

## **Darjeeling Children's Trust: Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 December 2021**

**Charity Registration No. 1143109**

**Principal office address: 151 Abbey Road, Westbury-On-Trym, Bristol BS9 3QH**

### **Trustees :**

The following were trustees throughout 2021:

- Katherine Carr (Chairperson), Marilyn Adams, Clare Blakeway-Phillips, Hugh Heron, Sharan Patel and Lisa Glydon, all of whom are resident in the UK.
- Tshering Huber, who is resident in Switzerland.
- Pasang Wangdi, Nima Wangdi and Sonam Dorjee, who are resident in India.

In March 2021:

- Monica Sood joined as a Trustee and Treasurer.
- Vik Patel stepped down as Trustee.
- Katherine Carr was re-elected as Chairperson alongside her role as Trustee.

### **Governance and Management**

The Darjeeling Children's Trust (DCT) is a UK charity governed by UK law. It was originally constituted by Trust Deed in early 2008. This document was amended in June 2011 to comply with a suggested amendment from the Charity Commission to allow full registration to proceed. The current Trust Deed is dated 15 July 2011 and registration by the Charity Commission was confirmed on 27 July 2011.

### **Recruitment of Trustees**

The minimum number of trustees is three. Trustees are appointed for three years by a resolution of trustees passed at a Special Meeting. New trustees are invited to join the Trust when either a vacancy arises due to the resignation of a current trustee or when a gap is identified in the skills available to trustees and which needs to be filled.

The procedure followed is in accordance with advice published by the Charity Commission. Prospective Trustees usually join initially as Associate Trustees for six months before agreeing by mutual agreement to become full Trustees.

### **Charitable Objectives and Activities**

The objectives of the charity are to advance the education and preserve and protect the good health of the children and young people of Darjeeling through the provision and improvement of education facilities, through improvements to their living conditions and through sponsorship.

Trustees engaged the services of NGO representatives and academics in Darjeeling to conduct a Community Needs Assessment during 2021, the results of which (to be ratified in 2022) will inform the future direction and priorities of the Trust.

## **How the Trust works**

The Trust has built close relationships with partners in Darjeeling over the years of its operation. Trustees based in the UK and Switzerland meet quarterly to take decisions about the operation of the Trust and its projects. Throughout 2021 these meetings took place remotely by video conference due to Covid restrictions.

Trustees were keen in 2021 to increase the input from Darjeeling in decision-making. To this end, in November 2021 Aashwin Pradhan was employed as the Trust's first Darjeeling-based Project Manager, and given the brief to work with India-based Trustees to develop new projects and guide activity in liaison with Trustees.

The Trust has also built up effective relationships with a number of educational and welfare organisations in Darjeeling, including in particular the head-teachers of the schools attended by sponsored children, the Food and Craft Institute, the Head Monk at the Kripasaran Children's Home, and the building and design team responsible for delivery of the Children's Home project.

Funds are transferred to Darjeeling through use of the Trinity Foundation, an organisation based in Siliguri which is able to receive funds from the UK through an FCRA account; and by direct transfers to the FCRA account held by the Kripasaran Buddhist Mission, where funds are to be spent on that project.

No visits to India were possible during the year as a result of Covid restrictions. Trustees have the intention to travel to Darjeeling during 2022.

## **Achievements and Performance in 2021**

The coronavirus pandemic severely restricted activity on the ground during 2021, particularly in the areas of activity related to educational provision. Schools remained closed for the majority of the year, and home learning was provided to varying extents. No new vocational training courses were undertaken. However, despite restrictions progress was made on construction of the Kripasaran Children's Home.

Trustees were hugely grateful for the continued support of donors during the year, despite the reduced scale of activity possible in India. They took the opportunity to commission a review of the Trust's priorities, and adapted fundraising activity to be online.

### **a) Support for schools**

There were no requests for DCT to fund school improvements in 2021.

### **Stationery provision to schools**

No stationery or other supplies were provided to schools, given the closures.

## **b) Travelling Library and Music teaching in schools**

Following feedback from Trustees in India, Trustees took the decision in March to stop funding music lessons and library visits. Schools remained closed, it was agreed that the provision of music and literacy activities should be reviewed to make sure any future provision is driven by the requirements and preferences of the children.

## **d) Vocational training**

DCT usually provides financial support to young people undertaking vocational training courses, including paying for course fees, books, uniforms and where appropriate for travel and hostel accommodation. Courses have previously been funded at the Darjeeling Food Craft Institute (FCI), on nursing courses and through beautician salons, all of which have proven highly successful in giving young people skills appropriate to their abilities and aspirations which allow them to find positive employment and support their families.

Five young people (three young men and two young women) had been accepted in 2019 for DCT sponsorship on the two-year hospitality training course at the FCI, but unable to take up their course throughout 2020 due to covid. These young people were finally able to start their training in the autumn of 2021, along with five additional candidates who Trustees agreed to support in recognition of the fact no funds had been spent on this training in 2020. These additional five students were recommended by FCI staff and their suitability for sponsorship assessed by DCT's India-based team. The cohort supported in 2021 brings the total number of students supported by DCT to undertake the FCI course since the initiative began in 2010 to 61. All students who have completed the course so far have progressed into work in the hospitality industry.

Trustees decided in 2015 to try and broaden the vocational training opportunities available to girls with fewer educational qualifications. In the knowledge that there is great demand for beauticians and also that this is a job that can be done from home with very little initial capital outlay, an arrangement was made for training to be provided at a local salon. After a hiatus due to covid in 2020, three young women were supported to undertake beautician training in autumn 2021, bringing the total number of women supported since 2015 to 13.

## **e) Supporting redevelopment of the Kripasaran Buddhist Mission (KBM) Children's Home**

DCT has supported the redevelopment of the Kripasaran Children's Home since 2011 from both conception and development of the idea through to construction. The programme of construction is overseen and managed by a Project Team comprising the three DCT trustees based in India, UK trustees Marilyn Adams and Hugh Heron, Pema Bhante who manages the Children's Home and who also heads the Kripasaran Buddhist Mission which is the commissioning body for the works, together with the Architect, Structural Engineer and Project Manager.

We were pleased that work was able to continue at the KBM Home for much of 2021, other than where the worst effects of covid forced progress to pause. Most of the children who would usually have lived in the Home returned home to their families

during the pandemic, but in early 2021 two new shared bedrooms and bathrooms were completed for the staff members, meaning that when the children returned they had access to larger dormitory spaces.

During the rest of 2021, work focussed on the third and final girls' dormitory and associated bathroom, and on creation of an activities room. This work was completed over the summer. The necessary structural elements were already in place so the work involved building walls, installing plumbing and electrics, decoration and fitting out. The activities room is intended as a multi-purpose space for all the children, to host group activities, learning sessions, health visits and entertainment. In December, for example, the room was used by the Darjeeling Women's Rotary to deliver health education workshops to the girls at the Home.

The final phase of the work started in late 2021, to dismantle the old prayer hall, construct a new kitchen and food storage area, provide living and office accommodation for the Head Monk, and landscape the site to create outdoor play space.

#### **f) Health improvements at the Kripasaran Children's Home**

During 2021, the children living at the Kripasaran Girls' and Boys' Homes received visits from a qualified nurse paid for by the Trust, supported by a young female health worker. They undertook general checks on the children's health, and helped the younger children to wash and learn about personal hygiene. These visits varied in frequency during the year as a result of covid restrictions.

Trustees reviewed the provision of health support to the KBM Home during 2021, following reports from India-based Trustees that the support was not sufficiently tailored to children of all ages and genders. Exploratory conversations during the year led to plans to engage a doctor in future, who would be able to work with other health staff to engage differently with the children and lead a more formal approach to the keeping of medical records and diagnosis of medical requirements.

#### **g) Child Sponsorship and education support**

A total of 56 children were being sponsored through the Trust at the end of 2021. This included 6 new children from the village of Ramlaldura who were accepted into the scheme in November, the first new additions for some time.

Classes for some of the older children (Classes 9-12) re-opened in March, but younger year groups continued to learn remotely throughout 2021. As exams approach in the autumn, it became clear that a number of the children could not access the necessary IT to be able to take tests online; the Trust therefore provided 16 of our older sponsored children with mobile phones and headphones, to enable them to register for, and sit, their end of year exams.

We are very hopeful that schools will resume full face to face teaching early in 2022. After so long out of the classroom many of the children are bound to need extra learning support and we will make an assessment of needs once they are back at school.

## **Review of priorities**

As activity on the ground in India necessarily reduced this year – and with it the funds required for projects – Trustees took the opportunity to consider future priorities. Since 2011 the Trust's largest funding commitment has been to support the reconstruction of the KBM Children's Home. This project is now in its final phase, and Trustees were keen to consider where funds might instead be directed. To this end the Trust engaged the services of two Darjeeling-based consultants in the Spring of 2021, to conduct a community needs assessment. Dr Jenny Bentley is a Swiss/British anthropologist with a PhD in socio-cultural anthropology and extensive experience of research and working with the NGO sector. Roshan Rai is an experienced NGO leader in Darjeeling, and one of the leads of Darjeeling Prerna, a charity which promotes the creation of sustainable human communities in the Darjeeling Hills through encouraging participation of the population, gender equality and living in harmony with the environment. His expertise lies in participatory governance and he is experienced in facilitating the organisational development of NGOs.

Jenny and Roshan undertook research during the year, using an iterative and consultative approach with Trustees, to test the Trust's existing objectives; map the NGO landscape of Darjeeling; and generate recommendations for future activity. This research will be followed by workshops with Trustees in early 2022 with the aim of agreeing the future focus for the Trust's activity.

## **Fund raising**

Despite covid restrictions in the UK, India and elsewhere, we managed to run a number of successful fundraising campaigns during the year. In May we held an online 'thank you and celebration' concert, linking our supporters around the world with speakers in Darjeeling, and providing a welcome chance to hear a live music performance. In July launched a '10k for 10k' campaign, asking our supporters to cover 10km in whatever way they felt able, to raise £10,000 for the provision of water harvesting facilities at the KBM Home, to add to a grant we had previously received from the UN Women's Guild for this purpose. One of our supporters very admirably spent over an hour standing on broken glass wearing handcuffs to raise funds for us.

Our child sponsorship scheme continued to be self-funding, with a number of very generous sponsors providing the school fees and equipment costs for our 56 sponsored children.

As always, individual donations made up the largest single element of our income, including a single legacy donation of \$20,000US, and we are hugely grateful to all those who contributed to us. We did not receive any income from grants during 2021. We benefited from Gift Aid income of £5,863.

This income, coupled with a temporarily reduced financial commitment in Darjeeling due to covid, left us in a good position at the end of the year to complete our work with consultants to conduct a community needs assessment and reset our priorities. Trustees agreed that funds should also be made available in 2022 for the recruitment of

the Trust's first paid employee in the UK, in order to support efforts to make the Trust as an organisation more efficient and resilient, and work more digitally.

### **Financial Review**

Total receipts in the year were £92,431, with payments of £45,399. UK balances increased to £109,632. Some of the balance, £42,158, was restricted to the redevelopment of the Kripasaran Children's Home. The remaining sum, £77,057, was for the Trust's unrestricted activities. The continued reduction in activity is a significant reason for the increase in balances during the year; Trustees are keen to increase spending next year when covid restrictions are (hopefully) lifted.

Statements of the Receipts and Payments, and Assets and Liabilities, come with this Report and are part of the formal statement for 2021.

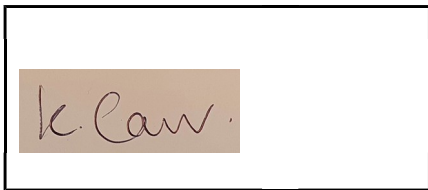
### **Policy on reserves**

The Trust's policy on reserves is to maintain a minimum balance of £7,500 for general activities. Reserves were well above this level throughout 2021. This figure will be periodically reviewed. None of the funds held by the Trust are in deficit.

The Trust does not act as the Custodian Trustee for any assets.

**The report was approved by trustees as a fair and true account of the Trust's activities at their meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> September 2022.**

#### ***Signed on behalf of the Trustees:***

<b>Signed</b>		
<b>Name</b>	Katherine Carr	
<b>Position</b>	Chair of Trustees	
<b>Date</b>	30.10.22	





CHARITY COMMISSION  
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Darjeeling Children's Trust

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## Receipts and payments accounts

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For the period from	1/1/2021	To	12/31/2021
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### Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds	Total funds	Last year
	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £
<b>A1 Receipts</b>					
Regular donations	12,065	1,828	-	13,893	10,655
Ad hoc donations	12,469	26,483	-	38,952	28,111
Fund raising events	4,024	8,606	-	12,630	7,297
Child sponsorship	22,112	620	-	22,732	24,965
Gift aid	732	415	-	1,147	9,282
Grants	-	3,077	-	3,077	3,349
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Sub total (Gross income for AR)</b>	<b>51,402</b>	<b>41,029</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>92,431</b>	<b>83,659</b>
<b>A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).</b>					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Total receipts</b>	<b>51,402</b>	<b>41,029</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>92,431</b>	<b>83,659</b>
<b>A3 Payments</b>					
School improvements	4,623	-	-	4,623	-
Child sponsorship	14,188	-	-	14,188	23,366
Kripisaran Children's home	-	10,147	-	10,147	25,134
Vocational training	-	6,004	-	6,004	1,431
Other activities	-	-	-	-	6,633
Trust running costs	9,927	-	-	9,927	4,538
Costs of major fundraising	510	-	-	510	1,080
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>29,248</b>	<b>16,151</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>45,399</b>	<b>60,022</b>
<b>A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)</b>					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Total payments</b>	<b>29,248</b>	<b>16,151</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>45,399</b>	<b>60,022</b>
<b>Net of receipts/(payments)</b>	<b>22,154</b>	<b>24,878</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>47,032</b>	<b>23,637</b>
<b>A5 Transfers between funds</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>A6 Cash funds last year end</b>	<b>54,903</b>	<b>17,280</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>72,183</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Cash funds this year end</b>	<b>77,057</b>	<b>42,158</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>119,215</b>	<b>23,637</b>



## Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
<b>B1 Cash funds</b>	Cash at Coop Bank	77,057	42,158	-
	Cash in Darjeeling	9,583		-
		-	-	-
	<b>Total cash funds</b>	<b>86,640</b>	<b>42,158</b>	<b>-</b>
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))	Agreement Error	OK	OK


Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
<b>B2 Other monetary assets</b>		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-

Categories	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
<b>B3 Investment assets</b>			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-

Categories	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
<b>B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use</b>			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-

Categories	Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
<b>B5 Liabilities</b>			-	
			-	
			-	
			-	
			-	

Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees

Signature	Print Name	Date of approval
	Monica Sood	28 / 10 / 2022

## Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of Darjeeling Children's Trust

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the charity for the year ended 31 December 2021.

### Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity's trustees you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act').

I report in respect of my examination of the charity's accounts carried out under section 145 of the Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

### Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the charity as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



Geoffrey Speirs FCA  
ICAEW  
Haines Watts Partnership (Bristol) Limited  
Chartered Accountants  
Bath House  
6-8 Bath Street  
Bristol  
BS1 6HL

Date 31 October 2022