the Board on any new potential or real risks that may arise.

The Risk Register is assessed monthly by the Chief Executive Officer and Senior Management Team to assure its relevance and accuracy. The Governance and Audit Committee review the Register prior to presenting the top ten risks to the full Board for information and discussion. The Board have assessed the major risks to which the Trust is exposed, in particular those related to the business and finance functions. The Senior Management Team has taken actions to mitigate these risks and their consequences, should they be realised. These actions and their effects on the severity of the risks are summarised in the Risk Register.

The Trust recognises that risk management is an essential part of good business practice and an effective mechanism of good governance. However, the Board also recognises that a risk management system can only seek to manage rather than eliminate risk of failure, and that it should, therefore, be only one of the tools that the Board uses to provide effective control and management of the administration of the charity.

**Objectives and Activities**

**Charitable Objects**

Our charitable objects as set down in the Articles of Association are:

To promote the conservation, protection and improvement of the physical and natural environment in the Island of Ireland (the Area).

To provide facilities in the interests of social welfare for recreation and leisure time occupation with the objective of improving the conditions of life for those living in or working in or resorting to the Area.

To advance public education in environmental matters and of the ways of better conserving, protecting, enhancing, improving and rehabilitating the same wheresoever including that which relates to sustainable development and the prudent use of resources.

To promote for the public benefit, urban or rural regeneration in areas of social and economic deprivation within the Area by all or any of the following means:

I. the relief of unemployment and poverty

II. the advancement of education, training or re-training particularly amongst unemployed people and providing unemployed people with work experience;
III. the maintenance, improvement or provision of public amenities, including the provision of routeways such as footpaths and cycleways and access to main transport routes;

IV. the reclamation of derelict land for use as open space;

V. the advancement, protection and promotion of health;

VI. the promotion of public safety and prevention of crime, including the alleviation of anti-social behaviour;

VII. such other means as may from time to time be determined subject to the prior written consent of the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland.

To promote sustainable development by the promotion of sustainable means of achieving economic and social growth and regeneration for both the protection of the environment and the improvement of the conditions of life in socially and economically disadvantaged communities.

To promote the efficiency and effectiveness of the voluntary sector for the benefit of the public by the provision of information support and advice to local community based groups to conserve protect and improve the physical and natural environment anywhere in the Area.

Public Benefit

Groundwork Northern Ireland is part of the Federation of Groundwork Trusts in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. In Northern Ireland the Trust delivers programmes and services in deprived areas throughout Northern Ireland and the border counties of the Republic of Ireland.

Groundwork Northern Ireland’s vision is for sustainable, safer and healthier communities living in peace with each other.

Groundwork Northern Ireland’s approach and model brings about concurrent social, economic and environmental benefits, providing the synergy to address fundamental societal issues – the sense of powerlessness to change the environment and tackle key issues both in terms of the physical landscape but more importantly, the needs of local people. We do this by:

- Engaging with local communities in consultation, design and implementation of improvements to their own areas. Not only does this enhance local environments but it also increases the skills and capacity of local people to influence their own circumstances whether that is environmental, social or economic;

- Supporting local communities and working closely alongside other organisations and existing initiatives to help improve the quality of life for
people living there. We provide training and support to help get people more involved in making decisions about where they live and to understand the benefits that sustainable development can bring. We help people improve the appearance of their streets, parks and neighbourhoods but also encourage them to lead healthier lifestyles, get to know other people in their area or work with their neighbours to reduce crime and the fear of crime;

• Supporting communities in transition from conflict and division to peace and prosperity by enabling the regeneration of contested and interface neighbourhoods through building relationship at the local level on a cross-community basis and seeking investment in people and place, particularly economic investment through capital and programme.

• Working in schools and with adults to illustrate how individual actions can make a big difference to immediate surroundings and the global environment both now and in the future. We help schools make better use of their playgrounds and aim to educate people to act more responsibly with regard to energy, waste, water and transport and to respect local places and other people;

• Helping unemployed people improve their employment prospects by preparing them for a career in the land-based industry or encouraging them to pursue further vocational qualifications. We help people to gain skills and experience in horticulture, while supporting their personal development and facilitating their move to employment;

• Recognising that people, places and prosperity are inextricably linked and so we aim to design projects that bring benefits for all three at once. We believe that our work can assist in creating a broader and deeper understanding of the route to active citizenship, via shared public space.

Achievements and Performance

Review of Activities

During 2017/2018, we successfully delivered 82 projects that resulted in the development of 61 public spaces across Northern Ireland, benefiting a population of 93,267 people and improving 72,274 square meters of land, including the planting of 211 trees. We supported 21 schools and worked with 100 businesses to encourage adults and children to grow their own food, advised, supported and delivered projects for 311 community organisations and supported 9 people to gain a qualification. We also supported communities with their applications for grant funding and awarded over £802,000 of Landfill Community Funding to 26 projects.

We continued to deliver our Meanwhile Use programme that has transformed 3 derelict sites into thriving community gardens. The sites, leased to Groundwork N.I. on a meanwhile basis from the Department for Communities, are located at Connswater Street in East Belfast, Mid-Shankill in West Belfast and Glenbryn in
North Belfast. A fourth garden: The Commuters Garden was opened at Yorkgate Train Station after we secured a lease from Translink. To meet demand for our courses we also leased beds at Colin Allotments. The gardens are opened regularly by volunteers and sessions are held by Groundwork N.I. staff and associates to deliver training to the local community on how to grow and cook their own food; participants ranged from toddlers to pensioners and learning disability groups. The Connswater garden was awarded a special commendation from Belfast in Bloom.

Our Mens Shed project supports mens sheds across Northern Ireland. This year we supported 67 sheds, working with them to redevelop a steering group, providing networking opportunities, training opportunities and signposting the sheds to other relevant services, for example, funding, health resources and materials. We have also supported other organisations to address mental health issues by providing counselling and resilience training for the sheds, and newly forming sheds were offered the opportunity to work with Co-Operation Ireland under their Circle of Learning programme.

Our Northern Allotments programme supported the following community growing areas throughout the year: Friends of Antrim Castle, Antrim Mens Shed, Friends of Knocknagin Primary School and Be Safe Be Well Cornfields site. We also delivered taster sessions to groups, which were tailored to the needs of each group and were always well received. We delivered gardening sessions to all ages from Primary School children through to pensioners and supported local groups to hold their own events while arranging and encouraging networking throughout the northern area.

Our Technical Team continued to support the BIG Lottery Space and Place programme by reviewing capital claims for projects on site, or complete, and overseeing the appointment of building contractors for Tranche 3 and 4, and flagship projects. As new building projects commenced our staff regularly attended site meetings to monitor progress of the work and provide support to the groups involved.

This year we were able to incorporate our learning and experience into the development of a new and improved Beacon that will burn more efficiently. With the support of three councils and six community groups we delivered 15 Beacons throughout Northern Ireland in July and Halloween and 1 Beacon at Railway Street, Dublin for the Inner City Organisation Network.

Working with Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council we progressed the regeneration of Duncan’s Park to planning stage. The project will see the 6.24 hectare site transformed into a public linear park running adjacent to Stockdam Road, Duncan’s Road, Magheralave Road and Derriaghy Road.

We entered into an arrangement with Bryson Future Skills to deliver a two-year SIF funded programme training 20 unemployed and economically inactive people from North Belfast in horticulture skills, while utilising this learning to improve the gardens of privately rented homes in the Ardoyne and Ballysillan areas of Belfast.
Our Tomorrow’s Leaders programme connected 84 women from across Northern Ireland: 42 mentees from the grassroots working in communities or delivering front line services to other women and 42 mentors from central and local government, public, private and not for profit sectors. The programme supported the women to gain skills and develop competencies that will enable them to make meaningful and lasting contributions to their communities and the wider Northern Ireland community.

At Hydebank Wood College, South Belfast we created the first Community Garden in the grounds of a secure college, where in partnership with the students and the Department of Justice we supported work to reduce re-offending and help the students to develop a greater sense of community responsibility.

We supported the Orchardville Society to regenerate and revitalise their community garden at Balloo Training and Resource Centre in Bangor and delivered training sessions at the allotment to promote health and wellbeing for Orchardville’s clients and the wider community.

Financial Review

The results for the year 2017/2018 are set out on page 15 and the trustees consider the results for the year to be satisfactory.

The Trust’s total incoming resources for the year were £1,618,780 and the net movement in funds for the year amounted to a decrease of £561,381.

Restricted funds, representing income received for projects but not yet expended decreased by £588,741 and an increase of £26,873 was in respect of unrestricted funds, producing total fund balances carried forward of £2,014,083.

The restricted funds carried forward total £1,760,477.

Unrestricted funds carried forward total £253,606.

Principal Funding Sources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>£</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Central Government</td>
<td>15,971</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Authorities</td>
<td>93,350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Agencies</td>
<td>239,243</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private Sector</td>
<td>1,157,183</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Lottery</td>
<td>42,062</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dept. of Foreign Affairs &amp; Trade</td>
<td>19,833</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dept. for Communities</td>
<td>23,120</td>
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</table>

The key objectives of the Trust have been supported during the year through the following expenditure:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>£</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community projects</td>
<td>533,267</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land projects</td>
<td>1,594,781</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Education projects 52,633

Reserves Policy

The Board of Trustees has decided that the Trust should aim to hold a level of unrestricted reserves that would provide a minimum of fourteen weeks working capital for the following reasons:

- To absorb short term set-backs such as loss or delays in funding
- To finance working capital needs, such as delays in receipts and to fund the time delays between the development of projects, securing support, and the funds being received
- To fund the working capital required to fund the usual retrospective nature of the programme funding which can result in considerable timing difference between expenditure and receipt of funds
- To provide funding to cover any unforeseen downturn in activity, allowing alternative activity to be generated and/or a planned down-sizing of activity

The current unrestricted reserve of £253,606 provides the Trust with £109,740 free funds and 16 weeks working capital provision.

Unrestricted funds do not include restricted reserves which can only be used in accordance with the sponsor’s funding agreement for programmes of work, and therefore do not form part of the unrestricted reserve that is under the control of the Trust’s Board. The Restricted Reserve balance of £1,760,477 at 31 March 2018 relates to unspent programme funding, mainly from the Landfill Communities Fund. The future movements on these restricted funds will reflect the long term nature of the Trust’s programme activity and in no way reflects on the Trust’s financial efficiency or performance.

All incoming resources are recognised in the period in which they are received regardless of whether any associated expenditure has been incurred or not. Only in specific circumstances such as when the grant has been received in advance for expenditure which must take place in a future accounting period; or when the grant is dependent upon the fulfilment of a contract, are grants deferred until the Trust becomes entitled to the resources.

Investment Policy

The Majority of funds received by the Trust are restricted in nature and need to be kept as liquid as possible. Therefore, all funds are invested in low risk charitable accounts with reputable banks where immediate access is balanced against available interest rates. The Board, through the Finance & Personnel Sub-Committee, review this policy on an annual basis.

Plans for Future Periods
GROUNDWORK NORTHERN IRELAND

Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2018

The Trust’s Strategic Plan for 2018-2021 has identified the following four strategic priorities:

1. To ensure all our programme, projects and services are developed from the ground up and reflects government policy.
   - To further develop and implement a client, stakeholder and communities’ engagement and management plan
   - To listen and respond to customer needs and expectations and take the feedback on board
   - To ensure that all programmes and projects are planned and managed effectively and delivered in accordance with contractual commitments and project plans

2. To manage our resources effectively and efficiently.
   - To review and strengthen the corporate governance framework of GWNI and the organisation’s business and financial planning and management processes
   - To ensure that best value is achieved in all projects and programmes and that we add value to them when possible
   - To carryout internal & external audits and reviews of all work to ensure we are following best practice and implement any improvements recommended

3. To encourage our people to carry out their roles successfully.
   - To build the capability and capacity of GWNI, and to broaden the depth of operational and strategic understanding of the individuals within it, to deliver the organisation’s objectives effectively
   - To improve internal communications and to ensure that all staff have the opportunity to contribute to the development of the organisation
   - To further develop and introduce a new staff appraisal and performance management system aligned with the organisation’s business objectives

4. To work in partnership to develop, deliver & co-produce all our existing & new services, programmes & projects.
   - Increased sharing of resources and best practice with partners
   - Strong partnerships and collaboration in service delivery
   - To increase funding sources available to GWNI and broaden the range of clients by offering services that focus and build on GWNI’s core business strengths

Responsibilities of the Trustees

The Board of Directors (who are also Trustees of Groundwork Northern for the Purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Annual Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and regulations.

Company law requires the Board of Directors to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under that law the Board of Directors have elected to prepare
GROUNDWORK NORTHERN IRELAND

Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2018

the financial statements in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice (United Kingdom Accounting Standards and applicable law). Under company law the Board of Directors must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and the income and expenditure of the charitable company for that period.

In preparing these financial statements, the Board of Directors are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- 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;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in operation.

The Board of Directors are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the charitable company’s transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The Board of Directors are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate 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.

Statement as to disclosure to our auditors:

In so far as the Board of Directors are aware at the time of approving our trustee’s annual report:

There is no relevant audit information of which the charitable company’s auditors is unaware; and

The Board of Directors, having made enquiries of fellow directors and the charitable company’s auditor that they ought to have individually taken, have each taken all steps that he/she is obliged to take as a director in order to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditor is aware of that information.

PKF-FPM Accountants Limited have expressed their willingness to continue in office as auditors. A resolution proposing that PKF-FPM Accountants Limited be reappointed as auditors will be put to the Annual General Meeting.

By order of the Board of Directors