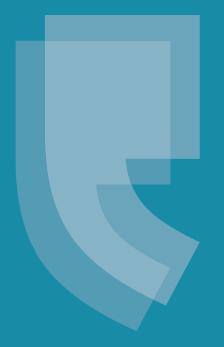


Annual Report 2017 & Accounts Review 2016





2017 has been a key milestone in the history of the Newry Chamber of Commerce & Trade, celebrating 125 years of existence since it's establishment in 1892.

To mark this, a strategic review of the organisation was undertaken during an away day at Slieve Gullion Court in February. This provided the perfect opportunity to discuss the future direction of the Chamber and to review the mission statement and vision for future growth. The outcome paved the way for a new set of Articles of Association which were ratified and adopted at an EGM on 6th June. Well done to everyone for embracing this process and the resulting change that is to occur.

**Mary Meehan**, CEO Newry Chamber of Commerce & Trade



### Contents

03	Contents
04	Chief Executive's Message
05	President's Message
06	A Message From The Corporate Patrons
07	2017 in Numbers
08	New Members
09-12	Events and Networking
13	Promotion
14	International
15	Influencing Local Policy
16	Organisational Change
17	Chamber Charities
18	Finances

### **Chamber Officers** 2016/17

President: Michael McKeown
Vice President: Mark Crimmins

Deputy Vice President: **Declan McChesney** 

Past President: **Deborah Loughran** 

Treasurer: **Aidan Malone**Chief Executive: **Mary Meehan** 



## Chief Executive's Message



Firstly, The Chamber Office Bearers, The Chamber Executive team and sub-committee members must be commended as they give up their time freely and willingly because they want to make a difference to their local area, to their business and to yours. As always, we are open and welcome to new faces to share expertise and to help make a difference.

2017 has been a key milestone in the history of the Newry Chamber of Commerce celebrating 125 years of existence since its establishment in 1892. To mark this, a strategic review of the organisation was undertaken during an away day at Slieve Gullion Court in February. This provided the perfect opportunity to discuss the future direction of the Chamber and to review the mission statement and vision for future growth. The outcome paved the way for a new set of Articles of Association which were ratified and adopted at an EGM on 6th June. Well done to everyone for embracing this process and the resulting change that is to occur.

Chamber events are key to the success of Newry Chamber and this year, we have been as busy as ever finding even more room in the calendar for new networking events such as the Race Evening at Down Royal which was kindly supported by new sponsors British Airways and American Airlines. Our biennial business awards with 21 award categories had a record number of 287 entries and 530 attendees celebrating success across the Newry, Mourne and Down area. Our thanks to all our sponsors and especially, Newry, Mourne & Down District Council, The Bank of Ireland and Flogas.

There has also been lots of workshops, roundtable meetings, breakfast briefings and of course our Annual President's dinner which is always a highlight of the calendar year. This year we were delighted to have Newry born and bred Brian Conlon, Founder and CEO of First Derivatives as our guest speaker. The event sponsored by The Ulster Bank and The Canal Court Hotel saw over 240 guests for dinner. Our annual Golf Classic was also a great success and thanks to Crash Services for once again sponsoring this annual event.

Chambers have always provided its members with an open network of contacts but this year, during the first international trade visit by Newry Chamber, a memorandum of understanding was signed with the largest Chamber in Poland. The Chamber hopes to build on this in 2018 and other international opportunities.

Brexit has certainly put a spot-light on this border city. It has opened old wounds, has stirred up old memories but has also reminded us of the resilience and tenacity of home grown indigenous business to thrive here, not to mention, the scale of the economic transformation that the region has undergone in the past 25 years. The vast volume of media requests received, and Ministerial and political engagements undertaken by the Chamber in the past 18 months, underlines the strength of influence and respect that the Newry Chamber demands not only on a local and national level but on the international stage.

Newry Chamber will continue to lobby decision-makers with a united voice, to promote economic prosperity and to put key projects such as the Southern Relief Road at the top of the Government agenda. It is encouraging to see that this project is moving along nicely, and we must bring it to fruition. We also remain focused on local issues such as on-street parking, business rates, rising energy costs and lack of broadband provision and will continue to provide representation and consultation to our members on these matters

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the outgoing President Michael McKeown, for his dedicated time and plethora of experience as a business leader to face the challenging demands that have been imposed upon us by Brexit. I wish him well in his exceptionally inspiring new business Matt D'Arcy and am pleased that he will remain on our new Board for the forthcoming year.

Mary Meehan Chief Executive Officer

Newry Chamber of Commerce & Trade





My second term as President had a spectacular beginning with the Christmas Charity Dinner raising over £100,000 for a widening range of local Charities. It will be remembered as the Ardhal O'Hanlon year and the inaugural year of the President's Golden Ticket. One hundred tickets, each £100, were sold raising £10,000 with the really golden prize of Return Business Class travel to North America for two. It is being repeated again this year thanks to the astounding generosity of American Airlines.

The President's Gala Dinner, sponsored by Ulster Bank, held on 29th June gave me personally, and I am certain many who attended, a unique opportunity to a rising mogul of the Information Age, our own Brian Conlon. This is a man who grew up in Newry, was schooled here, played football here, and would have been a star in that arena also but for injury. This is the stuff of inspiration to our aspirant entrepreneurs. It was my great good fortune to have chatted to him over dinner and I express our Chamber's delight in the honour his presence bestowed.

Other highly effective networking events included: The Golf Classic sponsored by CRASH Services and a Race Day at Down Royal sponsored jointly by American Airlines and British Airlines.

The final event of my term of office was the largest ever-Greater Newry Area Business Awards Ceremony held on 21st September. The night of the actual presentations is indeed only the tip of a very large iceberg. CEO Mary Meehan and her team, which included Chamber members on the Events Committee, began preparations in May and enlarged the number of categories to twenty-one. Congratulations on the smoothness of the judging process and the spectacular staging on the final night. It is a great achievement to recruit 21 sponsors and to entertain five hundred and fifty guests. Well done also to the Canal Court Hotel that delivered its now legendary consistency in food and service.

A serious mission, mixed with an over indulgent hospitality by the hosts, was undertaken to the Polish City of Szczecin. Several Chamber member companies, along with NMD Chairperson, Gillian Fitzpatrick were conducted by our esteemed member, Jerome Mullan on a three-day excusion. Businesses were visited along with the University and local government inward investment bodies. Our Chamber created official links with the Chamber of Szczecin.

On the local front the Chamber continued to chair the Greater Newry Vision Group composed of: the senior executives of Newry, Mourne & Down Council, Invest N.I, Department of Communities, Warrenpoint Harbour Authority, Newry & Mourne Enterprise Agency and The Southern Health & Social Care Trust. This group is responsible for effective communication and co-operation between these entities. I commend it to my successor.

I am delighted to have served at a time when the Newry Southern Relief Road has taken an important step forward with the imminent publication of the final two prospective corridors. This project ranks in historical importance and



difficulty with the creation of the Albert Basin and the Sea Canal lobbied for and achieved by Newry Chamber of Commerce between 1823 and 1850 – a period of 27 years. Our Chamber and our District Council and our elected representatives can be pleased that the Southern Relief Road will be a fact within the next 6-7 years.

I was greatly heartened by the response of our Chamber members to the Daisy Hill issue. Some thought that Healthcare was not within our remit but the vast majority saw that the well being of our employees and access to local emergency services is always number one. Our Chamber responded with a sub group oozing with energy and positivism. WE are now represented on the Daisy Hill Pathfinder Group and have been much appreciated by the Southern Trust. It can be said that Daisy Hill Emergency Services are now more secure that they have been for many years. As the Chamber Representative on that Group, I am witnessing near revolution in the local hospital system.

Nowadays a much-used cliché is the "Elephant in the Room". Brexit is a herd of Elephants and a few rhinoceros thrown in to keep the row brewing. As a lover of excitement and hullabaloo, I have thrived on it. Anyone who has played any competitive game from playground rounders to Rugby Union understands that you must stick with team mates and be united in your objective and let the other side know that you respect them but will assert your claim on the outcome. That is what I experienced in last two years as Captain of the Newry Chamber of Commerce & Trade Brexit team. With a Vice-Captain like Dr Connor Patterson you really cant get your eye off the ball. Conor has appeared on multiple television & radio broadcasts, been quoted in newspapers and journals all around the world and appeared before committees in Dublin, London and Brussels. His work is continuing. At this juncture at the close of my presidency, I commend him to you all.

As any true egotist would, I will look claim it as my legacy to designate this Presidency as an era of reform. Upon joining this Chamber's Executive, I saw that an unintentional dysfunctionality had arisen whereby the Executive had grown to 35 members and decisive forward direction was impaired. The job of the CEO was complicated by an excessive number of potential controllers. Having had parallel experience of other Chambers, I began to lobby for change. As you know, Mary Meehan, has also had experience of working for other Chambers. To shorten the tale, the Chamber members met for an away day in Slieve Gullion on 8th February and agreed a redrafting of the Articles of Association. Raymond Jackson worked strenuously and assiduously to complete that task. The new Articles were adopted at an EGM on xxxxxxx. The result of that change is playing out tonight in the formation of a twelve person Board and the plan to constitute a 25 person advisory Council later this month.

Michael McKeown, President Newry Chamber of Commerce & Trade



### **Autoline Insurance Group**

Autoline Insurance Group is proud to be one of the market leading insurance and financial services companies in Northern Ireland. One of the Province's truly indigenous businesses, Autoline was founded 42 years ago and has grown through the entrepreneurial leadership that is typical of the greater Newry area. Autoline offers personal and commercial lines insurance, the latter to large corporates as well as servicing the SME market, and also provides a range of mortgage, life assurance and complex investment and pension advice through its financial services arm, Ashtree Financial Services. Autoline's HQ is in Newry with additional branches in Ballymena, Coleraine, Downpatrick and Enniskillen with over 200 staff.

Autoline Senior Management has always been firm supporters of the members and leadership of the Newry Chamber of Commerce. Founded 42 years ago and growing despite challenging trading conditions, Autoline values the support the Chamber has provided throughout its development.

Newry Chamber offers invaluable support and networking for entrepreneurs and business leaders who are like minded in the belief that the economic generation of the region can be optimised. The continued investment and

growth of indigenous businesses provides opportunities for the rich talent pool available in the area. In this regard Newry Chamber of Commerce's objectives are absolutely consistent with each and every organisation focused on growth in the greater Newry area.

Julie Gibbons Autoline Insurance Group



### **First Trust Bank**

First Trust Bank is committed to supporting the ambition of local businesses and entrepreneurs so we are proud to be a Patron Sponsor of the Newry Chamber of Commerce and its programme of initiatives across the Eastern Seaboard Corridor.

With a long history of supporting the local community in Newry, the Chamber's pro-business ethos is in line with our own. In the last year alone, the Newry Chamber has offered a diverse range of events and seminars on topics including cyber security, data regulations, export and Brexit. Whether you are a retailer, a farmer or a start-up, the Chamber proactively offers practical advice, learning and networking opportunities to help businesses across sectors to grow and expand. From attending many of these events alongside our customers in the area, we know first-hand the value and knowledge they bring to members. An advocate for business and the local area, the Newry Chamber of Commerce represents the interests of enterprise at both a regional and national level. It believes that supporting local businesses across Northern Ireland

is essential as we seek to reinvigorate the economy - a belief we also share. With a plethora of unknowns and challenges around Brexit, political issues such as the stalemate at Stormont, and matters including skills

development and infrastructure investment, we're proud to partner with organisations such as the Chamber to keep business and economic priorities at the forefront and collaborate to help stimulate growth.





### The MJM Group

The MJM Group is exceptionally proud of what we have achieved and of our staff who have helped us achieve it. We have doubled our turnover and staff since 2009 and are continuing on a strong growth trajectory. We are the world leader in the refit and refurbishment of ferries and cruise ships and are proud to work with the largest cruise companies in the world and to have established a strong and growing land-based portfolio.

Our work and our reputation speak for themselves. We have spent over 30 years building MJM Group to the position we are in today – a global interior fit-out company that stands proud among the best in the world.

We are also very proud of our local roots, starting out in Rathfriland in 1983 before moving to Newry in 2009 where our Head-quarters remain. Our involvement with Newry Chamber of Commerce and Trade goes back to our earliest days where, as a fledgling business trying to establish our foundation, we learnt many business skills and got excellent advice from Newry's experienced business men and women. The Chamber's excellent networking events

remain a core part of their activity and now, as an established business, MJM Group is honoured to be a patron and impart our knowledge and experience to young, small businesses starting out on the journey we started over 30 years ago.





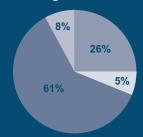




40% increase in members

28
press
statements

Percentage of Members:



26% Retail / 5% Trade 61% Service / 8% Manufacturing

record number of category sponsors for The Greater Newry Business Awards

25% increase in

increase in membership revenue

27% average increase in event participation

287
record number of entries for The Greater Newry Business Awards

56% fincrease in Facebook followers

34 press releases

representation meetings

95% of members are highly satisfied with level of service

from Newry Chamber







Barry Magill Financial Services

Bellinis

**Brilliant Red** 

Carnview Construction Ltd

Cathal Grant Design & Management Ltd (CGDM)

CCO

Chic

**Damolly Developments** 

**Environmental Product and Services** 

**EOS Systems** 

**ESS** 

Express Leaflets NI

**Fabtops** 

Fegan Construction

Fleming Metal Recycling

I am Social Media

James Bennett Painting

Kilmorey Care Homes

Matt D'Arcy & Co Ltd

McGahon Surveyors

Milestone Kitchen

Newry Advertiser

O'Kane Resourcing

Paddy McGurgan Make-up Store

Peter Fitzpatrick

Prestige

Regen Waste

**Reveal Business** 

Ryco Marketing

Shelbourne Motors

Soul Bia

Steel Lintels Ireland

Stephen Begley & Co Solicitors

**Teds Carpets** 

The Church Cafe & Bistro

The Murdock Group

The Strain Practice

The Voucher Book

Trahere Coaching

Weber Shandwick NI

Wild Rose Boutique

Zen Day Spa





### **MEET THE RIGHT PEOPLE**

We have tailored our events calendar to suit the varied requirements of a modern business; Pure Networking Breakfasts for the early starters, Speed Networking for quick connections and Networking lunches and dinners for enhanced networking.

### **GET IN THE KNOW**

Chamber events are run for the benefit of the business community, with targeted events to attract the right people from relevant industries.

3,000
Attendees
at events

**Almost** 

### **CONNECTING**

The Chamber's directory of members is the secret to the continued success of our networking events. Chamber members employ thousands of people giving attendees an enormous range of potential networking opportunities.

### **ROUNDTABLE EVENTS**

Our roundtable events provide opportunities to hear from influencers from the local and national political arena. Some of our speakers included:

- The Bank of England Chief Economist
- Mr James Brokenshire, NI Secretary of State
- The Rt Hon Minister Green MP
- · Charlie Flanagan TD
- The Northern Ireland Affairs Committee

### **ANNUAL GALA PRESIDENT'S DINNERS**

The stand-out events of the business calendar are without a doubt the Annual Dinners. Securing Brian Conlon, Founder and CEO of First Derivatives as a guest speaker in 2017 with over 230 people in attendance showcases just why this annual event is so well received.

890 companies represented at events









### **BUSINESS AWARDS**

As well as providing business support and insights, the Newry Chamber also celebrates the talent embedded in the local community. The Greater Newry Area Business Awards shine a spotlight on innovative practices, outstanding management and leadership excellence helping promote our local businesses and encouraging other business leaders to grow.

### **CROSS BORDER TRADE EXPO**

The Cross-Border Trade Expo supported by InterTradelreland and ran in collaboration with Dundalk Chamber, played host to over 25 exhibitors, with over 140 delegates.

### **LEARNING SEMINARS**

Our increased range of learning seminars ensured members benefited from the expertise of other members on topics such as social media, family succession planning, general data protection regulation, Road Safety, Brexit and retail management.

### THE BIG APPRENTICESHIP EVENT

Working in partnership with The Southern Regional College, this event attracted dozens of school leavers to find out about the range of apprenticeship opportunities on offer across a wide range of business sectors underpinning that University is not the only option to young people wishing to obtain higher level qualifications and skills







### **COMPANY VISITS**

Company visits provide an excellent familiarisation opportunity for members.

### **SOCIAL NETWORKING EVENTS**

This year we raised the stakes and enjoyed a VIP evening at The Down Royal Racecourse, providing the perfect setting for networking in style.

Our Annual Golf Classic at Warrenpoint Golf Course remains a key networking event, welcoming team members from across the province.

Our recent Gin tasting evening at the Bridge Bar provided an opportunity for members to network while sampling some of the many gins available in this award winning new bar.









The Chamber has taken more steps to ensure the best quality promotional tools are available to members.

### **WEBSITE**

With the launch of a new look Chamber dedicated website, the Chamber has shored up its commitment to providing an unrivalled multi-channel promotional toolkit for its members and the Greater Newry business community.

### **SOCIAL MEDIA**

With a greater focus on digital media, our members have now a greater toolkit of promotional options available to them. Committed to promoting our members, the Chamber posted hundreds of news stories online to the benefit of hundreds of companies. Another notable improvement is the surge in followers across the Chamber's social media channels, giving members the ability to promote their news to a large Twitter and Facebook following, a new Linkedin site and a new Instagram site. This gives members of Newry Chamber the best platform possible on which to promote their stories.

### **VIDEO CHANNEL**

Following the revised promotion structures and increased social media following, the Chamber now also has a video platform to feature member videos and Chamber updates. These are also posted on social media to enhance the promotional offer members receive.













### FIRST INTERNATIONAL TRADE VISIT TO POLAND

A Chamber business delegation including the Chair of The Newry, Mourne and Down District Council and the Honorary Consul of the Republic of Poland in Northern Ireland visited Szczecin, Poland in May 2016.

Participating companies benefited from a range of pre-arranged meetings with prospective suppliers and buyers of their products. During the visit, delegates met with the Medical University of West Pomerania to discuss potential cooperation and opportunities for student placements in the field of emergency medicine. As part of the Chamber's international recruitment effort for Emergency Department consultants, a commitment was made by the University to circulate the job description and prospectus to University Alumni.

Following a visit to a number of investment projects in the region, the delegation also met with the Deputy Mayor of the Szczecin Council and learned of future infrastructure spend of £1 billion in the area. We were also pleased to have signed our first international cooperation agreement with the largest Chamber in Poland 'The Northern Chamber of Poland' which has over 1700 members.



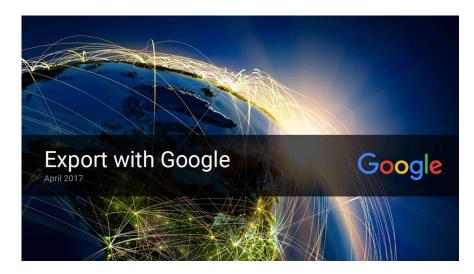




### **VISIT TO GOOGLE HEADQUARTERS IN DUBLIN**

More than 3.4 billion people are accessing the internet every day, making internationalization more important than ever: consumers are borderless and 'always on.'

On a visit to Google in April 2017, Newry Chamber members learned about how Internationalization can help your business grow and prosper by reaching new audiences abroad.





## Lobbying and Representation

### **BREXIT**

The CEO and Chamber representatives have appeared on multiple television & radio broadcasts, been quoted in newspapers and journals all around the world and appeared before committees in Dublin, London and Brussels.

Newry Chamber has also facilitated many meetings including;

- The All Island Brexit Dialogue Forum
- The NI Affairs Committee
- · A group of European MEPS
- The Northern Ireland Secretary of State, Mr James Brokenshire
- The First Secretary of State for the UK, Minister Green MP
- · Former An Taoiseach Enda Kenny
- · Former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr Charlie Flanagan
- The British Irish Chamber of Commerce

### SOUTHERN RELIEF ROAD

Newry Chamber has long lobbied for this scheme which aims to provide a strategic transport link from the A1 Belfast-Dublin key transport corridor to the A2 Warrenpoint dual carriageway.

Newry Chamber responded to the recent AECOM consultation to identify;

Stage 1: Preliminary Options report. This considered five options for the proposed scheme and has identified two road corridors to take forward for further development. In Autumn 2017, Newry Chamber will consult with its members to feedback to inform

Stage 2: of the development work. This will assess routes within each corridor and identify a preferred route. It is expected that, subject to the project being allocated the necessary funds, the Stage 2 assessment could be complete in summer 2018.

## NEWRY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE & TRADE THREE POINT PLAN FOR DAISY HILL EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT

### INTRODUCTION

The presence of a secure Emergency Department at Daisy Hill Hospital is vital to the wellbeing of all our employees across all the business sectors. Thus, following a meeting with Officials from the Southern Trust, the Chamber Executive has unanimously agreed that Newry Chamber of Commerce should pledge its assistance in the recruitment efforts of Emergency Department Consultants to Daisy Hill Hospital. We recognize that both short-term and long term measures are needed and through our newly formed Daisy Hill Sub-group, we have formulated a 3 point plan which is outlined below;

### SHORT-TERM EXECUTION OF A MARKETING CAMPAIGN TO ATTRACT ED CONSULTANTS TO WORK IN NEWRY

- A copy of the job description can be <u>downloaded here</u> and a copy of the prospectus can be <u>downloaded here</u> disseminated through wider business contacts using your own marketing channels and Diaspora contacts
- ✓ #workinnewry to be used for twitter campaign to ensure consistency of message
- A short 90 second promotional video will be produced to supplement marketing efforts - this will be made available by end of May

### 2. RELOCATION PACKAGE

Chamber members are asked to consider if any of the products and/or services that they supply would complement an attractive relocation package. A list of benefits will be pooled into a relocation package and will also supplement the recruitment drive. Please respond to <a href="mailto:mary@newry.com">mary@newry.com</a> by 31st May with ideas or suggestions.

### 3. PREPARATION OF PLAN FOR A MASTER HOSPITAL & CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE

A small sub group has been established to consider the longer-term aspirations of what is required to service a growing and ageing population and the cross border demand for health provision. In doing so, this group will consider the policy and lobbying pathways that are required as well as delivery of visual concepts and costings.

#### LeMonde



**POLITICO** 

Süddeutsche Zeitung **Ia Repubblica** Frantfurter Allgemeine

### ON STREET PARKING

In March 2017, Newry Chamber invited the Head of the NI Enforcement Unit to meet with Chamber representatives highlighting concerns at the high number of penalty notices issued in the city centre.

Engagement has been ongoing and a review of the excessive number of wardens patrolling the city centre was further requested in October 2017.

#### **BUSINESS RATE RELIEF**

Newry Chamber met with the Former Finance Minister Mairtin O Muilleoir MLA to support NIIRTA and Hospitality Ulster to target business rate relief toward the independent retail and hospitality sectors, which will directly support town centres and our tourism potential.

Newry Chamber 3 Point Plan for Daisy Hill Emergency Department



# Organisational Change

### **NEW TEAM**

CEO Mary Meehan took up position in June 2016 and Chamber Development Executive, Jessica Kane took up position in June 2017

### **NEW BRANDING**

In 2017, Newry Chamber enjoyed a well overdue facelift with the introduction of a new corporate logo and associated branding.

### NEW ARTICLES OF ASSOCIATION ADOPTED ON 6TH JUNE 2017

Following an extensive consultation period and consensus on the preferred operational structure, a new set of revised articles of association were adopted at a special EGM on 6th June 2017.

### **NEW BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

A new Board of Directors comprised of no more than 12 representatives will be appointed at an AGM on 7th November 2017.



## Chamber Charities

The Chamber is proud to support charities selected by serving Presidents each year.

Fundraising takes place throughout the year with functions such as the annual dinner and the business awards providing an opportunity to raise not only funds but awareness for these truly deserving causes.

PIPS NEWRY & Mourne - £1,900 Muscular Dystrophy Research - £3,400

### NEWRY CHAMBER CHRISTMAS CHARITY DINNER AND SANTA COLOUR RUN

Newry Chamber hosted than 700 patrons at the 17th Annual Christmas Charity Dinner in the Canal Court Hotel on 1st December 2016.

After breaking the £1million fundraising target for local charities in 2015, people were equally generous, with just over £100,000 raised for local causes. This brings the total raised during the past 17 years to just under £1.2million.











### **Finances**

ABRIDGED PROFIT & LOSS ACCOUNT				
YEAR	2016	2015		
Notes	£	£		
Gross profit/(loss)	55,953	(134)		
Administrative expenses	(53,012)	(49,722)		
Profit/(loss) before taxation	2,941	(49,856)		
Tax on profit/(loss)	-	-		
Profit/(loss) for the year	2,941	(49,856)		

ABRIDGED PROFIT & LOSS ACCOUNT				
YEAR	2016	2015		
Notes	£	£		
Current Assets				
Debtors	26,574	9,071		
Cash at bank & in hand	93,918	124,337		
	120,492	133,408		
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	(57,681)	(73,538)		
Net Current Assets	62,811	59,870		
Total Assets less Current Liabilities	62,811	59,870		
Reserves				
Profit and Loss Account	62,811	59,870		
Members' Funds	62,811	59,870		



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