

REGISTERED COMPANY NUMBER: 05156475 (England and Wales)
REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER: 1105173

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES AND
UNAUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30TH SEPTEMBER 2023
FOR
THE BLESS NETWORK

D E Ball & Co Limited
Chartered Accountants
15 Bridge Road
Wellington
Telford
Shropshire
TF1 1EB

THE BLESS NETWORK

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for the Year Ended 30th September 2023

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THE BLESS NETWORK
REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES
for the Year Ended 30th September 2023

The trustees who are also directors of the charity for the purposes of the Companies Act 2006, present their report with the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 30th September 2023. The trustees have adopted the provisions of Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019).

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

Objectives and activities

The objective of The Bless Network ('Bless'), is the advancement of the Christian faith throughout Europe in accordance with the articles of faith set out in the Company's articles of association. Bless uses a range of programmes to mobilise Christian individuals and groups to engage in relevant and missional strategies in contemporary European culture. Recognising the place of the local church at the heart of Christian mission, members of Bless based in France are supporting the planting of new churches.

Charity's Mission Statement

The Bless Network exists to explore and express the way of Jesus by activating the values of his Kingdom in the cultures of Europe.

ACHIEVEMENT AND PERFORMANCE

Charitable activities

Our local work in France, both in the planting of a bilingual / international church in Caen and our regular support of the refugee community in the city, continued strongly through the year. In particular, we are seeing growth in the local church community, with regular gatherings now established in Caen, Villedômer and Livarot. We were again able to supply vital supplies and support to refugees through the winter of 2022/23. We have continued to develop our "Seven Stories" training programme, offering both residential courses at Bethanie and off-site input into local churches, including Nashville, USA.

The Blesstival event was again well-attended and well-received. Our theme of the "Jesus Revolution" struck a deep chord with those present and the event culminated in seven baptisms.

The summer programs at Bethanie were led and managed by Ryan and Karen Hall with Jon and Anna White, and was both busy and fruitful. The Atelier weeks were particularly impactful, both on outside participants and on the local church, as was the now regular visit of Frontier Church from Pasadena, California.

The trustees have invested significant time in 2023 in further developing the relationship with Ryan and Karen Hall in-line with Bless' stated aim of their taking-on the management of Bethanie. For their part, Ryan and Karen made a loan of US\$ 95,000 to Bless in January 2023 through their US charity, Wayfinder Trust, based in Nashville, with a view to their raising further funds to buy Bethanie based on negotiations with the trustees during the year.

Ryan and Karen have been involved in summer programmes at Bethanie for several summers, and are developing a vision for the premises which is both complementary to, and a continuation of the objectives and purposes of the Bless Network.

The implementation of the decision of the UK to leave the European Union continues to significantly impact the charity's activities. UK interns and potential team members are now subject to visa restrictions and this has led to a slowing-down of UK applications for our intern programme, and to difficulties in recruiting long-term volunteers. The trustees are exploring creative ways to overcome these difficulties - not least through the mobilisation of France-based volunteers through the activities of our local churches. We are aware that this will change the relationship of UK nationals to the charity's work in France.

The centre of Bless activities is now Caen and so the trustees, having already decided that moving a building base for ministry from Bethanie to Caen is necessary, have taken advice from estate agent. This has been that in order to sell Bethanie, sewage treatment needs replacing, the old barns needs removing or renovating and the existing barn roof needs replacing. These works have been agreed by trustees. Nevertheless, Ryan and Karen Hall wish to continue the current charitable work of Bethanie as a retreat, prayer and spiritual discipleship centre. This means that selling it to them releases finance to purchase property for ministry in Caen whilst at the same time enabling the current use of Bethanie to continue. The money raised to purchase Bethanie will continue to be used for the same reasons in the building in Caen and Bethanie will also continue to function in its originally stated way. The trustees are keen to see this happen and so are negotiating selling the property to the Halls and considering also discounting the amount for the above mentioned necessary sale works to be done.

THE BLESS NETWORK
REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES
for the Year Ended 30th September 2023

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Financial position

Core running costs are continually kept under review and were 1% lower in 2022-23 compared to 2021-22; it is acknowledged that the trustees and volunteer team cover expenses incurred on behalf of Bless. None of the trustees or volunteers receive any remuneration.

Bless received a loan of US\$95,000 (£ 74,862) in January 2023 from Ryan & Karen Hall, repayable in December 2028 or the date of sale of Bethanie, whichever is the earlier. Part of the loan has been used during the year in repayment of a portion (28%) of the outstanding loan from Gerard & Chrissie Kelly (£ 32,500), funding a part-time church manager in France, and payment of the costs associated with negotiating the loan.

The net loss for the year of around £ 9,000 is almost entirely due to the funding of the church manager in France. Further losses are expected in the coming year as the loan monies are used to develop the work of the churches in France (Caen and Livarot), including larger premises in Caen.

Reserves policy

The policy on reserves is to maintain funds equivalent to keeping the charity (including VPLA in France) operational for 3 months before additional income is required from grants, donations or contributions from Bless programmes, i.e. approximately £7,500. Action is in hand to improve the reserves position by increasing the level of unrestricted income via donations and fund-raising, and by reducing the net operating costs of the charity.

Financial Review

Core running costs are continually kept under review; it is also acknowledged that the trustees and volunteer team often cover expenses incurred on behalf of Bless. None of the trustees or volunteers receive any remuneration.

The net loss for the year contrasts with the relatively large surplus in the previous year (2020-2021). This is due to the receipt of donations, allocated to the repair and maintenance of Bethanie, in the earlier year, but which were spent during the current financial year. Note that around £5,200 remains to be spent on projects and expenses associated with the likely transition of Bethanie to new managers.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Governing document

The charity is controlled by its governing document, the Memorandum and Articles of Association, and constitutes a limited company, limited by guarantee, as defined by the Companies Act 2006.

Organisational structure

Bless, established as a charitable company in June 2004, is overseen by a board of trustees, who delegate operational tasks to a core team of volunteers. The core team, living mainly in community in France, include trustees Gerard and Chrissie Kelly, who lead this team and operate as the link between it and the trustees. Additionally there continues to be volunteer 'reps' operating in the UK and the Netherlands, as well as France, assisting in the development, in both working practices and values, of a Europe wide Bless network.

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Registered Company number

05156475 (England and Wales)

Registered Charity number

1105173

Registered office

c/o Rising Brook Baptist Church
Burton Square
Stafford
Staffordshire
ST17 9LT

THE BLESS NETWORK

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES
for the Year Ended 30th September 2023

Trustees

Mrs C E Kelly
G J Kelly
T D Gwilliam
M J Young - Board Chairman
Prof J M Saker
Mrs C L Gwilliam
Mrs S C Harrington

Company Secretary

T M Herriott

Independent Examiner

D E Ball & Co Limited
Chartered Accountants
15 Bridge Road
Wellington
Telford
Shropshire
TF1 1EB

Bankers

The Co-operative Bank Plc
PO Box 250
Delf House
Southway
Skelmersdale
WN8 6WT

Approved by order of the board of trustees on 24th June 2024 and signed on its behalf by:

M J Young - Trustee

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF
THE BLESS NETWORK

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of The Bless Network ('the Company')

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the Company for the year ended 30th September 2023.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity's trustees of the Company (and also its directors for the purposes of company law) you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 ('the 2006 Act').

Having satisfied myself that the accounts of the Company are not required to be audited under Part 16 of the 2006 Act and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of your charity's accounts as carried out under Section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 ('the 2011 Act'). In carrying out my examination I have followed the Directions given by the Charity Commission under Section 145(5) (b) of the 2011 Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the Company as required by Section 386 of the 2006 Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements of Section 396 of the 2006 Act other than any requirement that the accounts give a true and fair view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or
4. the accounts have not been prepared in accordance with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for 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)).

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Russell Ball

D E Ball & Co Limited
Chartered Accountants
15 Bridge Road
Wellington
Telford
Shropshire
TF1 1EB

24th June 2024

THE BLESS NETWORK

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
for the Year Ended 30th September 2023

	Notes	Unrestricted fund £	Restricted fund £	30.9.23 Total funds £	30.9.22 Total funds £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM					
Donations and legacies		10,146	-	10,146	16,400
Charitable activities					
Go2Bless		9,461	-	9,461	7,699
Year2Bless		1,226	-	1,226	1,814
Bethanie		18,412	-	18,412	15,208
Management & administration		6,573	-	6,573	6,713
Total		<u>45,818</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>45,818</u>	<u>47,834</u>
EXPENDITURE ON					
Raising funds		216	-	216	1,254
Charitable activities					
Go2Bless		6,583	-	6,583	4,478
Year2Bless		649	-	649	317
Bethanie		20,230	-	20,230	28,025
Management & administration		25,251	-	25,251	19,655
SOS Caen		1,840	-	1,840	1,538
Total		<u>54,769</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>54,769</u>	<u>55,267</u>
NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)		(8,951)	-	(8,951)	(7,433)
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS					
Total funds brought forward		84,610	177,438	262,048	269,481
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD		<u><u>75,659</u></u>	<u><u>177,438</u></u>	<u><u>253,097</u></u>	<u><u>262,048</u></u>

The notes form part of these financial statements

THE BLESS NETWORK

BALANCE SHEET
30th September 2023

	Notes	Unrestricted fund £	Restricted fund £	30.9.23 Total funds £	30.9.22 Total funds £
FIXED ASSETS					
Tangible assets	5	196,262	177,438	373,700	374,669
CURRENT ASSETS					
Debtors	6	122	-	122	5,856
Cash at bank		47,434	-	47,434	6,779
		<u>47,556</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>47,556</u>	<u>12,635</u>
CREDITORS					
Amounts falling due within one year	7	(11,258)	-	(11,258)	(10,717)
NET CURRENT ASSETS		<u>36,298</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>36,298</u>	<u>1,918</u>
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES		232,560	177,438	409,998	376,587
CREDITORS					
Amounts falling due after more than one year	8	(156,901)	-	(156,901)	(114,539)
NET ASSETS		<u>75,659</u>	<u>177,438</u>	<u>253,097</u>	<u>262,048</u>
FUNDS	10				
Unrestricted funds				75,659	84,610
Restricted funds				<u>177,438</u>	<u>177,438</u>
TOTAL FUNDS				<u>253,097</u>	<u>262,048</u>

The charitable company is entitled to exemption from audit under Section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 for the year ended 30th September 2023.

The members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its financial statements for the year ended 30th September 2023 in accordance with Section 476 of the Companies Act 2006.

The trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for

- (a) ensuring that the charitable company keeps accounting records that comply with Sections 386 and 387 of the Companies Act 2006 and
- (b) preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company as at the end of each financial year and of its surplus or deficit for each financial year in accordance with the requirements of Sections 394 and 395 and which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 relating to financial statements, so far as applicable to the charitable company.

The notes form part of these financial statements

THE BLESS NETWORK

BALANCE SHEET - continued
30th September 2023

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to charitable companies subject to the small companies regime.

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Trustees and authorised for issue on 24th June 2024 and were signed on its behalf by:

M J Young - Trustee

The notes form part of these financial statements

THE BLESS NETWORK

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS **for the Year Ended 30th September 2023**

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of preparing the financial statements

The financial statements of the charitable company, which is a public benefit entity under FRS 102, have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019)', Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' and the Companies Act 2006. The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention.

Income

All income is recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities once the charity has entitlement to the funds, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably.

Expenditure

Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to that expenditure, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all cost related to the category. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings they have been allocated to activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

Tangible fixed assets

Depreciation is provided at the following annual rates in order to write off each asset over its estimated useful life.

Motor vehicles	- 25% on reducing balance
Computer equipment	- 33% on cost

Taxation

The charity is exempt from corporation tax on its charitable activities.

Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds can be used in accordance with the charitable objectives at the discretion of the trustees.

Restricted funds 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.

2. NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)

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

	30.9.23	30.9.22
	£	£
Depreciation - owned assets	969	1,293
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

THE BLESS NETWORK

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued
for the Year Ended 30th September 2023

3. TRUSTEES' REMUNERATION AND BENEFITS

There were no trustees' remuneration or other benefits for the year ended 30th September 2023 nor for the year ended 30th September 2022.

Trustees' expenses

There were no trustees' expenses paid for the year ended 30th September 2023 nor for the year ended 30th September 2022.

4. COMPARATIVES FOR THE STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

	Unrestricted fund £	Restricted fund £	Total funds £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM			
Donations and legacies	16,247	153	16,400
Charitable activities			
Go2Bless	7,699	-	7,699
Year2Bless	1,814	-	1,814
Bethanie	15,208	-	15,208
Management & administration	6,713	-	6,713
Total	<u>47,681</u>	<u>153</u>	<u>47,834</u>
EXPENDITURE ON			
Raising funds	1,254	-	1,254
Charitable activities			
Go2Bless	4,478	-	4,478
Year2Bless	317	-	317
Bethanie	28,025	-	28,025
Management & administration	19,655	-	19,655
SOS Caen	1,538	-	1,538
Total	<u>55,267</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>55,267</u>
NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)	(7,586)	153	(7,433)
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS			
Total funds brought forward	92,196	177,285	269,481
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD	<u>84,610</u>	<u>177,438</u>	<u>262,048</u>

THE BLESS NETWORK

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued
for the Year Ended 30th September 2023

5. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Freehold property £	Motor vehicles £	Computer equipment £	Totals £
COST				
At 1st October 2022 and 30th September 2023	370,792	9,118	904	380,814
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
DEPRECIATION				
At 1st October 2022	-	5,241	904	6,145
Charge for year	-	969	-	969
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
At 30th September 2023	-	6,210	904	7,114
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
NET BOOK VALUE				
At 30th September 2023	370,792	2,908	-	373,700
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
At 30th September 2022	370,792	3,877	-	374,669
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>

6. DEBTORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	30.9.23 £	30.9.22 £
Inter-Charity account	-	4,948
Other debtor	122	908
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	122	5,856
	<hr/>	<hr/>

7. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	30.9.23 £	30.9.22 £
Other loans (see note 9)	5,000	5,000
Accrued expenses	6,258	5,717
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	11,258	10,717
	<hr/>	<hr/>

THE BLESS NETWORK

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued
for the Year Ended 30th September 2023

8. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE AFTER MORE THAN ONE YEAR

	30.9.23	30.9.22
	£	£
Other loans (see note 9)	156,901	114,539
	<u>156,901</u>	<u>114,539</u>

9. LOANS

An analysis of the maturity of loans is given below:

	30.9.23	30.9.22
	£	£
Amounts falling due within one year on demand:		
Other loans	5,000	5,000
	<u>5,000</u>	<u>5,000</u>
Amounts falling due between two and five years:		
Other loans - 2-5 years	156,901	114,539
	<u>156,901</u>	<u>114,539</u>

10. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS

	At 1.10.22 £	Net movement in funds £	At 30.9.23 £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	84,610	(8,951)	75,659
Restricted funds			
Restricted Fund	177,438	-	177,438
	<u>177,438</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>177,438</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>262,048</u>	<u>(8,951)</u>	<u>253,097</u>

Net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	45,818	(54,769)	(8,951)
	<u>45,818</u>	<u>(54,769)</u>	<u>(8,951)</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>45,818</u>	<u>(54,769)</u>	<u>(8,951)</u>

THE BLESS NETWORK

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued
for the Year Ended 30th September 2023

10. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

Comparatives for movement in funds

	At 1.10.21 £	Net movement in funds £	At 30.9.22 £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	92,196	(7,586)	84,610
Restricted funds			
Restricted Fund	177,285	153	177,438
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>269,481</u>	<u>(7,433)</u>	<u>262,048</u>

Comparative net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	47,681	(55,267)	(7,586)
Restricted funds			
Restricted Fund	153	-	153
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>47,834</u>	<u>(55,267)</u>	<u>(7,433)</u>

A current year 12 months and prior year 12 months combined position is as follows:

	At 1.10.21 £	Net movement in funds £	At 30.9.23 £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	92,196	(16,537)	75,659
Restricted funds			
Restricted Fund	177,285	153	177,438
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>269,481</u>	<u>(16,384)</u>	<u>253,097</u>

THE BLESS NETWORK

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued
for the Year Ended 30th September 2023

10. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

A current year 12 months and prior year 12 months combined net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	93,499	(110,036)	(16,537)
Restricted funds			
Restricted Fund	153	-	153
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>93,652</u>	<u>(110,036)</u>	<u>(16,384)</u>

Unrestricted funds

These represent funds held to meet the reserves policy. Any surplus funds will be used to fulfil the charitable objectives. Details of both are provided in the Report of the Trustees.

Restricted funds

These relate to the funds donated towards the purchase of the property "Bethanie" at Heurtevent, France.

11. RELATED PARTY DISCLOSURES

There were no related party transactions for the year ended 30th September 2023.

THE BLESS NETWORK

DETAILED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
for the Year Ended 30th September 2023

	30.9.23 £	30.9.22 £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS		
Donations and legacies		
Gifts	1,571	2,360
Donations - general	7,716	6,112
Donations - Bethanie	426	5,203
SOS Caen	433	2,725
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	10,146	16,400
Charitable activities		
Go2Bless	9,461	7,699
Year/Time2Bless	1,226	1,814
Bethanie facilities	18,412	15,208
Management fees	6,573	6,713
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	35,672	31,434
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total incoming resources	45,818	47,834
EXPENDITURE		
Raising donations and legacies		
Publicity and promotion	-	1,038
Platform fees	216	216
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	216	1,254
Charitable activities		
Insurance	2,916	2,629
Repairs and maintenance	326	-
Motor and travel expenses	6,462	6,902
Gifts passed to third parties	1,571	2,360
Mission costs - Bethanie	20,233	28,025
Mission costs - Go2Bless	6,583	4,478
Mission costs - Year/Time2Bless	530	317
Mission costs - SOS Caen	1,840	1,538
Church manager	8,079	-
Sundry expenses	2,654	2,058
Accountancy and legal costs	2,390	4,413
Depreciation of vehicle	969	1,293
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	54,553	54,013
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total resources expended	54,769	55,267
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Net expenditure	<u>(8,951)</u>	<u>(7,433)</u>

This page does not form part of the statutory financial statements