



CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Trustees' Annual Report for the period

From 1 January 2023 Period start date
To 31 December 2023 Period end date

Charity name: The Eckhart Society

Charity registration number: 1042199

Objectives and Activities

	SORP reference	
Summary of the purposes of the charity as set out in its governing document	Para 1.17	<p>To promote the understanding and appreciation of Eckhart's writings and their importance for Christian thought and practice. To facilitate scholarly research into Eckhart's life and works. To promote the study of Eckhart's teaching as a contribution to inter-religious dialogue.</p> <p>The Eckhart Society aims to make known or better known the teachings of Meister Eckhart (c.1260-1328), by fostering the work of scholars, students and disciples of his teaching in further research and study.</p> <p>The specific objectives and purpose of this organization are a) to promote research, appreciation, and greater understanding of the thought of Meister Eckhart out of a Dominican tradition that engages ecumenical, inter-religious and interdisciplinary studies and dialogue; b) to provide events, activities, conferences fostering a community of scholars and learners in the mission of the Eckhart Society; to provide opportunities for participants to engage in social, educational, and spiritual growth and formation; to sponsor, host and/or participate in events and activities that promote the thought of Meister Eckhart and Medieval Mystical Theology.</p>
Summary of the main activities in relation to those purposes for the public benefit, in particular, the activities, projects or	Para 1.17 and 1.19	<p>The Society runs an Annual Conference, and publishes two editions annually of its journal <u>Medieval Mystical Theology</u>. In addition, it provides members with a newsletter and a bulletin, and a Society website (redesigned 2024). Projects have included publication of the landmark Vladimir Lossky book on Meister Eckhart (published 2024 - https://www.jamesclarke.co/product/eckharts-apophatic-theology-knowing-the-unknowable-god/), redesigning the Society website, providing online seminars, supporting members in creating Eckhart reading</p>

services identified in the accounts.		groups, and hosting one-day events. Projects currently planned include volumes of essays on Meister Eckhart, and an international conference.
Statement confirming whether the trustees have had regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit	Para 1.18	The Trustees confirm they have regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit. Our events and publications benefit our members and the wider public who seek to know more about Meister Eckhart and his philosophy.

Additional information (optional)

You may choose to include further statements where relevant about:

	SORP reference	
Policy on grant making	Para 1.38	Not applicable
Policy on social investment including program related investment	Para 1.38	Not applicable
Contribution made by volunteers	Para 1.38	The aims of the Society are managed by its Board of Trustees, who are all volunteers (elected by vote of the existing Board). Collectively the Board has control of and responsibility for the management of the affairs and property of the Society. Our annual conference, its papers, our newsletter, the bookshop, our one-day and online events, are all arranged and provided by volunteers (largely Members of the Society).
Other		Not applicable

Achievements and Performance

	SORP reference	
Summary of the main achievements of the charity, identifying the difference the charity's work has made to the circumstances of its beneficiaries and any wider benefits to society as a whole.	Para 1.20	<p>Since its formation in 1987 the Society has continued to grow its membership and foster knowledge and understanding of the works of Meister Eckhart. The Medieval Mystical Theology (MMT) journal, which began in 1992 as a self-produced booklet of conference talks titled the 'Eckhart Review', has grown into a twice-annual peer-reviewed journal published by Taylor & Francis, publishing essays from international scholars and academics. The Society has also developed a Newsletter and a Bulletin, publishing articles, poetry, book reviews and news of the Society for our membership. We have supported members to form reading groups worldwide, regularly answer queries on Meister Eckhart's work from a range of readers and scholars, and host a range of in-person and online events to cater to our wider membership encompassing the academic and the general public. In 2024 we published (via James Clarke) the first translation in English of Vladimir Lossky's masterwork 'Eckhart's Apophatic Theology'. We supported attempts by the Master of the Dominican Order to remove the shadow cast posthumously over Eckhart's reputation by accusations of heretical writing (Pope John Paul II went on to express his admiration for Eckhart). Our annual conference continues to attract new members to the Society and enlarge and encourage study of Eckhart's work. With a US conference and a Society-produced volume of essays in planning, we continue to expand our mission to benefit society through Eckhart's spiritual and philosophical teachings.</p>

Additional information (optional)

You may choose to include further statements where relevant about:

Achievements against objectives set	Para 1.41	Not applicable
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Performance of fundraising activities against objectives set	Para 1.41	Not applicable
Investment performance against objectives	Para 1.41	Not applicable
Other		Not applicable

Financial Review

Review of the charity's financial position at the end of the period	Para 1.21	<p>The Society's financial position showed a surplus of £13,964 in 2023. We received an exceptional donation of £10,000 + £2,500 gift aid totalling £12,500, to give an underlying surplus of £1,464.</p> <p>The income for 2023 stands at £32,042: disregarding the £12,500 donations this totals £19,542, which is much in line with previous years.</p> <p>The Society holds £20,543 in its COIF deposit account. These reserves safeguard the charity's future, being approximately equivalent to one year's turnover in a 'normal' year.</p>
Statement explaining the policy for holding reserves stating why they are held	Para 1.22	<p>The Society holds £20,543 in its COIF deposit account. These reserves safeguard the charity's future, being approximately equivalent to one year's turnover in a 'normal' year.</p> <p>Reserves are held to guard against unforeseen expenses given our uncertain revenue due to aging members, economic inflation, and project costs.</p>
Amount of reserves held	Para 1.22	£20,543
Reasons for holding zero reserves	Para 1.22	Not applicable
Details of fund materially in deficit	Para 1.24	Not applicable
Explanation of any uncertainties about the charity continuing as a going concern	Para 1.23	<p>Our plan is to continue to meet our mission, and to expand the Society so that more people can benefit from the wisdom and solace of Meister Eckhart's teachings. We successfully secured donations in 2023 that will support us in our work furthering our mission, and we will continue to plan to ensure the future and longevity of the charity for humanity's benefit. Having published the Lossky translation in 2024, and seeing increasing demand for our MMT journal, it is hoped that knowledge of and membership of the Society will increase the likelihood of its success as a going concern.</p>

Additional information (optional)

You may choose to include further statements where relevant about:

The charity's principal sources of funds (including any fundraising)	Para 1.47	Membership fees, member donations, payments and donations for attending events (including the online 'Table Talks', and the annual conference), bookshop sales, subscription to the MMT journal.
Investment policy and objectives including any social investment policy adopted	Para 1.46	Not applicable
A description of the principal risks facing the charity	Para 1.46	<p>Our principal risk is that the Society should run out of money. As one of our main income-generators is through membership contributions, the Board of Trustees is currently focussing our attention on expanding Society membership (one reason for increasing the geographical scope of our events, with our planned US conference) and exploring avenues (such as creating an Eckhart app, publishing a new series of Eckhart essays, and co-organising an international event with the German Meister Eckhart Gesellschaft) that will increase awareness of the Society and expand membership numbers. We continue to seek donations to the charity from members and attendees at our events.</p> <p>Another risk to the Society would be if the Board were to fall below 3 Trustees. We currently stand at 11 and plan to recruit additional Board members in 2024.</p>
Other		Not applicable

Structure, Governance and Management

Description of charity's trusts:		To advance the education of the public in the writings and teachings of Meister Eckhart. The Trustees shall be responsible for promoting the objects of the Trust and for the conduct of the Trust and for the management of the Trust Fund in such manner as the Trustees shall in their discretion think appropriate to promote those objects.
Type of governing document (trust deed, royal charter)	Para 1.25	Trust Deed
How is the charity constituted? (e.g unincorporated association, CIO)	Para 1.25	Trust
Trustee selection methods including details of any constitutional provisions e.g. election to post or name of any person or body entitled to appoint one or more trustees	Para 1.25	The Trustees shall have power to appoint a Custodian Trustee or a new Custodian Trustee hereof and this power notwithstanding any powers of delegation herein contained shall not be delegated by them. The Trustees shall vote as a Board on new nominations put forward by the Nominating Committee (see below).

Additional information (optional)

You may choose to include further statements where relevant about:

Policies and procedures adopted for the induction and training of trustees	Para 1.51	The Nominating Committee shall submit at a Board of Trustees meeting at least 30 days prior to the annual conference meeting (and AGM) the names of those persons for the respective offices of the Board of Trustees. Nominations shall also be invited by the Nominating Committee from the floor at the AGM. The election shall be held at a subsequent meeting of the Board of Trustees. Those officers elected shall serve a term of one (1) year renewable, commencing at the Board of Trustees meeting following their election. Officers of the Executive Committee shall be eligible to succeed themselves in their respective offices with the approval of the Board. The Nominating Committee shall also be responsible for nominating persons to fill vacancies which occur between annual meetings, including those of officers. Nominations shall be sent in
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		<p>writing to members of the Board of Trustees at least two (2) weeks prior to the next meeting at which the election will be held. The persons so elected shall hold membership or office for the unexpired term in respect of which such vacancy occurred.</p> <p>The chair of the Nominating Committee may be the immediate past Chair of the Board. The Committee shall include the Vice Chair of the Board and three additional members to be chosen by the Board. The Nominating Committee shall proffer to the Board candidates for office and/or candidates to serve as Trustees. The Committee should have an odd number of members at all times to prevent a tie vote. The terms of the committee members, including the Chair, shall be determined by the Board of Trustees.</p>
The charity's organisational structure and any wider network with which the charity works	Para 1.51	<p>The charity consists of a Board of Trustees (including Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer and Secretary), and a paid Administrator (appointed by the Board) to handle day-to-day admin for the Society (including but not limited to: correspondence, emails, processing membership payments, claiming giftaid, preparing the annual accounts, bookkeeping, sending out the Newsletter and notices to members, dealing with/passing on queries, assisting with organisation of the Annual Conference and other events. The administrator is also charged with filling out the Charity Commission return and keeping Society records up to date with the CC.).</p>
Relationship with any related parties	Para 1.51	Not applicable
Other		Not applicable

Reference and Administrative details

Charity name	The Eckhart Society
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Other name the charity uses	n/a
Registered charity number	1042199
Charity's principal address	4 Turpins Green MAIDENHEAD Berkshire SL6 4QE

Names of the charity trustees who manage the charity

	Trustee name	Office (if any)	Dates acted if not for whole year	Name of person (or body) entitled to appoint trustee (if any)
1	Dr. Rebecca Stephens	Chair		
2	Rev. Dr. Michael Demkovich	Vice Chair		
3	Dr. Joseph Milne	Treasurer		
4	Dr. Margaret Hamand	Secretary		
5	Dr. Marvin Anderson			
6	Dr. Richard Bolton			
7	Mr. Ronald Haynes			
8	Dr. Gregory Murphy OP			
9	Mr. Nicholas Quinn			
10	Dr. Anastasia Wendlinder			
11	Dr Duane Williams			
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17				
18				
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20				

Corporate trustees – names of the directors at the date the report was approved - **not applicable**

Director name		

Name of trustees holding title to property belonging to the charity

Not applicable: This charity does not own and/or lease land or property

[illegible]

Funds held as custodian trustees on behalf of others

Description of the assets held in this capacity	Not applicable
Name and objects of the charity on whose behalf the assets are held and how this falls within the custodian charity's objects	Not applicable
Details of arrangements for safe custody and segregation of such assets from the charity's own assets	Not applicable

Additional information (optional)**Names and addresses of advisers (Optional information) - not applicable**

Type of adviser	Name	Address
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		n/a

Name of chief executive or names of senior staff members (Optional information)

n/a

Exemptions from disclosure

Reason for non-disclosure of key personnel details

n/a

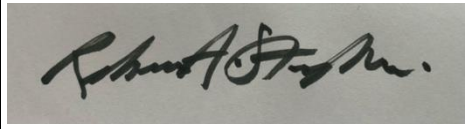
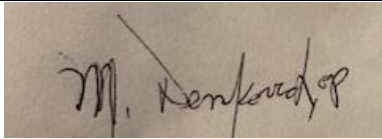
Other optional information

n/a

Declarations

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees

Signature(s)		
Full name(s)	Dr Rebecca Stephens	Fr. Michael Demkovich
Position (eg Secretary, Chair, etc)	Chair	
Date	22 August 2024	

The Eckhart Society

Income and Expenditure Account
Year ended 31st December 2023

2022		2023	
£	£	£	£
INCOME			
	3,594		4,813
	Subscriptions		
	Donations		
385	Members	84	
0	Online events	265	
0	Exceptional donation	10,000	
	385		10,349
	126		2,947
	Gift Aid		
	Annual Conference		
8,763	Income	11,095	
(7,754)	Expenditure	(9,750)	
	1,009		1,345
	1,099		1,574
	MMT royalties		
	Books		
1,154	Book /CD sales	412	
(128)	Book /CD purchases	(441)	
	1,026		(29)
	104		852
	Interest received		
	7,343		21,851
EXPENDITURE			
	3,007		3,529
	Journal (MMT)		
	293		324
	Printing		
	33		0
	Stationery and photocopying		
	142		50
	Telephone and post		
	3,097		3,040
	Admin and accounting charges		
	219		293
	Finance charges		
	913		556
	Website		
	2,000		95
	Miscellaneous		
	9,704		7,887
	(2,361)		13,964
	Surplus/(Deficit) for the year		

The Eckhart Society

Balance Sheet
Year ended 31st December 2023

2022			2023	
£	£		£	£
FIXED ASSETS				
2,170		Sound system - cost	2,170	
(2,169)		Less depreciation	(2,169)	
	1			1
CURRENT ASSETS				
2,010		Debtors	550	
10,543		COIF deposit account	20,543	
41		Lloyds deposit account	2,105	
1,688		Lloyds current account	1,996	
	14,282			25,194
CURRENT LIABILITIES				
	(5,371)	Creditors		(2,719)
	<u>8,912</u>			<u>22,476</u>
ACCUMULATED FUND				
978		Balance at 1 January 2023	(1,383)	
(2,361)		Surplus/(deficit) for the year	13,964	
	(1,383)	Balance at 31 December 2023		12,581
	8,056	MUSIC FUND		7,656
	2,000	DEVELOPMENT FUND		2,000
	239	RUDKIN BURSARY FUND		239
	<u>8,912</u>			<u>22,476</u>

Signed: Dr Joseph Milne
Honorary Treasurer

Date:

J.R. Milne
08/08/2024

Signed: Dr Rebecca Stephens
Chairman

Date:

R. Stephens
12/08/2024



- 1 The Music Fund is the balance remaining of funds transferred to the Society by the St Bartholemew the Great Music Trust on the trust's winding up some years ago. The Society undertook at the time to restrict the use of these funds to music provided at the Society's events.
- 2 The Development Fund and the Rudkin Bursary Fund originated as donations from individual trustees. The titles of these funds indicates their intended, but not their restricted, use.

THE ECKHART SOCIETY

Independent Examiner's Report to the trustees of the Society

I report on my examination of the accounts of The Eckhart Society for the year ended 31 December 2023.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As trustees of the Society 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 Society'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 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 Society 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 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.

Signed: 

Name: Christopher G Glover

Relevant professional qualification: F.C.A.

Address: I Hillside Cottages, New Road, Cookham, Berks. SL6 9HB

Date: 10 September 2024