

THE FRIARS, AYLESFORD

England & Wales · Charity number 1068518

Details

Other names	THE FRIARS (AYLESFORD)
Status	Registered
Legal form	Charitable company
Company number	03487590
Registered	1998-03-10
Register	View on the Charity Commission register

Contact

Address	The Friars Aylesford Priory Aylesford ME20 7BX
Phone	01622717272
Email	enquiry@thefriars.org.uk
Website	www.thefriars.org.uk

Activities

Objects: (A) SUCH CHARITABLE PURPOSES WHICH ADVANCE THE ROMAN CATHOLIC RELIGION IN ANY PART OF THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND.(B) TO PROMOTE FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE PUBLIC THE RESTORATION, PRESERVATION AND MAINTENANCE OF THE HISTORIC BUILDING, AMENITIES AND GROUNDS OF THE FRIARS, AYLESFORD.

Activities: THE FRIARS IS A MARIAN SHRINE, PILGRIMAGE AND RETREAT CENTRE

Classification

- **How:** Provides Buildings/facilities/open Space, Provides Services, Provides Advocacy/advice/information, Other Charitable Activities
- **What:** Religious Activities, Arts/culture/heritage/science, Environment/conservation/heritage, Human Rights/religious Or Racial Harmony/equality Or Diversity
- **Who:** Children/young People, Elderly/old People, People With Disabilities, People Of A Particular Ethnic Or Racial Origin, Other Charities Or Voluntary Bodies, The General Public/mankind

Geography

- **Area of benefit:** AYLESFORD
- Kent

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2024-12-31	£1,864,320	£1,657,289	£1,490,905	30
2023-12-31	£1,657,389	£1,681,192	£1,283,874	26
2022-12-31	£1,777,830	£1,579,453	£1,307,677	29
2021-12-31	£1,369,703	£1,041,381	£1,109,300	23
2020-12-31	£1,109,355	£1,125,266	£780,978	27

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
Rev Brendan Grady		2017-10-06
Rev Michael David Cox		2024-01-05
Rev PATRICK O'KEEFFE		2017-10-06

THE FRIARS, AYLESFORD

England & Wales - Charity number 1068518

Accounts

COMPANY REGISTRATION NUMBER: 03487590
CHARITY REGISTRATION NUMBER: 1068518

The Friars, Aylesford
Company Limited by Guarantee
Financial Statements
31 December 2024

BURGESS HODGSON AUDIT LIMITED

Chartered accountants & statutory auditor
Camburgh House
27 New Dover Road
Canterbury
Kent
CT1 3DN

The Friars, Aylesford
Company Limited by Guarantee
Financial Statements
Year ended 31 December 2024

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The Friars, Aylesford
Company Limited by Guarantee

Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Directors' Report) *(continued)*

Year ended 31 December 2024

The trustees, who are also the directors for the purposes of company law, present their report and the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 December 2024.

Reference and administrative details

Registered charity name The Friars, Aylesford

Charity registration number 1068518

Company registration number 03487590

Principal office and registered office C/O The Friars
Aylesford
Kent
ME20 7BX

The trustees

Isabel Bodunrin
Rev Michael Cox, O. Carm. (Appointed 4 January 2024)
Rev Brendan Grady, O. Carm.
Rev Patrick O'Keeffe, O. Carm

Advisers to the trustees Mr Jonathon Louth
Mrs Jan Wilkinson
Mr Simon Howell (resigned 30 January 2024)

Company secretary Mrs Clare Abbotson

Auditor Burgess Hodgson Audit Limited
Chartered accountants & statutory auditor
Camburgh House
27 New Dover Road
Canterbury
Kent
CT1 3DN

Bankers Royal Bank of Scotland plc
62-63 Threadneedle Street
London
EC2R 8LA

Solicitors Potheary Witham Weld
84 Eccleston Square
London
SW1V 1PX

Strategic report

The following sections for achievements and performance and financial review form the strategic report of the charity.

The Friars, Aylesford
Company Limited by Guarantee
Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Directors' Report) *(continued)*
Year ended 31 December 2024

FOREWORD

On behalf of the board of Trustees and Directors, I present the financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2024.

Once again, we set ourselves an ambitious budget in what we expected to be difficult economic conditions. Another strong trading performance from our retail operation, coupled with a substantial legacy and further generous donations from the Carmelite Charitable Trust, resulted in a healthy surplus for the year. The group made a positive contribution of £207,031, a much better outcome than originally forecasted.

During the year, we continued to invest heavily in our infrastructure, enabling better Wi-Fi reception throughout the site and continuing the work to upgrade our offer to guests and conference delegates alike.

2024 saw a full calendar of regular pilgrimages. Twenty-five in total, continuing the upward trend and marking a full recovery from Covid restrictions.

We continued acting responsibly as stewards of the buildings and the physical environment by completing work to provide extra energy capacity to the lower part of our site.

There was continued focus on the development of the Artisans' Yard under the guidance from our adviser Jonathan Louth and with the signing of the lease with the respective parties, we remain confident this will help increase footfall and rental income in the years to come.

The Working Party continued their work in ensuring staff achieved a meaningful and positive change at The Friars. The Board of Directors and Trustees met with staff to reintroduce the vision, mission, ethos, and values of Aylesford.

Looking to the future, we will prioritise our ongoing commitment to improve our trading operations and benefit the charity. We will devise a strong growth strategy and ensure that our financial plans are sustainable. We have so much to be proud of and there is more to do to make The Friars an amazing place to visit. Throughout this report, you can read about great examples of commitment, dedication and faith as people come together to build and advocate for a better future. We remain grateful to all our volunteers, donors, supporters of The Friars and to CCT for their continued support.

As ever, I wish to offer sincere thanks to our staff, Board of Trustees, Directors, and advisers for their contribution to the success of The Friars.

Jonathan Drew
Operations & Business Development Manager

The Friars, Aylesford
Company Limited by Guarantee
Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Directors' Report) *(continued)*
Year ended 31 December 2024

The Trustees, who are the directors for the purposes of company law, are pleased to present their statutory report together with the consolidated financial statements of The Friars, Aylesford (the "Charity") and its subsidiary Aylesford Priory Limited for the year ended 31 December 2024. This report has been prepared in accordance with part VI of the Charities Act 2011.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out on pages 39 to 43 of the attached financial statements and comply with the charitable company's Memorandum and Articles of Association, applicable laws and Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice, applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102).

These financial statements consolidate the activities of The Friars, Aylesford and its wholly owned subsidiary Aylesford Priory Limited. The subsidiary company, which manages the commercial activities, has been trading since 1 January 2010.



The Friars, Aylesford

Historic Overview

Aylesford Priory, better known as The Friars, first came into the hands of the Carmelites in 1242. There are a number of medieval buildings still standing that are Grade I listed. They include two walks of the Cloisters, the Cloister Chapel, Priors' Hall, and Pilgrims' Hall which still provide hospitality to guests and pilgrims. One building provides accommodation to a community of Carmelite Friars. The Community returned in 1949 after leaving at the Dissolution of the Monasteries in 1538. A new Gothic style outdoor Shrine was built. Work began in 1958. It has a fine collection of religious modern art and was recently Grade II* listed.

Aylesford Priory is now a 44 acre site of significant religious and historical interest, attracting around 100,000 to 120,000 visitors in a typical year. At its heart is a major religious shrine, the Shrine of Our Lady of Mount Carmel and St Simon Stock. The open air Marian shrine has a wide piazza which has room for up to 6,000 pilgrims, and a series of five linked chapels of varying sizes.

The Friars, Aylesford
Company Limited by Guarantee
Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Directors' Report) *(continued)*
Year ended 31 December 2024

Historic Overview (continued)

Our surviving medieval buildings are now partly used as a home to some members (friars) of the Carmelite Community, the remainder forming part of our hospitality facilities, our guest house and conference suite, which with additional newer buildings can now accommodate up to 100 overnight visitors. The site also has a tearoom, and a gift shop located in a refurbished 16th century thatched barn, and some auxiliary buildings which are offered for rental to individuals and local businesses.

From 1949 Aylesford Priory formed a part of a Carmelite Charitable Trust, which covered England and Wales. However, in 1997, the management of Aylesford Priory was devolved to a separate charitable company, The Friars, Aylesford. The ownership of the site and buildings remains with the overall charity, namely the Carmelite Charitable Trust but the administration, the maintenance and the development of the site and the management of the commercial activities have been entrusted to The Friars, Aylesford, and its wholly owned subsidiary company, Aylesford Priory Limited formed in 2010.

Objectives and Activities

The purpose of The Friars, Aylesford, as set out in the Memorandum of Association, is primarily to maintain and develop the Aylesford Priory site as a Marian shrine and retreat/conference centre at the service of the Roman Catholic community as well as other churches, people of other faiths, groups and individuals who wish to use the facilities. The trustees have given careful consideration to how activities of The Friars meet their statutory duty and have considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit. This report sets out how our activities benefit those who visit The Friars, Aylesford Priory, as well as the local and wider community affected by our presence and outreach activities.

Our Vision

A meeting place and centre of Christian spirituality with a Carmelite community at its heart; a space where people of all ages and all faiths and none, will find a welcome, where the sacred is expressed through prayer, the arts and nature.

Be still and know that I am God (Ps 46.10)

Our Mission

- ◆ To work in partnership with others
- ◆ To be inclusive
- ◆ To act responsibly as stewards of the buildings and the physical environment
- ◆ To be accountable to all our stakeholders

Our Values

*Love one another as I have loved you
(Jn 15.12)*

The Friars, Aylesford
Company Limited by Guarantee
Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Directors' Report) *(continued)*
Year ended 31 December 2024

Our Objectives

- ◆ Such charitable purposes which advance the Roman Catholic religion in any part of Great Britain.
- ◆ To promote for the benefit of the public the restoration, presentation and maintenance of the historic buildings, amenities and grounds of The Friars, Aylesford.

Our Ethos

- ◆ We derive our values from the life, message and teachings of Jesus Christ and our inspiration comes from our models, the prophet Elijah, the Blessed Virgin Mary and the saints of the Carmelite Family.
- ◆ The basis of our work is an expression of our commitment to serve the people through friendship, hospitality and a desire to live out the values that Christ preached.

Principal Activities

We are pleased to report that The Friars, Aylesford principal activities fully met our key objectives of partnership, inclusivity, stewardship, and accountability

Commercial Trading (Aylesford Priory Limited)

Aylesford Priory Limited, Company Registration Number 6740190 (England & Wales), is a wholly owned subsidiary of The Friars, Aylesford. The company's principal activity is to provide a profit on commercial activities at Aylesford Priory to financially support:

- ◆ The pastoral activity of the Charity
- ◆ The promotion of the benefit to the public
- ◆ The restoration, presentation and maintenance of the historic buildings, amenities and grounds of The Friars, Aylesford

The trading activity is primarily the provision of conference facilities, guests' catering and accommodation, events and sale of books, gifts, and refreshments.

Daily visitors

We continue to live by our vision: "a meeting place and centre of Christian spirituality with a Carmelite community at its heart; a space where people of all ages and all faiths and none, will find a welcome, where the sacred is expressed through prayer, the arts and nature". We provide free access 365 days a year to all visitors of any age or nationality to enjoy our place of peace, our venue for gathering, our community of prayer. In 2024, we saw numbers of local visitors once again increase, continuing the post-pandemic recovery.

Visitors enjoying a picnic on the lawn



The Friars, Aylesford
Company Limited by Guarantee
Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Directors' Report) *(continued)*
Year ended 31 December 2024

Principal Activities (continued)

Pilgrimages

2024 saw the return of all our regular pilgrimages, hosting 25 in total, marking a full recovery from Covid. As highlighted last year, the trend continued away from groups arriving in coaches towards individual travel arrangements. This puts significant pressure on car and minibus parking. For the larger pilgrimages, the Knights of St Columba act as parking stewards. In dry weather, they direct cars to the fields adjacent to the main and Tea Rooms car parks but in wet weather, this is not always possible. Therefore, active consideration is being given to extending the hard-standing areas for parking.

The Syro Malabar Pilgrimage is now one of the biggest attracting between 2,500-3,000 people from all over the country. Other pilgrimages include the Polish, Tamil, Italian, Divine Mercy, Legion of Mary, Caribbean, Goan, Filipino, Kerala Catholic Chaplaincy and Knights of St Columba. Total numbers of pilgrims for the year rose to 9,740.



Fr Michael Cox O. Carm. (Prior of Aylesford) with the Syro Malabar Pilgrimage 2024 and Bishop Joseph Srampickal.

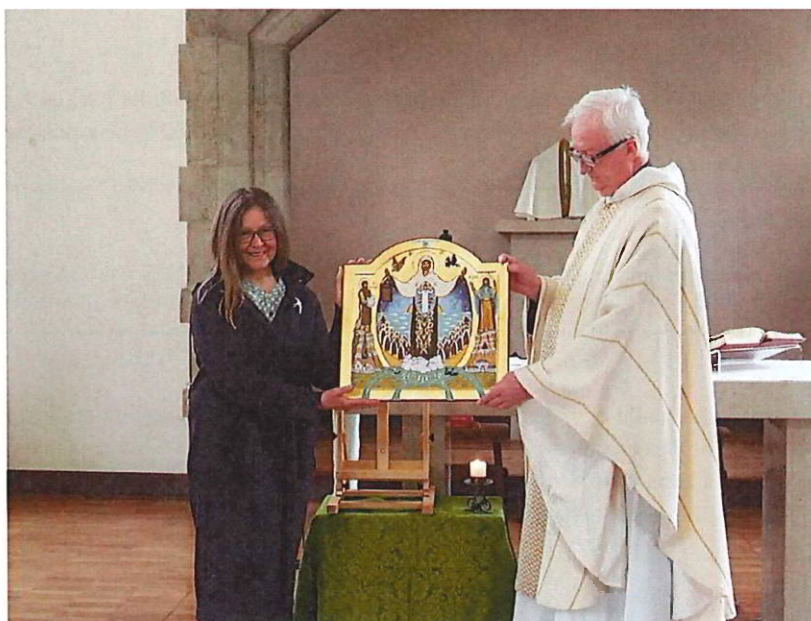
The Friars, Aylesford
Company Limited by Guarantee
Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Directors' Report) *(continued)*
Year ended 31 December 2024

Principal Activities *(continued)*

Pilgrimages (continued)



Fr Michael Cox & Fr Ged Walsh with the Little Flower Pilgrimage in October 2024



Fr Mícheál O'Neill and Rosie Bradshaw with the Travelling Pilgrims' icon

The Friars, Aylesford
Company Limited by Guarantee
Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Directors' Report) *(continued)*
Year ended 31 December 2024

Principal Activities (continued)

Pilgrimages (continued)



Bishop Patrick Lynch with the Relics of the Scottish Saints at the 2023 Knights of St Columba Pilgrimage.

Educational tour groups

We offer educational tours for groups covering the history of the Carmelite Order here at Aylesford, the artwork, and the development of Aylesford Priory. These tours are of interest to historical, art and other educational groups and we often welcome foreign groups visiting the UK.

Schools programme

The number of schools bringing pupils for day retreats remained high in 2024 with 34 schools visiting compared to 27 in 2023. With the significant increase in the cost of coach hire, it is noticeable that wherever possible, schools are making multiple small number bookings and using their own school transport.

Good use continues to be made of the North Barn where schools with larger numbers hire the Barn as a base for the day. The 'Welcome from a friar' slot at the start of their visit continues to be very popular. The majority of schools join the 12 noon Mass, but a significant minority have their own Mass or liturgy in one of the Chapels, St Joseph's Chapel being a favourite with schools.

The Friars, Aylesford
Company Limited by Guarantee
Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Directors' Report) *(continued)*
Year ended 31 December 2024

Principal Activities *(continued)*

Schools Programme (continued)



Pupils on a school visit

Outreach programme for schools and young adults

The two regular multi-school events again proved very popular in 2024 although numbers were down in 2023. On 18th June, the Southwark Education Commission organised an event for all Kent Primary schools when about 500 pupils and their teachers held a Eucharistic Liturgy on the Main Shrine. Later in the year, on September 24th Kent Catholic Schools Partnership organised a Mass for over 850 pupils who filled the entire Main Shrine. The principal celebrant was Bishop Paul Hendricks.

In 2024, some 99 groups made retreats and visits of various kinds to The Friars ranging from parish Confirmation, First Communion and RCIA groups, and groups such as local community support groups and Universities. This figure was up from 82 in 2023.

Below is a table showing the total number of visitors received via schools and parishes.

Visitors	2024
Pilgrims	9,740
School pupils	5,817
Parish/Group visitors	4,019
Totals	19,576

The Friars, Aylesford

Company Limited by Guarantee

Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Directors' Report) *(continued)*

Year ended 31 December 2024

Retreats

We continue to offer a place of retreat for individuals and groups. Members of the Carmelite Community (the friars) often work alongside groups that come to stay at The Friars, Aylesford and individuals are welcome to join community worship. As well as this work, the friars organise a few retreats each year which are open to anyone who wishes to participate. We successfully ran a series of Lent Talks each Saturday from 17 February to 31 March relating to The Apostles' Creed.

People who have experienced bereavement are encouraged to participate in the "Grief and Loss" retreats which were held in March and October. We grieve, remember, hope, and give thanks for our loved ones in the light of the Resurrection of Jesus.

Fundraising activities

To maintain the historic buildings at The Friars and to financially support the free pastoral offers to visitors, there is a continued programme of fundraising events. These include Summer and Christmas fayres, musical and dramatic productions. We do not use professional fundraisers or participators. The Summer and Christmas Fayres remained our biggest fundraising activity, and they provide a chance for the wider community to witness the vibrancy and life of The Friars.

The support of our volunteers continues to be crucial, and we would like to acknowledge the support we receive from them during our Summer and Christmas fayres. We are fortunate to have volunteers who give their time to support our fundraising efforts. We are also extremely grateful for the contributions we have received through individual donors and legacies. It is a source of great hope and inspiration that so many continue to generously support The Friars in these difficult times.

The Friars, Aylesford

Company Limited by Guarantee

Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Directors' Report) *(continued)*

Year ended 31 December 2024



Some of the volunteers at the 2024 summer fayre



The Friars, Aylesford
Company Limited by Guarantee
Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Directors' Report) *(continued)*
Year ended 31 December 2024



Summer fayre 2024

100+ Club

This is a great way of supporting The Friars. A special thank you to Mike and Judy Collins for the many years they have run this club.

Not only do we fundraise for our charity The Friars, but we also fundraise to support other charities like CAFOD and Mary's Meals which are charities that support poverty in countries around the world. We also collected food for Maidstone Christian Care Food Bank, a charity that supports the homeless and needy.

Volunteers

There are many volunteers who help The Friars in their charitable activities, giving their time and invaluable support. Volunteers play a crucial role in the running of The Friars and without their support we would be unable to operate in the way we do today. We are extremely grateful to all our volunteers who give their time year in year out. Many of our volunteers have been helping for many years and continue to be an integral part of The Friars. Among the regular worshipping community at The Friars, volunteers support us at social events and fundraising activities. In 2024, we had over 20 volunteers helping with the maintenance of the grounds and gardens, chapels, and events. The volunteer numbers are dwindling, and we need a strategy to attract new members.

The Friars, Aylesford
Company Limited by Guarantee
Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Directors' Report) *(continued)*
Year ended 31 December 2024

Principal Activities (continued)

Volunteers (continued)

The Gardening Group

Here is a message from Hugh McKearney, member of the Peace Garden Volunteer Group:

"The Friars, shrouded in its history and ancient buildings, is a beautiful and peaceful place which encompasses a spiritual haven for quiet reflection and silent contemplation, away from the maddening crowds of the world beyond its boundaries.

Pilgrims and visitors are attracted to The Friars from all over the country and the world. It quietly enthruses them to offer something in return to preserve this repository of a Holy Shrine here at Aylesford "in England's green and pleasant land."

The Peace Garden, though only thirteen years old by comparison, supports The Friars' ethos. The garden is, however, a non-denominational enclave secluded by long high Twelfth Century walls beyond the Archway of the Gatehouse. The garden is laid out in five separate smaller gardens with conventional seating to facilitate a quiet relaxation and peaceful reflection. It also stimulates an opportunity for visitors to amble along quietly appreciating the colour and beauty of God's creation.

The garden was constructed over a period of fourteen months by a group of volunteers professionally directed and enthusiastically motivated by Jayne and Bernard Hoose. It was officially opened in April 2012 by the famous horticulturist Tom Hart-Dyke of Lullingstone Castle, Eynsford, Kent. It was constructed based on the five elements; the gardens are reflected horticulturally, by a variety of plants and shrubs depicting Fire, Wind and Water.

Some of the original volunteers are still maintaining and nurturing these shrubs and plants and replacing them where needed. Our dedication is greatly appreciated by many visitors from far and wide, which encourages us to continue undertaking the delightful tasks for as long as God permits.

The volunteers of diverse nationalities, though now fewer in number, have formed a companionable and therapeutic group, whilst still sustaining the care and nursing attention required by this peaceful haven. God creates nature, but He needs a little help with the weeding. We seek to encourage more volunteers to join our group so that this attractive enclosure, close to the Holy Shrine and Rosary Way, may continue for as long as possible to attract visitors and pilgrims to the Friars, Aylesford". *Hugh McKearney*

The Gardening Group assists the Estates Team to maintain the grounds and usually meet and garden every Thursday and Saturday.

We also have the Pastoral Team which has transformed into a regular Prayer Group and will continue to support the pastoral ministry of The Friars. The Team, which includes five volunteers, meets regularly to help plan and support retreat programmes and enhance the pilgrim experience. The group members develop prayer opportunities, pilgrim tours and ways to improve the pastoral areas of the site.

The Friars, Aylesford
Company Limited by Guarantee
Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Directors' Report) *(continued)*
Year ended 31 December 2024



The Peace Garden

Principal activities (continued)

Volunteers (continued)

We are privileged to have a small number of professionally qualified lay advisors who hold honorary positions and regularly attend Trustees' meetings for The Friars and Directors' meetings for its subsidiary trading company Aylesford Priory Limited.

We also hosted volunteers from Europe who helped in our Catering and Estates department. These international volunteers come here to improve their English and learn some life skills and we are grateful for their support.

Looking into the future, our vision is to have an inclusive culture of volunteering. Everyone will be an advocate for volunteers and will understand the value they bring to The Friars. Volunteering will be embedded in organisational-wide planning and decision-making.

Once again, the trustees would wish to record their recognition of the professionalism and commitment of all their staff, volunteers, advisors, and the individual members of the Carmelite Community. Their dedication and positive approach are invaluable.

The Friars, Aylesford
Company Limited by Guarantee

Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Directors' Report) *(continued)*

Year ended 31 December 2024

Achievements and Performance in 2024

The Hospitality industry nationwide continued to be challenged because of rising prices, inflation, and a steep increase in minimum wage. We were no different, and were it not for a generous legacy, we would continue to struggle to break even. Details in the table below illustrate our few achievements in 2024:

<i>What we said we would do in 2024</i>	<i>What we did in 2024</i>
1. Deliver the agreed 2024 budget	The group posted a combined surplus of £207k with APL making a profit of £54k and TFA making a surplus of £153k. We had planned to make a small loss but were fortunate to receive a generous legacy for which we are enormously grateful.
2. Improve our IT infrastructure	To remain innovative and competitive, we continued to invest in our technical needs and built greater agility in our IT operations. We leveraged our cloud-based security.
3. Invest in priority capital and maintenance projects	Legacies and the continuing support of the Carmelite Charitable Trust has enabled us to continue our programme of refreshment and renewal. 2024 saw further investment in securing the future. Continuing investments in the Guest House alongside upgrades to our vital infrastructure are part of our plan to improve the sustainability of The Friars as a site of peaceful contemplation.
4. Work with Partners	The value of Partnership is central to the work we do. Having finalised the contract for the Artisans' Yard project and with financial backing from The Carmelite Charitable Trust, substantial progress has been made in creating a vibrant hub for the local artisan community.
5. Green Energy Initiatives	The green energy focus group was formed, and initial strategy formulated. Planning is ongoing and forms a central part of our thinking for site wide sustainability.
6. Volunteers	We continue to actively seek more volunteers to help us run our estate in various capacities, but we continue to struggle to increase volunteer numbers.

The Friars, Aylesford
Company Limited by Guarantee
Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Directors' Report) *(continued)*
Year ended 31 December 2024

Fulfilling our mission 2024

Working in partnership with others

It has already been mentioned that The Friars remains an important retreat and pilgrimage centre. Several groups would come to pray and worship at the Shrine each year, and it is pleasing to see that pilgrimage attendance is truly back to pre-pandemic levels.



Group worship at the Shrine

The Friars, Aylesford continues to play host to the Aylesford Farmers' Market, the Vintage Motorcycle Rally, The All-Ford Car Show, The Kit Customer American Car Show and The Woodturners' Exhibition.

Theatre at The Friars continues to be very popular and again we hosted the This is My Theatre Company, and they performed *Midsummers Night's Dream* in the month of July.

We continued to work with Maidstone Churches Winter Shelter programme, which provides shelter for the homeless in winter months and assist by laundering their bed linen.

As part of our ecumenical involvement, we continued to welcome different groups, celebrate mass, hear confessions and one of the Carmelite friars is also chaplain to a local Catholic school.

The Friars, Aylesford
Company Limited by Guarantee
Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Directors' Report) *(continued)*
Year ended 31 December 2024

Fulfilling our mission 2024 *(continued)*

Be inclusive

Classes offered by Aylesford Pottery are proving very popular. They continued to offer classes to groups with learning disabilities, such as Emotional Behaviour Disorder. Pottery classes have increased, and plans are well advanced to expand their buildings to accommodate more students.

The Brocard Room has continued to be a very popular regular meeting place for Aylesford Scouts, school groups, the Syro-Malabar group, the Enamellers and Woodturners.

We are pleased to continue to support The Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) who have been offered a much bigger room as their numbers attending meetings have increased.

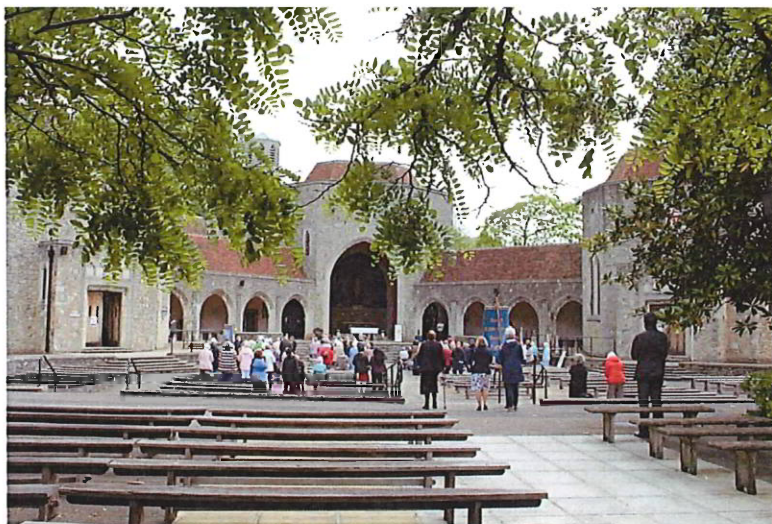
Our guesthouse continued to welcome people from all walks of life, from all backgrounds, abilities, ages, faiths and none. We continued to host mindfulness training groups, such as yoga and reiki groups.

The Spiritual Direction group has also been offered a room for their training. As their needs grow, the need for more break-out rooms has become a challenge, but we remain hopeful of meeting their requirements.

We continued to support our local schools by welcoming four students for work experience who all enjoyed their time working in the different departments of The Friars.

We continued to put our lottery funded North Barn to good use by hosting religious groups. The Woodturners also hold their yearly exhibitions here, showcasing their magnificent artworks to the public. We hired the North Barn to couples for their wedding receptions and hired it out for wakes, parties and meetings.

We hosted several events in our 13th Century Pilgrims' Hall.



Pilgrimage group using the Shrine.

The Friars, Aylesford
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Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Directors' Report) *(continued)*
Year ended 31 December 2024

Fulfilling our mission 2024 (continued)

Acting responsibly as stewards of the buildings and the physical environment

Our buildings and the majority of the site are in continual use by worshippers, visitors, lodgers, and tenants, conference and overnight guests as well as the Community, our Staff, and our Volunteers. The activities mean there is a continual attendance and vicarious inspection throughout the year. In this way, nascent or emerging risks and emergencies are ordinarily spotted or reported, following which the estate staff can make an immediate assessment.

The buildings are additionally risk-assessed annually, and the Quinquennial architect is also vigilant when attending formal maintenance or construction projects under their guidance. All large events have a Duty Manager, and a First Aider assigned to them and all hospitality/conference areas fall under the leadership of the hospitality team. Thus, we believe our site and facilities are as safe as is reasonably possible for the many visitors we welcome.

Over the years the Carmelite Charitable Trust (CCT) has supported and promoted work with young people and young adults. Our Young Peoples Project is an exciting new project for people aged 18 - 30. The Carmelite Charitable Trust is developing a residential volunteer community based at The Friars. The vision for the project comes from our desire to accompany and collaborate with young people, to share our experience, the Carmelite experience and story, and to journey together in finding new ways to live and share in the mission of the province.

The new project was submitted for planning permission and listed building consent during 2022 and will offer greater support for young people and further collaboration with young adults. At the development stage the initiative is already producing resources for visiting groups and offers input and support to large 'youth' and school pilgrimages. Subject to meeting planning and building regulation conditions, it is expected the buildings will be based in the walled garden at The Friars and will offer programmes and support to visiting groups: we have raised the relationship between CCT and TFA as regards appropriate lease back provisions which will be progressed with legal advice.

Each year an experience of community, service, prayer, and formation will be offered to young adults from different countries and backgrounds. The new team will also provide face to face programmes for visiting groups and engage with aspects of the day-to-day life of Aylesford Priory. Some of the physical facilities are expected to contribute to a renewal of some of the site infrastructure: electrics, water supplies, drainage and, potentially, joint development of renewable energy generation on the site.

Proactive exploration of opportunities for collaborative partner organisations and for the improved use of the whole site took a greater pace. Talks begun in 2022 with the potters and upholsterers have culminated in 2024 with the opening of the Artisans' Yard, a vibrant facility for local artisans to practice their craft and welcome visitors. Whilst TFA will receive a rent on these areas at their unimproved value, the Charities Act report from Sibley Pares approved extension of an existing discounted value to be reduced every five years together with an annual rent increase in line with RPI. The Upholsterer will invest reasonable, foreseeable renovation costs and reap the benefit of the buildings: a sub-lease structure will permit other artisans to take up spare space in the Artisans' Yard.

The Friars, Aylesford
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Year ended 31 December 2024

Fulfilling our mission 2024 *(continued)*

Acting responsibly as stewards of the buildings and the physical environment *(continued)*

Subject to TFA accommodating part-time hire groups elsewhere, an option for the Potters to move their activities partially into the Brocard room beside the pottery will bring similar benefits, enabling other artisans to occupy two vacated buildings.

The Estates team met six times this year, ordinarily attended by the quinquennial architect, and the group continued to report on significant maintenance concerns to the trustees. Mini refurbishment work continued in some of the guest rooms in the New Block. The architect was confirmed in three long-standing briefs for extended vehicle hard-standing for major events, secure site gates, en-suite and services improvements on guest rooms on the Old Block. Planning and listed building applications are currently being progressed.

Principal masonry and other fabric repairs [especially the tall South wall of the walled garden] arising from the 2013 QI report were completed in 2024.

In 2023, with the assistance of two government grants, a major 2 year restoration of the Grade 2* shrine was completed and this has been followed in 2024 with restoration work to the ceramics in the Rosary Walk, along with the continued expansion of our Wi-Fi/contactless network, completing our project to bring internet facilities to all our conference rooms and the Shrine area.

St. Anne's Chapel warranted continued environmental monitoring during 2024, assessing why humidity and condensation occur in St Anne's Chapel continued and, though the Kossowski ceiling graffiti wall damages were repaired, deterioration was not fully arrested and it will come forward for consideration after the further monitoring.

Conversation was initiated with CCT regarding the lease structure and the balance of responsibilities for capital works, for planned maintenance and for running repairs/wear & tear. There is an increasing sense that the size of the estate and the size or capacity of the trading company are mismatched if the major costs are to be borne only by local income. Pending potential reorganisation, CCT agreed in 2023 to make grants available from Province funds in the foreseeable future, principally where these arise out of death legacies that make reference to The Friars.

One concern discussed by estates group is the evident lack of time or resources to keep the grounds in 'best' order or to open up more and alternative uses of the wider estate: a proposition that further tenants and lodgers might be welcomed to take licenses and make beneficial use of parts of the estate (such as the tree surgeon and the IT consultant who became tenants on site during 2021/22) has been approved.

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Fulfilling our mission 2024 *(continued)*

Acting responsibly as stewards of the buildings and the physical environment *(continued)*

Having replaced the 25-year-old steam boiler and two pieces of laundry equipment in 2022, the out-moded nature of the heating and electrical infrastructure became increasingly apparent during 2023 and discussions on the need for sustainable, renewable, reliable energy supplies have taken place. Initially under the Prior Provincial [as Chair of TFA], the estates group, quinquennial architect and services consultant, convened a Green Strategy Group; the consultants' initial reports indicated that detail surveys will have to be undertaken during 2025 for coherent proposals for phased transition to renewables over something akin to a 10-year plan. This too will progress in discussion with the Province/CCT as freeholder and in collaboration with the Young Peoples' project team.

We invested heavily in our IT infrastructure, enabling a faster Wi-Fi in the conference rooms, Pilgrims' Hall, the Money Room, the Shrine and Piazza. Water damage to acoustic panels was addressed and these were also repaired.

There is increased demand for more information about companies' environmental, social, and corporate governance (ESG) performance and we are aware that the charities commission are also keen to see the eco credentials of charities and for that reason we embarked on our very own green energy strategy which would involve new technology with use of infrared heaters to heat people not buildings.

Looking into the future, we aspire to further refurbish the guest rooms in the Old Block, repair and extend the car park and fix electronic gates. We will continue investing in our IT infrastructure and be ready for when telecommunications convert to VOIP.

We continue to communicate with our local community and visitors via our website and social media. New followers on Facebook have been keeping up to date with our supporter-facing activities, hearing about campaigns and engaging with us.

In 2024, we continued to distribute The Aylesford quarterly newsletter to over 6,000 people across the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland. Many of those who receive the newsletter respond and share their views, thoughts, and aspirations for The Friars at Aylesford.



We also published and distributed the monthly Friars News for our local community and staff. Our visitors continued to share their feedback and ideas through a questionnaire which is available in all guest rooms.

The Friars, Aylesford

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Year ended 31 December 2024

Fulfilling our Objectives in 2024

Be accountable to all stakeholders

During the year, we actively responded to feedback on Trip Advisor ensuring that our customers' voice was heard. We were swift in providing solutions and we take on board reviews very seriously because we know they have the potential to transform our brand and inspire our team to be better every day.

Such charitable purposes which advance the Roman Catholic religion in any part of Great Britain

Throughout its long history, the Church has been a major source of social services like schooling and medical care; an inspiration for art, culture, and philosophy; and an influential player in politics and religion. In various ways it has sought to affect Western attitudes towards vice and virtue in diverse fields.

Being Catholic and partaking in Catholic services strengthens people's relationship with God and with their community. Being Catholic reminds them of what life is all about, family and helping others and setting time aside for the Lord. People can rely on their Catholic faith to guide them through all aspects of their life.

The Friars is primarily a Roman Catholic shrine and pilgrimage centre. Served by its Carmelite community, there are normally regular masses celebrated each day and the friars are available for confessions, counselling, and consultations. The chapels are open all day all year round for those looking for a place of quiet and meditation.

We are pleased to have the Syro-Malabar community who use our chapels on a regular basis. The Syro-Malabar community also provide us with volunteering support during our big fundraising events.

A pastoral team of friars and lay volunteers served the spiritual and religious needs of those visiting The Friars and delivered the annual retreat program.

As an important Marian shrine, pilgrims from all over the world visited throughout the year. These international pilgrims prayed and celebrated in their own languages.

The Friars is a religious setting open to all people with all faiths and none. Its purpose is not just to hold masses, but it is also a place of welcome to all.

The Carmelite Community continued to support the many schools who visited with their individualised programmes. These programmes include history and art appreciation. Apart from participating in these programmes, the school children also took part in Masses in the chapels. The friars normally also take them on ground tours explaining the history of the Carmelites in England and giving them an understanding of the various artworks.

To support families who have lost loved ones we maintain a Book of Friends that offers the opportunity to commemorate their loved one.

We also offer bereaved families a place to celebrate the life of their loved ones, providing a venue and catering for funerals and wakes.

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Year ended 31 December 2024

Financial Review

In another difficult year for all, the cost-of-living crisis left many families struggling to afford basics. Most families are forced to think twice before eating out and a large number relied on food banks to make ends meet. This had an impact on the Hospitality industry nationwide and we continued to see closures of restaurants and eateries.

The Hospitality industry also struggled to keep staff, with many people opting to go to work in retail where wages were more competitive. We are fortunate in retaining a solid core of loyal staff who, supported by our team of reliable casuals, provide a welcome to all who visit The Friars.

Staff costs are our most significant area of expenditure making up 46% of our total cost base. However, the Operational Team have worked hard to make the best use of staffing, restricting the overall increase in staff costs to 4.5%, largely due to increases in minimum wage and a pay award to all salaried staff.

High energy costs, coupled with rising supplier costs, meant that we had to work hard to control our cost base. But despite all the challenges, our financial results for the year were stronger than we had hoped for, even with the challenging cost-of-living environment. We planned for a small deficit, but robust financial control and a strong performance in our trading departments contributed to a positive result.

We continue to seek ways to diversify our income streams, to grow our net income and we embarked on various income generating events which were less labour-intensive. As well as our regular calendar of events, we included Open Air Theatre and an Easter Egg Hunt, which proved very popular with children and families.

We continued the work to convert our outbuildings into an Artisans' Yard. This will improve our rental income considerably in years to come.

It is also worth noting that grants and donations for the year were significantly less than the previous year, 2023.

General Funds

The Trustees continue to ensure the profitability of the day-to-day operations in the wholly owned subsidiary Aylesford Priory Limited, and to ensure the net costs of their charitable activities are met by the surplus made.

The trading activities of Aylesford Priory Limited resulted in a profit of £54,124 (2023: loss £16,568), (please see note 1). A surplus of £152,907 (loss of £7,235 in 2023) was made by the Charity, resulting in a Group profit of £207,031 (2023: loss of £23,803).

General reserves were £699,317 compared to £403,365 in 2023. The increase in general reserves reflects the receipt of a generous one-off legacy alongside a positive contribution from Aylesford Priory Ltd.

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Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Directors' Report) *(continued)*
Year ended 31 December 2024

Financial Review (continued)

Restricted Funds for special purposes

These funds usually arise from legacies and donations and are limited to spending on defined purposes.

In January, £345,441 (2023: £391,420) of restricted funds were brought forward into 2024, represented by £16,914 (2023: £17,054) for the Peace Garden and £328,527 (2023: £374,366) for the Restoration Fund.

As of 31 December 2024, carried forward restricted funds were £200,412 (2023: £324,863), comprising £184,357 for the Restoration Fund and £16,055 for the Peace Garden.

Total funds as of 31 December 2024 were £1,490,905 (2023: £1,283,874) represented by £200,412 (2023: £345,441) of restricted funds, £815,317 of Tangible Fixed Assets (2023: £813,336), a shortfall of £224,141 in Aylesford Priory Limited Funds/Reserves (2023: £(278,268)) and £699,317 of general reserves (2023: £403,365).

Income

The turnover of the charity's trading subsidiary Aylesford Priory Limited, derived from the provision of hospitality (conference facilities and guest accommodation), events, sale of books, gifts and refreshments, at £1,171,177 it was up 7.1% from 2023. This represented a strong performance in retail activity.

Our unrestricted donations were £124,785, down 40% from last year (£207,087 in 2023). Shrine activity was £95,168, up 9.2% on 2023 (£87,178). Summer and Christmas fayres brought in £55,487, down 13% on 2023 (£64,317).

The Carmelite Charitable Trust (CCT) continued to provide financial support to the Charity in the form of an annual grant of £120,000 for its ongoing activities.

The group income was £1,864,320, an increase of 12.5% in comparison to £1,657,389 in 2023. This was primarily down to receiving a generous one-off legacy.

Expenditure

The results for the year ended 31 December 2024 reflect another year of challenges presented by rising inflation and supplier costs. We continued to follow through on various cost-saving strategies and held new income generating events. We focused on agreed margins for each of our trading activities and ensured adequate investment in our site and facilities, to maintain a healthy and safe environment for our staff, volunteers, customers, and visitors.

For more details of activity in the wholly owned subsidiary Aylesford Priory Limited see note 16.

The living and personal expenses of the Carmelite Friars at Aylesford were £49,150 (£78,701 in 2023) down 38% year on year. There are fewer Carmelite Community members now.

Table 1 below shows that expenditure in 2024 on the upkeep of the shrine (note 5) was up 1.3% on 2023. Good cost control meant that non-staff costs were in line with the previous year.

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Year ended 31 December 2024

Table 1 - 2024 Expenditure on upkeep of the shrine compared to 2023.

	2023	2024	% Difference
Governance costs	£11,220	£4,897	-56.4%
Office costs	£14,352	£9,050	-36.9%
Premises & Facilities costs	£257,630	£283,682	10.1%
Indirect Staff costs	£46,379	£49,680	7.1%
Direct Shrine costs	£110,853	£99,041	-10.7%
Total	£440,434	£446,350	1.3%

Reserves

Reserves are needed both to maintain the level of The Friars Aylesford's current activities and to enable the completion of long-term projects.

At 31 December 2024 unrestricted general funds amounted to £699,317 (£403,365 in 2023) an increase of 73.4%.

During the year, restricted funds have decreased from £345,441 (31 December 2023) to £200,412 (made up of Peace Garden £16,913 and Restoration fund £183,499) at 31 December 2024.

The total funds at 31 December 2024 are a surplus of £1,490,905 (2023: £1,283,874) equivalent to an increase of 16.1%.

These total funds are represented by tangible fixed assets of £1,027,506 (2023: £908,341), net current assets of £511,066 (2023: £426,866) included within net current assets is a net cash position of £342,092 (2023: £370,234). Bank accounts held are part of a centralised, pooled banking system, used together with and managed by the Carmelite Charitable Trust. Pooled bank accounts are managed to optimise return on investments. Any accumulated reserves will be invested in the restoration, presentation and maintenance of the historic buildings, amenities and grounds of The Friars, Aylesford.

The trustees continue to recognise the importance of securing a long-term presence of the Carmelite Community at Aylesford Priory and working with a new Young Adults Community.

The continued ambition is to secure a commercial partnership agreement by considering a new commercial or social enterprise partner or partners, to use part of the available assets, to deliver activities that provide adequate income to meet or exceed the on-going costs and support the viability of the non-business charitable activities and in particular the maintenance of our historic buildings.

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Year ended 31 December 2024

Our key risks and uncertainties

The Board of Trustees has responsibility for making sure there are adequate and effective risk management protocols and systems of internal controls in place to manage The Friars' major risks and to achieve our strategic objectives. The risk register is reviewed yearly by the Board of Trustees to ensure that relevant risks are identified and sound mitigating controls are in place. We have processes in place to manage the key risks that could affect the charity's ability to achieve its objectives.

While many risks from previous years remain, increased supplier costs could have an impact on our income, as volunteers and retail customers respond to the cost-of-living crisis, as well as having an impact on our running costs. We also don't know what the knock-on impact on public sector spending will be – a major source of income for the charity. We continued to mitigate inflation risks through good procurement practices, as well as continuing to review our pricing strategies in our trading outlets.

Current labour market conditions and the cost-of-living crisis mean we also anticipate major risks around staff retention, recruitment, and satisfaction. The hospitality industry overall continues to suffer from recruitment and The Friars is no different.

Processes are in place to manage the key risks that could affect The Friars' ability to achieve its objectives, including the following:

1. Financial Performance and sustainability

Risk: A significant reduction in our available resources due to external economic and environmental factors. The continued rise in supplier costs is a risk to our trading operation and undermines our ability to achieve our strategic objectives.

Mitigations:

- Annual budget setting and then full half-year re-forecasting.
- Holding a significant value of free reserves at any point in time, with a monthly review of these to make sure they remain adequate.
- Regular review of our pricing strategy to ensure we remain competitive and be flexible in our approach.
- Shopping around for competitive suppliers (including energy suppliers) to minimise rising costs.
- Regular review and scrutiny of financial performance by senior management and trustees through the Finance Group.

2. Business Continuity

Risk: Events adversely impact reputation and/or operations, including loss of operations due to a major incident (cyber-attack, serious data security breach, a serious fraud, major health and safety incidents, internal control failures or an outbreak of a communicable disease).

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Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Directors' Report) *(continued)*

Year ended 31 December 2024

Mitigations:

- Regular review and update of business continuity and disaster recovery plans to help minimise disruption to operations from unexpected events.
- We continue to upgrade our IT systems. This includes using modern cloud computing that gives staff access to better storage, files and software, through internet-connected devices.
- The Groups files are stored & operated behind an externally maintained firewall to protect against malicious cyber-attack.

3. Change Management

Risk: Inability to implement change and complete priority projects due to constant changes in department managers. Risk of change fatigue, burn-out or high-attrition within teams, given the level of change.

Mitigations:

- Continue to offer support for individuals.
- Staff welfare is always on the agenda at Trustees meetings.

4. Lack of funding for maintenance and repairs of the buildings

Risk: Reduction in funding has a negative impact on The Friars' ability to achieve its objectives. A reduction in funding could be due to failure to qualify for certain funds or apathy of donors or due to constraints on their available income from the financial crises.

Mitigations:

- Strengthen our existing relations and develop new relationships to secure additional funding.
- Diversify our sources of funding.

5. Staff Recruitment and Retention

Risk: Difficulty in attracting qualified managers and keeping them and recruiting the right calibre of non-management staff. Staff turnover continues to be high.

Mitigations:

- Create a talent pipeline to manage uncertainty in filling vacancies when staff retire.
- Work closely with recruitment agencies.
- Ongoing benchmarking of compensation and benefits to the rest of the sector.

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Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Directors' Report) *(continued)*

Year ended 31 December 2024

Our plans for the future

Income generation

Our key objective is to generate as much income as we can to remain viable. We know that the coming years ahead aren't going to be easy but in challenging times people need places of respite, beauty, and solace more than ever – and people need the certainty of knowing we are still here, caring for the grounds that are important and dear to them. Because of these reasons, we will aspire to deliver the 2025 budget as best as we can. We will improve the effectiveness of our trading activities by operating an effective pricing strategy, source new suppliers and continue to urge staff to work smarter. We will need to find ways to encourage our visitors to increase contributions.

The external and economic environment remains very uncertain, and we are clear that we need to remain agile and flexible to meet changing demands and needs.

Invest in priority capital and maintenance projects

We will continue to ensure that every decision we make will support our core aim and objective to promote for the benefit of the public the restoration, presentation and maintenance of the historic buildings, amenities and grounds of The Friars, Aylesford. We will continue refurbishing our guest house facilities and improve our conference facilities.

We will continue working with the Estates sub-group and the Estates Manager to regularly review progress on agreed projects.

Working with partners

With the introduction of Creative Aylesford and the Artisans' Yard we hope to continue working with partners and suppliers whose local network will expand the outreach and the effective mission of the Carmelite Community.

Environmental sustainability initiatives

Climate change is now widely acknowledged as one of the most important issues facing society today and with growing concerns for the environment, it is now becoming critical for organisations to adopt and take corporate sustainability initiatives that focus on people, planet, alongside profits.

Sustainability practices can boost The Friars, Aylesford's longer-term by giving us a competitive edge, enhancing our brand image, attracting a loyal customer base, reducing operational costs, and creating new opportunities for success in the long run. We can start off small by recycling all our packaging, find other ways of using energy (solar), work towards minimizing single-use cups and other plastics. Plans are already in place to form a comprehensive green energy strategy.

Improve IT

We will continue to invest further in our information and technology infrastructure so that we can operate more efficiently and effectively. We identify that IT is a key enabler for both service quality and financial sustainability. In today's dynamic business environment, technology plays an increasingly

The Friars, Aylesford

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Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Directors' Report) *(continued)*

Year ended 31 December 2024

Our plans for the future *(continued)*

vital role as a powerful enabler for continuous improvement initiatives. Digital technology advancements have revolutionised how organisations approach improvement processes, providing valuable digital tools and resources to drive operational efficiency, increase productivity, and meet future strategic goals. The Board of Trustees have agreed the entire IT infrastructure of the site be upgraded.

Volunteers

People volunteer for a range of reasons, and each volunteering opportunity provides its own unique experience. The Friars, Aylesford depends on volunteers to ensure that we remain a place of welcome and prayer to our numerous and diverse visitors. The volunteer numbers are dwindling so we will develop a robust volunteering strategy, to be the charity of choice in the Kent area.

Going concern

We are doing everything we can to build on our financial stability, seeking new income streams and developing new partnerships to keep this beautiful place as a sustainable charitable and commercial venture. The Trustees have assessed The Friars, Aylesford's financial position, and the work we are doing to diversify our income through partnerships and the creation of the Artisans' Yard, and they feel confident in the charity's ability to operate as a going concern.

The Trustees have confidence that the charity and its subsidiary company will be able to withstand all challenges presented by the cost-of-living crisis and be financially sustainable in the short to medium term.

Structure, governance, and management

The Friars, Aylesford is constituted as a company limited by guarantee governed by its own Memorandum and Articles of Association. The members are the individual friars of the British Province of the Carmelite Order, who meet in Annual General Meetings to elect the Trustees, to review the financial statements for the previous year and to discuss any other relevant business.

The Trustees are appointed to oversee the strategic governance of The Friars and its subsidiary. They set the strategy, agree an annual budget and monitor performance. In particular, the Trustees make all decisions where the reputation and ethos may be impacted.

During 2024, the Trustees met 6 times, with an Annual General Meeting on 18 July 2025.

There are two specialist sub-groups which meet regularly providing advice and recommendations to the Board.

- ♦ The Finance Group Chair: Fr Brendan Grady
- ♦ The Estates Group Chair: Jonathan Louth (architect)

The Trustees are supported by advisors: Jan Wilkinson (Finance), Jonathan Louth (Estates and Development).

The Friars, Aylesford

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Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Directors' Report) *(continued)*

Year ended 31 December 2024

Our plans for the future (continued)

New Trustees are briefed on the role of a Trustee and provided with relevant literature plus copies of the Memorandum and Articles of Association. Trustee indemnity insurance premiums are paid for by the charitable company to provide protection for the Trustees in the execution of their duties. In December 2017, we undertook a review of our current practices compared to the Charity Commission's Code of Governance and were pleased that there were few areas that were identified as needing minor improvement.

The Trustees delegate the day-to-day operations of the charity to the Management Team also known as the Trading Operations Management Team (TOMT). The TOMT comprises the Operations & Business Development Manager (OBDM) and five other members with clear lines of responsibility for specific departments of the organisation. The Trustees have worked with the TOMT to develop the longer-term strategic plans for the charity. Responsibility for the implementation of the plans is delegated to the TOMT through agreed one-year business plans also known as Operational Plans.

The TOMT has clear terms of reference, regularly reviewed by the Trustees, and its prime and collective responsibility is to self-manage the trading operations of The Friars, Aylesford and to achieve a balanced budget, in line with the budget presented to and agreed by the Trustees in December of the prior year.

Within the TOMT, certain managers are expected to occasionally attend Trustee meetings, reporting from, and representing the TOMT. These managers can also refer urgent matters that are outside the remit of the TOMT to the Trustees.

TOMT members at the start of 2025 are: Jonathan Drew – The Business Operations & Manager (Lead); Ros Duddell – Gift Shop Manager; Steve Hayden – Estates Manager, Karen Stevens – Hospitality Manager, Natalie James – Catering Manager and Clare Abbotson – Prior's and Trustees' Secretary.

Key management remuneration is first informed by current local market rates for similar roles, and by maintaining appropriate differentials for job responsibilities within the organisation. A proposal is considered by the Finance Group and a recommendation made to the Trustees. The Trustees authorise all key management salaries.

Statement of Fundraising

The Charities (Protection and Social Investment) Act 2016 requires us to make a statement on fundraising. This statement outlines how we will behave when we fundraise and ensures our fundraising is legal, honest, open, respectful, fair, transparent and accountable.

At The Friars, we need to raise a considerable amount of funds to maintain our 22-acre site and provide the religious activities that go with it. Our teams work tirelessly to raise funds mainly via our Summer and Christmas fayres (our main fundraiser), other small events like the new Easter Egg Hunt, Shakespeare plays, postal and online donations.

We do all we can to ensure that fundraisers and volunteers comply with our Fundraising Promise. We do not use professional fundraisers or commercial participators to help us and in the past twelve months we did not work with any "on behalf of" fundraisers.

The Friars, Aylesford

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Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Directors' Report) *(continued)*

Year ended 31 December 2024

Statement of Fundraising (continued)

We are registered with the Fundraising Regulator, have paid the levy and uphold the code of practice. We comply with current regulations and best practice set out by the Regulator. We acknowledge that as we engage volunteers to fundraise on our behalf, it is imperative that we have the right safeguards in place to support them. We insist that any fundraising carried out by any third party complies with data protection legislation as set out in the code of Fundraising practice, including requirements of the Telephone, Mailing and Fundraising Preference Services.

We work closely with our volunteers to ensure that they are polite, respectful and aware that anyone can be in a vulnerable situation even if it is not immediately apparent. If it is known or there are reasonable grounds for believing that an individual lacks capacity to make a decision to donate, a donation will not be taken or if it is already taken will be refunded. It also means that nobody should be pressurised or made to feel guilty for not supporting us. If our supporters do not want to give or wish to cease giving, we respect their decision and act on this. We offer them choices about how they wish to be contacted and we respond to requests to end contact.

Our volunteers make it clear when communicating on our behalf how a person can register feedback or a complaint directly with us. We encourage any feedback from the public and we regularly review any feedback that we receive.

The Friars, Aylesford

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Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Directors' Report) *(continued)*

Year ended 31 December 2024

Trustees' responsibilities statement

The trustees, who are also directors for the purposes of company law, are responsible for preparing the trustees' report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the charity trustees to prepare financial statements for each year which give a

true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, for that period

In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the applicable Charities SORP;
- make judgments and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in business.

The trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the charity's transactions and 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 Companies Act 2006. They 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.

Auditor

Each of the persons who is a trustee at the date of approval of this report confirms that:

- so far as they are aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the charity's auditor is unaware; and
- they have taken all steps that they ought to have taken as a trustee to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the charity's auditor is aware of that information.

The trustees' annual report and the strategic report were approved on 18/07/2025 and signed on behalf of the board of trustees by:



Rev Brendan Grady O. Carm.
Trustee

The Friars, Aylesford

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Independent Auditor's Report to the Members of The Friars, Aylesford

Year ended 31 December 2024

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of The Friars, Aylesford (the 'charitable parent company') and of The Friars, Aylesford and its subsidiary Aylesford Priory Limited (the 'group') for the year ended 31 December 2024 which comprise the group statement of financial activities (including income and expenditure account), the group and charitable parent company statement of financial position, the consolidated statement of cash flows and the related notes, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including FRS 102 The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the group and of the charitable parent company's affairs as at 31 December 2024 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice;
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charity in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charity's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

The Friars, Aylesford
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Independent Auditor's Report to the Members of The Friars, Aylesford *(continued)*

Year ended 31 December 2024

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the annual report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the information given in the trustees' report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the trustees' report has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charity and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the trustees' report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.
- the trustees were not entitled to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the small companies regime and take advantage of the small companies' exemptions in preparing the trustees' report and from the requirement to prepare a strategic report.

The Friars, Aylesford

Company Limited by Guarantee

Independent Auditor's Report to the Members of The Friars, Aylesford *(continued)*

Year ended 31 December 2024

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the trustees' responsibilities statement, the trustees (who are also the directors for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charity's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charity or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below:

We identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, and then design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, including obtaining audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

In identifying and assessing risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations, we have considered; the nature of the industry, control environment and business performance.

We also consider the results of our enquiries of management relating to their own identification and assessment of the risks of irregularities and possible related fraud which includes reviewing available documentation on their policies and procedures.

Throughout the audit testing we are considering the incentives that may exist within the organisation for fraud. Key areas include timing of recognising income around the year end and posting of unusual journals. In common with all audits under ISAs (UK), we are also required to perform specific procedures to respond to the risk of management override.

We ensure we have an understanding of the relevant laws and regulations and remain alert to possible non-compliance throughout the audit.

Despite proper planning and audit work in accordance with auditing standards there are inherent limitations and unavoidable risk that we may not detect some irregularities and material misstatements in the financial statements. We are not responsible for preventing non-compliance and cannot be expected to detect non-compliance with all laws and regulations.

The Friars, Aylesford

Company Limited by Guarantee

Independent Auditor's Report to the Members of The Friars, Aylesford *(continued)*

Year ended 31 December 2024

As part of an audit in accordance with ISAs (UK), we exercise professional judgment and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the trustees.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the charity's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the charity to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charity's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charity's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charity and the charity's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Burgess Hodgson Audit Limited

Kenton May BSc FCA CTA MAE (Senior Statutory Auditor)

For and on behalf of
Burgess Hodgson Audit Limited

Chartered accountants & statutory auditor

Camburgh House

27 New Dover Road

Canterbury

Kent

CT1 3DN

23rd July 2025

The Friars, Aylesford
Company Limited by Guarantee
Statement of Financial Activities
(including income and expenditure account)
Year ended 31 December 2024

		2024	2023
		Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds
	Note	£	£
Total funds			
		£	£
Income and endowments			
Donations, grants and legacies	4	476,037	400
Charitable activities	5	98,743	—
Other trading activities	6	1,264,194	—
Other income	7	24,946	—
Total income		<u>1,863,920</u>	<u>400</u>
Expenditure			
Expenditure on raising funds:			
Costs of other trading activities	8	1,161,789	—
Expenditure on charitable activities	9	396,129	50,221
Other expenditure	10	49,150	—
Total expenditure		<u>1,607,068</u>	<u>50,221</u>
Net income/(expenditure) before transfers			
		256,852	(49,821)
Transfers between funds		95,208	(95,208)
Net income/(expenditure) and net movement in funds		<u>352,060</u>	<u>(145,029)</u>
Reconciliation of funds			
Total funds brought forward		938,433	345,441
Total funds carried forward		<u>1,290,493</u>	<u>200,412</u>

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.
All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

The Friars, Aylesford
Company Limited by Guarantee
Statement of Financial Position

31 December 2024

	Notes	Group		Charity	
		2024	2023	2024	2023
		£	£	£	£
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	15	1,027,506	908,341	815,317	813,334
Investments	16			1	1
		<u>1,027,506</u>	<u>908,341</u>	<u>815,318</u>	<u>813,335</u>
Current assets					
Stock	17	35,733	36,916	2,643	6,176
Debtors	18	337,089	152,694	756,901	602,755
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>342,092</u>	<u>370,234</u>	<u>259,185</u>	<u>222,380</u>
		714,914	559,844	1,018,729	831,311
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	19	<u>(203,848)</u>	<u>(132,978)</u>	<u>(71,334)</u>	<u>(31,173)</u>
Net current (liabilities) assets		511,066	426,866	947,395	800,138
Creditors: amounts falling due after one year	20	<u>(47,667)</u>	<u>(51,333)</u>	<u>(47,667)</u>	<u>(51,333)</u>
Total net (liabilities) assets		<u>1,490,905</u>	<u>1,283,874</u>	<u>1,715,046</u>	<u>1,562,140</u>
Represented by Funds and reserves					
Restricted funds	21	200,412	345,441	200,412	345,441
Unrestricted funds					
. General funds		699,317	403,365	699,317	403,365
. Tangible fixed assets fund		815,317	813,336	815,317	813,334
. Non-charitable trading funds		<u>(224,141)</u>	<u>(278,268)</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Total funds		<u>1,490,905</u>	<u>1,283,874</u>	<u>1,715,046</u>	<u>1,562,140</u>

These financial statements were approved by the board of trustees and authorised for issue on 18/07/2025 and are signed on behalf of the board by:



Rev Brendan Grady O. Carm.
Trustee

The notes on pages 39 to 52 form part of these financial statements.

The Friars, Aylesford
Company Limited by Guarantee
Statement of Cash Flows
Year ended 31 December 2024

	2024	2023
	£	£
Cash flows from operating activities		
Net income/(expenditure)	207,031	(23,803)
<i>Adjustments for:</i>		
Depreciation of tangible fixed assets	82,018	75,556
<i>Changes in:</i>		
Stocks	1,183	9,593
Trade and other debtors	(184,395)	38,908
Trade and other creditors	70,870	22,288
Cash generated from operations	<u>(30,324)</u>	<u>146,345</u>
Net cash from/(used in) operating activities	<u>176,707</u>	<u>122,542</u>
Cash flows from investing activities		
Purchase of tangible assets	(201,183)	(74,492)
Net cash used in investing activities	<u>(201,183)</u>	<u>(74,492)</u>
Cash flows from financing activities		
Proceeds from borrowings	(3,667)	50,000
Net cash (used in)/from financing activities	<u>(3,667)</u>	<u>50,000</u>
Net increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents	(28,142)	98,050
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year	370,234	272,184
Cash and cash equivalents at end of year	<u>342,092</u>	<u>370,234</u>

The notes on pages 39 to 52 form part of these financial statements.

The Friars, Aylesford
Company Limited by Guarantee
Notes to the Financial Statements
Year ended 31 December 2024

1. General information

The charity is a public benefit entity and a private company limited by guarantee, registered in England and Wales and a registered charity in England and Wales. The address of the registered office is C/O The Friars, Aylesford, Kent, ME20 7BX.

2. Statement of compliance

These financial statements have been prepared in compliance with FRS 102, 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and the Republic of Ireland', the Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (Charities SORP (FRS 102)) and the Companies Act 2006.

3. Accounting policies

Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared on the historical cost basis, as modified by the revaluation of certain financial assets and liabilities and investment properties measured at fair value through income or expenditure.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the entity.

Basis of consolidation

The consolidated statement of financial activities and group balance sheet consolidate each reporting line of the financial statements of The Friars, Aylesford and its subsidiary company, Aylesford Priory Limited, made up at the balance sheet date.

Going concern

The trustees have assessed whether the use of the going concern assumption is appropriate in preparing these accounts. The trustees have made the assessment in respect to a period of at least one year from the date of approval of these accounts.

Having reviewed the financial position and future plans for the charity, the Trustees have identified no material uncertainties related to events or conditions that cast significant doubt on the charity's ability to continue its activities for the foreseeable future.

The long-term economic outlook remains uncertain and the team here at The Friars have put a few measures in place to ensure financial stability. This includes finding smarter ways of working, embarking on various cost saving initiatives and regular cashflow forecasting. We will continue to closely monitor the impact of any government decision making and the impact on the economy from any crisis, and we will actively respond to any rapid changes.

Therefore, the financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis given the undertaking of the Carmelite Charitable Trust to support the group and charity financially whilst they continue with the work to restore the activities at Aylesford to a sustainable basis.

The Friars, Aylesford
Company Limited by Guarantee
Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*
Year ended 31 December 2024

Judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty

The preparation of the financial statements requires management to make judgements, estimates and assumptions that affect the amounts reported. These estimates and judgements are continually reviewed and are based on experience and other factors, including expectations of future events that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances.

The significant estimates and judgements are estimating the expected useful life of tangible fixed assets, assessing the probability of the receipt of legacy income, determining the basis for allocating shared overhead costs between the charity and subsidiary company, and estimating future income and expenditure flows for the purpose of assessing going concern.

Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees to further any of the charity's purposes.

Designated funds are unrestricted funds earmarked by the trustees for particular future project or commitment.

Restricted funds are subjected to restrictions on their expenditure declared by the donor or through the terms of an appeal, and fall into one of two sub-classes: restricted income funds or endowment funds.

The tangible fixed assets fund represents the net book value of the land and buildings occupied by the charity and other tangible fixed assets held by the charity. Such assets are vital to the charity being able to carry out its charitable work and the value invested in the assets cannot, therefore, be realised in order to meet future expenditure or contingencies. To emphasise this point the net book value of the assets is represented by a specific tangible fixed assets fund on the balance sheet.

Non charitable trading funds comprise the retained surplus or accumulated deficit on the activities of Aylesford Priory Limited.

Incoming resources

All incoming resources are included in the statement of financial activities when entitlement has passed to the charity; it is probable that the economic benefits associated with the transaction will flow to the charity and the amount can be reliably measured. The following specific policies are applied to particular categories of income:

Income from donations or grants are recognised when there is evidence of entitlement to the gift, receipt is probable, and its amount can be measured reliably. In the event of donations or grants pledged but not received, the amount is accrued for where the receipt is considered probable. In the event that a donation or grant is subject to conditions that require a level of performance before the charitable parent company and/or group is entitled to the funds, the income is deferred and not recognised until either those conditions are fully met, or the fulfilment of those conditions is wholly within the control of the charitable parent company and/or group and it is probable that those conditions will be fulfilled in the reporting period.

Legacy income is recognised when receipt is probable, and entitlement is established.

Entitlement is taken as the earlier of the date on which either: the charity is aware that probate has been granted, the estate has been finalised, and notification has been made by the executor to the charity that a distribution will be made, or when a distribution is received from the estate. Receipt of a legacy, in whole or in part, is only considered probable when the amount can be

The Friars, Aylesford
Company Limited by Guarantee
Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*
Year ended 31 December 2024

measured reliably, and the charity has been notified of the executor's intention to make a distribution. Where legacies have been notified to the charity, or the charity is aware of the granting of probate, but the criteria for income recognition have not been met, then the legacy is treated as a contingent asset and disclosed if material. In the event that the gift is in the form of an asset other than cash, or a financial asset traded on a recognised stock exchange, recognition is subject to the value of the gift being reliably measurable with a degree of reasonable accuracy and the title of the asset having been transferred to the charity.

Income from donated goods is measured at the fair value of the goods unless this is impractical to measure reliably, in which case the value is derived from the cost to the donor or the estimated resale value. Donated facilities and services are recognised in the accounts when received if the value can be reliably measured. No amounts are included for the contribution of general volunteers.

Income from contracts for the supply of services is recognised with the delivery of the contracted service. This is classified as unrestricted funds unless there is a contractual requirement for it to be spent on a particular purpose and returned if unspent, in which case it may be regarded as restricted.

In accordance with the Charities SORP, volunteer hours are not recognised.

Income from trading activities is recognised to the extent that it is probable that the economic benefits will flow to the company and the revenue can be reliably measured. It is measured at fair value of the consideration received or receivable, excluding discounts, rebates, value added tax and other sales taxes.

Income from charitable activities, comprising income in connection with the shrine and retreats, is recognised to the extent that it is probable that the economic benefits will flow to the charity and the revenue can be reliably measured.

Income is deferred only when the charity has to fulfil conditions before becoming entitled to it or where the donor or funder has specified that the income is to be expended in a future accounting period.

No separate statement of financial activities has been presented for the charity alone, as permitted by s408 of the Companies Act 2006 and the Charities SORP FRS 102. The charity had total income in the year of £693,143 (2023: £563,622), total expenditure of £540,237 (2023: £570,857), resulting in net income of £152,906 (2023: net loss of £17,235).

Resources expended

Expenditure is recognised on an accruals basis as a liability is incurred. Expenditure includes any VAT which cannot be fully recovered, and is classified under headings of the statement of financial activities to which it relates:

Expenditure on raising funds includes the costs of all fundraising activities, events, non-charitable trading activities, and the sale of donated goods.

Expenditure on charitable activities includes all costs incurred by the group in undertaking activities that further its charitable aims for the benefit of its beneficiaries, including those support costs and costs relating to the governance of the group apportioned to charitable activities.

Other expenditure includes all expenditure that is neither related to raising funds for the charity nor part of its expenditure on charitable activities.

All costs are allocated to expenditure categories reflecting the use of the resource. Direct costs

The Friars, Aylesford
Company Limited by Guarantee
Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*
Year ended 31 December 2024

attributable to a single activity are allocated directly to that activity. Shared costs are apportioned between the activities they contribute to on a reasonable, justifiable and consistent basis.

Governance costs comprise the costs involving the public accountability of the charity (including audit costs) and costs in respect to its compliance with regulation and good practice.

Support costs and governance costs are apportioned based on area occupied, level of activity and staff time as appropriate.

Certain support costs incurred are shared between the charity and its subsidiary company, Aylesford Priory Limited. This allocation is based on area occupied, level of activity and staff time. Those costs which would be incurred whether or not Aylesford Priory Limited existed are allocated 100% to the charity.

Tangible assets

Tangible assets are initially recorded at cost and subsequently stated at cost less any accumulated depreciation and impairment losses. Any tangible assets carried at revalued amounts are recorded at the fair value at the date of revaluation less any subsequent accumulated depreciation and subsequent accumulated impairment losses.

All assets costing more than £1,000 with an expected useful life exceeding one year are capitalised.

No value is attached in these financial statements to the leasehold land occupied by the group and charity. The site is of historic importance generally and specifically to the Roman Catholic Church and the principal objective of the charity is to preserve the site for the enjoyment of future generations. As such, the asset meets the definition of heritage assets in the Charities SORP FRS 102 and is not valued for the purposes of these financial statements.

Depreciation

Depreciation is calculated so as to write off the cost or valuation of an asset, less its residual value, over the useful economic life of that asset as follows:

Leasehold improvements	- 4 - 10% Straight line
Plant and machinery	- 10 - 20% Straight line
Fixtures and equipment	- 20% straight line
Motor vehicles	- 20% straight line

Impairment of fixed assets

A review for indicators of impairment is carried out at each reporting date, with the recoverable amount being estimated where such indicators exist. Where the carrying value exceeds the recoverable amount, the asset is impaired accordingly. Prior impairments are also reviewed for possible reversal at each reporting date.

Stocks

Stocks are measured at the lower of cost and estimated selling price less costs to complete and sell. Cost includes all costs of purchase, costs of conversion and other costs incurred in bringing the stock to its present location and condition.

The Friars, Aylesford
Company Limited by Guarantee
Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*
Year ended 31 December 2024

Defined contribution plans

Contributions to defined contribution plans are recognised as an expense in the period in which the related service is provided. Prepaid contributions are recognised as an asset to the extent that the prepayment will lead to a reduction in future payments or a cash refund.

Financial instruments

Financial liabilities and equity instruments are classified according to the substance of the contractual arrangements entered into.

Debtors and creditors with stated interest rate and receivable or payable within one year are recorded at transaction price. Any losses arising from impairment are recognised in the profit and loss account in other administrative expenses.

Loans and borrowings are initially recognised at the transaction price including transaction costs. Subsequently, they are measured at amortised cost using the effective interest rate method, less impairment. If an arrangement constitutes a finance transaction it is measured at present value.

4. Donations, grants and legacies

Group	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2024 £	Total Funds 2023 £
Legacies	231,252	-	231,252	20,278
Donations	124,785	400	125,185	208,146
Grant from the Carmelite Charitable Trust	120,000	-	120,000	120,000
	<u>476,037</u>	<u>400</u>	<u>476,437</u>	<u>348,424</u>

5. Charitable activities

Group	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2024 £	Total Funds 2023 £
Shrine income	95,168	-	95,168	87,178
Car park contributions	3,575	-	3,575	4,101
	<u>98,743</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>98,743</u>	<u>91,279</u>

6. Other trading activities

Group	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2024 £	Total Funds 2023 £
Provision of conference facilities, guest accommodation, events and sale of books, gifts and refreshments	1,146,231	-	1,146,231	1,093,767
Other	55,487	-	55,487	64,316
Rental income	62,476	-	62,476	57,603
	<u>1,264,194</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,264,194</u>	<u>1,215,686</u>

The Friars, Aylesford
Company Limited by Guarantee
Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*
Year ended 31 December 2024

7. Other income

Group	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2024 £	Total Funds 2023 £
Business support scheme	24,946	-	24,946	2,000

8. Costs of other trading activities

Group	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2024 £	Total Funds 2023 £
Provision of conference facilities, guest accommodation, events and sale of books, gifts and refreshments	1,117,052	-	1,117,052	1,110,334
Other	44,737	-	44,737	51,723
	<u>1,161,789</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,161,789</u>	<u>1,162,057</u>

9. Expenditure on Upkeep of the Shrine at Aylesford

Group	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2024 £	Total Funds 2023 £
Direct costs	99,041	-	99,041	110,853
Other indirect staff costs	49,680	-	49,680	46,379
Premises and facilities	233,461	50,221	283,682	257,630
Office costs	9,050	-	9,050	14,352
Governance costs	4,897	-	4,897	11,220
	<u>396,129</u>	<u>50,221</u>	<u>446,350</u>	<u>440,434</u>

10. Other expenditure

Group	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2024 £	Total Funds 2023 £
Support of the Carmelite Friars of the Aylesford community	49,150	-	49,150	78,701

11. Taxation

The Friars, Aylesford is a registered charity and, therefore, is not liable to corporation tax or income tax on income or gains derived from its charitable activities, as they fall within the various exemptions available to registered charities.

Profits of Aylesford Priory Limited, if any, are subject to corporation tax calculated on the basis of tax rates and laws that have been enacted or substantially enacted by the balance sheet date.

The Friars, Aylesford
Company Limited by Guarantee
Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*
Year ended 31 December 2024

12. Net income/(expenditure)

Net income/(expenditure) is stated after charging/(crediting):

	2024	2023
Group	£	£
Staff costs	763,357	730,510
Auditor's remuneration		
. Statutory audit services	10,291	16,245
. Other services: tax compliance	2,000	2,400
Depreciation of tangible fixed assets	82,018	75,556
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

During the year, the company's auditor changed from Burgess Hodgson LLP to Burgess Hodgson Audit Limited following a change in legal structure of the audit firm. The responsible individual remains the same.

13. Staff costs

	2024	2023
Group	£	£
Staff costs during the year were as follows:		
Wages and salaries	702,575	665,373
Social security costs	40,987	36,663
Other pension costs	14,409	15,278
Other staff related costs	5,386	13,196
	<u>763,357</u>	<u>730,510</u>

	2024	2023
	£	£
Staff costs per function were as follows:		
Upkeep of the Shrine	140,320	133,657
Provision of conference facilities, guest accommodation, events and sale of books, gifts and refreshments	501,449	467,321
Support functions	121,588	129,532
	<u>763,357</u>	<u>730,510</u>

The average head count of employees during the year was 57 (2023: 54). The average number of full-time equivalent employees during the year is analysed as follows:

Group	2024	2023
	No.	No.
Shrine maintenance	5	5
Commercial trading operations	22	18
Support costs	3	3
	<u>30</u>	<u>26</u>

No employee received employee benefits of more than £60,000 during the year (2023: Nil).

The Friars, Aylesford
Company Limited by Guarantee
Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*
Year ended 31 December 2024

14. Trustee remuneration and expenses

A number of the trustees are members of the Carmelite Order and, as such, certain of their personal living expenses are borne by the charity, but they received no remuneration in connection with their duties as trustees during the year (2023: none). No incidental expenses were reimbursed to trustees (2023: None).

The charity has purchased trustees and individual insurance to indemnify the trustees or other officers against the consequences of any claim for a wrongful act. The insurance premium paid by the charity during the year totalled £893 (2023: £893) and provides cover up to a maximum of £1 million (2023: £1 million).

In addition to the trustees, the key management personnel of the charity in charge of directing and controlling, running, and operating the charity on a day-to-day basis during 2024 comprised the Operations and Business Development Manager, the Estates Manager, the Catering Manager, the Hospitality Manager and the Prior's and Trustees' Secretary. The total remuneration (including taxable benefits, employer's pension contributions and employers national insurance contributions) of these employees was £187,655 (2023: £182,450).

15. Tangible fixed assets

Group	Leasehold improvements	Plant and machinery	Fixtures and equipment	Motor vehicles	Office equipment	Total
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Cost						
At 1 January 2024	909,013	228,194	130,464	19,945	7,779	1,295,395
Additions	–	111,029	85,752	–	4,401	201,183
Disposals	–	–	–	–	(4,167)	(4,167)
At 31 December 2024	909,013	339,223	216,216	19,945	8,013	1,492,411
Depreciation						
At 1 January 2024	182,147	112,538	76,276	8,495	7,598	387,054
Charge for the year	49,362	16,292	13,893	2,290	181	82,018
Disposals	–	–	–	–	(4,167)	(4,167)
At 31 December 2024	231,509	128,830	90,169	10,785	3,612	464,905
Carrying amount						
At 31 December 2024	677,504	210,394	126,048	9,160	4,401	1,027,506
At 31 December 2023	726,866	115,656	54,188	11,450	181	908,341

The Friars, Aylesford
Company Limited by Guarantee
Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*
Year ended 31 December 2024

Charity	Leasehold improvements £	Plant and machinery £	Fixtures and equipment £	Motor vehicles £	Total £
Cost					
At 1 January 2024	909,013	96,218	69,122	19,945	1,094,298
Additions	—	36,166	32,979	—	69,145
At 31 December 2024	<u>909,013</u>	<u>132,384</u>	<u>102,101</u>	<u>19,945</u>	<u>1,163,443</u>
Depreciation					
At 1 January 2024	182,147	62,583	27,739	8,495	280,964
Charge for the year	49,362	4,342	11,168	2,290	67,162
At 31 December 2024	<u>231,509</u>	<u>66,925</u>	<u>38,907</u>	<u>10,785</u>	<u>348,126</u>
Carrying amount					
At 31 December 2024	<u>677,504</u>	<u>65,459</u>	<u>63,194</u>	<u>9,160</u>	<u>815,317</u>
At 31 December 2023	<u>726,866</u>	<u>33,635</u>	<u>41,383</u>	<u>11,450</u>	<u>813,334</u>

The charity's objective is to promote for the benefit of the public the restoration, presentation and maintenance of the historic buildings, amenities and grounds of The Friars, Aylesford. The freehold title to The Friars, Aylesford is held by The Carmelite Charitable Trust, a registered charity and a connected entity to the charity.

In 2002 the charity was granted a 99-year lease over the site and pays an annual rent of £nil to the Carmelite Charitable Trust. No value has been assigned to this lease in these financial statements. The site is of historic importance generally and specifically to the Roman Catholic Church and, as noted above, the principal objective of the charity is to preserve the site for the enjoyment of future generations. As such, the asset meets the definition of heritage assets in the Charities SORP FRS 102 and is not valued for the purposes of these financial statements.

16. Investments

	Group 2024 £	Group 2023 £	Charity 2024 £	Charity 2023 £
Investment in subsidiary company	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>

All investments shown above are held at valuation.

Investment in subsidiary company

The charity holds 100% beneficial ownership interest in its wholly owned subsidiary, Aylesford Priory Limited (company no. 06740190).

This holding was acquired on incorporation of the company on 10 November 2008. Their registered office is, The Friars, Aylesford Priory, Aylesford, Kent, ME20 7BX.

The following is a summary of the financial statements of Aylesford Priory Limited for the year ended 31 December 2024, which have been included in the consolidated financial statements.

The Friars, Aylesford
Company Limited by Guarantee
Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 December 2024

	2024 £	2023 £
Turnover	1,171,177	1,093,767
Cost of sales	(967,086)	(941,963)
Gross profit	204,091	151,804
Administrative expenditure	(149,967)	(168,372)
Net profit for the period before Gift Aid	54,124	(16,568)
Gift Aid to The Friars, Aylesford	-	-
Net Profit for the year	54,124	(16,568)
Accumulated profit at 1 January 2023	(278,268)	(261,700)
Retained profit at 31 December 2024	(224,144)	(278,268)

At 31 December 2024 the company had total net liabilities of £224,143 (2023: total net liabilities of £278,267 represented by called up share capital of £1 (2023: £1) and negative reserves of £224,144 (2022: £278,268)).

17. Stocks

Group	2024 £	2023 £
Raw materials and consumables	35,733	36,916

18. Debtors

	Group		Charity	
	2024 £	2023 £	2024 £	2023 £
Trade debtors	24,956	45,779	10,584	3,553
Amounts due from the Carmelite Charitable Trust	2,653	7,065	2,411	6,842
Other debtors	8,415	9,097	5,343	6,522
Legacies receivable	228,900	18,051	228,900	18,051
Prepayments	72,166	72,285	66,057	65,466
Social Security and Other Taxes	-	418	-	-
Amounts due from Aylesford Priory Limited	-	-	443,606	502,321
	<u>337,089</u>	<u>152,694</u>	<u>756,901</u>	<u>602,755</u>

The Friars, Aylesford
Company Limited by Guarantee
Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*
Year ended 31 December 2024

19. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	Group		Charity	
	2024	2023	2024	2023
	£	£	£	£
Expense creditors	76,729	31,329	48,949	13,027
Other creditors	27,990	39,136	1,591	1,366
Amounts due to Carmelite Charitable Trust	3,667	3,667	3,667	3,667
Accruals and deferred income	95,462	58,846	17,127	13,113
	<u>203,848</u>	<u>132,978</u>	<u>71,334</u>	<u>31,173</u>

Income has been deferred where it relates clearly to future periods and/or where the charity has not yet met the conditions for recognising the income. The movements in deferred income are analysed below:

	2024	2023
	£	£
Brought Forward	17,780	23,243
Released in the year	(17,780)	(23,243)
New designations	<u>28,548</u>	<u>17,780</u>
	<u>28,548</u>	<u>17,780</u>

20. Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year

	Group 2024	Group 2023	Charity 2024	Charity 2023
	£	£	£	£
Amounts due to Carmelite Charitable Trust	<u>47,667</u>	<u>51,333</u>	<u>47,667</u>	<u>51,333</u>

The Carmelite Charitable Trust loaned £55,000 to The Friars to assist with the works on the Artisans' Yard project. The repayment term for this loan is 15 years with no interest. This implies a yearly repayment figure of £3,667.

21. Restricted funds

The income funds of the charity include restricted funds comprising the following unexpended balances of donations and grants held on trusts to be applied for specific purposes:

	At 1 January 2024	Incoming resources	Expenditure	Transfer General Reserves Funds	At 31 December 2024
Group	£	£	£	£	£
Restoration fund	328,527	400	(49,362)	(95,208)	184,357
Peace garden fund	16,914	-	(859)		16,055
	<u>345,441</u>	<u>400</u>	<u>(50,221)</u>	<u>(95,208)</u>	<u>200,412</u>

The Friars, Aylesford
Company Limited by Guarantee
Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*
Year ended 31 December 2024

Restoration fund

This fund represents donations received from the Carmelite Charitable Trust for maintenance projects which are only to be carried out after approval by the Trustees of the Carmelite Charitable Trust together with grants from the Programme of Major Works Scheme which is part of the Cultural Recovery Funds towards repairs to the roof of the church situated on the site of The Friars, Aylesford. The transfer from the restoration fund to unrestricted funds represents eligible expenditure incurred and capitalised during the year.

Peace garden

This fund represents donations received for the creation of a peace garden at the entrance to the Friars.

22. Analysis of charitable funds

Group	General funds £	Tangible fixed asset fund £	Non - Charitable trading funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2024 £
Fund balances at 31 December 2024 are represented by:					
Tangible fixed assets	-	815,317	212,189	-	1,027,506
Net current (liabilities) assets	746,984	-	(436,328)	200,412	511,066
Non Current Liabilities	(47,667)	-	-	-	(47,667)
Total net (liabilities) assets	699,317	815,317	(224,141)	200,412	1,490,905

Group	General funds £	Tangible fixed asset fund £	Non - Charitable trading funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2023 £
Fund balances at 31 December 2023 are represented by:					
Tangible fixed assets	-	813,336	95,005	-	908,341
Net current (liabilities) assets	454,698	-	(373,273)	345,441	426,866
Non Current Liabilities	(51,333)	-	-	-	(51,333)
Total net (liabilities) assets	403,365	813,336	(278,268)	345,441	1,283,874

The Friars, Aylesford
Company Limited by Guarantee
Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 December 2024

Charity	General funds £	Tangible fixed asset fund £	Restricted funds £	Total 2024 £
Fund balances at 31 December 2024 are represented by:				
Tangible fixed assets	-	815,317	-	815,317
Investments	1			1
Net current (liabilities) assets	746,984	-	200,412	947,396
Non Current Liabilities	(47,667)	-	-	(47,667)
Total net (liabilities) assets	699,318	815,317	200,412	1,715,047

Charity	General funds £	Tangible fixed asset fund £	Restricted funds £	Total 2023 £
Fund balances at 31 December 2023 are represented by:				
Tangible fixed assets	-	813,334	-	813,334
Investments	1			1
Net current (liabilities) assets	454,697	-	345,441	800,138
Non Current Liabilities	(51,333)	-	-	(51,333)
Total net (liabilities) assets	403,365	813,334	345,441	1,562,140

23. Analysis of changes in net debt

	At 1 Jan 2024 £	Cash flows £	At 31 Dec 2024 £
Cash at bank and in hand	370,234	(28,142)	342,092
Debt due within one year	(3,667)	(225)	(3,892)
Debt due after one year	(51,333)	3,667	(47,666)
	<u>315,234</u>	<u>(24,700)</u>	<u>290,534</u>

24. Related parties

The Friars, Aylesford is connected to the Carmelite Charitable Trust by virtue of the fact that several of the trustees of the charitable company are also trustees of the Carmelite Charitable Trust (Charity Registration No. 1061342).

The Friars, Aylesford
Company Limited by Guarantee
Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*
Year ended 31 December 2024

The transactions with the Carmelite Charitable Trust during the year are as follows:

The Friars, Aylesford received an unrestricted grant of £120,000 (2023: £120,000) and rent of £nil (2023: £nil) from the Carmelite Charitable Trust.

At 31 December 2024 The Carmelite Charitable Trust owed £42,918 to The Friars, Aylesford (2023: £47,935 owed to The Friars, Aylesford).

The Carmelite Charitable Trust also loaned £55,000 to The Friars to assist with the works on the Artisans' Yard project in 2023. The repayment terms for this loan is 15 years with no interest. This implies a yearly repayment figure of £3,667.

The Carmelite Charitable Trust holds the freehold of Aylesford Priory. No rent was paid by the charity in the period. During the period the Carmelite Charitable Trust carried out various improvements to the property as permitted under the lease. These improvements have been capitalised in the accounts of the Carmelite Charitable Trust and are not included in the accounts of the charity. However, the charity and its subsidiary absorbed all the general running costs of the Priory.

The Carmelite Charitable Trust has confirmed that it will continue to provide financial support to the group as and when required to enable it to meet its liabilities as they fall due over the short to medium term.

The charity has taken advantage of the exemption provided by FRS 102 for the requirement to disclose transactions with its subsidiary undertaking.

THE FRIARS, AYLESFORD

England & Wales - Charity number 1068518

Accounts

The Friars, Aylesford

Annual Report and Consolidated Financial Statements

Year ended 31 December 2023

Charity Registration Number
1068518

Company Registration Number
03487590 (England and Wales)

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Reference and administrative details of the Charity, its Trustees and its advisers

Trustees	Rev Michael Cox, O. Carm, Rev Brendan Grady, O. Carm. Rev Patrick O’Keeffe, O. Carm. Rev Francis Kemsley, O.Carm. (Deceased 8 October 2023) Isabel Bodunrin
Advisers to the Trustees	Mr Jonathan Louth Mrs Jan Wilkinson Mr Simon Howell (Resigned 30 January 2024)
Secretary	Mrs Clare Abbotson
Registered office	The Friars Aylesford Kent ME20 7BX
Charity registration number	1068518
Company registration number	03487590 (England and Wales)
Auditor	Buzzacott LLP 130 Wood Street London EC2V 6DL
Principal bankers	The Royal Bank of Scotland plc 62/63 Threadneedle Street London EC2R 8LA
Solicitors	Pothecary Witham Weld 84 Eccleston Square London SW1V 1PX

FOREWORD

On behalf of the board of Trustees and Directors I present to you the financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2023.

We knew from the outset that the budget was ambitious and difficult to achieve, but we were fortunate to receive a donation from the Carmelite Charitable Trust, a benefactor and a small grant from Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council which resulted in a smaller loss than expected. Our retail operation stood out as a highlight, with a turnover of almost £1.1m which was 6.6% up on the previous year. But the steep increase in minimum wage (9.7%) coupled with the continued rise in energy prices and depreciation massively impacted on our ability to break even or make a profit. Rising supplier costs and high inflation continued in the year 2023 and it was challenging to retain staff as was the case for the hospitality industry nationwide. The group made a negative contribution of £23,803, a much better outcome than originally forecasted.

During the year, we invested heavily in our IT infrastructure, enabling better Wi-Fi reception in our conference rooms and guest rooms and started refurbishing our guest rooms in the New Block and the conference rooms.

2023 saw the return to a full complement of regular pilgrimages. Twenty-two pilgrimages in total, the highest so far since the 2020 Covid restrictions.

We continued acting responsibly as stewards of the buildings and the physical environment by completing the final repairs to the chapel roofs and repaired the roof to the first aid hut. We started refurbishing the guest rooms in the new block and repaired the dormer windows for the farmhouse Buildings. We also replaced the hot water boiler.

There was greater focus on the Artisans' Yard being developed with the help and guidance from our advisers Jonathan Louth and Simon Howell and the contract lease was finally signed between respective parties. We remain confident this will help increase footfall and rental income in the years to come.

The Working Party continued their work in ensuring staff achieved a meaningful and positive change at The Friars. The Board of Directors and Trustees met with staff to reintroduce the vision, mission, ethos, and values of Aylesford.

Thinking about the future, we will prioritise our ongoing commitment to improve our trading operations and benefit the charity. We will devise a strong growth strategy and ensure that our financial plans are sustainable. We have so much to be proud of and there is more to do to make this place an amazing place to visit. Throughout this report, you can read about great examples of commitment, dedication and faith as people come together to build and advocate for a better future. We remain grateful to all our volunteers, donors, supporters of The Friars and to CCT for their continued support.

Sadly, we lost Fr Francis Kemsley, The Prior of Aylesford Priory after a short illness. His dedication and commitment to The Friars will be one that we will forever be grateful for.

As ever, I wish to offer sincere thanks to our staff, Board of Trustees, Directors, and advisers for their contribution to the success of The Friars.

Pearl Nyafli
Operations & Business Development Manager

Trustees' report Year ended 31 December 2023

The Trustees, who are the directors for the purposes of company law, are pleased to present their statutory report together with the consolidated financial statements of The Friars, Aylesford (the "Charity") and its subsidiary Aylesford Priory Limited for the year ended 31 December 2023. This report has been prepared in accordance with part VI of the Charities Act 2011.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out on pages 42 to 46 of the attached financial statements and comply with the charitable company's Memorandum and Articles of Association, applicable laws and Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice, applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102).

These financial statements consolidate the activities of The Friars, Aylesford and its wholly owned subsidiary Aylesford Priory Limited. The subsidiary company, which manages the commercial activities, has been trading since 1 January 2010.



The Friars, Aylesford

Historic Overview

Aylesford Priory, better known as The Friars, first came into the hands of the Carmelites in 1242. There are a number of medieval buildings still standing that are Grade I listed. They include two walks of the Cloisters, the Cloister Chapel, Priors' Hall, and Pilgrims' Hall which still provide hospitality to guests and pilgrims. One building provides accommodation to a community of Carmelite Friars. The Community returned in 1949 after leaving at the Dissolution of the Monasteries in 1538. A new Gothic style outdoor Shrine was built. Work began in 1958. It has a fine collection of religious modern art and was recently Grade II* listed.

Aylesford Priory is now a 44 acre site of significant religious and historical interest, attracting around 100,000 to 120,000 visitors in a typical year. At its heart is a major religious shrine, the Shrine of Our Lady of Mount Carmel and St Simon Stock. The open air Marian shrine has a wide piazza which has room for up to 6,000 pilgrims, and a series of five linked chapels of varying sizes.

Historic Overview (continued)

Our surviving medieval buildings are now partly used as a home to some members (friars) of the Carmelite Community, the remainder forming part of our hospitality facilities, our guest house and conference suite, which with additional newer buildings can now accommodate up to 100 overnight visitors. The site also has a tea room and a gift shop located in a refurbished 16th century thatched barn, and some auxiliary buildings which are offered for rental to individuals and local businesses.

From 1949 Aylesford Priory formed a part of a Carmelite Charitable Trust, which covered England and Wales. However, in 1997, the management of Aylesford Priory was devolved to a separate charitable company, The Friars, Aylesford. The ownership of the site and buildings remains with the overall charity, namely the Carmelite Charitable Trust but the administration, the maintenance and the development of the site and the management of the commercial activities have been entrusted to The Friars, Aylesford, and its wholly owned subsidiary company, Aylesford Priory Limited formed in 2010.

Objectives and Activities

The purpose of The Friars, Aylesford, as set out in the Memorandum of Association, is primarily to maintain and develop the Aylesford Priory site as a Marian shrine and retreat/conference centre at the service of the Roman Catholic community as well as other churches, people of other faiths, groups and individuals who wish to use the facilities. The trustees have given careful consideration to how activities of The Friars meet their statutory duty and have considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit. This report sets out how our activities benefit those who visit The Friars, Aylesford Priory, as well as the local and wider community affected by our presence and outreach activities.

Our Vision

A meeting place and centre of Christian spirituality with a Carmelite community at its heart; a space where people of all ages and all faiths and none, will find a welcome, where the sacred is expressed through prayer, the arts and nature.

Be still and know that I am God (Ps 46.10)

Our Mission

- ◆ To work in partnership with others
- ◆ To be inclusive
- ◆ To act responsibly as stewards of the buildings and the physical environment
- ◆ To be accountable to all our stakeholders

Our Values

*Love one another as I have loved you
(Jn 15.12)*

Our Objectives

- ◆ Such charitable purposes which advance the Roman Catholic religion in any part of Great Britain.
- ◆ To promote for the benefit of the public the restoration, presentation and maintenance of the historic buildings, amenities and grounds of The Friars, Aylesford.

Our Ethos

- ◆ We derive our values from the life, message and teachings of Jesus Christ and our inspiration comes from our models, the prophet Elijah, the Blessed Virgin Mary and the saints of the Carmelite Family.
- ◆ The basis of our work is an expression of our commitment to serve the people through friendship, hospitality and a desire to live out the values that Christ preached.

Principal Activities

We are pleased to report that The Friars, Aylesford principal activities fully met our key objectives of partnership, inclusivity, stewardship, and accountability.

Commercial Trading (Aylesford Priory Limited)

Aylesford Priory Limited, Company Registration Number 6740190 (England & Wales), is a wholly owned subsidiary of The Friars, Aylesford. The company's principal activity is to provide a profit on commercial activities at Aylesford Priory to financially support:

- ◆ The pastoral activity of the Charity
- ◆ The promotion of the benefit to the public
- ◆ The restoration, presentation and maintenance of the historic buildings, amenities and grounds of The Friars, Aylesford

The trading activity is primarily the provision of conference facilities, guests' catering and accommodation, events and sale of books, gifts, and refreshments.

Daily visitors

We continue to live by our vision: "a meeting place and centre of Christian spirituality with a Carmelite community at its heart; a space where people of all ages and all faiths and none, will find a welcome, where the sacred is expressed through prayer, the arts and nature". We provide free access 365 days a year to all visitors of any age or nationality to enjoy our place of peace, our venue for gathering, our community of prayer. In 2023, we saw local visitor numbers increase. This is the first-time post-pandemic that these numbers have risen.



Visitors enjoying a picnic on the lawn

Principal Activities (continued)

Pilgrimages

2023 saw the return of most of our regular pilgrimages and we hosted 22 pilgrimages, the highest so far since Covid. This is 3 Pilgrimages more than we hosted last year 2022. One significant change has been in the mode of transport used by Pilgrims. Whereas in pre-covid times, around 40-50% would arrive by coach, with the rest travelling by car or minibus, in 2023 the figure for coaches fell to around 25%. This places significant pressure on car and minibus parking. For the larger pilgrimages, the Knights of St Columba act as parking stewards. In dry weather they are able to direct cars to the fields adjacent to the main and Tea Rooms car parks but in wet weather this is not always possible. Therefore, consideration should be given to extending the hard-standing areas for parking. The reduction in the use of coaches would seem to largely be accounted for by a significant increase in the costs in coach hire.

The Polish Pilgrimage continues to be one of the biggest which attracted more than 2,000 people. Other pilgrimages included the Tamils, Italian, Divine Mercy, Legion of Mary, Caribbean, Goan, Filipino, Kerala Catholic Chaplaincy and Knights of St Columba. Total number of pilgrims for the year was almost 8,000.



Southwark Union of Catholic Mothers Pilgrimage in May 2023 with the Archbishop John Wilson

Trustees' report Year ended 31 December 2023

Principal Activities (continued)

Pilgrimages (continued)



Fr Ged Walsh with the Little Flower Pilgrimage in October 2023



Fr Mícheál O'Neill and Rosie Bradshaw with the Travelling Pilgrims' icon

Principal Activities (continued)

Pilgrimages (continued)



Bishop Patrick Lynch with the Relics of the Scottish Saints at the Knights of St Columba Pilgrimage in June 2023

The Knights of St Columba brought the relics of the Scottish saints St Andrew, St Columba, and St Margaret here and the day was led by Bishop Patrick Lynch, S.S.C.C.

Educational tour groups

We offer educational tours for groups covering the history of the Carmelite Order here at Aylesford, the artwork, and the development of Aylesford Priory. These tours are of interest to historical, art and other educational groups and we often welcome foreign groups visiting the UK.

Schools programme

The number of schools bringing pupils for day retreats increased significantly in 2023 with 27 schools visiting compared to 14 in 2022. With the significant increase in the cost of coach hire, it is noticeable that wherever possible, schools are making multiple small bookings and using their own school transport.

Good use continues to be made of the North Barn where schools with larger numbers hire the Barn as a base for the day. The “Welcome from a friar” slot at the start of their visit continues to be very popular. Most schools join the 12 noon Mass, but a significant minority have their own Mass or liturgy in one of the Chapels. St Joseph’s Chapel being a favourite with schools.

Principal Activities (continued)

Schools Programme (continued)



Pupils on a school visit

Outreach programme for schools and young adults

Two multi-school events, The “One Body in Christ” and Mass proved very popular again in 2023 following on from its successful launch last year. On Thursday 8th June, Southwark Education Commission organised again The “One Body in Christ” event for all Kent Primary schools which was attended by over a thousand pupils and their teachers with a Eucharistic Liturgy on the Main Shrine. Later in the year, on 27th September, Kent Catholic Schools partnership organised a Mass for over 850 pupils who filled the entire Main Shrine. The principal celebrant was Bishop Paul Hendricks.

Below is a table showing the total number of visitors received via schools and parish:

Visitors	2023
Pilgrims	7,780
School pupils	7,379
Parish/Group visitors	3,720
Totals	18,879

Principal Activities (continued)

Retreats

We continue to offer a place of retreat for individuals and groups. Members of the Carmelite Community (the friars) often work alongside groups that come to stay at The Friars, Aylesford and individuals are welcome to join community worship. As well as this work, the friars organise a few retreats each year which are open to anyone who wishes to participate. We successfully ran a series of Lent Talks each Saturday from 25 February to 1 April. In summer a series of talks took place relating to Titus Brandsma (Carmelite Saint) which were well attended.

People who have experienced bereavement are encouraged to participate in the "Grief and Loss" retreats which were held in March and October. We grieve, remember, hope, and give thanks for our loved ones in the light of the Resurrection of Jesus.

It is disappointing to see that residential retreats in recent years have seen a downward trend.

Fundraising activities

To maintain the historic buildings at The Friars and to financially support the free pastoral offers to visitors, there is a continued programme of fundraising events. These include Summer and Christmas fayres, musical and dramatic productions. We do not use professional fundraisers or participators. The Summer and Christmas Fayres remained our biggest fundraising activity and in 2023 they brought in a combined income of more than £64k.



Patsy and Hugh helping at the 2023 summer fayre

Principal Activities (continued)

Fundraising activities (continued)

The support of our volunteers continues to be crucial, and I would like to acknowledge the support we receive from Hugh and Patsy Mckearney during our summer and Christmas fayres. Last year, Patsy singlehandedly raised almost £5,000 in raffle ticket sales. We are fortunate to still have volunteers such as Patsy who give their time to support our fundraising efforts. We are also extremely grateful for the contributions we have received through individual donors and legacies. It is a source of great hope and inspiration that so many continue to generously support The Friars despite the terrible cost of living crisis.



Mountain bike aerial display at the 2023 summer fayre



The mayor with our kitchen staff at the 2023 summer fayre

Principal Activities (continued)

Fundraising Activities (continued)



Summer fayre 2023

100+ Club – This is a great way of supporting The Friars. A special thank you to Mike and Judy Collins for the many years they have run this club.

Not only do we fundraise for our charity The Friars, but we also fundraise to support other charities like CAFOD and Mary's Meals which are charities that support poverty in countries around the world. We also collected food for Maidstone Christian Care Food Bank, a charity that supports the homeless and needy

Volunteers

There are many volunteers who help The Friars in their charitable activities, giving their time and invaluable support. Volunteers play a crucial role in the running of The Friars and without their support we would be unable to operate in the way we do today. We are extremely grateful to all our volunteers who give their time year in year out. Many of our volunteers have been helping for many years and continue to be an integral part of The Friars. Among the regular worshipping community at The Friars, volunteers support us at social events and fundraising activities. In 2023, we had over 20 volunteers helping with the maintenance of the grounds and gardens, chapels, and events. The volunteer numbers are dwindling, and we need a strategy to attract new members.

The Gardening Group

Here is a message from Hugh McKearney, member of the Peace Garden Volunteer Group:

"The Friars, shrouded in its history and ancient buildings, is a beautiful and peaceful place which encompasses a spiritual haven for quiet reflection and silent contemplation, away from the maddening crowds of the world beyond its boundaries.

Principal Activities (continued)

Volunteers (continued)

Pilgrims and visitors are attracted to the Friars from all over the country and the world. It quietly enthruses them to offer something in return to preserve this repository of a Holy Shrine here at Aylesford "in England's green and pleasant land."

The Peace Garden, though only twelve years old by comparison, supports the Friars' ethos. The garden is, however, a non-denominational enclave secluded by long high Twelfth Century walls beyond the Archway of the Gatehouse. The garden is laid out in five separate smaller gardens with conventional seating to facilitate a period of quiet relaxation and peaceful reflection. It also stimulates an opportunity for visitors to amble along quietly appreciating the colour and beauty of God's creation.

The garden was constructed over a period of fourteen months by a group of volunteers professionally directed and enthusiastically motivated by Jayne and Bernard Hoose. It was officially opened in April 2012 by the famous horticulturist Tom Hart-Dyke of Lullingstone Castle, Eynsford, Kent. It was constructed based on the five elements; the gardens are reflected horticulturally, by a variety of plants and shrubs depicting Fire, Wind and Water.

Some of the original volunteers are still maintaining and nurturing these shrubs and plants and replacing them where needed. Our dedication is greatly appreciated by many visitors from far and wide, which encourages us to continue undertaking the delightful tasks for as long as God permits.

The volunteers of diverse nationalities, though now fewer in number, have formed a companionable and therapeutic group, whilst still sustaining the care and nursing attention required by this peaceful haven. God creates nature, but He needs a little help with the weeding. We seek to encourage more volunteers to join our group so that this attractive enclosure, close to the Holy Shrine and Rosary Way, may continue for as long as possible to attract visitors and pilgrims to the Friars, Aylesford". *Hugh McKearney*



The Peace Garden

Principal activities (continued)

Volunteers (continued)

The Gardening Group assists the Estates Team to maintain the grounds and usually meet and garden every Thursday and Saturday.

We also have the Pastoral Team which has transformed into a regular Prayer Group and will continue to support the pastoral ministry of The Friars. The Team, which includes five volunteers, meets regularly to help plan and support retreat programmes and enhance the pilgrim experience. The group members develop prayer opportunities, pilgrim tours and ways to improve the pastoral areas of the site.

We are privileged to have a small number of professionally qualified lay advisors who hold honorary positions and regularly attend Trustees' meetings for The Friars and Directors' meetings for its subsidiary trading company Aylesford Priory Limited.

We also hosted volunteers from Europe who helped in our Catering and Estates department. These international volunteers come here to improve their English and learn some life skills and we are grateful for their support.

Looking into the future, our vision is to have an inclusive culture of volunteering. Everyone will be an advocate for volunteers and will understand the value they bring to The Friars. Volunteering will be embedded in organisational wide planning and decision making.

Once again, the trustees would wish to record their recognition of the professionalism and commitment of all their staff, volunteers, advisors, and the individual members of the Carmelite Community. Their dedication and positive approach are very much appreciated in organisational wide planning and decision making.

Achievements and Performance in 2023

Despite our best efforts, due to external economic factors, we struggled to break even. The Hospitality industry nationwide continued to be challenged because of rising prices, inflation, a steep increase in minimum wage and we were no different. Details in the table below illustrate our few achievements in 2023:

<i>What we said we would do in 2023</i>	<i>What we did in 2023</i>
1. Deliver the agreed 2023 budget	The group posted a combined loss of £23.8k with APL making a loss of £16.6k and TFA making a loss of £7.2k. We had planned for a larger deficit.
2. Improve our IT infrastructure	To remain innovative and competitive, we invested in our technical needs and built greater agility in our IT operations. We leveraged our cloud-based security. Our IT spend was increased by more than 56%
3. Invest in priority capital and maintenance projects	We completed the final phase of the chapel roofs, repaired the roof to the First Aid Hut and continued with refurbishing guest rooms in the New Block. We repaired two boilers and repaired the Dorma windows for the Farmhouse lodging.
4. Work with Partners	The value of Partnership is central to the work we do. We finalised the contract for the Artisans' Yard project with the view to commence works from January 2024.
5. Green Energy Initiatives	The green energy focus group was formed, and initial strategy formulated. More to be done in 2024 once the plans for the Young Person's project have been finalised.
6. Volunteers	We continue to actively seek more volunteers to help us run our estate in various capacities, but we were not very successful in increasing volunteer numbers.

Fulfilling our mission 2023

Working in partnership with others

It has already been mentioned that The Friars remains an important retreat and pilgrimage centre. Several groups would come to pray and worship at the Shrine each year, and it is pleasing to see that pilgrimage attendance is truly back to pre-pandemic levels.



Group worship at the Shrine

The Friars, Aylesford continues to play host to the Aylesford Farmers' Market, the Vintage Motorcycle Rally, The All-Ford Car Show, The Kit Customer American Car Show and The Woodturners' Exhibition.

Theatre at The Friars continues to be very popular and again we hosted The Changeling Theatre Company, and they performed Love's Labour's Lost in the month of July.

We continued to work with Maidstone Churches Winter Shelter programme, which provides shelter for the homeless in winter months and assist by laundering their bed linen.

As part of our ecumenical involvement, we continued to welcome different groups, have mass, give tours, and hear confessions. One of the Carmelite friars is a chaplain to a local Catholic school and another friar sits on the Rochester Cathedral council.

Be inclusive

Classes offered by Aylesford Pottery were on the rise again this year. They continued to offer classes to groups with learning disabilities, such as Emotional Behaviour Disorder. Pottery classes have increased so much so that there are plans to expand their buildings to accommodate more students.

The Brocard Room has continued to be a very popular regular meeting place for Aylesford Scouts, school groups, the Syro-Malabar group, the Enamellers and Woodturners.

Fulfilling our mission 2023 (continued)

Be inclusive (continued)

We are pleased to continue to support The Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) who have been offered a much bigger room as their numbers attending meetings have increased.

Our guesthouse continued to welcome people from all walks of life, from all backgrounds, abilities, ages, and faiths and none. We continued to host mindfulness training groups, such as yoga and reiki groups.

The Spiritual Direction group has also been offered a room for their training. As their needs grow, the need for more break-out rooms has become a challenge, but we remain hopeful of meeting their requirements.

We continued to support our local schools by welcoming four students for work experience who all enjoyed their time working in the different departments of The Friars.

We continued to put our lottery funded North Barn to good use by hosting religious groups. The Woodturners also held their yearly exhibitions here, showcasing their magnificent artworks to the public. We hired the North Barn to couples for their wedding receptions and also hired it out for wakes, parties and meetings.

We hosted several events in our 13th Century Pilgrims' Hall.



Pilgrimage group using the Shrine.

Acting responsibly as stewards of the buildings and the physical environment

Our buildings and the majority of the site are in continual use by worshippers, visitors, lodgers, and tenants, conference and overnight guests as well as the Community, our Staff, and our Volunteers. The activities mean there is a continual attendance and vicarious inspection throughout the year. In this way, nascent or emerging risks and emergencies are ordinarily spotted or reported, following which the estate staff can make an immediate assessment.

Fulfilling our mission 2023 (continued)

Acting responsibly as stewards of the buildings and the physical environment
(continued)

The buildings are additionally risk-assessed annually, and the Quinquennial architect is also vigilant when attending formal maintenance or construction projects under their guidance. All large events have a Duty Manager and a First Aider assigned to them and all hospitality/conference areas fall under the leadership of the hospitality team. Thus, we believe our site and facilities are as safe as is reasonably possible for the many visitors we welcome.

Over the years the Carmelite Charitable Trust (CCT) has supported and promoted work with young people and young adults. This main opportunity is an exciting new project for people aged 18 - 30. The Carmelite Charitable Trust is developing a residential volunteer community based at The Friars. The vision for the project comes from our desire to accompany and collaborate with young people, to share our experience and Carmelite experience and story, and to journey together in finding new ways to live and share in the mission of the province.

The new project commenced during 2021 was submitted for planning permission and listed building consent during 2022 and will offer greater support for young people and further collaboration with young adults. At the development stage the initiative is already producing resources for visiting groups and offers input and support to large 'youth' and school pilgrimages. Subject to meeting planning and building regulation conditions, it is expected the buildings to be based in the walled garden at The Friars will offer programmes and support to visiting groups: we have raised the relationship between CCT and TFA as regards appropriate lease back provisions which will be progressed with legal advice.

Each year an experience of community, service, prayer, and formation will be offered to young adults from different countries and backgrounds. The new team will also provide face to face programmes for visiting groups and engage with aspects of the day-to-day life of Aylesford Priory. Some of the physical facilities are expected to contribute to a renewal of some of the site infrastructure: electrics, water supplies, drainage and, potentially, joint development of renewal energy generation on the site.

Proactive exploration of opportunities for collaborative partner organisations and for the improved use of the whole site took a greater pace. Talks that began in 2022 with the potters and upholsterers with regards to developing an artisan project which would benefit them, and The Friars Aylesford progressed to a lease to the Upholsterers for the renovation and re-use of ten stores and maintenance and workshop buildings. Whilst TFA will receive a rent on these areas at their unimproved value, the Charities Act report from Sibley Pares approved extension of an existing discounted value to be reduced every five years together with an annual rent increase in line with RPI. The Upholsterer will invest reasonable, foreseeable renovation costs and reap the benefit of the buildings: a sub-lease structure will permit other artisans to take up spare space in the Artisans' Yard.

Subject to TFA accommodating part-time hire groups elsewhere, an option for the Potters to move their activities partially into the Brocard room beside the pottery will bring similar benefits, enabling other artisans to occupy two vacated buildings. In 2023, delays with the Upholsterers' lease structure means the Pottery discussion will delay into 2024.

Fulfilling our mission 2023 (continued)

Acting responsibly as stewards of the buildings and the physical environment
(continued)

The Estates team met six times this year, ordinarily attended by the quinquennial architect, and the group continued to report on significant maintenance concerns to the trustees. Mini refurbishment work continued in some of the guest rooms in the New Block. The architect was confirmed in three long-standing briefs for extended vehicle hard-standing for major events, secure site gates, en-suite and services improvements on guest rooms on the Old Block. These will need planning and/or listed building applications in 2023 before proceeding on site.

Principal masonry and other fabric repairs [especially the tall South wall of the walled garden] arising from the 2013 QI report and subsequent inspections were deferred during 2022 into 2023, then - in part due to the quinquennial architect being over-stretched - are expected now to fall into 2024.

Over the previous two years a major restoration of the Grade 2* shrine had been taking place with two government grants and other shrine decorations progressed: in 2023, these were completed, and the Wi-Fi/contactless donation equipment extended to the shrines, which all but completed the significant IT project, bringing internet facilities to all our conference rooms and the Shrine area.

St. Anne's Chapel warranted continued environmental monitoring during 2023, assessing why humidity and condensation occur in St Anne's Chapel continued and, though the Kossowski ceiling/sgraffito wall damages were repaired, deterioration was not fully arrested: it will come forward for consideration after the further monitoring. Similarly, restoration work for some of the ceramics along the Rosary Way including a major project on the Scapular Shrine was deferred to 2024.

Conversation was initiated with CCT regarding the lease structure and the balance of responsibilities for capital works, for planned maintenance and for running repairs/wear & tear: there is an increasing sense that the size of the estate and the size or capacity of the trading company are mismatched if the major costs are to be borne only by local income. CCT agreed during 2023 to make grants available from Province funds in the foreseeable future, pending potential reorganisation, principally where these arise out of death legacies, which make reference to The Friars.

One concern discussed by estates group is the evident lack of time or resources to keep the grounds in 'best' order or to open up more and alternative uses of the wider estate: a proposition that further tenants and lodgers might be welcomed to take licenses and make beneficial use of parts of the estate (such as the tree surgeon and the IT consultant who became tenants on site during 2021/22).

Fulfilling our mission 2023 (continued)

Acting responsibly as stewards of the buildings and the physical environment
(continued)

Having replaced the 25-year-old steam boiler and two pieces of laundry equipment in 2022, not only was the out-moded nature of the heating and electrical infrastructure increasingly apparent during 2023 when the Community/Shrine boilers became defunct - but also the need for sustainable, renewable, reliable energy supplies a significant topic of discussion. Initially under the Prior Provincial [as Chair of TFA] the estates group, quinquennial architect and services consultant convened a Green Strategy Group; the consultants' initial reports indicated that detail surveys will have to be undertaken during 2024 for coherent proposals for phased transition to renewables over something akin to a 10-year plan. This too will progress in discussion with the Province/CCT as freeholder and in collaboration with the Young Peoples' project team.

We invested heavily in our IT infrastructure, enabling a faster Wi-Fi in the conference rooms, Pilgrims' Hall, the Money Room, the Shrine and Piazza. Water damage to acoustic panels was addressed and these were also repaired.

There is increased demand for more information about companies' environmental, social, and corporate governance (ESG) performance and we are aware that the charities commission are also keen to see the eco credentials of charities and for that reason we embarked on our very own green energy strategy which would involve new technology with use of infrared heaters to heat people not buildings.

Looking into the future, we aspire to further refurbish the guest rooms in the Old Block, repair and extend the car park and fix electronic gates. We will continue investing in our IT infrastructure and be ready for when telecommunications convert to VOIP. We will continue repairs to the walls of Rosary Way and buttress.

We continue to communicate with our local community and visitors via our website and social media. New followers on Facebook have been keeping up to date with our supporter-facing activities, hearing about campaigns and engaging with us.

In 2023, we continued to distribute The Aylesford quarterly newsletter to over 6,000 people across the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland. Many of those who receive the newsletter respond and share their views, thoughts, and aspirations for The Friars at Aylesford.

We also published and distributed the monthly Friars News for our local community and staff. Our visitors continued to share their feedback and ideas through a questionnaire which is available in all guest rooms.

Fulfilling our Objectives in 2023

Be accountable to all stakeholders

During the year, we actively responded to feedback on Trip Advisor ensuring that our customers' voice was heard. We were swift in providing solutions and we take on board reviews very seriously because we know they have the potential to transform our brand and inspire our team to be better every day.

Fulfilling our Objectives in 2023 (continued)

Such charitable purposes which advance the Roman Catholic religion in any part of Great Britain

Throughout its long history, the Church has been a major source of social services like schooling and medical care; an inspiration for art, culture, and philosophy; and an influential player in politics and religion. In various ways it has sought to affect Western attitudes towards vice and virtue in diverse fields.

Being Catholic and partaking in Catholic services strengthens people's relationship with God and with their community. Being Catholic reminds them of what life is all about, family and helping others and setting time aside for the Lord. People can rely on their Catholic faith to guide them through all aspects of their life.

The Friars is primarily a Roman Catholic shrine and pilgrimage centre. Served by its Carmelite community, there are normally regular masses celebrated each day and the friars are available for confessions, counselling, and consultations. The chapels are open all day all year round for those looking for a place of quiet and meditation.

We are pleased to have the Syro-Malabar community who use our chapels on a regular basis. The Syro-Malabar community also provide us with volunteering support during our big fundraising events.

A pastoral team of friars and lay volunteers served the spiritual and religious needs of those visiting The Friars and delivered the annual retreat program.

As an important Marian shrine, pilgrims from all over the world visited throughout the year. These international pilgrims prayed and celebrated in their own languages.

The Friars is a religious setting open to all people with all faiths and none. Its purpose is not just to hold masses, but it is also a place of welcome to all.

The Carmelite Community continued to support the many schools who visited with their individualised programmes. These programmes include history and art appreciation. Apart from participating in these programmes, the school children also took part in Masses in the chapels. The friars normally also take them on ground tours explaining the history of the Carmelites in England and giving them an understanding of the various artworks.

To support families who have lost loved ones we continue to offer memorials in the form of benches, plaques, and trees, which are normally placed in our grounds. Demand for this undoubtedly went up during the pandemic and we continue to receive several requests for other forms of memorials. We are gradually running out of space for such memorials, and we are beginning to explore other types of memorials.

We also offer bereaved families a place to celebrate the life of their loved ones, providing a venue and catering for funerals and wakes.

Financial Review

In another phenomenally difficult year for all, the cost-of-living crisis left many families struggling to afford basics. Most families could no longer afford to eat out and a large number relied on food banks to make ends meet. This had an impact on the Hospitality industry nationwide and we saw record closures of restaurants and eateries.

The Hospitality industry also struggled to keep staff, with many people opting to go to work in retail where wages were more competitive. Despite the government's attempt to bridge the gap with a 9.7% rise in the minimum wage, this was not enough to lure people back. We were also hit by severe long term staff absence which meant we had to rely on agency staff on some occasions resulting in paying far more on wages than usual.

Our most significant area of expenditure was staff costs of over £730k which was an increase of 5.4% on the prior year. This increase being largely due to a 5% pay award to all salaried staff and another 2% cost of living bonus awarded to selected staff.

High energy costs, coupled with rising supplier costs meant that we struggled to break even or make a profit. But despite all the challenges, our financial results for the year were stronger than we had hoped for, even with the challenging inflationary environment. We planned for a larger deficit but robust financial control and a strong performance in some of our trading departments contributed to a more positive result.

We continue to seek ways to diversify our income streams, to grow our net income and we embarked on various income generating events which were less labour-intensive. We held two wedding fayres and an Easter Egg Hunt which proved very popular with children and their families.

We started the groundwork to convert our outbuildings into an Artisans' Yard. This will improve our rental income considerably in years to come.

It is also worth noting that grants and donations for the year were significantly less than the previous year, 2022.

General Funds

The Trustees continue to ensure the profitability of the day-to-day operations in the wholly owned subsidiary Aylesford Priory Limited, and to ensure the net costs of their charitable activities are met by the surplus made.

The trading activities of Aylesford Priory Limited resulted in a loss of £16,568 (2022: £10,849 Profit), (please see note 11). A loss of £7,235 (surplus of £187,528 in 2022) was made by the Charity, resulting in a Group loss of £23,803 (2022: surplus of £198,377).

General reserves were £423,943 compared to £370,240 in 2022. The increase in general reserves reflects the £55,000 loan given to the charity from the Carmelite Charitable Trust to assist with the Artisans' Yard project.

Financial Review (continued)

Restricted Funds

These funds usually arise from legacies and donations and are limited to spending on defined purposes.

In January, £255,430 (2022: £311,869) of restricted funds were brought forward into 2023, represented by £17,032 (2022: £17,477) for the Peace Garden and £238,398 (2022: £294,392) for the Restoration Fund.

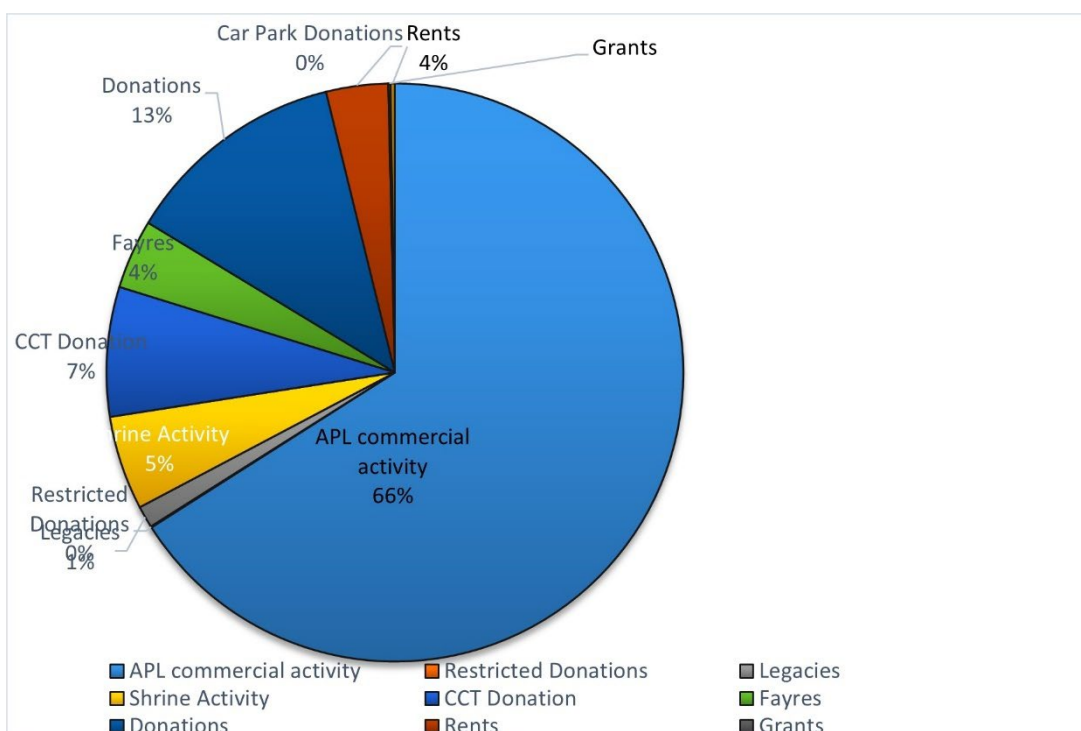
As of 31 December 2023, carried forward restricted funds were £324,863 (2022: £391,420) comprising £307,950 for the Restoration Fund and £16,914 for the Peace Garden.

Total funds as of 31 December 2023 were £1,283,874 (2022: £1,307,677) represented by £324,863 (2022: £391,420) of restricted funds, £813,334 of Tangible Fixed Assets (2022: £807,717), a shortfall of £278,267 in Aylesford Priory Limited Funds/Reserves (2022: £(261,700)) and £423,943 of general reserves (2022: £370,240).

Income

The Group income for 2023 by activity is shown in figure 1 below, and figure 2 shows the increases and decreases in income from 2022 to 2023 by activity.

The total income for the group was £1,657,389 (2022: £1,777,830).



Financial Review (continued)

Income (continued)

Table 1 - APL Income activity

As part of the total income above, Aylesford Priory Limited's turnover was £1,093,767 up 6.6% on the previous year. APL activity accounted for 66% of the total group income. This was made up of:

Department	2022 Income	2023 Income	% Change
Hospitality	325,620	329,275	1.1%
Tea Room	215,398	266,214	23.6%
Gift Shop	115,470	122,800	6.3%
Pilgrims' Hall Catering	303,894	323,751	6.5%
Events & Bars	65,364	51,727	-20.8%
Total income	1,025,746	1,093,767	6.6%

All other income was derived from activities of The Friars Aylesford made up of:

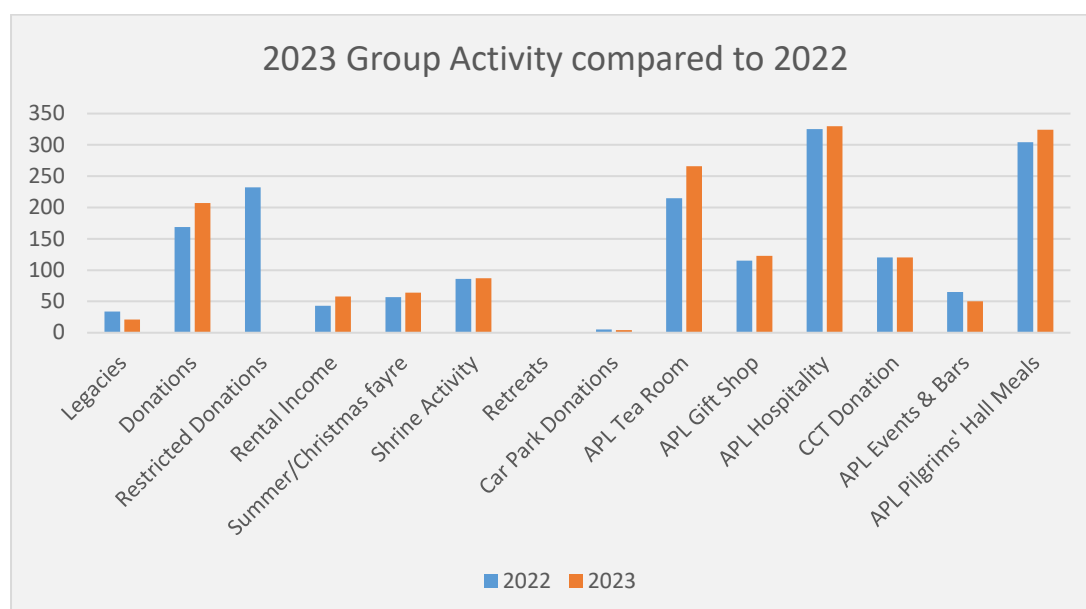
Table 2 – TFA Income activity

Department	2022 Income	2023 Income	% Difference
Legacies	£33,830	£20,278	-40%
Unrestricted Donations	£169,062	£207,087	22.5%
Restricted Donations	£88,871	£1,058	-98.9%
Rental Activity	£43,780	£57,603	31.6%
Grants	£143,288	£2,000	-98.6%
Fayres	£56,967	£64,317	13%
Car Park	£4,737	£4,101	-13.4%
Shrine Activity	£85,549	£87,178	1.9%
CCT Donations	£120,000	£120,000	0%
Total income	£746,084	£563,622	-24.5%

Financial Review (continued)

Income (continued)

Figure 2 – 2023 Group Income by Activity compared to 2022.



The turnover of the charity's trading subsidiary Aylesford Priory Limited is made up of the provision of hospitality (conference facilities and guest accommodation), events, sale of books, gifts and refreshments was £1,093,767 which was up by £68,021 (6.6%) from 2022. This represented a strong performance in retail activity.

Figure 2 highlights which areas' income improved or declined in 2023 compared to 2022. All areas performed better than last year apart from legacies.

Sales from our Hospitality department were £329,275 up by 1.1% (£325,622 in 2022). Some great results from the Tea Room brought in sales income of £266,214 up by 23.6% (£215,397 in 2022). The Gift Shop's sales income was £122,800 up 6.3% in comparison to 2022 (£115,470). This increase was partly down to the Relics of St Bernadette event in October. Pilgrims' Hall's sales income was £323,751 up 6.5% on 2022 (£303,893), Events and bars were £51,727 down 20.8% against £65,364 in 2022. Wedding reception bookings were less compared to the previous year.

Table 2 illustrates that we received a total of £20,278 in legacies in 2023, in contrast to £33,830 in 2022, a decrease of 40%.

Our unrestricted donations were £207,087 which were up 22.5% on last year (£169,062 in 2022). Shrine activity was £87,178 up 1.9% on 2022 (£85,549). Summer and Christmas fayres brought in £64,317 up 13% on 2022 (£56,967).

The Carmelite Charitable Trust (CCT) continued to provide financial support to the Charity. The Charity received an annual grant of £120,000 for the on-going support of its activities.

The group income was £1,657,389 a decrease of 6.8% in comparison to £1,777,830 in 2022. This was down receiving less grants, donations, legacies, and car park donations.

Financial Review (continued)

Expenditure

The results for the year ended 31 December 2023 reflect another year of challenges presented by rising inflation and supplier costs. We did our best by working smarter and embarked on various cost-saving strategies and held new income generating events. We focused on agreed margins for each of our trading activities and ensured adequate investment in our site and facilities, to maintain a healthy and safe environment for our staff, volunteers, customers, and visitors.

This year, our trading operating costs (cost of sales) for the subsidiary company Aylesford Priory Limited, was £941,963 up 6% against 2022 (£888,069). This increase was due to higher staff costs, employing more staff, paying for additional staff due to staff absence and long-term sickness and the rising cost of goods and services. We honoured the government minimum wage requirement which went up by 9.7%.

We invested in new two new boilers for the site and carried out other major maintenance works.

For more details of activity in the wholly owned subsidiary Aylesford Priory Limited see note 11.

The living and personal expenses of the Carmelite Friars at Aylesford were £78,701 (£86,030 in 2022) down 8.5% year on year. There are fewer Carmelite community members now.

Table 3 below shows that expenditure in 2023 on the upkeep of the shrine (note 5) was up 6% on 2022. The expenditure on premises and facilities costs was up 3.3% against the previous year.

Direct costs of £110,853 (2022: £106,989) up 3.6% were made up of purchase of candles, memorial benches and plaques, direct staffing costs, high utility bills, cash handling, chapel ad hoc expenses and general expenses. Other indirect staff costs were up 30.7% on the previous year at £46,379 (2022: £35,475).

Table 3- 2023 Expenditure on upkeep of the shrine compared to 2022.

	2022	2023	% Difference
Governance costs	£7,920	£11,220	41.6%
Office costs	£15,644	£14,352	-8.2%
Premises & Facilities costs	£249,368	£257,630	3.3%
Indirect Staff costs	£35,475	£46,379	30.7%
Direct Shrine costs	£106,989	£110,853	3.6%
Total	£415,395	£440,434	6%

Financial Review (continued)

Reserves (continued)

Reserves are needed both to maintain the level of The Friars Aylesford's current activities and to enable the completion of long-term projects. The trustees are yet to finalise a formal reserve policy which will establish the recommended reserve levels for the group to hold.

At 31 December 2023 unrestricted general funds amounted to £423,943 (£370,240 in 2022) an increase of 14.5%.

During the year, restricted funds have decreased from £391,420 (31 December 2022) to £345,441 (made up of Peace Garden £16,913 and Restoration fund £328,528 at 31 December 2023).

The total funds at 31 December 2023 are a surplus of £1,283,874 (2022: £1,307,677) equivalent to a decrease of 1.8%.

These total funds are represented by tangible fixed assets of £908,341 (2022: £909,405), net current assets of £559,844 (2022: £510,295 including within net current assets a net cash position of £370,234 (2022: £272,184)). Bank accounts held are part of a centralised, pooled banking system, used together with and managed by the Carmelite Charitable Trust. Pooled bank accounts are managed to optimise return on investments. Any accumulated reserves will be invested in the restoration, presentation and maintenance of the historic buildings, amenities and grounds of The Friars, Aylesford.

The trustees continue to recognise the importance of securing a long-term presence of the Carmelite Community at Aylesford Priory and working with a new Young Adults Community.

The continued ambition is to secure a commercial partnership agreement by considering a new commercial or social enterprise partner or partners, to use part of the available assets, that is the land and buildings at Aylesford Priory, in delivering activities that provide adequate income to meet or exceed the on-going costs and support the viability of the non-business charitable activities and in particular the maintenance of our historic buildings. The contract for this project has been finalised with works planned to commence in 2024.

Our key risks and uncertainties

The Board of Trustees has responsibility for making sure there are adequate and effective risk management protocols and systems of internal controls in place to manage The Friars' major risks and to achieve our strategic objectives. The risk register is reviewed yearly by the Board of Trustees to ensure that relevant risks are identified and sound mitigating controls are in place. We have processes in place to manage the key risks that could affect the charity's ability to achieve its objectives.

While many risks from previous years remain, this year saw the emergence of a new risk to our financial sustainability: rising supplier costs. Increased supplier costs could have an impact on our income, as volunteers and retail customers respond to the cost-of-living crisis, as well as having an impact on our running costs. We also don't know what the knock-on impact on public sector spending – a major source of income for the charity. We continued to mitigate inflation risks through good procurement practices, as well as continuing to review our pricing strategies in our trading outlets.

Our key risks and uncertainties (continued)

Current labour market conditions and the cost-of-living crisis mean we also anticipate major risks around staff retention, recruitment, and satisfaction. The hospitality industry overall continues to suffer from recruitment and The Friars is no different.

Processes are in place to manage the key risks that could affect The Friars' ability to achieve its objectives, including the following:

1. Financial Performance and sustainability

Risk: A significant reduction in our available resources due to external economic and environmental factors. The continued rise in supplier costs is a risk to our trading operation and undermines our ability to achieve our strategic objectives.

Mitigations:

- ◆ Annual budget setting and then full half-year re-forecasting.
- ◆ Holding a significant value of free reserves at any point in time, with a monthly review of these to make sure they remain within the target range set by the Finance Group.
- ◆ Regular review of our pricing strategy to ensure we remain competitive and be flexible in our approach.
- ◆ Shopping around for competitive suppliers (including energy suppliers) to minimise rising costs.
- ◆ Regular review and scrutiny of financial performance by senior management and trustees through the Finance Group.

2. Business Continuity

Risk: Events adversely impact reputation and/or operations, including loss of operations due to a major incident (cyber-attack, serious data security breach, a serious fraud, major health and safety incidents, internal control failures or an outbreak of a communicable disease).

Mitigations:

- ◆ Regular review and update of business continuity and disaster recovery plans to help minimise disruption to operations from unexpected events.
- ◆ We continue to upgrade our IT systems. This includes using modern cloud computing that gives staff access to better storage, files and software, through internet-connected devices.

Our key risks and uncertainties (continued)

3. Change Management

Risk: Inability to implement change and complete priority projects due to constant changes in department managers. Risk of change fatigue, burn-out or high-attrition within teams, given the level of change.

Mitigations:

- ◆ Continue to offer support for individuals.
- ◆ Staff welfare is always on the agenda at Trustees meetings.

4. Lack of funding for maintenance and repairs of the buildings

Risk: Reduction in funding has a negative impact on The Friars' ability to achieve its objectives. A reduction in funding could be due to failure to qualify for certain funds or apathy of donors or due to constraints on their available income from the financial crises.

Mitigations:

- ◆ Strengthen our existing relations and develop new relationships to secure additional funding.
- ◆ Diversify our sources of funding.

5. Staff Recruitment and Retention

Risk: Difficulty in attracting qualified managers and keeping them and recruiting the right calibre of non-management staff. Staff turnover continues to be high.

Mitigations:

- ◆ Create a talent pipeline to manage uncertainty in filling vacancies when staff retire.
- ◆ Work closely with recruitment agencies.
- ◆ Ongoing benchmarking of compensation and benefits to the rest of the sector.

Our plans for the future

Income generation

Our key objective is to generate as much income as we can to remain viable. We know that the year ahead isn't going to be easy but in challenging times people need places of respite, beauty, and solace more than ever – and people need the certainty of knowing we are still here caring for the grounds that are important and dear to them. Because of these reasons, we will aspire to deliver the 2024 budget as best as we can. We will improve the effectiveness of our trading activities by operating an effective pricing strategy, source new suppliers and continue to urge staff to work smarter. We will need to find ways to increase the contributions of our visitors.

Our plans for the future (continued)

Income generation (continued)

The external and economic environment remains very uncertain, and we are clear that we need to remain agile and flexible to meet changing demands and needs.

Continue to Invest in priority capital and maintenance projects

We will continue to ensure that every decision we make will support our core aim and objective to promote for the benefit of the public the restoration, presentation and maintenance of the historic buildings, amenities and grounds of The Friars, Aylesford. We will continue refurbishing our guest house facilities and improve our conference facilities.

We will continue working with the Estates sub-group and the Estates Manager to regularly review progress on agreed projects.

Working with partners

With the introduction of Creative Aylesford and the Artisans' Yard we hope to continue working with partners and suppliers whose local network will expand the outreach and the effective mission of the Carmelite Community.

Environmental sustainability initiatives

Climate change is now widely acknowledged as one of the most important issues facing society today and with growing concerns for the environment, it is now becoming critical for organisations to adopt and take corporate sustainability initiatives that focus on people, planet, alongside profits.

Sustainability practices can boost The Friars, Aylesford's longer-term by giving us a competitive edge, enhancing our brand image, attracting a loyal customer base, reducing operational costs, and creating new opportunities for success in the long run. We can start off small by recycling all our packaging, find other ways of using energy (solar), work towards minimizing single-use cups and other plastics. Plans are already in place to form a comprehensive green energy strategy.

Improve IT

We will continue to invest further in our information and technology infrastructure so that we can operate more efficiently and effectively. We identify that IT is a key enabler for both service quality and financial sustainability. In today's dynamic business environment, technology plays an increasingly vital role as a powerful enabler for continuous improvement initiatives. Digital technology advancements have revolutionised how organisations approach improvement processes, providing valuable digital tools and resources to drive operational efficiency, increase productivity, and meet future strategic goals. The Board of Trustees have agreed the entire IT infrastructure of the entire site be upgraded.

Volunteers

People volunteer for a range of reasons, and each volunteering opportunity provides its own unique experience. The Friars, Aylesford depends on volunteers to ensure that we remain a place of welcome and prayer to our numerous and diverse visitors. The volunteer numbers are dwindling so we will develop a robust volunteering strategy, to be the charity of choice in the Kent area.

Going concern

We are doing everything we can to build on our financial stability, seeking new income streams and developing new partnerships to keep this beautiful place as a sustainable charitable and commercial venture. The Trustees have assessed The Friars, Aylesford's financial position, and the work we are doing to diversify our income through partnerships and the creation of the Artisans' Yard, and they feel confident in the charity's ability to operate as a going concern.

Many of the unprecedented challenges presented in 2023 have been bravely overcome by staff and volunteers and they have shown themselves to be resilient and creative – facing up to these challenges and producing results on par to pre-pandemic times.

The Trustees have confidence that the charity and its subsidiary company will be able to withstand all challenges presented by the cost-of-living crisis and be financially sustainable in the short to medium term.

Structure, governance, and management

The Friars, Aylesford is constituted as a company limited by guarantee governed by its own Memorandum and Articles of Association. The members are the individual friars of the British Province of the Carmelite Order, who meet in Annual General Meetings to elect the Trustees, to review the financial statements for the previous year and to discuss any other relevant business.

The Trustees are appointed to oversee the strategic governance of The Friars and its subsidiary. They set the strategy, agree an annual budget and monitor performance. In particular, the Trustees make all decisions where the reputation and ethos may be impacted.

During 2023, the Trustees met 6 times, with an Annual General Meeting on 30 July 2023.

There are two specialist sub-groups which meet regularly providing advice and recommendations to the Board.

- ◆ The Finance Group Chair: Fr Brendan Grady
- ◆ The Estates Group Chair: Jonathan Louth (architect)

The Trustees are supported by advisors: Jan Wilkinson (Finance), Jonathan Louth (Estates and Development) and Simon Howell (Legal and Development) who regularly attend Board or sub-group meetings as applicable. Simon has since resigned.

New Trustees are briefed on the role of a Trustee and provided with relevant literature plus copies of the Memorandum and Articles of Association. Trustee indemnity insurance premiums are paid for by the charitable company to provide protection for the Trustees in the execution of their duties. In December 2017, we undertook a review of our current practices compared to the Charity Commission's Code of Governance and were pleased that there were few areas that were identified as needing minor improvement.

Structure, governance, and management (continued)

The Trustees delegate the day-to-day operations of the charity to the Management Team also known as the Trading Operations Management Team (TOMT). The TOMT comprises the Operations & Business Development Manager (OBDM) and four other members with clear lines of responsibility for specific departments of the organisation. The Trustees have worked with the TOMT to develop the longer-term strategic plans for the charity. Responsibility for the implementation of the plans is delegated to the TOMT through agreed one-year business plans also known as Operational Plans.

The TOMT has clear terms of reference, regularly reviewed by the Trustees, and its prime and collective responsibility is to self-manage the trading operations of The Friars, Aylesford and to achieve a balanced budget, in line with the budget presented to and agreed by the Trustees in December of the prior year.

Within the TOMT, certain managers are expected to occasionally attend Trustee meetings, reporting from, and representing the TOMT. These managers can also refer urgent matters that are outside the remit of the TOMT to Trustees.

TOMT members at the start of 2023 were: Pearl Nyafli – The Operations & Business Development Manager (Lead); Ros Duddell – Gift Shop Manager; Steve Hayden – Estates Manager, Karen Stevens – Hospitality Manager, Gail Grimes – Catering Manager and Clare Abbotson – Prior's and Trustees' Secretary.

Key management remuneration is first informed by current local market rates for similar roles, and by maintaining appropriate differentials for job responsibilities within the organisation. A proposal is considered by the Finance Group and a recommendation made to the Trustees. The Trustees authorise all key management salaries.

Statement of Fundraising

The Charities (Protection and Social Investment) Act 2016 requires us to make a statement on fundraising. This statement outlines how we will behave when we fundraise and ensures our fundraising is legal, honest, open, respectful, fair, transparent and accountable.

At The Friars, we need to raise a considerable amount of funds to maintain our 22-acre site and provide the religious activities that go with it. Our teams work tirelessly to raise funds mainly via our Summer and Christmas fayres (our main fundraiser), other small events like the new Easter Egg Hunt, Shakespeare plays, postal and online donations.

We do all we can to ensure that fundraisers and volunteers comply with our Fundraising Promise. We do not use professional fundraisers or commercial participators to help us and in the past twelve months we did not work with any "on behalf of" fundraisers.

We are registered with the Fundraising Regulator, have paid levy and uphold the code of practice. We comply with current regulations and best practice set out by the Regulator. We acknowledge that as we engage volunteers to fundraise on our behalf, it is imperative that we have the right safeguards in place to support them. We insist that any fundraising carried out by any third party complies with data protection legislation as set out in the code of Fundraising practice, including requirements of the Telephone, Mailing and Fundraising Preference Services.

Statement of Fundraising (continued)

We work closely with our volunteers to ensure that they are polite, respectful and aware that anyone can be in a vulnerable situation even if it is not immediately apparent. If it is known or there are reasonable grounds for believing that an individual lacks capacity to make a decision to donate, a donation will not be taken or if it is already taken will be refunded. It also means that nobody should be pressurised or made to feel guilty for not supporting us. If our supporters do not want to give or wish to cease giving, we respect their decision and act on this. We offer them choices about how they wish to be contacted and we respond to requests to end contact.

Our volunteers make it clear when communicating on our behalf how a person can register feedback or a complaint directly with us. We encourage any feedback from the public and we regularly review any feedback that we receive. We are pleased to report that we did not receive any complaint in the year 2023.

Statement of Trustees' responsibilities

The Trustees (who are also Directors of The Friars, Aylesford for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and Financial Statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Charity and the Group and of the income and expenditure of the group for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

- ◆ select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently.
- ◆ observe the methods and principles in Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable to the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102);
- ◆ make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- ◆ state whether applicable United Kingdom Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- ◆ prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Charity and the Group will continue in operation.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that 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 Companies Act 2006. They are also

responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Charity and the Group and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Trustees' report Year ended 31 December 2023

Statement of Trustees responsibilities (continued)

Each of the Trustees confirms that:

- ◆ so far as each Trustee is aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the Charity's auditor is unaware; and
- ◆ each Trustee has taken all the steps that he/she ought to have taken as a Trustee in order to make himself/herself aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the Charity's auditor is aware of that information.

This confirmation is given and should be interpreted in accordance with the provisions of s418 of the Companies Act 2006.

The Trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the Charity's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

Approved by the Trustees on: 30 July 2024



Brendan Grady O. Carm.

Trustee

Independent auditor's report to the members of The Friars, Aylesford

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of The Friars, Aylesford (the 'charitable parent company') and of The Friars, Aylesford and its subsidiary Aylesford Priory Limited (the 'group') for the year ended 31 December 2023 which comprise the group statement of financial activities, the group and charitable parent company balance sheets, the consolidated statement of cash flows, the principal accounting policies and the notes to the financial statements. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- ◆ give a true and fair view of the state of the group's and of the charitable parent company's affairs as at 31 December 2023 and of the group's income and expenditure for the year then ended;
- ◆ have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- ◆ have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the group in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the group and charitable parent company's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The trustees are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the Annual Report and Consolidated Financial Statements, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements, or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- ◆ the information given in the trustees' report, which is also the directors' report for the purposes of company law, for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- ◆ the trustees' report, which is also the directors' report for the purposes of company law has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the group and the charitable parent company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the trustees' report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- ◆ adequate accounting records have not been kept by the charitable parent company, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- ◆ the charitable parent company financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- ◆ certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- ◆ we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit; or
- ◆ the trustees were not entitled to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the small companies regime and take advantage of the small companies' exemptions in preparing the trustees' report and from the requirement to prepare a strategic report.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the trustees' responsibilities statement, the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the group's and the charitable parent company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the group or the charitable parent company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud, is detailed below.

Our approach to identifying and assessing the risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations, was as follows:

- ◆ the engagement partner ensured that the engagement team collectively had the appropriate competence, capabilities and skills to identify or recognise non-compliance with applicable laws and regulations.
- ◆ we identified the laws and regulations applicable to the group through discussions with management, and from our commercial knowledge and experience of the sector.
- ◆ we focused on specific laws and regulations which we considered may have a direct material effect on the financial statements or the operations of the company, including the Companies Act 2006 and the Charities Act 2011.
- ◆ we assessed the extent of compliance with the laws and regulations identified above through making enquiries of management and inspecting correspondence; and
- ◆ identified laws and regulations were communicated within the audit team and the team remained alert to instances of non-compliance throughout the audit.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements (continued)

We assessed the susceptibility of the group's accounts to material misstatement, including obtaining an understanding of how fraud might occur, by:

- ◆ making enquiries of management as to where they considered there was susceptibility to fraud, their knowledge of actual, suspected and alleged fraud; and
- ◆ considering the internal controls in place to mitigate risks of fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations.

To address the risk of fraud through management bias and override of controls, we:

- ◆ performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships.
- ◆ tested journal entries to identify unusual transactions.
- ◆ assessed whether judgements and assumptions made in determining the accounting estimates were indicative of potential bias; and
- ◆ tested authorisation controls on expenditure items, checking that all expenditure was approved in line with the charitable parent company's procedures and the group's procedures.

There are inherent limitations in our audit procedures described above. The more removed that laws and regulations are from financial transactions, the less likely it is that we would become aware of non-compliance. Auditing standards also limit the audit procedures required to identify non-compliance with laws and regulations to enquiry of the trustees and other management and the inspection of regulatory and legal correspondence, if any.

Material misstatements that arise due to fraud can be harder to detect than those that arise from error as they may involve deliberate concealment or collusion.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and the charitable company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.



Peter Mackereth (Senior Statutory Auditor)
For and on behalf of Buzzacott LLP, Statutory Auditor
130 Wood Street
London EC2V 6DL

16 August 2024

Consolidated statement of financial activities Year to 31 December 2023

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2023 Total funds £	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2022 Total funds £
Income from:							
Donations, grants and legacies	1	347,365	1,059	348,424	316,202	238,849	555,051
Other trading activities	2	1,215,686	—	1,215,686	1,126,493	—	1,126,493
Charitable activities	3	91,279	—	91,279	90,286	—	90,286
Other sources:							
Business Support Scheme		2,000	—	2,000	6,000	—	6,000
Total income		1,656,330	1,059	1,657,389	1,538,981	238,849	1,777,830
Expenditure on:							
Raising funds	4	1,162,057	—	1,162,057	1,077,594	434	1,078,028
Charitable activities							
· Upkeep of the shrine at Aylesford	5	405,270	35,164	440,434	393,673	21,722	415,395
· Support of the Carmelite Friars of the Aylesford community	6	78,701	—	78,701	86,030	—	86,030
Total expenditure		1,646,028	35,164	1,681,192	1,557,297	22,156	1,579,453
Net income (expenditure) before transfers		10,302	(34,105)	(23,803)	(18,316)	216,693	198,377
Transfers between funds	14	11,874	(11,874)	—	137,142	(137,142)	—
Net income (expenditure) and net movement in funds	7	22,176	(45,979)	(23,803)	118,826	79,551	198,377
Reconciliation of funds:							
Balances brought forward at 1 January 2023		916,257	391,420	1,307,677	797,431	311,869	1,109,300
Balances carried forward at 31 December 2023		938,433	345,441	1,283,874	916,257	391,420	1,307,677

All the group's activities derived from continuing operations during the above two financial years.

There were no recognised gains and losses other than those set out in the consolidated statement of financial activities above.

Balance sheets 31 December 2023

	Notes	Group		Charity	
		2023 £	2022 £	2023 £	2022 £
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	10	908,341	909,405	813,334	807,717
Investments	11	—	—	1	1
		908,341	909,405	813,335	807,718
Current assets					
Stock		36,916	46,509	6,176	8,500
Debtors	12	152,694	191,602	602,755	640,341
Cash at bank and in hand		370,234	272,184	222,380	125,273
		559,844	510,295	831,311	774,114
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	13	(132,978)	(112,023)	(31,173)	(12,454)
Net current assets		426,866	398,272	800,138	761,660
Creditors: amounts falling due after one year	13	(51,333)	—	(51,333)	—
Total net assets		1,283,874	1,307,677	1,562,140	1,569,378
Represented by:					
Funds and reserves					
Restricted funds	14	345,441	391,420	345,441	391,420
Unrestricted funds					
. General funds		403,365	370,240	403,365	370,241
. Tangible fixed assets fund		813,336	807,717	813,334	807,717
. Non-charitable trading funds		(278,268)	(261,700)	—	—
Total funds		1,283,874	1,307,677	1,562,140	1,569,378

Approved by the trustees of The Friars, Aylesford, Company Registration Number 03487590 (England and Wales) and signed on their behalf by:



Brendan Grady O.Carm.
Trustee

Approved by the trustees on: 30 July 2024

Consolidated statement of cash flows Year to 31 December 2023

	Notes	2023 £	2022 £
Cash flows from operating activities			
. Net cash provided by operating activities	A	122,542	217,798
Cash flows from investing activities			
. Purchase of tangible fixed assets		(74,492)	(312,480)
Cash flows from financing activities			
. Cash inflows from new borrowing		50,000	—
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year		98,050	(94,682)
Cash and cash equivalents at 1 January 2023	B	272,184	366,866
Cash and cash equivalents at 31 December 2023	B	370,234	272,184

Notes to the statement of cash flows for the year to 31 December 2023.

A Reconciliation of net movement in funds to net cash provided by operating activities

	2023 £	2022 £
Net movement in funds (as per the statement of financial activities)	(23,803)	198,377
Depreciation charge	75,556	57,972
Decrease (increase) in stocks	9,593	(21,590)
Decrease (increase) in debtors	38,908	(17,747)
Increase in creditors	22,288	786
Net cash provided by operating activities	122,542	217,798

B Analysis of cash and cash equivalents

	2023 £	2022 £
Total cash and cash equivalents: Cash at bank and in hand	370,234	272,184

C Analysis of changes in net debt

	2022 £	Cash flows £	2023 £
Cash at bank and in hand	272,184	98,050	370,234
Loan from Carmelite Charitable Trust	—	(55,000)	(55,000)
	272,184	43,050	315,234

Principal accounting policies 31 December 2023

The principal accounting policies adopted, judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty in the preparation of the financial statements are laid out below:

Basis of accounting

These accounts have been prepared for the year to 31 December 2023 with comparative information provided in respect to the year to 31 December 2022.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention with items initially recognised at cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy notes.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (Charities SORP FRS 102), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

The charity constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS 102.

The accounts are presented in sterling and rounded to the nearest pound.

Basis of consolidation

The consolidated statement of financial activities and group balance sheet consolidate each reporting line of the financial statements of The Friars, Aylesford and its subsidiary company, Aylesford Priory Limited, made up at the balance sheet date.

Critical accounting estimates and areas of judgement

The preparation of the financial statements in compliance with the Charities SORP FRS 102 requires the use of certain critical accounting estimates. It requires also that trustees and management exercise judgement in applying the group's and charity's accounting policies.

In preparing these financial statements, the trustees have made significant estimates and judgements in the following areas:

- ◆ Estimating the expected useful economic life of tangible fixed assets for the purpose of calculating an annual depreciation charge;
- ◆ Assessing the probability of the receipt of legacy income of which the charity and group had been notified;
- ◆ Determining the basis for allocating shared overhead costs between the charity and its subsidiary company; and
- ◆ Estimating future income and expenditure flows for the purpose of assessing going concern (see below).

Going concern

The trustees have assessed whether the use of the going concern assumption is appropriate in preparing these accounts. The trustees have made the assessment in respect to a period of at least one year from the date of approval of these accounts.

Having reviewed the financial position and future plans for the charity, the Trustees have identified no material uncertainties related to events or conditions that cast significant doubt on the charity's ability to continue its activities for the foreseeable future.

The long-term economic outlook remains uncertain and the team here at The Friars have put a few measures in place to ensure financial stability. This includes finding smarter ways of working, embarking on various cost saving initiatives and regular cashflow forecasting. We will continue to closely monitor the impact of any government decision making and the impact on the economy from any crisis, and we will actively respond to any rapid changes.

Therefore, the financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis given the undertaking of the Carmelite Charitable Trust (note 16) to support the group and charity financially whilst they continue with the work to restore the activities at Aylesford to a sustainable basis.

Income

Income is recognised in the period in which the group is entitled to the income, the amount can be measured with reasonable certainty, and it is probable that the funds will be received.

Income is deferred only when the charity has to fulfil conditions before becoming entitled to it or where the donor or funder has specified that the income is to be expended in a future accounting period.

Donations are recognised when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the charity.

Donations and grants are recognised when the charitable parent company and/or group has confirmation of both the amount and settlement date. In the event of donations or grants pledged but not received, the amount is accrued for where the receipt is considered probable. In the event that a donation or grant is subject to conditions that require a level of performance before the charitable parent company and/or group is entitled to the funds, the income is deferred and not recognised until either those conditions are fully met, or the fulfilment of those conditions is wholly within the control of the charitable parent company and/or group and it is probable that those conditions will be fulfilled in the reporting period.

Legacies are included in the statement of financial activities when the charity is entitled to the legacy, the executors have established that there are sufficient surplus assets in the estate to pay the legacy, and any conditions attached to the legacy are within the control of the charity.

Income (continued)

Entitlement is taken as the earlier of the date on which either: the charity is aware that probate has been granted, the estate has been finalised and notification has been made by the executor to the charity that a distribution will be made, or when a distribution is received from the estate. Receipt of a legacy, in whole or in part, is only considered probable when the amount can be measured reliably and the charity has been notified of the executor's intention to make a distribution. Where legacies have been notified to the charity, or the charity is aware of the granting of probate, but the criteria for income recognition have not been met, then the legacy is treated as a contingent asset and disclosed if material. In the event that the gift is in the form of an asset other than cash or a financial asset traded on a recognised stock exchange, recognition is subject to the value of the gift being reliably measurable with a degree of reasonable accuracy and the title of the asset having being transferred to the charity.

In accordance with the Charities SORP, volunteer hours are not recognised.

Income from trading activities is recognised to the extent that it is probable that the economic benefits will flow to the company and the revenue can be reliably measured. It is measured at fair value of the consideration received or receivable, excluding discounts, rebates, value added tax and other sales taxes.

Income from charitable activities, comprising income in connection with the shrine and retreats, is recognised to the extent that it is probable that the economic benefits will flow to the charity and the revenue can be reliably measured.

No separate statement of financial activities has been presented for the charity alone, as permitted by s408 of the Companies Act 2006 and the Charities SORP FRS 102. The charity had total income in the year of £563,622 (2022: £746,084), total expenditure of £570,857 (2022: £558,556), resulting in net income of -£7,235 (2022: net income of £187,528).

Expenditure

Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the group or charity to make a payment to a third party, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably.

All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis. Expenditure is comprised of direct costs and support costs. Direct costs are allocated to a specific activity. The classification between activities is as follows:

- a) Expenditure on raising funds includes all expenditure associated with raising funds for the charity and the operating costs of Aylesford Priory Limited.
- b) Expenditure on charitable activities includes all costs associated with furthering the charitable purposes of the charity through the provision of its charitable activities i.e. the upkeep of the shrine at Aylesford and supporting the Carmelite Friars of the Aylesford community. Expenditure on charitable activities includes both direct costs and indirect support costs.

All expenditure is inclusive of irrecoverable VAT.

Principal accounting policies 31 December 2023

Allocation of support and governance costs

Support costs represent indirect charitable expenditure. In order to carry out the primary purposes of the charity it is necessary to provide support in the form of personnel development, financial procedures, provision of office services and equipment and a suitable working environment.

Governance costs comprise the costs involving the public accountability of the charity (including audit costs) and costs in respect to its compliance with regulation and good practice.

Support costs and governance costs are apportioned based on area occupied, level of activity and staff time as appropriate.

Certain support costs incurred are shared between the charity and its subsidiary company, Aylesford Priory Limited. This allocation is based on area occupied, level of activity and staff time. Those costs which would be incurred whether or not Aylesford Priory Limited existed are allocated 100% to the charity.

Tangible fixed assets

All assets costing more than £1,000 with an expected useful life exceeding one year are capitalised.

Depreciation is provided at the following annual rates on a straight line basis in order to write off the cost of each asset, less its estimated residual value, over its estimated useful economic life. The annual rates used for this purpose are:

◆ Leasehold improvements	- 4 to 10% per annum on cost
◆ Plant and machinery	- 10 to 20% per annum on cost
◆ Furniture and equipment	- 20% per annum on cost
◆ Motor vehicles	- 20% per annum on cost

Depreciation is applied in all cases commencing from the start of the month following that in which the asset was purchased.

No value is attached in these financial statements to the leasehold land occupied by the group and charity. As explained in note 10, the site is of historic importance generally and specifically to the Roman Catholic Church and the principal objective of the charity is to preserve the site for the enjoyment of future generations. As such, the asset meets the definition of heritage assets in the Charities SORP FRS 102 and is not valued for the purposes of these financial statements.

Stock

Stocks of books, souvenir items and food stuff for resale are valued at the lower of cost and net realisable value. Cost is calculated by assuming stock movements are on a first in, first out basis.

Principal accounting policies 31 December 2023

Debtors

Debtors are recognised at the settlement amount, less any provision for non-recoverability. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid.

Cash at bank and in hand

Cash at bank and in hand represents such accounts and instruments that are available on demand or have a maturity of less than three months from the date of acquisition.

Creditors and provisions

Creditors and provisions are recognised when there is an obligation at the balance sheet date as a result of a past event, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefit will be required in settlement, and the amount of the settlement can be estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are recognised at the amount the charity anticipates it will pay to settle the debt.

Fund structure

Restricted funds comprise monies raised for, or their use restricted to, a specific purpose, or contributions subject to donor imposed conditions.

General funds represent those monies which are freely available for application towards achieving any charitable purpose that falls within the charity's charitable objects.

The tangible fixed assets fund represents the net book value of the land and buildings occupied by the charity and other tangible fixed assets held by the charity. Such assets are vital to the charity being able to carry out its charitable work and the value invested in the assets cannot, therefore, be realised in order to meet future expenditure or contingencies. To emphasise this point the net book value of the assets is represented by a specific tangible fixed assets fund on the balance sheet.

Non charitable trading funds comprise the retained surplus or accumulated deficit on the activities of Aylesford Priory Limited.

Pension contributions

Contributions in respect of the charity's defined contribution pension scheme are charged to the statement of financial activities when they are payable to the scheme. The charity's contributions are restricted to the contributions disclosed in note 8. There were no outstanding contributions at the year end. The charity has no liability beyond making its contributions and paying across the deductions for the employees' contributions.

1. Income from: Donations, grants and legacies

Group	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2023 Total funds £	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2022 Total funds £
Legacies	20,278	—	20,278	27,140	6,690	33,830
Donations	207,087	1,059	208,146	169,062	88,871	257,933
Grants for roof repairs (see below)	—	—	—	—	143,288	143,288
Grant from Carmelite Charitable Trust	120,000	—	120,000	120,000	—	120,000
	347,365	1,059	348,424	316,202	238,849	555,051

2. Income from: Other trading activities

Group	Unrestricted funds	
	2023 £	2022 £
Provision of conference facilities, guest accommodation, events, and sale of books, gifts and refreshments	1,093,767	1,025,746
Rental income	57,603	43,780
Other	64,316	56,967
	1,215,686	1,126,493

3. Income from: Charitable activities

Group	Unrestricted funds	
	2023 £	2022 £
Shrine income	87,178	85,549
Car park contributions	4,101	4,737
	91,279	90,286

4. Expenditure on: Raising funds

Group	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2023 Total funds £	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2022 Total funds £
Provision of conference facilities, accommodation, events, and sale of books, gifts and refreshments	1,110,334	—	1,110,334	1,020,896	—	1,020,896
Fayres	51,723	—	51,723	56,698	434	57,132
	1,162,057	—	1,162,057	1,077,594	434	1,078,028

5. Expenditure on: Upkeep of the shrine at Aylesford

Group	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2023 Total funds £	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2022 Total funds £
Direct costs	110,853	—	110,853	106,989	—	106,989
Other indirect staff costs	46,379	—	46,379	35,475	—	35,475
Premises and facilities	222,466	35,164	257,630	227,645	21,722	249,367
Office costs	14,352	—	14,352	15,644	—	15,644
Governance costs	11,220	—	11,220	7,920	—	7,920
	405,270	35,164	440,434	393,673	21,722	415,395

Governance costs included above comprise auditor's remuneration only.

6. Expenditure on: Support of the Carmelite Friars of the Aylesford Community

Group	Unrestricted funds	
	2023 £	2022 £
Living and personal expenses	78,701	86,030

7. Net income (expenditure) and net movement in funds

This is stated after charging:

Group	2023 £	2022 £
Staff costs (note 8)	730,510	693,292
Auditor's remuneration		
. Statutory audit services	16,245	9,533
. Other services: tax compliance	2,400	2,400
Depreciation	75,556	57,972

8. Staff costs and trustees' remuneration

Group	2023 £	2022 £
Staff costs during the year were as follows:		
Wages and salaries	665,373	639,105
Social security costs	36,663	35,627
Other pension costs	15,278	14,229
	717,314	688,961
Other staff related costs	13,196	4,331
	730,510	693,292
Staff costs per function were as follows:		
Upkeep of the shrine	133,657	117,915
Provision of conference facilities, related accommodation, events and sale of books, gifts and refreshments	467,321	453,536
Support functions	129,532	121,841
	730,510	693,292

8. Staff costs and trustees' remuneration (continued)

No employee earned £60,000 per annum or more (including taxable benefits but excluding pension contributions) during the year (2022: none).

The average number of employees, based on full time equivalents and analysed by function, was as follows:

Group	2023	2022
Shrine maintenance	5	6
Commercial trading operations	18	19
Support costs	3	4
	26	29

The average number of employees, based on headcount, was 54 in 2023 (2022: 51).

A number of the trustees are members of the Carmelite Order and, as such, certain of their personal living expenses are borne by the charity, but they received no remuneration in connection with their duties as trustees during the year (2022: none). No incidental expenses were reimbursed to trustees (2022: None).

The charity has purchased trustees and individual insurance to indemnify the trustees or other officers against the consequences of any claim for a wrongful act. The insurance premium paid by the charity during the year totalled £893 (2022: £839) and provides cover up to a maximum of £1 million (2022: £1 million).

In addition to the trustees, the key management personnel of the charity in charge of directing and controlling, running, and operating the charity on a day-to-day basis during 2023 comprised the Operations and Business Development Manager, the Estates Manager, the Catering Manager, the Hospitality Manager and the Prior's and Trustees' Secretary. The total remuneration (including taxable benefits, employer's pension contributions and employers national insurance contributions) of these employees was £182,450 (2022: £165,901).

9. Taxation

The Friars, Aylesford is a registered charity and, therefore, is not liable to corporation tax or income tax on income or gains derived from its charitable activities, as they fall within the various exemptions available to registered charities.

Profits of Aylesford Priory Limited, if any, are subject to corporation tax calculated on the basis of tax rates and laws that have been enacted or substantially enacted by the balance sheet date.

10. Tangible fixed assets

Group	Leasehold improvements £	Plant and machinery £	Furniture and equipment £	Motor vehicles £	Office equipment £	Total £
Cost or valuation						
At 1 January 2023	897,139	195,645	111,845	8,495	7,779	1,220,903
Additions	11,874	32,549	18,619	11,450	—	74,492
At 31 December 2023	<u>909,013</u>	<u>228,194</u>	<u>130,464</u>	<u>19,945</u>	<u>7,779</u>	<u>1,295,395</u>
Depreciation						
At 1 January 2023	132,736	97,888	65,503	8,495	6,876	311,498
Charge for year	49,411	14,650	10,773	—	722	75,556
At 31 December 2023	<u>182,147</u>	<u>112,538</u>	<u>76,276</u>	<u>8,495</u>	<u>7,598</u>	<u>387,054</u>
Net book values						
At 31 December 2023	726,866	115,656	54,188	11,450	181	908,341
At 31 December 2022	<u>764,403</u>	<u>97,757</u>	<u>46,342</u>	<u>—</u>	<u>903</u>	<u>909,405</u>

Charity	Leasehold improvements £	Plant and machinery £	Furniture and equipment £	Motor vehicles £	Total £
Cost or valuation					
At 1 January 2023	897,139	63,669	60,023	8,495	1,029,326
Additions	11,874	32,549	9,099	11,450	64,972
At 31 December 2023	<u>909,013</u>	<u>96,218</u>	<u>69,122</u>	<u>19,945</u>	<u>1,094,298</u>
Depreciation					
At 1 January 2023	132,736	61,496	18,882	8,495	221,609
Charge for year	49,411	1,087	8,857	—	59,355
At 31 December 2023	<u>182,147</u>	<u>62,583</u>	<u>27,739</u>	<u>8,495</u>	<u>280,964</u>
Net book values					
At 31 December 2023	726,866	33,635	41,383	11,450	813,334
At 31 December 2022	<u>764,403</u>	<u>2,173</u>	<u>41,141</u>	<u>—</u>	<u>807,717</u>

The charity's objective is to promote for the benefit of the public the restoration, presentation and maintenance of the historic buildings, amenities and grounds of The Friars, Aylesford. The freehold title to The Friars, Aylesford is held by The Carmelite Charitable Trust, a registered charity and a connected entity to the charity (see note 16).

In 2002 the charity was granted a 99 year lease over the site and pays an annual rent of £200 to the Carmelite Charitable Trust. No value has been assigned to this lease in these financial statements. The site is of historic importance generally and specifically to the Roman Catholic Church and, as noted above, the principal objective of the charity is to preserve the site for the enjoyment of future generations. As such, the asset meets the definition of heritage assets in the Charities SORP FRS 102 and is not valued for the purposes of these financial statements.

11. Investments

	Group 2023 £	Group 2022 £	Charity 2023 £	Charity 2022 £
Investment in subsidiary company	—	—	1	1

Investment in subsidiary company

The charity holds 100% of the issued share capital of Aylesford Priory Limited. This holding was acquired on incorporation of the company on 10 November 2008.

The following is a summary of the financial statements of Aylesford Priory Limited for the year ended 31 December 2023, which have been included in the consolidated financial statements.

	2023 £	2022 £
Turnover	1,093,767	1,025,746
Cost of sales	(941,963)	(888,069)
Gross profit (loss)	151,804	137,677
Administrative expenditure	(168,372)	(132,828)
Other income: Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme and Coronavirus Business Support Scheme	—	6,000
Operating (loss) profit	(16,568)	10,849
Accumulated losses at 1 January 2023	(261,700)	(272,549)
Accumulated losses at 31 December 2023	(278,268)	(261,700)

At 31 December 2023 the company had total net liabilities of £278,267 (2022: total net liabilities of £261,699) represented by called up share capital of £1 (2022: £1) and negative reserves of £278,268 (2022: £261,700).

12. Debtors

	Group		Charity	
	2023 £	2022 £	2023 £	2022 £
Trade debtors	45,779	35,825	3,553	926
Amounts due from the Carmelite Charitable Trust (note 16)	7,065	31,132	6,842	30,849
Other debtors	9,096	23,371	6,522	21,226
Legacies receivable	18,051	25,731	18,051	25,731
Prepayments	72,285	75,543	65,466	65,612
Social security and other taxes	418	—	—	—
Amounts due from Aylesford Priory Limited	—	—	502,321	495,997
	152,694	191,602	602,755	640,341

13. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	Group		Charity	
	2023 £	2022 £	2023 £	2022 £
Expense creditors	31,329	55,720	13,027	3,392
Social security and other taxes	—	(195)	—	—
Amounts due to the Carmelite Charitable Trust (note 16)	3,667	—	3,667	—
Other creditors	39,136	8,454	1,366	1,366
Accruals and deferred income	58,846	48,044	13,113	7,697
	132,978	112,023	31,173	12,455

Income has been deferred where it relates clearly to future periods and/or where the charity has not yet met the conditions for recognising the income. The movements in deferred income are analysed below:

	2023 £	2022 £
Brought forward	23,243	18,470
Released in the year	(23,243)	(13,697)
Deferred in the year	17,780	18,470
Carried forward	17,780	23,243

Creditors: amounts falling due after one year

	Group		Charity	
	2023 £	2022 £	2023 £	2022 £
Amounts due to the Carmelite Charitable Trust (note 18)	51,333	—	51,333	—

The Carmelite Charitable Trust loaned £55,000 to The Friars to assist with the works on the Artisans' Yard project. The repayment term for this loan is 15 years with no interest. This implies a yearly repayment figure of £3,667.

14. Restricted funds

The income funds of the charity include restricted funds comprising the following unexpended balances of donations and grants held on trusts to be applied for specific purposes:

Group and charity	At 1 January 2023 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	At 31 December 2023 £
Restoration fund	374,366	1,046	(35,010)	(11,874)	328,528
Peace garden fund	17,054	13	(154)	—	16,913
	391,420	1,059	(35,164)	(11,874)	345,441

14. Restricted funds (continued)

	At 1 January 2022 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	At 31 December 2022 £
<i>Group and charity</i>					
<i>Restoration fund</i>	294,392	238,838	(21,722)	(137,142)	374,366
<i>Peace garden fund</i>	17,477	11	(434)	—	17,054
	<u>311,869</u>	<u>238,849</u>	<u>(22,156)</u>	<u>(137,142)</u>	<u>391,420</u>

Restoration fund

This fund represents donations received from the Carmelite Charitable Trust for maintenance projects which are only to be carried out after approval by the Trustees of the Carmelite Charitable Trust together with grants from the Programme of Major Works Scheme which is part of the Cultural Recovery Funds towards repairs to the roof of the church situated on the site of The Friars, Aylesford. The transfer from the restoration fund to unrestricted funds represents eligible expenditure incurred and capitalised during the year.

Peace garden fund

This fund represents donations received for the creation of a peace garden at the entrance to the Friars.

15. Analysis of net assets between funds

<i>Group</i>	<i>Unrestricted funds</i>			<i>Restricted funds</i> £	<i>Total 2023</i> £
	<i>General funds</i> £	<i>Tangible fixed assets fund</i> £	<i>Non-charitable trading funds</i> £		
Fund balances at 31 December 2023 are represented by:					
Tangible fixed assets	—	813,336	95,005	—	908,341
Net current assets (liabilities)	454,698	—	(373,273)	345,441	426,866
Non current liabilities	(51,333)	—	—	—	(51,333)
Total net assets	403,365	813,336	(278,268)	345,441	1,283,874

<i>Group</i>	<i>Unrestricted funds</i>			<i>Restricted funds</i> £	<i>Total 2022</i> £
	<i>General funds</i> £	<i>Tangible fixed assets fund</i> £	<i>Non-charitable trading funds</i> £		
Fund balances at 31 December 2022 are represented by:					
Tangible fixed assets	—	807,717	101,688	—	909,405
Net current assets (liabilities)	370,240	—	(363,388)	391,420	398,272
Total net assets	370,240	807,717	(261,700)	391,420	1,307,677

15. Analysis of net assets between funds (continued)

	Unrestricted funds		Restricted funds	Total 2023
	General funds	Tangible fixed assets fund		
Charity	£	£	£	£
Fund balances at 31 December 2023 are represented by:				
Tangible fixed assets	—	813,334	—	813,334
Investments	1	—	—	1
Net current assets	454,697	—	345,441	800,138
Non current liabilities	(51,333)	—	—	(51,333)
Total net assets	403,365	813,334	345,441	1,562,140

	Unrestricted funds		Restricted funds	Total 2022
	General funds	Tangible fixed assets fund		
Charity	£	£	£	£
Fund balances at 31 December 2022 are represented by:				
Tangible fixed assets	—	807,717	—	807,717
Investments	1	—	—	1
Net current assets	370,240	—	391,420	761,660
Total net assets	370,241	807,717	391,420	1,569,378

16. Connected charities

The Friars, Aylesford is connected to the Carmelite Charitable Trust by virtue of the fact that several of the trustees of the charitable company are also trustees of the Carmelite Charitable Trust (Charity Registration No. 1061342).

The transactions with the Carmelite Charitable Trust during the year are as follows:

- ◆ The Friars, Aylesford received an unrestricted grant of £120,000 (2022: £120,000) and rent of £nil (2022: £1,050) from the Carmelite Charitable Trust.
- ◆ At 31 December 2023 The Carmelite Charitable Trust owed £47,935 to The Friars, Aylesford (2022: £31,132 owed to The Friars, Aylesford).
- ◆ The Carmelite Charitable Trust also loaned £55,000 to The Friars to assist with the works on the Artisans' Yard project. The repayment terms for this loan is 15 years with no interest. This implies a yearly repayment figure of £3,667.

16. Connected charities (continued)

The Carmelite Charitable Trust holds the freehold of Aylesford Priory. No rent was paid by the charity in the period. During the period the Carmelite Charitable Trust carried out various improvements to the property as permitted under the lease. These improvements have been capitalised in the accounts of the Carmelite Charitable Trust and are not included in the accounts of the charity. However, the charity and its subsidiary absorbed all the general running costs of the Priory.

The Carmelite Charitable Trust has confirmed that it will continue to provide financial support to the group as and when required to enable it to meet its liabilities as they fall due over the short to medium term.

The charity has taken advantage of the exemption provided by FRS 102 for the requirement to disclose transactions with its subsidiary undertaking.

Banking arrangements

The charity's bank accounts form part of a centralised banking system operated with the Carmelite Charitable Trust. Cash and cash equivalents for the group were £370,234 as at 31 December 2023 (£272,184 as at 31 December 2022).

17. Lease commitments

As at 31 December 2023 the Friars, Aylesford had total future commitments under non-cancellable operating leases due as follows:

	2023 £	2022 £
Office equipment		
Within one year	—	345
Within one to two years	—	—
	—	345

18. Capital commitments

At 31 December 2023, the charity and group had no capital commitments.

THE FRIARS, AYLESFORD

England & Wales - Charity number 1068518

Accounts

The Friars, Aylesford

Annual Report and Consolidated Financial Statements

Year ended 31 December 2022

Charity Registration Number
1068518

Company Registration Number
03487590 (England and Wales)

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Reference and administrative details of the Charity, its Trustees and its advisers

Trustees	Rev Brendan Grady, O. Carm. Rev Patrick O’Keeffe, O. Carm. Rev Francis Kemsley, O.Carm. Isabel Bodunrin
Advisers to the Trustees	Mr Jonathan Louth Mrs Jan Wilkinson Mr Simon Howell
Secretary	Mrs Clare Abbotson
Registered office	The Friars Aylesford Kent ME20 7BX
Charity registration number	1068518
Company registration number	03487590 (England and Wales)
Auditor	Buzzacott LLP 130 Wood Street London EC2V 6DL
Principal bankers	The Royal Bank of Scotland plc 62/63 Threadneedle Street London EC2R 8LA
Solicitors	Pothecary Witham Weld 84 Eccleston Square London SW1V 1PX

FOREWORD

We entered 2022 looking forward to a better year ahead as the Covid 19 pandemic slipped into the rear-view mirror. We were on the verge of learning to live with Covid 19 and its impact then we got one of the toughest financial years in memory. Double digit inflation driven by high food and fuel prices and the impact of the war in Ukraine meant that the defining financial phrase of 2022 was "the cost-of-living crisis". Our energy costs more than doubled and the team had to look at various cost saving ideas. Despite the challenges of the year, I am pleased to share that our financial results were on par with pre-pandemic results.

The trading subsidiary Aylesford Priory Limited made a small profit of £10,849 and the charity The Friars, Aylesford made a surplus of £187,528 giving a combined positive contribution of £198,377.

I am immensely proud of the team who worked hard despite the severe management shortages and the tough and prudent decisions made to lower our staff and general costs.

We were fortunate again this year to receive grants from the Catholic Trust for England and Wales (CaTEW) to continue with our roof project. We also received a small Omicron Hospitality and Leisure Grant from Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council. There were a few generous benefactors who made donations towards specific projects on the Shrine. We finally replaced the 25-year-old boiler and laundry equipment and continued with our guestroom refurbishment.

We continue to live in challenging and uncertain times, and we will do everything possible so that The Friars continues to be a place of welcome and service to all.

Looking ahead, the budget for 2023 is very ambitious but I remain quietly confident that our dedicated and hardworking team and volunteers will continue to rise to the challenge. Our volunteer numbers are dwindling as they get older, and it is our mission to attract younger members into the volunteer fold.

One of our key priorities for 2023 is to ensure that all staff are being supported and are well trained so that they are more effective in their job roles and work smarter not harder.

We want to achieve a positive and meaningful change for all staff, and I am deeply grateful to my immediate team and the Board of Directors and advisors for their support.

I would like to thank all volunteers, donors, supporters and the Carmelite Friars Community for their hard work and dedication to our cause, for sharing in our values and commitment to working together to achieve better outcomes for The Friars.

Finally, my sincere appreciation goes to members of the Board of Trustees, directors and advisors who work tirelessly and devote their time sharing their wisdom and expertise to help drive the charity forward.

Pearl Nyafli
Operations & Business Development Manager

Trustees' report Year ended 31 December 2022

The Trustees, who are the directors for the purposes of company law, are pleased to present their statutory report together with the consolidated financial statements of The Friars, Aylesford (the "Charity") and its subsidiary Aylesford Priory Limited for the year ended 31 December 2022. This report has been prepared in accordance with part VI of the Charities Act 2011.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out on pages 40 to 44 of the attached financial statements and comply with the charitable company's Memorandum and Articles of Association, applicable laws and Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice, applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102).

These financial statements consolidate the activities of The Friars, Aylesford and its wholly owned subsidiary Aylesford Priory Limited. The subsidiary company, which manages the commercial activities, has been trading since 1 January 2010.



The Friars, Aylesford

Historic Overview

Aylesford Priory, better known as The Friars, first came into the hands of the Carmelites in 1242. There are a number of medieval buildings still standing that are Grade I listed. They include two walks of the Cloisters, the Cloister Chapel, Priors' Hall, and Pilgrims' Hall which still provide hospitality to guests and pilgrims. One building provides accommodation to a community of Carmelite Friars. The Community returned in 1949 after leaving at the Dissolution of the Monasteries in 1538. A new Gothic style outdoor Shrine was built. Work began in 1958. It has a fine collection of religious modern art and was recently Grade II* listed.

Aylesford Priory is now a 44 acre site of significant religious and historical interest, attracting around 100,000 to 120,000 visitors in a typical year. At its heart is a major religious shrine, the Shrine of Our Lady of Mount Carmel and St Simon Stock. The open air Marian shrine has a wide piazza which has room for up to 6,000 pilgrims, and a series of five linked chapels of varying sizes.

Historic Overview (continued)

Our surviving medieval buildings are now partly used as a home to some members (friars) of the Carmelite Community, the remainder forming part of our hospitality facilities, our guest house and conference suite, which with additional newer buildings can now accommodate up to 100 overnight visitors. The site also has a tea room and a gift shop located in a refurbished 16th century thatched barn, and some auxiliary buildings which are offered for rental to individuals and local businesses.

From 1949 Aylesford Priory formed a part of a Carmelite Charitable Trust, which covered England and Wales. However, in 1997, the management of Aylesford Priory was devolved to a separate charitable company, The Friars, Aylesford. The ownership of the site and buildings remains with the overall charity, namely the Carmelite Charitable Trust but the administration, the maintenance and the development of the site and the management of the commercial activities have been entrusted to The Friars, Aylesford, and its wholly owned subsidiary company, Aylesford Priory Limited formed in 2010.

Objectives and Activities

The purpose of The Friars, Aylesford, as set out in the Memorandum of Association, is primarily to maintain and develop the Aylesford Priory site as a Marian shrine and retreat/conference centre at the service of the Roman Catholic community as well as other churches, people of other faiths, groups and individuals who wish to use the facilities. The trustees have given careful consideration to how activities of The Friars meet their statutory duty and have considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit. This report sets out how our activities benefit those who visit The Friars, Aylesford Priory, as well as the local and wider community affected by our presence and outreach activities.

Our Vision

A meeting place and centre of Christian spirituality with a Carmelite community at its heart; a space where people of all ages and all faiths and none, will find a welcome, where the sacred is expressed through prayer, the arts and nature.

Be still and know that I am God (Ps 46.10)

Our Mission

- ◆ To work in partnership with others
- ◆ To be inclusive
- ◆ To act responsibly as stewards of the buildings and the physical environment
- ◆ To be accountable to all our stakeholders

Our Values

*Love one another as I have loved you
(Jn 15.12)*

Our Objectives

- ◆ Such charitable purposes which advance the Roman Catholic religion in any part of Great Britain.
- ◆ To promote for the benefit of the public the restoration, presentation and maintenance of the historic buildings, amenities and grounds of The Friars, Aylesford.

Our Ethos

- ◆ We derive our values from the life, message and teachings of Jesus Christ and our inspiration comes from our models, the prophet Elijah, the Blessed Virgin Mary and the saints of the Carmelite Family.
- ◆ The basis of our work is an expression of our commitment to serve the people through friendship, hospitality and a desire to live out the values that Christ preached.

Principal Activities

We are pleased to report that The Friars, Aylesford principal activities fully met our key objectives of partnership, inclusivity, stewardship, and accountability.

Commercial Trading (Aylesford Priory Limited)

Aylesford Priory Limited, Company Registration Number 6740190 (England & Wales), is a wholly owned subsidiary of The Friars, Aylesford. The company's principal activity is to provide a profit on commercial activities at Aylesford Priory to financially support:

- ◆ The pastoral activity of the Charity
- ◆ The promotion of the benefit to the public
- ◆ The restoration, presentation and maintenance of the historic buildings, amenities and grounds of The Friars, Aylesford

The trading activity is primarily the provision of conference facilities, guests' catering and accommodation, events and sale of books, gifts, and refreshments.

Daily visitors

We continue to live by our vision: "a meeting place and centre of Christian spirituality with a Carmelite community at its heart; a space where people of all ages and all faiths and none, will find a welcome, where the sacred is expressed through prayer, the arts and nature". We provide free access 365 days a year to all visitors of any age or nationality to enjoy our place of peace, our venue for gathering, our community of prayer. In 2022, we saw local visitor numbers increase. This is the first-time post-pandemic that these numbers have risen.

Visitors enjoying a picnic on the lawn



Principal Activities (continued)

Pilgrimages

After the restrictions were lifted, 2022 saw the return of most of our regular pilgrimages and we hosted 19 pilgrimages. At the start of the season, numbers were fewer than in pre-covid seasons, with organisers citing the fact that some elderly and vulnerable pilgrims were still reluctant to travel by coach or public transport. However, by September, pilgrimages were closer to their usual numbers. Bookings for 2023 have returned to pre-Covid figures with some 22 pilgrimages booked.

The Polish Pilgrimage continues to be one of the biggest which attracted almost 2,000 people. Other pilgrimages included the Tamils, Italian, Divine Mercy, Caribbean, Goan, Filipino, Kerala Catholic Chaplaincy and Knights of St Columba.



Syro-Malabar Procession of Our Lady of Mount Carmel in May

Principal Activities (continued)

Pilgrimages (continued)



The Southwark Union of Catholic Mothers Pilgrimage presided by Archbishop Wilson

In October, we were privileged to be one of the 52 venues in the UK to host The Relics of St. Bernadette of Lourdes. This was a five-day event and attended by thousands of visitors. This event brought people together and it was all about community and sharing our faith. Visitors were able to venerate the relics, light a candle and receive the Lourdes water. Father Francis Kemsley, Prior of Aylesford, said: "Saints are ordinary people who live extraordinary lives, and we are inspired by their presence, by their dedication and by their prayer. Many people have encountered something, something unique, that will allow them to continue with hope and the expectation that God is with them even in the darkest moments of their lives". The Relics travelled 11,500 miles on the road and over 500 kilos of petitions were delivered to Lourdes.

Principal Activities (continued)

Pilgrimages (continued)



Night procession along the Rosary Way



Veneration of the Relics

Principal Activities (continued)

Pilgrimages (continued)



Educational tour groups

We offer educational tours for groups covering the history of the Carmelite Order here at Aylesford, the artwork, and the development of Aylesford Priory. These tours are of interest to historical, art and other educational groups and we often welcome foreign groups visiting the UK.

Schools programme

We have a schools programme, offering guidelines and resources to support teachers and other adults who bring groups of children and young people to Aylesford. In 2022, the number of schools bringing pupils for day retreats remained steady at 14. Schools with larger numbers often hired the North Barn as their base for the day. The “welcome from a friar” slot at the start of their visit continues to be very popular. Most schools join the 12 noon Mass with just 3 schools having their own Mass or liturgy. School Chaplains and teachers report that reduced school budgets and significantly increased transport costs are a real pressure but the number of schools visiting in 2022 was the same as for 2021. Some of the information provided during these visits is linked to the National Curriculum or Religious Education programmes of study. The programme has been designed to support spiritual, moral, social, and cultural education.

The English School of Mongolia was here in June and stayed for two weeks. They gave a performance “Oklahoma” which was enjoyed by several visitors.

Principal Activities (continued)

Schools programme (continued)



Fr. Ged giving a tour to pilgrims

Outreach programme for schools and young adults

Two multi-school events proved very popular in 2022. On Thursday 23 June, the Southwark Education Commission organised an event of all Kent Primary Schools called “One Mind, One Heart” when nearly 1,000 pupils and their teachers held a Eucharistic Liturgy on the Main Shrine.

Later in the year, on 29 September, the Kent Catholic Schools Partnership organised a Mass for 1,200 pupils who filled the entire Main Shrine (see drone photo below). The principal

celebrant was Archbishop John Wilson.



Aerial view of Kent Catholic Schools Mass on the Main Shrine on 29 September

Principal Activities (continued)

Retreats

In 2022, 64 groups made retreats and visits of various kinds to The Friars ranging from parish Confirmation and RCIA groups, and special interest groups such as Art Societies, National Trust parties and University groups.

From 15 to 19 August, we hosted the Summer Silence Retreat. This was led by Sister Felicity Young O.S.U.

We offer a place of retreat for individuals and groups. Members of the Carmelite Community (the friars) often work alongside groups that come to stay at The Friars, Aylesford and individuals are welcome to join community worship. As well as this work, the friars organise a few retreats each year which are open to anyone who wishes to participate. We successfully ran a series of Lent Talks each Saturday from 5 March to 9 April.

People who have experienced bereavement are encouraged to participate in the "Grief and Loss" retreats which are held throughout the year. We grieve, remember, hope, and give thanks for our loved ones in the light of the Resurrection of Jesus.

Fundraising activities

The eyes of the world were directed to Ukraine. With over one million refugees in Poland and other countries, we realised Ukraine would require long term help. That is why we created a help fund for their residents.



There was also an Easter collection purposely for Ukraine and a donation of £6,000 was made. Ukraine is still very much in our prayers. It is worth noting that Carmelite sisters were involved in helping the Ukrainians and all their convents were open and ready to welcome refugees.

To maintain the historic buildings at The Friars and to financially support the free pastoral offers to visitors, there is a continued programme of fundraising events. These include Summer and Christmas fayres, musical and dramatic productions. We do not use professional fundraisers or participators. The Summer and Christmas Fayres remained our biggest fundraising activity and in 2022 they brought in a combined income of more than £50k.

Trustees' report Year ended 31 December 2022

Principal Activities (continued)

Fundraising activities (continued)



Birds of Prey Display at Summer Fayre 2022



Summer fayre



Principal Activities (continued)

Fundraising activities (continued)

100+ Club – This is a great way of supporting The Friars. A special thank you to Mike and Judy Collins for the many years they have run this club.

Not only do we fundraise for our charity The Friars, but we also fundraise to support other charities like CAFOD and Mary's Meals which are charities that support poverty in countries around the world. We also collected food for Maidstone Christian Care Food Bank, a charity that supports the homeless and needy.

Volunteers

Volunteers play a crucial role in the running of The Friars and without their support we would be unable to operate in the way we do today. We are extremely grateful to all our volunteers who give their time and invaluable support year in year out. Many of our volunteers have been helping for many years and continue to be an integral part of The Friars. Among the regular worshipping community at The Friars, volunteers support us at social events and fundraising activities. In 2022, we had over 30 volunteers helping with the maintenance of the grounds and gardens, chapels, and events.

Here is what one volunteer Judy Collins said about why she volunteers:

"The reason we volunteer is to support The Friars (the Carmelites). We do this in various ways such as Fund Raising: - this includes helping at the Summer and Christmas Fayres, running The Friars Lottery (the monthly draw) organising group lunches which support The Friars hospitality business. We also organise an annual Harvest Lunch which raises funds for CAFOD.

I have been a member of the choir for 17 years which gives me great pleasure, I am also involved in choosing the music for weekly Mass. The choir is a lovely social group and hopefully what we do enhances the Mass.

The Friars is of great importance to us for our faith and socially where we have made many lovely friends. We hope this continues for many years to come."

We also have the gardening group and Hugh McKearney wrote on their behalf:

In 2010, the Volunteer Gardening Group was formed and expertly directed by Jayne Hoose, with the aim of constructing and maintaining a Peace Garden, in addition to other gardening duties in the Aylesford Friary.

After thirteen years it remains a companionable, welcoming, therapeutic multinational group, (French, Austrian, Czech, Polish, Irish, English) age-ranged from the gainfully employed to the gently ageing retired, enthused by the continued, resolute desire to nurture and care for quiet areas frequented and admired by grateful pilgrims and visitors, who encourage us to prolong our delightful and varied tasks for as long as God permits, in a rare, peaceful and spiritual haven away from the frantic, turbulent world outside.

The Peace Garden is a nondenominational enclosure secluded by long high twelfth century walls secreted beyond the Archway of the Gatehouse of the same period. The garden is a quiet, relaxing area for peaceful reflection and silent contemplation, constructed on the four elements; the five gardens are reflected, horticulturally, by a variety of plants and shrubs representing fire, wind, and water.

Volunteers (continued)



We also hosted volunteers from Europe who helped in our Catering and Estates department. These international volunteers come here to improve their English and learn some life skills and we are grateful for their support.

The Gardening Group

We also have the Pastoral Team which has transformed into a regular Prayer Group and will continue to support the pastoral ministry of The Friars. The Team, which includes five volunteers, meets regularly to help plan and support retreat programmes and enhance the pilgrim experience. The group members develop prayer opportunities, pilgrim tours and ways to improve the pastoral areas of the site.

We are privileged to have a small number of professionally qualified lay advisors who hold honorary positions and regularly attend Trustees' meetings for The Friars and Directors' meetings for its subsidiary trading company Aylesford Priory Limited.

Once again, the trustees would wish to record their recognition of the professionalism and commitment of all their staff, volunteers, advisors, and the individual members of the Carmelite Community. Their dedication and positive approach are very much appreciated.

Achievements and Performance in 2022

The Friars, Aylesford had a reasonably good year, and this is illustrated in the table below:

<i>What we said we would do in 2022</i>	<i>What we did in 2022</i>
1. Deliver the agreed 2022 budget.	The Group made a combined profit of £198,377 with Aylesford Priory Limited making a profit of £10,849 and the Charity making a surplus of £187,527.
2. Continue to invest in specific priority capital and maintenance projects approved by the board to be funded by the accumulated reserves brought forward from 2021.	In 2022, the restoration of the Shrine was completed. The drainage and roofs were repaired, and the statue of our lady was regilded. This included the painting of the shrine, restoration artwork on the Main Shrine and in St Anne's Chapel.
3. Develop a three-year business plan and a more formalised reserves policy.	This was deferred to 2023.
4. To collaborate with CCT regarding the Province plans for the development of a new Young Peoples' programme in the Gatehouse and walled garden	We are developing a residential volunteer community based at The Friars. The vision for the project comes from our desire to accompany and collaborate with young people, to share our experience and Carmelite story, and to journey together in finding new ways to live and share in the mission of the Province. Each year we aim to offer an experience of community, service, prayer, and formation to young adults from different countries and backgrounds. The new team will also provide face to face programmes for visiting groups and engage with aspects of the day-to-day life of Aylesford Priory.

Fulfilling our mission 2022

Working in partnership with others

As mentioned under our principal activities, The Friars remains an important retreat and pilgrimage centre. Many different groups come to pray and worship at the Shrine.

The Friars, Aylesford continues to play host to the Aylesford Farmers' Market, the Vintage Motorcycle Rally, The All-Ford Car Show, The Kit Customer American Car Show and The Woodturners' Exhibition.

In June, we had a visit from the Society of St Vincent de Paul. The St Vincent de Paul Society is a lay Catholic organisation that aspires to love the gospel message by serving Christ in the poor with love, respect, justice, hope, and joy, and by working to shape a more just and compassionate society.



Society of St Vincent de Paul who visited in June

The Friars hosted The Changeling Theatre Company once again and they performed Othello in the month of July.

We continued to work with Maidstone Churches Winter Shelter programme, which provides shelter for the homeless in winter months by laundering their bed linen.

As part of our ecumenical involvement, we continued to welcome the different groups, have mass, give tours, and hear confessions. One of the Carmelite friars is a chaplain to a local Catholic school and another friar sits on the Rochester Cathedral council.

Be inclusive

Classes offered by Aylesford Pottery were on the rise this year. They continued to offer classes to groups with learning disabilities such as Emotional Behaviour Disorder, Pottery classes have increased so much so that there are plans to expand their buildings to accommodate more students.

Fulfilling our mission 2022 (continued)

Be inclusive (continued)

The Brocard Room has continued to be a very popular regular meeting place for Aylesford Scouts, school groups, the Syro -Malabar group, the Enamellers and Woodturners.

We are pleased to continue to support The Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) who have been offered a much bigger room as their numbers have increased.

Our guesthouse continued to welcome people from all walks of life, from all backgrounds, abilities, ages, and faiths and none. We continued to host mindfulness training groups, such as yoga and reiki groups.

The Spiritual Direction group has also been offered a room for their training. As their needs grow, the need for more break-out rooms has become a challenge, but we remain hopeful of meeting their requirements.

We continued to support our local schools by welcoming four students for work experience who all enjoyed their time working in the different departments of The Friars.

We continued to put our lottery funded North Barn to good use by hosting religious groups. The Woodturners also held their yearly exhibitions here, showcasing their magnificent artworks to the public. We hired the North Barn to couples for their wedding receptions and also hired it out for wakes, parties and meetings.



Pilgrimage group using the North Barn

We continued to host our ever-popular Mothers' Day and Christmas lunches. We also hosted weddings, wakes and celebration parties in our 13th Century Pilgrims' Hall.

Fulfilling our mission 2022 (continued)

Acting responsibly as stewards of the buildings and the physical environment

We continue to ensure all the buildings and the site are as safe as is reasonably possible for the many visitors we welcome. The buildings are risk assessed annually, and all large events have a Duty Manager and a First Aider assigned to them.

Over the years the Carmelite Charitable Trust (CCT) has supported and promoted work with young people and young adults. In 2021, they developed a new project to offer greater support for young people and further collaboration with young adults. The project is based at The Friars and will offer programmes and support to visiting groups.

Although at a development stage the initiative has already produced resources for visiting groups and offered input and support to large 'youth' and school pilgrimages.

The main opportunity is an exciting new project for people aged 18 - 30. The Carmelite Charitable Trust is developing a residential volunteer community based at The Friars. The vision for the project comes from our desire to accompany and collaborate with young people, to share our experience and Carmelite experience and story, and to journey together in finding new ways to live and share in the mission of the province.

Each year an experience of community, service, prayer, and formation will be offered to young adults from different countries and backgrounds. The new team will also provide face to face programmes for visiting groups and engage with aspects of the day-to-day life of Aylesford Priory.

Proactive exploration of opportunities for collaborative partner organisations and for the improved use of the whole site continues. Talks began with the potters and upholsterers with regards to developing an artisan project which would benefit them and The Friars Aylesford.

The Estates team met four times this year and the group continued to report on significant maintenance concerns to the trustees. Mini refurbishment work began in some of the guest rooms in the New Block.

Over the last two years a major restoration of the Grade 2 * shrine has been taking place. Two government grants have enabled major repairs to the roofs and the drainage of the gothic style shrine designed by Adrian Gilbert Scott.

St. Joseph's, the Relic Chapel and Main Shrine have all now been painted.

The restoration of the Shrine continued with St. Anne's Chapel. Environmental monitoring, assessing why humidity and condensation occur in St Anne's Chapel continued and the ceiling was repaired.

In May, professional art conservators patiently cleaned the sgraffito and skilfully restored it from the damage caused by rain damage. We can see the original vibrant colours for the first time in years. The soft greens used by Kossowski symbolised "*the green freshness of Spring of Faith*".

Work was also carried out on all the confessionals and the Boys' Sacristy.

Fulfilling our mission 2022 (continued)

***Acting responsibly as stewards of the buildings and the physical environment
(continued)***

Work has just been completed on the restoration of the statue of Our Lady of the Assumption by Michael Clark. It has dominated the shrine since it was erected on 8 September 1960. The statue received a major award from the Royal Society of British sculptors. The original wood, agba, an African hard wood, was splitting. This has been dealt with and the original gold leaf has been restored. The statue has not looked so vibrant and magnificent in years.

Later this year we hope to restore some of the ceramics along the Rosary Way including a major project on the Scapular Shrine.

We also embarked on a significant IT project, bringing internet facilities to all our conference rooms and the Shrine area.

We replaced the 25-year-old steam boiler and two pieces of laundry equipment.



Ongoing regilding works on the statue of Our Lady

Fulfilling our mission 2022 (continued)

***Acting responsibly as stewards of the buildings and the physical environment
(continued)***



The finished work on the statue of Our Lady

Fulfilling our Objectives in 2022 (continued)

Be accountable to all stakeholders

In 2022, we continued to distribute The Aylesford quarterly newsletter to over 6,000 people across the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland. Many of those who receive the newsletter respond and share their views, thoughts, and aspirations for The Friars at Aylesford.

We also published and distributed the monthly Friars News for our local community and staff. Our visitors continued to share their feedback and ideas through a questionnaire which is available in all guest rooms.

We continue to communicate with our local community and visitors via our website and social media. New followers on Facebook have been keeping up to date with our supporter-facing activities, hearing about campaigns and engaging with us.

Such charitable purposes which advance the Roman Catholic religion in any part of Great Britain

Served by its Carmelite community, The Friars is primarily a Roman Catholic shrine and pilgrimage centre. There are regular masses celebrated each day and the friars are available for confessions, counselling, and consultations. The chapels are open all day all year round for those looking for a place of quiet and meditation.

A pastoral team of friars and lay volunteers served the spiritual and religious needs of those visiting The Friars and delivered the annual retreat program.

As an important Marian shrine, pilgrims from all over the world visited throughout the year. These international pilgrims prayed and celebrated in their own languages.

The Carmelite Community continued to support the many schools who visited with their individualised programmes. These programmes include history and art appreciation. Apart from participating in these programmes, the school children also took part in Masses in the chapels. The friars normally would take them on ground tours explaining the history of the Carmelites in England and giving them an understanding of the various artworks.

Financial Review

The trustees' stated aim in December 2021 was for the group to achieve a balanced budget and a continued commitment to invest in overdue maintenance projects. Our post Covid- 19 recovery was challenging, with visitor numbers slowly rising but spending was noticeably down in certain departments.

Rising living costs impacted on many families, making it completely unaffordable to engage in simple sociable activities like eating out. This in turn impacted on our trade and we saw less customers patronising our Pilgrims' Hall food offers. Our overhead spending more than doubled due to the high energy costs.

Grants and donations for the year were much less than the previous year, 2021.

Despite the challenges, at the end of the year, we found our finances in a positive position and this is testament to the hard work of staff, volunteers and supporters throughout the charity who went above and beyond to ensure that we remained viable.

Financial Review (continued)

General Funds

The Trustees continue to ensure the profitability of the day-to-day operations in the wholly owned subsidiary Aylesford Priory Limited, and to ensure the net costs of their charitable activities are met by the surplus made.

The trading activities of Aylesford Priory Limited resulted in a profit of £10,849 (2021: £31,990 loss), (please see note 11). A surplus of £187,528 (£360,312 in 2021) was made by the Charity, resulting in a Group surplus of £198,377 (2021: surplus of £328,322).

General reserves were £370,240 compared to £434,924 in 2021.

Restricted Funds

These funds usually arise from legacies and donations and are limited to spending on defined purposes.

£311,869 (2021: £378,282) of restricted funds were brought forward into 2022, represented by £17,477 (2021: £17,491) for the Peace Garden and £294,392 (2021: £360,791) for the Restoration Fund.

As of 31 December 2022, carried forward restricted funds were £391,420 (2021: £311,869) comprising £374,366 for the Restoration Fund and £17,054 for the Peace Garden.

Total funds as of 31 December 2022 were £1,307,677 (2021: £1,109,300) represented by £391,420 (2021: £311,869) of restricted funds, £807,717 of Tangible Fixed Assets (2021: £635,055), a shortfall of £(261,700) in Aylesford Priory Limited Funds/Reserves (2021: £(272,548)) and £370,240 of general reserves (2021: £434,924).

Income

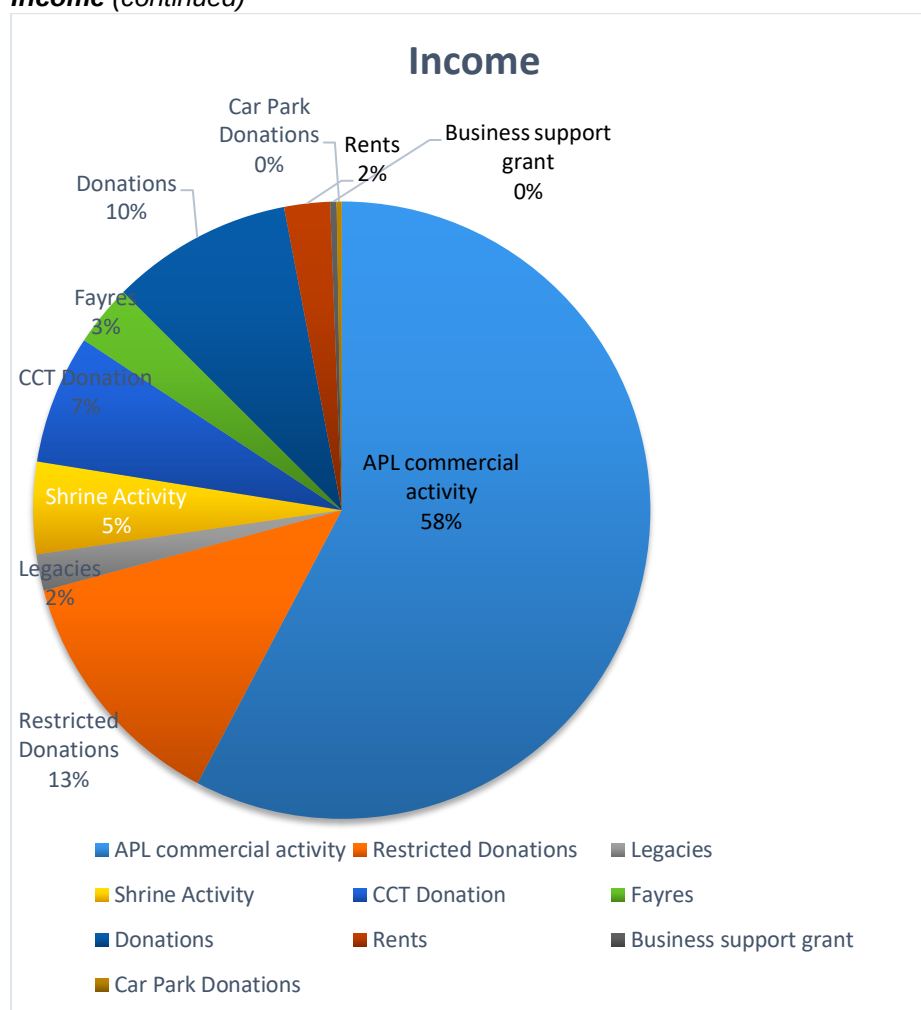
The Group income for 2022 by activity is shown in figure 1 below, and figure 2 shows the increase in income from 2021 to 2022 by activity.

Figure 1 – 2022 Group Income by Activity

The Total income for the group was £1,777,830.

Financial Review (continued)

Income (continued)



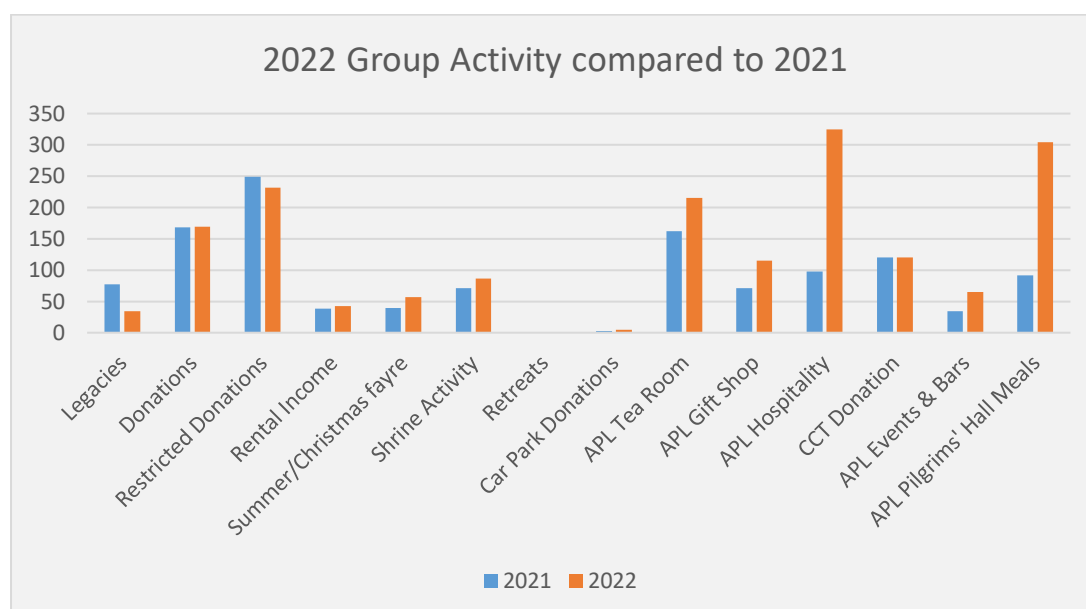
Department	2022	2021	% Change
Gift Shop	115,470	71,473	+61.5%
Tea Room	215,398	161,656	+33%
Hospitality	325,622	97,478	+234%
Pilgrims' Hall	304,737	92,185	+231%
Events/Bars	64,518	34,079	+89%
Total	1,025,745	456,871	+125%

All other income was derived from activities of The Friars Aylesford: - legacies £33,830; unrestricted donations £169,062; restricted donations £88,871, grants £143,288; rental activity £43,780; fayres £56,967; shrine activity £85,549; car park donations £4,737; the Carmelite Charitable Trust donation £120,000; and Covid-19 business support grants of £6,000.

Financial Review (continued)

Income (continued)

Figure 2 – 2022 Group Income by Activity compared to 2021.



The turnover of the charity's trading subsidiary Aylesford Priory Limited is made up of the provision of hospitality (conference facilities and guest accommodation), events, sale of books, gifts and refreshments was £1,025,746 which was up by £568,875 (125%) from 2021. This represented a strong recovery in retail activity.

Figure 2 highlights which areas' income improved or declined in 2022 compared to 2021. All areas performed better than last year apart from legacies.

Sales from our Hospitality department were £325,622, up by 234% (£97,723 in 2021). Some great results from the Tea Room brought in sales income of £215,397, up by 33% (£161,656 in 2021). The Gift Shop's sales income was £115,470, up 61.5% in comparison to 2021 (£71,473). This increase was partly down to the Relics of St Bernadette event in October. Pilgrims' Hall's sales income was £303,893 up 231% on 2021 (£91,742), down to the fact that the accounting for this department now reflects it as a profit making one as opposed to previous years. Events and bars were £64,498, up 88% against £34,278 in 2021. Wedding receptions increased as many weddings had been delayed due to the pandemic.

We received a total of £33,830 in legacies in 2022, in contrast to £77,189 in 2021, a decrease of 56%.

Our unrestricted donations were £169,062 which were slightly up on last year (£168,489 in 2021). Shrine activity was £85,549 up 20% on 2021 (£71,172). Summer and Christmas fayres brought in £56,967 up 46% on 2021 (£39,146).

The Carmelite Charitable Trust (CCT) continued to provide financial support to the Charity. The Charity received an annual grant of £120,000 for the on-going support of its activities.

The group income was £1,777,830 an increase of 29.8% in comparison to £1,369,703 in 2021.

Financial Review (continued)

Expenditure

The results for the year ended 31 December 2022 reflect another year of challenges. Challenges presented by high energy costs which meant our energy spend was more than doubled in comparison to previous years and other rising costs. We did our best by working smarter and embarked on various cost-saving strategies. We focused on agreed margins for each of our trading activities and ensured adequate investment in our site and facilities, to maintain a healthy and safe environment for our staff, volunteers, customers, and visitors.

This year, our trading operating costs (cost of sales) for the subsidiary company Aylesford Priory Limited, was £888,069, up 69.7% against 2021 (£523,154). This increase was due to higher staff costs, employing more staff (including turnover in Hospitality and Catering Manager positions) and the rising cost of goods and services. We honoured the government minimum wage which went up by 6.7%. The Trustees also agreed a one-off cost of living bonus of 2% for all staff which was very well received. This was to support our highly committed staff through the crisis.

We invested in new boilers for the site and a new laundry equipment.

For more details of activity in the wholly owned subsidiary Aylesford Priory Limited see note 11.

Notable increases in expenditure for the Charity are higher costs of raising funds (note 4) and Support of the Carmelite Friars (note 6). The fayres generated a healthy income of £56,967 (£39,146 in 2021). There was only one fayre in 2021. It was pleasing to see a return of visitors to such events once again.

The living and personal expenses of the Carmelite Friars at Aylesford were £86,030 (£56,102 in 2021) up 53% year on year, brought on by rising costs and high energy prices.

Table 1 below shows that expenditure in 2022 on the upkeep of the shrine (note 5) was up 21.7% on 2021. The expenditure on premises and facilities costs was up 11.7% against the previous year.

Direct costs of £106,989 (2021: £60,859) up 75.8% were made up of purchase of candles, memorial benches and plaques, direct staffing costs, high utility bills, cash handling, chapel ad hoc expenses and general expenses. Other indirect staff costs were on par with the previous year at £35,475 (2021: £35,715) down by 0.7%.

Financial Review (continued)

Expenditure (continued)

Table 1- 2022 Expenditure on upkeep of the shrine compared to 2021.

	2021	2022	% Difference
Governance costs	£9,021	£7,920	-12.2%
Office costs	£12,345	£15,644	+26.7%
Premises & Facilities costs	£223,305	£249,368	+11.7%
Indirect Staff costs	£35,715	£35,475	-0.7%
Direct Shrine costs	£60,859	£106,989	+75.8%
Total	£341,245	£415,395	+21.7%

Reserves

Reserves are needed both to maintain the level of The Friars Aylesford's current activities and to enable the completion of long-term projects. The trustees are yet to finalise a formal reserve policy which will establish the recommended reserve levels for the group to hold.

At 31 December 2022 unrestricted general funds amounted to £370,240 (£434,925 in 2021) a decrease of 14.9%.

During the year, restricted funds have increased from £311,869 (31 December 2021) to £391,420 (made up of Peace Garden £17,054 and Restoration fund £374,366) at 31 December 2022.

The total funds at 31 December 2022 are a surplus of £1,307,677 (2021: £1,109,300) equivalent to a 17.9% increase.

These total funds are represented by tangible fixed assets of £909,405 (2021: £654,897), net current assets of £398,272 (2021: £454,403) including within net current assets a net cash position of £272,184 (2021: £366,866). Bank accounts held are part of a centralised, pooled banking system, together with and managed by the Carmelite Charitable Trust. Pooled bank accounts are managed to optimise return on investments. Any accumulated reserves will be invested in the restoration, presentation and maintenance of the historic buildings, amenities and grounds of The Friars, Aylesford.

The trustees continue to recognise the importance of securing a long-term presence of the Carmelite Community at Aylesford Priory and working with a new Young Adults Community.

The ambition remains to secure a commercial partnership agreement by considering a new commercial or social enterprise partner or partners, to use part of the available assets, that is the land and buildings at Aylesford Priory, in delivering activities that provide adequate income to meet or exceed the on-going costs and support the viability of the non-business charitable activities and in particular the maintenance of our historic buildings. This idea has been initiated with plans in place to create an Artisan centre.

Our key risks and uncertainties

The Board of Trustees has responsibility for making sure there are adequate and effective risk management protocols and systems of internal controls in place to manage The Friars' major risks and to achieve our strategic objectives. The risk register is reviewed yearly by the Board of Trustees to ensure that sound mitigating controls are in place. We have processes in place to manage the key risks that could affect the charity's ability to achieve its objectives.

While many risks from previous years remain, this year saw the emergence of a new risk to our financial sustainability: high inflation. High inflation could have an impact on our income, as volunteers and retail customers respond to the cost-of-living crisis, as well as having an impact on our running costs. We also don't know what the knock-on impact on public sector spending – a major source of income for the charity. We intend to mitigate inflation risks through good procurement practices, as well as continuing to review our pricing strategies in our trading outlets.

Current labour market conditions and the cost-of-living crisis mean we also anticipate major risks around staff retention, recruitment, and satisfaction. The hospitality industry overall continues to suffer from recruitment and The Friars is no different.

The key risks to The Friars' objectives and how these are managed are set out below:

Key Risks	How are these risks managed?
Financial performance and sustainability A significant reduction in our available resources due to external economic and environmental factors. The continued global impact of the war in Ukraine and the rise in inflation and rising energy prices is a risk to our sustainability. These risks undermine our ability to invest appropriately to achieve our strategic objectives.	1. Annual budget setting and then full re-forecasting processes every six months. 2. Holding a significant value of free reserves at any point in time, with a monthly review of these to make sure they remain within the target range set by the Finance Group. 3. Regular review of our pricing strategy to ensure we remain competitive and be flexible in our approach. 4. Shopping around for competitive suppliers (including energy suppliers) to minimise rising costs.
Staff Recruitment and Retention Difficulty in attracting qualified managers and keeping them and recruiting the right calibre of non-management staff. Staff turnover continues to be high.	1. Create a talent pipeline to manage uncertainty in filling vacancies when staff retire. 2. Work closely with recruitment agencies. 3. Ongoing benchmarking of compensation and benefits to the rest of the sector.

Our key risks and uncertainties (continued)

Key Risks	How are these risks managed?
Business Continuity Events adversely impact reputation and/or operations, including loss of operations due to a major incident (cyber-attack, serious data security breach, a serious fraud, major health and safety incidents, internal control failures or an outbreak of a communicable disease).	1. Regular review and update of business continuity and disaster recovery plans to help minimise disruption to operations from unexpected events. 2. We continue to upgrade our IT systems. This includes using modern cloud computing that gives staff access to better storage, files and software, through internet-connected devices.
Safeguarding Inadequate or ineffective safeguarding policy or practice that could result in, or contribute to, serious harm or injury to a child or a young person.	1. Clear safeguarding reporting mechanisms, as set out in our safeguarding policy, including Safeguarding Lead roles. 2. Department Managers to continue receiving training from the experts. 3. Board of Trustees continues to keep safeguarding as an agenda item in all its bi-monthly meetings.
Change Management Inability to implement change and complete priority projects due to constant changes in department managers. Risk of change fatigue, burn-out or high-attrition within teams, given the level of change.	1. Continue to offer support for individuals. 2. Staff welfare is always on the agenda at Trustees meetings.
Lack of funding for maintenance and repairs of the buildings Reduction in funding has a negative impact on The Friars' ability to achieve its objectives. A reduction in funding could be due to failure to qualify for certain funds or apathy of donors due to financial crises.	1. Strengthen our existing relations and develop new relationships to secure additional funding. 2. Diversify our sources of funding. 3. Develop a robust fundraising strategy.

Our plans for the future

Income generation

Our key objective is to generate as much income as we can to remain viable. We will aim to deliver the 2023 budget as best as we can although we are aware it is an ambitious one. We will improve the effectiveness of our trading activities by operating an effective pricing strategy, source new suppliers and urge staff to work smarter. We will need to find ways to increase the contributions of our visitors.

The external and economic environment remains very uncertain, and we are clear that we need to remain agile and flexible to meet changing demands and needs.

Improve IT

We will invest further in our IT and technology systems. We identify that IT is a key enabler for both service quality and financial sustainability. We will extend our internet coverage to the chapels and improve the reception in our guest house and conference rooms. We will introduce card payment machines in our chapels to improve service and to bring in additional income.

Invest in priority capital and maintenance projects

We will continue to ensure that every decision we make will support our core aim and objective to promote for the benefit of the public the restoration, presentation and maintenance of the historic buildings, amenities and grounds of The Friars, Aylesford. We will continue refurbishing our guest house facilities and improve our conference facilities.

We will continue working with the Estates sub-group and the Estates Manager to regularly review progress on agreed projects.

Working with partners

With the introduction of Creative Aylesford and the Artisan Village we hope to continue working with partners and suppliers whose local network will expand the outreach and the effective mission of the Carmelite Community.

Environmental sustainability initiatives

With growing concerns for the environment, it is now becoming critical for organisations to adopt and take corporate sustainability initiatives that focus on people, planet, alongside profits.

Sustainability practices can boost The Friars, Aylesford's life term by giving us a competitive edge, enhancing our brand image, attracting a loyal customer base, reducing operational costs, and creating new opportunities for success in the long run. We can start off small by recycling all our packaging, find other ways of using energy (solar?), work towards minimizing single-use cups and other plastics.

Volunteers

People volunteer for a range of reasons, and each volunteering opportunity provides its own unique experience. The Friars, Aylesford depends on volunteers to ensure that we remain a place of welcome and prayer to our numerous and diverse visitors. The volunteer numbers are dwindling so we will develop a robust volunteering strategy, to be the charity of choice in the Kent area.

Going concern

We are doing everything we can to build on our financial stability, seeking new income streams and developing new partnerships to keep this beautiful place going. The Trustees have assessed The Friars, Aylesford's financial position, and the work we are doing to diversify our income through partnerships and the creation of the Artisan Village, and they feel confident in the charity's ability to operate as a going concern.

Many of the unprecedented challenges and turmoil of 2021 continued into 2022, but staff and volunteers here have shown themselves to be resilient and creative – facing up to these challenges and producing results on par to pre-pandemic times.

The Trustees have confidence the charity and its subsidiary company will be able to withstand all challenges presented by the cost-of-living crisis and be financially sustainable in the short to medium term.

Structure, governance, and management

The Friars, Aylesford is constituted as a company limited by guarantee governed by its own Memorandum and Articles of Association. The members are the individual friars of the British Province of the Carmelite Order, who meet in Annual General Meetings to elect the Trustees, to review the financial statements for the previous year and to discuss any other relevant business.

The Trustees are appointed to oversee the strategic governance of The Friars and its subsidiary. They set the strategy, agree an annual budget and monitor performance. In particular, the Trustees make all decisions where the reputation and ethos may be impacted.

During 2022, the Trustees met 6 times, with an Annual General Meeting on 18 July 2022.

There are two specialist sub-groups which meet regularly providing advice and recommendations to the Board.

- ◆ The Finance Group Chair: Fr Brendan Grady
- ◆ The Estates Group Chair: Jonathan Louth (architect)

The Trustees are supported by advisors: Jan Wilkinson (Finance), Jonathan Louth (Estates and Development) and Simon Howell (Legal and Development) who regularly attend Board or sub-group meetings as applicable.

New Trustees are briefed on the role of a Trustee and provided with relevant literature plus copies of the Memorandum and Articles of Association. Trustee indemnity insurance premiums are paid for by the charitable company to provide protection for the Trustees in the execution of their duties. In December 2017, we undertook a review of our current practices compared to the Charity Commission's Code of Governance and were pleased that there were few areas that were identified as needing minor improvement.

Structure, governance, and management (continued)

The Trustees delegate the day-to-day operations of the charity to the Management Team also known as the Trading Operations Management Team (TOMT). The TOMT comprises the Operations & Business Development Manager (OBDM) and four other members with clear lines of responsibility for specific departments of the organisation. The Trustees have worked with the TOMT to develop the longer-term strategic plans for the charity. Responsibility for the implementation of the plans is delegated to the TOMT through agreed one-year business plans also known as Operational Plans.

The TOMT has clear terms of reference, regularly reviewed by the Trustees, and its prime and collective responsibility is to self-manage the trading operations of The Friars, Aylesford and to achieve a balanced budget, in line with the budget presented to and agreed by the Trustees in December of the prior year.

Within the TOMT, certain managers are expected to occasionally attend Trustee meetings, reporting from, and representing the TOMT. These managers can also refer urgent matters that are outside the remit of the TOMT to Trustees.

TOMT members at the start of 2022 were: Pearl Nyafli – The Operations & Business Development Manager (Lead); Ros Duddell – Gift Shop Manager; Steve Hayden – Estates Manager and Clare Abbotson – Prior's and Trustees' Secretary. The Hospitality Manager and Catering Manager positions were not filled until August and September 2022 respectively. Karen Stevens manages the Hospitality Department and Gail Grimes manages the Catering Department.

Key management remuneration is first informed by current local market rates for similar roles, and by maintaining appropriate differentials for job responsibilities within the organisation. A proposal is considered by the Finance Group and a recommendation made to the Trustees. The Trustees authorise all key management salaries.

Statement of Trustees' responsibilities

The Trustees (who are also Directors of The Friars, Aylesford for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and Financial Statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Charity and the Group and of the income and expenditure of the group for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

- ◆ select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- ◆ observe the methods and principles in Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable to the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102);
- ◆ make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;

Trustees' report Year ended 31 December 2022

Structure, governance, and management (continued)

Statement of Trustees' responsibilities (continued)

- ♦ state whether applicable United Kingdom Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- ♦ prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Charity and the Group will continue in operation.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that 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 Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Charity and the Group and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Each of the Trustees confirms that:

- ♦ so far as each Trustee is aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the Charity's auditor is unaware; and
- ♦ each Trustee has taken all the steps that he/she ought to have taken as a Trustee in order to make himself/herself aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the Charity's auditor is aware of that information.

This confirmation is given and should be interpreted in accordance with the provisions of s418 of the Companies Act 2006.

The Trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the Charity's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

Approved by the Trustees on: 18/7/23 Francis Kemsley

F N Kemsley
18/7/23

Independent auditor's report to the members of The Friars, Aylesford

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of The Friars, Aylesford (the 'charitable parent company') and of The Friars, Aylesford and its subsidiary Aylesford Priory Limited (the 'group') for the year ended 31 December 2022 which comprise the group statement of financial activities, the group and charitable parent company balance sheets, the consolidated statement of cash flows, the principal accounting policies and the notes to the financial statements. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- ◆ give a true and fair view of the state of the group's and of the charitable parent company's affairs as at 31 December 2022 and of the group's income and expenditure for the year then ended;
- ◆ have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- ◆ have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the group in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the group and charitable parent company's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The trustees are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the Annual Report and Consolidated Financial Statements, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- ◆ the information given in the trustees' report, which is also the directors' report for the purposes of company law, for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- ◆ the trustees' report, which is also the directors' report for the purposes of company law has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the group and the charitable parent company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the trustees' report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- ◆ adequate accounting records have not been kept by the charitable parent company, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- ◆ the charitable parent company financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- ◆ certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- ◆ we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit; or
- ◆ the trustees were not entitled to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the small companies regime and take advantage of the small companies' exemptions in preparing the trustees' report and from the requirement to prepare a strategic report.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the trustees' responsibilities statement, the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the group's and the charitable parent company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the group or the charitable parent company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below.

Our approach to identifying and assessing the risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations, was as follows:

- ◆ the engagement partner ensured that the engagement team collectively had the appropriate competence, capabilities and skills to identify or recognise non-compliance with applicable laws and regulations;
- ◆ we identified the laws and regulations applicable to the group through discussions with management, and from our commercial knowledge and experience of the sector;
- ◆ we focused on specific laws and regulations which we considered may have a direct material effect on the financial statements or the operations of the company, including the Companies Act 2006 and the Charities Act 2011;
- ◆ we assessed the extent of compliance with the laws and regulations identified above through making enquiries of management and inspecting correspondence; and
- ◆ identified laws and regulations were communicated within the audit team and the team remained alert to instances of non-compliance throughout the audit.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements (continued)

We assessed the susceptibility of the group's accounts to material misstatement, including obtaining an understanding of how fraud might occur, by:

- ◆ making enquiries of management as to where they considered there was susceptibility to fraud, their knowledge of actual, suspected and alleged fraud; and
- ◆ considering the internal controls in place to mitigate risks of fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations.

To address the risk of fraud through management bias and override of controls, we:

- ◆ performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships;
- ◆ tested journal entries to identify unusual transactions;
- ◆ assessed whether judgements and assumptions made in determining the accounting estimates were indicative of potential bias; and
- ◆ tested authorisation controls on expenditure items, checking that all expenditure was approved in line with the charitable parent company's procedures and the group's procedures.

There are inherent limitations in our audit procedures described above. The more removed that laws and regulations are from financial transactions, the less likely it is that we would become aware of non-compliance. Auditing standards also limit the audit procedures required to identify non-compliance with laws and regulations to enquiry of the trustees and other management and the inspection of regulatory and legal correspondence, if any.

Material misstatements that arise due to fraud can be harder to detect than those that arise from error as they may involve deliberate concealment or collusion.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and the charitable company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.



Amanda Francis (Senior Statutory Auditor)
For and on behalf of Buzzacott LLP, Statutory Auditor
130 Wood Street
London EC2V 6DL

29 July 2023

Consolidated statement of financial activities Year to 31 December 2022

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2022 Total funds £	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2021 Total funds £
Income from:							
Donations, grants and legacies	1	316,202	238,849	555,051	365,678	249,099	614,777
Other trading activities	2	1,126,493	—	1,126,493	534,161	—	534,161
Charitable activities	3	90,286	—	90,286	74,389	—	74,389
Other sources:							
. Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme		—	—	—	91,978	—	91,978
. Coronavirus Business Support Scheme		6,000	—	6,000	54,398	—	54,398
Total income		1,538,981	238,849	1,777,830	1,120,604	249,099	1,369,703
Expenditure on:							
Raising funds	4	1,077,594	434	1,078,028	644,034	—	644,034
Charitable activities							
. Upkeep of the shrine at Aylesford	5	393,673	21,722	415,395	330,658	10,587	341,245
. Support of the Carmelite Friars of the Aylesford community	6	86,030	—	86,030	56,102	—	56,102
Total expenditure		1,557,297	22,156	1,579,453	1,030,794	10,587	1,041,381
Net income (expenditure) before transfers		(18,316)	216,693	198,377	89,810	238,512	328,322
Transfers between funds	14	137,142	(137,142)	—	304,925	(304,925)	—
Net income (expenditure) and net movement in funds	7	118,826	79,551	198,377	394,735	(66,413)	328,322
Reconciliation of funds:							
Balances brought forward at 1 January 2022		797,431	311,869	1,109,300	402,696	378,282	780,978
Balances carried forward at 31 December 2022		916,257	391,420	1,307,677	797,431	311,869	1,109,300

All the group's activities derived from continuing operations during the above two financial years.

There were no recognised gains and losses other than those set out in the consolidated statement of financial activities above.

Balance sheets 31 December 2022

	Notes	Group		Charity	
		2022 £	2021 £	2022 £	2021 £
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	10	909,405	654,897	807,717	635,055
Investments	11	—	—	1	1
		<u>909,405</u>	<u>654,897</u>	<u>807,718</u>	<u>635,056</u>
Current assets					
Stock		46,509	24,919	8,500	1,640
Debtors	12	191,602	173,855	640,341	546,031
Cash at bank and in hand		272,184	366,866	125,273	240,950
		<u>510,295</u>	<u>565,640</u>	<u>774,114</u>	<u>788,621</u>
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	13	(112,023)	(111,237)	(12,455)	(41,828)
Net current assets		<u>398,272</u>	<u>454,403</u>	<u>761,660</u>	<u>746,793</u>
Total net assets		<u>1,307,677</u>	<u>1,109,300</u>	<u>1,569,378</u>	<u>1,381,849</u>
Represented by:					
Funds and reserves					
Restricted funds	14	391,420	311,869	391,420	311,869
Unrestricted funds					
. General funds		370,240	434,924	370,241	434,925
. Tangible fixed assets fund		807,717	635,055	807,717	635,055
. Non-charitable trading funds		(261,700)	(272,548)	—	—
Total funds		<u>1,307,677</u>	<u>1,109,300</u>	<u>1,569,378</u>	<u>1,381,849</u>

Approved by the trustees of The Friars, Aylesford, Company Registration Number 03487590 (England and Wales) and signed on their behalf by:

F. N' Kemsley

Francis Kemsley
Trustee

Approved by the trustees on:

18/7/23

Consolidated statement of cash flows Year to 31 December 2022

	Notes	2022 £	2021 £
Cash flows from operating activities			
. Net cash provided by operating activities	A	217,798	316,866
Cash flows from investing activities			
. Purchase of tangible fixed assets		(312,480)	(291,247)
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year		(94,682)	25,619
Cash and cash equivalents at 1 January 2022	B	366,866	341,247
Cash and cash equivalents at 31 December 2022	B	272,184	366,866

Notes to the statement of cash flows for the year to 31 December 2022.

A Reconciliation of net movement in funds to net cash provided by operating activities

	2022 £	2021 £
Net movement in funds (as per the statement of financial activities)	198,377	328,322
Depreciation charge	57,972	47,135
(Increase) decrease in stocks	(21,590)	2,111
Increase in debtors	(17,747)	(20,395)
Increase (decrease) in creditors	786	(40,307)
Net cash provided by operating activities	217,798	316,866

B Analysis of cash and cash equivalents

	2022 £	2021 £
Total cash and cash equivalents: Cash at bank and in hand	272,184	366,866

C Analysis of changes in net debt

	2021 £	Cash flows £	2022 £
Cash at bank and in hand	366,866	(94,682)	272,184

Principal accounting policies 31 December 2022

The principal accounting policies adopted, judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty in the preparation of the financial statements are laid out below:

Basis of accounting

These accounts have been prepared for the year to 31 December 2022 with comparative information provided in respect to the year to 31 December 2021.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention with items initially recognised at cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy notes.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (Charities SORP FRS 102), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

The charity constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS 102.

The accounts are presented in sterling and rounded to the nearest pound.

Basis of consolidation

The consolidated statement of financial activities and group balance sheet consolidate each reporting line of the financial statements of The Friars, Aylesford and its subsidiary company, Aylesford Priory Limited, made up at the balance sheet date.

Critical accounting estimates and areas of judgement

The preparation of the financial statements in compliance with the Charities SORP FRS 102 requires the use of certain critical accounting estimates. It requires also that trustees and management exercise judgement in applying the group's and charity's accounting policies.

In preparing these financial statements, the trustees have made significant estimates and judgements in the following areas:

- ◆ Estimating the expected useful economic life of tangible fixed assets for the purpose of calculating an annual depreciation charge;
- ◆ Estimating any provision for slow moving and/or obsolete stock;
- ◆ Estimating any provision for bad or doubtful debts;
- ◆ Assessing the probability of the receipt of legacy income of which the charity and group had been notified;
- ◆ Determining the basis for allocating shared overhead costs between the charity and its subsidiary company; and
- ◆ Estimating future income and expenditure flows for the purpose of assessing going concern (see below).

Going concern

The trustees have assessed whether the use of the going concern assumption is appropriate in preparing these accounts. The trustees have made the assessment in respect to a period of at least one year from the date of approval of these accounts.

Having reviewed the financial position and future plans for the charity, the Trustees have identified no material uncertainties related to events or conditions that cast significant doubt on the charity's ability to continue its activities for the foreseeable future.

The long-term economic outlook is uncertain and the team here at The Friars have put a few measures in place to ensure financial stability. This includes finding smarter ways of working, embarking on various cost saving initiatives and regular cashflow forecasting. We will continue to closely monitor the impact of any government decision making and the impact on the economy from any crisis, and we will actively respond to any rapid changes.

Therefore, the financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis given the undertaking of the Carmelite Charitable Trust (note 16) to support the group and charity financially whilst they continue with the work to restore the activities at Aylesford to a sustainable basis.

Income

Income is recognised in the period in which the group is entitled to the income, the amount can be measured with reasonable certainty and it is probable that the funds will be received.

Income is deferred only when the charity has to fulfil conditions before becoming entitled to it or where the donor or funder has specified that the income is to be expended in a future accounting period.

Donations are recognised when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the charity.

Donations and grants are recognised when the charitable parent company and/or group has confirmation of both the amount and settlement date. In the event of donations or grants pledged but not received, the amount is accrued for where the receipt is considered probable. In the event that a donation or grant is subject to conditions that require a level of performance before the charitable parent company and/or group is entitled to the funds, the income is deferred and not recognised until either those conditions are fully met, or the fulfilment of those conditions is wholly within the control of the charitable parent company and/or group and it is probable that those conditions will be fulfilled in the reporting period.

Legacies are included in the statement of financial activities when the charity is entitled to the legacy, the executors have established that there are sufficient surplus assets in the estate to pay the legacy, and any conditions attached to the legacy are within the control of the charity.

Income (continued)

Entitlement is taken as the earlier of the date on which either: the charity is aware that probate has been granted, the estate has been finalised and notification has been made by the executor to the charity that a distribution will be made, or when a distribution is received from the estate. Receipt of a legacy, in whole or in part, is only considered probable when the amount can be measured reliably and the charity has been notified of the executor's intention to make a distribution. Where legacies have been notified to the charity, or the charity is aware of the granting of probate, but the criteria for income recognition have not been met, then the legacy is treated as a contingent asset and disclosed if material. In the event that the gift is in the form of an asset other than cash or a financial asset traded on a recognised stock exchange, recognition is subject to the value of the gift being reliably measurable with a degree of reasonable accuracy and the title of the asset having being transferred to the charity.

In accordance with the 2015 SORP, volunteer hours are not recognised.

Income from trading activities is recognised to the extent that it is probable that the economic benefits will flow to the company and the revenue can be reliably measured. It is measured at fair value of the consideration received or receivable, excluding discounts, rebates, value added tax and other sales taxes.

Income from charitable activities, comprising income in connection with the shrine and retreats, is recognised to the extent that it is probable that the economic benefits will flow to the charity and the revenue can be reliably measured.

Income from other sources comprises funding in connection with the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme and Coronavirus Business Support Scheme and is recognised as unrestricted income in the period in which the charity is entitled to the income, the amount of income can be measured reliably and it is probable that the income will be received.

No separate statement of financial activities has been presented for the charity alone, as permitted by s408 of the Companies Act 2006 and the Charities SORP FRS 102. The charity had total income in the year of £746,084 (2021: £801,198), total expenditure of £558,556 (2021: £440,885), resulting in net income of £187,528 (2021: net income of £360,313).

Expenditure

Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the group or charity to make a payment to a third party, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably.

All expenditure is accounted for on an accrual basis. Expenditure is comprised of direct costs and support costs. Direct costs are allocated to a specific activity. The classification between activities is as follows:

- a) Expenditure on raising funds includes all expenditure associated with raising funds for the charity and the operating costs of Aylesford Priory Limited.

Expenditure (continued)

- b) Expenditure on charitable activities includes all costs associated with furthering the charitable purposes of the charity through the provision of its charitable activities i.e. the upkeep of the shrine at Aylesford and supporting the Carmelite Friars of the Aylesford community. Expenditure on charitable activities includes both direct costs and indirect support costs.

All expenditure is inclusive of irrecoverable VAT.

Allocation of support and governance costs

Support costs represent indirect charitable expenditure. In order to carry out the primary purposes of the charity it is necessary to provide support in the form of personnel development, financial procedures, provision of office services and equipment and a suitable working environment.

Governance costs comprise the costs involving the public accountability of the charity (including audit costs) and costs in respect to its compliance with regulation and good practice.

Support costs and governance costs are apportioned based on area occupied, level of activity and staff time as appropriate.

Certain support costs incurred are shared between the charity and its subsidiary company, Aylesford Priory Limited. This allocation is based on area occupied, level of activity and staff time. Those costs which would be incurred whether or not Aylesford Priory Limited existed are allocated 100% to the charity.

Tangible fixed assets

All assets costing more than £1,000 with an expected useful life exceeding one year are capitalised.

Depreciation is provided at the following annual rates on a straight line basis in order to write off the cost of each asset, less its estimated residual value, over its estimated useful economic life. The annual rates used for this purpose are:

◆ Leasehold improvements	- 4 to 10% per annum on cost
◆ Plant and machinery	- 10 to 20% per annum on cost
◆ Furniture and equipment	- 20% per annum on cost
◆ Motor vehicles	- 20% per annum on cost

Depreciation is applied in all cases commencing from the start of the month following that in which the asset was purchased.

No value is attached in these financial statements to the leasehold land occupied by the group and charity. As explained in note 10, the site is of historic importance generally and specifically to the Roman Catholic Church and the principal objective of the charity is to preserve the site for the enjoyment of future generations. As such, the asset meets the definition of heritage assets in the Charities SORP FRS 102 and is not valued for the purposes of these financial statements.

Stock

Stocks of books, souvenir items and food stuff for resale are valued at the lower of cost and net realisable value. Cost is calculated by assuming stock movements are on a first in, first out basis.

Debtors

Debtors are recognised at the settlement amount, less any provision for non-recoverability. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid.

Cash at bank and in hand

Cash at bank and in hand represents such accounts and instruments that are available on demand or have a maturity of less than three months from the date of acquisition.

Creditors and provisions

Creditors and provisions are recognised when there is an obligation at the balance sheet date as a result of a past event, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefit will be required in settlement, and the amount of the settlement can be estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are recognised at the amount the charity anticipates it will pay to settle the debt.

Fund structure

Restricted funds comprise monies raised for, or their use restricted to, a specific purpose, or contributions subject to donor imposed conditions.

General funds represent those monies which are freely available for application towards achieving any charitable purpose that falls within the charity's charitable objects.

The tangible fixed assets fund represents the net book value of the land and buildings occupied by the charity and other tangible fixed assets held by the charity. Such assets are vital to the charity being able to carry out its charitable work and the value invested in the assets cannot, therefore, be realised in order to meet future expenditure or contingencies. To emphasise this point the net book value of the assets is represented by a specific tangible fixed assets fund on the balance sheet.

Non charitable trading funds comprise the retained surplus or accumulated deficit on the activities of Aylesford Priory Limited.

Pension contributions

Contributions in respect of the charity's defined contribution pension scheme are charged to the statement of financial activities when they are payable to the scheme. The charity's contributions are restricted to the contributions disclosed in note 8. There were no outstanding contributions at the year end. The charity has no liability beyond making its contributions and paying across the deductions for the employees' contributions.

1. Income from: Donations, grants and legacies

Group	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2022 Total funds £	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2021 Total funds £
Legacies	27,140	6,690	33,830	77,189	—	77,189
Donations	169,062	88,871	257,933	168,489	5,563	174,052
Grants for roof repairs (see below)	—	143,288	143,288	—	243,536	243,536
Grant from Carmelite Charitable Trust	120,000	—	120,000	120,000	—	120,000
	316,202	238,849	555,051	365,678	249,099	614,777

During the year, the charitable parent company and group received grants from the Programme of Major Works Scheme which is part of the Cultural Recovery Funds towards repairs to the roof of the church situated on the site of The Friars, Aylesford. The grants were administered through the Catholic Trust for England and Wales (CaTEW).

2. Income from: Other trading activities

Group	Unrestricted funds	
	2022 £	2021 £
Provision of conference facilities, guest accommodation, events, and sale of books, gifts and refreshments	1,025,746	456,871
Rental income	43,780	38,144
Other	56,967	39,146
	1,126,493	534,161

3. Income from: Charitable activities

Group	Unrestricted funds	
	2022 £	2021 £
Shrine income	85,549	71,172
Car park contributions	4,737	3,217
	90,286	74,389

4. Expenditure on: Raising funds

Group	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2022 Total funds £	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2021 Total funds £
Provision of conference facilities, accommodation, events, and sale of books, gifts and refreshments	1,020,897	—	1,020,897	600,496	—	600,496
Other	56,698	434	57,132	43,538	—	43,538
	1,077,594	434	1,078,028	644,034	—	644,034

5. Expenditure on: Upkeep of the shrine at Aylesford

Group	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2022 Total funds £	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2021 Total funds £
Direct costs	106,989	—	106,989	60,859	—	60,859
Other indirect staff costs	35,475	—	35,475	35,715	—	35,715
Premises and facilities	227,646	21,722	249,368	212,718	10,587	223,305
Office costs	15,644	—	15,644	12,345	—	12,345
Governance costs	7,920	—	7,920	9,021	—	9,021
	393,673	21,722	415,395	330,658	10,587	341,245

Governance costs included above comprise auditor's remuneration only.

6. Expenditure on: Support of the Carmelite Friars of the Aylesford Community

Group	Unrestricted funds	
	2022 £	2021 £
Living and personal expenses	86,030	56,102

7. Net income (expenditure) and net movement in funds

This is stated after charging:

Group	2022 £	2021 £
Staff costs (note 8)	693,292	522,837
Auditor's remuneration		
. Statutory audit services	9,533	10,426
. Other services: tax compliance	2,400	2,240
Depreciation	57,972	47,135

8. Staff costs and trustees' remuneration

Group	2022 £	2021 £
Staff costs during the year were as follows:		
Wages and salaries	639,105	483,756
Social security costs	35,627	23,770
Other pension costs	14,229	11,577
	688,961	519,103
Other staff related costs	4,331	3,734
	693,292	522,837
Staff costs per function were as follows:		
Upkeep of the shrine	117,915	119,625
Provision of conference facilities, related accommodation, events and sale of books, gifts and refreshments	453,536	312,080
Support functions	121,841	91,132
	693,292	522,837

8. Staff costs and trustees' remuneration (continued)

No employee earned £60,000 per annum or more (including taxable benefits but excluding pension contributions) during the year (2021: none).

The average number of employees, based on full time equivalents and analysed by function, was as follows:

Group	2022	2021
Shrine maintenance	6	4
Commercial trading operations	19	16
Support costs	4	3
	29	23

The average number of employees, based on headcount, was 51 in 2022 (2021: 45).

A number of the trustees are members of the Carmelite Order and, as such, certain of their personal living expenses are borne by the charity, but they received no remuneration in connection with their duties as trustees during the year (2021: none). No incidental expenses were reimbursed to trustees (2021: £87 to one trustee).

The charity has purchased trustees and individual insurance to indemnify the trustees or other officers against the consequences of any claim for a wrongful act. The insurance premium paid by the charity during the year totalled £893 (2021: £839) and provides cover up to a maximum of £1 million (2021: £1 million).

In addition to the trustees, the key management personnel of the charity in charge of directing and controlling, running, and operating the charity on a day-to-day basis during 2021 comprised the Operations and Business Development Manager, the Estates Manager, the Catering Manager, the Hospitality Manager and the Prior's and Trustees' Secretary. The total remuneration (including taxable benefits, employer's pension contributions and employers national insurance contributions) of these employees was £165,901 (2021: £136,972).

9. Taxation

The Friars, Aylesford is a registered charity and, therefore, is not liable to corporation tax or income tax on income or gains derived from its charitable activities, as they fall within the various exemptions available to registered charities.

Profits of Aylesford Priory Limited, if any, are subject to corporation tax calculated on the basis of tax rates and laws that have been enacted or substantially enacted by the balance sheet date.

10. Tangible fixed assets

Group	Leasehold improvements £	Plant and machinery £	Furniture and equipment £	Motor vehicles £	Office equipment £	Total £
Cost or valuation						
At 1 January 2022	715,186	105,935	71,028	8,495	7,779	908,423
Additions	181,953	89,710	40,817	—	—	312,480
At 31 December 2022	897,139	195,645	111,845	8,495	7,779	1,220,903
Depreciation						
At 1 January 2022	94,382	85,221	59,899	8,495	5,529	253,526
Charge for year	38,354	12,667	5,604	—	1,347	57,972
At 31 December 2022	132,736	97,888	65,503	8,495	6,876	311,498
Net book values						
At 31 December 2022	764,403	97,757	46,342	—	903	909,405
At 31 December 2021	620,804	20,714	11,129	—	2,250	654,897

Charity	Leasehold improvements £	Plant and machinery £	Furniture and equipment £	Motor vehicles £	Total £
Cost or valuation					
At 1 January 2022	715,186	63,669	23,313	8,495	810,663
Additions	181,953	—	36,710	—	218,663
At 31 December 2022	897,139	63,669	60,023	8,495	1,029,326
Depreciation					
At 1 January 2022	94,382	56,066	16,665	8,495	175,608
Charge for year	38,354	5,430	2,217	—	46,001
At 31 December 2022	132,736	61,496	18,882	8,495	221,609
Net book values					
At 31 December 2022	764,403	2,173	41,141	—	807,717
At 31 December 2021	620,804	7,603	6,648	—	635,055

The charity's objective is to promote for the benefit of the public the restoration, presentation and maintenance of the historic buildings, amenities and grounds of The Friars, Aylesford. The freehold title to The Friars, Aylesford is held by The Carmelite Charitable Trust, a registered charity and a connected entity to the charity (see note 16). In 2002 the charity was granted a 99 year lease over the site and pays an annual rent of £200 to the Carmelite Charitable Trust. No value has been assigned to this lease in these financial statements. The site is of historic importance generally and specifically to the Roman Catholic Church and, as noted above, the principal objective of the charity is to preserve the site for the enjoyment of future generations. As such, the asset meets the definition of heritage assets in the Charities SORP FRS 102 and is not valued for the purposes of these financial statements.

11. Investments

	Group 2022 £	Group 2021 £	Charity 2022 £	Charity 2021 £
Investment in subsidiary company	—	—	1	1

Investment in subsidiary company

The charity holds 100% of the issued share capital of Aylesford Priory Limited. This holding was acquired on incorporation of the company on 10 November 2008.

The following is a summary of the financial statements of Aylesford Priory Limited for the year ended 31 December 2022, which have been included in the consolidated financial statements.

	2022 £	2021 £
Turnover	1,025,746	456,871
Cost of sales	(888,069)	(523,154)
Gross profit (loss)	137,677	(66,283)
Administrative expenditure	(132,828)	(77,342)
Other income: Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme and Coronavirus Business Support Scheme	6,000	111,635
Operating profit (loss)	10,849	(31,990)
Accumulated losses at 1 January 2022	(272,549)	(240,559)
Accumulated losses at 31 December 2022	(261,700)	(272,549)

At 31 December 2022 the company had total net liabilities of £261,699 (2021: total net liabilities of £272,548) represented by called up share capital of £1 (2021: £1) and negative reserves of £261,700 (2021: £272,549).

12. Debtors

	Group		Charity	
	2022 £	2021 £	2022 £	2021 £
Trade debtors	35,825	18,180	926	4,505
Amounts due from the Carmelite Charitable Trust (note 16)	31,132	10,929	30,849	10,102
Other debtors	23,371	8,408	21,226	5,729
Legacies receivable	25,731	45,153	25,731	45,153
Prepayments	75,543	91,185	65,612	83,271
Amounts due from Aylesford Priory Limited	—	—	495,997	397,271
	191,602	173,855	640,341	546,031

13. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	Group		Charity	
	2022 £	2021 £	2022 £	2021 £
Expense creditors	55,720	30,355	3,392	15,043
Additions to tangible fixed assets	—	12,256	—	12,256
Social security and other taxes	(195)	156	—	—
Other creditors	8,454	8,379	1,366	1,361
Accruals and deferred income	48,044	60,091	7,697	13,168
	112,023	111,237	12,455	41,828

Income has been deferred where it relates clearly to future periods and/or where the charity has not yet met the conditions for recognising the income. The movements in deferred income are analysed below:

	2022 £	2021 £
Brought forward	18,470	22,095
Released in the year	(13,697)	(25,720)
Deferred in the year	18,470	22,095
Carried forward	23,243	18,470

14. Restricted funds

The income funds of the charity include restricted funds comprising the following unexpended balances of donations and grants held on trusts to be applied for specific purposes:

Group and charity	At 1 January 2022 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	At 31 December 2022 £
Restoration fund	294,392	238,838	(21,722)	(137,142)	374,366
Peace garden fund	17,477	11	(434)	—	17,054
	311,869	238,849	(22,156)	(137,142)	391,420

Group and charity	At 1 January 2021 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	At 31 December 2021 £
Restoration fund	360,791	249,089	(10,563)	(304,925)	294,392
Peace garden fund	17,491	10	(24)	—	17,477
	378,282	249,099	(10,587)	(304,925)	311,869

Restoration fund

This fund represents donations received from the Carmelite Charitable Trust for maintenance projects which are only to be carried out after approval by the Trustees of the Carmelite Charitable Trust together with grants from the Programme of Major Works Scheme which is part of the Cultural Recovery Funds towards repairs to the roof of the church situated on the site of The Friars, Aylesford. The transfer from the restoration fund to unrestricted funds represents eligible expenditure incurred and capitalised during the year.

14. Restricted funds (continued)

Peace garden fund

This fund represents donations received for the creation of a peace garden at the entrance to the Friars.

15. Analysis of net assets between funds

Group	Unrestricted funds			Restricted funds	Total 2022
	General funds	Tangible fixed assets fund	Non-charitable trading funds		
	£	£	£	£	£
Fund balances at 31 December 2022 are represented by:					
Tangible fixed assets	—	807,717	101,688	—	909,405
Net current assets (liabilities)	370,240	—	(363,388)	391,420	398,272
Total net assets	370,240	807,717	(261,700)	391,420	1,307,677

Group	Unrestricted funds			Restricted funds	Total 2021
	General funds	Tangible fixed assets fund	Non-charitable trading funds		
	£	£	£	£	£
Fund balances at 31 December 2021 are represented by:					
Tangible fixed assets	—	635,055	19,842	—	654,897
Net current assets (liabilities)	434,924	—	(292,390)	311,869	454,403
Total net assets	434,924	635,055	(272,548)	311,869	1,109,300

Charity	Unrestricted funds		Restricted funds	Total 2022
	General funds	Tangible fixed assets fund		
	£	£	£	£
Fund balances at 31 December 2022 are represented by:				
Tangible fixed assets	—	807,717	—	807,717
Investments	1	—	—	1
Net current assets	370,240	—	391,420	761,660
Total net assets	370,241	807,717	391,420	1,569,378

15. Analysis of net assets between funds (continued)

Charity	Unrestricted funds		Restricted funds	Total 2021
	General funds	Tangible fixed assets fund		
	£	£	£	£
Fund balances at 31 December 2021 are represented by:				
Tangible fixed assets	—	635,055	—	635,055
Investments	1	—	—	1
Net current assets	434,924	—	311,869	746,793
Total net assets	434,925	635,055	311,869	1,381,849

16. Connected charities

The Friars, Aylesford is connected to the Carmelite Charitable Trust by virtue of the fact that several of the trustees of the charitable company are also trustees of the Carmelite Charitable Trust (Charity Registration No. 1061342).

The transactions with the Carmelite Charitable Trust during the year are as follows:

- ◆ The Friars, Aylesford received an unrestricted grant of £120,000 (2021: £120,000) and rent of £1,050 (2021: £4,200) from the Carmelite Charitable Trust.
- ◆ At 31 December 2022 The Carmelite Charitable Trust owed £31,132 to The Friars, Aylesford (2021: £10,929 owed to The Friars, Aylesford).

The Carmelite Charitable Trust holds the freehold of Aylesford Priory. No rent was paid by the charity in the period. During the period the Carmelite Charitable Trust carried out various improvements to the property as permitted under the lease. These improvements have been capitalised in the accounts of the Carmelite Charitable Trust and are not included in the accounts of the charity. However, the charity and its subsidiary absorbed all the general running costs of the Priory.

The Carmelite Charitable Trust has confirmed that it will continue to provide financial support to the group as and when required to enable it to meet its liabilities as they fall due over the short to medium term.

The charity has taken advantage of the exemption provided by FRS 102 for the requirement to disclose transactions with its subsidiary undertaking.

Banking arrangements

The charity's bank accounts form part of a centralised banking system operated with the Carmelite Charitable Trust. Cash and cash equivalents for the group were £272,184 as at 31 December 2022 (£366,866 as at 31 December 2021).

Notes to the financial statements 31 December 2022

17. Lease commitments

As at 31 December 2022 the Friars, Aylesford had total future commitments under non-cancellable operating leases due as follows:

	2022 £	2021 £
Office equipment		
Within one year	345	1,379
Within one to two years	—	345
	345	1,724

18. Capital commitments

At 31 December 2022, the charity and group had no capital commitments.

THE FRIARS, AYLESFORD

England & Wales - Charity number 1068518

Accounts

The Friars, Aylesford

Annual Report and Consolidated Financial Statements

Year ended 31 December 2021

Charity Registration Number
1068518

Company Registration Number
03487590 (England and Wales)

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Reference and administrative details of the Charity, its Trustees and its advisers

Trustees	Rev Brendan Grady, O. Carm. Rev Patrick O’Keeffe, O. Carm. Rev Francis Kemsley, O.Carm. Isabel Bodunrin
Advisers to the Trustees	Mr Jonathan Louth Mrs Jan Wilkinson Mr Simon Howell
Secretary	Mrs Clare Abbotson
Registered office	The Friars Aylesford Kent ME20 7BX
Charity registration number	1068518
Company registration number	03487590 (England and Wales)
Auditor	Buzzacott LLP 130 Wood Street London EC2V 6DL
Principal bankers	The Royal Bank of Scotland plc 62/63 Threadneedle Street London EC2R 8LA
Solicitors	Pothecary Witham Weld 84 Eccleston Square London SW1V 1PX

Trustees' report Year ended 31 December 2021

FOREWORD

2021 was not without challenges – the continuous difficult situation with the coronavirus pandemic forced us to quickly adapt and in doing so we learnt a lot about how to best serve our visitors with cost saving at the centre of everything.

Nonetheless, I am immensely proud of what we have achieved in what continues to be challenging times. The collective team spirit of our staff is commendable, and I remain grateful for their hard work, dedication, and commitment. I am also proud of the Group's financial results which is testament to its strength and resilience, but also to the creativity of our teams.

Despite trading for just six months the Group returned a combined surplus of £328,322 which was better than forecast.

We were fortunate to receive some legacies and donations and some help from government grants. During the year, we also received grants from the programme of Major Works Scheme which is part of the Cultural Recovery Funds towards repairs to the roofs of our chapels.

Whilst the pandemic prevented in person gathering, we continued to hold directors' and board of trustees' meetings online.

Looking forward, despite the varied challenges presented by the pandemic, there are many reasons for us to be cautiously optimistic. Amongst them is the introduction of Creative Aylesford, a development group which is aimed at reflecting the desire for developing more partnerships to a greater degree than ever before.

As we enter 2022, we will continue to evolve and innovate to best meet the needs of our visitors; for example, providing internet service in our guest house, chapels and shrine area. There is much more to do, and we will continue to work with all our stakeholders to achieve this.

I could not sign off without recognising the impact that our board of trustees and advisers' team have had on the success of our strategy. They have devoted so much time and effort to the Group in this challenging period.

I have no doubt that the passion, dedication and sheer determination of our teams will ensure that we continue our strong road to recovery in the coming year. I also believe that our proven ability to be flexible in our approach will serve us well in the years to come.

Pearl Nyafli

Operations and Business Development Manager

Trustees' report Year ended 31 December 2021

The Trustees, who are the directors for the purposes of company law, are pleased to present their statutory report together with the consolidated financial statements of The Friars, Aylesford (the "Charity") and its subsidiary Aylesford Priory Limited for the year ended 31 December 2021. This report has been prepared in accordance with part VI of the Charities Act 2011.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out on pages 36 to 40 of the attached financial statements and comply with the charitable company's Memorandum and Articles of Association, applicable laws and Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice, applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102).

These financial statements consolidate the activities of The Friars, Aylesford and its wholly owned subsidiary Aylesford Priory Limited. The subsidiary company, which manages the commercial activities, has been trading since 1 January 2010.



The Friars, Aylesford

Historic Overview

Aylesford Priory, better known as The Friars, first came into the hands of the Carmelites in 1242. There are a number of medieval buildings still standing that are Grade I listed. They include two walks of the Cloisters, the Cloister Chapel, Priors' Hall, and Pilgrims' Hall which still provide hospitality to guests and pilgrims. One building provides accommodation to a community of Carmelite Friars. The Community returned in 1949 after leaving at the Dissolution of the Monasteries in 1538. A new Gothic style outdoor Shrine was built. Work began in 1958. It has a fine collection of religious modern art and was recently Grade II* listed.

Aylesford Priory is now a 44 acre site of significant religious and historical interest, attracting around 100,000 to 120,000 visitors in a more typical year. At its heart is a major religious shrine, the Shrine of Our Lady of Mount Carmel and St Simon Stock. The open air Marian shrine has a wide piazza which has room for up to 6,000 pilgrims, and a series of five linked chapels of varying sizes.

Historic Overview (continued)

Our surviving medieval buildings are now partly used as a home to some members (friars) of the Carmelite Community, the remainder forming part of our hospitality facilities, our guest house and conference suite, which with additional newer buildings can now accommodate up to 100 overnight visitors. The site also has a tea room and a gift shop located in a refurbished 16th century thatched barn, and some auxiliary buildings which are offered for rental to individuals and local businesses.

From 1949 Aylesford Priory formed a part of a Carmelite Charitable Trust, which covered England and Wales. However, in 1997, the management of Aylesford Priory was devolved to a separate charitable company, The Friars, Aylesford. The ownership of the site and buildings remains with the overall charity, namely the Carmelite Charitable Trust but the administration, the maintenance and the development of the site and the management of the commercial activities have been entrusted to The Friars, Aylesford, and its wholly owned subsidiary company, Aylesford Priory Limited formed in 2010.

Objectives and Activities

The purpose of The Friars, Aylesford, as set out in the Memorandum of Association, is primarily to maintain and develop the Aylesford Priory site as a Marian shrine and retreat/conference centre at the service of the Roman Catholic community as well as other churches, people of other faiths, groups and individuals who wish to use the facilities. The trustees have given careful consideration to how activities of The Friars meet their statutory duty and have considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit. This report sets out how our activities benefit those who visit The Friars, Aylesford Priory, as well as the local and wider community affected by our presence and outreach activities.

Our Vision

A meeting place and centre of Christian spirituality with a Carmelite community at its heart; a space where people of all ages and all faiths and none, will find a welcome, where the sacred is expressed through prayer, the arts and nature.

Be still and know that I am God (Ps 46.10)

Our Mission

- ◆ To work in partnership with others
- ◆ To be inclusive
- ◆ To act responsibly as stewards of the buildings and the physical environment
- ◆ To be accountable to all our stakeholders

Our Values

*Love one another as I have loved you
(Jn 15.12)*

Trustees' report Year ended 31 December 2021

Our Objectives

- ◆ Such charitable purposes which advance the Roman Catholic religion in any part of Great Britain.
- ◆ To promote for the benefit of the public the restoration, presentation and maintenance of the historic buildings, amenities and grounds of The Friars, Aylesford.

Our Ethos

- ◆ We derive our values from the life, message and teachings of Jesus Christ and our inspiration comes from our models, the prophet Elijah, the Blessed Virgin Mary and the saints of the Carmelite Family.
- ◆ The basis of our work is an expression of our commitment to serve the people through friendship, hospitality and a desire to live out the values that Christ preached.

Principal Activities

The Friars, Aylesford principal activities and whether they meet our key objectives of partnership, inclusivity, stewardship and accountability are detailed in the table below. It is worth noting that in early January 2021, England entered the third national lockdown due to the Omicron virus and there was subsequently a phased easing of restrictions for different sectors of the economy.

A grey tick  therefore indicates our objectives were partially achieved due to the continued impact of the pandemic during 2021.

Daily Visitors	From July 2020, Masses were held on the Main Shrine four days a week. This was made possible by having a marquee erected (with permission from Historic Churches Southeast) over the Shrine for six months. The marquee was loaned by a benefactor. These outdoor Masses were very popular, and people came from afar. People felt The Friars was a safe and prayerful place to visit and outside Masses remained until October 2021. There is a friar available three hours a day to see pilgrims for confessions and other spiritual matters.			
	Partnership	Inclusivity	Stewardship	Accountability
				

Trustees' report Year ended 31 December 2021

Principal Activities (continued)

Pilgrimages	Due to the continuous impact of Covid-19 pandemic all pilgrimages due to take place before July 2021 were cancelled. Pilgrimages resumed with Our Lady of Mount Carmel pilgrimage on 11 July 2021. All pilgrimages that came after the month of July were understandably smaller than usual. The Goan pilgrimage was the largest. Ordinarily, we would have a comprehensive programme welcoming between 21 national and international pilgrimage groups of various sizes (100 to 2,000 people) to our shrine, as a place of prayer, offering a meeting place and centre of spirituality. We hosted only 11 groups between the months of July and October 2021, which was 55% of the 20 planned. A pilgrimage secretary has been employed to look after our visiting groups and to encourage bookings. The pilgrimage secretary works with Catholic dioceses or societies, and a variety of Christian denominations. Contacts also include Primary and Secondary Schools, Adult Education, University of the Third Age and Groups with Disabilities and Special Needs. There are no fees for these bookings; however, voluntary donations are often received. During 2021, sacristy work was carried out by the Carmelites and the pilgrimage secretary, acting as the Sacristan, left our employment and was not replaced.			
	Partnership	Inclusivity	Stewardship	Accountability
	✓	✓	✓	

Educational Tour Groups	We offer educational tours for groups covering the history of the Carmelite Order here at Aylesford, the art work, Christian education and the development of Aylesford Priory. These tours are of interest to historical, art, and other educational groups and we often welcome foreign groups visiting the UK. There are no fees for these bookings; however, voluntary donations are occasionally received. Once again in 2021 there were no educational tours due to the impact of the pandemic.			
	Partnership	Inclusivity	Stewardship	Accountability
		✓	✓	

Trustees' report Year ended 31 December 2021

Principal Activities (continued)

Schools Programme	We have a schools' programme, offering guidelines and resources to support teachers and other adults who bring groups of children and young people to Aylesford. These were updated in 2021 by the pilgrimage Secretary and Carmelite Young People's Coordinator. Some of the information provided is linked to the National Curriculum or Religious Education programmes of study. The programme has been designed to support spiritual, moral, social, and cultural education. There are no fees for the schools' programmes. We had 17 school groups visiting from 23 June 2021, several of whom visited more than once			
	Partnership	Inclusivity	Stewardship	Accountability
	✓	✓	✓	
Outreach Programme for Schools and Young Adults	Southwark Catholic Youth Service (SCYS) was disbanded in March 2020, as St Vincent's Centre in Whitstable had to close. In September 2021, the Carmelite Charitable Trust employed a Carmelite Young People and Formation Commission Coordinator. It is hoped that a new Youth Community will become established in the Gatehouse. The Community of Friars will work with schools and other youth projects.			
	Partnership	Inclusivity	Stewardship	Accountability
	✓	✓	✓	
Retreats	Due to pandemic restrictions, there was just one Retreat held in 2021, a Grief and Loss Retreat, which was attended by 10 people. All the participants suffered bereavements during the pandemic and more such retreats are now being offered. We usually offer a place of retreat for individuals and groups. Members of the Carmelite Community (the friars) often work alongside groups that come to stay at The Friars, Aylesford. These scheduled retreats include formal talk/discussion periods, quiet time and joining the community services. A charge is made to cover the hospitality costs and any speaker fees. The number of people coming for organised residential retreats is declining so we are focussing more on the day groups.			
	Partnership	Inclusivity	Stewardship	Accountability
	✓	✓	✓	

Trustees' report Year ended 31 December 2021

Principal Activities (continued)

Fundraising Activities	To maintain the historic buildings at The Friars and to financially support the free pastoral offers to visitors, there is a continued programme of fundraising events. These include a Summer and Christmas Fayre, musical and dramatic productions. In 2021, the pandemic prevented us from holding the Summer Fayre, but we managed to hold the Christmas event, which was a great success. Despite the pandemic, we distributed approximately 22,000 pilgrims' newsletters to around 6,500 people and we have an informative website which is regularly updated and maintain regular social media presence, including invitations to, and reviews of, events. We do not use professional fundraisers or participators.			
	Partnership	Inclusivity	Stewardship	Accountability
	✓	✓	✓	
Maintenance and Restoration	We review, plan, and invest in the presentation, upkeep and maintenance of the grounds, buildings, and facilities to provide a comfortable, safe, accessible environment for all our guests, Carmelite community, staff, and volunteers. During 2021, refurbishment work on our guest rooms continued. Drainage improvements to the Chapel roofs and the painting of the tribune of the Relic Chapel and Confessionals was carried out, largely paid for by a Government Cultural Recovery Grant.			
	Partnership	Inclusivity	Stewardship	Accountability
	✓	✓	✓	✓

Trustees' report Year ended 31 December 2021

Principal Activities (continued)

Commercial Trading (Aylesford Priory Limited)	Aylesford Priory Limited, Company Registration Number 06740190 (England and Wales), is a wholly owned subsidiary of The Friars, Aylesford. The company's principal activity is to provide a profit on commercial activities at Aylesford Priory to financially support: the pastoral activity of the Charity; the promotion of the benefit to the public; and the restoration, presentation and maintenance of the historic buildings, amenities and grounds of The Friars, Aylesford. The trading activity is primarily the provision of conference facilities, guests' catering and accommodation, events, and sale of books, gifts, and refreshments. Trading activity was curtailed significantly in 2021 due to the impact of the pandemic.			
	Partnership	Inclusivity	Stewardship	Accountability
		✓	✓	✓

Principal Activities (continued)



Picture of Light up a Life – With Heart of Kent Hospice

Volunteers

The continued Covid-19 restrictions throughout much of the reporting year made it challenging for our volunteers to provide the same level of service we had in pre-pandemic times. It was only after the various lockdowns were lifted that a few volunteers felt confident enough to visit and give their service. There are many volunteers who help The Friars in their charitable activities, giving their time and invaluable support. The numbers of volunteers fluctuate according to people's availability, but there are approximately 25 volunteers with some distinct volunteer groups: The Peace Garden Gardening group, and Pastoral, Domestic and Fundraising groups. It is worth mentioning that a proportion of these volunteers have been helping over many years and the amount that they are able to do is diminishing. The Friars hopes to address this by attracting new volunteers.

The Pastoral Team has transformed into a regular Prayer Group and will continue to support the pastoral ministry of The Friars. The Team, which includes some volunteers, meets regularly to help plan and support retreat programmes and enhance the pilgrim experience. The group members develop prayer opportunities, pilgrim tours and ways to improve the pastoral areas of the site.

The Peace Garden group assists the Estates Team to maintain the grounds and usually meets and tends the gardens each Thursday and Saturday.

Among the regular worshipping community at The Friars, volunteers support us at social events and fundraising activities.

Trustees' report Year ended 31 December 2021

Volunteers (continued)

Due to the pandemic, there was limited volunteering opportunity in the first six months of the year but once restrictions were lifted, the Peace Garden Group reconvened, and volunteers assisted with our Christmas Fayre in November 2021.

We are privileged to have a small number of professionally qualified lay advisors who hold honorary positions and regularly attend Trustees' meetings for The Friars and Directors' meetings for its subsidiary trading company Aylesford Priory Limited

The Trustees would once again wish to record their recognition of the professionalism and commitment of all their staff, volunteers, advisors, and the individual members of the Carmelite Community. Their dedication and positive approach are very much appreciated.

Achievements and Performance in 2021

This time last year (2020) we would've been forgiven for thinking that 2021 would see all our economic worries melt away, instead, we experienced the worst form of déjà vu, with the hospitality industry suffering further restrictions, and the understandable concerns caused by the Omicron variant impacted severely on our operations.

Trading for only six months of the year meant that some of our goals were partially achieved as illustrated in the table below:

<i>What we said we would do in 2021</i>	<i>What we did in 2021</i>
1. Deliver the agreed 2021 break-even budget	The Group made a combined profit of £328,322 of which Aylesford Priory Limited made a loss of £31,990 and The Friars Aylesford make a surplus of £360,312. The surplus for the charity was a result of generous donations and legacies received.
2. Continue to invest in specific priority capital and maintenance projects approved by the board to be funded by accumulated reserves brought forward from 2020	Continued works to the Shrine roofs with the help of a cultural recovery grant is taking place in two phases, which will continue through to 2022. The rainwater disposal, previously through pipes hidden in walls, will mostly have been brought out to the exterior, minimising leaks caused by blockages. The kitchen garden peg tile roof was repaired. The Gatehouse convent facilities were also repaired. There were urgent repairs to the boundary / Rosary Way wall.

Achievements and Performance in 2021 (continued)

3. Develop a three-year business plan and a more formalised reserves policy	The development of this plan was not achieved and was deferred to 2023 – given the ongoing uncertainties with the pandemic during much of 2021.
4. To further the plans for the development of a new Pastoral Centre	In September 2021 the province employed a Carmelite Young People and Formation Coordinator, and part of their job is to develop a young adult community, based at The Friars Aylesford. This community would be able to develop programmes and support young people both at The Friars and beyond.

Fulfilling our mission 2021

Working in partnership with others

The Friars is an important retreat and pilgrimage centre. Several groups would come to pray and worship at the Shrine. Once the pandemic restrictions were eased, pilgrimages resumed from early July 2021.

The Friars and the Southwark Catholic Youth Services (SCYS) have continued to work closely together and further developed the work on the schools' retreat programme.

The Changeling Theatre Group put on A Midsummer Night's Dream in the month of July.

The Friars continued to play host to the Farmers' market even during lockdown restrictions as outside markets were permitted to operate.

Be inclusive

Aylesford Scouts continued to use the Brocard Room for their meetings. It is worth noting that the Brocard Room was also used by other groups, such as the Enamellers, the Woodturners and Syro Malabar group.

Aylesford Pottery offered limited classes to groups with learning disabilities (Emotional Behaviour Disorder). These classes inspire many visitors to develop new skills. The Potters' work with schools and disability groups gathered more momentum after lockdown restrictions were fully lifted in July.

The Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) meetings also resumed after the lockdown restrictions were lifted.

Our guesthouse continued to welcome people of all backgrounds, abilities, ages and all faiths and none. Between the months of July and December, we hosted a number of small groups, like mindfulness training groups, yoga and reiki groups.

Fulfilling our mission 2021 (continued)

Acting responsibly as stewards of the buildings and the physical environment

During 2020, it became clear the archdiocesan intention to construct a pastoral centre in the walled garden would not proceed and, therefore, our focus must shift towards smaller, more incremental partnerships, in other areas of the estate. In September 2021, the province appointed a Carmelite Young People and Formation Coordinator. Part of this role is to develop a young adult community based at The Friars Aylesford. This community would be able to develop programmes and support young people both at The Friars and beyond. The advisors are in the process of developing appropriate accommodation and facilities on site. The coordinator is also developing resources and developing partnerships to support the project.

Proactive exploration of opportunities for collaborative partner organisations and for the improved use of the whole site continues.

We continue to ensure all the buildings and the site are as safe as is reasonably possible for the many visitors we welcome. We have been responding closely to government guidelines to open, close or re-open our public income-generating facilities, albeit with reduced staffing.

Capital commitments

2021 was not a normal year for capital or running expenditure on the estate. We completed the 2020 programme of works to the shrine roofs funded, unexpectedly, by the UK Government's Cultural Recovery Fund's Programmes of Major Works Scheme: that second project – the first having been self-funded – left some items of roofing and rainwater disposal still undone. We were surprised to obtain a further grant in late 2021 so works will continue into 2022, completing the over-whelming majority of high-level deficiencies in the shrines. The rainwater disposal, previously through pipes hidden in walls, will mostly have been brought out to the exterior minimising leaks caused by blockages.

Capital commitments (continued)



Above: Repair works on chapel roofs

There was less wear and tear on facilities, but we had less staffing during the pandemic so fewer tasks were undertaken: that slightly reduced the maintenance budget outlay and made it just about manageable with the two available estates staff. During late 2021, we moved to appoint a third person to complete the team.

Since 2019, the quinquennial architects now attend and report to the Estates Group on a planned basis: there is an improved sub-division of specialist conservation work under their direction and ordinary in-house facilities management works, which reassures us on the capital expenditure projects.

Beside (and despite) the problems of the pandemic, the Estate Manager continued the annual risk assessments and his programme of health & safety, security, electrical and mechanical checks, and inspections, addressing matters from red to amber to green on the relevant reports, as and when received.

Capital commitments (continued)

The quinquennial architect and a building services consultant brought reports and tenders for one of the five boiler systems to fruition: the work, delayed from 2020, will proceed in 2022. Monitoring of the environmental conditions in St Ann's Chapel has continued. The grant-funded work includes an element of environmental and conservation analysis and reporting: those consultants will have to be appointed to advise on statuary, sgraffito, and ceramics including the Rosary Way. The architect has embarked on a phased repair of stone walls (walled garden, riverside, buttresses and the like).

Work to improve the bedrooms in the older visitor wings of the estate proceeded in 2020 with some en-suite bathrooms and re-furbishing of six rooms: however, the scope of work did not improve acoustic insulation or electrical systems (to offer kettles or tea-points and the like). Plans for a further 3 rooms were shelved during 2021, in part as the staff had too little time and the price from external contractors was beyond the allocated budget. The Prior has obtained promise of funding for further upgrades from a Trust. It will be necessary in 2022 to identify whether the upgraded rooms bring a better return on income and occupancy rates, whether the loss of bedrooms in forming en-suites would affect the groups who book and whether the Local Planning Authority would need to give listed building consent for further radical alterations.

The Potters had previously undertaken to build a small additional building at their expense (which they completed) and the local Tree Surgeon similarly made improvements to the horse field (top field) which he rents. Both licenses were redrafted to reflect that: this work provides a blueprint for other tenants and license holders, who also have skills to maintain or improve the estate. The Upholsterer asked to undertake a comparable development along similar lines and that initiative will need to be followed through if feasible. The firm that advises and runs our IT/Internet infrastructure similarly asked to co-locate on the site and discussions/license should progress in 2022.

It should be noted that neither construction costs, nor construction labour, are easier to manage than before the pandemic: few firms tender for works, unless it is very clearly straight-forward and within their main skillset. If they tender, then their availability to concentrate on the estate, compared with their other more regular or larger clients, is poor. Accordingly, the Estates Manager and Estates Group Chair proposed gradually negotiating "term contracts" for the most relevant contractors and sub-contractors: the intention has been agreed and will have to be followed through, according to a sequence of largest or most frequently needed skills being prioritised. An element of competitive scrutiny (or value certainty) will be achieved through the negotiations being led by the quinquennial architect.

These matters, and the enthusiasm of new senior management staff to look once more at local contracts for supplies and local partners for events, led to re-establishing the Aylesford Development Group with a new name, Creative Aylesford, reflecting an aspiration to work with partners and suppliers whose local network will expand the outreach and effective mission of the Community. Creative Aylesford has offered the chance to align events and buildings redevelopment, with revenue and capital expenditure priorities.

Capital commitments (continued)

Hence, as reported in 2020, the emphasis on social enterprise, community volunteering and artisan tenants is likely to be progressed, as well as working towards engaging with appropriate commercial partners who are sympathetic to the mission, values and ethos of The Friars. It will be necessary in 2022 to expand the Creative Aylesford group to include representatives of the Carmelite province, so that The Friars Aylesford (TFA) and Aylesford Priory Limited (APL) can be assured that ideas and plans also match the aspirations of the Carmelite Order beyond our own boundaries.

Given the ongoing significant maintenance projects authorised in 2018, the Trustees agreed with the province (Carmelite Charitable Trust) that ongoing maintenance related to the cost of trading as a public venue, would be absorbed in the annual budgets, whereas capital repair and investment in the buildings as assets, such as flood protection pump systems, would be reimbursed through legacy income and other financial support from the province. We decided in 2021 to seek a discussion with the province, more clearly to allocate responsibilities for the building assets and to reconfirm terms of reference: the request was agreed, and the discussions will commence in 2022.

When that division of financial responsibilities is agreed, it will be easier to allocate works for the decade 2023-2032 that will follow the 2023 Quinquennial survey.

What we do for public and community outreach

The Friars is home to many significant works of art, in particular a great number of ceramics by Adam Kossowski, in chapels, the grounds and in particular in the Prior's Hall, where there are a series of narrative artworks depicting the history of The Friars, whilst also reflecting the Carmelite values and traditions. The public benefit of having free access to such works of art is widely appreciated and was formally recognised in the Grade II listing in 2016.

The site also presents a significant public benefit in that it has proved very popular with artists and photography clubs and conservation groups. We have regularly seen groups producing paintings of the various listed buildings and the wonderful grounds and have had considerable interest in the examples of very old trees. This activity was limited in 2021.

The Friars continues to encourage event organisers to arrange their events on the grounds including classic and vintage car shows, bike shows and several dramatic performances.

Fulfilling our Objectives in 2021

Be accountable to all stakeholders

The Friars' quarterly pilgrims' newsletter continued to be very important means of sharing information with our visitors, bringing a message of hope and spirituality to them. In 2021, well over 6,000 newsletters were circulated to people throughout the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland and beyond. Our readership continued to find newsletters very beneficial during the pandemic because it was the only way they could keep in touch with The Friars.

Fulfilling our Objectives in 2021 (continued)

Such charitable purposes which advance the Roman Catholic religion in any part of Great Britain

The Friars is primarily a Roman Catholic shrine and pilgrimage centre. Served by its Carmelite community, there are normally regular Masses celebrated each day, together with confessions, counselling, and consultations. Masses, confessions, and counselling activities were all put on hold until July 2021 from when Masses were held four days in the week outside on the Shrine. We also held a special mass for the victims of Covid on 11 September. The Syro-Malabar community joined us for Mass twice a month and they provided stewards for Mass. The Choir Chapel was opened for prayer three days a week.

The usual Lent Talks were unable to take place due to restrictions.

In 2021, some Schools continued to visit in September when restrictions were eased but these were prone to last minute cancellations due to year groups having to suddenly self-isolate. These schools offer their individualised programmes with the help of the Carmelite community. These programmes include history and art appreciation, and in most cases the young people attend Mass in one of the chapels. Many of the students who visit us come from the inner city and they enjoy the natural environment and expansive grounds. The friars are usually involved with these groups, taking them on tours explaining the history of the Carmelites in England and giving them an understanding of the various artworks.

We had groups who visited for the first time and hope to organise a pilgrimage in 2022, notably the Association of Polish Knights of Malta and a group from the Vietnamese community in South London.

As usual, we hosted the national gathering of the Carmelite Order and the year ended with the Heart of Kent Hospice "Light up a Life" event on 5 December.

To promote for the benefit of the public the restoration, presentation and maintenance of the historic buildings, amenities and grounds of The Friars, Aylesford

Our ever - popular Mothering Sunday, Christmas and Easter lunches and several other events and social gatherings such as celebration of life buffets and weddings that would normally take place in the Pilgrims' Hall were sporadic. We managed to host our yearly Christmas lunch with great pleasure to our clients.

To support families who have lost loved ones we continue to offer memorials in the form of benches, plaques, and trees, which are normally placed in our grounds. Demand for this undoubtedly went up during the pandemic as several families had lost loved ones and wanted a suitable memorial for them. It is worth noting that we are gradually running out of space for such memorials, and we are beginning to explore other types of memorials. We also offer bereaved families a place to celebrate the life of their loved ones, providing a venue and catering for funerals, as allowed during the pandemic restrictions.

In 2021, despite the pandemic, The Friars continued to host the monthly outdoor Farmers' market. This brought in revenue to The Friars but also served the community allowing local producers to exhibit and sell their produce and afford us an opportunity to welcome those who would otherwise not visit.

Trustees' report Year ended 31 December 2021

Financial Review

Part of the year was marked by the severe disruption caused by the global pandemic, but nonetheless, this has been a fairly good year for us, where financial results are concerned. We adapted quickly and had a strong post covid recovery plan in place. We understood that consumer confidence was not back to pre-pandemic levels and had to find a way of attracting our customers back. The trustees' stated aim in December 2020 was for the group to achieve a balanced budget and a continued commitment to invest in overdue maintenance projects.

The final results for 2021 have significantly exceeded our expectations which were for loss of income and, combined with the agreed cost savings that were achieved, by not immediately replacing staff (following on from unavoidable redundancies in 2020), meant that we ended the year with a combined net operating surplus of £328,322. This overall result was made possible due to the receipt of the UK Government Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme grant, the local authority business support grants, legacies, and generous donations. The team were resilient and worked hard to save on salaries and other overhead costs.

General Funds

Despite not trading for a full year, the consolidated statement of financial activities shows that the Group (The Friars, Aylesford and Aylesford Priory Limited) returned a surplus of £328,322.

The trading activities of Aylesford Priory Limited was a loss of £31,990 (2020: £270,928 loss), (please see note 11). However, a surplus of £360,312 (£255,017 in 2020) was made by the Charity, resulting in a Group surplus of £328,322 (2020: loss of £15,911)

General reserves were £434,924 compared to £278,761 in 2020.

Restricted Funds

£378,282 (2020: £365,380) of restricted funds were brought forward into 2021, represented by £17,491 (2020: £17,931) for the Peace Garden and £360,791 (2020: £347,449) for the Restoration Fund.

Carried forward Restricted Funds as at 31 December 2021 are £311,869 (2020 £378,282) comprising £294,392 for the Restoration Fund and £17,477 for the Peace Garden.

Total funds as at 31 December 2021 were £1,109,300 (2020: £780,978) represented by £311,869 (2020: £378,282) of Restricted Funds, £635,055 of Tangible Fixed Assets (2020: £364,493), a shortfall of £(272,548) in Aylesford Priory Limited Funds/Reserves (2020: £(240,558)) and £434,924 of General Reserves (2020: £278,761).

Income

The Group income for 2021 by activity is shown in figure 1 below, and figure 2 shows the increase in income from 2020 to 2021 by activity.

Trustees' report Year ended 31 December 2021

Financial Review (continued)

Income (continued)

Figure 1 – 2021 Group Income by Activity

The Total income for the group was £1,369,703.

Category	Income	% share
APL	£456,871	33.4%
Legacies	£77,181	5.6%
Unrestricted donations	£168,489	12.3%
Restricted donations	£249,099	18.2%
Rental Activity	£38,114	2.8%
Fayres	£39,184	2.9%
Shrine Activity	£71,172	5.2%
Car Park donations	£3,217	0.23%
Carmelite Charitable Trust donation	£120,000	8.8%
Coronavirus job retention grant	£91,978	6.7%
Business support grants	£54,398	4%
Total Income	£1,369,703	100%

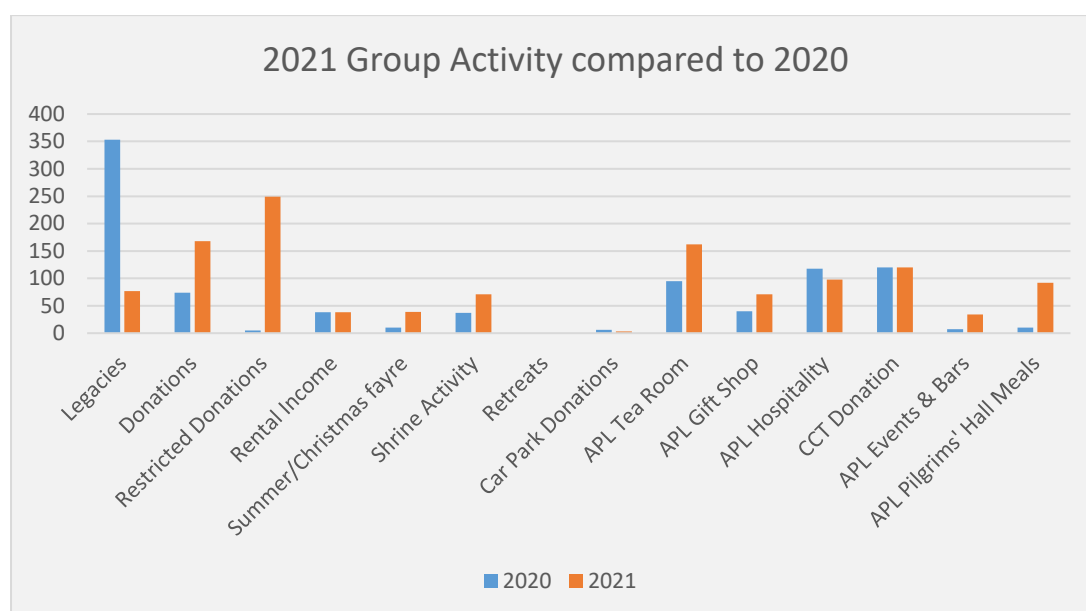
Within the above total income, Aylesford Priory Limited turnover was £456,871 (made up of: - Hospitality, £97,723; Tearoom, £161,656; Gift shop £71,473; Events/bars £34,278; and Pilgrims' Hall £91,742). All other income was derived from activities of The Friars Aylesford: - legacies £77,189; unrestricted donations £168,489; restricted donations £249,098; rental activity £38,114; fayres £39,184; shrine activity £71,172; car park donations £3,217; the Carmelite Charitable Trust donation £120,000; Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme grant of £91,978; and Covid-19 business support grants of £54,398.

The majority of this income was earned between the months of July and December.

Financial Review (continued)

Income (continued)

Figure 2 – 2021 Group Income by Activity compared to 2020



Turnover of Aylesford Priory Limited from the provision of hospitality (conference facilities and guest accommodation), events, sale of books, gifts and refreshments was £456,871, up by £185,892 (69%) from 2020.

Figure 2 highlights which department's income improved or declined in 2021 compared to 2020. Sales from our Hospitality department were £98k, down by 17% against 2020 (£118k in 2020). Tea Room's sales were £162k, 71% up against 2020 (£95k in 2020). The Gift Shop's sales were £71k, up by £31k (80% up) in comparison to 2020 (£40k). Pilgrims' Hall's sales were £92k, up by £19k which was 26% up on last year (2020 £73k). Events and bars were £34k, up (325%) against £8k in 2020.

Results from our charitable activities were very positive in 2020, with increasing income especially from legacies. We received a total of £77,181 in legacies in 2021, in contrast to £353,143 in 2020, a decrease of 78%.

Our unrestricted donations were £168k up £93k on last year (up 124%). Shrine activity was £71k up by £34k (92%) on last year (£37k in 2020). Summer fayre was cancelled but we hosted the Christmas fayre bringing an income of £39k which was 118% up against 2020 (£10k).

The Carmelite Charitable Trust (CCT) continues to provide financial support to the Charity. The CCT and the Charity budget for an annual grant of up to £120,000 for the on-going costs of the charitable activities. An annual grant of £120,000 (2020 £120,000) was still received from the CCT in the year to support The Friars, due to the financial challenges brought on by the pandemic.

Financial Review (continued)

Expenditure

As the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic unfolded we quickly made provision for reducing our overheads and operating costs.

Our trading operating costs (cost of sales) of the subsidiary company Aylesford Priory Limited, was £523,154, down 15% against 2020 (£612,794). Whilst group income of £1,369,703 was also increased by 23% in comparison to £1,109,355 in 2020.

For full details of the investment in the wholly owned subsidiary Aylesford Priory Limited see note 11.

Notable increases in expenditure for the Charity are increased costs of raising funds (note 4) and Support of the Carmelite Friars (note 6). As already mentioned, the summer fayre was cancelled but we still managed to generate a healthy income of £39,184 (£10,000 in 2020) from the Christmas fayre alone. We remain hopeful that the ability to hold events returns to more normal circumstances, so we can invest in better attractions, to achieve a step change in the number of visitors to these events, to secure better income year on year.

The living and personal expenses of the Carmelite Friars at Aylesford were £56,102 (£47,946 in 2020) which is up 17% year on year.

Table 1 below shows that expenditure in 2021 on the upkeep of the shrine (note 5) was up 5% on 2020. The expenditure on premises and facilities costs was on par with the previous year 2020 (at -0.45%).

Direct costs of £60,859 (2020 £49,994) up 22% were made up of purchase of candles, memorial benches and plaques, direct staffing costs, utilities, cash handling, chapel ad hoc expenses and general expenses. Other indirect staff costs were £35,715 (2020 £29,606) up by 21%.

Table 1- 2021 Expenditure on upkeep of the shrine compared to 2020

	2020	2021	% Difference
Governance costs	£10,888	£9,021	-17.1%
Office costs	£9,645	£12,345	+27.9%
Premises & Facilities costs	£234,959	£233,892	-0.45%
Indirect Staff costs	£29,606	£35,715	+20.6%
Direct Shrine costs	£49,994	£60,859	+21.7%
Total	£335,092	£351,832	+5.0%

Trustees' report Year ended 31 December 2021

Financial Review (continued)

Reserves

At 31 December 2021 unrestricted general funds amounted to £434,924 (£278,761 in 2020).

Since 31 December 2013, unrestricted general funds have improved from an unrestricted deficit of £231,052 to unrestricted funds in hand of £434,924 as noted above.

During the year, restricted funds have decreased from £378,282 (31 December 2020) to £311,869 (made up of Peace Garden £17,477 and Restoration fund £294,392) at 31 December 2021.

The total funds at 31 December 2021 are a surplus of £1,109,300 (2020 £780,978).

These total funds are represented by tangible fixed assets of £654,897, net current assets of £454,403 (2020 £387,765) including within net current assets a net cash position of £366,866 (2020 £341,247). Bank accounts held are part of a centralised, pooled banking system, together with and managed by the Carmelite Charitable Trust. Pooled bank accounts are managed to optimise return on investments. Any accumulated reserves will be invested in the restoration, presentation and maintenance of the historic buildings, amenities and grounds of The Friars, Aylesford.

Whilst the financial position of the Charity did not make progress towards short term financial stability in 2021, most notably because of the Covid-19 pandemic, the Trustees recognise that the historic buildings at Aylesford require significant material investment. Therefore, in 2022, they will continue to explore the two potential strands of opportunity identified in 2015 and subsequently adjusted:

- ◆ To secure the long-term presence of a Carmelite Community at Aylesford Priory and by working collaboratively with a new Young Adults Community; and
- ◆ To secure a commercial partnership agreement by considering a new commercial or social enterprise partner or partners, to use part of the available assets, that is the land and buildings at Aylesford Priory, in delivering activities that provide adequate income to meet or exceed the on-going costs and support the viability of the non-business charitable activities and in particular the maintenance of our historic buildings.

In 2020, the Trustees considered a new financial strategy considering the next three years. The implementation of this continues to be delayed due to Covid-19, so further discussions will be held in 2022, and part of this work will be to formulate a more formal reserves policy.

Risks

Risks refers to factors that could prevent us delivering our plans and strategies or achieving our aims. Risks can be financial, political, regulatory or operational. Whilst we cannot control the risk occurring, we can ensure that we have sound mitigating actions and controls in place. Risk management is incorporated into our planning, organisational decision-making and management procedures. Our Trustees review the organisational risk register regularly (yearly), ensuring that we manage threats to our work appropriately.

Trustees' report Year ended 31 December 2021

Risks (continued)

The Covid-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on both the internal and external environment and has in turn affected our risk profile. Our principal risks and uncertainties identified for 2021 were:

Identified Risk	Impact	Existing Controls	Further Controls implemented
1. Financial performance and sustainability	External economic or environmental factors - continued impact of Covid-19 on trading income. Other internal or external "crisis" leading to unexpected increased expenditure for example damage caused by storms on our buildings.	Regular monitoring, review, and proactive management of financial position by the management team. Ensure insurance plan is in place.	Team adapted ways of working. Sought support from Carmelite Charitable Trust as needed.
2. Impact of increased energy prices	Prices expected to more than double, consequently impacting on our overhead costs and affecting the overall bottom-line.	Explore fitting solar panels in the future.	Energy saving ideas implemented.
3. The longer-term UK economic effect of the Covid-19 crisis	Further reduction in gross income impacting proposed future forecasts.	Team being agile and different ways of working.	Developing strategic plans to mitigate risks. Flex our approach in every aspect.
4. Staff turnover and succession planning	Difficulty in recruiting the right calibre post pandemic. Managing the uncertainty in the talent pipeline to fill in vacancies as others retire.	Continuous recruitment and staff are multi skilled. Identify potential successors and determine when they will be ready. Determine what development needs they may have.	Work closely with recruitment agencies. Create a talent pipeline.

Plans for the future

<i>What we aim to do in 2022</i>	<i>How</i>
1. Deliver the agreed 2022 budget.	We will continue to focus on bringing annual expenditure in line with our income by targeting our resources on our core mission, to achieve better services for visitors. The external environment, including the trajectory of post pandemic recovery remains uncertain, and we are clear that we need to remain agile and be able to be flexible to meet the changing demands of our clients.
2. Continue to invest in specific priority capital and maintenance projects approved by the board to be funded by the accumulated reserves brought forward from 2021.	Continue working with Estates Sub-group and the Estates Manager and regularly review progress on agreed projects: ◆ Replacement of steam boiler and washer dryer for laundry department ◆ Continue renewal of conference centre and guest house facilities. ◆ Artwork conservation for the shrines and Prior's Hall. ◆ Ongoing quinquennial maintenance work including Brocard room, Hermitage, and electrical repairs. ◆ Continue monitoring humidity levels in St Anne's Chapel and commence conservation. ◆ Hold quarterly Estates meetings.
3. Develop a three-year business plan and a more formalised reserves policy.	Trustees will agree plans for the next three years and a targeted level of reserves to be achieved.
4. To redefine terms of reference and responsibilities for areas of expenditure.	Trustees will draft a paper and open discussions with CCT regarding the responsibilities of CCT, TFA, APL for protecting the historic assets, undertaking major maintenance and repairs or undertaking running repairs and renewals. This arises out of consideration of what the province would do at Aylesford if there were no trading company.

Plans for the future (continued)

<i>What we aim to do in 2022</i>	<i>How</i>
5. To collaborate with CCT regarding the province plans for the development of a new Young Peoples' programme in the Gatehouse and walled garden	Support the project by providing adequate relevant resources to help drive forward this exciting venture: responsibility for the capital expenditure in this part of the estate should naturally transfer to CCT. We will explore the structure of an appropriate lease between CCT and TFA.

Covid-19 and the impact on going concern

External environmental events and the continuous impact of post pandemic recovery poses economic uncertainty for The Friars.

The coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic has highlighted and heightened differences across society and economy, and the hospitality sector is no exception. While the sector itself has been severely affected, some sub-sectors within have fared better than others. Overall, turnover for the hospitality sector has remained below its 2019 levels throughout the pandemic, with July 2021 25% lower than July 2019 and our Hospitality department follow similar trends.

Throughout 2021, the hospitality industry has been hit hard by the coronavirus pandemic and the impact has been severe. In the case of Aylesford Priory, our trading was stopped between the months of January and June.

In the first half of the year, all planned events, including weddings and pilgrimages, were postponed and our only source of income came from donations and legacies. Pilgrims' Hall and our other trading outlets reopened on 19 July to offer the usual "walk-in" service. Trade picked up well and, in some departments, outperformed pre-pandemic results, which was very encouraging.

We looked at other ways of working and became agile and trained in other departments.

With the introduction of Creative Aylesford, the hope is to continue working with partners and suppliers whose local network will expand the outreach and effective mission of the community.

We will explore offering to a wider range of customers including groups, universities, Anglican and ecclesiastical movements.

We recognise it remains important to continue to exercise stewardship of our core salaries and cost levels, at least until we see sustained growth in all our other supporter income streams. Accordingly, we are still minded to maintaining base core expenditure levels (salaries and costs) in line with the lower levels included in the 2021 budget.

Trustees' report Year ended 31 December 2021

Covid-19 and the impact on going concern (continued)

There was significant uncertainty around the charity's financial position and the Trustees looked to the Carmelite Charitable Trust to provide financial support during 2021 and over the next twelve to twenty- four months. The exact financial position of the charity and its subsidiary company continues to depend on a few factors, including the extent of travel bans and other restrictions, extending into 2022; the continued availability of government assistance (which was fully utilised in 2021) and potential sources of replacement financing; in addition to the financial health of suppliers and customers. All of these may impact on expected profitability and other key financial performance ratios including cashflows and maintaining sufficient liquidity to continue to meet obligations when they are due.

With the assistance of the Carmelite Charitable Trust, the Trustees have confidence that the charity and its subsidiary company will be able to withstand the challenges presented by Covid-19 and be financially sustainable in the short to medium term.

Structure, governance, and management

The Friars, Aylesford is constituted as a company limited by guarantee governed by its own Memorandum and Articles of Association. The members are the individual friars of the British Province of the Carmelite Order, who meet in Annual General Meetings to elect the Trustees, to review the financial statements for the previous year and to discuss any other relevant business.

The Trustees are appointed to oversee the strategic governance of The Friars and its subsidiary. They set the strategy, agree an annual budget and monitor performance. In particular, the Trustees make all decisions where the reputation and ethos may be impacted.

During 2021, the Trustees met five times, with an Annual General Meeting on 12 July 2021.

There are two specialist sub-groups which meet regularly providing advice and recommendations to the board.

- ◆ The Finance Group Acting Chair: Father Kevin Alban (deceased) & Fr Brendan Grady
- ◆ The Estates Group Chair: Jonathan Louth

The Trustees are supported by advisors: Jan Wilkinson (Finance), Jonathan Louth (Estates and Development) and Simon Howell (Legal and Development) who regularly attend board or sub-group meetings as applicable.

New Trustees are briefed on the role of a Trustee and provided with relevant literature plus copies of the Memorandum and Articles of Association. Trustee indemnity insurance premiums are paid for by the charitable company to provide protection for the Trustees in the execution of their duties. In December 2017, we undertook a review of our current practices compared to the Charity Commission's Code of Governance and were pleased that there were few areas that were identified as needing minor improvement.

Trustees' report Year ended 31 December 2021

Structure, governance, and management (continued)

The Trustees delegate the day-to-day operations of the charity to the Management Team also known as the Trading Operations Management Team (TOMT). The TOMT comprises the Operations & Business Development Manager OBDM and four other members with clear lines of responsibility for specific departments of the organisation. The Trustees have worked with the TOMT to develop the longer-term strategic plans for the charity. Responsibility for the implementation of the plans is delegated to the TOMT through agreed one-year business plans also known as Operational Plans.

The TOMT has clear terms of reference, regularly reviewed by the Trustees, and its prime and collective responsibility is to self-manage the trading operations of The Friars, Aylesford and to achieve a balanced budget, in line with the budget presented to and agreed by the Trustees in December of the prior year.

Within the TOMT, certain managers are expected to occasionally attend Trustee meetings, reporting from and representing the TOMT. These managers can also refer urgent matters that are outside the remit of the TOMT to Trustees.

TOMT members at the start of 2021 were: Pearl Nyafli – The Operations & Business Development Manager (Lead); Ros Duddell – Gift Shop Manager; Steve Hayden – Estates Manager and Clare Abbotson – Prior's and Trustees' Secretary. The Hospitality Manager and Catering Manager positions were not filled until September 2021.

In 2021, we continued to benefit from the Government's Coronavirus Jobs Retention Scheme and also from the Local Restrictions Grant from the local authority Tonbridge and Malling Council.

Key management remuneration is first informed by current local market rates for similar roles, and by maintaining appropriate differentials for job responsibilities within the organisation. A proposal is considered by the Finance Group and a recommendation made to the Trustees. The Trustees authorise all key management salaries.

Statement of Trustees' responsibilities

The Trustees (who are also directors of The Friars, Aylesford for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees' report and Financial Statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Charity and the Group and of the income and expenditure, of the group for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

- ◆ select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- ◆ observe the methods and principles in Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable to the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102);
- ◆ make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;

Trustees' report Year ended 31 December 2021

Structure, governance, and management (continued)

Statement of Trustees' responsibilities (continued)

- ♦ state whether applicable United Kingdom Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- ♦ prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Charity and the Group will continue in operation.

Approved by the Trustees on: 18/07/2022

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gordon Gray', is written below the approval date.

Independent auditor's report to the members of The Friars, Aylesford

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of The Friars, Aylesford (the 'charitable parent company') and of The Friars, Aylesford and its subsidiary Aylesford Priory Limited (the 'group') for the year ended 31 December 2021 which comprise the group statement of financial activities, the group and charitable parent company balance sheets, the consolidated statement of cash flows, the principal accounting policies and the notes to the financial statements. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- ◆ give a true and fair view of the state of the group's and of the charitable parent company's affairs as at 31 December 2021 and of the group's income and expenditure for the year then ended;
- ◆ have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- ◆ have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the group in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the group and charitable parent company's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The trustees are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the Annual Report and Consolidated Financial Statements, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- ◆ the information given in the trustees' report, which is also the directors' report for the purposes of company law, for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- ◆ the trustees' report, which is also the directors' report for the purposes of company law has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the group and the charitable parent company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the trustees' report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- ◆ adequate accounting records have not been kept by the charitable parent company, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- ◆ the charitable parent company financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- ◆ certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- ◆ we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit; or
- ◆ the trustees were not entitled to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the small companies regime and take advantage of the small companies' exemptions in preparing the trustees' report and from the requirement to prepare a strategic report.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the trustees' responsibilities statement, the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the group's and the charitable parent company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the group or the charitable parent company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below.

Our approach to identifying and assessing the risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations, was as follows:

- ◆ the engagement partner ensured that the engagement team collectively had the appropriate competence, capabilities and skills to identify or recognise non-compliance with applicable laws and regulations;
- ◆ we identified the laws and regulations applicable to the group through discussions with management, and from our commercial knowledge and experience of the sector;
- ◆ we focused on specific laws and regulations which we considered may have a direct material effect on the financial statements or the operations of the company, including the Companies Act 2006 and the Charities Act 2011;
- ◆ we assessed the extent of compliance with the laws and regulations identified above through making enquiries of management and inspecting correspondence; and
- ◆ identified laws and regulations were communicated within the audit team and the team remained alert to instances of non-compliance throughout the audit.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements (continued)

We assessed the susceptibility of the group's accounts to material misstatement, including obtaining an understanding of how fraud might occur, by:

- ◆ making enquiries of management as to where they considered there was susceptibility to fraud, their knowledge of actual, suspected and alleged fraud; and
- ◆ considering the internal controls in place to mitigate risks of fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations.

To address the risk of fraud through management bias and override of controls, we:

- ◆ performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships;
- ◆ tested journal entries to identify unusual transactions;
- ◆ assessed whether judgements and assumptions made in determining the accounting estimates were indicative of potential bias; and
- ◆ tested authorisation controls on expenditure items, checking that all expenditure was approved in line with the charitable parent company's procedures and the group's procedures.

There are inherent limitations in our audit procedures described above. The more removed that laws and regulations are from financial transactions, the less likely it is that we would become aware of non-compliance. Auditing standards also limit the audit procedures required to identify non-compliance with laws and regulations to enquiry of the trustees and other management and the inspection of regulatory and legal correspondence, if any.

Material misstatements that arise due to fraud can be harder to detect than those that arise from error as they may involve deliberate concealment or collusion.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and the charitable company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

 Buzzacott LLP

Amanda Francis (Senior Statutory Auditor)
For and on behalf of Buzzacott LLP, Statutory Auditor
130 Wood Street
London EC2V 6DL

22 August 2022

Consolidated statement of financial activities Year to 31 December 2021

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2021 Total funds £	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2020 Total funds £
Income from:							
Donations, grants and legacies	1	365,678	249,099	614,777	526,104	25,979	552,083
Other trading activities	2	534,161	—	534,161	319,561	—	319,561
Charitable activities	3	74,389	—	74,389	43,539	—	43,539
Other sources:							
. Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme		91,978	—	91,978	194,172	—	194,172
. Coronavirus Business Support Scheme		54,398	—	54,398	—	—	—
Total income		1,120,604	249,099	1,369,703	1,083,376	25,979	1,109,355
Expenditure on:							
Raising funds	4	644,034	—	644,034	741,768	460	742,228
Charitable activities							
. Upkeep of the shrine at Aylesford	5	330,658	10,587	341,245	324,529	10,563	335,092
. Support of the Carmelite Friars of the Aylesford community	6	56,102	—	56,102	47,946	—	47,946
Total expenditure		1,030,794	10,587	1,041,381	1,114,243	11,023	1,125,266
Net income (expenditure) before transfers		89,810	238,512	328,322	(30,867)	14,956	(15,911)
Transfers between funds	14	304,925	(304,925)	—	2,054	(2,054)	—
Net income (expenditure) and net movement in funds	7	394,735	(66,413)	328,322	(28,813)	12,902	(15,911)
Reconciliation of funds:							
Balances brought forward at 1 January 2021		402,696	378,282	780,978	431,509	365,380	796,889
Balances carried forward at 31 December 2021		797,431	311,869	1,109,300	402,696	378,282	780,978

All the group's activities derived from continuing operations during the above two financial years.

There were no recognised gains and losses other than those set out in the consolidated statement of financial activities above.

Balance sheets 31 December 2021

	Notes	Group		Charity	
		2021 £	2020 £	2021 £	2020 £
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	10	654,897	393,213	635,055	364,492
Investments	11	—	—	1	1
		654,897	393,213	635,056	364,493
Current assets					
Stock		24,919	27,030	1,640	836
Debtors	12	173,855	153,460	546,031	451,112
Cash at bank and in hand		366,866	341,247	240,950	281,107
		565,640	521,737	788,621	733,055
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	13	(111,237)	(133,972)	(41,828)	(76,012)
Net current assets		454,403	387,765	746,793	657,043
Total net assets		1,109,300	780,978	1,381,849	1,021,536
Represented by:					
Funds and reserves					
Restricted funds	14	311,869	378,282	311,869	378,282
Unrestricted funds					
. General funds		434,924	278,761	434,925	278,761
. Tangible fixed assets fund		635,055	364,493	635,055	364,493
. Non-charitable trading funds		(272,548)	(240,558)	—	—
Total funds		1,109,300	780,978	1,381,849	1,021,536

Approved by the trustees of The Friars, Aylesford, Company Registration Number 03487590 (England and Wales) and signed on their behalf by:



Brendan Grady
Trustee

Approved by the trustees on: 18/07/2022

Consolidated statement of cash flows Year to 31 December 2021

	Notes	2021 £	2020 £
Cash flows from operating activities			
. Net cash provided by operating activities	A	316,866	33,280
Cash flows from investing activities			
. Purchase of tangible fixed assets		(291,247)	(2,054)
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year		25,619	31,266
Cash and cash equivalents at 1 January 2021	B	341,247	310,021
Cash and cash equivalents at 31 December 2021	B	366,866	341,247

Notes to the statement of cash flows for the year to 31 December 2021.

A Reconciliation of net movement in funds to net cash provided by operating activities

	2021 £	2020 £
Net movement in funds (as per the statement of financial activities)	328,322	(15,911)
Depreciation charge	47,135	49,393
Decrease in stocks	2,111	12,730
Increase in debtors	(20,395)	(20,765)
(Decrease) increase in creditors	(40,307)	7,833
Net cash provided by operating activities	316,866	33,280

B Analysis of cash and cash equivalents

	2021 £	2020 £
Total cash and cash equivalents:		
Cash at bank and in hand	366,866	341,247

C Analysis of changes in net debt

	2020 £	Cash flows £	2021 £
Cash at bank and in hand	341,247	25,619	366,866

Principal accounting policies 31 December 2021

The principal accounting policies adopted, judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty in the preparation of the financial statements are laid out below:

Basis of accounting

These accounts have been prepared for the year to 31 December 2021 with comparative information provided in respect to the year to 31 December 2020.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention with items initially recognised at cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy notes.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (Charities SORP FRS 102) issued on 16 July 2014, the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

The charity constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS 102.

The accounts are presented in sterling and rounded to the nearest pound.

Basis of consolidation

The consolidated statement of financial activities and group balance sheet consolidate each reporting line of the financial statements of The Friars, Aylesford and its subsidiary company, Aylesford Priory Limited, made up at the balance sheet date.

Critical accounting estimates and areas of judgement

The preparation of the financial statements in compliance with the Charities SORP FRS 102 requires the use of certain critical accounting estimates. It requires also that trustees and management exercise judgement in applying the group's and charity's accounting policies.

In preparing these financial statements, the trustees have made significant estimates and judgements in the following areas:

- ◆ Estimating the expected useful economic life of tangible fixed assets for the purpose of calculating an annual depreciation charge;
- ◆ Estimating any provision for slow moving and/or obsolete stock;
- ◆ Estimating any provision for bad or doubtful debts;
- ◆ Assessing the probability of the receipt of legacy income of which the charity and group had been notified;
- ◆ Estimating and recognising accrued expenditure;
- ◆ Determining the basis for allocating shared overhead costs between the charity and its subsidiary company; and

Critical accounting estimates and areas of judgement (continued)

- ◆ Estimating future income and expenditure flows for the purpose of assessing going concern (see below).

Going concern

The trustees have assessed whether the use of the going concern assumption is appropriate in preparing these accounts. The trustees have made the assessment in respect to a period of at least one year from the date of approval of these accounts.

Having reviewed the financial position and future plans for the charity, the Trustees have identified no material uncertainties related to events or conditions that cast significant doubt on the charity's ability to continue its activities for the foreseeable future.

The long-term economic outlook is uncertain and with the onset of the war in Ukraine and the surge in Coronavirus variants, the team here at The Friars have put a few measures in place to ensure financial stability. This includes finding smarter ways of working, embarking on various cost saving initiatives and regular cashflow forecasting. We will continue to closely monitor the impact of any government decision making and the impact on the economy from any crisis, and we will actively respond to any rapid changes.

Therefore, the financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis given the undertaking of the Carmelite Charitable Trust (note 16) to support the group and charity financially whilst they continue with the work to restore the activities at Aylesford to a sustainable basis.

Income

Income is recognised in the period in which the group is entitled to the income, the amount can be measured with reasonable certainty and it is probable that the funds will be received.

Income is deferred only when the charity has to fulfil conditions before becoming entitled to it or where the donor or funder has specified that the income is to be expended in a future accounting period.

Donations are recognised when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the charity.

Donations and grants are recognised when the charitable parent company and/or group has confirmation of both the amount and settlement date. In the event of donations or grants pledged but not received, the amount is accrued for where the receipt is considered probable. In the event that a donation or grant is subject to conditions that require a level of performance before the charitable parent company and/or group is entitled to the funds, the income is deferred and not recognised until either those conditions are fully met, or the fulfilment of those conditions is wholly within the control of the charitable parent company and/or group and it is probable that those conditions will be fulfilled in the reporting period.

Legacies are included in the statement of financial activities when the charity is entitled to the legacy, the executors have established that there are sufficient surplus assets in the estate to pay the legacy, and any conditions attached to the legacy are within the control of the charity.

Income (continued)

Entitlement is taken as the earlier of the date on which either: the charity is aware that probate has been granted, the estate has been finalised and notification has been made by the executor to the charity that a distribution will be made, or when a distribution is received from the estate. Receipt of a legacy, in whole or in part, is only considered probable when the amount can be measured reliably and the charity has been notified of the executor's intention to make a distribution. Where legacies have been notified to the charity, or the charity is aware of the granting of probate, but the criteria for income recognition have not been met, then the legacy is treated as a contingent asset and disclosed if material. In the event that the gift is in the form of an asset other than cash or a financial asset traded on a recognised stock exchange, recognition is subject to the value of the gift being reliably measurable with a degree of reasonable accuracy and the title of the asset having being transferred to the charity.

In accordance with the 2015 SORP, volunteer hours are not recognised.

Income from trading activities is recognised to the extent that it is probable that the economic benefits will flow to the company and the revenue can be reliably measured. It is measured at fair value of the consideration received or receivable, excluding discounts, rebates, value added tax and other sales taxes.

Income from charitable activities, comprising income in connection with the shrine and retreats, is recognised to the extent that it is probable that the economic benefits will flow to the charity and the revenue can be reliably measured.

Income from other sources comprises funding in connection with the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme and Coronavirus Business Support Scheme and is recognised as unrestricted income in the period in which the charity is entitled to the income, the amount of income can be measured reliably and it is probable that the income will be received.

No separate statement of financial activities has been presented for the charity alone, as permitted by s408 of the Companies Act 2006 and the Charities SORP FRS 102. The charity had total income in the year of £801,198 (2020 - £669,641), total expenditure of £440,885 (2020 - £414,624), resulting in net income of £360,313 (2020 – net income of £255,017).

Expenditure

Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the group or charity to make a payment to a third party, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably.

All expenditure is accounted for on an accrual basis. Expenditure is comprised of direct costs and support costs. Direct costs are allocated to a specific activity. The classification between activities is as follows:

- a) Expenditure on raising funds includes all expenditure associated with raising funds for the charity and the operating costs of Aylesford Priory Limited.

Principal accounting policies 31 December 2021

Expenditure (continued)

- b) Expenditure on charitable activities includes all costs associated with furthering the charitable purposes of the charity through the provision of its charitable activities i.e. the upkeep of the shrine at Aylesford and supporting the Carmelite Friars of the Aylesford community. Expenditure on charitable activities includes both direct costs and indirect support costs.

All expenditure is inclusive of irrecoverable VAT.

Allocation of support and governance costs

Support costs represent indirect charitable expenditure. In order to carry out the primary purposes of the charity it is necessary to provide support in the form of personnel development, financial procedures, provision of office services and equipment and a suitable working environment.

Governance costs comprise the costs involving the public accountability of the charity (including audit costs) and costs in respect to its compliance with regulation and good practice.

Support costs and governance costs are apportioned based on area occupied, level of activity and staff time as appropriate.

Certain support costs incurred are shared between the charity and its subsidiary company, Aylesford Priory Limited. This allocation is based on area occupied, level of activity and staff time. Those costs which would be incurred whether or not Aylesford Priory Limited existed are allocated 100% to the charity.

Tangible fixed assets

All assets costing more than £1,000 with an expected useful life exceeding one year are capitalised.

Depreciation is provided at the following annual rates on a straight line basis in order to write off the cost of each asset, less its estimated residual value, over its estimated useful economic life. The annual rates used for this purpose are:

◆ Leasehold improvements	- 4 to 10% per annum on cost
◆ Plant and machinery	- 10 to 20% per annum on cost
◆ Furniture and equipment	- 20% per annum on cost
◆ Motor vehicles	- 20% per annum on cost

Depreciation is applied in all cases commencing from the start of the month following that in which the asset was purchased.

No value is attached in these financial statements to the leasehold land occupied by the group and charity. As explained in note 10, the site is of historic importance generally and specifically to the Roman Catholic Church and the principal objective of the charity is to preserve the site for the enjoyment of future generations. As such, the asset meets the definition of heritage assets in the Charities SORP FRS 102 and is not valued for the purposes of these financial statements.

Principal accounting policies 31 December 2021

Stock

Stocks of books, souvenir items and food stuff for resale are valued at the lower of cost and net realisable value. Cost is calculated by assuming stock movements are on a first in, first out basis.

Debtors

Debtors are recognised at the settlement amount, less any provision for non-recoverability. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid.

Cash at bank and in hand

Cash at bank and in hand represents such accounts and instruments that are available on demand or have a maturity of less than three months from the date of acquisition.

Creditors and provisions

Creditors and provisions are recognised when there is an obligation at the balance sheet date as a result of a past event, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefit will be required in settlement, and the amount of the settlement can be estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are recognised at the amount the charity anticipates it will pay to settle the debt.

Fund structure

Restricted funds comprise monies raised for, or their use restricted to, a specific purpose, or contributions subject to donor imposed conditions.

General funds represent those monies which are freely available for application towards achieving any charitable purpose that falls within the charity's charitable objects.

The tangible fixed assets fund represents the net book value of the land and buildings occupied by the charity and other tangible fixed assets held by the charity. Such assets are vital to the charity being able to carry out its charitable work and the value invested in the assets cannot, therefore, be realised in order to meet future expenditure or contingencies. To emphasise this point the net book value of the assets is represented by a specific tangible fixed assets fund on the balance sheet.

Non charitable trading funds comprise the retained surplus or accumulated deficit on the activities of Aylesford Priory Limited.

Pension contributions

Contributions in respect of the charity's defined contribution pension scheme are charged to the statement of financial activities when they are payable to the scheme. The charity's contributions are restricted to the contributions disclosed in note 8. There were no outstanding contributions at the year end. The charity has no liability beyond making its contributions and paying across the deductions for the employees' contributions.

1. Income from: Donations, grants and legacies

Group	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2021 Total funds £	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2020 Total funds £
Legacies	77,189	—	77,189	331,976	21,167	353,143
Donations	168,489	5,563	174,052	74,128	4,812	78,940
Grants for roof repairs (see below)	—	243,536	243,536	—	—	—
Grant from Carmelite Charitable Trust	120,000	—	120,000	120,000	—	120,000
	365,678	249,099	614,777	526,104	25,979	552,083

During the year, the charitable parent company and group received grants from the Programme of Major Works Scheme which is part of the Cultural Recovery Funds towards repairs to the roof of the church situated on the site of The Friars, Aylesford. The grants were administered through the Catholic Trust for England and Wales (CaTEW).

2. Income from: Other trading activities

Group	Unrestricted funds	
	2021 £	2020 £
Provision of conference facilities, guest accommodation, events, and sale of books, gifts and refreshments	456,871	270,979
Rental income	38,144	38,411
Other	39,146	10,171
	534,161	319,561

3. Income from: Charitable activities

Group	Unrestricted funds	
	2021 £	2020 £
Shrine income	71,172	37,428
Retreat centre	—	236
Car park contributions	3,217	5,875
	74,389	43,539

4. Expenditure on: Raising funds

Group	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2021 Total funds £	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2020 Total funds £
Provision of conference facilities, accommodation, events, and sale of books, gifts and refreshments	600,496	—	600,496	710,643	—	710,643
Other	43,538	—	43,538	31,125	460	31,585
	644,034	—	644,034	741,768	460	742,228

5. Expenditure on: Upkeep of the shrine at Aylesford

Group	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2021 Total funds £	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2020 Total funds £
Direct costs	60,859	—	60,859	49,994	—	49,994
Other indirect staff costs	35,715	—	35,715	29,606	—	29,606
Premises and facilities	212,718	10,587	223,305	224,396	10,563	234,959
Office costs	12,345	—	12,345	9,645	—	9,645
Governance costs	9,021	—	9,021	10,888	—	10,888
	330,658	10,587	341,245	324,529	10,563	335,092

Governance costs included above comprise auditor's remuneration only.

6. Expenditure on: Support of the Carmelite Friars of the Aylesford Community

Group	Unrestricted funds	
	2021 £	2020 £
Living and personal expenses	56,102	47,946

7. Net income (expenditure) and net movement in funds

This is stated after charging:

Group	2021 £	2020 £
Staff costs (note 8)	522,837	663,551
Auditor's remuneration		
. Statutory audit services	10,426	10,631
. Other services: tax compliance	2,240	2,570
Depreciation	47,135	49,393

8. Staff costs and trustees' remuneration

Group	2021 £	2020 £
Staff costs during the year were as follows:		
Wages and salaries	483,756	573,970
Social security costs	23,770	30,617
Other pension costs	11,577	13,650
	519,103	618,237
Redundancy payments	—	41,906
Other staff related costs	3,734	3,408
	522,837	663,551
Staff costs per function were as follows:		
Upkeep of the shrine	119,625	120,543
Provision of conference facilities, related accommodation, events and sale of books, gifts and refreshments	312,080	429,284
Support functions	91,132	113,724
	522,837	663,551

8. Staff costs and trustees' remuneration (continued)

No employee earned £60,000 per annum or more (including taxable benefits but excluding pension contributions) during the year (2020 – none).

The average number of employees, based on full time equivalents and analysed by function, was as follows:

Group	2021	2020
Shrine maintenance	4	5
Commercial trading operations	16	19
Support costs	3	3
	23	27

The average number of employees, based on headcount, was 45 in 2021 (2020: 56).

A number of the trustees are members of the Carmelite Order and, as such, certain of their personal living expenses are borne by the charity, but they received no remuneration in connection with their duties as trustees during the year (2020 – none). Incidental expenses of £87 (2020 - £108) were reimbursed to one trustee (2020 – one).

The charity has purchased trustees and individual insurance to indemnify the trustees or other officers against the consequences of any claim for a wrongful act. The insurance premium paid by the charity during the year totalled £839 (2020 - £621) and provides cover up to a maximum of £1 million (2020 - £1 million).

In addition to the trustees, the key management personnel of the charity in charge of directing and controlling, running, and operating the charity on a day-to-day basis during 2021 comprised the Operations and Business Development Manager, the Estates Manager, the Catering Manager, the Hospitality Manager and the Prior's Secretary. The total remuneration (including taxable benefits, employer's pension contributions and employers national insurance contributions) of these employees was £136,972 (2020 - £170,477).

9. Taxation

The Friars, Aylesford is a registered charity and, therefore, is not liable to corporation tax or income tax on income or gains derived from its charitable activities, as they fall within the various exemptions available to registered charities.

Profits of Aylesford Priory Limited, if any, are subject to corporation tax calculated on the basis of tax rates and laws that have been enacted or substantially enacted by the balance sheet date.

10. Tangible fixed assets

Group	Leasehold improvements £	Plant and machinery £	Furniture and equipment £	Motor vehicles £	Office equipment £	Total £
Cost or valuation						
At 1 January 2021	410,261	193,434	151,309	12,652	7,779	775,435
Additions	304,925	3,894	—	—	—	308,819
Disposals	—	(91,393)	(80,281)	(4,157)	—	(175,831)
At 31 December 2021	<u>715,186</u>	<u>105,935</u>	<u>71,028</u>	<u>8,495</u>	<u>7,779</u>	908,423
Depreciation						
At 1 January 2021	69,418	163,691	134,187	10,953	3,973	382,222
Charge for year	24,964	12,923	5,993	1,699	1,556	47,135
Disposals	—	(91,393)	(80,281)	(4,157)	—	(175,831)
At 31 December 2021	<u>94,382</u>	<u>85,221</u>	<u>59,899</u>	<u>8,495</u>	<u>5,529</u>	253,526
Net book values						
At 31 December 2021	620,804	20,714	11,129	—	2,250	654,897
At 31 December 2020	<u>340,843</u>	<u>29,743</u>	<u>17,122</u>	<u>1,699</u>	<u>3,806</u>	393,213

Charity	Leasehold improvements £	Plant and machinery £	Furniture and equipment £	Motor vehicles £	Total £
Cost or valuation					
At 1 January 2021	410,261	88,488	51,092	8,495	558,336
Additions	304,925	—	—	—	304,925
Disposals	—	(24,819)	(27,780)	—	(52,599)
At 31 December 2021	<u>715,186</u>	<u>63,669</u>	<u>23,312</u>	<u>8,495</u>	810,662
Depreciation					
At 1 January 2021	69,418	75,402	42,228	6,796	193,844
Charge for year	24,964	5,483	2,216	1,699	34,362
Disposals	—	(24,819)	(27,780)	—	(52,599)
At 31 December 2021	<u>94,382</u>	<u>56,066</u>	<u>16,664</u>	<u>8,495</u>	175,607
Net book values					
At 31 December 2021	620,804	7,603	6,648	—	635,055
At 31 December 2020	<u>340,843</u>	<u>13,086</u>	<u>8,864</u>	<u>1,699</u>	364,492

The charity's objective is to promote for the benefit of the public the restoration, presentation and maintenance of the historic buildings, amenities and grounds of The Friars, Aylesford. The freehold title to The Friars, Aylesford is held by The Carmelite Charitable Trust, a registered charity and a connected entity to the charity (see note 16). In 2002 the charity was granted a 99 year lease over the site and pays an annual rent of £200 to the Carmelite Charitable Trust. No value has been assigned to this lease in these financial statements. The site is of historic importance generally and specifically to the Roman Catholic Church and, as noted above, the principal objective of the charity is to preserve the site for the enjoyment of future generations. As such, the asset meets the definition of heritage assets in the Charities SORP FRS 102 and is not valued for the purposes of these financial statements.

11. Investments

	Group 2021 £	Group 2020 £	Charity 2021 £	Charity 2020 £
Investment in subsidiary company	—	—	1	1

Investment in subsidiary company

The charity holds 100% of the issued share capital of Aylesford Priory Limited. This holding was acquired on incorporation of the company on 10 November 2008.

The following is a summary of the financial statements of Aylesford Priory Limited for the year ended 31 December 2021, which have been included in the consolidated financial statements.

	2021 £	2020 £
Turnover	456,871	270,979
Cost of sales	(523,154)	(612,794)
Gross loss	(66,283)	(341,815)
Administrative expenditure	(77,342)	(97,848)
Other income: Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme and Coronavirus Business Support Scheme	111,635	168,735
Operating loss	(31,990)	(270,928)
(Accumulated losses) retained profits at 1 January 2021	(240,558)	30,369
Accumulated losses at 31 December 2021	(272,548)	(240,559)

At 31 December 2021 the company had total net liabilities of £272,548 (2020 – total net liabilities of £240,558) represented by called up share capital of £1 (2020 - £1) and negative reserves of £272,549 (2020 – £240,559).

12. Debtors

	Group		Charity	
	2021 £	2020 £	2021 £	2020 £
Trade debtors	18,180	11,449	4,505	2,804
Amounts due from the Carmelite Charitable Trust (note 16)	10,929	4,402	10,102	3,529
Other debtors	8,408	15,322	5,729	14,412
Legacies receivable	45,153	43,363	45,153	43,363
Prepayments	91,185	78,924	83,271	74,150
Amounts due from Aylesford Priory Limited	—	—	397,271	312,854
	173,855	153,460	546,031	451,112

13. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	Group		Charity	
	2021 £	2020 £	2021 £	2020 £
Expense creditors	30,355	67,323	15,043	58,629
Additions to tangible fixed assets	12,256	—	12,256	—
Social security and other taxes	156	(80)	—	—
Other creditors	8,379	12,587	1,361	5,762
Accruals and deferred income	60,091	54,142	13,168	11,621
	111,237	133,972	41,828	76,012

Income has been deferred where it relates clearly to future periods and/or where the charity has not yet met the conditions for recognising the income. The movements in deferred income are analysed below:

	2021 £	2020 £
Brought forward	22,095	25,720
Released in the year	(25,720)	(25,720)
Deferred in the year	22,095	22,095
Carried forward	18,470	22,095

14. Restricted funds

The income funds of the charity include restricted funds comprising the following unexpended balances of donations and grants held on trusts to be applied for specific purposes:

Group and charity	At 1 January 2021 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	At 31 December 2021 £
Restoration fund	360,791	249,089	(10,563)	(304,925)	294,392
Peace garden fund	17,491	10	(24)	—	17,477
	378,282	249,099	(10,587)	(304,925)	311,869

Group and charity	At 1 January 2020 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	At 31 December 2020 £
Restoration fund	347,449	25,959	(10,563)	(2,054)	360,791
Peace garden fund	17,931	20	(460)	—	17,491
	365,380	25,979	(11,023)	(2,054)	378,282

Restoration fund

This fund represents donations received from the Carmelite Charitable Trust for maintenance projects which are only to be carried out after approval by the Trustees of the Carmelite Charitable Trust together with grants from the Programme of Major Works Scheme which is part of the Cultural Recovery Funds towards repairs to the roof of the church situated on the site of The Friars, Aylesford. The transfer from the restoration fund to unrestricted funds represents eligible expenditure incurred and capitalised during the year.

14. Restricted funds (continued)

Peace garden fund

This fund represents donations received for the creation of a peace garden at the entrance to the Friars.

15. Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unrestricted funds			Restricted funds	Total 2021
	General funds	Tangible fixed assets fund	Non-charitable trading funds		
Group	£	£	£	£	£
Fund balances at 31 December 2021 are represented by:					
Tangible fixed assets	—	635,055	19,842	—	654,897
Net current assets (liabilities)	434,924	—	(292,390)	311,869	454,403
Total net assets	434,924	635,055	(272,548)	311,869	1,109,300

	Unrestricted funds				
	General funds	Tangible fixed assets fund	Non-charitable trading funds	Restricted funds	Total 2020
Group	£	£	£	£	£
Fund balances at 31 December 2020 are represented by:					
Tangible fixed assets	—	364,493	28,720	—	393,213
Net current assets (liabilities)	278,761	—	(269,278)	378,282	387,765
Total net assets	278,761	364,493	(240,558)	378,282	780,978

Charity	Unrestricted funds		Restricted funds £	Total 2021 £
	General funds £	Tangible fixed assets fund £		
Fund balances at 31 December 2021 are represented by:				
Tangible fixed assets	—	635,055	—	635,055
Investments	1	—	—	1
Net current assets	434,924	—	311,869	746,793
Total net assets	434,925	635,055	311,869	1,381,849

15. Analysis of net assets between funds (continued)

Charity	Unrestricted funds		Restricted funds	Total 2020
	General funds	Tangible fixed assets fund		
	£	£	£	£
Fund balances at 31 December 2020 are represented by:				
Tangible fixed assets	—	364,493	—	364,493
Investments	1	—	—	1
Net current assets	278,760	—	378,282	657,042
Total net assets	278,762	364,493	378,282	1,021,536

16. Connected charities

The Friars, Aylesford is connected to the Carmelite Charitable Trust by virtue of the fact that several of the trustees of the charitable company are also trustees of the Carmelite Charitable Trust (Charity Registration No. 1061342).

The transactions with the Carmelite Charitable Trust during the year are as follows:

- ◆ The Friars, Aylesford received an unrestricted grant of £120,000 (2020 - £120,000) and rent of £ 4,200 (2020 - £4,200) from the Carmelite Charitable Trust.
- ◆ At 31 December 2021 The Carmelite Charitable Trust owed £10,929 to The Friars, Aylesford (2020 – £4,402 owed by The Carmelite Charitable Trust to The Friars, Aylesford).

The Carmelite Charitable Trust holds the freehold of Aylesford Priory. No rent was paid by the charity in the period, but the charity and its subsidiary absorbed all the running costs of the Priory, including all repair and maintenance costs.

The Carmelite Charitable Trust has confirmed that it will continue to provide financial support to the group as and when required to enable it to meet its liabilities as they fall due over the short to medium term.

The charity has taken advantage of the exemption provided by FRS 102 for the requirement to disclose transactions with its subsidiary undertaking.

Banking arrangements

The charity's bank accounts form part of a centralised banking system operated with the Carmelite Charitable Trust. Cash and cash equivalents for the group were £366,866 as at 31 December 2021 (£341,247 as at 31 December 2020).

Notes to the financial statements 31 December 2021

17. Lease commitments

As at 31 December 2021 the Friars, Aylesford had total future commitments under non-cancellable operating leases due as follows:

	2021 £	2020 £
Office equipment		
Within one year	1,379	1,379
Within one to two years	345	1,724
	1,724	3,103

18. Capital commitments

At 31 December 2021, the charity had capital commitments in respect to work on the repair to the roof of the church situated on the site of The Friars, Aylesford. At 31 December 2021, a total of £305,000 (2020 - £nil) had been incurred leaving a capital commitment of circa £20,000 being amounts contracted for but not provided for in these financial statements (2020 - £325,000 authorised but not contracted for).



Scaffold and roof stripping to choir chapel

THE FRIARS, AYLESFORD

England & Wales - Charity number 1068518

Accounts

The Friars, Aylesford

Annual Report and Consolidated Financial Statements

Year ended 31 December 2020

Charity Registration Number
1068518

Company Registration Number
03487590 (England and Wales)

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Reference and administrative details of the Charity, its Trustees and its advisers

Trustees	The following Trustees have served since 1 January 2019, except where indicated: Rev Brendan Grady, O. Carm. Rev Patrick O’Keeffe, O. Carm. Rev Francis Kemsley, O.Carm. Rev Kevin Alban, O Carm. (deceased 4 May 2021) Isabel Kernthaler
Advisers to the Trustees	Mr Jonathan Louth Mrs Jan Wilkinson
Secretary	Mrs Clare Abbolson
Registered office	The Friars Aylesford Kent ME20 7BX
Charity registration number	1068518
Company registration number	03487590 (England and Wales)
Auditor	Buzzacott LLP 130 Wood Street London EC2V 6DL
Principal bankers	The Royal Bank of Scotland plc 62/63 Threadneedle Street London EC2R 8LA
Solicitors	Pothecary Witham Weld 70 St George’s Square London SW1V 3RD

FOREWORD

In this year 2020, like everyone we have experienced the dramatic contrast between plans and reality. All of us at The Friars were faced with unforeseen challenges. It was daunting, stressful, emotional, and depressing but it also gave us a perspective of the important things in life and the people to be grateful for. Our world was turned upside down and our business and Charity had to endure unexpected changes and we still continue to adapt to the challenges.

Personally, I have taken great inspiration from the ways our staff, volunteers, the Friars' community and most importantly, our customers and supporters, have dealt with these unprecedented times. They have done so with the full power of our values of resolve, adaptability, and dignity.

We had a strong start to 2020 and income received between the months of January and March far exceeded the income for the same period in 2019. When Coronavirus hit, we had to temporarily close our entire operation, but our Estates team continued to refurbish some of our bedrooms and brought them up to a high standard. Others in our team continued working remotely and several staff were furloughed. Our Tea Room and Gift Shop reopened for trade in July 2020 with social distancing guidelines fully in place. We did our bit in keeping other overhead costs to the bare minimum.

We said farewell to some of our colleagues during the restructure and we are a much smaller team now but, without a doubt, the size of our ambition has not changed. We are grateful for the support of our now former colleagues and wish them well for the future.

If the pandemic has taught us anything, it is the value of people and the importance of kindness, and it has reminded us of what we can achieve when we work together. As we strive together to maintain and rebuild our business, let us remain thankful to the Carmelite Charitable Trust for its financial support in keeping our doors open. I am thankful to all staff, our volunteers and to the benefactors who have made generous donations or left legacies to enable the Charity to continue to operate. Our legacy income for the year 2020 was very generous in comparison to 2019.

My thanks go to our trustees and advisors for their continued support. It is down to all of them that The Friars, Aylesford has continued to thrive despite the difficult circumstances that 2020 has brought.

I would also like to acknowledge Father Kevin Alban, Prior Provincial of the British Province who sadly died on 4 May 2021. Father Kevin was Chair of the Board of Trustees and a Director and the contribution and energy he brought will be sorely missed

The financial position of our business and Charity has been weakened and we face many challenges of course, but we pledge to embrace the new ways of working and explore the trading opportunities that the new year will bring.

The future is uncertain, but what remains true is our resolute belief that the Carmelite mission of welcome and hospitality is fulfilled.

Pearl Nyafli

Operations & Business Development Manager

Trustees' report Year ended 31 December 2020

The Trustees, who are the directors for the purposes of company law, are pleased to present their statutory report together with the consolidated financial statements of The Friars, Aylesford (the "Charity") and its subsidiary Aylesford Priory Limited for the year ended 31 December 2020. This report has been prepared in accordance with part VI of the Charities Act 2011.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out on pages 40 to 45 of the attached financial statements and comply with the charitable company's Memorandum and Articles of Association, applicable laws and Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102).

These financial statements consolidate the activities of The Friars, Aylesford and its wholly owned subsidiary Aylesford Priory Limited. The subsidiary company, which manages the commercial activities, has been trading since 1 January 2010.



The Friars, Aylesford

Historic Overview

Aylesford Priory is the site of one of the earliest Carmelite communities in England, founded in 1242. At the Reformation, following the dispersal of the religious community, the church was demolished but a significant amount of the medieval domestic buildings survived by being incorporated into a country house. The remaining buildings and land were purchased back by the Carmelite Order in 1949 and an extensive programme of renovation and new building was undertaken.

Aylesford Priory is now a 44 acre site of significant religious and historical interest, attracting around 100,000 to 120,000 visitors in a more typical year. At its heart is a major religious shrine, the Shrine of Our Lady of Mount Carmel and St Simon Stock. The open air Marian shrine has a wide piazza which has room for up to 6,000 pilgrims, and a series of five linked chapels of varying sizes.

Historic Overview (continued)

Our surviving medieval buildings are now partly used as a home to some members (friars) of the Carmelite Community, the remainder forming part of our hospitality facilities, our guest house and conference suite, which with additional newer buildings can now accommodate up to 100 visitors. The site also has a tea room and a gift shop located in a refurbished 16th century thatched barn, and some auxiliary buildings which are offered for rental to individuals and local businesses.

From 1949 Aylesford Priory formed a part of a Carmelite Trust, which covered England and Wales. However, in 1997, the management of Aylesford Priory was devolved to a separate charitable company, The Friars, Aylesford. The ownership of the site and buildings remains with the overall charity, namely the Carmelite Charitable Trust but the administration, the maintenance and the development of the site and the management of the commercial activities have been entrusted to The Friars, Aylesford, and its wholly owned subsidiary company, Aylesford Priory Limited.

Objectives and Activities

The purpose of The Friars, Aylesford, as set out in the Memorandum of Association, is primarily to maintain and develop the Aylesford Priory site as a Marian shrine and retreat/conference centre at the service of the Roman Catholic community as well as other churches, groups and individuals who wish to use the facilities. The trustees have given careful consideration to how activities of The Friars meet their statutory duty and have considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit. This report sets out how our activities benefit those who visit The Friars, Aylesford Priory, as well as the local and wider community affected by our presence and outreach activities.

Our Vision

A meeting place and centre of Christian spirituality with a Carmelite community at its heart; a space where people of all ages and all faiths and none, will find a welcome, where the sacred is expressed through prayer, the arts and nature.

Be still and know that I am God (Ps 46.10)

Our Mission

- ◆ To work in partnership with others
- ◆ To be inclusive
- ◆ To act responsibly as stewards of the buildings and the physical environment
- ◆ To be accountable to all our stakeholders

Our Values

Love one another as I have loved you
(Jn 15.12)

Trustees' report Year ended 31 December 2020

Our Objectives

- ◆ Such charitable purposes which advance the Roman Catholic religion in any part of Great Britain.
- ◆ To promote for the benefit of the public the restoration, presentation and maintenance of the historic buildings, amenities and grounds of The Friars, Aylesford.

Our Ethos

- ◆ We derive our values from the life, message and teachings of Jesus Christ and our inspiration comes from our patrons, the prophet Elijah, the Blessed Virgin Mary and the saints of the Carmelite Family.
- ◆ The basis of our work is an expression of our commitment to serve the people through friendship, hospitality and a desire to live out the values that Christ preached.

Principal Activities

The Friars, Aylesford principal activities and whether they meet our key objectives of partnership, inclusivity, stewardship and accountability are detailed in the table below. A grey

tick  indicates objectives not fully achieved due to the pandemic.

Daily Visitors	During the pandemic, the site was opened for approximately 205 days and for the remainder of the days it was shut due to national lockdown Covid-19 restrictions. Masses were held four times a week when restrictions got lifted.			
	Partnership	Inclusivity	Stewardship	Accountability
				
Pilgrimages	Ordinarily, we would have a comprehensive programme welcoming between 21 national and international pilgrimage groups of various sizes (100 to 2,000 people) to our shrine as a place of prayer, offering a meeting place and centre of spirituality. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic all pilgrimages were cancelled in line with government guidelines. A pilgrimage secretary and sacristan are employed to look after our visiting groups and to encourage bookings. They work with Catholic dioceses or societies, and a variety of Christian denominations, including Primary and Secondary Schools, Adult Education, University of the Third Age, Groups with Disabilities and Special Needs. There are no fees for these bookings; however, voluntary donations are often received. During 2020, sacristy work was carried out by the Carmelites due to the Sacristan leaving.			
	Partnership	Inclusivity	Stewardship	Accountability
				

Principal Activities (continued)

Educational Tour Groups	We offer educational tours for groups covering the history of the Carmelite Order here at Aylesford, the art work, and the development of Aylesford Priory. These tours are of interest to historical, art, and other educational groups and we often welcome foreign groups visiting the UK. There are no fees for these bookings; however, voluntary donations are occasionally received. Once again there were no educational tours due to the impact of the pandemic.			
	Partnership	Inclusivity	Stewardship	Accountability
	✓	✓	✓	
Schools Programme	We have a Schools programme, offering guidelines and resources to support teachers and other adults who bring groups of children and young people to Aylesford. Some of the information provided is linked to the National Curriculum or Religious Education programmes of study. The programme has been designed to support spiritual, moral, social and cultural education. There are no fees for the Schools programmes. No schools programme was able to be carried out in 2020.			
	Partnership	Inclusivity	Stewardship	Accountability
	✓	✓	✓	
Outreach Programme for Schools and Young Adults	Building on the relationship forged with Southwark Catholic Youth Service (SCYS), they and the Carmelite community have developed a partnership to provide away days for schools. The programme aims to provide a pilgrim experience and support the development of our young people. The site allows many different aspects of Christian faith to be explored through the environment, art, history, prayer, and liturgy. The Carmelite Order has a strong tradition of welcoming pilgrims to their home and ministering to their needs. Southwark Catholic Youth Service, through its work at St Vincent's Centre in Whitstable, has been providing residential retreats for young people over the last 10 years; the model of peer ministry has kept its pastoral care alive, vibrant, and relevant in its mission to help young people encounter Christ. There are no fees to The Friars for these outreach programmes. Once again, the pandemic in 2020 prevented the SCYS from visiting.			
	Partnership	Inclusivity	Stewardship	Accountability
	✓	✓	✓	

Principal Activities (continued)

Retreats	We offer a place of retreat for individuals and groups. Members of the Carmelite Community (the friars) often work alongside groups that come to stay at The Friars, Aylesford, and individuals are welcome to join community worship. As well as this work, the friars organise a number of retreats each year which are open to anyone who wishes to participate. These scheduled retreats include formal talk/discussion periods, quiet time and joining the community services. A charge is made to cover the hospitality costs and any speaker fees. The number of people coming for organised residential retreats is declining so we are focussing more on the day groups. Two-day retreats and Lent evening talks took place between January and March 2020 before the lockdown began.			
	Partnership	Inclusivity	Stewardship	Accountability
	✓	✓	✓	
Fundraising Activities	In order to maintain the historic buildings at The Friars and to financially support the free pastoral offers to visitors, there is a continued programme of fundraising events. These include a Summer and Christmas Fayre, musical and dramatic productions. In 2020, the pandemic prevented us from holding any fayres. Despite the pandemic, we distributed approximately 22,000 newsletters to around 6,500 people and we have an informative website and regular social media presence including invitations to, and reviews of, events. We do not use professional fundraisers or participators.			
	Partnership	Inclusivity	Stewardship	Accountability
	✓	✓	✓	
Maintenance and Restoration	We review, plan, and invest in the presentation, upkeep and maintenance of the grounds, buildings, and facilities to provide a comfortable, safe, accessible environment for all our guests, Carmelite community, staff, and volunteers. During the pandemic, refurbishment work on our guest room continued and some chapel roofs were repaired.			
	Partnership	Inclusivity	Stewardship	Accountability
	✓	✓	✓	✓

Principal Activities (continued)

Commercial Trading (Aylesford Priory Limited)	Aylesford Priory Limited, Company Registration Number 06740190 (England and Wales), is a wholly owned subsidiary of The Friars, Aylesford.			
	The company's principal activity is to provide a profit on commercial activities at Aylesford Priory to financially support: the pastoral activity of the Charity; the promotion of the benefit to the public; and the restoration, presentation and maintenance of the historic buildings, amenities and grounds of The Friars, Aylesford.			
	The trading activity is primarily the provision of conference facilities, guests' catering and accommodation, events, and sale of books, gifts, and refreshments. Trading activity was curtailed significantly in 2020 by the pandemic.			
	Partnership	Inclusivity	Stewardship	Accountability
		✓	✓	✓

Volunteers

There are many volunteers who help The Friars in their charitable activities, giving their time and invaluable support. The numbers of volunteers fluctuate according to people's availability but there are approximately 25 volunteers with some distinct volunteer groups: gardening, pastoral, domestic and fundraising. It is worth mentioning that a proportion of these volunteers have been helping over many years and the amount that they are able to do is diminishing. The Friars hope to address this by attracting new volunteers. In 2020, volunteer work was impacted by the pandemic and it was only after the various lockdowns were lifted that a few volunteers felt confident enough to visit.

The Pastoral Team has transformed into a regular Prayer Group and will continue to support the Pastoral ministry of The Friars. The Team, which includes five volunteers, meets regularly to help plan and support retreat programmes and enhance the pilgrim experience. The group members develop prayer opportunities, pilgrim tours and ways to improve the pastoral areas of the site.

The Gardening Group assists the Estates Team to maintain the grounds and usually meets and gardens each Thursday and Saturday.

Among the regular worshipping community at The Friars, volunteers support us at social events and fundraising activities.

Due to the pandemic, there was limited volunteer opportunity in 2020.

We are privileged to have a small number of professionally qualified lay advisors who hold honorary positions and regularly attend Trustees' meetings for The Friars and Directors' meetings for its subsidiary trading company Aylesford Priory Limited.

Trustees' report Year ended 31 December 2020

Volunteers (continued)

The trustees would once again wish to record their recognition of the professionalism and commitment of all their staff, volunteers, advisors, and the individual members of the Carmelite Community. Their dedication and positive approach are very much appreciated.

Achievements and Performance in 2020

Undoubtedly, all business establishments, irrespective of their strength and type of industry, were affected greatly by the Coronavirus pandemic and The Friars was no different. We started the year strongly, but the onset of Covid-19 lockdown restrictions in March brought activity to a standstill. Activity returned partially in July although our highest income generator (Hospitality) had to remain closed. Details in the table below illustrate our few achievements in 2020:

<i>What we said we would do in 2020</i>	<i>What we did in 2020</i>
1.Deliver the agreed 2020 break-even budget	The Group made a combined loss of £15,911 with Aylesford Priory making a loss of £270,928 and The Friars making a profit of £255,017. The surplus for the Charity was a result of generous donations and legacies received.

Trustees' report Year ended 31 December 2020

Achievements and Performance in 2020 (continued)

<i>What we said we would do in 2020</i>	<i>What we did in 2020</i>
2.Continue to invest in specific priority capital and maintenance projects approved by the board to be funded by the accumulated reserves brought forward from 2019	Due to lockdown, the Estates Group held only two meetings in the year. These meetings were attended by the quinquennial architects, who did much of the work preparing a successful bid for the Historic England administered "Cultural Recovery Fund" grant. The remaining three phases of roof renewal of the shrines were able to be started in October 2020 all in one phase. Our ability to win this grant, which justifies the expense involved (mostly 2019), has made a significant difference. The intention is to return to quarterly meetings when things return to normal. In January/February 2020, we had significant issue with items of plant following a Gas Safety inspection. This resulted in work to the Barn and Farmhouse area: four gas line unions on the underground supply pipe work to the West Barn boilers and the toilet block boiler were repaired. As a result, our gas safe certificate was issued. We continued to address the non-critical electrical items identified in previous EIC inspections. Emergency lights in both guesthouses were replaced, with the lights in the conference centres planned for replacement in 2021. We continued with the programme to upgrade some bedrooms in the expectation of charging appropriate higher booking rates. The Estates Team worked during the winter months of lockdown and managed to complete refurbishment of three additional rooms.

Achievements and Performance in 2020 (continued)

<i>What we said we would do in 2020</i>	<i>What we did in 2020</i>
	The team were faced with challenges due to the delay in securing building materials. This delay was brought on by Brexit as some of our suppliers import from the EU. We also had problems with heating in several buildings. Two of the boilers in the community building were repaired. One boiler which is beyond repair is now out of service pending a complete upgrade. Boiler and laundry equipment in the New Block conference building has been carefully tended month by month to keep it functioning, pending availability of funds to renew or replace. Steam-based systems are increasingly rare and estimates to replace were much higher than originally budgeted. We planned in 2018 that the significant deterioration of the scraffito wall art and artefacts in St Anne's Chapel – thought to be damp/condensation/humidity related – would be monitored with new equipment. And so, in 2019, investigation into high level of humidity in the Chapel was started. The aim was to find a solution and continuous monitoring has been carried out throughout the year 2020. The architect is being asked to propose remediation measures once the roofs have been repaired. Gallaghers were generous again to us by erecting a canopy/tent which allowed masses to be held outside during the pandemic. This was very helpful as Covid-19 guidelines were appropriately followed as a result. We could not have held masses unless these guidelines were followed.

Achievements and Performance in 2020 (continued)

<i>What we said we would do in 2020</i>	<i>What we did in 2020</i>
3. To Further the plans for the development of a new Pastoral Centre here at Aylesford, by supporting the development of a project group and to provide adequate relevant resources to help drive forward this exciting new venture.	Following a review and reconfiguring of pastoral and financial commitments within the Catholic Archdiocese of Southwark, a new Pastoral Centre at Aylesford no longer featured as a priority for the diocese. The Carmelites are committed to continue the exploration and resourcing of a creative, informed, and innovative way forward to ensure good provision for the thousands of young people and others who come to The Friars for educational, cultural pastoral and spiritual development. A plan was prepared that will lead: - in 2021: to the recruitment and appointment of a Young People and Formation Coordinator. - in 2022: to the recruitment and establishment of a Young Adults Community at Aylesford. - in 2022/23: to the creation of an attractive and engaging programme of opportunities for young adults (18-30 year), young people (under 18 years) and others
4. Recruitment of lay directors	Prospective directors were spoken to and particular emphasis was placed on securing directors with a finance or Human Resources background to support the function/activities of Aylesford Priory Limited. While Covid-19 has slowed the progress on recruitment, one new potential director with a legal background became a regular contributor at Board meetings. The work of identifying and recruiting new directors has continued.

Achievements and Performance in 2020 (continued)

<i>What we said we would do in 2020</i>	<i>What we did in 2020</i>
5. Develop a three-year business plan and reserves policy	This plan was put on hold due to the onset of the pandemic where other matters were of greater concern. Developing the business plan will be back on the directors' agenda in 2021.

Fulfilling our mission 2020

Working in partnership with others

The Friars is an important retreat and pilgrimage centre. Several groups would come to pray and worship at the Shrine but sadly due to the pandemic no pilgrimages were held in 2020.

Only a few two-day retreats were held between January and March. All other retreats were cancelled. We also held Lent Evening talks until lockdown kicked in.

The Friars and the Southwark Catholic Youth Services (SCYS) have continued to work closely together and further developed the work on the schools' retreat programme. The Carmelite Charitable Trust and SCYS worked together to make the Youth weekend a very positive experience. This programme continued right up to lockdown when restrictions made it impossible to meet.

Our usual summer theatre programme with Changeling Theatre Group which was scheduled to take place in July was cancelled too.

The Friars has played host to the Farmers' Market only after the first lockdown and this was because outside markets were permitted to operate in accordance with strict Covid guidelines.

It was impossible to collect donations of food items, goods, and toiletries for Maidstone Christian Care (our local food bank) nor were we able to support Maidstone Churches Winter Shelter programme, which provides shelter for the homeless in winter.

As we were closed over the Christmas period, we could not raise funds for Mary's meals, a charity supplying meals in schools in some of the poorest parts of the world.

Be inclusive

The Brocard Room is a very popular regular meeting place for Aylesford Scouts, and has proved to be a popular venue. The Brocard Room which is normally used by school groups for their picnics and, also used as a meeting place for Aylesford Scouts, was hardly able to be used in 2020.

We were unable to offer work place experience to young adults with disabilities from local schools and colleges due to afore mentioned reasons.

Aylesford Pottery, which has been located in The Friars for 60 years continues to work with EBD (Emotional Behaviour Disorder) schools and learning disability groups. Their classes have inspired many visitors to develop new skills. Their work with schools and disability groups were very limited for the most part of the year but their work gathered momentum again after the first lockdown.

Trustees' report Year ended 31 December 2020

Fulfilling our mission in 2020

Working in partnership with others(continued)

The weekly Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) meetings were all cancelled due to Covid restrictions.

In keeping with the Carmelite ethos at The Friars, the guesthouse welcomes people of all backgrounds, abilities, ages and all faiths and none. During January and March 2020, we again played host to many small groups in particular, mindfulness training Groups, each with approximately between 10 and 50 attendees from various backgrounds.

Act responsibly as stewards of the buildings and the physical environment

In 2013 the trustees commissioned an Options Analysis, examining a full range of options to assist in the strategic direction of The Friars, Aylesford. In late 2014, an Aylesford Development Group, consisting of representatives from the Carmelite Charitable Trust, Aylesford Priory Community, and lay professional advisors was formed. Its priority was to consider and explore potential investment options to ensure sufficient on-going funds were available to maintain the Aylesford Priory site and its buildings in a sustainable manner, for many years to come. Engaging with a major commercial partner, through one of the options considered, may not always be an ideal mix for this uniquely spiritual site. An emphasis on social enterprise, community volunteering and artisan tenants is likely to be progressed, as well as working towards engaging with appropriate commercial partners who are sympathetic to the mission, values, and ethos of The Friars.

Fulfilling our mission in 2020 (continued)

Acts responsibly as stewards of the buildings and the physical environment (continued)

In 2015, the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Southwark and the British Province of Carmelites announced the development of a new pastoral centre for the Diocese at Aylesford Priory. The new centre, agreed in principle, was estimated to cost £6 million, and was planned to welcome adults, school groups and young adults, benefitting from a secure the long-term presence of Carmelites at Aylesford.

In 2017, changes in leadership of both the Carmelite Community and Archdiocese of Southwark affected progress of the Pastoral Centre project, but the aspiration to move forward in developing a professional and exciting provision for young adults, younger people and others at The Friars, Aylesford, remains strong. Planned developments in this area will become more evident from 2021 with the appointment of a Young People and Formation Coordinator and from 2022 with the establishment of a Young Adults Community at Aylesford. During 2020, it became clear the archdiocesan intention to construct a pastoral centre in the walled garden would not proceed and, therefore, our focus must shift towards smaller, more incremental partnerships in other areas of the estate.

Proactive exploration of opportunities for collaborative partner organisations and for the improved use of the whole site continues.

We continue to ensure all the buildings and the site are as safe as is reasonably possible for the many visitors we welcome. We have been responding closely to government guidelines to open, close or re-open our public income-generating facilities, albeit with reduced staffing.

An example to be copied is the agreement to one of our commercial tenants, the Potters, constructing a small extension for their teaching/hands-on classes, which we facilitated with a fresh license and an uplift in rent.

In 2020, we continued with the re-decoration of St Joseph's Chapel. Other redecorations are expected to be scheduled for 2021 in the wake of the re-roofing. Metal roofing theft has affected us for a second time - this is taking place on roofs that are accessible, on the single gatehouse convent buildings. The roofs are now Smart-watered.

The Estates Team continues to report any significant, previously unidentified maintenance issues to the Trustees through the Estates Group. Given the ongoing significant maintenance projects authorised in 2018, the Trustees agreed with the Province (Carmelite Charitable Trust) that ongoing maintenance related to the cost of trading as a public venue, would be absorbed in the annual budgets, whereas capital repair and investment in the buildings as assets, such as flood protection pumps systems, would be reimbursed through legacy income and other financial support from the Province. Since 2019, the Quinquennial Architects now attend and report to the Estates Group on a planned basis: there is an improved sub-division of specialist conservation work under their direction and ordinary in-house facilities management works.

During 2018, in light of then recent inspections of the major buildings (coming under the care of diocesan-appointed architects, or our quinquennial architects, as well as our Estates Manager), Trustees decided not to commit immediately to a 5-yearly report but to allocate the value of those fees to the designated maintenance programme.

Fulfilling our mission in 2020 (continued)

Acts responsibly as stewards of the buildings and the physical environment (continued)

A new Quinquennial Report in 2023 will likely follow the completion of several major dilapidation repairs and developments, and thus be a more accurate forward guide into the next decade. The substantive repairs in re-roofing and insulating 2 chapels - both their tiled pitched roofs and upper flat roofs - and of the lower flat-roofed sacristy (with the latter being tested with green sedum roofing) have been successful major restoration projects, which have attracted funding.

We received acceptable match funding for the 2020 Historic England Cultural Recovery Fund grant: 80% in one tranche towards phases 3, 4 and 5 together represented overall some 60% grant aid to the completed shrine roofs, over a four- year period.

Environmental monitoring has been in progress for one year in St Anne's Chapel, trying to assess how widely humidity and condensation occur: the architects will be asked to propose solutions during 2022. Additionally, electrical surveys, gas safety inspections and other similar surveys, have led to renewal and repair of some systems. The next major item during 2020 would have been the renewal of the boilers to the Conference/New block, for which the quinquennial architect introduced an [pro bono] consultant for further advice. This did not go ahead due to lockdown. The consultant is to be commissioned to arrange tenders during 2021.

Preparations began to update the 2016 survey of the walled garden and the copings of the river wall stonework were to commence a phase of capital repair in 2020. That too has been deferred.

The buildings are risk assessed annually, and all larger events and pilgrimages have a duty manager trained in Health and Safety procedures and their specific responsibilities for the event. The entire site is compliant with fire regulations and the infrastructure to provide the electricity supply continues to undergo improvements.

On 23 September 2016 our Shrine of Our Lady of Mount Carmel and St Simon Stock constructed to designs by Adrian Gilbert Scott and containing significant art works by Adam Kossowski, Michael Clark, Lynsey Clark, Dom Charles Norris and others, was entered on the statutory list of Grade II protected heritage buildings (entry number 1437906). The principal reasons for the designation being the Shrine is of historic, religious, architectural, and artistic interest. The listing of the shrine clarifies eligibility for heritage and other grants in tandem with the ecclesiastical exemption for VAT purposes. The clarity now informs our approach to designating funds and priorities for the capital works to our buildings.

In 2018, the Angels ceramic by Adam Kossowski repair took place, and an information plaque explaining the significance of the Rosary Way was added at the entrance of Rosary Way. A pop-up displaying explaining the history of The Friars was also put into the Priors' Hall.

The Peace Garden remains a very popular attraction for all our visitors. Outside lockdown periods the volunteer Gardening Group has maintained it and ensured it remains a place of reflection and peace. We continue to maintain a Peace Garden restricted fund to ensure the on-going maintenance of this special garden.

Fulfilling our Objectives in 2020

Be accountable to all our stakeholders

In 2020, The Friars' quarterly newsletter continued to be a very important means of sharing information with our visitors, and it continued to bring a message of hope and spirituality to them. The newsletter has a circulation of around 6,500 and is received by people throughout the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland and beyond. Many of those who receive the newsletter respond and share their views, thoughts and aspirations for The Friars at Aylesford. Our readership found newsletters very beneficial during the pandemic because it was the only way they could keep in touch with us. Several people were affected by the pandemic by way of loss and grief and The Friars' newsletters was successful in reaching these people and reassuring them of love and hope.

The online booking system which was launched in 2019 has resulted in greater efficiency in the booking process and increased our occupancy rate in return. Sadly, some bookings had to be put on hold or postponed or even cancelled altogether due to the pandemic.

Such charitable purposes which advance the Roman Catholic religion in any part of Great Britain

The Friars is primarily a Roman Catholic shrine and pilgrimage centre. Served by its Carmelite community, there are normally regular Masses celebrated each day, together with confessions, counselling and consultations. Masses, confessions, and counselling activities were all put on hold until July 2020 from when Masses were held four days in the week outside on the Shrine. The Syro-Malabar community joined us for Mass twice a month and they provided stewards for Mass. The Relic Chapel was opened for prayer on the same days three days a week.

As an important Marian shrine, many pilgrims visit from all over the world. Organised ethnic pilgrimages pray and celebrate in their own languages and the range of nationalities continues to increase. In 2020, The Friars which would normally attract many groups from overseas who stay in the Guesthouse, including groups from Poland, the Caribbean, Germany, France, Belgium, Holland, Spain and a walking group travel weekly from Holland were unable to travel to the UK due to travel and lockdown restrictions already mentioned.

Two- day retreats and Lent evening talks took place between January and March.

Many Schools continue to visit, offering their individualised programmes with the help of the Carmelite community. These programmes include history and art appreciation, and in most cases the young people attend Mass in one of the chapels. Many of the students who visit us come from the inner city and they enjoy the natural environment and expansive grounds. The friars are usually involved with these groups, taking them on tours explaining the history of the Carmelites in England and giving them an understanding of the various artworks but once again, due to Covid, no tours were organised in 2020.

Fulfilling our Objectives in 2020 (continued)

To promote for the benefit of the public the restoration, presentation and maintenance of the historic buildings, amenities and grounds of The Friars, Aylesford

The Friars encourages event organisers to arrange their events on the grounds and we have in prior years hosted classic and vintage car shows, bike shows and several dramatic performances, although in 2020 we were unable to host any events.

The Friars is home to many significant works of art, in particular a great number of ceramics by Adam Kossowski in chapels, the grounds and in particular in the Prior's Hall, where there is a series of narrative artworks depicting the history of The Friars, whilst also reflecting the Carmelite values and traditions. The public benefit of having free access to such works of art is widely appreciated and was formally recognised in the Grade II listing in 2016.

The site also presents a significant public benefit in that it has proved very popular with artists and photography clubs and conservation groups. We have regularly seen groups producing paintings of the various listed buildings and the wonderful grounds and have had considerable interest in the examples of very old trees. This activity was limited in 2020.

Our ever - popular Mothering Sunday, Christmas and Easter lunches and several other events and social gatherings such as celebration of life buffets and weddings that would normally take place in the Pilgrims' Hall were all cancelled in 2020. We were hopeful that Christmas dinners would take place as we had secured lots of bookings but sadly, we had to cancel at the very last minute.

To support families who have lost loved ones we continue to offer memorials in the form of benches, plaques and trees, which are normally placed in our grounds. Demand for this undoubtedly went up during the pandemic as several families had lost loved ones and wanted a suitable memorial for them. It is worth noting that we are gradually running out of space for such memorials, and we are beginning to explore other types of memorials. We also offer bereaved families a place to celebrate the life of their loved ones, providing a venue and catering for funerals, as allowed during the pandemic restrictions.

In 2020, despite the pandemic, The Friars continued to host the monthly outdoor farmers' market. This brought in revenue to The Friars but also served the community allowing local producers to exhibit and sell their produce and afford us an opportunity to welcome those who would otherwise not visit.

Financial Review

The year ended 31 December 2020 was a challenging one overall, underpinned by the closure of our entire business operations for much of the year and an expected downturn in charitable giving. In December 2019, the Trustees had approved a detailed annual budget for 2020, with a clear aim to balance expenditure with income, and a continued commitment to invest in overdue maintenance projects.

Financial Review (continued)

The coronavirus pandemic impacted our ability to raise income as we had to pause and adapt ways to work under restrictions, which made it impossible to hold fundraising events (eg Summer and Christmas fayres) the entire year. Our principal trading activities were put on hold and our collection donations dwindled. As we looked ahead during this time of uncertainty, we had to make difficult decisions to implement a cost reduction programme to ensure the Group was in the best possible position to remain viable and secure a sustainable future. While this was the right decision for the organisation, it is with heavy heart that we have had to seek voluntary redundancies.

General Funds

As mentioned above, we made a small loss in the year. The loss would have been greater had it not been for receipt of government furlough subsidy and generous large donations.

The consolidated statement of financial activities shows that the Group (The Friars, Aylesford and Aylesford Priory Limited) returned a small loss of £15,911. This loss of income was largely mitigated by the receipt of large legacies received, receipt of government furlough subsidy and savings made from reduced general overhead costs.

The loss on the commercial activities of Aylesford Priory Limited was £270,928 (2019 £41,622 profit), (please see note 11). However, a profit of £255,017 was made by the Charity, resulting in a Group loss of £15,911 (2019 £88,910)

General reserves were £278,761 compared to £3,750 in 2019.

Restricted Funds

£365,380 (2019 £413,223) of restricted funds were brought forward into 2020, represented by £17,931 (2019 £18,214) for the Peace Garden and £347,449 (2019 £395,009) for the Restoration Fund.

Carried forward Restricted Funds as at 31 December 2020 are £378,282 (2019 £365,380) comprising £360,791 for the Restoration Fund and £17,491 for the Peace Garden.

Total Funds as at 31 December 2020 were £780,978 (2019 £796,889) represented by £378,282 (2019 £365,380) of Restricted Funds, £364,493 of Tangible Fixed Assets (2019 £397,389), £240,558 negative Aylesford Priory Ltd Funds/Reserves (2019 £30,370) and £278,761 of General Reserves (2019 £3,750).

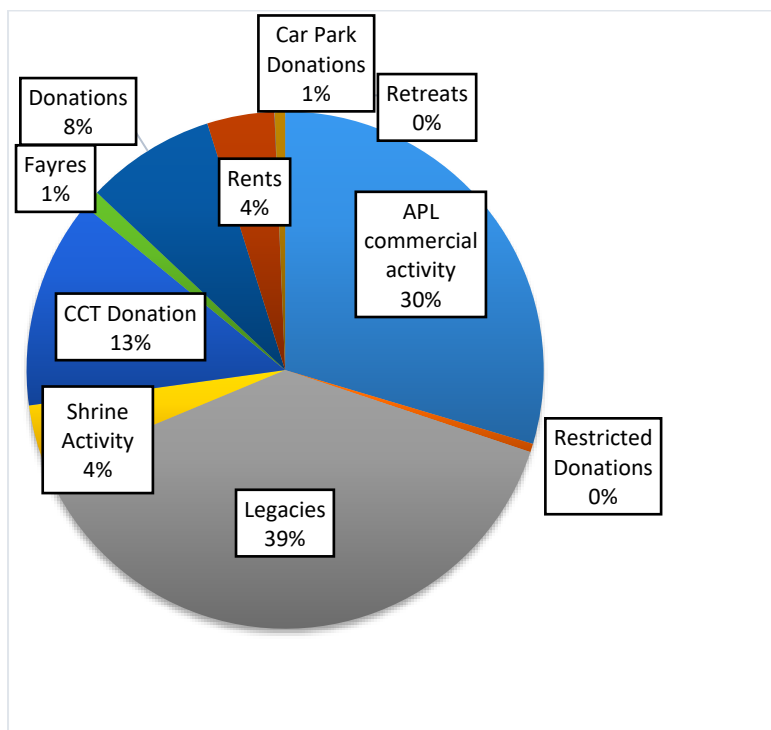
Trustees' report Year ended 31 December 2020

Financial Review (continued)

Income

The Group income for 2020 by activity is shown in figure 1 below, and figure 2 shows the decline in income from 2019 to 2020 by activity.

Figure 1 - 2020 Group Income by Activity



The Total income for the group was £1,109,355.

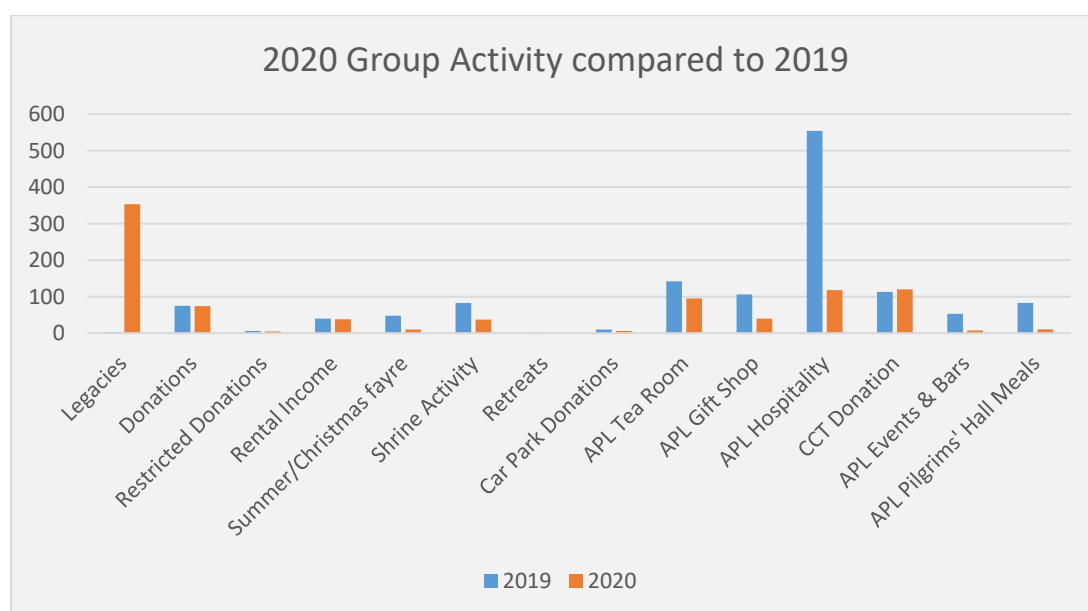
Aylesford Priory Limited turnover of £271k (made up of: hospitality, £118k; tea room, £95k; gift shop £40k; events/bars £7.5k; and Pilgrims' Hall £10.5k); legacies £353k; unrestricted donations £74k; restricted donations £5k; rental activity £38k; fayres £10k; shrine activity £37.4k; retreats £0.2k; car park donations £6k; the Carmelite Charitable Trust donation £120k and the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme grant of £194k.

Majority of the above income was earned between the months of January and March and the remainder between August and October.

Financial Review (continued)

Income (continued)

Figure 2 – 2020 Group Income by Activity compared to 2019.



Turnover of Aylesford Priory Limited from the provision of hospitality (conference facilities and guest accommodation), events, sale of books, gifts and refreshments was £270,979 down by £665,675 (71%) from 2019.

Figure 2 highlights which department's income improved or declined in 2020 compared to 2019. Sales from our Hospitality department were £118k, down by 79% against 2019 (£554k in 2019). Tea Room's sales were £46k (67.4%) down against 2019 (£141k in 2019). The Gift Shop's sales were £40k, down by £66k (61.5% down) in comparison to 2019 (£106k). Pilgrims' Hall's sales were down by £73k, which was 89% down on last year (2019 £83k) and events and bars were down by £25.5k (-77%) against £52k in 2019.

Results from our charitable activities were very positive in 2020, with increasing income especially from legacies. We received a total of £353,143 in legacies in contrast to £2,901 in 2019, an increase of 12,073%.

Our unrestricted donations were on par with last year's at £75k. Shrine activity was down by £45k (-55%) on last year (£83k in 2019). Restricted donations were £5k 20% down in comparison to £6k in 2019. Summer and Christmas fayres were cancelled but sales from raffle tickets generated £10k which was 79% down against 2019 (£48k).

Financial Review (continued)

Income (continued)

The Carmelite Charitable Trust (CCT) continues to provide financial support to the Charity. The CCT and the Charity budget for an annual grant of up to £120,000 for the on-going costs of the charitable activities. An annual grant of £120,000 (2019 £120,000) was still received from the CCT in the year to support The Friars, due to the financial challenges brought on by the pandemic.

Expenditure

As the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic unfolded we quickly made provision for reducing our overheads and operating costs.

Our trading operating costs (cost of sales) of the subsidiary company Aylesford Priory Limited, was £612,794, down 21.6% against 2019 (£781,450). Whilst group income of £1,109,355 was also decreased by 15.6% in comparison to £1,315,130 in 2019.

For full details of the investment in the wholly owned subsidiary Aylesford Priory Limited see note 11.

Notable increases in expenditure for the Charity are increased costs of raising funds (note 4) and Support of the Carmelite Friars (note 6). As already mentioned, both Summer and Christmas fayres were cancelled hence income, at £10,000 (sale of raffle tickets), was down £37,692 on 2019. We remain hopeful that the ability to hold events comes back to more normal circumstances, so we can invest in better attractions to achieve a step change in the number of visitors to these events, to secure better income year on year. The living and personal expenses of the Carmelite Friars at Aylesford were £47,946 (2019 £66,212) which is down 27.6% year on year.

Table 1 below shows that expenditure in 2020 on the upkeep of the shrine (note 5) was down 15% on 2019. The expenditure on premises and facilities were only 2% down on 2019 which illustrates that despite the pandemic, chapel refurbishments and other maintenance works still carried on throughout the year. Direct costs were down 57% and other indirect staff costs were up against 2019 by 27%.

Direct costs of £49,994 (2019 £116,230) were made up of purchase of candles, memorial benches and plaques, direct staffing costs, utilities, cash handling, chapel ad hoc expenses and general expenses. This is a 57% decrease compared to 2019. Other indirect staff costs of £29,606 (2019 £23,271) are allocation of support costs other than premises.

Financial Review (continued)

Expenditure (continued)

Table 1- 2020 Expenditure on upkeep of the shrine compared to 2019

	2019	2020	% Difference
Governance costs	£7,066	10,888	+54%
Office costs	£8,184	£9,645	+19%
Premises & Facilities costs	£240,955	£234,959	-2%
Indirect Staff costs	£23,371	£29,606	+27%
Direct Shrine costs	£116,230	£49,994	-57%
Total	£395,806	£335,092	-15%

Reserves

At 31 December 2020 free reserves amounted to £278,761.

Since 2013, unrestricted funds have improved from a negative total unrestricted funds of £231,052 to a positive position of £402,696. During the same period, restricted funds have increased from £186,127 to £378,282.

The total funds at 31 December 2020 are in surplus by £780,978, (2019 £796,889). This is represented by fixed assets of £364,493 (2019 £397,389) and net current assets of £387,765 (£356,338) including a net cash position of £341,247 (2019 £310,020). Bank accounts held are part of a centralised, pooled banking system, together with and managed by the Carmelite Charitable Trust. Pooled bank accounts are managed to optimise return on investments. Any accumulated reserves will be invested in the restoration, presentation and maintenance of the historic buildings, amenities and grounds of The Friars, Aylesford.

Whilst the financial position of the Charity did not make progress towards short term financial stability in 2020, not least because of the Covid-19 pandemic, the Trustees recognise that the historic buildings at Aylesford require significant material investment. Therefore, in 2021, they will continue to explore the two potential strands of opportunity identified in 2015 and subsequently adjusted:

- ♦ To secure the long-term presence of a Carmelite Community at Aylesford Priory and by working collaboratively with a new Young Adults Community; and
- ♦ To secure a commercial partnership agreement by considering a new commercial or social enterprise partner or partners, to use part of the available assets, that is the land and buildings at Aylesford Priory, in delivering activities that provide adequate income to meet or exceed the on-going costs and support the viability of the non-business charitable activities and in particular the maintenance of our historic buildings.

Trustees' report Year ended 31 December 2020

Financial Review (continued)

Reserves (continued)

In 2019, the Trustees considered a new financial strategy considering the next three years. The implementation of this was delayed due to Covid-19, so further discussions will be held in 2021, and part of this work will be to formulate a more formal reserves policy.

Risks

Risks refers to factors that could prevent us delivering our plans and strategies or achieving our aims. Risks can be financial, political, regulatory or operational. Whilst we cannot control the risk occurring, we can ensure that we have sound mitigating actions and controls in place. Risk management is incorporated into our planning, organisational decision-making and management procedures. Our Trustees review the organisational risk register regularly (yearly), ensuring that we manage threats to our work appropriately.

The Covid-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on both the internal and external environment and has in turn affected our risk profile. Our principal risks and uncertainties identified for 2020 were:

Identified Risk	Impact	Existing Controls	Further Controls to be implemented
1. Material shortfall in delivering a balanced budget where expenditure is covered by income.	Reduction in reserves required for investment in restoration of buildings and grounds. Inability to fulfil principal charitable aims.	Regular monitoring, review and proactive management of financial position by the management team. Bi - monthly reports to trustees stating the position and management action taken, or to be taken to redress any potential shortfall identified. Operational plan developed alongside 2021 budget	Continue to seek government furlough subsidy and assess local restriction grants. Seek support from Carmelite Charitable Trust

Trustees' report Year ended 31 December 2020

Risks (continued)

Identified Risk	Impact	Existing Controls	Further Controls to be implemented
2. Health and Safety of our Staff, Volunteers, Community and Visitors	Incident resulting in injury. Bad publicity, and potential damage to reputation. Potential prosecution Civil claim	Health and Safety policies and procedures are in place and regularly monitored by the management team. An independent external audit of procedures was carried out in 2019 and all action points were dealt with. Health and Safety is a constant agenda item for all management and trustees' meetings. There is regular training for the lead manager.	Continue to review and agree any necessary actions from the external independent Health and Safety review carried out in 2019 report from the Annual Review of Health & safety procedures to be reviewed by Trustees annually

Trustees' report Year ended 31 December 2020

3.Spread of Covid variants	Staff, visitors, and contractors being exposed to infected persons	All car parks open.	Car parking to be restricted and site to be closed at 17:30
		Signage	Increased signage in all areas to remind visitors of social distancing. Supply of protective equipment in all areas
		Regular cleaning	Hourly cleaning in public toilets Introduce sanitising stations at all entrances to buildings and chapels. Chapel doors to be manned by stewards.
		Free flow into and out of the Tea Room	Staff member to monitor entry and exit into Tea Room

Plans for the future

<i>What we aim to do in 2021</i>	<i>How</i>
1. Deliver the agreed 2021 budget.	To ensure our financial health, we will drive efficiencies and cost reductions in our core overheads by regular monitoring of all departments' income and associated costs and making the necessary management decisions to eliminate any risk to achieving the break-even position
2. Continue to invest in specific priority capital and maintenance projects approved by the board to be funded by the accumulated reserves brought forward from 2020.	Continue working with Estates Sub-group and the Estates Manager and regularly review progress on agreed projects: • Replacement of steam boiler and washer dryer for laundry department • Continue renewal of conference centre and guest house facilities. • Artwork conservation for the shrines and Prior's Hall • Ongoing quinquennial maintenance work • Continue monitoring humidity levels in St Anne's Chapel • Hold quarterly Estates meetings
3. Develop a three-year business plan and a more formalised reserves policy	Trustees will agree plans for the next three years and a targeted level of reserves to be achieved. Trustees to determine the level of the fund and why it is held. Trustees need to review the level of risk to ensure reserves are adequate to cover costs of ongoing operations. This is a basic requirement for all Trustee boards.
4. To further the plans for the development of a new Pastoral Centre	Appoint a Young People and Formation Coordinator. Recruit a Young Adults Community.

Trustees' report Year ended 31 December 2020

<i>What we aim to do in 2021</i>	<i>How</i>
	Support the project by providing adequate relevant resources to help drive forward this exciting venture.

Covid-19 and the impact on going concern

The Covid-19 pandemic is a global crisis that has and will continue to have a huge personal, social, and economic impact on all of society.

With unprecedented economic challenges posed by Covid-19 our business operation has been affected significantly and poses real challenges to The Friars. The site closed on 23 March 2020 and reopened on 4 July 2020. Then we followed the Government's "tier system" which allowed us to operate a "take away" service in the Tea Rooms only.

In 2020, all planned events, including weddings, pilgrimages, were postponed and our only source of income came from the Tea Room, Gift Shop, estate rentals and donations. Pilgrims' Hall will reopen on 19 July to offer the usual "walk-in" service.

Looking forward, we are pleased to see our customers slowly returning to our guest house and we have received some conference room bookings too. Our Tea Rooms continue to outperform results from 2019 and the hope is that we build on this encouraging trend. Wedding bookings have been postponed to 2021 and beyond.

As a team, we are looking at thinking outside the box and be creative with our weddings and events to boost our income. We will also look into partnerships with, for example, Livability UK to build on our Artisan village which currently includes Pottery, Upholstery, and Ceramics.

We will explore offering to a wider range of groups, universities, Anglican and ecclesiastical movements.

We recognise it remains important to continue to exercise stewardship on our core salaries and cost levels, at least until we see sustained growth in all our other supporter income streams. Accordingly, we are still minded to maintaining base core income levels (salaries and costs) in line with the lower levels included in the 2020 budget.

As the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic unfolded, the external financial environment around the organisation changed dramatically.

Whilst income has suffered greatly, some savings have been made in respect to expenditure.

Covid-19 and the impact on going concern (continued)

There was huge uncertainty around the charity's financial position and the Trustees looked to the Carmelite Charitable Trust to provide financial support during 2020 and over the next twelve to twenty- four months. The exact financial position of the charity and its subsidiary company continues to depend on a number of factors including the extent of travel bans and other restrictions, extending into 2021, the continued availability of government assistance (which was fully utilised in 2020) and potential sources of replacement financing, in addition to the financial health of suppliers and customers. All of these may impact on expected profitability and other key financial performance ratios including cashflows and having sufficient liquidity to continue to meet obligations when they are due.

With the assistance of the Carmelite Charitable Trust, the Trustees have confidence that the charity and its subsidiary company will be able to withstand the challenges presented by Covid-19 and be financially sustainable in the short to medium term.

Impact on plans for the future

We are hoping to welcome our visitors back fully again soon and we hope to take the following actions to further enhance our chances of remaining a sustainable business:

<i>What we aim to do</i>	<i>How</i>
1. To have a robust post covid recovery plan	Significant focus on marketing and social media marketing to increase our presence and profile both locally and regionally.
2. Recruitment	Recruit relevant personnel in the right departments. Expand the volunteer base to support and sustain existing and future services.
3. Maximise the use of our North Barn	Consider wedding bookings and other celebrations during the week to exploit the "backlog" of weddings due to the pandemic restrictions.
4. Revamp our Hospitality trade	Actively develop relationships with our regular customers and look for new business.

Trustees' report Year ended 31 December 2020

Structure, governance, and management

The Friars, Aylesford is constituted as a company limited by guarantee governed by its own Memorandum and Articles of Association. The members are the individual friars of the British Province of the Carmelite Order, who meet in Annual General Meetings to elect the Trustees, to review the financial statements for the previous year and to discuss any other relevant business.

The Trustees are appointed to oversee the strategic governance of The Friars and its subsidiary. They set the strategy, agree an annual budget and monitor performance. In particular, the Trustees make all decisions where the reputation and ethos may be impacted.

During 2020, the Trustees met five times, with a later than normal Annual General Meeting on 15 September 2020. The AGM was adjourned and reconvened on 8 October 2020 to allow a narrative to be written to demonstrate that the business was a going concern.

There are two specialist sub-groups which meet regularly providing advice and recommendations to the board.

- ◆ The Finance Group Acting Chair: Father Kevin Alban
- ◆ The Estates Group Chair: Jonathan Louth

The Trustees are supported by advisors:- Jan Wilkinson (Finance and Development) and Jonathan Louth (Estates and Development) who regularly attend board or sub-group meetings as applicable.

New Trustees are briefed on the role of a Trustee and provided with relevant literature plus copies of the Memorandum and Articles of Association. Trustee indemnity insurance premiums are paid for by the charitable company to provide protection for the Trustees in the execution of their duties. In December 2017, we undertook a review of our current practices compared to the Charity Commission's Code of Governance and were pleased that there were few areas that were identified as needing minor improvement.

The Trustees delegate the day-to-day operations of the charity to the Management Team also known as the Trading Operations Management Team (TOMT). The TOMT comprises the Operations & Business Development Manager OBDM and four other members with clear lines of responsibility for specific departments of the organisation. The Trustees have worked with the TOMT to develop the longer-term strategic plans for the charity. Responsibility for the implementation of the plans is delegated to the TOMT through agreed one-year business plans also known as Operational Plans.

The team has clear terms of reference, regularly reviewed by the Trustees, and its prime and collective responsibility is to self-manage the trading operations of The Friars, Aylesford and to achieve a balanced budget, in line with the budget presented to and agreed by the Trustees in December.

Within the team, certain managers are expected to occasionally attend Trustee meetings, reporting from and representing the TOMT. These managers can also refer urgent matters that are outside the remit of the TOMT to Trustees.

Structure, governance, and management (continued)

TOMT members at the start of 2020 were- Pearl Nyafli -The Operations & Business Development Manager (Lead); Ros Duddell – Gift Shop Manager; Steve Hayden – Estates Manager; Karen Wright – Hospitality Manager; Helen Bannister – Catering Manager; and Clare Abbotson – Prior's and Trustees' Secretary.

The Trading Operations Management Team (TOMT) had reduced by the end of the year as our Hospitality Manager left the business in July and the Catering Manager took voluntary redundancy in October.

During 2020, in response to the Coronavirus pandemic, several staff were furloughed, and we took advantage of the Government's Jobs Retention Scheme. We also benefitted from the Local Restrictions Grant from the local authority Tonbridge and Malling Council

Key management pay is first informed by current local market rates for similar roles, and by maintaining appropriate differentials for job responsibilities within the organisation. A proposal is considered by the Finance Group and a recommendation made to the Trustees. The Trustees authorise all key management salaries.

Statement of Trustees' responsibilities

The Trustees (who are also directors of The Friars, Aylesford for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees' report and Financial Statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Charity and the Group and of the income and expenditure, of the group for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

- ◆ select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- ◆ observe the methods and principles in Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable to the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102);
- ◆ make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- ◆ state whether applicable United Kingdom Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- ◆ prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Charity and the Group will continue in operation.

Trustees' report Year ended 31 December 2020

Structure, governance, and management (continued)

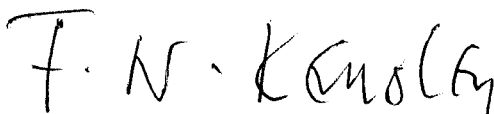
Statement of Trustees' responsibilities (continued)

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that 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 Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Charity and the Group and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Each of the Trustees confirms that:

- ♦ so far as each Trustee is aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the Charity's auditor is unaware; and
- ♦ each Trustee has taken all the steps that he/she ought to have taken as a Trustee in order to make himself/herself aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the Charity's auditor is aware of that information.

This confirmation is given and should be interpreted in accordance with the provisions of s418 of the Companies Act 2006.



Trustee

Approved by the Trustees on:

 12th July, 2021

Independent auditor's report to the members of The Friars, Aylesford

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of The Friars, Aylesford (the 'charitable parent company') and of The Friars, Aylesford and its subsidiary Aylesford Priory Limited (the 'group') for the year ended 31 December 2020 which comprise the group statement of financial activities, the group and charitable parent company balance sheets, the consolidated statement of cash flows, the principal accounting policies and the notes to the financial statements. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- ◆ give a true and fair view of the state of the group's and of the charitable parent company's affairs as at 31 December 2020 and of the group's income and expenditure for the year then ended;
- ◆ have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- ◆ have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the group in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the group and charitable parent company's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The trustees are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the Annual Report and Consolidated Financial Statements, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- ◆ the information given in the trustees' report, which is also the directors' report for the purposes of company law, for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- ◆ the trustees' report, which is also the directors' report for the purposes of company law has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the group and the charitable parent company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the trustees' report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- ◆ adequate accounting records have not been kept by the charitable parent company, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- ◆ the charitable parent company financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- ◆ certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- ◆ we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit; or

Matters on which we are required to report by exception (continued)

- ◆ the trustees were not entitled to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the small companies regime and take advantage of the small companies' exemptions in preparing the trustees' report and from the requirement to prepare a strategic report.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the trustees' responsibilities statement, the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the group's and the charitable parent company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the group or the charitable parent company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below:

Our approach to identifying and assessing the risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations, was as follows:

- ◆ the engagement partner ensured that the engagement team collectively had the appropriate competence, capabilities and skills to identify or recognise non-compliance with applicable laws and regulations;
- ◆ we identified the laws and regulations applicable to the group through discussions with management, and from our commercial knowledge and experience of the sector;
- ◆ we focused on specific laws and regulations which we considered may have a direct material effect on the financial statements or the operations of the company, including the Companies Act 2006 and the Charities Act 2011;
- ◆ we assessed the extent of compliance with the laws and regulations identified above through making enquiries of management and inspecting correspondence; and
- ◆ identified laws and regulations were communicated within the audit team and the team remained alert to instances of non-compliance throughout the audit.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements (continued)

We assessed the susceptibility of the group's accounts to material misstatement, including obtaining an understanding of how fraud might occur, by:

- ◆ making enquiries of management as to where they considered there was susceptibility to fraud, their knowledge of actual, suspected and alleged fraud; and
- ◆ considering the internal controls in place to mitigate risks of fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations.

To address the risk of fraud through management bias and override of controls, we:

- ◆ performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships;
- ◆ tested journal entries to identify unusual transactions;
- ◆ assessed whether judgements and assumptions made in determining the accounting estimates were indicative of potential bias; and
- ◆ tested authorisation controls on expenditure items, ensuring all expenditure was approved in line with the company's procedures.

There are inherent limitations in our audit procedures described above. The more removed that laws and regulations are from financial transactions, the less likely it is that we would become aware of non-compliance. Auditing standards also limit the audit procedures required to identify non-compliance with laws and regulations to enquiry of the trustees and other management and the inspection of regulatory and legal correspondence, if any.

Material misstatements that arise due to fraud can be harder to detect than those that arise from error as they may involve deliberate concealment or collusion.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and the charitable company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

 Buzzacott LLP

Amanda Francis (Senior Statutory Auditor)
For and on behalf of Buzzacott LLP, Statutory Auditor
130 Wood Street
London
EC2V 6DL

23 July 2021

Consolidated statement of financial activities Year to 31 December 2020

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2020 Total funds £	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2019 Total funds £
Income from:							
Donations and legacies	1	526,104	25,979	552,083	186,385	11,012	197,397
Other trading activities	2	319,561	—	319,561	1,024,269	—	1,024,269
Charitable activities	3	43,539	—	43,539	93,464	—	93,464
Other sources:							
. Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme		194,172	—	194,172	—	—	—
Total income		1,083,376	25,979	1,109,355	1,304,118	11,012	1,315,130
Expenditure on:							
Raising funds	4	741,768	460	742,228	941,286	736	942,022
Charitable activities							
. Upkeep of the shrine at Aylesford	5	324,529	10,563	335,092	374,054	21,752	395,806
. Support of the Carmelite Friars of the Aylesford community	6	47,946	—	47,946	66,212	—	66,212
Total expenditure		1,114,243	11,023	1,125,266	1,381,552	22,488	1,404,040
Net (expenditure) income before transfers		(30,867)	14,956	(15,911)	(77,434)	(11,476)	(88,910)
Transfers between funds	14	2,054	(2,054)	—	36,367	(36,367)	—
Net (expenditure) income and net movement in funds	7	(28,813)	12,902	(15,911)	(41,067)	(47,843)	(88,910)
Reconciliation of funds:							
Balances brought forward at 1 January 2020		431,509	365,380	796,889	472,576	413,223	885,799
Balances carried forward at 31 December 2020		402,696	378,282	780,978	431,509	365,380	796,889

All the group's activities derived from continuing operations during the above two financial years.

There were no recognised gains and losses other than those set out in the consolidated statement of financial activities above.

Balance sheets 31 December 2020

	Notes	Group		Charity	
		2020 £	2019 £	2020 £	2019 £
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	10	393,213	440,552	364,492	397,389
Investments	11	—	—	1	1
		393,213	440,552	364,493	397,390
Current assets					
Stock		27,030	39,760	836	4,816
Debtors	12	153,460	132,695	451,112	330,248
Cash at bank and in hand		341,247	620,661	281,107	368,451
		521,737	793,116	733,055	703,515
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	13	(133,972)	(436,779)	(76,012)	(334,385)
Net current assets		387,765	356,337	657,043	369,130
Total net assets		780,978	796,889	1,021,536	766,520
Represented by:					
Funds and reserves					
Restricted funds	14	378,282	365,380	378,282	365,380
Unrestricted funds					
. General funds		278,761	3,750	278,761	3,751
. Tangible fixed assets fund		364,493	397,389	364,493	397,389
. Non-charitable trading funds		(240,558)	30,370	—	—
Total funds		780,978	796,889	1,021,536	766,520

Approved by the trustees of The Friars, Aylesford, Company Registration Number 03487590 (England and Wales) and signed on their behalf by:

F. N. Kinsley

Trustee

Approved by the trustees on:

12th July, 2021

Consolidated statement of cash flows Year to 31 December 2020

	Notes	2020 £	2019 £
Cash flows from operating activities			
. Net cash provided by operating activities	A	33,280	170,095
Cash flows from investing activities			
. Purchase of tangible fixed assets		(2,054)	(99,008)
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year		31,266	71,787
Cash and cash equivalents at 1 January 2020	B	310,021	238,234
Cash and cash equivalents at 31 December 2020	B	341,247	310,021

Notes to the statement of cash flows for the year to 31 December 2020.

A Reconciliation of net movement in funds to net cash provided by operating activities

	2020 £	2019 £
Net movement in funds (as per the statement of financial activities)	(15,911)	(88,910)
Depreciation charge	49,393	42,026
Decrease in stocks	12,730	6,393
(Increase) decrease in debtors	(20,765)	197,242
Increase in creditors	7,833	14,044
Net cash provided by operating activities	33,280	170,795

B Analysis of cash and cash equivalents

	2020 £	2019 £
Cash at bank and in hand	341,247	620,661
Overdraft	—	(310,640)
Total cash and cash equivalents	341,247	310,021

C Analysis of changes in net debt

	2019 £	Cash flows £	2020 £
Cash at bank and in hand	620,661	(279,414)	341,247
Overdraft	(310,640)	310,640	—
	310,021	31,266	341,247

Principal accounting policies 31 December 2020

The principal accounting policies adopted, judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty in the preparation of the financial statements are laid out below:

Basis of accounting

These accounts have been prepared for the year to 31 December 2020 with comparative information provided in respect to the year to 31 December 2019.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention with items initially recognised at cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy notes.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (Charities SORP FRS 102) issued on 16 July 2014, the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

The charity constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS 102.

The accounts are presented in sterling and rounded to the nearest pound.

Basis of consolidation

The consolidated statement of financial activities and group balance sheet consolidate each reporting line of the financial statements of The Friars, Aylesford and its subsidiary company, Aylesford Priory Limited, made up at the balance sheet date.

Critical accounting estimates and areas of judgement

The preparation of the financial statements in compliance with the Charities SORP FRS 102 requires the use of certain critical accounting estimates. It requires also that trustees and management exercise judgement in applying the group's and charity's accounting policies.

In preparing these financial statements, the trustees have made significant estimates and judgements in the following areas:

- ◆ Estimating the expected useful economic life of tangible fixed assets for the purpose of calculating an annual depreciation charge;
- ◆ Estimating any provision for slow moving and/or obsolete stock;
- ◆ Estimating any provision for bad or doubtful debts;
- ◆ Assessing the probability of the receipt of legacy income of which the charity and group had been notified;
- ◆ Estimating and recognising accrued expenditure;

Critical accounting estimates and areas of judgement (continued)

- ◆ Determining the basis for allocating shared overhead costs between the charity and its subsidiary company; and
- ◆ Estimating future income and expenditure flows for the purpose of assessing going concern (see below).

Going concern

The trustees have assessed whether the use of the going concern assumption is appropriate in preparing these accounts. The trustees have made this assessment in respect to a period of at least one year from the date of approval of these accounts.

The COVID -19 pandemic is a global crisis that has and will continue to have a huge personal, social and economic impact on all of society.

Looking forward, we are pleased to see our customers slowly returning to our guest house and we have received some conference room bookings too. Our Tea Rooms continue to outperform results from 2019 and the hope is that we build on this encouraging trend. Wedding bookings have been postponed to 2021 and beyond.

As a team, we are looking at thinking outside the box and be creative with our weddings and events to boost our incomes. We will also look into partnerships with for example Livability UK build on our Artisan village which currently includes Pottery, Upholstery, and Ceramics.

We will explore offering a wider range of groups, universities, Anglican and ecclesiastical movements.

We recognise it remains important to continue to exercise stewardship on our core salaries and cost levels, at least until we see sustained growth in all our other supporter income streams. Accordingly, we are still minded to maintaining base core income levels (salaries and costs) in line with the lower levels included in the 2020 budget

Whilst income will suffer greatly, some savings will be made in respect to expenditure.

There is huge uncertainty around the group's financial position and the Trustees will be looking to the Carmelite Charitable Trust (see note 16) to provide financial support over the next twelve to twenty-four months. The exact financial position of the charity and its subsidiary company will depend on a number of factors including the extent of travel bans, other restrictions, the availability of government assistance and potential sources of replacement financing, and the financial health of suppliers and customers. All of these may impact on expected profitability and other key financial performance ratios including information that shows whether there will be sufficient liquidity to continue to meet obligations when they are due.

With the assistance of the Carmelite Charitable Trust, it is hoped that the charity and its subsidiary company will be able to withstand the challenges presented by Covid-19 and be financially sustainable in the short to medium term.

Going concern (continued)

Therefore, the financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis given the undertaking of the Carmelite Charitable Trust (note 16) to support the group and charity financially whilst they continue with the work to restore the activities at Aylesford to a sustainable basis.

Income

Income is recognised in the period in which the group is entitled to the income, the amount can be measured with reasonable certainty and it is probable that the funds will be received.

Income is deferred only when the charity has to fulfil conditions before becoming entitled to it or where the donor or funder has specified that the income is to be expended in a future accounting period.

Donations are recognised when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the charity.

Legacies are included in the statement of financial activities when the charity is entitled to the legacy, the executors have established that there are sufficient surplus assets in the estate to pay the legacy, and any conditions attached to the legacy are within the control of the charity.

Entitlement is taken as the earlier of the date on which either: the charity is aware that probate has been granted, the estate has been finalised and notification has been made by the executor to the charity that a distribution will be made, or when a distribution is received from the estate. Receipt of a legacy, in whole or in part, is only considered probable when the amount can be measured reliably and the charity has been notified of the executor's intention to make a distribution. Where legacies have been notified to the charity, or the charity is aware of the granting of probate, but the criteria for income recognition have not been met, then the legacy is treated as a contingent asset and disclosed if material. In the event that the gift is in the form of an asset other than cash or a financial asset traded on a recognised stock exchange, recognition is subject to the value of the gift being reliably measurable with a degree of reasonable accuracy and the title of the asset having being transferred to the charity.

In accordance with the 2015 SORP, volunteer hours are not recognised.

Income from trading activities is recognised to the extent that it is probable that the economic benefits will flow to the company and the revenue can be reliably measured. It is measured at fair value of the consideration received or receivable, excluding discounts, rebates, value added tax and other sales taxes.

Income from charitable activities, comprising income in connection with the shrine and retreats, is recognised to the extent that it is probable that the economic benefits will flow to the charity and the revenue can be reliably measured.

Income (continued)

Income from other sources comprises funding in connection with the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme and is recognised as unrestricted income in the period in which the charity is entitled to the income, the amount of income can be measured reliably and it is probable that the income will be received.

No separate statement of financial activities has been presented for the charity alone, as permitted by s408 of the Companies Act 2006 and the Charities SORP FRS 102. The charity had total income in the year of £669,641 (2019 - £423,640), total expenditure of £414,624 (2019 - £509,007), resulting in net income of £255,017 (2019 – net expenditure of £85,367).

Expenditure

Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the group or charity to make a payment to a third party, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably.

All expenditure is accounted for on an accrual basis. Expenditure is comprised of direct costs and support costs. Direct costs are allocated to a specific activity. The classification between activities is as follows:

- a) Expenditure on raising funds includes all expenditure associated with raising funds for the charity and the operating costs of Aylesford Priory Limited.
- b) Expenditure on charitable activities includes all costs associated with furthering the charitable purposes of the charity through the provision of its charitable activities i.e. the upkeep of the shrine at Aylesford and supporting the Carmelite Friars of the Aylesford community. Expenditure on charitable activities includes both direct costs and indirect support costs.

All expenditure is inclusive of irrecoverable VAT.

Allocation of support and governance costs

Support costs represent indirect charitable expenditure. In order to carry out the primary purposes of the charity it is necessary to provide support in the form of personnel development, financial procedures, provision of office services and equipment and a suitable working environment.

Governance costs comprise the costs involving the public accountability of the charity (including audit costs) and costs in respect to its compliance with regulation and good practice.

Support costs and governance costs are apportioned based on area occupied, level of activity and staff time as appropriate.

Certain support costs incurred are shared between the charity and its subsidiary company, Aylesford Priory Limited. This allocation is based on area occupied, level of activity and staff time. Those costs which would be incurred whether or not Aylesford Priory Limited existed are allocated 100% to the charity.

Principal accounting policies 31 December 2020

Tangible fixed assets

All assets costing more than £1,000 with an expected useful life exceeding one year are capitalised.

Depreciation is provided at the following annual rates on a straight line basis in order to write off the cost of each asset, less its estimated residual value, over its estimated useful economic life. The annual rates used for this purpose are:

♦ Leasehold improvements	- 4 to 10% per annum on cost
♦ Plant and machinery	- 10 to 20% per annum on cost
♦ Furniture and equipment	- 20% per annum on cost
♦ Motor vehicles	- 20% per annum on cost

Depreciation is applied in all cases commencing from the start of the month following that in which the asset was purchased.

No value is attached in these financial statements to the leasehold land occupied by the group and charity. As explained in note 10, the site is of historic importance generally and specifically to the Roman Catholic Church and the principal objective of the charity is to preserve the site for the enjoyment of future generations. As such, the asset meets the definition of heritage assets in the Charities SORP FRS 102 and is not valued for the purposes of these financial statements.

Stock

Stocks of books, souvenir items and food stuff for resale are valued at the lower of cost and net realisable value. Cost is calculated by assuming stock movements are on a first in, first out basis.

Debtors

Debtors are recognised at the settlement amount, less any provision for non-recoverability. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid.

Cash at bank and in hand

Cash at bank and in hand represents such accounts and instruments that are available on demand or have a maturity of less than three months from the date of acquisition.

Creditors and provisions

Creditors and provisions are recognised when there is an obligation at the balance sheet date as a result of a past event, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefit will be required in settlement, and the amount of the settlement can be estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are recognised at the amount the charity anticipates it will pay to settle the debt.

Principal accounting policies 31 December 2020

Fund structure

Restricted funds comprise monies raised for, or their use restricted to, a specific purpose, or contributions subject to donor imposed conditions.

General funds represent those monies which are freely available for application towards achieving any charitable purpose that falls within the charity's charitable objects.

The tangible fixed assets fund represents the net book value of the land and buildings occupied by the charity and other tangible fixed assets held by the charity. Such assets are vital to the charity being able to carry out its charitable work and the value invested in the assets cannot, therefore, be realised in order to meet future expenditure or contingencies. To emphasise this point the net book value of the assets is represented by a specific tangible fixed assets fund on the balance sheet.

Non charitable trading funds comprise the retained surplus or accumulated deficit on the activities of Aylesford Priory Limited.

Pension contributions

Contributions in respect of the charity's defined contribution pension scheme are charged to the statement of financial activities when they are payable to the scheme. The charity's contributions are restricted to the contributions disclosed in note 8. There were no outstanding contributions at the year end. The charity has no liability beyond making its contributions and paying across the deductions for the employees' contributions.

1. Income from: Donations and legacies

Group	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2020 Total funds £	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2019 Total funds £
Legacies	331,976	21,167	353,143	(2,099)	5,000	2,901
Donations	74,128	4,812	78,940	75,052	6,012	81,064
Grant from Carmelite Charitable Trust	120,000	—	120,000	113,432	—	113,432
	526,104	25,979	552,083	186,385	11,012	197,397

2. Income from: Other trading activities

Group	Unrestricted funds	
	2020 £	2019 £
Provision of conference facilities, guest accommodation, events, and sale of books, gifts and refreshments	270,979	936,654
Rental income	38,411	39,752
Other	10,171	47,863
	319,561	1,024,269

3. Income from: Charitable activities

Group	Unrestricted funds	
	2020 £	2019 £
Shrine income	37,428	82,712
Retreat centre	236	1,283
Car park contributions	5,875	9,469
	43,539	93,464

4. Expenditure on: Raising funds

Group	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2020 Total funds £	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2019 Total funds £
Provision of conference facilities, accommodation, events, and sale of books, gifts and refreshments	710,643	—	710,643	895,033	—	895,033
Other	31,125	460	31,585	46,253	736	46,989
	741,768	460	742,228	941,286	736	942,022

5. Expenditure on: Upkeep of the shrine at Aylesford

Group	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2020 Total funds £	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2019 Total funds £
Direct costs	49,994	—	49,994	116,230	—	116,230
Other indirect staff costs	29,606	—	29,606	23,371	—	23,371
Premises and facilities	224,396	10,563	234,959	219,203	21,752	240,955
Office costs	9,645	—	9,645	8,184	—	8,184
Governance costs	10,888	—	10,888	7,066	—	7,066
	324,529	10,563	335,092	374,054	21,752	395,806

Governance costs included above comprise auditor's remuneration only.

6. Expenditure on: Support of the Carmelite Friars of the Aylesford Community

Group	Unrestricted funds	
	2020 £	2019 £
Living and personal expenses	47,946	66,212

7. Net (expenditure) income and net movement in funds

This is stated after charging:

Group	2020 £	2019 £
Staff costs (note 8)	663,551	694,052
Auditor's remuneration		
. Statutory audit services	10,631	10,551
. Other services: tax compliance	2,570	1,155
Depreciation	49,393	42,026

8. Staff costs and trustees' remuneration

Group	2020 £	2019 £
Staff costs during the year were as follows:		
Wages and salaries	573,970	636,309
Social security costs	30,617	35,304
Other pension costs	13,650	13,847
Redundancy payments	41,906	—
Other staff related costs	3,408	8,592
	663,551	694,052
Staff costs per function were as follows:		
Upkeep of the shrine	120,543	148,427
Provision of conference facilities, related accommodation, events and sale of books, gifts and refreshments	429,284	393,317
Support functions	113,724	152,308
	663,551	694,052

8. Staff costs and trustees' remuneration (continued)

No employee earned £60,000 per annum or more (including taxable benefits but excluding pension contributions) during the year (2019 – none).

The average number of employees, based on full time equivalents and analysed by function, was as follows:

Group	2020	2019
Shrine maintenance	5	7
Commercial trading operations	19	20
Support costs	3	3
	27	30

The average number of employees, based on headcount, was 56 in 2020 (2019: 60).

A number of the trustees are members of the Carmelite Order and, as such, certain of their personal living expenses are borne by the charity, but they received no remuneration in connection with their duties as trustees during the year (2019 – none). Incidental expenses of £108 (2019 - £61) were reimbursed to one trustee (2019 – one).

The charity has purchased trustees and individual insurance to indemnify the trustees or other officers against the consequences of any claim for a wrongful act. The insurance premium paid by the charity during the year totalled £621 (2019 - £517) and provides cover up to a maximum of £1 million (2019 - £1 million).

In addition to the trustees, the key management personnel of the charity in charge of directing and controlling, running and operating the charity on a day to day basis during 2020 comprised the Estates Manager, the Operations and Business Development Manager, the Catering Manager, the Hospitality Manager and the Prior's Secretary. The total remuneration (including taxable benefits, employer's pension contributions and employers national insurance contributions) of these employees was £170,477 (2019 - £176,680).

9. Taxation

The Friars, Aylesford is a registered charity and, therefore, is not liable to corporation tax or income tax on income or gains derived from its charitable activities, as they fall within the various exemptions available to registered charities.

Profits of Aylesford Priory Limited, if any, are subject to corporation tax calculated on the basis of tax rates and laws that have been enacted or substantially enacted by the balance sheet date.

10. Tangible fixed assets

Group	Leasehold improvements £	Plant and machinery £	Furniture and equipment £	Motor vehicles £	Total £
Cost or valuation					
At 1 January 2020	408,207	193,434	159,088	12,652	773,381
Additions	2,054	—	—	—	2,054
At 31 December 2020	410,261	193,434	159,088	12,652	775,435
Depreciation					
At 1 January 2020	44,454	149,945	129,176	9,254	332,829
Charge for year	24,964	13,746	8,984	1,699	49,393
At 31 December 2020	69,418	163,691	138,160	10,953	382,222
Net book values					
At 31 December 2020	340,843	29,743	20,928	1,699	393,213
At 31 December 2019	363,753	43,489	29,912	3,398	440,552

Charity	Leasehold improvements £	Plant and machinery £	Furniture and equipment £	Motor vehicles £	Total £
Cost or valuation					
At 1 January 2020	408,207	88,488	51,092	8,495	556,282
Additions	2,054	—	—	—	2,054
At 31 December 2020	410,261	88,488	51,092	8,495	558,336
Depreciation					
At 1 January 2020	44,455	69,329	40,012	5,097	158,893
Charge for year	24,964	6,072	2,216	1,699	34,951
At 31 December 2020	69,419	75,401	42,228	6,796	193,844
Net book values					
At 31 December 2020	340,842	13,088	8,864	1,699	364,492
At 31 December 2019	363,752	19,159	11,080	3,398	397,389

The charity's objective is to promote for the benefit of the public the restoration, presentation and maintenance of the historic buildings, amenities and grounds of The Friars, Aylesford. The freehold title to The Friars, Aylesford is held by The Carmelite Charitable Trust, a registered charity and a connected entity to the charity (see note 16). In 2002 the charity was granted a 99 year lease over the site and pays an annual rent of £200 to the Carmelite Charitable Trust. No value has been assigned to this lease in these financial statements. The site is of historic importance generally and specifically to the Roman Catholic Church and as noted above, the principal objective of the charity is to preserve the site for the enjoyment of future generations. As such, the asset meets the definition of heritage assets in the Charities SORP FRS 102 and is not valued for the purposes of these financial statements.

Leasehold improvements include £2,054 (2019 - £73,167) in relation to assets under the course of construction.

11. Investments

	Group 2020 £	Group 2019 £	Charity 2020 £	Charity 2019 £
Investment in subsidiary company		—	1	1

Investment in subsidiary company

The charity holds 100% of the issued share capital of Aylesford Priory Limited. This holding was acquired on incorporation of the company on 10 November 2008.

The following is a summary of the financial statements of Aylesford Priory Limited for the year ended 31 December 2020, which have been included in the consolidated financial statements.

	2020 £	2019 £
Turnover	270,979	936,654
Cost of sales	(612,794)	(781,450)
Gross (loss) profit	(341,815)	155,204
Administrative expenditure	(97,848)	(113,582)
Other income: Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme	168,735	—
Operating (loss) profit	(270,928)	41,622
Deed of Covenant to The Friars, Aylesford	—	(45,165)
	(270,928)	(3,543)
Retained profit at 1 January 2020	30,369	33,912
(Accumulated losses) retained profits at 31 December 2020	(240,559)	30,369

At 31 December 2020 the company had total net liabilities of £240,558 (2019 – total net assets of £30,370) represented by called up share capital of £1 (2019 - £1) and negative reserves of £240,559 (2019 – £30,369).

12. Debtors

	Group		Charity	
	2020 £	2019 £	2020 £	2019 £
Trade debtors	11,449	56,847	2,804	2,622
Amounts due from the Carmelite Charitable Trust (note 16)	4,402	377	3,529	—
Other debtors	15,322	11,181	14,412	7,564
Legacies receivable	43,363	—	43,363	—
Prepayments	78,924	64,290	74,150	59,225
Amounts due from Aylesford Priory Limited	—	—	312,854	260,837
	153,460	132,695	451,112	330,248

13. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	Group		Charity	
	2020 £	2019 £	2020 £	2019 £
Bank overdraft	—	310,640	—	310,640
Expense creditors	67,323	31,405	58,629	13,753
Social security and other taxes	(80)	25,570	—	—
Other creditors	12,587	7,510	5,762	1,625
Amounts due to the Carmelite Charitable Trust (note 16)	—	962	—	962
Accruals and deferred income	54,142	60,692	11,621	7,405
	133,972	436,779	76,012	334,385

Income has been deferred where it relates clearly to future periods and/or where the charity has not yet met the conditions for recognising the income. The movements in deferred income are analysed below:

	2020 £	2019 £
Brought forward	25,720	10,100
Released in the year	(25,720)	(10,100)
Deferred in the year	22,095	25,720
Carried forward	22,095	25,720

14. Restricted funds

The income funds of the charity include restricted funds comprising the following unexpended balances of donations and grants held on trusts to be applied for specific purposes:

Group and charity	At 1 January 2020 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	At 31 December 2020 £
Restoration fund	347,449	25,959	(10,563)	(2,054)	360,791
Peace garden fund	17,931	20	(460)	—	17,491
	365,380	25,979	(11,023)	(2,054)	378,282

Group and charity	At 1 January 2019 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	At 31 December 2019 £
Restoration fund	395,009	10,559	(21,752)	(36,367)	347,449
Peace garden fund	18,214	453	(736)	—	17,931
	413,223	11,012	(22,488)	(36,367)	365,380

Restoration fund

This fund represents donations received from the Carmelite Charitable Trust for maintenance projects which are only to be carried out after approval by the Trustees of the Carmelite Charitable Trust. The transfer from the restoration fund to unrestricted funds represents eligible capital expenditure incurred during the year.

14. Restricted funds (continued)

Peace garden fund

This fund represents donations received for the creation of a peace garden at the entrance to the Friars.

15. Analysis of net assets between funds

Group	Unrestricted funds			Restricted funds £	Total 2020 £
	General funds £	Tangible fixed assets fund £	Non- charitable trading funds £		
Fund balances at 31 December 2020 are represented by:					
Tangible fixed assets	—	364,493	28,720	—	393,213
Net current assets (liabilities)	278,761	—	(269,278)	378,282	387,765
Total net assets	278,761	364,493	(240,558)	378,282	780,978

Group	Unrestricted funds			Restricted funds £	Total 2019 £
	General funds £	Tangible fixed assets fund £	Non- charitable trading funds £		
Fund balances at 31 December 2019 are represented by:					
Tangible fixed assets	—	397,389	43,162	—	440,551
Net current assets (liabilities)	3,750	—	(12,792)	365,380	356,338
Total net assets	3,750	397,389	30,370	365,380	796,889

Charity	Unrestricted funds		Restricted funds £	Total 2020 £
	General funds £	Tangible fixed assets fund £		
Fund balances at 31 December 2020 are represented by:				
Tangible fixed assets	—	364,492	—	364,492
Investments	1	—	—	1
Net current assets	278,760	—	378,282	657,043
Total net assets	278,762	364,492	378,282	1,021,536

15. Analysis of net assets between funds (continued)

	Unrestricted funds		Restricted funds	Total 2019
	General funds	Tangible fixed assets fund		
Charity	£	£	£	£
Fund balances at 31 December 2019 are represented by:				
Tangible fixed assets	—	397,389	—	397,389
Investments	1	—	—	1
Net current assets	3,750	—	365,380	369,130
Total net assets	3,751	397,389	365,380	766,520

16. Connected charities

The Friars, Aylesford is connected to the Carmelite Charitable Trust by virtue of the fact that several of the trustees of the charitable company are also trustees of the Carmelite Charitable Trust (Charity Registration No. 1061342).

The transactions with the Carmelite Charitable Trust during the year are as follows:

- ◆ The Friars, Aylesford received a restricted grant of £nil towards the restoration project (2019 - £5,559), unrestricted grant of £120,000 (2019 - £113,432) and rent of £4,200 (2019 - £4,800) from the Carmelite Charitable Trust.
- ◆ At 31 December 2020 The Friars, Aylesford owed £4,402 to The Carmelite Charitable Trust (2019 – £585 owed by The Friars, Aylesford to The Carmelite Charitable Trust).

The Carmelite Charitable Trust holds the freehold of Aylesford Priory. No rent was paid by the charity in the period, but the charity and its subsidiary absorbed all the running costs of the Priory, including all repair and maintenance costs.

The Carmelite Charitable Trust has confirmed that it will continue to provide financial support to the group as and when required to enable it to meet its liabilities as they fall due over the short to medium term.

The charity has taken advantage of the exemption provided by FRS 102 for the requirement to disclose transactions with its subsidiary undertaking.

17. Lease commitments

As at 31 December 2020 the Friars, Aylesford had total future commitments under non-cancellable operating leases due as follows:

	2020 £	2019 £
Office equipment		
Within one year	1,379	2,029
Within one to two years	1,724	3,102
	3,102	5,131

Banking arrangements

The charity's bank accounts form part of a centralised banking system operated with the Carmelite Charitable Trust. Cash and cash equivalents for the group were £341,247 as at 31 December 2020 (£310,020 as at 31 December 2019), which includes an overdraft of £nil (2019 - £310,640). This has been underwritten by the Carmelite Charitable Trust.

18. Capital commitments

At 31 December 2020, the charity had capital commitments in respect to work authorised but not contracted for on the repair to the roof of the church situated on the site of The Friars, Aylesford. The work is anticipated to cost approximately £325,000 with £209,745 being funded from a grant from the Programmes of Major Works Scheme which is part of the Cultural Recovery Fund, the government's £1.57 billion support package to protect the country's cultural, arts and heritage organisations. The balance of the cost will be met by the charity itself.