



THE MESSAGE TRUST

ANNUAL REPORT & FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

YEAR ENDING 31 AUGUST 2023

Company Limited by Guarantee

Company Registration Number 03961183

Registered Charity Number 1081467

Scottish Registered Charity Number SC045838

THE MESSAGE TRUST

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS YEAR ENDING 31 AUGUST 2023

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THE MESSAGE TRUST

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

The Board of Trustees

G. J. Haynes (Chairman)
R. D. White
J. A. Wainwright – *Resigned 20 March 2023*
Dr A. L. Orr-Ewing
A. C. Leakey
Dr L. Neilson – *Appointed 14 December 2023*

Company Secretary

I. Rowbottom

Chief Executive Officer

A. Hawthorne OBE

Registered Office

Lancaster House
Harper Road
Sharston
Manchester
Lancashire
M22 4RG

External Auditors

Beever and Struthers
One Express
1 George Leigh Street
Manchester
M4 5DL

Bankers

National Westminster Bank PLC
699 Wilmslow Road
Didsbury
Manchester
M20 6NW

Investment Managers

Juniper Wealth Management Ltd
Old Docks House
90 Watery Lane
Preston
PR2 1AU

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REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES

YEAR ENDING 31 AUGUST 2023

The Trustees have pleasure in presenting their report and the financial statements of the charity for the year ending 31 August 2023.

The Message Trust is a company limited by guarantee and a registered charity governed by its memorandum and articles of association. Charity number 1081467. Company number 03961183. On 27 July 2015 The Message Trust became a cross-border charity registered with the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR) Charity number SC045838. The financial statements comply with current statutory requirements, the memorandum and articles of association and the Statement of Recommended Practice – Accounting and Reporting by Charities.

BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

The Message was formed in 1991 with one full-time member of staff, who worked mainly within secondary schools in the Greater Manchester area. This work developed with the formation of a dance music band, The Worldwide Message Tribe who became one of Europe's most popular Christian Music groups. The formation of Eden teams working in the toughest parts of the city of Manchester and the development of The Community Grocery stores and many other projects have added rapid growth with the work now becoming a significant organisation employing an average of 180 paid staff (2022: 180) with an annual income of £10.7 million (2022 £8.6 million).

The organisation was initially set up as the Message to Schools Trust but, with the growth and increasing number of opportunities opening up, all the activities, assets and liabilities were transferred to a new trust, The Message Trust, with effect from 31 August 2000. The new Trust, a company limited by guarantee, was incorporated on 30 March 2000 but did not become active until 31 August 2000 when it took over the operations of the old trust.

The Message Trust exists to advance the Christian faith primarily amongst young people and vulnerable adults through creative arts, community-based outreach programmes to those who are poor, disadvantaged, deprived and marginalised or who are at risk of reoffending or who have poor employment potential, through education, enterprise, befriending, mentoring, faith-based activities and outreach.

This report includes a few highlights from each area of our work over the past year, as well as an overview of what we've been doing in our different hub areas across the UK.

These objects are being worked out in four main areas:

- **Creative Mission:**

Producing quality Christian music and educational resources. Live music bands, printed materials, the internet and multi-media are all used to communicate Christianity to young people with clarity and in ways that are relevant to today's youth culture and perspectives.

Combining music with powerful stories and teaching, the **No More Knives** tour engages young people in schools and equips them with the skills and knowledge they need to say no to knives and start to discover their full value and identity.

Respect ME is an international PSHE project, which uses powerful stories to teach on issues such as sexuality, self-image and abuse, to young people in Key Stage 3-5.

Providing mobile youth centres in urban areas where teenagers have nowhere to go through our **Message Buses**, fully equipped with the latest video game technology and staffed by trained and skilled professional youth workers.

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BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES (continued)

- **Community Transformation:**

In Partnership with local Churches, **Eden** sends and supports teams of urban missionaries for the UK's most deprived neighbourhoods – to live sacrificially, share the gospel and build authentic community. Sharing the good news of Jesus in word & deed and creating a deep sense of community, our teams stretch across the UK, supporting their partner churches in youth ministry, community projects, gospel outreach and discipleship, all while living within the community.

Establishing and growing **The Community Grocery** in partnership with local Churches to support families in need. We bridge the gap between supermarkets and foodbanks, by utilising surplus food our stores make the cost of the weekly shop more affordable. We support our partner Churches to provide members with free wrap-around support and access to courses including debt management support through Christians Against Poverty (CAP), cooking lessons, Alpha courses, and many more. It's about sharing the love and hope of Jesus in word and action.

Working with the local church, running social action mission weeks in local neighbourhoods across the UK, which we call **Love Where U Live**. Our teams and volunteers go out picking up litter, tidying gardens and doing whatever they can to help their neighbours, whilst also sharing the good news of Jesus and praying for the neighbourhood.

The Proximity Network provides resources and links up Christian missionaries to enable collaborative working to serve every disadvantaged neighbourhood in the nation. Work has begun on a brand-new resource launching in 2024 with a vision to equip urban and estates churches and their leaders as they run mission in some of the toughest places across the United Kingdom, through a high-quality, easily accessible, online hub.

- **Prisons & Enterprise:**

Providing regular, long-term, accredited education courses alongside friendship and care to men and women in prisons and young offenders' institutions throughout the UK. Our **Message in Prisons** outreach workers run Peacemaker courses, Bible studies, chapel services, offering mentoring support and through all this building relationships.

Offering employment and training to ex-offenders those at risk of offending in businesses based in Manchester and London, through our subsidiary charity the **Message Enterprise Centre**. Our two-year programme starts with providing full time jobs in one of our businesses, gaining valuable work experience and skills as well as on the job training and Christian support and mentoring.

- **Equipping & Training:**

Promoting and developing the proclamation of the gospel and calling of evangelists through **Advance**, with group mentoring and evangelism training. Advance is committed to equipping and empowering those who have a desire to prioritise sharing the gospel.

As part of the Advance Network, **Advance Youth** is a movement of young people equipped and empowered to Advance the kingdom of God through the proclamation of the gospel of Jesus, with monthly training and equipping at The Gathering and an annual week-long urban mission in London called The Scattering.

The Message School of Evangelism (formerly known as Message Academy) is a gap year for 18-25 years olds to come and be trained, equipped and resourced to reach the lost through evangelism training. Students are given first-hand experience in sharing the gospel in different settings and contexts.

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STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

The directors of the charitable company (“the charity”) are its Trustees for the purpose of charity law and throughout this report are collectively referred to as the Trustees.

A Trustee Indemnity policy was in place during the financial year to cover itself and its Trustees.

The Trustees’ recruitment is by personal contact of existing Trustees and the Executive Team. Potential Trustees typically attend board meetings prior to their appointment in order to meet other members of the Board and Executive team to ensure they are a sound match and share the vision and values of the charity. They are then elected by the Board of Trustees in consultation with the Chief Executive, on the basis of their expertise, professional experience and qualifications, wisdom and advice that they can bring to the Management and Administration of the Trust. Training and induction are provided to new Trustees as appropriate.

The Board of Trustees has a variety of experience including both Christian ministry and commercial business skills. They meet quarterly to oversee the vision and strategies of the charity. Executive Directors have been appointed by the Trustees to oversee the day-to-day operations of the charity. The Board is accountable to the Charity Commission for the careful use of charitable and other public funds provided in a variety of forms, and for the achievement of appropriate performance standards in service delivery. The Board also undertakes at least one additional annual away-day for the purposes of further developing the vision and strategic direction of The Message, and to concentrate on continuous improvement in performance.

With the growth of activities of the Trust an increasing level of expertise is required on a day-to-day basis and an established senior management team is in place that is capable of running the affairs of the Trust. The Trust's senior management team is the Executive Board, headed by the Chief Executive, Mr A Hawthorne. The Executive Board meets monthly, and its members are both jointly and individually accountable via the Chief Executive to the Board of Trustees.

Day-to-day management matters are further scrutinised by a cross-functional team of internal departmental managers who meet regularly, and monthly management accounts are utilised by the Senior Management team to ensure financial budgets and fundraising targets are being met. This group’s work is referred back to the Trustee’s whenever a more significant matter of policy or other key decision-making arises.

The Message recognises the importance of our staff and aims to help them to develop their potential, improve their skills and gain greater job satisfaction.

RISK MANAGEMENT

Risk awareness is integral to the Trust’s overall management effectiveness. All Executive Team members and Senior Managers carry out regular reviews of the risks affecting their areas of the Trust’s activity, including, but not limited to, financial, operational, health & safety, and safeguarding risks. Wherever possible the Risk is quantified using financial values and other qualitative assessments, in order to determine the overall priority level of the risk. Status reports detail any changes to the overall levels of risk to The Executive Team and Board of Trustee, particularly when introducing a new activity. See the going concern note on page 42 for further details of the assessment of financial risks facing the charity.

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RISK MANAGEMENT (continued)

The Board of Trustees consider the consolidated impact of all risks annually, recognising that some risk is positive and beneficial in assisting the organisation to stretch and grow, particularly in terms of innovation. A standardised risk analysis and mapping procedure assists the Trust to identify, evaluate and rank any special risk and audit needs or manage any corrective action required, taking into account the impact and likelihood and the known strengths and weaknesses of internal controls.

Operationally the activity of The Message Trust is split into two parallel functions: **Mission and Support**.

Mission encompasses staff and volunteers with regular or frequent face to face contact with young people and / or vulnerable adults and their families. Each of the mission project areas and departments has its own branded identity as follows:

The Community Grocery stores (enabling families to buy groceries at an affordable price, whilst also offering support to its membership, through training courses and advisory services), Message Bus (mobile youth centres), Eden (missions teams in urban communities), Advance (evangelists' movement), Message to Prisons (working with prisoners and young offenders), Message School of Evangelism (training initiatives), Proximity Network (resourcing and connecting urban missionaries) and educational ministry teams: OTC (rap and afro-pop group), SoulBox (soul, rap & beatbox group), Amongst Wolves (pop-rock group), RespectME (relationships & self-esteem education team), as well as The Message Enterprise Centre (MEC), which in turn houses the Mess Café, Neal Street Espresso (Covent Garden), Wedding Angels, and the MEC Buildings & Property business.

Support encompasses staff and volunteers, mostly working behind the scenes. These activities are structured departmentally as follows: Administration, Operations (including IT, HR and fleet & facilities management), Finance, Communications, Partnerships and the Executive Leadership team.

Summary of Mission priorities:

The Trustees confirm that they have referred to the guidance contained in the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when reviewing our aims and objectives and in planning our future activities.

Our mission is to demonstrate and explain the Christian faith to young people and adults in very practical and relevant ways using a variety of means including educational work in schools, young offender institutions and prisons, relational and recreational work in community centres, churches and outdoors. We have a particular concern for urban youth and adults from deprived or socially excluded backgrounds who do not receive the same opportunities as those growing up in the wealthier suburbs.

The Trustees remain committed to the policy of utilising music **Bands** as one of the most effective ways to communicate the Gospel to young people. Our goal continues to be to present the Christian message and lifestyle in ways that are relevant to today's youth.

Eden teams and now, **Community Grocery Stores**, are one of the primary ways that the Trustees seek to ground the work of The Message with both local churches and the communities. Our goal is to see both established in the most deprived neighbourhoods of the UK, positively impacting the people in those areas irrespective of religion, race or background.

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RISK MANAGEMENT (continued)

Training the next generation of evangelists through our **Message School of Evangelism** and equipping the wider Church to be effective in personal evangelism through **Advance** group mentoring is an established part of the Trustees vision and strategy, and has seen remarkable growth in recent years, and therefore remains a core activity and focus for the charity.

The Message Trust's Executive leadership team seek to achieve these Mission priorities by motivating staff and volunteers with a compelling vision and supporting them within a robust management framework.

We ensure our volunteers have comprehensive support for their roles through appropriate policies and procedures, clarifying the extent of their remit and providing checks and balances in relation to the key areas of the Management & HR Strategy.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

The Message Group: 2022/23 in review

The Message Trust's mission is to share the good news of Jesus Christ in word and action with the hardest-to-reach young people and places. Our activity centres largely around four main areas:

- Creative Mission
- Community Transformation
- Prisons and Enterprise
- Equipping and Training

This report includes a few highlights from our work in each of these areas over the past year.

CREATIVE MISSION

Our cutting-edge creative mission teams work all year sharing the good news of Jesus in schools and with young people. From lessons and assemblies to high-energy gigs run in partnership with local churches, the gospel is clearly explained to young people through music and powerful stories, and they get the opportunity to respond to what they've heard and connect with a local church.

Our creative mission team projects and initiatives include (but are not limited to):

- Mission bands who use their music and powerful stories to share hope with young people in schools and at events, whilst also sharing the life changing gospel of Jesus Christ.
- Respect ME, our international PSHE project, which uses powerful stories to equip and empower young people in Key Stage 3 – 5 to face the challenging issues they face today such as self-image and abuse.
- The No More Knives tour which combines music with powerful stories and teaching. During each tour we head into schools in partnership with local police forces, local authorities and church partners to equip young people with the skills and knowledge they need to say "no" to knives and start to discover their full value and identity.

Our **mission bands** – Amongst Wolves, Soul Box and OTC (Outta The Cage) continue to use music and personal stories to encourage and equip young people in lessons, assemblies and at events.

As bands see young people in schools, they invite them to evening performances that are run in partnership with local churches. Here, young people get to hear more music from the band that they met in school, as well as hear the life changing gospel of Jesus Christ and have a chance to respond to it.

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CREATIVE MISSION (continued)

As well as going out on mission in the UK, 2022/23 saw our bands head over to both The Netherlands and Germany to be part of outreach weeks happening in schools there with our international hubs.

A huge area of growth and opportunity with our creative mission activity this year has been the **No More Knives** tour. Sadly, knife crime and the devastating impact it has on lives is never far from the headlines. Knowing that something had to change, the No More Knives tour was launched a few years ago. Partnering with local churches, police forces and Councils, the tour exists to equip and empower young people to say 'no' to knives, make positive choices and start to discover their full value and identity.

At the end of each tour, young people are invited to an evangelistic outreach gig held in a local venue. Here they get to see more performances from the creative mission band they've seen in schools, hear more stories of lives transformed and the gospel message boldly shared and have a chance to respond to it.

During 2022/23, we ran nine tours across the UK in Teesside, East Lancashire, Wythenshawe, Teesside, Redcar, North Manchester, Cardiff, Tameside and Blackpool. Through these 38,740 students in 49 different schools heard the life-changing message about knives. Over 3,300 of those we met in schools came along to the end of tour gig and we saw 736 respond to the gospel. As demand for the No More Knives tour continues to grow, more tours are planned for 2023/24 including in Glasgow, Tameside, Nottingham and Sheffield.

Whilst in a school in Cardiff, James from OTC shared his powerful testimony of how in the past he was involved with the wrong crowd and was stabbed. After class, one lad Josh came up to him and said, "I've been getting bullied outside of school and am really struggling with my mental health. I've been thinking about taking a knife and just stabbing my bully, but after today's lesson, I definitely won't do that. I don't want to carry a knife or fight anyone. Your story has really helped me. Thanks for coming into our school today!"

Story from a schools day

"The No More Knives Tour is more than just a message, more than a workshop. This is real – real stories and real people. The students left with a real topic of conversation and understanding of how to make better choices. This tour is a lifeline to many students who needed to hear and say "No More Knives". Should anyone have the opportunity to attend this tour I urge you to work with The Message Trust and give your students the experience and support. Thank you to everyone for helping the people of today be the role models of tomorrow."

Owen McGrattan, Oasis Academy

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CREATIVE MISSION (continued)

The work of **Respect ME** continued to grow this year with tens of thousands of young people being equipped, empowered and built up through lessons, courses and online resources covering topics such as self-esteem, bullying, sex and relationships and abuse. As people hear about the impact Respect ME has on young lives, we're being approached by local authorities about running tours in geographic areas where lessons are taken into multiple schools and large numbers of young people equipped at the same time. The first Respect ME tour is planned in 2023/24 with other to follow later in the year.

Music continues to be at the heart of our creative mission as we engage with young people and share music packed with gospel-filled truth with them. 2022/23 saw changes within our mission bands as the current Brightline and Amongst Wolves teams decided to move onto other roles outside of the team, and there were line-up changes within OTC. This impacted the number of bookings and music releases the missions bands were able to complete during 2022/23. Looking ahead into 2023/24 we have plans to launch a new mission band, NXT CHAPTR, as well as add to the OTC line-up.

Our fleet of **Message Buses** have continued to head out into communities across the UK in partnership with churches and organisations. As young people stepped on-board, they found a mobile youth centre packed full of fun things they can do with their friends, including games consoles, nail bars, climbing walls, slides, gaming PCs and much more. This year six buses have been running across the UK in Scotland, North West, Wales, London, Yorkshire and Coventry/Warwickshire. They have been at community events, Love Where U Live social action projects and partnered with churches to run local youth projects and community outreach.

Mechanical difficulties have meant that a number of the buses spent significant amounts of time undergoing repairs this year and were unable to be out on the road. This not only impacted on the number of mission opportunities that the buses could undertake, but also saw the financial costs of repairs increase significantly. Given that the Message Bus fleet is ageing this is a pattern that we anticipate could continue into future years, therefore we conducted a full review into the long-term viability of the Message Buses. The outcome of this is that in the next 12 months we will be retiring some of the buses within the fleets, as well as passing ownership of some others to partners, with The Message Trust still involved in delivering mission activity on these.

Creative Mission: Outcomes against our 2022/23 goals

- **To complete at least 5 No More Knives Tours across the UK**
Achieved – Between September 2022 and August 2023 we completed nine tours across the UK in Teesside (September 2022), East Lancashire (December 2022), Wythenshawe (January 2023), Teesside (second tour – February 2023), Redcar (March 2023), North Manchester (April 2023), Cardiff (June 2023), Tameside (June 2023) and Blackpool (2023). Through these tours we ran lessons that equipped and empowered young people to say no to knives, whilst also told them about their true value and identity in 49 schools.
- **To reach 75,000 young people with the gospel through schools work, including Respect ME and No More Knives Tours**
Achieved – the No More Knives tours and Respect ME lessons saw us engage with 74,995 young people. On top of this we have run numerous other lessons in schools too.

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CREATIVE MISSION (continued)

- **To give at least 5,000 young people opportunities to respond to the gospel at evangelistic gigs following our schools work**
Achieved – end of tour gigs, LIFT events, concerts and ad hoc events have seen The Message Trust’s creative mission teams reach well over 5,000 young people at evangelistic concerts. At each gig the gospel was boldly shared and young people had the chance to respond to what they heard.
- **To deliver Respect ME lessons/courses to 25,000 young people in 50 schools across the UK**
Achieved – during 2022/23 Respect ME teams delivered lessons and courses in 77 different schools for 36,255 students.
- **To see at least 500,000 music streams on Spotify in the year and reach 12,000 subscribers on YouTube across the Message Band**
Not achieved – significant changes within the creative mission bands meant that the amount of new music content released reduced in 22/23 impacting the number of music streams and YouTube subscribers gained.
- **To maintain at least 30 young people attending weekly Genetik Sessions at HQ (Sharston)**
Achieved – on average 30 young people attend the weekly sessions to take part in workshops on music production, street dance, drums, vocals and rap.
- **To have at least 50 young people attend the Genetik Summer School in August 2023**
Not achieved – the number of young people enrolled on the Genetik Summer School was below 50 on this occasion however we have continued to maintain the number attending weekly sessions.
- **To complete at least 150 Message Bus Sessions across the fleet in the Hubs**
Not achieved – as detailed above mechanical difficulties have meant that a number of the buses spent significant amounts of time undergoing repairs this year and were unable to be out on the road. A full mission and financial review of the Message Bus ministry has been undertaken and seen a number of vehicles retired or transferred to other organisations.

COMMUNITY TRANSFORMATION

This year marked 25 years of **Eden**, our flagship programme working in some of the toughest communities (each ranked within the bottom 10% by the Indices of Deprivation). Eden teams stay for the long-term into these communities and work day-in, day-out to build relationships with their neighbours and bring about real transformation.

The need for Eden is greater than ever with evidence showing that the cost-of-living crisis the UK is facing plus the long-lasting impact of Covid is disproportionately impacting the poorest in our society financially, physically and emotionally. It’s in the heart of many of these communities that our Eden teams are living and working, so they are perfectly positioned to offer vital support their neighbourhoods need.

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COMMUNITY TRANSFORMATION (continued)

This year, teams have continued to give out food parcels to their neighbours, prepare meals, offer holidays at home for those unable to get away and organise a wide range of community events from lunches to large-scale festivals. The events and activities Eden teams organise vary from one location to another depending upon the opportunities that exist to support the community.

In Farnworth (Bolton), our Eden team leaders have been running fortnightly events where their neighbours can come to chat and relax. Eden Top Valley (Nottingham) have also been stepping out with community events. Every week they run a hot chocolate outreach where they give out free hot chocolates to pupils as they walk home from school. Having made some connections with the youth on their estate, the Eden team have launched a new Friday night youth group – Friday Hub – that’s all about telling them more about Jesus. Each week, they’re seeing more and more young people turn up, eager not just for community but to ask their questions about Christianity. “I want to hear more about Jesus,” is what they tell the Eden team time and again.

In addition, to this Eden teams are supporting those impacted long-term by Covid. For example, Eden Fir Vale in Sheffield have continued offering tutoring to young people whose educational attainment was impacted by the closures of schools during Covid lockdowns. The team there offer free maths tuition to those who need it through their maths club programme. They have found that not only have this been able to benefit the students they are helping, but is having a significant impact on their wider families too as they realise that the team is there to help and support them, and that they see them as people they want to invest in.

2022/23 saw the launch of three new Eden teams in Byker (Newcastle), South Bank (Middlesbrough) and Jordanthorpe (Sheffield). Each of these teams have hit the ground running and is making an impact in their community.

Another highlight of the year was in June 2023, when we got to hold our Proximity Conference. Over two days, people passionate about urban mission and making an impact in their communities came together to be equipped and empowered. Each delegate was challenged by powerful teaching from Ness Wilson, Pete Portal, Sam Ward, Andy Hawthorne and Sarah Small.

With the UK gripped by a cost-of-living crisis, demand for the **Community Grocery** and the vital support the stores provide to keep families fed has grown significantly this year. In response to this, our rollout of stores has continued across the UK in order that we can do as much as possible to provide affordable food and wrap-around support to the people who most need it.

Today we have 21 stores (rising to 22 by December 2023). Spread throughout the UK, over 50,000 families now rely on the Community Grocery network to get the affordable food they desperately need. Many member families tell our teams that without the support of the Community Grocery they would have to skip meals/go hungry.

“My family and I wouldn’t have been able to survive over the last year without the Community Grocery.”

Community Grocery member quote

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COMMUNITY TRANSFORMATION (continued)

"The Community Grocery helps make my money go further, so now I can feed my family. I love coming – the food is fantastic; there's so much choice and it's run by such lovely people.

"It wasn't until I had Covid that I realised how much I relied on the Community Grocery and how it helped me with money. When I couldn't get to the store to do my shop, the difference the grocery makes really hit me.

"And the team go above and beyond. Last Christmas, I was given an amazing hamper full of food that we enjoyed for weeks – it was a real lifesaver. It meant I could give my kids the Christmas they deserve and that none of us went hungry! But this place is about more than just food for me. There's so much wrap-around support available too.

"I've been coming along to lots of courses. The cookery course taught me how to cook with some of the ingredients available in store and I've also been to the CAP Money Management course which has been life-changing. During one of the sessions, I had a lightbulb moment that changed how I think about money and that gave me tips I can use every day. It's going to help me so much this winter when things are tighter than ever."

Faye, Community Grocery member

Beatrice* is a member of our Newcastle store. Facing a lot of financial difficulties she shared with Rachel (the assistant manager) that she was feeling anxious, stressed and hopeless. Not knowing how she was going to afford her shopping; she asked if she could use a pay-it-forward note to cover the cost of her food. At the till, the team offered to pray for her and she said 'yes'. The next week, Beatrice popped into the store to tell Rachel that God had answered her prayer! She shared how things had started falling into place since praying and that she was starting to have breakthrough in her housing and financial situations. She couldn't believe it and was so thankful and wants to find out more about Jesus.

Community Grocery member story

*Name changed for anonymity

For an annual membership of just £5, members have the opportunity to come and shop in store for just £5 per basket. On average members save £20 on the cost of their food shop each visit. But food is just part of what's on offer at The Community Grocery. Members get access to free wrap-around support and courses too including debt management, cookery courses, jobs clubs, Alpha/Exploring Christianity courses and dance classes. The combination of food and support is seeing lives impacted. Members have become debt free, entered employment, seen improvements in their health and gained new skills.

Sharing the good news of Jesus in word and deed is at the heart of each grocery, with each store acting in partnership with a local church who are looking to reach their community. As members shop and access support, relationships between members and the local church develop and churches are growing. A number of our partner churches have had to launch new services to accommodate the Community Grocery members who have started coming to the church, whilst another has had to move to a new building to fit their growing congregation into the services.

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COMMUNITY TRANSFORMATION (continued)

One church partner has said, “This is what it is all about. It’s about helping to provide what our community needs, sharing the gospel as we do and we’re seeing God transform lives. I’ve watched the team at work and the level of care they give is amazing. Jesus made friends with people, and when you share the gospel from that place too like we do at the Community Grocery, it is all the more powerful.”

As the Community Grocery store network continues to grow, we closely monitor the viability and impact of each store to ensure that the membership and shopping trip numbers demonstrate a need for the grocery. Where these figures do not show this the sustainability of the store both in terms of mission impact and financial viability is closely monitored, and we work with the team to put measures in place to build the Community Grocery’s profile. If this doesn’t yield results, discussions with partner churches about whether they wish to continue operating the store independently take place. This year we saw Destiny Church decide to take over the running of Glasgow Community Grocery.

Community Transformation - Eden: Outcomes against our 2022/23 goals

- **Launch 2 new Eden teams**
Achieved – during 2022/23 three Eden teams were launched in Byker (Newcastle), South Bank (Middlesbrough) and Jordanthorpe and Batemoor (Sheffield). Each of these teams are doing well and are impacting lives of those in their community.
- **Recruit at least 10 new Eden team members**
Achieved – 26 team members have joined Eden teams this year. Some have moved to communities for the first time, others have moved back into neighbourhoods/towns that they’d previously left but are now called back to, and others are people from within the community who have heard about Eden and joined teams.
- **Run Proximity Conference for urban missionaries and see at least 250 attend**
Achieved – Proximity Conference was held in June 2023. 352 attendees came along to the two days where they were challenged by teaching from Ness Wilson, Pete Portal, Sam Ward, Andy Hawthorne and Sarah Small, and equipped to keep going in their urban mission.
- **Run at least 2 Love Where U Live social action mission weeks in our hubs**
Achieved – social action mission weeks have been held in the North West, North East and Wales this year.

Community Transformation - Community Grocery: Outcomes against our 2022/23 goals

- **To open another 4 Community Grocery stores across the UK**
Achieved – partnering with local churches looking to reach out and impact their communities, stores were opened in Burslem (Stoke-on-Trent), Liverpool, Ilford (London) and Burnley town centre. The Down Town Community Grocery in Burnley is our second store in the town and opened due to soaring demand for our services and support.
- **To reach 45,000 members of our Community Grocery stores nationwide**
Achieved – by the end of August 2023 there were 50,000 members signed up to use the Community Grocery stores to help keep their families fed.

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COMMUNITY TRANSFORMATION (continued)

- **To see 250,000 shopping visits to our stores by Community Grocery members**
Achieved – the number of shops done in store up to the end of August 2023 was 305,606. As the cost-of-living crisis impacted lives we saw the number of shops increase by 29% compared with the previous years, as families search for access to affordable food and support.
- **Distribute the equivalent of 5 million meals to our Community Grocery members**
Achieved – 6.1 million meals had been provided to Community Grocery members through our network of stores by the end of 2022/23.

PRISONS AND ENTERPRISE

Prisons work has continued to grow and impact the lives of men, women and young people this year. Our **Message in Prisons** team now work in 11 prisons across the UK, giving us the chance to work with over 8,800 men, women and young people – approximately 10% of the current prison population in England and Wales.

As the team head into prisons they get to run chapel services, Bible studies and exploring Christianity courses, but also build relationships with prisoners through the music classes they run, Peacemaker courses that equip people with positive ways to resolve conflict and tough situations, mentoring and spending time chatting to those they meet.

The Message in Prisons team get alongside people who may be at the lowest point in their lives and offer vital support and encouragement, all whilst pointing them to the hope Jesus offers.

Since 2003, Freddie had been stuck in cycles of drugs and violence and was having a tough time when our team met him in prison. As they got chatting and to know him, they were able to share more about the hope and peace that Jesus offers and invited him along to chapel services. There, Freddie heard the gospel and accepted Jesus into his life! As they carried on meeting with him, Freddie said: "I've done a lot of bad things in my life and I felt full of dark and hateful things but when I accepted Jesus into my life, I found love again and I haven't looked back!"

Freddie

Christmas 2022 saw the Message in Prisons team give out 5,700 Bags of Hope to prisoners across the country (1,200 more than they did in 2021/22). Each bag was filled with resources, a Bible and encouragement to remind those who received them that they weren't alone and were loved by Jesus at a time of the year when many will have been feeling increased isolation. The impact of this small gesture was huge. As she was given a bag one lady her eyes filled with tears, and she said "I haven't received a gift in 10 years, and I can't believe you brought this to my door! Thank you, thank you, thank you!"

But our work doesn't stop at the prison gates. We continue supporting ex-offenders upon their release from prison. This includes working closely with the Message Enterprise Centre and our enterprise businesses. This year, team members have been working in the Mess Café, Neal Street Espresso (our enterprise coffee shop in London), the building team, facilities team as well as across the network of Community Grocery stores.

THE MESSAGE TRUST

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES

YEAR ENDING 31 AUGUST 2023

PRISONS AND ENTERPRISE (continued)

Prisons: Outcomes against our 2022/23 goals

- **Start work in 1 more UK prison this year and expand the work in our East Midlands prisons by starting groups following the lifting of Covid lockdowns inside the prisons**
Ongoing – groups have begun in an East Midlands prison, and we have been able to fully relaunch work in Styal following Covid restrictions. Funding restrictions have meant that the timescale associated with the launch of a new prison project have been adjusted.
- **Connect over 2,500 times with prisoners and see 100 first time commitments to Jesus**
Achieved – as prisons work got up and running, we were able to deliver over 2,500 prisoner contacts and through these and events saw lives impacted as men, women and young people responded to the gospel, and got involved in discipleship being delivered.
- **Share the gospel with 5,000 prisoners through the Christmas packs**
Achieved - the Message in Prisons team gave out 5,700 Bags of Hope to prisoners across the country (1,200 more than they did in 2021/22). Each bag was filled with resources, a Bible and reminded recipients that they weren't alone and were loved by Jesus at a time of the year when many felt isolated.

EQUIPPING AND TRAINING

One of our core values is enabling the local church to be equipped for evangelism and discipleship. Some of the ways we do this are through Advance Groups, Advance Youth and the Message School of Evangelism.

Through group mentoring and evangelism training, **Advance Groups** equip and empower people across the globe to share the good news of Jesus with a new boldness, using materials translated into different languages. In 2022/23, Advance Groups continued to grow across the world at their fastest rate, with groups launching for the first time in a number of countries including Nicaragua, Togo, Chad and Belize. Advance Groups are now established in over 90 different nations across the globe, with groups being found in every continent apart from Antarctica.

In January 2023, we held our second Global Advance Day. On that day alone, we saw hundreds of new groups launch around the globe. The launch of these new groups saw us reach the huge milestone of 10,000 groups globally each one training and equipping men and women in their evangelism.

Advance Youth trains up the next generation so that young people can share their faith with boldness in their schools and communities. As teenagers come along to monthly gatherings in London and the North East, they are equipped to tell people about Jesus and share their faith. This has seen the young people starting Christian Unions in their schools, finding new ways to show Jesus' love in action, and praying with a new passion for their friends and family. As people hear about Advance Youth they are getting in touch about groups in their region. In 2023/24, we plan to launch Advance Youth in Wales and the North West. In August 2022, 70 young people from across the UK came together for a week of mission, known as The Scattering, in London where they got to put their faith into action.

THE MESSAGE TRUST

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EQUIPPING AND TRAINING (continued)

Another way we seek to equip people in evangelism, is through the **Message School of Evangelism** training programme. Here individuals get to spend 10 months being equipped for mission whilst getting to put what they learnt into action. In 2022/23, 23 (2022: 14) students enrolled on the programme and completed it. They ran youth groups, were part of Love Where U Live social action projects, got involved in homeless support projects, served in the Community Grocery stores, and played a key part in outreach events. Interest in the 2023/24 course is increasing with a growing number of international applicants looking to join the course as awareness of the work of The Message grows around the globe through Advance Groups.

Advance: Outcomes against our 2022–23 goals

- **Have Advance groups established in 100 nations**
Ongoing – Advance Groups are currently established in over 90 nations with representatives in other countries speaking to us about launching Advance Groups in their churches for their congregations.
- **Reach 12,000 Advance groups internationally**
Achieved – this figure was exceeded by the end of August 2023. By the end of 2023, there were at least 14,797 groups meeting in 93 nations across the globe.
- **Have 65 Advance Ambassadors established across the globe**
Ongoing – as the number of Advance Groups grew during 2022/23 so did the number of Advance Ambassadors however this number did not reach 65 this year.
- **Host a Global Advance Day in January 2023 and launch 500 groups on the day**
Achieved – the 2023 Global Advance Day was held on 28 January 2023 and saw in excess of 500 groups launched around the world on that day. The launch of these new groups saw us reach the huge milestone of 10,000 groups globally.
- **Welcome 20 students on the Message School of Evangelism course in September 2022**
Achieved – 23 students enrolled on the Message School of Evangelism course in September 2022 and completed it celebrating their achievements with a graduation in July 2023.
- **Have 50 young people on Advance The Scattering mission week in London in summer 2023**
Achieved – in August 2023 70 young people from across the UK joined forces in London for a week of mission. As they stepped out on mission, they prayed for over 680 people and saw 62 responding to the gospel.

THE MESSAGE TRUST

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES

YEAR ENDING 31 AUGUST 2023

THE MESSAGE ACROSS THE UK

The work of The Message continues across the UK. We have teams operating in the North West, North East, Scotland, Wales, London, East Midlands, West Midlands and Yorkshire & Humberside. In each location, our opportunities to reach out have continued to grow. Our continued approach of devolving work to local teams is proving successful with increasing innovation in each area helping to identify opportunities for new and exciting mission opportunities in their schools, prisons and local communities, as well as seeing new Eden teams and church partnership being launched.

Here are some of the highlights from our teams across the UK this year:

EAST MIDLANDS

- Following their launch in 2021/22, Eden Top Valley (Nottingham) continued impacting their community. As part of their community work the team started giving out free hot chocolate to their neighbours. Soon they had more than 100 young people coming along each week, telling the team it was the highlight of their week. The sessions kept getting bigger with the team also running competitions and playing frisbee alongside the hot chocolate stand. The hot chocolate sessions have grown so much that another session has been launched near another school to reach even more pupils. Hearing about what the positive things happening, the local MP and PSCO have been supporting the outreach work happening off the back of the sessions.
- As creative mission grew, our mission band OTC ran a schools week in Lincoln. Over the week, OTC headed into four schools performing their gospel-packed music for more than 2,000 students as well as running lessons on wellbeing, mental-health and self-worth that had the love and hope of Jesus at their heart. Each student was invited to the end-of-week gig. On the Friday night, over 350 young people came along for a night of music. When Gina and James shared about the love and hope Jesus offers them, 54 young people responded to the gospel.
- In February 2023, Lincoln Community Grocery moved into a new larger premises in a location that is more central to the city centre. Since then, the store has continued to grow with more families than ever before connecting with the grocery and the support it offers them to help keep their families fed.

LONDON

- Neal Street Espresso has continued to go from strength to strength, not only growing in popularity and profitability as a speciality coffee shop, but also as an enterprise in which ex-offenders can get training and employment. As businesses have continued connecting with the Neal Street Espresso team, an increasing number of organisations are using the conference facilities for their external events helping to boost the stores profitability further.
- A new team member joined the team at Neal Street Espresso getting discipleship and developing key life skills and experience.

THE MESSAGE TRUST

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES

YEAR ENDING 31 AUGUST 2023

THE MESSAGE ACROSS THE UK (continued)

- A Community Grocery opened in London for the first time in March 2023. Partnering with City Gates Church with support from Redbridge Council, Ilford Community Grocery is all about keeping families fed amidst the growing cost-of-living crisis whilst also providing members with wrap-around support too. Within six months of opening (as at October 2023), Ilford Community Grocery had welcomed over 1,400 member households, seen 5,687 households shop in store and distributed 142,175 meals to local families. “The Ilford Community Grocery is a centrepiece for all the reasons The Message said it would be – people come there for food and find other means of addressing their poverty through it.” Randal Smith, Head of Anti-Poverty at Redbridge Council.
- Advance The Scattering saw 70 young people from across the UK head out on mission for a week in London. Over seven days they took part in outreach events, got to pray for 680 people and saw people say “yes” to Jesus.

NORTH EAST

- Schools work continued to grow with teams during 2022/23. We took the No More Knives to Teesside twice, as well as Redcar, running lessons in 12 schools, equipping 12,190 young people to say “no” to knives whilst also telling them about their true value and identity. Alongside this, Respect ME lessons continued with 1,160 students being part of lessons where they were empowered to face the tough issues young people today face from the Christian perspective.
- Advance Youth has continued to grow this year with young people meeting monthly and telling us how they are finding a new boldness in sharing their faith.
- There are now five Community Grocery stores helping to keep families across the North East fed and offering support. Members regularly tell grocery teams what a lifeline the stores are to them in times of need. As the partnerships between the Community Grocery and churches develop, members are going along to services and events, and local churches are growing.
- Eden continued to grow across the North East with the launch of two new teams in Byker (Newcastle) and South Bank (Middlesbrough). The teams are already having an impact, hosting community fun days, running events and meals for their neighbours, praying and supporting their neighbours as well as building relationships. The launch of the teams in Newcastle and Middlesbrough continues to grow the activity of Eden in the North East with six teams now actively having a day-to-day impact in their communities.

NORTH WEST

- Schools work and creative mission continued to be a significant focus in the North West during 2022/23. Respect ME teams ran lessons, boys courses and girls courses in 34 different schools sharing vital teaching that tackles some of the challenging topics and pressures young people face from a Christian perspective with 19,250 students. At the same time, No More Knives tours were held in East Lancashire, Wythenshawe, North Manchester, Tameside and Blackpool. As lessons and sessions were delivered, 23,750 young people were equipped and empowered to say ‘no’ to knives as well as getting the opportunity to hear more about the good news of Jesus at end-of-tour gigs.

THE MESSAGE TRUST

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YEAR ENDING 31 AUGUST 2023

THE MESSAGE ACROSS THE UK (continued)

- The opening of two new Community Grocery stores in Liverpool and Burnley city centre (Down Town) saw the number of stores across the North West grow to 10. The impact that these have on the life of members as they come in store to get the affordable food they need for their families as well as wrap-around support is huge. One member in Burnley recently told the team how the food, support and welcome she's found in the Community Grocery have been "life changing" and helped her at a time when her mental health, wellbeing and finances were at their lowest. She has now become involved in the partner church and found a hope and joy she never knew existed as she's discovered more about Jesus and the Christian faith.
- Genetik Sessions have continued to run weekly music and dance classes throughout the year, as well as Winter and Summer holiday weeks. Children and young people, including those from families we've connected with through the Community Grocery in Sharston, have come along to develop their skills and at the same time heard more about their value, purpose and identity, and the hope Jesus offers them.

SCOTLAND

- This year saw schools work grow in Scotland, with our schools worker heading into high schools to deliver lessons and assemblies to students in S1 – S6. Each PSHE lesson promoted positive mental health and wellbeing, and approached challenging issues that young people face from the Christian perspective, whilst also helping pupils know that they are loved, accepted and valued by Jesus. In 2023/24, we hope to build on this work further by taking the No More Knives tour to Glasgow.
- Eden Dumbarton has continued to impact their community as they ran events and offered support to those who need their help.
- Glasgow Community Grocery continued to keep local families fed through the provision of affordable food during the cost-of-living crisis. Following conversations with the partner church, the running of the Community Grocery was taken on solely by Destiny Church in June 2023. This change has not affected the support that members receive, and the store still operates for its community.

WALES

- 2022/23 continued to see prisons work grow across Wales. As well as heading into prisons each week to run services, provide mentoring support, organise events and courses, the team have been actively involved in supporting those they've been working with through the resettlement process too. Through this they've helped to connect them with organisations who can provide support and linked them with local churches where they can continue growing in faith too.
- Youth Nights have been a highlight of the year for the Wales hub team. Partnering with churches in and around Cardiff, Message Wales run termly events where young people gathered to worship and pray together, whilst also hearing teaching that encouraged them in their faith.

THE MESSAGE TRUST

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES

YEAR ENDING 31 AUGUST 2023

THE MESSAGE ACROSS THE UK (continued)

The impact these events had on the faith of young people has been incredible, and stories about how they are stepping out to tell their friends and family are a real encouragement. To build on this further Advance Youth has been launched in Wales with plans to start a second group in 2023/24.

- The Message Bus has continued to head out across South Wales. Partnering with local churches to run sessions, the mobile youth centre has headed into communities and opened its doors for young people. When they have stepped onboard, teenagers found games consoles, activities, a nail bar and lots of other activities to enjoy with their friends. As they've had fun, young people have also heard more about the good news of Jesus and from this been able to connect them with their local church. We continue to hear stories of youth groups growing as a direct result of Message Bus activity.

WEST MIDLANDS

- The Community Grocery in Telford continues to have a significant impact within the community. Thousands of local people now rely on the store each week for the food they need. Alongside affordable food shopping, the Community Grocery team and church partner run a wide range of weekly courses as well as larger scale events throughout the year including a toy shop at Christmas, hamper giveaway and alternative Halloween party. As they do this, members and their families are coming along to church and discovering Jesus' love for themselves. "Life for people in Telford is tough, and the grocery provides a much-needed lifeline. As we get to know members, we're able to tell them about the hope Jesus offers. Through these conversations we've seen people asking about faith and starting to come along to church. One third of our congregation is now made up of grocery members. Each week they're coming along to church and hearing the gospel preached! The other Sunday we got to celebrate as 13 members were baptised and at the same service another 24 responded to the gospel!" Rick Kaul, Church leader at the partner church.
- Seeing young people grow in their faith is a passion for our West Midlands team, so partnering with 24-7 Prayer Youth they have launched youth prayer gatherings. At each event they are seeing hundreds of young people come along to spend time in prayer and worship, but more than that they're desperate to tell their friends and families about Jesus. In response to this there are plans to launch Advance Youth in the West Midlands in 2023/24.

YORKSHIRE AND HUMBERSIDE

- 2023/24 saw the completion of the building work at Woodseats – the new base for our Yorkshire and Humberside team – from which we will run enterprise work in the region. Opening the building was a huge achievement and the team there have already taken commercial lettings on spaces, launched hot desking facilities, and run events from the building. Opportunities to build on this are continually being developed as well as plans to launch social enterprise.
- Eden Jordanthorpe and Batemoor launched in Sheffield. As soon as the team moved in, they began building relationships with their neighbours by hosting events, supporting groups the partner church already ran and looking for new opportunities to serve their community.

THE MESSAGE TRUST

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES

YEAR ENDING 31 AUGUST 2023

OPERATIONS AND MINISTRY SUPPORT

Priority of Prayer

A rhythm of daily, weekly and monthly prayer lies at the heart of our life together as a ministry. At the beginning of each day a half hour daily prayer time (one hour on Tuesdays) is mandatory for all staff as a key time to reflect and refuel. We also encourage all staff to spend at least an additional half-hour in prayer during a weekly time in our prayer room from 12 to 3pm on Tuesdays. Our all-staff monthly prayer days have become increasingly essential for keeping up with news from across the ministry, especially as God continues to open doors in the UK and abroad.

Staff

The Message Trust and the Message Enterprise Centre employed an average of 180 personnel in the year (2022: 180) in total across the group. This average includes full-time and part-time staff.

Volunteers

Volunteers play a key role in helping us deliver both our front-line missional work and behind-the-scenes support. Commitments this year ranged from full-time volunteer work based in our offices to ad-hoc volunteer support at events. Across the year, in the region of 234,000 hours (2022: 201,000 hours) were freely given in support of our activities. The pattern of growth in volunteer numbers is seen in 2022/23 as well due to the continuation expansion of the Community Grocery store network and the vital role volunteers are playing to keep stores running.

Creative, Communications, Facilities and IT

Whilst the facilities team have continued to undertake projects across our HQ buildings and hub offices, a large focus of their work this year has been the refit of premises for Community Grocery stores as well as ensuring maintenance issues associated with these are resolved in a timely manner. At the same time, the team have played a key role in the refurbishment works taking place at Woodseats Baptist Church – the new base for our Yorkshire and Humberside team – from which we will run enterprise work in the region.

Our in-house design and communications department were instrumental in the promotion and marketing of Community Grocery stores to each community they are serving, whilst also helping to resource teams for mission. Alongside this, they have played a key role in major fundraising campaigns that have run throughout the year. They also continued to deliver supporter communications, including editions of Flow magazine, supporter prayer updates, a suite of websites, and email and social media campaigns. The implementation of a proactive communications strategy continues to yield results and has helped highlight the work of The Message Trust within the local and national media. Our focus for supporter communication continues to be to ensure opportunities to increase engagement, especially across digital platforms, are fully utilised. Beyond supporter communications, the team delivered video content for live events and digital platforms, and story videos.

As The Message Trust continued to grow, the in-house IT and information systems team have continued to support teams around the UK as well as Community Grocery stores with their IT requirements. This has included providing infrastructure, support and software assistance to the whole organisation. As the Community Grocery network continues to grow it is planned to undertake development work on a Community Grocery app in order to ensure we can manage membership and shop visit data robustly.

THE MESSAGE TRUST

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES

YEAR ENDING 31 AUGUST 2023

PARTNERSHIPS

Supporter Events and Fundraising

The cost-of-living crisis means that many of our donors have continued to find themselves unexpectedly in a different financial position which has impacted our regular fundraising income, however, thankfully due to the generosity and loyalty of our supporter base, our attrition rate has not increased significantly.

June 2023 saw us run our Urban Hero Awards which celebrated the transformation we have seen in the lives of some of those we work with. It was an opportunity to not only tell stories celebrating the work God has done in the lives of our award winners, but also a chance to share about the impact of The Message Trust's work and vision for the coming years with supporters.

This year also saw us run a series of fundraising events and vision nights in different hub areas giving us a chance to connect with new supporters and deepen relationships with existing supporters. Each of these has been successful in encouraging people about our work and the impact it has on lives.

In addition to in-person events, December 2022 saw us hold another online fundraising dinner as part of our Christmas campaign. The event shared powerful stories of the transformation happening in the lives of Community Grocery members as well more about the impact stores are having on lives. The dinner was part of a larger campaign to raise vital funds to keep Community Grocery stores stocked and help finance new stores.

We used the services of Chell Perkins Ltd, as professional fundraisers acting on behalf of The Message Trust for grant funding applications again, in 2022/23. Chell Perkins Ltd is registered with the Fundraising Regulator and we monitor their activities on behalf of The Message Trust on a monthly basis.

The Message Trust is also registered with the Fundraising Regulator and as such subscribes to The Code of Fundraising Practice along with its four core values to be legal, open, honest and respectful. Anyone considered to be vulnerable, and our Community Grocery members are not contacted by The Message Trust for fundraising purposes, and flagged as such on our contact database, to prevent this happening. The charity and its agent have not received any formal complaints in the last year about its fundraising activities.

Sharing our resources

Our commitment to helping others around the world who share our heart for the poor and unreached is expressed through our tithe fund. We tithe a proportion of our unrestricted charitable income and give it to other organisations and charities who share similar objectives to The Message Trust.

Our giving from our Tithe fund in 2022/23 totalled **£570,701** (2021-22 £499,421).

THE MESSAGE TRUST

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES

YEAR ENDING 31 AUGUST 2023

PARTNERSHIPS (continued)

Compassion UK received **£43,344** (2021-22 £44,212) for child sponsorship in Haiti.

We continued our support of **Life Association** (a related party link with Simon Hawthorne) through a gift of **£14,383** (2021-22 £14,383) to help provide schooling for Dalit orphans in Machilipatnam, India. **£9,000** was given to **Press Red** who are making a stand against the violence suffered by girls and women worldwide (a related party link with Michelle Hawthorne) (2021-22 £10,000). A total of **£15,000** was given to **Ignite** (a related party) including £12,000 to support their ministry building new churches in India (2021-22 £24,000) and £3,000 to Ignite Big Idea in the UK (2021-22 £3,000).

We also gave **significant gifts** to the following projects £12,000 to **Embassy Bus** providing emergency accommodation for people who are homeless in Manchester (2021-22 £50,750). £12,000 was given to Manchester House of Prayer for their prayer ministry (2021-22 £12,000). **£50,000** to Luis Palau Association for Festival Teesside through schools' tours, social action projects, mass choirs and multiple outreach events aiming to reach every group of society (2021-22 £Nil); **£13,200** to Good Shepherd Children's Orphanage in Haiti (2021-22 £13,200); **£8,174** to CRMI (2021-22 £2,940) for child sponsorship in Uganda, and **£43,000** (2021-22 £27,620) for a variety of projects including completion of a bungalow and purchase of livestock. **£16,000** was given to support Potters House Church, Hull, led by Mo Timbo (2021-22 £18,000).

New projects supported this year included:

There was continued support for **£15,000** to Junction 42 to support the work in live transforming and empowering of offenders in prisons and communities (2021-22 £8,000); **£19,275** towards Christmas Hampers to our Community Grocery members (2021/22 these hampers were organised by the Community Grocery Sharston rather than being funded from donations).

One-off gifts of £10,000 each (2021-22 £Nil) were given this year to the following organisations: **Operation Mobilisation** to provide support for those in need across the globe including setting up REACH and serving refugees; **British Youth for Christ** for evangelistic work with young people both in school and in the local community; **Transforming Lives for Good**, to bring hope and a future to struggling children through Warm food and Warm spaces, Early intervention coaching and providing Boxes of hope; **Christians Against Poverty**, to help people in the UK overcome debt and poverty. In total £40,000 was given to these 4 UK based charities.

Other gifts to our **Message partners** in the UK and beyond from Other Projects (per note 5) included **£56,500** to Message South Africa (2021-22 £7,400); **£17,850** to Eden Chemnitz (2021-22 £26,400); **£21,668** to Message Germany (2021-22 £32,264); **£8,250** to Message Canada (2021-22 £16,694); **£7,500** to Eden Westwood, Oldham (2021-22 £11,000); and £250 to Eden Salt River (2021-22 £Nil).

There was also support for **£30,810** bursaries towards Message School of Evangelism (MSE) students to be trained, equipped and resourced to reach the lost through evangelism training. Students are given first-hand experience in sharing the gospel in different settings and contexts (2021-22 £Nil).

THE MESSAGE TRUST

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES

YEAR ENDING 31 AUGUST 2023

MEC - OUR BUSINESSES

This year, the Message Enterprise Centre continued with its model for training – a model that has skills and discipleship at its heart whilst also aiming to maximise skills development and financial sustainability for our team members. Team member opportunities were offered to individuals in our different social enterprise businesses as well in store, warehouse and logistics roles at the Community Grocery in Sharston.

2022/23 marked the tenth anniversary of the Message Enterprise Centre which first opened its doors and began offering team member opportunities in 2013. In those 10 years:

- 89 team members have received employment, training, housing and discipleship.
- 100% of our graduates have achieved qualifications and entered employment.
- The programme has helped reduce reoffending rates – the Message Enterprise Centre’s 10-year reoffending rate is just 13% compared to a national nine-year average of 75%. For many of those we work with who have reoffended, we also know through our continued contact with them that prison is not the end of their story.

This landmark anniversary was celebrated with a Message Business Network dinner event in February 2023. This was an event which supporters who have stood with us to help make enterprise work happen were invited to celebrate all that’s been achieved. Attendees got to hear first-hand from team members, who have been part of our enterprise in the Message Enterprise Centre about the transformational impact programme has had on their lives. The guest speaker at the dinner was Sir John Timpson CBE, chairman of Timpson’s, who shared a masterclass in upside down management and his experiences in business. The Message Business Network dinner also saw the opening of the larger Sharston Community Grocery store within the enterprise centre.

Demand for the **Community Grocery** in Sharston continues to increase, as more people find it difficult to put food on the tables amidst the soaring food costs and cost-of-living crisis in the UK. The scale of demand means that the grocery located within the Message Enterprise Centre now serves over 4,000 member families and helps keep them fed, whilst also being the location where wrap-around support courses run from. As member numbers grew, space within the initial store became limited, and a larger store space was required to meet surging demand. Around this time, the organisation renting the adjoining larger unit within the enterprise centre made the decision to vacate the premises and this provided the ideal opportunity to relocate the Community Grocery into the space. The new store was opened in February 2023, and the previous space repurposed into a dedicated courses room which now sees community events and support courses, each designed to help members and their families, running every day of the working week.

Growing food poverty has led to demand for further Community Grocery stores across the UK to continue to grow, so in response to this we have continued to open further stores during 2022/23. There are now 22 stores operating across the UK, each launched since September 2020 by The Message Trust in partnership with local churches, and there are plans to launch more stores in 2023/24. By the end of August 2023, more than 50,000 member families were relying on Community Grocery stores to keep their families fed.

THE MESSAGE TRUST

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES

YEAR ENDING 31 AUGUST 2023

MEC - OUR BUSINESSES (Continued)

The location of the Community Grocery next to **The Mess Café**, coupled with growing food offer, media coverage and increasingly positive Trip Advisor reviews saw the café's popularity continue to grow, and footfall continue to build. In early 2023, the positivity of reviews led to The Mess Café being rated the no.1 café in Manchester. Throughout the year further opportunities to ensure the café's efficiency were continually identified and implemented to help reduce costs.

Following the easing of all Covid restrictions, the **MEC Events** business was able to fully operate and host large-scale events such as live acoustic music nights, weddings and conferences again this year. As awareness of the MEC Events offering has grown we have received an increased number of enquiries and bookings for events, helping to increase the profitability of this area of our work. Tenants within the office space this year included the charity Early Essentials, Our Boards and Pure Innovations, with more tenants due to move into the space during 2023/24.

As in 2021/22, the work of the **MEC Building Services** has focused primarily on refurbishment and development projects this year, with the team undertaking projects both for The Message, the shop fitting of Community Grocery stores and the refurbishment of the MEC's rental properties. The team were again involved in the fit out of all the Community Grocery stores that opened this year, as well as continued work on the Sheffield Enterprise Centre in Woodseats and the renovation of the properties to be used by Message School of Evangelism students in 2023/24 due to the course taking on its largest ever intake.

Message School of Evangelism students were housed in MEC properties, with properties also being rented to Message School of Evangelism graduates, team members, some employees of The Message Trust as well as commercial rents.

Following conversations with our Community Grocery church partner in Telford, **Wedding Angels** was transitioned across to All Nations Church. This decision came at a time when demand for the services of the social enterprises had declined slightly locally and gave the church the opportunity to reach out into their community. The space occupied by Wedding Angels in the MEC was repurposed to be used by the Community Grocery.

As partnerships across the UK grow, our vision to expand our enterprise work into other areas of the UK, offering training and discipleship opportunities to team members remains and continued to grow. **Neal Street Espresso**, our speciality coffee shop in Covent Garden, continues to go from strength to strength. The quality of its coffee offer has made it popular with visitors, residents and workers in Covent Garden. A pipeline for team members continues to be developed and in 2022/23 new team members joined the team, we also celebrated the graduation of a team member from the Neal Street Espresso enterprise programme and the transformation that had taken place in his life. The function space within Neal Street Espresso continues to be popular with external clients and has been rented out for meetings and events throughout the year, including to clients who are committing to regular bookings. This provides an extra income stream and gives the opportunity to introduce our enterprise work to a wider audience.

As the financial stability of the activities associated with the Message Enterprise Centre has increased and the risk reduced, discussions began about transferring the activity to sit within The Message Trust, the charity that the Message Enterprise Centre is a subsidiary of. This transfer of the business activities took place in September 2023, however there are no current plans to close the Message Enterprise Centre charity.

THE MESSAGE TRUST

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES

YEAR ENDING 31 AUGUST 2023

MEC - SUPPORTER EVENTS AND FUNDRAISING

Many businesses and organisations have chosen to support the Message Enterprise Centre during the past year, and we are very grateful to them all. In February 2023, we celebrated 10 years of the Message Enterprise Centre with a Message Business Network (MBN) dinner which successfully shared the impact of our work and vision with supporters. To build on this, another MBN event is planned for 2023/24.

MEC Businesses: Outcomes against our 2022 – 2023 goals

MEC Businesses

- **To open the Mess Café 6 days a week, including Saturdays, and so increase gross profits**
Achieved – the Mess Café was opening six days a week for a period of time during 2022/23 however team member availability and the income being received against expenditure meant that the café reverted to opening five days a week.
- **To employ another team member for Neal Street Espresso, and increase gross profits**
Achieved – a new team member joined the team and the profitability of the Neal Street Espresso continued to grow during 2022/23.
- **For the events business to host 100 training bookings and 15 external events (e.g. weddings, conferences, parties)**
Achieved – following the easing of Covid restrictions our events bookings have grown again with the Message Enterprise Centre hosting events of all sizes from training conferences and team away days to weddings and leaving parties.
- **To provide accredited training to 4 team members**
Ongoing – where team members have required accredited training this has been sourced externally, however the training requirements for a number of team members this year centred around skills that can be addressed through internal training.

MEC The Oaks

- **For each room to be occupied throughout the year by our Message School of Evangelism students**
Ongoing – the Oaks was used to accommodate a number of students as required by the course numbers. The anticipated course growth for 2023/24 means we anticipate the property being at full capacity next year.

MEC Recruitment Pipeline

- **To recruit another 5 team members**
Ongoing – new team members have continued to join the programme and we are still offering support to ex-offenders looking to turn their lives around, as well as increasingly to those who experience significant barriers to employment.
- **To train a further 50 new volunteers**
Achieved – throughout 2022/23 new volunteers have given their time to not only serve in the Mess Café and our social enterprises but at the Community Grocery in Sharston too.

THE MESSAGE TRUST

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES

YEAR ENDING 31 AUGUST 2023

MEC - SUPPORTER EVENTS AND FUNDRAISING (Continued)

MEC Supporter events and fundraising

- **To host 2 business networking / fundraising events**

Achieved – a Message Business Network event was held in February 2023 celebrating 10 years of the Message Enterprise Centre as well as a London vision night that informed supporters about our enterprise work.

CHARITABLE GIVING

The Message Trust group tithes a proportion of our unrestricted charitable income and gives it to other organisations and charities who share similar objectives to The Message. Our Parent charity The Message Trust donated £545k – see page 22, and our subsidiary the Message Enterprise Centre had £39 charitable giving this year (2022: £483).

GROUP FINANCIAL REVIEW

The 2023 accounts have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (Statement of Recommended Practice) (second edition – October 2019) Accounting and Reporting by Charities: applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102), as published January 2022.

The Trustees have taken the opportunity to review all The Message's key accounting policies to ensure that they continue to be in accordance with the requirements of the Charities SORP (FRS 102) and best accounting practice.

Whilst these steps have resulted in enhanced disclosures in the financial statements, it has not been necessary to make any significant amendments to key accounting policies.

Review of the year

While 2021/22 was a year of investing some of the Charities built-up reserves in the long-term future of The Message, as well as putting on the largest gospel outreach for a generation in Festival Manchester, 2022/23 was a year for consolidation and building organisational and financial resilience, whilst continuing to maximise the opportunities for sustainable growth.

We launched 4 new Community Grocery stores (2022: 9), in partnership with local churches across the UK using a revised financial model with more built-in resilience, including our first in London, while distributing c.6 million subsidised meals through our network of grocery stores to families struggling financially. We also planted 2 new Eden teams in deprived areas of the UK, ran 5 No More Knives tours in 49 schools, grew our intake for the Message School of Evangelism to 23 students, and reached 14,797 Advance groups meeting regularly by the end of the year.

Income

Income rose to £10.7m (2022: £8.6m), a highly positive outcome in the context of a challenging year financially for many. The growth in income was in part down to the increase in income from Gifts via Stewardship/CAF £3.2m (2022 £1.8m). Additionally, sales from The Community Grocery stores rose to £1.8m (2022: £1.3m), reflecting both the impact of our investment in new stores in the prior year and the rising demand for affordable food across the UK.

Total income from Donations and Legacies, including Gift Aid amounted to £7.8m (2022: £6.4m).

THE MESSAGE TRUST

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES

YEAR ENDING 31 AUGUST 2023

GROUP FINANCIAL REVIEW (continued)

Over half our total income, 50.6% (2022: 50.3%), came from donations by individuals (including Gift Aid) either directly or indirectly through an intermediary such as CAF or Stewardship.

A large proportion of these gifts were unrestricted 85.8% (2022: 77.1%), which has enabled the Trustees to be agile and use the funds for the nearest needs and opportunities during the year.

Evidently, The Message continues to rely on voluntary income, and donations from individuals in particular as its principal source of funding. It is the tremendous generosity of all the individuals who support us year after year, and continue to trust us to use their donations wisely, which is behind all the stories of lives transformed and the gospel of Jesus Christ being shared with people in schools, prisons, and communities, detailed throughout this report. The Trustees would like to extend their enormous gratitude and thanks to all our supporters that stood with us this year, this report is a testament to their kindness and generosity.

Gifts from Trust and Foundations increased to £1,190k (2022: £1,092k) which constitutes 15.3% (2022: 17.1%) of Donations. Gifts from individuals (including Gift Aid) decreased to £2,254k providing 29% of Donations (2022: £2,516k – 39.5%). Gifts via Stewardship/CAF were £3,158k – 40.6% (2022: £1,816k – 28.5%), while income from other organisations – Churches, Ministries and Business Supporters provided £379k – 4.9% (2022: £491k – 7.7%), income from Sponsored Events raised £298k – 3.8% (2022: £48k – 0.7%) whilst other sources including Grants and Legacies this year provided £497k – 6.4% (2022: £383k – 6.0%).

Income from Other trading activities, which support the charity, increased to £73k in 2023 (2022: £58k). The cost of Raising Funds in the financial statements amounted to £186k in 2023 (2022: £148k), as per Note 4a.

Other funds were generated through Charitable Activities, most notably Community Grocery £1.77m (2022: £1.28m), other Project Income (including the various Eden Partnerships and Prison projects) £68k (2022: £79k); Message School of Evangelism £50k (2022: £28k), Business Income from the Social Enterprise Businesses £496k (2022: £337k); Sundry Income £279k (2022: £232k); Rental Income £127k (2022: £134k) and Events £40k (2022: £42k).

Please note: The Message School of Evangelism is not an exclusively commercial operation, as the Trustees encourage both the training and facility to be used by the community.

Expenditure

Total Costs fell slightly to £10.5m (2022: £10.6m), of which Charitable activities (including associated support costs) was £10.3m (2022: £10.4m). The small reduction in spend this year was largely due to the difference on expenditure for Festival Manchester this year vs prior year £1k (2022: £1.2m), as the one-off outreach event finished in July 2022, off-set by £1.1m of increased costs for the Community Grocery network to £4.6m (2022: £3.5m), due to the increase in ongoing running costs for the stores from the new openings in prior year as well as increased costs of food and salaries due to inflationary uplifts.

The Charity was also able to spend £46k more on tithes compared to last year, £570,701 (2021-22 £499,421), to benefit other amazing ministries which share similar objectives to us but are working in different ways or in locations where The Message does not currently have a presence.

Governance costs of £23k (2022: £38k) includes the expenses associated with Trustee Board meetings, Trustee elections, maintaining our constitution, external audit and core executive management.

THE MESSAGE TRUST

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES

YEAR ENDING 31 AUGUST 2023

Net Income in the Year

The Income exceeded Expenditure (after gains on investments) in the year by £202,471 (2022: net expenditure £1.4m) which will support our work in future years. Hence in 2023 we have Net income on unrestricted funds of £268,342 (2022: £1.2m net expenditure) and Net expenditure on restricted funds of £65,871 (2022: £187k), after transfers and other recognised gains.

Balance Sheet

The Balance Sheet as at 31st August 2023 remained strong ensuring that the charity has the assets required to deliver its commitments to the community.

The additions to fixed assets for the group amounted to £83k (2022: £335k), of which additions for the Message Trust comprised of **Operational Equipment** – £14k (2022: £35k) which includes six display freezers for the community grocery stores and 2 x Mac computers for our Recording Studio at HQ; **Fixtures and Fittings** - £17k (2022: £12k) included a new boiler at HQ and a high security safe for Finance; the additions to **Leasehold Buildings** - £53k (2022: £241k) related to further refurbishment costs for the Yorkshire & Humberside Enterprise Centre in Woodseats, Sheffield. New **MEC Enterprise Equipment** cost £Nil (2022: £1k).

A further £500k was invested into The Message Trust's General Investment Account (GIA) during the year, which is the main reason for the increase in the Financial Investments figure from £1.02m to £1.53m in note 12.

Subsidiary undertakings

The Message Trust established a second subsidiary charitable company, in 2012, The Message Enterprise Centre (MEC), which is included in the consolidated accounts.

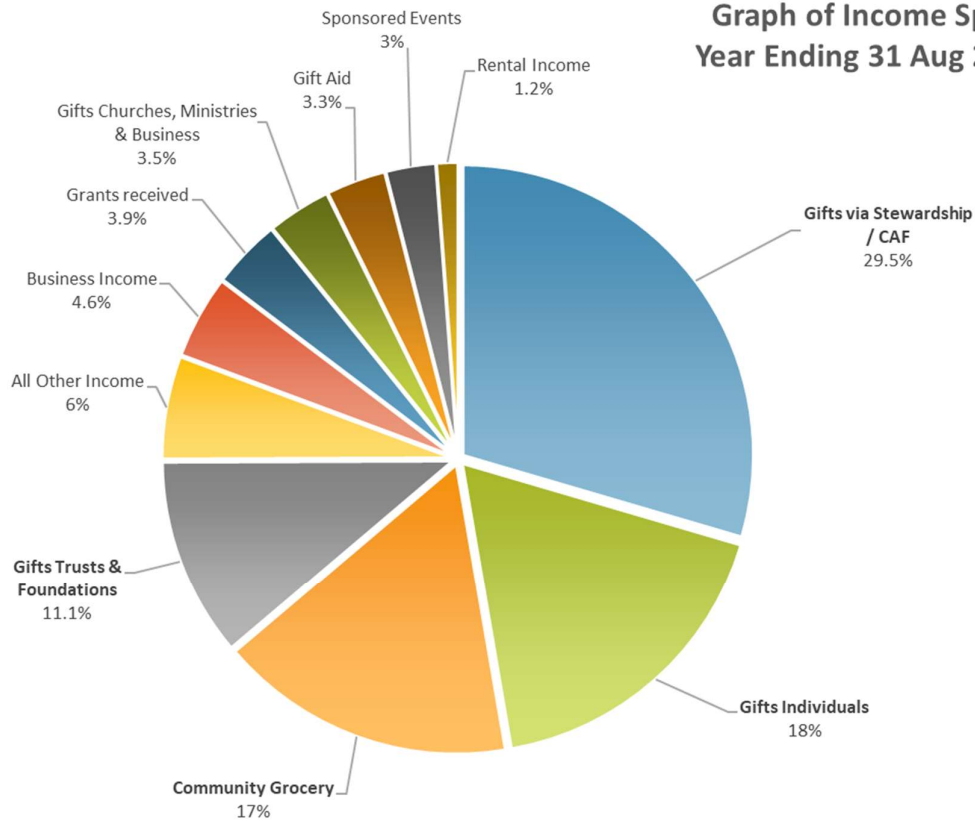
During 2013 The Message Trust established an associate – Eden Network Merseyside, which became a registered charity on 8 July 2013.

THE MESSAGE TRUST

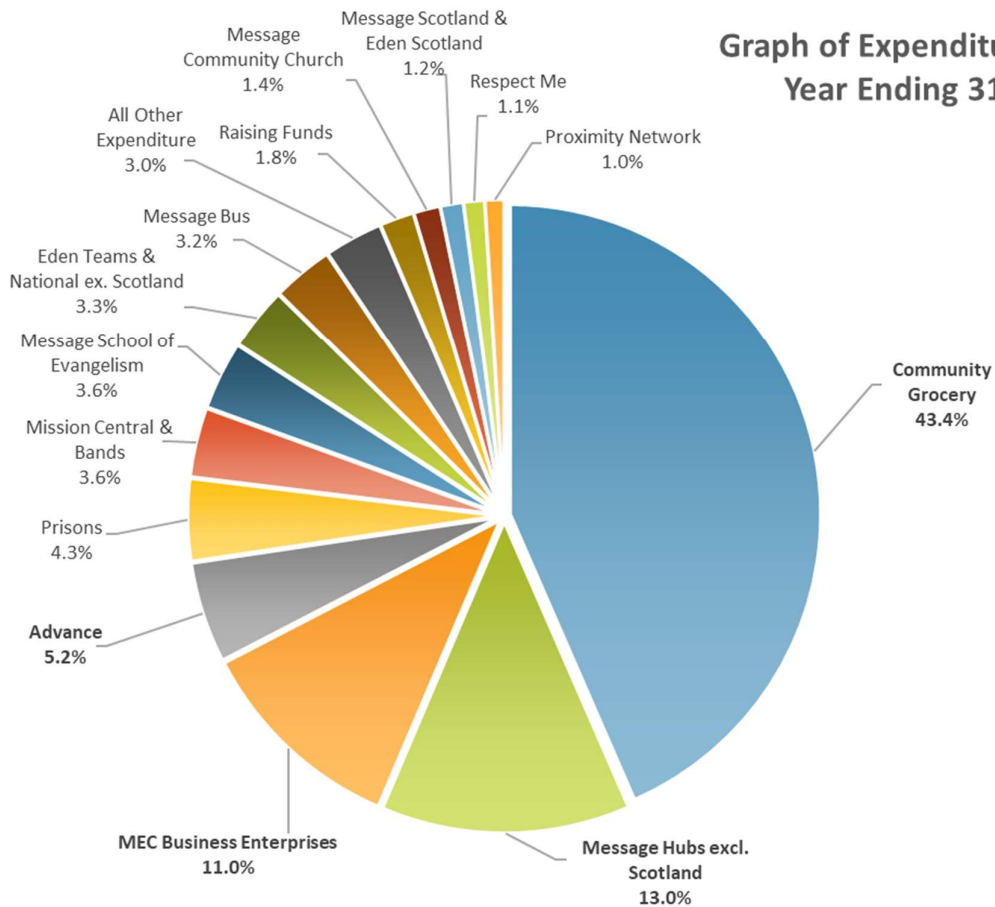
REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES

YEAR ENDING 31 AUGUST 2023

**Graph of Income Split:
Year Ending 31 Aug 2023**



**Graph of Expenditure by Activity:
Year Ending 31 Aug 2023**



THE MESSAGE TRUST

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES

YEAR ENDING 31 AUGUST 2023

Investment Powers and Policies

The Trustees have the power to invest surplus funds of the charity in investments, securities and property as they think fit. The current policy of the Trustees is to invest funds not required in the short term by the charity into a range of Treasury, Capital Bond and Instant Access or Fixed Term Deposit accounts which bear competitive rates of interest. Funds not required in the Medium to Long term are invested in a General Investment Account (GIA) through Juniper Wealth Management Ltd, the Trustees appointed Investment Manager. The Trustees have a written investment policy which considers the social, environmental and ethical impact of investments, as well as the types of securities to be invested in, the acceptable risk exposure, and expected time horizon for the charity's invested funds. Juniper are instructed to maintain the Charity's GIA in-line with this policy, which is reviewed periodically by the Trustees.

Reserves

The Trustees have adopted a reserves policy which they consider appropriate, to ensure the continuing ability of both The Message Trust and the Group to meet its objectives and obligations.

The total funds held by the Group at 31 August 2023 are £7,397,092 (2022: £7,194,621), of which £363,424 (2022: £429,297) are restricted and not available for the general purposes of the charitable group.

In order to be prudent, the Message Trust aims to accumulate, in general reserves, an amount equivalent to at least one month's staff costs (including Pension & NI), in August 2023 this was approx. £398k (2022: £384k). This is our minimum base level for reserves, however, given the degree of uncertainty in the economic climate at present we are currently holding reserves above this level. The amount of General Funds, excluding restricted and designated funds and fixed assets, freely available to spend on any of the charity's purposes as at 31 August 2023 was £676,968 (2022: £478,514) which is £279k (2022: £94k) in excess of the minimum reserves set out in our reserves policy.

We recognise that the long-term economic climate is still uncertain, and therefore the Trustees' have set revised financial budgets for the coming year, which they believe to be sustainable, with the help of our major donors. With this in mind, the Trustees have judged it appropriate to maintain the amount held in general reserves in line with this policy. Further details of the financial planning reviewed by the Trustees are in the going concern note on page 42.

The Trustees have continued to designate funds to underwrite future mission projects over the next 5 years. The Group has unrestricted funds at 31 August 2023, totalling £7,033,667 (2022: £6,765,324), of which £2,705,423 (2022: £2,900,336) has been designated for underwriting a variety of future mission projects by The Message Trust, and a further £3,651,276 (2022: £3,386,473) by The Message Enterprise Centre. A significant proportion of these designated funds are held in the form of buildings and other fixed assets, which are an ongoing resource for future mission projects across the group. The designated fund for Future Mission Projects can only be realised by disposing of £1,989,012 (2022: £2,165,290) the amount of tangible fixed assets and investment properties held by The Message Trust at 31 August 2023, whilst The Message Enterprise funds rely on the separate disposal of £3,600,876 (2022: £3,488,642) the amount of tangible fixed assets and investment properties held by The Message Enterprise Centre. Therefore, the total held by the Group for Future Mission Projects in the form of buildings and other fixed assets is £5,589,888 (2022: £5,653,932).

THE MESSAGE TRUST

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES

YEAR ENDING 31 AUGUST 2023

Grant making Policy

Grants are made to Eden Partners or to designated individuals directly associated with those Partnerships. Currently there are 22 partnerships in the UK (2022: 23 partnerships) in receipt of grants and work is ongoing to establish others. Part of the aims of The Message Trust are achieved through these partnerships, which employ full-time and volunteer youth and community workers. These workers seek to positively impact the people in their area, irrespective of religion, colour or background.

Student bursaries are also made to Message School of Evangelism students, who would otherwise not be able to finish their course. The Message School of Evangelism fulfils the objectives of the charity by providing training courses to Christian youth workers and others.

Remuneration Policy

The remuneration policy seeks to balance our Christian values and the need to attract and retain staff with appropriate qualifications and skills.

Our minimum wage is based on the Living Wage as set by the Living Wage Foundation, which is higher than the National Living wage as regulated by HMRC. The UK Leadership Team review the organisations pay scales by benchmarking against similar jobs in the North West and a London weighting is applied where appropriate. We review the retail price and consumer price indices for inflation on an annual basis, before deciding upon any annual increments for inflation. Individual staff salaries are reviewed annually, with mid-term reviews every 6 months. The Executive pay is set within the same pay grade structure. The Trustees set and approve the salary for the Chief Executive on an annual basis, by benchmarking against similar sized Charities with reference to the Association of Chief Executives of Voluntary Organisations (ACEVO) annual Pay and Equalities Survey. Details regarding employees with salaries above £60,000 can be found in note 7 of the Financial Statements.

Social Investment Policy

In order to provide appropriate affordable housing for our Message School of Evangelism Students during their one-year course, as well as providing refurbishment and building maintenance opportunities for our Message Enterprise Building Team Members the charity has adopted a policy of investing in local Wythenshawe properties, rather than renting properties from local landlords. This policy started in 2016 and has continued since then.

Principal Risks and Uncertainties

The Trustees have identified four principal risk areas for both The Message Trust and its subsidiary The Message Enterprise Centre. These cover potential risks to the reputation of both charities, financial sustainability, safeguarding of young people & vulnerable adults, and cyber security, arising from both internal and external factors. The principal financial sustainability risks present at the year-end are related to the sustained price rises and high levels of inflation across the UK which are increasing operational costs for the charity, limiting the disposable income of our donors and having an acute impact on our community grocery members, increasing the level of demand for our services. The Trustees have adopted a number of measures to counter each of these risks, to reduce the likelihood that they will adversely affect the charity. These strategies are reviewed periodically to ensure they remain effective and are considered sufficient measures to protect the charitable group, its staff, and beneficiaries from significant harm.

The Trustees assessment of these financial risks is discussed in more detail in the 'Going concern' note on page 42.

THE MESSAGE TRUST

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES

YEAR ENDING 31 AUGUST 2023

PLANS FOR FUTURE PERIODS

Goals for 2023/24

Our teams have set the following objectives, for the next financial year.

Creative Mission

- To complete at least 10 **No More Knives** Tours across the UK
- To reach 75,000 young people with the gospel through schools work, including **Respect ME** and **No More Knives** Tours
- To give at least 5,000 young people opportunities to respond to the gospel at evangelistic gigs following our schools work
- To deliver **Respect ME** lessons/courses to 25,000 young people across the UK
- Launch a new mission band who will take lessons into schools
- To have 30 young people regularly attending weekly **Genetik Sessions** at HQ (Sharston)
- To complete at least 40 **Message Bus** sessions

Community Transformation

- Launch 2 new **Eden** teams
- Recruit at least 12 new **Eden** team members
- Run **Proximity Conference** for urban missionaries and see at least 300 attending
- Run at least 2 **Love Where U Live** social action mission weeks in our hubs
- To open another 4 **Community Grocery** stores across the UK
- To reach 55,000 members of our **Community Grocery** stores nationwide
- To see 300,000 shopping visits to our stores by **Community Grocery** members
- Distribute the equivalent of 5.5 million meals to our **Community Grocery** members

Prisons & Enterprise

- Continue discussions and preparations to expand work into 2 more UK **Prisons** this year
- Connect over 2,500 times with prisoners and see 100 first time commitments to Jesus

Equipping & Training

- Have 25,000 **Advance** groups established in 100 nations
- Reach 150,000 **Advance** group members internationally
- Have 100 **Advance** Ambassadors established across the globe
- Host a Global **Advance** Day in January 2024 and launch at least 700 groups off the back of it
- Welcome 30 students on the **Message School of Evangelism** course in September 2023
- Run two **Advance The Scattering** mission weeks in summer 2024

MEC Businesses and fundraising

Since the operations of the MEC transferred to the parent charity, The Message Trust, in September 2023, the goals below will remain but will be outworked by The Message Trust and reported on in their 2023-24 Annual report and Financial Statements.

- To employ another team member for **Mess Café**, and increase gross profits
- To employ another team member for **Neal Street Espresso**, and increase gross profits
- For the events business to host 100 training bookings and 15 external events (e.g. weddings, conferences, parties)
- To continue providing accredited training to 4 team members
- To host 2 business networking / fundraising events

THE MESSAGE TRUST

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES

YEAR ENDING 31 AUGUST 2023

DIRECTORS AND TRUSTEES

The directors of the charitable company ("the charity") are its Trustees for the purpose of charity law and throughout this report are collectively referred to as the Trustees.

The trustees serving during the year and since the year-end were as follows:

G.J. Haynes
A L Orr-Ewing
R.D. White

A.C. Leahey
J.A. Wainwright (resigned 20 March 2023)
Dr L. Neilson (appointed 14 December 2023)

RELATED PARTIES

A summary of transactions with related parties is set out in note 17 of the financial statements.

TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES

The Trustees (who are also directors of The Message Trust for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Report of the Trustees and the 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 charitable company and the group at the end of the year and of the income and expenditure for the year then ended.

In preparing those financial statements, the Trustees are required to select suitable accounting policies, as described on pages 42 to 46, and then apply them on a consistent basis, making judgements and estimates that are prudent and reasonable. The trustees must also prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operations.

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with Companies Act 2006, the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006. The trustees are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

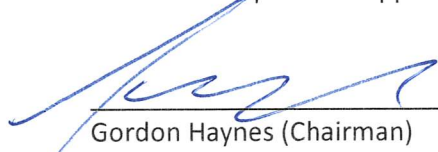
The Trustees also confirm that:

- as far as they are aware there is no relevant audit information of which the charity's auditors are unaware; and
- they have taken all steps that they ought to have taken as Trustees in order to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the charity's auditors are aware of that information

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

This report has been prepared in accordance with the special provisions of Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

The annual report was approved by trustees of the charity on 29 May 2024 and signed on its behalf by:


Gordon Haynes (Chairman)

Date: 29 May 2024

THE MESSAGE TRUST

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF THE MESSAGE TRUST

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of The Message Trust 'the parent charitable company' and its subsidiary "the group" for the year ended 31 August 2023 which comprise the Consolidated Statement of Financial Activities including the Consolidated Income and Expenditure Account, the Consolidated and Parent Charitable Company Balance Sheets, 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's and of the parent charitable company's affairs as at 31 August 2023 and of the group's incoming resources and application of resources 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, the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and regulations 6 and 8 of the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006, (as amended in 2010).

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 and parent charitable company 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 the provisions available for small entities, in the circumstances set out in the Trustees' Responsibilities on page 34, 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 parent charitable company and the group financial statements, we have concluded that the director's 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 parent's and group's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least 12 months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

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

THE MESSAGE TRUST

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF THE MESSAGE TRUST (Continued)

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the annual report, including the trustees' report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) 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.

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 course of the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. 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 report of the Trustees which includes the directors' report prepared 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 directors' report included within 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 charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the directors' report included within the trustees' report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which Companies Act 2006 and the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended) requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate and proper accounting records have not been kept by the parent charitable company, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the parent charitable company and the group 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.

THE MESSAGE TRUST

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF THE MESSAGE TRUST (Continued)

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the Trustees' Responsibilities Statement set out on page 34, 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 charitable company's and the group 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 charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

We have been appointed as auditor under section 44(1)(c) of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and under the Companies Act 2006 and report in accordance with the Acts and relevant regulations made or having effect thereunder.

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 addressing risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations, our procedures included the following:

- We obtained an understanding of laws, regulations and guidance that affect the charitable company, focusing on those that had a direct effect on the financial statements or that had a fundamental effect on its operations. Key laws, regulations and guidance that we identified included the Companies Act 2006, tax legislation, health and safety legislation, Charities Act England & Wales, Charities Act Scotland and employment legislation.
- We enquired of the Trustees and reviewed correspondence and Trustee meeting minutes for evidence of non-compliance with relevant laws and regulations. We also reviewed controls the Trustees have in place, where necessary, to ensure compliance.
- The risk of fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations was discussed within the audit team and tests were planned and performed to address these risks.

THE MESSAGE TRUST

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF THE MESSAGE TRUST (Continued)

- We reviewed financial statements disclosures and supporting documentation to assess compliance with relevant laws and regulations discussed above.
- We enquired of the Trustees about actual and potential litigation and claims.
- We performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships that might indicate risks of material misstatement due to fraud.
- In addressing the risk of fraud due to management override of internal controls we tested the appropriateness of journal entries and assessed whether the judgements made in making accounting estimates were indicative of a potential bias.
- We gained an understanding of the controls that the Trustees have in place to prevent and detect fraud. We enquired of the Trustees about any incidences of fraud that had taken place during the accounting period.

Due to the inherent limitations of an audit, there is an unavoidable risk that we may not have detected some material misstatements in the financial statements, even though we have properly planned and performed our audit in accordance with auditing standards. For example, as with any audit, there remained a higher risk of non-detection of irregularities, as these may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal controls. We are not responsible for preventing fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations and cannot be expected to detect all fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations.

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 parent charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006, and to the parent charitable company's trustees, as a body, in accordance with Regulation 10 of the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the parent charitable company's members and trustees 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 parent charitable company, parent charitable company's members as a body and the parent charitable company's trustees as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.



Sue Hutchinson FCCA (Senior Statutory Auditor)

For and on behalf of

BEEVER AND STRUTHERS

Statutory Auditor

One Express

1 George Leigh Street

Manchester

M4 5DL

Date: 30 May 2024

THE MESSAGE TRUST

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES (INCLUDING AN INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT) YEAR ENDING 31 AUGUST 2023

	Note	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2023 £	Total 2022 £
INCOME					
Donations and Legacies	3a	5,595,254	2,180,311	7,775,565	6,373,012
Income from Charitable activities	3b	2,812,313	14,028	2,826,341	2,136,499
Income from Other trading activities	3c	69,496	3,061	72,557	57,782
Investment Income	3d	19,651	-	19,651	17,980
TOTAL INCOME		8,496,714	2,197,400	10,694,114	8,585,273
EXPENDITURE					
Raising Funds	4a	186,126	-	186,126	147,551
Charitable Activities	4b	7,478,743	2,835,741	10,314,484	10,425,504
TOTAL EXPENDITURE		7,664,869	2,835,741	10,500,610	10,573,055
Net (Expenditure) / Income before Investment gains		831,845	(638,341)	193,503	(1,987,782)
Net gains on investments	12	8,966	-	8,966	621,108
NET (EXPENDITURE) / INCOME		840,811	(638,341)	202,470	(1,366,674)
NET INCOME / (EXPENDITURE) BEFORE TRANSFERS		840,811	(638,341)	202,470	(1,366,674)
Transfers between Funds	18	(572,469)	572,469	-	-
NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS		268,342	(65,872)	202,470	(1,366,674)
Total Funds Brought Forward		6,765,324	429,297	7,194,621	8,561,295
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD		7,033,666	363,425	7,397,091	7,194,621

The charity has no recognised gains or losses other than the results for the year as set out above.

All of the activities of the charity are classed as continuing.

The notes on pages 42 to 61 form an integral part of these financial statements.

THE MESSAGE TRUST

CONSOLIDATED & CHARITY BALANCE SHEETS

AS AT 31 AUGUST 2023

		The Message Group 2023	The Message Group 2022	The Message Trust 2023	The Message Trust 2022
	Note	£	£	£	£
FIXED ASSETS					
Tangible fixed assets	11	723,670	868,632	669,175	774,990
Investments	12	<u>4,866,218</u>	<u>4,785,300</u>	<u>1,324,837</u>	<u>1,395,300</u>
		<u>5,589,888</u>	<u>5,653,932</u>	<u>1,994,012</u>	<u>2,170,290</u>
CURRENT ASSETS					
Investments	12	1,527,428	1,018,462	1,527,428	1,018,462
Stocks	13	246,458	144,184	235,347	137,429
Debtors	14	511,105	464,524	440,689	458,399
Cash at bank and in hand	15	<u>412,313</u>	<u>683,857</u>	<u>317,732</u>	<u>654,868</u>
		<u>2,697,304</u>	<u>2,311,027</u>	<u>2,521,196</u>	<u>2,269,157</u>
CREDITORS: Amounts falling due within one year	16	(890,101)	(770,338)	(769,392)	(633,302)
NET CURRENT ASSETS		<u>1,807,203</u>	<u>1,540,689</u>	<u>1,751,804</u>	<u>1,635,856</u>
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES		7,397,091	7,194,621	3,745,815	3,806,146
NET ASSETS		<u>7,397,091</u>	<u>7,194,621</u>	<u>3,745,815</u>	<u>3,806,146</u>
FUNDS OF THE CHARITY					
Restricted Income Funds	18a	363,425	429,297	363,425	427,297
Unrestricted Income Funds	18b	7,033,666	6,765,324	3,382,390	3,378,849
TOTAL FUNDS		<u>7,397,091</u>	<u>7,194,621</u>	<u>3,745,815</u>	<u>3,806,146</u>

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions of Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies. The notes on pages 42 to 61 form an integral part of these financial statements, which were approved and authorised for issue by the Trustees on 29 May 2024 and signed on their behalf by:


 Andrew Leakey, Trustee


 Gordon Haynes, Trustee

THE MESSAGE TRUST

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT of CASH FLOWS

YEAR ENDING 31 AUGUST 2023

The Message Group	Note	2023	2022
Cash flows from operating activities		£	£
Net movement in funds		202,470	(1,366,674)
Adjustments to cash flows from non-cash items			
Depreciation		215,628	230,675
(Profit) on disposal of tangible fixed assets		(896)	(2,389)
Investment Income		(19,651)	(17,980)
(Increase) in valuation of investments		0	(602,646)
(Increase) in valuation of financial investments		(8,966)	(18,462)
		<u>388,585</u>	<u>(1,777,475)</u>
Working capital adjustments			
(Increase) in stocks		(102,274)	(57,140)
(Increase) in debtors		(46,581)	(149,641)
Increase in creditors		61,773	157,095
Increase in deferred income		57,990	6,119
Net cash flows from operating activities		<u>359,493</u>	<u>(1,821,043)</u>
Cash flows from investing activities			
Interest receivable and similar income		19,651	17,980
Proceeds of sale of tangible fixed assets		13,691	601
Purchase of intangible fixed assets		-	3,542
Purchase of tangible fixed assets		(83,461)	(334,736)
Purchase of investments		(260,918)	(522,654)
Purchase of financial investments		(500,000)	(1,000,000)
Sale of investment		180,000	-
Net cash flows from investing activities		<u>(631,037)</u>	<u>(1,835,267)</u>
Net increase in cash and cash equivalents		(271,544)	(3,656,309)
Cash and cash equivalents at 1 September		<u>683,857</u>	<u>4,340,166</u>
Cash and cash equivalents at 31 August		<u>412,313</u>	<u>683,857</u>
Cash at Bank and in hand	15	<u>412,313</u>	<u>683,857</u>

All the cash flows are derived from continuing operations during the two periods above.

The notes on pages 42 to 61 form an integral part of these financial statements.

THE MESSAGE TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

YEAR ENDING 31 AUGUST 2023

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of preparation

These accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention with items recognised at cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant note(s) to these accounts.

The accounts (financial statements) have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (Statement of Recommended Practice) (second edition – October 2019) Accounting and Reporting by Charities: applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) effective from 1 January 2019, with the Charities Act 2022, the Companies Act 2006, the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005, the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 and with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102).

The charity meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS102. The Charity exists for the benefit of the public through the promotion of Christian values and spiritual development, providing education, mentoring and enterprise services, in particular to those who have poor employment potential.

Financial statements

The financial statements are presented in GBP and rounded to the nearest £. The accounts include all transactions, assets and liabilities for which the charity is responsible in law.

Group financial statements

These financial statements consolidate the results of the charity and its wholly owned subsidiaries The Message Trading Company Limited and The Message Enterprise Centre on a line-by-line basis, up to 31 August 2023. A separate Statement of Financial Activities, or income and expenditure account and Statement of Cash Flows for the charity itself is not presented, because the charity has taken advantage of the exemptions afforded by section 408 of the Companies Act 2006. The results of the parent charity are detailed in note 9.

It is the charity's policy to write off any deficit on consolidation to reserves.

Disclosure exemptions

The parent charity satisfies the criteria of being a qualifying entity as defined in FRS 102. As such advantage has been taken of the following reduced disclosures available under FRS 102:

- No cash flow has been presented for the parent charity

Going concern

The Trustees of the Group consider that there are no material uncertainties related to events or conditions that cast significant doubt on the ability of the Message Trust to continue to operate as a going concern. This conclusion has been reached after reviewing the Charity's financial position, the levels of reserves and cash, including general funds available to the Charity, and the two-year financial forecast.

Sustained price rises due to high inflation and further strain on individuals income from continued fiscal drag, are increasing both the operational costs of the charity and the demand for our charitable services (particularly in our Community Grocery stores which are in some of the UKs most deprived areas), as well as potentially slowing growth in fundraising income in the short-term. The Trustees have considered these factors in their assessment and believe that the charity is well-placed to manage their impact and risks successfully following a cost-cutting exercise during the 2023/24 annual budget process, a review and implementation of modest price increases where the charity charges for its goods and services (particularly in the Community Grocery), its fundraising strategy and policy to maximise the benefit of increased interest rates on the charity's held cash reserves. Consequently, The Trustees are confident that the group will continue as a going concern for the foreseeable future, and therefore, continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in preparing the annual financial statements.

Post year-end, in September 2023, the activities of The Message Enterprise Centre transferred to The Message Trust including the Mess Café and Neal Street Espresso as well as the general operating costs of the Enterprise Centre, however there are no current plans to close the Message Enterprise Centre charity. The subsidiary continues to have the full support of its parent charity, having all its Trustees in common with the parent charity.

THE MESSAGE TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

YEAR ENDING 31 AUGUST 2023

Key Judgements and sources of estimation uncertainty

In the application of the charity's accounting policies the Trustees are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying values of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and underlying assumptions are based on historical experience and other relevant factors, including reasonable expectations of future events. However, because balances cannot be determined with certainty, actual results may differ from these estimates and assumptions. The main areas which involve such estimates and judgements include the useful lives of fixed assets and the valuation of the Group's investment properties.

The carrying value and annual depreciation charges for tangible assets are sensitive to changes in the estimated useful economic lives and residual values of the assets, which are reviewed annually for their current condition and economic utilisation and amended when necessary to reflect current estimates. Impairment on tangible fixed assets is evaluated when an asset is held for sale. See note 11 for the carrying amount of the tangible fixed assets.

The Trustees have based the Group's investment property valuations on observable market prices, adjusted if necessary for any difference in the nature, location or condition of the specific asset, combined with comparison to movements in Housing Price Indices since their last independent professional valuation – see note 12 for details.

INCOME

Recognition of income

These are included in the Statement of Financial Activities (SoFA) when:

- the charity becomes entitled to the resources;
- it is more likely than not that the Trustees will receive the resources; and
- the monetary value can be measured with sufficient reliability.

Offsetting

There has been no offsetting of assets and liabilities, or income and expenses, unless required or permitted by the Charities SORP (FRS 102) or FRS 102.

Donations and Grants

Donations and grants are only included in the SoFA when the general income recognition criteria are met (5.10 to 5.12 Charities SORP (FRS102)).

In the case of performance related grants, income is only recognised to the extent that the charity has provided the specified goods or services as entitlement to the grant only occurs when the performance related conditions are met (5.16 Charities SORP (FRS 102)).

Income is deferred only when there are conditions to fulfil before becoming entitled to it and where the donor has specified that the income is to be expended in a future period.

Legacies

Legacies are included in the SOFA when receipt is probable, that is, when there has been grant of probate, the executors have established that there are sufficient assets in the estate and any conditions attached to the legacy are either within the control of the charity or have been met.

Tax reclaims on donations and gifts

Gift Aid receivable is included in income when there is a valid declaration from the donor. Any Gift Aid amount recovered on a donation is considered to be part of that gift and is treated as an addition to the same fund as the initial donation unless the donor or the terms of the appeal have specified otherwise.

Contractual income

This is only included in the SoFA once the charity has provided the related goods or services.

THE MESSAGE TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

YEAR ENDING 31 AUGUST 2023

Donated goods

Donated goods are measured at fair value (the amount for which the asset could be exchanged) unless impractical to do so. The cost of any stock of goods donated for distribution to beneficiaries is deemed to be the fair value of those gifts at the time of their receipt and they are recognised on receipt. In the reporting period in which the stocks are distributed, they are recognised as an expense at the carrying amount of the stocks at distribution.

Donated goods for resale are measured at fair value on initial recognition, which is the expected proceeds from sale less the expected costs of sale and recognised in 'Income from other trading activities' with the corresponding stock recognised in the balance sheet. On its sale the value of stock is charged against 'Income from other trading activities' and the proceeds from sale are also recognised as 'Income from other trading activities'

Goods donated for on-going use by the charity are recognised as tangible fixed assets and included in the SoFA as incoming resources when receivable. Gifts in kind for use by the charity are included in the SoFA as income from donations when receivable.

Donated services and facilities

Donated services and facilities are included in the SOFA when received at the value of the gift to the charity provided the value of the gift can be measured reliably.

Donated services and facilities that are consumed immediately are recognised as income with an equivalent amount recognised as an expense under the appropriate heading in the SOFA.

Volunteer help

The value of any voluntary help received is not included in the accounts but is described in the Trustees' annual report.

Income from interest and royalties

This is included in the accounts when receipt is probable, and the amount receivable can be measured reliably.

Investment gains and losses

This includes any realised or unrealised gains or losses on the sale of investments and any gain or loss resulting from revaluing investments to market value at the end of the year.

EXPENDITURE and LIABILITIES

Liability recognition

Liabilities are recognised where it is more likely than not that there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to pay out resources and the amount of the obligation can be measured with reasonable certainty.

Governance and support costs

Support costs have been allocated between governance costs and other support. Governance costs comprise all costs involving public accountability of the charity and its compliance with regulation and good practice.

Support costs include central functions and have been allocated to activity cost categories on a basis consistent with the use of resources, e.g. allocating property costs by floor areas, or per capita, staff costs by the time spent and other costs by their usage.

Grants with performance conditions

Where the charity gives a grant with conditions for its payment being a specific level of service or output to be provided, such grants are only recognised in the SoFA once the recipient of the grant has provided the specified service or output.

Grants payable without performance conditions

Where there are no conditions attaching to the grant that enables the donor charity to realistically avoid the commitment, a liability for the full funding obligation is recognised.

THE MESSAGE TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

YEAR ENDING 31 AUGUST 2023

Creditors

The charity has creditors which are measured at settlement amounts less any trade discounts.

Basic financial instruments

The charity accounts for basic financial instruments on initial recognition at cost. Subsequent measurement is at fair value (their market value)

ASSETS

Tangible fixed assets for use by charity

These are capitalised if they can be used for more than one year and cost at least £1,000 (Prior to 1 September 2021, if they cost at least £500). They are valued at cost.

Depreciation is provided in equal annual instalments over the estimated useful lives of the assets and is calculated on the cost or valuation of the assets.

The following annual rates are used:

Leasehold Property	20%
Other Buildings:	
– Log Cabin	5%
– Community Grocery	10%
Operational Equipment	25%
Fixtures and Fittings	25%
Motor Vehicles	25%

Depreciation is first charged in the quarter following acquisition and up to the month of disposal.

No provision is made for the increased cost of tangible fixed assets.

Investments

Investments are valued at initially at cost and subsequently at fair value (their market value) at the year end, unless fair value cannot be measured reliably in which case it is measured at cost less impairment.

Investments held for resale (or pending their sale) or which are realisable as cash within less than 1 year, and cash and cash equivalents with a maturity date of less than 1 year are treated as current asset investments.

Investment properties

Investment properties are carried at fair value, derived from the current market prices for comparable real estate determined by external valuers, with properties being valued on a rolling basis every five years. The valuers use observable market prices, adjusted if necessary for any difference in the nature, location or condition of the specific asset. Changes in fair values are recognised in profit or loss.

Stocks and work in progress

Stocks held for sale as part of non-charitable trade are measured at the lower of cost or net realisable value. Cost is determined using the First-in, First-out (FIFO) methodology.

Goods or services provided as part of a charitable activity are measured at net realisable value based on the service potential provided by items of stock.

Work in progress is valued at cost less any foreseeable loss that is likely to occur on the contract.

Debtors

Debtors (including trade debtors and loans receivable) are measured on initial recognition at settlement amount after any trade discounts or amount advanced by the charity. Subsequently, they are measured at the cash or other consideration expected to be received.

THE MESSAGE TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

YEAR ENDING 31 AUGUST 2023

Funds

Funds held by the charity are either:

Unrestricted general funds

These are funds that can be used in accordance with the charitable objects at the discretion of the Trustees.

Designated funds

These are unrestricted funds that have been earmarked for a particular project. This designation is for administrative purposes only and does not restrict the Trustees' discretion to apply the fund within the objects of the charity.

Restricted funds

These are funds that can only be used for particular restricted purposes within the objects of the charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular restricted purposes.

Further explanation of the nature and purpose of each fund is included in the notes to the financial statements.

Operating leases

Rentals payable under operating leases are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities in equal annual instalments over the term of the lease.

Pension costs and other benefits

The pension costs charged in the financial statements represent the contributions payable by the company during the period in accordance with FRS 102. The charity provides a defined contribution scheme for staff.

2. LEGAL STATUS OF THE CHARITY

The Message Trust charity is a private company limited by guarantee, incorporated in England and Wales, and consequently has no share capital. The registered office is Lancaster House, Harper Road, Manchester, M22 4RG. The liability of each member in the event of winding-up the company is limited to £1.

THE MESSAGE TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

YEAR ENDING 31 AUGUST 2023

3. INCOME

The Message - Group	Unrestricted Funds Total £	Restricted Funds Total £	T O T A L 2023 £	Unrestricted Funds Total £	Restricted Funds Total £	T O T A L 2022 £
3a Donations and Legacies						
Gifts Individuals	1,360,575	538,514	1,899,089	1,478,390	635,819	2,114,209
Gifts via Stewardship / CAF	3,068,687	89,654	3,158,341	1,590,180	225,691	1,815,871
Gifts Churches, Ministries & Business	155,334	223,548	378,882	107,694	383,156	490,850
Gifts Trusts & Foundations	458,214	731,820	1,190,034	516,267	576,174	1,092,441
Gifts International Hubs	-	-	-	26,875	-	26,875
Government Grants	(4,019)	80,357	76,338	131,963	26,938	158,901
Gift Aid	216,278	138,911	355,189	273,978	128,206	402,184
Grants received	106,000	306,676	412,676	62,078	161,200	223,278
Sponsored Events	226,696	70,831	297,527	9,394	38,149	47,543
Legacies	7,489	-	7,489	860	-	860
	<u>5,595,254</u>	<u>2,180,311</u>	<u>7,775,565</u>	<u>4,197,679</u>	<u>2,175,333</u>	<u>6,373,012</u>
3b Income from Charitable Activities						
Project Income	53,725	14,028	67,753	75,493	3,276	78,769
Community Grocery	1,766,300	-	1,766,300	1,284,632	-	1,284,632
Message School of Evangelism	50,075	-	50,075	27,930	-	27,930
Business Income	496,165	-	496,165	336,802	-	336,802
Rental Income	127,457	-	127,457	133,631	-	133,631
Event Income	39,694	-	39,694	42,399	-	42,399
Sundry Income	278,897	-	278,897	220,777	11,559	232,336
	<u>2,812,313</u>	<u>14,028</u>	<u>2,826,341</u>	<u>2,121,663</u>	<u>14,835</u>	<u>2,136,499</u>
3c Income from Other trading activities						
Merchandise Sales	8,375	-	8,375	20,641	-	20,641
Fundraising Events	80	2,135	2,215	35	1,040	1,075
Charity Sponsorship	51,250	-	51,250	30,000	-	30,000
Speakers Gifts	6,769	-	6,769	4,940	-	4,940
Media Creative Income	250	-	250	-	-	-
Other Sales Income	2,772	926	3,698	1,126	-	1,126
	<u>69,496</u>	<u>3,061</u>	<u>72,557</u>	<u>56,743</u>	<u>1,040</u>	<u>57,782</u>
3d Investment Income						
Bank Interest Received	19,651	-	19,651	17,980	-	17,980
	<u>19,651</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>19,651</u>	<u>17,980</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>17,980</u>
TOTAL INCOME	<u>8,496,714</u>	<u>2,197,400</u>	<u>10,694,114</u>	<u>6,394,066</u>	<u>2,191,209</u>	<u>8,585,273</u>

Many volunteers give freely of their time in the service of our Lord for the Trust, the value of which is unquantifiable.

THE MESSAGE TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

YEAR ENDING 31 AUGUST 2023

4. EXPENDITURE

	Staff	Depreciation	Project	Total	Staff	Depreciation	Other	Total	Total	Total
	£	£	Costs	Direct	£	£	Support	Support	2023	2022
			£	Costs			Costs	Costs	£	£
4a Raising Funds										
Fundraising - Donations	57,276	-	116,847	174,123	-	-	-	-	174,123	134,108
Fundraising - Events	-	-	310	310	-	-	-	-	310	24
Trading Activities	-	-	11,693	11,693	-	-	-	-	11,693	13,419
	57,276	-	128,850	186,126	-	-	-	-	186,126	147,551
4b Charitable Activities										
Unrestricted Funds										
Eden Regions	-	-	53,396	53,396	66,189	4,809	56,455	127,453	180,849	265,015
Eden Scotland	-	-	20,444	20,444	5,655	411	4,823	10,889	31,333	12,009
Message Bus	82,883	250	62,060	145,193	60,209	4,374	51,354	115,937	261,130	144,195
Message Hubs	154,066	17,815	70,415	242,296	258,806	18,801	220,741	498,348	740,644	495,610
Mission Central	68,664	-	22,453	91,117	44,304	3,218	37,788	85,310	176,427	151,369
Events	-	3,083	62,757	65,840	18,560	1,346	15,830	35,736	101,576	(14,971)
Message School of Evangelism	59,601	214	163,847	223,662	67,297	4,889	57,399	129,585	353,247	158,653
Studio Sessions	27,540	1,856	1,065	30,461	8,636	627	7,366	16,629	47,090	62,006
Message Bands	85,222	214	28,740	114,176	33,616	2,442	28,670	64,728	178,904	329,268
Advance	-	-	155,769	155,769	99,234	7,209	84,639	191,082	346,851	449,318
Respect Me	54,193	282	10,892	65,367	20,523	1,491	17,504	39,518	104,885	66,105
Prisons	27,949	-	12,820	40,769	80,900	5,877	69,002	155,779	196,548	99,537
Proximity	16,287	316	8,162	24,765	18,633	1,354	15,892	35,879	60,644	27,565
Message Live	-	733	2,850	3,583	1,182	86	1,008	2,276	5,859	64,422
Love Wythenshawe	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6,835
Love Where You Live	-	-	868	868	287	21	245	553	1,421	-
Community Grocery	-	31,546	1,806,257	1,837,803	838,724	60,928	715,366	1,615,018	3,452,821	2,806,927
Festival Manchester	-	-	385	385	107	8	91	206	591	443,369
Message Community Church	-	-	32,218	32,218	26,215	1,904	22,359	50,478	82,696	35,040
Other Projects	6,632	-	35,385	42,017	-	-	-	-	42,017	380,763
Street Pastors	-	-	7,838	7,838	6,928	503	5,909	13,340	21,178	40
MEC Business Enterprises	225,165	1,901	758,859	985,925	46,017	37,244	-	83,261	1,069,186	1,181,253
Governance	-	-	14,130	14,130	-	-	8,716	8,716	22,846	37,500
	808,202	58,210	3,331,610	4,198,022	1,702,022	157,542	1,421,157	3,280,721	7,478,743	7,201,828
Total Expenditure Unrestricted	865,478	58,210	3,460,460	4,384,148	1,702,022	157,542	1,421,157	3,280,721	7,664,869	7,349,379

THE MESSAGE TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

YEAR ENDING 31 AUGUST 2023

4. EXPENDITURE (continued)

4b Charitable Activities

Restricted Funds

	Staff Depreciation		Project	Direct	Staff Depreciation		Other	Total	Total	Total
			Costs	Costs			Support	Support	2023	2022
	£	£	£		£	£	Costs	Costs	£	£
Eden National	40,835	-	20,274	61,109	-	-	-	-	61,109	139,600
Eden Manchester	-	-	29,451	29,451	-	-	-	-	29,451	20,389
Eden Yorkshire	-	-	11,804	11,804	-	-	-	-	11,804	3,107
Eden North West	-	-	31,514	31,514	-	-	-	-	31,514	19,251
Eden North East	-	-	18,189	18,189	-	-	-	-	18,189	393
Eden West Midlands	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3,278
Eden East Midlands	-	-	12,000	12,000	-	-	-	-	12,000	101
Eden London	-	-	1,236	1,236	-	-	-	-	1,236	2,930
Eden Scotland	-	-	20,582	20,582	-	-	-	-	20,582	-
Eden Wales	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	180
Message Bus	52,346	-	20,122	72,468	-	-	-	-	72,468	209,342
Message North West	22,654	-	3,289	25,943	-	-	-	-	25,943	56,601
Message North East	95,674	-	13,646	109,320	-	-	-	-	109,320	100,493
Message Yorkshire	58,106	-	64,707	122,813	-	-	-	-	122,813	145,695
Message West Midlands	57,954	-	17,858	75,812	-	-	-	-	75,812	75,432
Message East Midlands	23,443	-	17,971	41,414	-	-	-	-	41,414	42,633
Message London	78,658	-	22,053	100,711	-	-	-	-	100,711	105,163
Message Scotland	70,948	-	1,309	72,257	-	-	-	-	72,257	84,284
Message Wales	100,210	-	44,832	145,042	-	-	-	-	145,042	196,506
Mission Central	16,091	-	-	16,091	-	-	-	-	16,091	15,830
Events	-	-	1,261	1,261	-	-	-	-	1,261	1,174
Message School of Evangelism	-	-	19,620	19,620	-	-	-	-	19,620	3,490
Studio Sessions	760	-	-	760	-	-	-	-	760	768
Message Bands	7,345	-	-	7,345	-	-	-	-	7,345	2,267
Advance	117,654	-	85,317	202,971	-	-	-	-	202,971	47,585
Respect Me	8,825	-	-	8,825	-	-	-	-	8,825	13,378
No More Knives	22	-	44,093	44,115	-	-	-	-	44,115	10,540
Prisons	244,125	-	7,568	251,693	-	-	-	-	251,693	187,123
Proximity	42,594	-	-	42,594	-	-	-	-	42,594	32,442
Message Live	-	-	690	690	-	-	-	-	690	570
Love Wythenshawe	2,361	-	6,479	8,840	-	-	-	-	8,840	-
Love Where You Live	-	-	171	171	-	-	-	-	171	340
Community Grocery	1,032,657	-	76,846	1,109,503	-	-	-	-	1,109,503	727,370
Festival Manchester	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	785,708
Message Community Church	39,633	-	22,918	62,551	-	-	-	-	62,551	34,556
Street Pastors	14,629	-	2,578	17,207	-	-	-	-	17,207	16,233
Business Enterprises	3,414	-	-	3,414	-	-	-	-	3,414	8,061
MEC Neal Street Café	5,841	-	-	5,841	-	-	-	-	5,841	10,547
MEC Apprentice Funding	80,584	-	-	80,584	-	-	-	-	80,584	98,410
MEC The Oaks	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	13,243
MEC Properties	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7,663
Total Restricted Funds (*)	2,217,363	-	618,378	2,835,741	-	-	-	-	2,835,741	3,223,676
(*) includes Grants see note 5										
Total Expenditure Restricted	2,217,363	-	618,378	2,835,741	-	-	-	-	2,835,741	3,223,676
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	3,082,840	58,210	4,078,838	7,219,889	1,702,022	157,542	1,421,157	3,280,721	10,500,610	10,573,055

THE MESSAGE TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

YEAR ENDING 31 AUGUST 2023

5. GRANTS - Payable in furtherance of the charity's objects

Grants given to Organisations:		Total	
Partnerships - Overseas		2023	2022
	2023	2023	2022
	£	£	£
Advance	3,930		27,022
Message Canada	8,250		25,544
Message Germany	21,668		41,019
Eden Chemnitz (Germany)	17,850		26,400
Message South Africa	56,500		15,000
Eden Salt River (Message South Africa)	250		-
Total Partnership Grants	108,448		134,984
Eden Teams - UK			
Eden Teams North West	Eden Farnworth	12,525	8,350
	Eden Westwood	7,500	11,000
	Eden Central Drive	5,000	10,000
	Eden Wythenshawe Park	4,245	16,982
	Eden Orford	10,000	10,000
	Eden Kensington	16,514	21,100
			55,784
Eden Merseyside	Eden Birkenhead	-	1,000.00
			-
Eden Teams Midlands			
West Midlands	Eden Whitmore Reans	-	2,630
East Midlands	Top Valley	18,591	27,887
			18,591
Eden Teams North East	Eden Redcar	12,806	21,015
	Eden Southbank	13,875	-
	Eden Hexham	12,000	12,000
			38,681
Eden Teams Scotland	Eden Dumbarton	20,341	12,009
			20,341
Eden Teams Yorkshire	Eden Jordanthorpe	11,592	-
			11,592
Total Eden Team Grants	144,989		153,973
	The Ramp (Festival Manchester)	-	4,000
	Luis Palau Association (Festival Manchester)	50,000	14,783
	Destinity Church (Community Grocery)	50	-
Total Grants given to Organisations	303,487		307,740
Grants to Individuals:		2023	2022
Bursaries		£	£
	Message School of Evangelism Student Bursaries	32,426	4,285
	Advance Ambassadors	-	52,135
Total Grants given to Individuals	32,426		56,420
Total Grants:	335,913		364,160

The Message Trust works in partnership with, and makes grants to, autonomous Eden Partners, who look to The Message Trust for support and guidance on best practice in work with young people.

These grants are included within Project Costs across several activities in Note 4 above, including Eden Teams – Restricted and Unrestricted Funds, Other Projects and Message Hubs.

THE MESSAGE TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

YEAR ENDING 31 AUGUST 2023

6. NET INCOME

This is stated after charging / (crediting):	2023	2022
	£	£
Auditors' remuneration	21,823	20,564
Depreciation of owned assets	215,628	230,675
Loss on disposal of assets	11,243	247
Profit on disposal of assets	(896)	(386)
Rentals under operating leases		
Building lease	33,000	33,000
School of Evangelism & other accommodation Leases	118,688	50,650
Hire of motor vehicles & equipment	219,480	94,650

7. INFORMATION REGARDING TRUSTEES AND EMPLOYEES

	2023	2022
	£	£
Employee costs during the year:		
Wages and salaries	4,175,814	4,002,892
Social security costs	371,050	363,519
Pension costs	236,310	211,059
	4,783,174	4,577,470

The monthly average number of persons (including the Executive Directors) employed by the group during the year was as follows:

	No.	No.
Average number of staff employed:		
Charitable Activities	125	131
Cost of Generating Funds	3	3
Governance / Management	4	4
Others - Support	49	42
	181	180
Employee costs during the year:	No.	No.
Employee earning £60,000 - £70,000	2	2
Employee earning £70,001 - £80,000	-	-
Employee earning £80,001 - £90,000	1	1

Amounts paid or Reimbursed to Trustees in their capacity as Trustees - £Nil (2022: £Nil)

The key management personnel are defined as the Trustees, CEO and other Executive Directors in office during the year. Their total remuneration for the year was £380,202 (2022 £365,104).

THE MESSAGE TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

YEAR ENDING 31 AUGUST 2023

8. TAX ON SURPLUS ON ORDINARY ACTIVITIES

	2023	2022
	£	£
Corporation tax based on the results of the Trading Company for the year at Nil% (2022: Nil%)	-	-
	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>

The Message Trust is a registered charity and is therefore exempt from taxation on its charitable activities.

9. FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE OF THE CHARITY

As permitted by Section 408 of the Companies Act 2006, the income and expenditure account of the parent company is not presented as part of these financial statements. The parent company's gross income for the year was £9,853,417 (2022: £7,968,897) and the net expenditure for the year amounted to (£60,331) (2022: (£1,599,953))

10. INVESTMENTS IN SUBSIDIARY COMPANIES

a. COMMERCIAL TRADING OPERATIONS AND INVESTMENT IN TRADING SUBSIDIARY

The wholly owned trading subsidiary, The Message Trading Company Limited, company number 03863509, which is incorporated in the United Kingdom, aims to pay all its profits to the charity by gift aid. The charity owns the entire issued share capital of 5,000 ordinary shares of £1 each. The Trading Company did not trade in the year 2023 (& in the year 2022).

The net assets of the trading subsidiary are £5,000 (2022: £5,000).

b. THE MESSAGE ENTERPRISE CENTRE

The Message Enterprise Centre is a charitable company and a wholly owned subsidiary of The Message Trust. The Message Enterprise Centre accounts are consolidated in the group accounts of The Message Trust. The, separately filed, accounts of The Message Enterprise Centre, are available to view on The Charity Commission web-site – Registered Charity Number 1147287 and Company Number 07892774.

The gross income for the year of The Message Enterprise Centre is £1,430,855 (2022: £1,243,282) and the net movement in funds for the year is £262,804 (2022: £263,278). The total funds held by the subsidiary charity at 31 August 2023 is £3,651,277 (2022: £3,388,473).

The Message Enterprise Centre holds investments at 31 August 2023 totalling £3,546,381 (at 31 August 2022: £3,395,000), namely The Oaks and currently 14 Other Residential Properties (2022: 13 Other Properties).

The Oaks and Residential Properties are maintained by the Building Services Team and housed in total 47 people (2022: 32 people), including 23 Message School of Evangelism (MSE) students; 12 Message staff; and 12 Other (2022: 16 Message School of Evangelism students, 8 Message staff; 8 Other).

THE MESSAGE TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

YEAR ENDING 31 AUGUST 2023

11. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

The Message - Group		Leasehold Buildings £	Other Buildings £	Operational Equipment £	Fixtures & Fittings £	Motor Vehicles £	Total £
Cost							
	at 1 September 2022	430,483	123,286	392,450	323,215	646,292	1,915,727
	Additions	52,553	-	14,323	16,585	-	83,461
	Disposals	-	-	(10,545)	(61,318)	(212,365)	(284,229)
	at 31 August 2023	<u>483,036</u>	<u>123,286</u>	<u>396,228</u>	<u>278,482</u>	<u>433,927</u>	<u>1,714,959</u>
Accumulated Depreciation							
	at 1 September 2022	76,338	10,812	257,026	235,884	467,035	1,047,095
	Charge for the year	44,302	8,464	52,775	35,408	74,680	215,629
	Disposals	-	-	(5,574)	(60,139)	(205,722)	(271,435)
	at 31 August 2023	<u>120,640</u>	<u>19,276</u>	<u>304,227</u>	<u>211,153</u>	<u>335,993</u>	<u>991,289</u>
Net Book Value							
	at 31 August 2023	<u>362,396</u>	<u>104,010</u>	<u>92,001</u>	<u>67,329</u>	<u>97,934</u>	<u>723,670</u>
	at 31 August 2022	<u>354,145</u>	<u>112,474</u>	<u>135,424</u>	<u>87,331</u>	<u>179,257</u>	<u>868,632</u>
The Message Trust - Company		Leasehold Buildings £	Other Buildings £	Operational Equipment £	Fixtures & Fittings £	Motor Vehicles £	Total £
Cost							
	at 1 September 2022	289,855	123,286	302,452	295,280	638,584	1,649,457
	Additions	52,553	-	14,323	16,585	-	83,461
	Disposals	-	-	(10,545)	(61,318)	(212,365)	(284,229)
	at 31 August 2023	<u>342,408</u>	<u>123,286</u>	<u>306,230</u>	<u>250,547</u>	<u>426,218</u>	<u>1,448,690</u>
Accumulated Depreciation							
	at 1 September 2022	6,024	10,812	189,022	208,282	460,327	874,467
	Charge for the year	16,177	8,464	42,087	35,075	74,679	176,483
	Disposals	-	-	(5,574)	(60,139)	(205,722)	(271,435)
	at 31 August 2023	<u>22,201</u>	<u>19,276</u>	<u>225,536</u>	<u>183,218</u>	<u>329,285</u>	<u>779,515</u>
Net Book Value							
	at 31 August 2023	<u>320,207</u>	<u>104,010</u>	<u>80,694</u>	<u>67,329</u>	<u>96,934</u>	<u>669,175</u>
	at 31 August 2022	<u>283,831</u>	<u>112,474</u>	<u>113,430</u>	<u>86,998</u>	<u>178,257</u>	<u>774,990</u>

THE MESSAGE TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

YEAR ENDING 31 AUGUST 2023

12. INVESTMENTS

	The Message Group 2023 £	The Message Group 2022 £	The Message Trust 2023 £	The Message Trust 2022 £
Investment Properties				
The Oaks	650,000	650,000	-	-
Other Residential Properties	2,896,381	2,925,000	-	180,000
Message Enterprise Centre	1,319,837	1,210,300	1,319,837	1,210,300
	<u>4,866,218</u>	<u>4,785,300</u>	<u>1,319,837</u>	<u>1,390,300</u>
Financial Investments	<u>1,527,428</u>	<u>1,018,462</u>	<u>1,527,428</u>	<u>1,018,462</u>
Investment in Trading Company	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>5,000</u>	<u>5,000</u>
Total	<u>6,393,646</u>	<u>5,803,762</u>	<u>2,852,265</u>	<u>2,413,762</u>

Investment Property Analysis:	The Message Group £	The Message Trust £
Valuation		
at 1 September 2022	4,785,300	1,390,300
Disposal in the year	(180,000)	(180,000)
Additions in the year	260,918	109,537
At 31 August 2023	<u>4,866,218</u>	<u>1,319,837</u>

As at 31 August 2023 The Message Group owns sixteen Investment Properties (2022: sixteen properties). Thirteen of these Investment Properties were revalued by Longden & Cook, members of the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) as at 6th January 2023 and one other by Spendlove Surveyors, also members of the RICS, as at 25th January 2023, following inspections on those dates. The Message Enterprise Centre was revalued by Roger Hannah Limited, members of the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors, following an updated valuation on 24th March 2023. The final property, purchased in March 2023, is held at its cost price of £151k.

The charity performed analysis of the average property sale prices in the region around the investment properties, as well as the movement in the general house price index, which indicated that the carrying value of the properties in the financial statements may differ by as little 0.57% overall from the independent valuations carried out in the prior year.

Therefore, the Trustees consider the investment properties are carried in the Balance Sheet at their fair value as at 31 August 2023, given the independent valuations were carried out within 8 months of the year end and the lack of evidence to suggest a materially different valuation. The Trustees have a policy of using professional independent valuers to revalue investment properties on a rolling basis at least every 5 years.

On an annual basis, the Trustees review these valuations for any significant changes in the local property market and any impairment in the properties and will make adjustments as necessary.

THE MESSAGE TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

YEAR ENDING 31 AUGUST 2023

12. INVESTMENTS (Continued)

Financial Investment Analysis:	The Message Group £	The Message Trust £
Valuation		
at 1 September 2022	1,018,462	1,018,462
Realised and Unrealised Gains in the year	8,966	8,966
Additions in the year	<u>500,000</u>	<u>500,000</u>
At 31 August 2023	<u>1,527,428</u>	<u>1,527,428</u>

During 2021/22, The Message has invested £1 million in two investment funds. A further £500,000 was invested in the year 2022/23. At the 2023 year-end Juniper Wealth Management valued the funds with an upward revaluation of £27,428 (2022: £18,462). The funds are managed on behalf of The Message Trust by Juniper, in funds which meet the requirements of the Trusts Investment policy.

13. STOCKS

	The Message Group 2023 £	The Message Group 2022 £	The Message Trust 2023 £	The Message Trust 2022 £
Stocks of Goods for Resale	47,899	45,769	36,788	39,013
Community Grocery Stock	<u>198,559</u>	<u>98,416</u>	<u>198,559</u>	<u>98,416</u>
	<u>246,458</u>	<u>144,184</u>	<u>235,347</u>	<u>137,429</u>

14. DEBTORS

	The Message Group 2023 £	The Message Group 2022 £	The Message Trust 2023 £	The Message Trust 2022 £
Trade debtors	227,271	121,867	187,138	95,569
Amounts due from group undertakings	-	-	-	58,924
Prepayments	210,745	163,709	181,296	133,928
Accrued income	8,573	84,248	7,739	79,592
Other debtors	<u>64,516</u>	<u>94,700</u>	<u>64,516</u>	<u>90,385</u>
	<u>511,105</u>	<u>464,524</u>	<u>440,689</u>	<u>458,399</u>

THE MESSAGE TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

YEAR ENDING 31 AUGUST 2023

15. CASH AT BANK & IN HAND

	The Message Group 2023 £	The Message Group 2022 £	The Message Trust 2023 £	The Message Trust 2022 £
Cash at Bank and in Hand				
Reserve Accounts	156,266	333,246	110,469	326,523
Current Accounts	223,135	348,894	175,012	327,147
Cash	<u>32,912</u>	<u>1,717</u>	<u>32,251</u>	<u>1,198</u>
	412,313	683,857	317,732	654,868

16. CREDITORS: Amounts falling due within one year

	The Message Group 2023 £	The Message Group 2022 £	The Message Trust 2023 £	The Message Trust 2022 £
Trade Creditors	401,843	370,575	374,136	325,896
Amounts due to Group undertakings	-	-	7,184	5,000
Accruals and Deferred income	297,633	230,060	224,420	165,198
Taxation and Social Security	108,428	110,683	82,477	79,961
Other Creditors	<u>82,197</u>	<u>59,020</u>	<u>81,175</u>	<u>57,247</u>
	890,101	770,338	769,392	633,302

Included in accruals and deferred income – Message Group £297,633 (2022 £230,060) and Message Trust £224,420 (2022 £165,198) - is respectively deferred income of:

Deferred Income

	2023 £	2022 £	2023 £	2022 £
Deferred income brought forward	88,366	82,247	84,106	76,695
Income released in the year	(237,267)	(175,057)	(156,933)	(157,021)
Added in the year	<u>295,257</u>	<u>181,177</u>	<u>212,073</u>	<u>164,432</u>
Deferred income carried forward	146,356	88,366	139,246	84,106

Deferred income consists of grants and fees received in advance of projects and courses taking place after the year end. The resources are held as a liability until the charity becomes entitled to the income when the project or course takes place, at which point the income is released and recognised as an incoming resource.

THE MESSAGE TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

YEAR ENDING 31 AUGUST 2023

17. RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS

The Message Enterprise Centre sold goods and services to the value of £207,545 (2022: £157,523) at cost to The Message Trust (Parent Charity) during the year and bought goods and services to the value of £13,308 (2022: £16,921) from The Message Trust. Appropriate expenses totalling £85,847 in 2023 (wages, premises costs, etc) were recharged from The Message Trust (Parent Charity) to The Message Enterprise Centre at cost (2022: £85,264). The Message Trust received £30,000 (2022: £30,000) in rent from The Message Enterprise Centre for the building in which they operate and paid £87,924 (2022: £48,720) in rent to The Message Enterprise Centre for the Message School of Evangelism students' accommodation in property which is owned or leased by The Message Enterprise Centre for rental purposes. The Message Trust donated £312,612 (2022: £450,437) to the Message Enterprise Centre for general funds and future Message Enterprise projects. As at 31 August 2023, The Message Trust owed The Message Enterprise Centre £2,184 (2022: The Message Enterprise Centre owed The Message Trust £58,924).

During the year gifts totalling £14,383 (2022: £14,383) were given to the Life Association, providing schooling for 50 poor children in India. These are related party transactions as Simon Hawthorne, Director of the Life Association is a close relative of Andy Hawthorne, Global Chief Executive of The Message Trust.

Gifts totalling £15,000 were given to Ignite (Big Ideas) (2022: £27,000). These are related party transactions as Ian Rowbottom Executive Director of Operations is also a Trustee of the charity Ignite (Big Ideas).

During the year Michele Hawthorne, Andy Hawthorne's wife, was paid £15,899 (2022: £13,685) for networking, fundraising, providing hospitality and work on UK & international assignments with Andy.

The Message Trust gifted £9,000 to Press Red who are making a stand against the violence suffered by girls and women worldwide (2022 £10,000). Press Red is a related party as both Sam Ward Director of Ministry and Michelle Hawthorne are trustees of Press Red.

In addition to these transactions above, the Trustees, their related party companies and their charities (Boodle & Dunthorne Limited (trading as Boodles), Ignite/Big Ideas, Issachar Foundation, Life Church Wilmslow and Hope Citadel Healthcare), collectively gave The Message Trust, including gift aid, £83,947 (2022: £44,150 of which £27,500 was given for Festival Manchester).

A further £2,168 including gift aid (2022: £8,031) was collectively given by the Trustees and their related party companies (Boodle & Dunthorne Limited (trading as Boodles) to The Message Enterprise.

THE MESSAGE TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

YEAR ENDING 31 AUGUST 2023

18. RECONCILIATION OF MOVEMENTS IN FUNDS

	Balance at 31/08/2022	Movement in Resources		Transfers Between Funds	Gains on Revaluation Fixed Assets	Balance at 31/08/2023
	£	Incoming £	Outgoing £	£	£	£
18a. Restricted Funds						
Eden National	36,998	129,658	(61,108)	(77,068)	-	28,480
Eden Manchester	59,228	27,924	(29,451)	-	-	57,701
Eden Yorkshire & Humberside	129,828	2,066	(11,804)	(71,836)	-	48,254
Eden North West	3,800	14,113	(31,514)	19,775	-	6,174
Eden North East	-	12,918	(18,189)	5,101	-	(170)
Eden West Midlands	-	2,548	-	-	-	2,548
Eden East Midlands	668	469	(12,000)	10,863	-	-
Eden London	1,604	2,770	(1,236)	-	-	3,138
Eden Scotland	450	600	(20,582)	19,532	-	-
Eden Wales	10	837	-	-	-	847
Message Bus	-	22,025	(72,468)	60,443	-	10,000
Message North West	-	8,829	(25,943)	17,114	-	-
Message North East	-	19,404	(109,320)	89,916	-	-
Message Yorkshire & Humberside	-	10,674	(122,813)	112,139	-	-
Message West Midlands	-	6,942	(75,812)	68,870	-	-
Message East Midlands	10,199	31,215	(41,414)	-	-	-
Message London	-	49,150	(100,711)	51,561	-	-
Message Scotland	-	9,513	(72,257)	62,744	-	-
Message Wales	-	82,787	(145,042)	78,354	-	16,099
Message Global	-	5,859	-	(8)	-	5,851
Mission Central	-	16,091	(16,091)	-	-	-
Events	-	1,261	(1,261)	-	-	-
Higher	63,790	19,694	-	(2,424)	-	81,060
Message School of Evangelism	2,645	16,975	(19,620)	-	-	-
Studio Sessions	-	760	(760)	-	-	-
Message Bands	-	7,345	(7,345)	-	-	-
Advance	-	202,971	(202,971)	-	-	-
Respect Me	-	8,825	(8,825)	-	-	-
No More Knives	20,184	68,301	(44,115)	(18,916)	-	25,454
Enable	10,132	-	-	(156)	-	9,976
Prisons	50	147,548	(251,693)	105,405	-	1,310
Proximity	-	83,418	(42,594)	-	-	40,824
Message Live	-	690	(690)	-	-	-
Love Wythenshawe	8,371	743	(8,840)	(217)	-	57
Love Where You Live	1,115	250	(171)	101	-	1,295
Community Grocery	78,225	1,037,873	(1,109,503)	-	-	6,595
Festival Manchester	-	17,487	-	(17,487)	-	-
Message Community Church	-	80,483	(62,551)	-	-	17,932
Street Pastors	-	8,906	(17,207)	8,301	-	-
Business Enterprises	-	340	-	(340)	-	-
MEC Enterprises	2,000	1,414	(3,414)	-	-	-
MEC Neal Street Espresso	-	5,841	(5,841)	-	-	-
MEC Apprentice Funding	-	29,882	(80,584)	50,702	-	-
	429,297	2,197,400	(2,835,741)	572,469	-	363,425

THE MESSAGE TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

YEAR ENDING 31 AUGUST 2023

18. RECONCILIATION OF MOVEMENTS IN FUNDS (continued)

	Balance at 31/08/2022 £	Movement in Resources		Transfers Between Funds £	Gains on Revaluation Fixed Assets £	Balance at 31/08/2023 £
		Incoming £	Outgoing £			
18b. Unrestricted Funds						
General Fund	478,514	4,437,642	(1,127,179)	(3,112,011)	-	676,966
Designated Funds:						
- Eden Teams	85,013	22,858	(212,182)	204,080	-	99,769
- Message Bus	-	20,856	(261,130)	240,274	-	-
- Respect Me	-	55,535	(104,885)	49,349	-	-
- Other Associates	29,720	-	-	-	-	29,720
- Festival Manchester	-	4,539	(591)	(3,948)	-	-
- Community Grocery	-	2,106,286	(3,452,822)	1,346,536	-	-
- Message Community Church	-	48,731	(82,696)	52,281	-	18,316
- Higher	19,419	6,545	(4,785)	-	-	21,179
- Message School of Evangelism	-	71,210	348,462	(419,672)	-	-
- Mission Central	-	9,942	(176,683)	166,741	-	-
- Events	-	3,157	(101,576)	98,419	-	-
- Street Pastors	5,433	9,673	(21,178)	6,073	-	-
- Proximity	-	40,786	(60,644)	19,858	-	-
- Prisons Teams	-	39,346	(196,548)	157,202	-	-
- Message Hubs	-	175,307	(741,091)	565,784	-	-
- Premises	57,000	27,500	-	(84,500)	-	-
- Advance	-	23,085	(349,112)	326,027	-	-
- International Projects	70,000	-	-	-	-	70,000
- Investment Properties	450,000	-	-	-	-	450,000
- Future Mission Projects - Trust	2,206,591	-	-	(176,279)	-	2,030,312
- Revaluation Reserve - Trust	(41,301)	-	-	-	-	(41,301)
- Realised and Unrealised						
Gains on Investments - Trust	18,462	-	-	-	8,966	27,428
- Message Enterprise Centre	3,386,473	1,393,716	(1,078,213)	(50,701)	-	3,651,276
- Other Projects	-	-	(42,017)	42,017	-	-
	<u>6,765,324</u>	<u>8,496,714</u>	<u>(7,664,869)</u>	<u>(572,469)</u>	<u>8,966</u>	<u>7,033,666</u>
	<u>7,194,621</u>	<u>10,694,114</u>	<u>(10,500,610)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>8,966</u>	<u>7,397,091</u>

The Transfer of Funds from Unrestricted to Restricted, relates to support for Restricted Projects. There is one restricted fund in deficit at the year-end, Eden North East by £170 (2022 balance: £nil), since there is regular giving towards this ongoing project the Trustees are comfortable that the deficit will be covered by incoming resources in the next financial year. Last year no restricted funds were in deficit at the year-end.

The various Eden projects comprise teams of youth workers who regularly work within Secondary schools (e.g. taking RE lessons, assemblies, lunch clubs) preparing the groundwork for visits by the Message Bands, and other Christian bands, as well as being attached to a local church where they continue with after school activities. Since 1 September 2010, all these projects have operated through a partnership arrangement, with The Message Trust providing support and training, initially over a three-year period.

A number of gifts received in the year are restricted for Eden but not for a specific project. These are accumulated in the Eden National Fund and reallocated to specific Eden Projects at the end of the year as the Trustees see fit.

In 2023 £456,717 (2022: £426,262) was received by way of donations and personal support for employees who work in non-restricted areas of ministry, e.g. Bands, Advance, etc. The gifts received have been fully utilised by way of a contribution to the salaries and associated costs of the individual employees specifically supported. During the year £109,495 (2022: £295,789) was designated to Future Mission Projects for The Message Trust. This is a designated fund to cover the costs of Future Mission Projects, arising over the next five years.

THE MESSAGE TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

YEAR ENDING 31 AUGUST 2023

18. RECONCILIATION OF MOVEMENTS IN FUNDS (continued)

Unrestricted funds grew in the year by £268k to £7m (2022: £6.8m), including £198k net income on General Funds, as all projects were funded from income received in the year.

The Trustees have designated in total the equivalent of The Message Trust's Net Book Value of Fixed Assets and Investment Properties (including revaluation reserve) for future mission projects, which totals £1,989,011 at 31 August 2023 (2022: £2,165,290).

In addition, at the end of 2023 the Trustees have designated a total of £168,984 (2022: £162,482) general funds to Other Designated Funds – Eden Teams, the Message Community Church, mission in Schools (Higher) and other associates for future projects over the next three years.

When looking at the major restricted funds, Higher Funds £81,060 (2022: £63,790) are restricted for future Mission weeks in schools. Eden Manchester £57,701 (2022: £59,228) is held for three existing Eden teams (Farnworth, Wythenshawe and Sharston), Eden Yorkshire £48,254 (2022: £129,828), is funding for two existing Eden Yorkshire teams (Hunslet and Hackenthorpe), whilst other smaller Eden Funds are held for existing projects in other parts of the UK. The Proximity fund total of £40,824 (2022: £nil) is held to fund the development and launch (in June 2024) of a new online hub to resource and equip urban missionaries. The No More Knives fund has £25,454 (2022: £20,184) of restricted funds towards the cost of touring the school lessons in the coming year. The Message Community Church fund of £17,932 (2022: £nil) is held for the ongoing running costs of the Church which meets out of our HQ base in Sharston, and related events for its members. Community Grocery £6,595 (2022: £78,255) is being held for setting up new grocery stores in 2023/24.

19. ANALYSIS OF NET ASSETS BY FUND

	Tangible Fixed Assets £	Intangible Assets / Investments £	Net Current Assets £	Creditors Due after One Year £	2023 TOTAL £	2022 TOTAL £
Restricted Funds						
Eden National	-	-	28,480	-	28,480	36,998
Eden Manchester	-	-	57,701	-	57,701	59,228
Eden Yorkshire & Humberside	-	-	48,254	-	48,254	129,828
Eden North West	-	-	6,174	-	6,174	3,800
Eden North East	-	-	(170)	-	(170)	-
Eden West Midlands	-	-	2,548	-	2,548	-
Eden East Midlands	-	-	-	-	-	668
Eden London	-	-	3,138	-	3,138	1,604
Eden Scotland	-	-	-	-	-	450
Eden Wales	-	-	847	-	847	10
Message Bus	-	-	10,000	-	10,000	-
Message East Midlands	-	-	-	-	-	10,199
Message Wales	-	-	16,099	-	16,099	-
Higher Tour	-	-	81,060	-	81,060	63,790
Message School of Evangelism	-	-	-	-	-	2,645
Message Global	-	-	5,851	-	5,851	-
No More Knives	-	-	25,454	-	25,454	20,184
Enable	-	-	9,976	-	9,976	10,132
Prisons	-	-	1,310	-	1,310	50
Proximity	-	-	40,824	-	40,824	-
Love Wythenshawe	-	-	57	-	57	8,371
Love Where You Live	-	-	1,295	-	1,295	1,115
Community Grocery	-	-	6,595	-	6,595	78,225
Message Community Church	-	-	17,932	-	17,932	-
MEC Enterprises	-	-	-	-	-	2,000
	-	-	363,425	-	363,425	429,297
Unrestricted Funds	723,670	4,866,218	1,443,778	-	7,033,666	6,765,324
	723,670	4,866,218	1,807,203	-	7,397,091	7,194,621

THE MESSAGE TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS YEAR ENDING 31 AUGUST 2023

20. PENSIONS

The charity operates a defined contribution pension scheme on behalf of its employees. All contributions due have been fully paid.

21. CONTINGENCIES

The Trustees have confirmed that there were no contingent liabilities which should be disclosed at 31 August 2023 (2022: £Nil).

22. OPERATING LEASE COMMITMENTS

At 31 August 2023 the total of future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases are as follows:

The Message - Group	2023	2023	2022	2022
	Land and	Other	Land and	Other
	Buildings		Buildings	
	£	£	£	£
Leases which expire:				
Not later than one year	60,735	152,455	47,535	132,984
Later than one year and not later than five years	75,000	17,888	75,000	19,308

23. CAPITAL COMMITMENTS

At 31 August 2023 there were no outstanding capital commitments £Nil (2022: £Nil).

24. ANALYSIS OF CHANGES IN NET DEBT

	At	Cashflows	At
	01/09/2022		31/08/2023
	£	£	£
Cash	683,857	(271,544)	412,313
Loans due < 1 year	-	-	-
	683,857	(271,544)	412,313