

Darjeeling Children's Trust Annual Report 2011

Charity Registration No. 1143109

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

Trustees :

Pasang Wangdi, Sheila Saye, Sharan Patel, Hugh Heron, Louise Hall, Katherine Carr, Penelope Adams, Marilyn Adams

Governance and Management

The Darjeeling Children's Trust 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 June 2011 and registration by the Charity Commission was confirmed on 27 July 2011.

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.

Objectives and Activities

The Trust seeks 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.

In 2009 trustees approved a five year plan to cover the period 2009 – 2014 which provides detailed targets which are consistent with the Trust's aims and objectives. This plan sets the context against which suggested new projects are assessed. The plan states that Darjeeling Children's Trust will work with the local community to:

- Build at least one new toilet a year in a primary school where none exists;
- Carry out school repairs where conditions have an adverse impact upon children's health, and provide essential educational equipment;
- Fund a travelling library to visit at least 6 primary schools to encourage literacy, access to information and a love of reading;
- Fund vocational training for young people;
- Fund health improvement measures for girls at a local orphanage;
- Support the rebuilding of a boys' orphanage which is in a state of disrepair;
- Sponsor individual children to attend better schools.

In 2011 the Trust has undertaken activities in all these areas.

Achievements and Performance

a) Improvements to primary schools

In 2011 the Trust exceeded its target for toilet construction in primary schools. A new toilet and water harvesting system was built at Rupnaryan School where an existing small space was enclosed to provide the toilet cubicle. This work was undertaken in conjunction with repair work to windows where glass was broken, and provision of a new external door to a classroom. The second toilet and water harvesting system was built at Subash Gram M.S.K. School at Soom Tea Estate where this was also accompanied by extensive repair work to classroom windows. A letter of thanks was received from staff at the school which included the following:

“All your campaigns towards the school have greatly supported and encouraged us to proceed further in our vision and mission of importing education.”

b) Travelling Library

The Travelling Library continues to be a success with visits being made to eight primary schools. A total of 50 new books were acquired from Nepal to replace and augment existing stock. The story telling competition which was first introduced to children in 2010 and which had proved popular again took place in 2011 and was very well supported by children and staff.

c) Music teaching in schools

Whilst the teaching of music in primary schools was not identified in the Trust's five year plan, this was introduced in mid 2010 and led to the first Darjeeling Children's Music Festival in October of that year. As access to and participation in musical activities has been shown by research to have a beneficial effect upon a child's emotional and intellectual development the Trust took the decision to continue to support a peripatetic music teacher throughout 2011. He visits eight municipal primary schools and also provides singing lessons to the children sponsored through the Trust. This activity by the Trust which is consistent with the Trust's overall objectives is in addition to, and not a replacement for the other activities identified in the five year plan.

d) Vocational training

Vocational training has expanded over the year. Five students began their training in the food and hospitality industry in mid 2010 at a government college which will result in a nationally recognised Diploma. They completed their college based training in mid 2011 and are all shortly to complete the 6 month practical element of their course. All have passed their exams and monitoring will take place of their success in finding appropriate jobs once they finally graduate from the course.

The second group of five students to be sponsored by the Trust to undertake this course began in mid 2011.

This element of the Trust's work expanded as in July 2011 three young women began a two year course in nursing training at a private hospital in Darjeeling.

The training in needlework skills has continued at the Girls' Orphanage but it has been disappointing that the course has not been completed. Consequently trustees have taken

the decision to change teaching staff to improve the efficiency of the course and ensure that all the girls who undertake it have some skills which they are able to use once they leave the orphanage and which they may be able to use to earn some income.

e) Health improvements at the orphanages

Funding for health improvement measures originally concentrated on the Girls' Orphanage in view of their more apparent needs due to the cramped nature of their site and consequent crowded living conditions which have an adverse impact upon their health. Early measures concentrated upon provision of goods such as combs, medicated soap and towels. This has expanded over time to include water deliveries to allow better personal hygiene. In addition the girls benefit from visits from a qualified nurse paid for by the Trust who advises them and monitors their health. She also advises the Trust of specific needs, such as for medication, as they arise. The girls have also benefited during 2011 from specific donations by supporters of the Trust who have provided money for new clothing and new underwear.

This activity by the Trust has now been expanded to include deliveries of medicated soap and towels to the 60 boys in the Boys' Orphanage.

The resources provided by the Trust continue to make a significant difference to the children and young people's health and well-being, especially since problems are more quickly addressed as they arise. Expenditure by the Trust on this area is unlikely to change until all 100 children are accommodated in new buildings, at which time it is anticipated that the improvement in conditions will result in fewer health problems and also water supplies will be more readily available.

f) Supporting redevelopment of the orphanages

The main new initiative undertaken by the Trust in 2011 has been the financing of design work and the raising of funds to contribute to the redevelopment of the boys' orphanage site in order to provide new accommodation for 100 children and young people. This is a significant task for trustees in that it has required support largely at arm's length for the development of project management and fund raising groups in Darjeeling as well as the development of a funding strategy in the UK. There have been additional spin offs to these immediate tasks, for example in the need to redesign elements of the Trust's web site.

The role of the Trust is to act as supporter, adviser and fund raiser. Responsibility for the project lies with the Kripasaran Bhuddist Mission which is a completely separate body.

Significant progress has been made in this project. In autumn 2011 the Trust underwrote the costs of soil analysis and other work required to allow structural calculations to be made and design is now in its final stages. This will allow detailed costings to be prepared early in 2012 which it is hoped will allow some construction work to proceed before the onset of the 2012 monsoon in June.

g) Child Sponsorship

2011 saw an increase in the number of children being sponsored through the Trust to a total of 53. The latest additions to this number were identified in April 2011 and will start school in March 2012.

The main challenge facing the Trust is ensuring the continuity of funding for each child, although reserves are sufficient to match any shortfall generated in this way. The economic situation has possibly resulted in some former sponsors feeling unable to continue and in difficulty in attracting new sponsors. Consequently at the end of 2011 a total of 4 children are being sponsored but without identified sponsors.

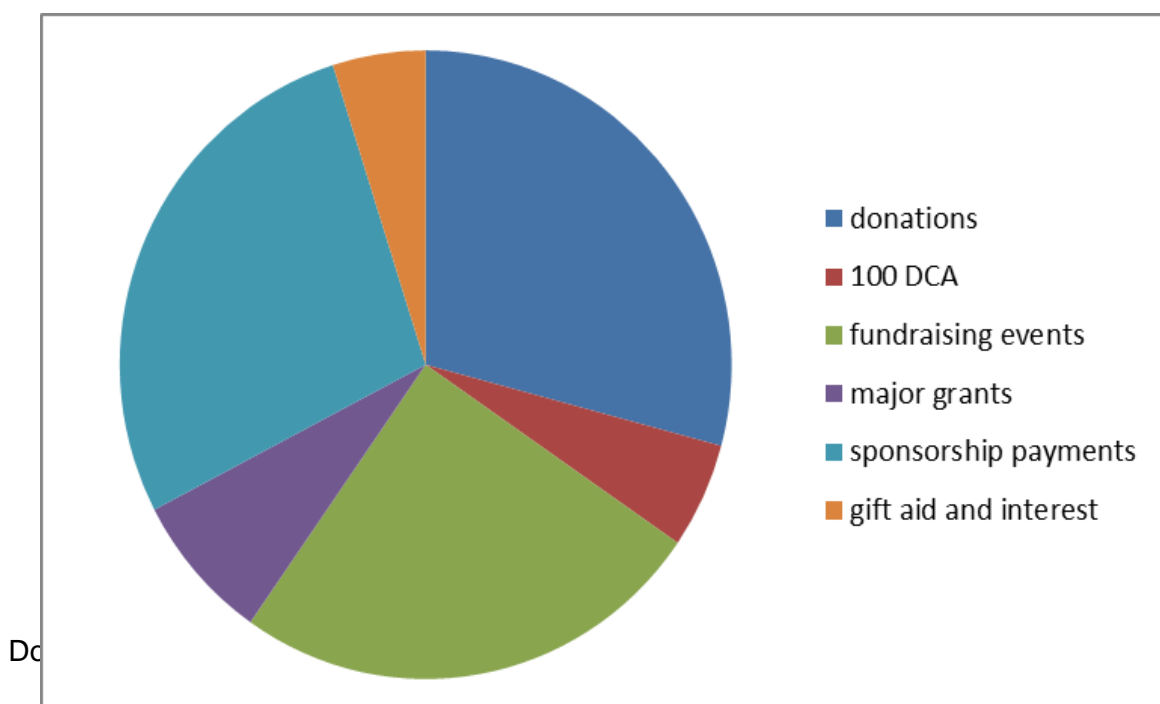
The scheme appears to be of significant benefit to the children who are now in better education. They appear to have a developing self-confidence and all are making good progress in their studies. Although Trustees seek to ensure that families are completely supportive of the process and are settled in Darjeeling, there can be no guarantee of each child continuing in the scheme. In 2011 one child and her family left Darjeeling without notice and the Trust has no knowledge of their whereabouts. Such an event represents a lost opportunity to another child and a waste of resources to the Trust. Nevertheless such incidents are infrequent and do not invalidate the programme in any way.

Although the benefits to the children who are helped are clearly visible and the need for further sponsorships is significant, trustees will need to consider the timing of any future sponsorship offers and their delay at least until autumn 2012 to allow sponsors to be found for existing children in the scheme.

h) Fund raising

The general issues relating to fund raising are discussed in the financial report for 2011. However, it is worth noting here the major milestone which has been reached at the start of 2012 in that £100,000 has been raised by Trustees and the supporters of the Trust to benefit the children of Darjeeling and to help them flourish.

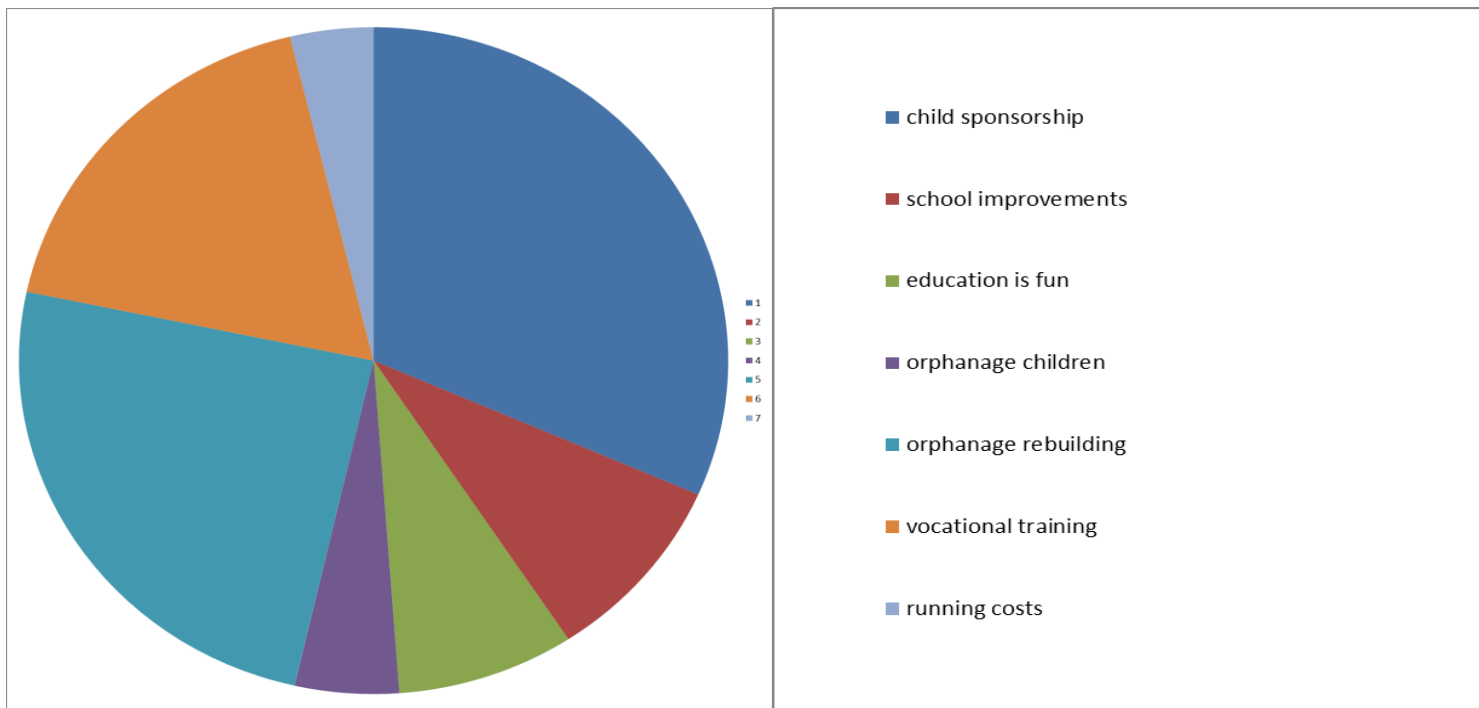
Sources of income are shown below. 100 DCA refers to the orphanage appeal.



for the Trust. Whilst the total amount derived from gift aid and interest is not large it is significant when expenditure is considered.

The challenge for the Trust in the next few years will be to maintain the level of income under these three heads to ensure that funds are available for core activities whilst also increasing the amount available for the orphanage redevelopment through the 100 Darjeeling Children's Appeal.

Expenditure areas are shown below; the analysis is based on actual expenditure up to the end of 2011 plus the expenditure proposed using all the monies raised up the end of that year.



Costs associated with child sponsorship remain the largest area of spend for the Trust with significant expenditure also identified on school improvements and vocational training. Of the total monies raised for the orphanage redevelopment the greater sum is still to be spent during 2012.

The proportion of the total spent on the Trust's running costs is the smallest area of expenditure. The major components of this are fees charged by Western Union which allows the Trust to make payments such as the school fees for the sponsored children and the costs of maintaining the Trust's Just Giving web site. None of this expenditure relates to the payment of personal expenses for Trustees and the Trust remains fortunate that all trustees are willing to cover all such costs themselves. It should also be noted that the total running costs remain lower than the amount of income from Gift Aid.

i) Policy on reserves and other financial issues

The Trust's policy on reserves is to maintain a minimum cash balance of £5000, a figure which 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.

Recommended that:

The report be adopted as a fair and true account of the Darjeeling Children's Trust's activities in 2011

Marilyn Adams
Chairperson
Darjeeling Children's Trust
4th February 2011

DARJEELING CHILDREN'S TRUST

HEADLINE ACCOUNTS FOR 2011

Income

Sponsorship agreements	£9,700
Individual and corporate donations	£16,000
Fundraising events	£10,400
Tax refunds and interest	£3,000
All income	£39,100

Expenditure

Providing safer environments	£6,400
Providing better education	£13,400
Training for employment	£8,500
Fees and purchases	£1,000
All expenditure	£29,300

Income exceeds expenditure in 2011 because funds were raised during the year for specific activities that will be undertaken in 2012.