

**For Ethiopian Heritage Fund
The Charity Commission Return 2023**

Charity Number 1110969

Address

Castle House
Eardisley
HR3 6NT

Trustees

Blair Priday
Catherine de Meillac
Cathy Giangrande
Judith van Helden

Executive

Blair Priday

Independent Examiner

Helen Powers
The Coach House
Lower Breinton
HR4 7PG

Constitution of the Trust

The Ethiopian Heritage Fund was constituted under a trust deed on 9 March 2005 and registered with the commission on 22 August 2005.

Trustees are appointed by the incumbent trustees in conjunction with the executive.

Mission statement

Working with national heritage organisations, the Ethiopian Orthodox Church and the regional bureaux of culture, the charity undertakes conservation and documentation of the churches' artifacts and paintings. It also provides advice and education on their maintenance. Its other stated aim is to raise awareness of these beautiful objects within Ethiopia and internationally and to increase tourism in rural areas.

Reserves Policy

Our work is project-based and is subject to the approval of several Ethiopian agencies and the availability of experts to undertake the projects. It is therefore difficult to predict accurately the spending year to year. We aim to have sufficient reserves to exceed any unfunded expenditure predicted for the year. At the year-end reserves stood at £17859.

Public Benefit Statement

Trustees are aware of the Charity Commission guidance on Charity and Public Benefit and confirm that they have complied with the duty in Section 17 of the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to it. They consider the full information which follows in this annual report, about the Trust's aims, activities and achievements in the many areas of interest that the Trust supports, demonstrates the benefit to its beneficiaries, and through them to the public, that arise from those activities.

Financial Year 2023

Since the charity was set up in 2005, the Ethiopian Heritage Fund has been actively involved in the conservation and monitoring of the condition of manuscripts, icons, crosses and wall-paintings in the churches of Ethiopia.

The charity has also undertaken training of local guides and conservation professionals in order to enhance their knowledge and appreciation of the churches, their history and the remarkable craftsmanship of their creators. It enables locals to provide informed commentary for tourism clients.

Communities actively worship in the churches. They appreciate the work we undertake to conserve the important history of these ancient buildings. Our work also helps to alert the community and the cultural bureaux of the potential and real threats to the buildings and their decorations.

Tourism had been growing in these rural areas as travellers seek out these authentic places of worship bringing much needed revenue. The war has dramatically reduced the number of tourists visiting Tigray. However, the end of the war and the rebuilding of the infrastructure may see visitors returning in greater numbers.

In 2019 we began a survey of the wall-paintings in the rock-hewn churches of Tigray. This is an important source of information as it will form a base from which the heritage authorities can assess the conditions of the wall-paintings over time.

Covid and the civil war which was centred in Tigray made it difficult to complete as we were unable to visit the region until 2023.

In September 2023, Lisa Shekede and Stephen Rickerby returned to Tigray to visit the important wall-painted churches to assess the impact the war had had on the paintings. Some churches had been shelled as people took shelter in them.

The survey of 17 sites was completed and the report written by October 2023. The findings can be viewed at through the link below.

<https://www.ethiopianheritagefund.org/events-publication>

Damage to and loss of wall paintings in Tigray's churches are occurring at an alarming rate. Although natural deterioration relating to geological context and environmental exposure are longstanding and real concerns, the greater and more immediate threats come from human action (and inaction). Well-meaning but misguided local attempts at renovation are a primary cause of deliberate or unintended obliteration or destruction of paintings. Survey findings to date indicate that almost 20% of all known wall paintings in Tigray have disappeared in the last 50 years; half of this amount has been lost in the last 10 years.

The post-war visit revealed that the war has also had a detrimental effect on some of the church sites. More work will be needed to assess what the long-term risk that poses to these unique sites and their paintings. Other unvisited churches were said to have sustained some bombardment but in the short time available, it was difficult to assess how urgent any conservation measures might be.

These trips and the report were funded by the Gerda Henkel Stiftung.

In 2023, we also were able to fund the digitisation of historical information about the rock-hewn churches and their paintings held at Ethiopian Heritage Authority in Addis Ababa. To have access to an historic data base is invaluable when trying to assess the deterioration of the churches over time.

These two initiatives will prove invaluable in assessing the war damage to the churches and to inform a conservation strategy for the future.

Financial Review

Because of the war, it has been difficult to make plans for our work in Ethiopia. In 2023, we undertook a survey of war damage to the important rock-hewn churches in Tigray. We also completed an extensive report detailing the wall-paintings surveyed in our trip in 2019. In total we received £24,307 from The Gerda Henkel Stiftung

We also received £2,218 in private donations. We did not actively seek any further funding as it was not clear whether we would be able to safely undertake work in the region.

At the beginning of 2023, the charity had cash reserves of £35,301.

The original project of 2019 was to undertake a further visit to document smaller churches with less known paintings.

However, given the length and intensity of the war, Gerda Henkel Stiftung agreed that we could repurpose the funds to visit the important painting sites to assess the impact of the war on their condition.

The visit to Tigray was successfully concluded and later in the year, an extensive report on the sites and condition of the churches was completed. This report was a culmination of the visits undertaken since 2019. (see link above).

Funding of the digitisation project of £3700 came from our general funds.

At the end of 2023 the charity had £17,859 in reserves.

Future Projects

EHF has undertaken to write a report on the war damage to the condition of the paintings in the churches visited in September 2023.

EHF has also been asked to return to Dengelat to undertake a survey of the incredible wall paintings found in this abandoned church. Because the way up to the entrance collapsed some time ago, access is only available by being hoisted up the cliff face. The project will be a unique chance to make a lasting comprehensive record of the church site and its incredible paintings.

Shelling had damaged Debre Tsion where the plaster was already in a concerning state. It appears that quite a large amount of plaster has now fallen from the walls and ceiling and more may be in a very precarious condition. The roof of this church has recently been repaired with the support of the World Monuments Fund. EHF intend to return to Debre Tsion to try and conserve the plaster and paintings of this nationally important church.



CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Charity Name
Ethiopian Heritage Fund

No (if any)
1110969

Receipts and payments accounts

CC16a

For the period
from

Period start date
1/1/2023

To

Period end date
12/31/2023

Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds to the nearest £	Restricted funds to the nearest £	Endowment funds to the nearest £	Total funds to the nearest £	Last year to the nearest £
A1 Receipts					
Grants and donations	2,218	24,307	-	26,525	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total (Gross income for AR)	2,218	24,307	-	26,525	-
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	2,218	24,307	-	26,525	-
A3 Payments					
Survey and report	-	38835	-	38,835	-
exhibition	-	-	-	-	2,178
digitisation	3,700	-	-	3,700	-
cost of sales	1,432	-	-	1,432	987.2
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	5,132	38,835	-	43,967	3,165
A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total payments	5,132	38,835	-	43,967	3,165
Net of receipts/(payments)	- 2,914	- 14,528	-	- 17,442	- 3,165
A5 Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	35,301	-	-	35,301	38,466
Cash funds this year end	32,387	- 14,528	-	17,859	35,301

Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B1 Cash funds		35,301	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
	Total cash funds	35,301	-	-
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))	Agreement Error	Agreement Error	OK

	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B2 Other monetary assets		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-

	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
B3 Investment assets			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-

	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-

	Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
B5 Liabilities			-	
			-	
			-	
			-	
			-	

Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees

Signature	Print Name	Date of approval



Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

**Report to the trustees/
members of**

Ethiopian Heritage Fund

**On accounts for the year
ended**

31/12/23

**Charity no
(if any)**

1110969

Set out on pages

1-4 Annual Report
1 Accounts

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31/12/2023.

**Responsibilities and
basis of report**

As the charity trustees of the Trust, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

**Independent
examiner's statement**

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention (other than that disclosed below *) in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- ☐ accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act or
- ☐ the accounts do not accord with the accounting records

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

** Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply.*

Signed:

Helen Powers

Date:

15th October 2024

Name:

HELEN POWERS

**Relevant professional
qualification(s) or body
(if any):**

TEACHER (retired)

Address:

COACH HOUSE

BREINTON COURT

HEREFORD HR4 7PG