

# *The* **NEWMAN ASSOCIATION**

Promoting open discussion and greater  
understanding in today's Church

## **Annual Report 2024-5**

[www.newman.org.uk](http://www.newman.org.uk)

The Newman Association is registered as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO), charity no. 1006769. Registered office: Swallow & Company Commercial House Bridge Road Stokesley North Yorkshire TS9 5AA.

Email: [info@newman.org.uk](mailto:info@newman.org.uk) Website: [www.newman.org.uk](http://www.newman.org.uk) Member of Pax Romana – International Catholic Movement for Intellectual and Cultural Affairs

## OFFICERS AND MEMBERS OF COUNCIL 2024-5

\* denotes Council members who are also Trustees

### President

Brian Hamill\*  
York Circle  
Email: [president@newman.org.uk](mailto:president@newman.org.uk)  
(elected President and Trustee June 2022)

### Chaplain

Mgr Patrick Kilgarriff  
Email: [patrickkilgarriff1941@gmail.com](mailto:patrickkilgarriff1941@gmail.com)

### Vice-President

Alex Mthobi\*  
Eastbourne and Bexhill Circle  
Email: [amthobi@yahoo.com](mailto:amthobi@yahoo.com)  
(elected as Vice President June 2022)

### Journal Editor

Barry Riley  
Ealing Circle  
Email: [barryriley@btinternet.com](mailto:barryriley@btinternet.com)

### Secretary

Sophie Rudge\*  
Email: [secretary@newman.org.uk](mailto:secretary@newman.org.uk)

### Membership Registrar

Cindy Hamill  
York Circle  
Email: [cindyhamilluk@yahoo.com](mailto:cindyhamilluk@yahoo.com)  
(appointed as Membership Registrar  
December 2022)

### Treasurer

Anthony Baker\*  
Hertfordshire Circle  
Email: [treasurer@newman.org.uk](mailto:treasurer@newman.org.uk)

### Council Members

John Duckett\*  
Coventry Circle  
(elected June 2022,  
resigned June 2024)

Barbara Bolgiano\*  
Hertfordshire Circle  
(elected June 2023)  
Email:  
[b.bolgiano@outlook.com](mailto:b.bolgiano@outlook.com)

Carole O'Toole\*  
Wrexham Circle  
(elected June 2023)  
Email:  
[carolegtotoole@aol.com](mailto:carolegtotoole@aol.com)

## PRESIDENT'S REVIEW OF THE YEAR

Perhaps the major event of the year for the Association as a whole was the Annual General Meeting in June. It was then that it took the step of opening the membership of the Newman to all baptised Christians and so we now have one class of membership. The reasoning behind this move was not primarily to boost the numerical membership, though of course this would help, but to move into an ecumenical approach to our function and declare the equality in Baptism among all Christians. There was some resistance to this move, perhaps mostly from those who some years ago, in different times, had joined the Newman as a specifically Roman Catholic organisation and wished that approach to be sustained. However, following the changes in ecumenical dialogue over the past decades, allied to the very open approach of Pope Francis with his Synodality initiative, made it no surprise that some 80% of the votes were in favour of the change.

Turning to other more regular affairs within the Newman Association, we have continued to keep the members up to date with what is happening with national events by our usual means of communication. First, the regular *Newsletter*, ably edited by Barbara Bolgiano, continues to provide the details of what is happening within the Circles and information about accessing these events. There is also the Newman Website, which is managed primarily by myself, with technical assistance from my son, Michael. We have endeavoured to keep it up to date and to encourage people both within the Association and beyond to make use of it, especially regarding the new link to recorded talks. The third means of connection with the Association is the Journal. Barry Riley has organised this for some considerable time on a very professional level, but it has unfortunately suffered somewhat this past year with a lack of available copy. It used to be a regular feature that the Circles would send in either written versions of talks given to them or recordings of the same. This practice seems to have somewhat fallen in abeyance (perhaps this is another Covid consequence), with the resulting reduction in editions of the Journal over this past year.

Turning to our relationships with outside Catholic agencies, our connection with *Andante*, a European organisation for women along similar lines to ourselves, but very practical in its approach, has produced, via Sophie Rudge, our national Secretary and Andante officer, some interesting links to talks on a broader canvas, and also a retreat. Sophie is also involved with another partner organisation, the National Board of Catholic Women, which has a good programme of events which she passes on to us. Anthony Baker, our Treasurer, is our representative on the National Council of Lay Associations which keeps us in touch with the more general lay organisations in the Church.

Finally, Pax Romana is another external organisation with which the Newman has connections, in this instance from its very beginning in 1942. This has grown over the years into a global organisation which seeks to air and have full discussions on various issues in the modern world. Alex Mthobi, our Vice-President, who has been our representative on Pax Romana for a number of years and has kept us informed about its progress, was invited to host a European conference on the Refugee and Asylum situation in Europe and the world. In the event this proved rather beyond the ability, not of the Alex and his Newman helpers but of the British hospitality sector to provide sufficiently low booking rates which would challenge those of Spain. As a result, the Conference has been transferred to Bilbao.

On a personal level I have attempted over the last couple of years to go back to our original source of members, the Universities, by working with the Leeds University Chaplaincy and Catholic Society there. What has emerged to date is that this is a difficult task to pull off. The students do not have the same relaxed lifestyle which I and many of our members enjoyed in our

own university days. Owing to modern communications their attention is widely spread what with deadlines for academic work and the necessity to have paid work to supplement their student loans etc, plus of course keeping up with their friendship group online. But I will continue to see if there is a way to set up some sort of permanent connection between them and the Newman.

On a very positive note, the Margaret Beaufort Institute in Cambridge has asked us to become partners with them in their project on John Henry Newman. This will comprise a study course of 4-6 lectures to examine the Newman's theology and its relevance in today's Church. The intention is to provide an outline of his view on the relationships between faith and reason, as well as authority, obedience and sincere enquiry. Individual modules will include reference to his published work on topics such as The Development of Christian Doctrine, The Threefold Office of Jesus in the context of the Church and the findings of the 1869 First Vatican Council. On a practical level, films will be produced which will be made available for circulation round the Circles.

While the membership of the Association continues a gentle downward trend, that trend has improved overall this past year. The decrease in membership was 7% 2023-24 but has been 4% this past year. This reflects the 16 new members who have joined us and the coming back to life of some Circles, such as Worcester. My recent general consultation of the Circles contacts, which has stemmed from Carole O'Toole's good work on a general Questionnaire to all Circles regarding both their present situation and ideas for the future, has raised the issues concerning recruiting those who are ready willing and able to actually run a Circle. This applies as much to Council as it does to the Circles. When I included a flyer with the latest edition of the Journal, the last to be edited by Barry Riley who is retiring from that role, I was in some respects sending up a distress rocket. It has not reached the critical level as yet but it may well do over the next year or so. Just as each Circle for a healthy life requires a turn-over in officers, so does Council. I wanted to make it clear to all members, as I stepped down from the Presidency, that the future of the Association has a certain air of uncertainty about it. I think we all need to take this to heart and seek out the ways and means to develop it further into the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Brian Hamill, President, May 2025

## **REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES FOR THE YEAR**

The trustees present their report and financial statements for the year ended January 31, 2025.

### **Objectives**

The object of the Newman Association is to further the mission to the world of the Christian religion with particular reference to the Roman Catholic Church and in the light of the life and work of Saint John Henry Newman, by promoting greater understanding of the Christian faith and the application of its principles to the contemporary world.

Much of the activity of the Association is carried out in local "Circles", though some members are "unattached" where no Circle exists locally. These activities, typically talks or conferences on religious, artistic, and philosophical subjects, are open to non-members, including Christians of other denominations, non-Christians and those professing no religion. The trustees confirm that in governing the Association they have had regard to the Charity Commission statement on public benefit.

## **Structure, Governance and Management- Governing Document**

The Newman Association was founded in 1942 as a company limited by guarantee, incorporated on 1 May 1947 and registered as a charity on 13 December 1991. The new Constitution as a C.I.O. was adopted by the membership in June 2022 and approved by the Charities Commission in November 2022.

## **Recruitment and Appointment of Council and Trustees**

The charity trustees are the principal members of the Association's Council, which may also include advisory members such as the chaplain and the editor of *The Newman* journal. Trustees are elected for a period of 3 years, but may be re-elected for a further term. The trustees may appoint a replacement trustee to fill a casual vacancy, and may also co-opt up to three further trustees, but such appointed trustees automatically retire at the following Annual General Meeting.

A trustee may serve for sets of two 3 year periods, after which they must cease office for at least a year, after which they may stand for re-election at a general meeting, as specified in the constitution. Council normally meets at least four times each year, which may be in person or by electronic means. The Association's success in meeting its aims and objectives is assessed each year in the President's review.

New trustees are directed to the Charities Commission website, in particular to those sections outlining the legal obligations of trustees under charity law. They also receive a copy of the previous year's annual report and accounts and a representative section of the Association's current literature. All trustees are encouraged to make themselves aware of information published by the Charity Commission and to keep abreast of developments in Charity governance.

## **Responsibilities of the Trustees**

Charities law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements that give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity at the end of the financial year and of its surplus or deficit for the financial year. In doing so the trustees are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- Make sound judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent and
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis, unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Association will continue on that basis.

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records, which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011. The trustees are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

In accordance with charities law, as trustees, we confirm that:

- So far as we are aware there is no relevant audit information of which the Association's independent examiner is unaware and
- As the trustees, we have taken all the steps that we ought to have taken in order to make ourselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the charity's independent examiner is aware of that information.

## Financial Review

The trustees have reviewed the required level of the financial reserve. The total funds available in January 2025 were just in excess of £130,000 which may seem excessive in the light of the current levels of expenditure of around £30,000/year.

However the trustees point out that most of the reserves are held in the CCLA COIF Charities Ethical Investment Fund, the value of which fluctuates over time. The sharp increase in the fund's value in 2024 increased the Association's assets by nearly £8000, but as with many investment products, the fund lost all its 2024 gain in the first quarter of 2025, and the value of £102,753 had become around £91,000 by the end of March, though by June 2025 it had risen to around the same value as at the start of the 2024-5 year. Despite these fluctuations, investment in such a fund is also a modest hedge against relentlessly rising inflation of the main operating costs of the Association. The Trustees judge that increasing the Association subscription rates at present would not be wise - and could actually reduce revenue by increasing the rate of membership lapsing.

a) Ongoing Circles need funds from the centre to organise new programmes of talks and discussion, and also to widen their contacts with other local groups. The income generated and expenditure incurred directly by Circles is included in the financial report. Every year a national grant is made to each Circle which requests new funds to maintain their programme. In 2024-5 £2550 in total was provided in national grants to six Circles. Given the increasing obstacles in operating small local bank accounts, the Trustees are encouraging some Circles to close local accounts and operate an imprest cash system to fund local events from the main national account.

b) In addition, further IT activity to enable Circles to provide a wider coverage of on-screen lectures is likely to require significant future expenditure

The trustees therefore conclude that the gap between operational income and expenditure is may well increase over the next years, and believe it prudent to retain a balance of around £100,000 for the present, with a significant proportion being held in the CCLA ethical investment fund. Nevertheless the Trustees will continue to assess opportunities to make further grants to external (mainly educational) institutions in support of projects which promote the Association's objectives.

Approved by the Board of Trustees on 25 July 2025 signed on its behalf by:



Brian Hamill, President

**Statement of Financial Activities (Balance Sheet and Income & Expenditure Account)  
for the Year Ended January 31, 2025**

<b>Balance Sheet</b>		
<b>2024</b>		<b>2025</b>
<b>£</b>		<b>£</b>
127,325	Net assets brought forward	122,788
(4,537)	Net gain/(loss) in the year	7,800
122,788	<b>Net assets carried forward</b>	130,589
<b>Represented by:</b>		
95,715	COIF Charities investment Fund	102,753
15,706	Cash in banks managed by Newman Council	15,490
11,075	Cash in Circles banks	11,776
1,800	Debtors and prepayments	3,835
124,296	Gross Assets	133,854
(1,508)	Less liabilities	(3,265)
122,788	<b>Net Assets</b>	130,589
<b>Income and Expenditure</b>		
<b>2023-4</b>	<b>Income</b>	<b>2024-5</b>
9,475	Membership subscriptions	8,749
314	Donations	193
1,938	Gift Aid Receipts	1,735
1,522	National events -retreat	0
5,070	Circles Income (note1)	7,054
2,801	Bank and investment income	2,873
5,551	Increase/ (decrease) in value of COIF investment	7,038
-	Other income	-
26,672	<b>Total income</b>	27,642
<b>Expenditure</b>		
1,894	National events	0
3,110	Newman Journal	1,894
308	Public liability insurance	307
9,756	Circles expenditure - note 1	8,904
2,044	Annual general meeting and national lecture	1,044
396	Council meetings (incl.UK travel)	375
1,653	Website maintenance costs	1,584
848	IT/Zoom services	845
(270)	Pax Romana and national subscriptions (note2)	791
9,500	Donations to educational institutions (note 3)	900
2,271	Other expenses (note 4)	3,198
31,210	<b>Total expenditure</b>	19,842
(4,537)	<b>Overall Surplus/(deficit)</b>	7,800

The notes below form part of these accounts.

**Note 1**

	2023-4	2024-5
<b>Circles Income</b>		
Meetings	2,475	3,416
Functions	2,046	2,118
Other	549	1,520
Total	5,070	7,054

**Circles expenditure**

Meetings	4,544	6,753
Functions	1,625	1,431
Other	906	720
Total	9,756	8,904

**Note2****Pax Romana and other subscriptions**

Pax Romana the 2023-4 figure was a correction of earlier overpaid subscriptions	(463)	600
National Board of Catholic Women	45	45
National Council for Lay Associations	0	0
Andante ( European Catholic Women)	148	146

**Note 3 grants**

University of Durham CCS conference	2,000	
Edmund Plowden Trust, lecture fund	5,000	
University of Hertfordshire Catholic Society	2,400	900
Liverpool University chaplaincy	100	

	2023-4	2024-5
<b>Note 4 Miscellaneous expenditure</b>		
Bank charges	262	256
DD collection charges	101	557
Chaplain's honorarium	700	700
Examiner honorarium	500	950
Registered office services	210	420
postage	186	280
Travel (Pax Romana conference international)	199	0
Other small items	113	35
Total	2,271	3,198




## **Note 5 Trustee remuneration and related party transactions**

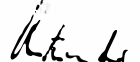
No trustee received any remuneration during the year 2024-5 (2023-4: nil). Specialist IT skills needed for the development of the website and to provide electronic links with Circles are provided by Michael Hamill of Smarts Group, son of a trustee, who responded to an earlier request to provide such services. Smarts Group was paid £2439 (VAT inclusive) in 2024-5. The trustees remain satisfied that the provision of such services is essential, and that the arrangement with Michael Hamill is good value and does not commit the Association in any long term way.

● otherwise, no trustee or any other person related to the charity has any personal interest in any contract or transaction entered into by the charity during the year, save as a potential beneficiary of the charity in the normal course of its activities (2023-4: none).

£ 213 expenses for travel to Council meetings were reimbursed to six trustees in the course of the year (2023-4: £479 to four trustees).

Approved by the Board of Trustees on 25 July 2025 and signed on its behalf by:

  
Brian Hamill  
President & Trustee

  
Anthony Baker  
Treasurer & Trustee

## **INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF THE NEWMAN ASSOCIATION**

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of The Newman Association for the year ended 31 January 2025, which are set out on pages 6-9.

### ***Responsibilities and basis of report***

As the charity trustees of the Trust, 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 Trustee's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 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 2011 Act.

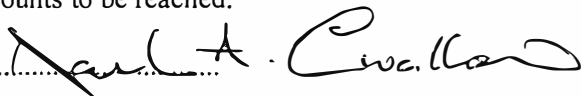
### ***Independent examiner's statement***

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 Trust as required by section 130 of the Act; or
- (2) the accounts do not accord with those records; or

- (3) the accounts do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view' which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concern and have come across no other matter 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.

Signed:.....

David A Swallow F.C.A. 25<sup>th</sup> July 2025

Swallow and Co, Commercial House, Bridge Road, Stokesley, TS9 5AA

## MEMBERSHIP REPORT

Cindy Hamill, Membership Secretary, has supplied this report covering the period from 1 February 2024 until the 31 January 2025.

Since the last annual report we have welcomed the following new members of the Association: Mrs Patricia Burrows (North Gloucester), Mr David McAuley and Dr Christine McAuley (North Gloucester), Ms Florence Boyle (Glasgow), Dr Antony Cole (Worcester), Mr Peter Ball and Dr Mariette Ball (Wimbledon), Mr George Kevin Thorogood and Mrs Sandra Thorogood (Wimbledon), Mrs Jenny Cairns (Wimbledon), Mrs Mary Diane Gent (Cleveland), Mrs Joyann Green (Eastbourne & Bexhill), Mrs Mary Nolan (Ealing), Mrs Jan Campbell (Glasgow), Rev. Peter Grimwood (Worcester), and Dr Peter Kevern (Worcester),

Circle membership (net figures after allowing for leavers and joiners) were:

Circle	Roll		Change
	01/02/24	31/01/25	
Birmingham	9	9	0
Cleveland	23	25	+2
Coventry	38	38	0
Ealing	21	18	-3
Eastbourne & Bexhill	9	9	0
Edinburgh	12	12	0
Glasgow	25	22	-3
Hertfordshire	48	48	0
Manchester & North Cheshire	32	30	-2
North Gloucester	17	20	+3
North Merseyside	16	14	-2

Overseas	3	3	0
Tyneside	23	20	-3
Unattached	92	81	-11
Wimbledon	13	16	+3
Worcester	26	26	0
Wrexham	15	13	-2
York	21	21	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>443</b>	<b>425</b>	<b>-18</b>

The net decrease in membership is about four percent this year in the period from 1<sup>st</sup> February 2024 to 31<sup>st</sup> January 2025.

The active circles have a wide variety of face to face meetings throughout the year. Some of the meetings from some circles are available on a Zoom link and the Newsletter is an excellent source of information for this. Unattached members are asked to ensure, by contacting [membership@newman.org.uk](mailto:membership@newman.org.uk), that we have an up to date email address to which to send a Newsletter directly to them

There are also a few members who have moved but not updated us with their new address. This comes to light only when the membership secretary receives returned Journals stating 'Not at this address'. All members are asked in February each year to send any new contact details.

Some members have become ill and need care or have resigned their membership and there are those members and ex-members who have died; may they rest in peace. We hold all these and their families in our prayers.

### **In Memoriam – Requiescant in pace**

In particular, in the period February 2024 – January 2025, the Newman Association was notified of the deaths of the following members:

Mrs E A MacNamara (Feb 2024) Cleveland; Dr Christine Newman (Feb 2024) Cleveland; Mrs Felicity French (April 2024) Herts; Mrs Sheila Parkinson (Feb/March 2024) Wrexham, and her husband Bernard Parkinson who died sometime before her; Mgr. George Hay (April 2024) unattached; Mr and Mrs McManus (notified June 2024) unattached; Miss C. M. Moran (June 2024) N. Merseyside; Miss Mary Winifred C Fitzpatrick (June 2024) unattached; Fr A C Cogliolo (July 2024) Manchester; Mrs Monica White (July 2024) Croydon (closed); Sue Way (July 2024) Eastbourne & Bexhill; Mr Dan Baird (Dec 2024) Glasgow; Mrs Anne Merckx (Jan 2025) Cleveland; Ms Marguerite Walter (Jan 2025) Hertfordshire; Mrs Sylvia Reay (Jan 2025) Tyneside.

Dr Christine Newman was President of the Newman Association in 2007-09.

May these and other departed members all rest in peace.

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