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Annual Report 2015

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## Building Change Trust

### Annual Report 2014

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## Foreword

From its beginnings voluntary activism and philanthropy has been about the free association of citizens to improve one's lot and that of fellow citizens. As William Beveridge, the great social reformer stated free association is one of "*the distinguishing marks of a free society*". Voluntary activism has always been more than the delivery of services and whilst the provision of services is a significant facet the quintessential characteristic of voluntary action is this freedom to engage with issues and concerns, particularly those that impact on the most vulnerable, to bring about social change. As the great Merseyside activist Margaret Simey states more forcefully "*the agent for spontaneous social change is voluntary action*". She goes on to say, "*no government is elected to contravene its own manifesto. It is to the conscience of the dissenter and the non-conformer that we must look for the will to change*".

In this context of voluntary action, Beveridge defined voluntary organisations as "*organisations which, whether its workers are paid or unpaid, is initiated and governed by its own members without external control*". This freedom from "*external control*" and role of dissenter is a challenge to us all as we seek funding and contracts for services; the danger is not only the restrictions that might be imposed but the self-censorship we may exercise to maintain our relationship with the funder.

"*The world is full of magic things, patiently waiting for our senses to grow sharper*" so says WB Yeats. By voluntary action, dissent and innovation we nurture the senses and begin to see the magic of the world and its people.

The Building Change Trust was established in order to support the Northern Ireland voluntary community sector and social enterprise sector explore the challenges, find creative solutions and above all aid the voice of those with the will to make change. This annual report highlights in detail how in 2015 we deployed the Trust's resources and the actions taken to nurture and encourage our "*senses to grow sharper*".

I would like to thank and pay tribute to my fellow Board members for their commitment, precious time, valued opinions, rigorous counsel, wit and humour. It is a pleasure to be associated with such a vivacious and erudite group of people. I would in particular pay tribute to Maeve Monaghan my Vice –Chair who this year resigned to take up an appointment as Chair of The Community Foundation for Northern Ireland while wishing her every success in this role I will miss her creativity and support.

Finally, the Trust does not employ staff but has an administrative contract with The Community Foundation for Northern Ireland and I would like to acknowledge their support for our work. In particular the time, imagination, patience and passion of Nigel, Cathy, Paul and Robbie who continuously endeavour to nurture that the Board and cultivate our senses.

Bill Osborne, June 2016

## **Background and history of the Building Change Trust**

The Building Change Trust was established in 2008 by the Big Lottery Fund (BIG) following the submission and acceptance of a proposal developed by the Community Foundation for Northern Ireland, Community Evaluation Northern Ireland, Business in the Community, Rural Community Network and the then Volunteer Development Agency (now Volunteer Now).

The Trust is resourced through a National Lottery grant of £10 million as an investment for community capacity building and promotion of the voluntary and community sector in Northern Ireland.

The Building Change Trust is accepted as a charity by HM Revenue and Customs (XT11390) and registered with The Charity Commission for Northern Ireland NIC103379.

The Trust is managed by a corporate trustee; Building Change Trust Limited which is registered as a company limited by guarantee in Northern Ireland (NI071182).

The corporate Trustee currently has 11 Directors drawn from across the community, voluntary and private sectors and a Protector, Michael Wilson appointed by the Big Lottery Fund. Each of the original bid partners along with the Big Lottery Fund has the right to nominate one Director to the Board of the corporate trustee. Other Directors, including the Chairperson, have been recruited following an open recruitment process.

<b>Director</b>	<b>Nominated by</b>
Bill Osborne – Chairperson	Open recruitment
Martin McCarthy	Business in the Community
Maurice Meehan	Community Evaluation NI
Joe McVey	Volunteer Now
Libby Keys	Rural Community Network
Catherine Cooke	Community Foundation NI
Julie Harrison	Big Lottery Fund
Maeve Monaghan	Open recruitment
Mary McKee	Open recruitment
Margaret Henry	Open recruitment
Karen Smyth	Open recruitment
John Peto	Open recruitment

The Trust will by the 31 December 2018 have invested and expended the £10 million original grant along with any interest generated.

The Trust plans to support the voluntary and community sector (including social enterprises) through the development, delivery of and learning from a range of programmes including commissioned work, awards programmes and other interventions.

The specific objects of the Trust as detailed within the Trust Deed are as follows:

*“To make awards for charitable purposes for:*

- The development, for the public benefit, of the capacity and skills of the members of socially and economically disadvantaged communities in Northern Ireland in such a way that they are better able to identify, and help meet, their needs and to participate more fully in society;*
- The promotion, for the public benefit, of the Voluntary Sector, the efficiency and effectiveness of Charities and the effective use of charitable resources in Northern Ireland;*
- The advancement, for the public benefit, of citizenship and community development in Northern Ireland and thereby increase opportunities for volunteering, enhance the identification and support of best practice and good governance in the Voluntary Sector and the development of the skills of persons working in the Voluntary Sector and enable organisations in the Voluntary Sector to work effectively together for the benefit of the community.”*

The development of criteria for distribution of resources and decisions on the distribution of resources are the responsibility of the Board of Directors of the corporate trustee.

In 2009 the Trust was initially focused on establishment and governance arrangements and on enabling delivery of the actions outlined in the business plan - ***Building Capacity for a New Paradigm*** – developed and submitted by the 5 original bidding organisations and accepted by BIG.

Consultation with the sector was also undertaken with a view to informing strategy development and future investment by the Trust.

In 2010, following on from the original business plan, the Trust developed a strategy and programmes for the 2010 - 2013 period, *Investing in Social Change, Strategy 2010 – 2013* and significant investment was made in Charity Bank, plans for CollaborationNI advanced and the Trust’s initial award programmes – Exploring Change and Deliver Change made a reality.

In 2011 the focus was on implementation of actions previously agreed,

- CollaborationNI was commissioned from NICVA and partners CO3 and Stellar Leadership
- Charity Bank were provided with grant aid to support their deposit taking, loan making and investment readiness activities in Northern Ireland
- In addition to the implementation of individual projects through Exploring Change and Deliver Change Awards the Trust’s own Building Change Added value programme worked with award recipients and others to share their learning and critically consider

the other ways in which the NI voluntary and community sector could change for development in the future.

From mid-2011 onwards the Trust began to consider its strategy and actions for the period 2012 onwards. A number of initiatives were focused on during 2012 with progress made by the establishment of the Collaboration Enabling Fund linked to CollaborationNI and the Trust becoming a partner in the UK wide Inspiring Impact Programme, as well as making arrangements for the development and delivery of a linked Northern Ireland Inspiring Impact programme.

We also began in 2012 to consider future social finance support actions in addition to the £1million grant to Charity Bank.

In 2013 the Trust continued to implement actions previously agreed and began to more clearly refine its future strategy and actions across 6 proposed strategic themes:

- **Collaboration,**
- **Social Finance,**
- **Inspiring Impact,**
- **Social Innovation,**
- **Creative Space for Civic Thinking**
- **Leadership.**

Additionally the Trust clarified the outcomes it wished to achieve from its work as **Collaboration, Sustainability, Learning and Influence** as set out below.

### **Collaboration:**

#### **More and better collaboration between organisations**

- By collaboration we mean organisations and individuals working together in pursuit of objectives. There are many ways for organisations to work together which vary in both structure and purpose and which have varying degrees of commitment and levels of formality.
- We believe that whilst community and voluntary and social enterprise organisations in Northern Ireland have a long history and experience of various types of collaborative activity that it is now timely for organisations to explore collaboration and work more collaboratively with others ultimately for the benefit of communities.

### **Sustainability**

#### **Increased Sustainability**

- By this we mean the resilience of an organisation and its ability to deliver its mission and meet the needs of present beneficiaries without compromising the ability of itself and others to identify and meet the needs of future beneficiaries. This resilience and ability might be measured both in a financial and non-financial way.

- Our definition of sustainability is not about supporting or taking actions to ensure that particular individual organisations endure but a statement of the need for action to be taken to ensure that Northern Ireland benefits from a dynamic and developing community and voluntary and social enterprise sector into the future where the diverse and changing needs of individuals and communities are to the fore.

## **Learning and influence**

A learning sector which identifies, shares and acts on the lessons of its own and others' work and influences others' actions

- By learning, we mean the formal (i.e. training) and informal (e.g. networking and other) ways that individuals and organisations acquire skills and knowledge to develop and grow, ultimately to meet the diverse and changing needs of individuals and communities. Learning should be followed by application of the lessons.
- By influencing others we mean sharing the lessons of actions with others and having a positive impact on their decision making in respect of supporting the sector and the individuals and communities it serves.

Having conceived 6 strategic themes, more recently the aim is to focus on the first 5 as the key strategic themes with leadership as a cross-cutting action.

In 2013 the actions to be taken within the first 3 strategic areas were clearly mapped out and implementation commenced as set out below.

In 2013/2014 we spent considerable time and resource in engaging with a wide range of stakeholders to shape our strategy and plans in respect of the themes of Social Innovation and Creative Space for Civic Thinking and also to progress implementing the actions within these areas. We also started to think about our legacy beyond the expenditure of the £10 million endowment by 31 December 2018.

In 2015 the Trust began to concentrate its focus on considering and agreeing legacy actions, initially in respect of an ultimately unsuccessful request from BIG to present a bid for additional resources beyond the end date of 2018 and subsequently in the context of planning legacy actions within the context of each of the 5 themes.

As with other years, 2015 was a period of both delivery and planning for the future. With the bulk of resources allocated and budgets set for each theme some themes such as Social Finance and Collaboration are coming to an end, with plans and work set to continue and accelerate under the others with a particular focus on Social Innovation and Creative Space for Civic Thinking.

## Our specific areas of action

In achieving our outcomes all our actions are being taken under 5 key themes as set out below. The potential for collaborative and synergistic actions within the 5 themes is continually explored.

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Headline Actions</b>
<b>Social Finance</b>	<p>Maintain and develop our relationship with Charity Bank and other social finance providers for the benefit of the sector here</p> <p>Commission a community shares pilot for NI and following implementation consider next steps</p> <p>Develop through collaboration with others a plan for a 3 - 5 year investment readiness (IR) programme in NI.</p> <p>Explore the potential development of new social finance products for NI</p> <p>Leverage other resources for implementation of IR and new social finance products in NI</p>
<b>Collaboration</b>	<p>Provide effective management of the existing contract with CollaborationNI until conclusion of the programme in 2016</p> <p>Work with a range of stakeholders to determine the future collaboration support needs of the community and voluntary sector in NI</p> <p>Resource and lever other resources towards implementation of a sustained collaboration support programme during the 2014 – 2018 period</p> <p>Ongoing consideration of and decisions on applications to the Trust's CollaborationNI linked Collaboration Enabling Fund</p>
<b>Inspiring Impact in NI</b>	<p>Develop and resource an NI development plan for Inspiring Impact in the period 2013 – 2018 which takes account of the UK programme and any particular NI circumstances and opportunities</p> <p>Develop and implement effective governance and management arrangements for Inspiring Impact in</p>

	<p>NI that are fit for purpose and which in themselves can make a contribution towards the Trust outcomes sought</p> <p>Maintain membership of the UK wide Inspiring Impact partnership and seek to make an effective contribution to its work</p>
<p><b>Social Innovation</b></p>	<p>To progressively implement the range of actions contained within our Social Innovation action plan in partnership with others where appropriate for the long term benefit of the sector.</p> <p>Specifically to focus on actions within the 3 areas of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ecosystem</li> <li>• Financing</li> <li>• Practice</li> </ul> <p>through the development and delivery of a range of actions under the umbrella of Social Innovation NI</p>
<p><b>Creative space for civic thinking (CSCT)</b></p>	<p>To progressively implement the range of actions contained within our CSCT action plan in partnership with others where appropriate for the long term benefit of the sector</p> <p>Specifically to focus on actions within the 3 areas of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support creativity and build capacity</li> <li>• More open and accountable government</li> <li>• Sector independence</li> </ul> <p>through development and delivery of a Civic Activism Support Programme, support the development of the NI Open Government Network and commissioning of research and support into the independence of the VCSE sector</p>

In respect of the latter 2 themes the focus of our activity within 2015 has been progressive and iterative implementation of the actions within the agreed plans and a continual refinement of the plans in the context of resource availability and opportunity.