

**ABBHEY UNITED REFORMED CHURCH,
ROMSEY CHARITY**

Registered No 1132706

**ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS FOR
YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023**

ABBEY UNITED REFORMED CHURCH, ROMSEY CHARITY

Annual Report and Accounts for the year ending 31 December 2023

Page 1 – Introduction

The accounts are presented in a format that follows the requirements of the accounting regulations introduced by the Financial Reporting Standard for Charities (SORP FRS 102) with an annual income of less than £250,000 and interpreted, as approved, for religious orders. The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of financial statements

Pages 2-6 – Trustees Annual Report

These pages contain the annual report of the Trustees, which cover the following aspects: Administration, Organisation structure, Objectives, Achievements and Financial Review.

Page 7 – Balance Sheet

This page shows the Church's assets and liabilities. The "tangible fixed assets", comprising the church, hall, manse and caretaker's residence, being vested in the United Reformed Church (Wessex) Trust Limited as trustee, are not capitalized into the accounts

Page 8 – Statement of Financial Activities

This statement is a receipts and payments account and combines all of the Church's funds together. It shows separate columns for the General Funds, Designated Funds and Restricted Funds, all of which are shown in detail on the subsequent pages.

Page 9 – General Fund

The General Fund represents the funds that can be used for any purpose without restriction. 2022 income/expenditure is compared with that for the previous year.

Pages 10 & 11 – Designated Funds and Restricted Funds

The Suspense Fund is the only Designated Fund. It is the aggregate of bequests and large donations, which do not have any restrictions on their use. The Church is free to bring such resources back into the General Funds if so wished.

Restricted Funds are those that can only be used for the purpose specified at the time the funds were received. They include: the Communion Fund (set aside for the assistance of those in hardship and used at the discretion of the Minister of the Church), the TWW Fund (a bequest by a former organist of the Church for the replacement/refurbishment of the organ), the Organ Fund (also for the replacement/refurbishment of the organ).

Page 12 – Notes to the Accounts

These notes provide technical information about the basis of preparation of the accounts.

Page 13 – Report by the Independent Examiner

This independent examination of the accounts is a requirement of the Charities Act 2011. Whilst less comprehensive than an audit, it is designed to be suitable for an organisation of the Church's type and size.

Trustees Annual Report for year ended 31 December 2023

The trustees present the annual report and accounts for Abbey United Reformed Church for the year ended 31 December 2023.

Reference and Administration

Charity name Abbey United Reformed Church Romsey Charity

Charity Registration No. 1132706

Contact Address Abbey URC Romsey
The Abbey
Romsey
Hants SO51 8EL

www.abbeyurc.org.uk

email: revd.mike13@gmail.com

Trustees The list of all trustees who served during 2023 and during 2024 until the date of approval of this report in alphabetical order is as follows:-

Sylvia Anderson-Lewis
Sarah Beaman
Angela Bevan
Wai Chan
Gillian Coates
Howard Coulson
Carole Cox
Derek Hiscocks
Valerie Lloyd
Mike Perrott
Shirley Smith

Minister Mike Perrott

Independent Examiner Bell & Co. Chartered Accountants
Unit 1(c)
Chickenhall Lane
Eastleigh
Hants.
SO50 6PQ

Bankers Nat West Bank plc
6, Market Place
Romsey
Hants
SO51 8YS

Structure, Governance and Management Governing Document

The church is administered in accordance with the Governing Document issued by the United Reformed Church.

Recruitment and Appointment of Trustees

Serving Elders and the Minister are the Charity Trustees. Elders are members of the church who have been chosen to serve because they have appropriate gifts and skills. They are elected by Church Meeting and normally serve between one to three years after which they may seek re-election.

Organisational Structure

All attendees of the church constitute the Church Meeting which meets five times each year. Only church members may vote at the Church Meeting but non-members are welcome to attend. Church Meeting lays down the procedures to be followed, which conform to the Scheme of Union of the United Reformed Church.

The day to day running of the charity is delegated to the Elders Meeting. The Elders' Meeting is normally chaired by the Minister and generally meets monthly. The Elders Meeting is responsible for the spiritual affairs within the church as well as day to day operational matters and pastoral oversight of the congregation.

Most affairs are delegated to their respective Committees which meet as required and report back to the Elders' meeting who consider decisions as requested. Abbey United Reformed Church, Romsey operates in Hampshire.

Objectives and Activities

The objective of the Charity is the advancement of the Christian faith for the benefit of the public in accordance with the Scheme of Union of the United Reformed Church and has regard to the Charity's Commission's guidance on public benefit. The Charity provides regular public worship for all, promoting the Christian faith, teaching the faith to all ages, it offers training, nurture and activities for children and young people. It serves the community, giving pastoral care and support to members and others in need, particularly those in sickness, distress or poverty. It provides premises and resources for community groups and activities.

Achievements and Performance

The church has been presented with some interesting challenges in 2023, not least with maintaining our buildings as well as trying to reach out to new people, whilst also supporting existing charities with whom we have long established relationships.

We continue to hold our weekly Sunday morning services of worship, the first Sunday morning of the month also offering the sacrament of Holy Communion to all believers. The first Sunday evening of each month usually sees the Minister leading a Bible Study on zoom which offers the opportunity to explore further the Gospel text used during the morning service. These Bible Studies are also held through Lent and Advent.

A further opportunity for worship and receiving Communion is offered on the third Thursday of each month in the comfort of our Lounge. Some members find the seating and more informal atmosphere of this 30 minute service more comfortable than the pews and longer Sunday services in the church.

In addition to the Christian festival celebrations, special Sunday morning services held during the year have included our Rededication service giving members an opportunity to renew their commitment to our Lord and the church fellowship, our Community Awareness Service which focused on the work of a local youth charity, George's Trust, hosting the annual Battle of Britain Service with the local RAF Association, celebrating Harvest Festival with donated goods being given to the Romsey Community Pantry, a special service learning about the work of the URC Commitment for Life project, our Toy Service at which members brought new toys for collection by Southampton Social Services for distribution on Christmas Day, and Prison Sunday service at which the Chaplain from HMP Winchester spoke about his work.

Other special services included hosting a Service of Remembering for the local Dementia Support Group, our annual All Souls service to which invitations were sent to the recently bereaved known to the church, the closing service for Romsey Festival 2023 and an Advent Carol Service supported by members of the Hampshire School Teachers Choir. We also experimented with changing our Christmas Candlelight Service from Sunday evening to the Saturday evening before Christmas and this proved popular with more families attending.

Other links with the wider community and charities included adopting a quarterly charity bringing information about its work through church displays and church magazine articles, these being George's Trust, Christian Aid, the local Oasis Christian Bookshop and the Fellowship of Reconciliation. The church Table Tennis group also continued to welcome local sufferers of Dementia and their carers.

Other support for Christian Aid included joining with five local churches in hosting one of the Lent Lunches, six churches each hosting a lunch during the period of Lent, the proceeds from which were donated to Christian Aid; and holding a Book Sale for their funds. In addition, proceeds from coffee after services and members' collection jars were given to Commitment for Life who works closely with Christian Aid.

A basket was permanently available at the back of church for members to leave goods which were then given to Romsey Food Bank and Community Pantry. In addition, collection receptacles were available for used postage stamps for the Wessex Cancer Trust and for foreign currency coins passed to the Children's Society as part of their fundraising efforts.

During November friends collected toiletries and treats for Amber, a charity working with women working on the streets and in sex clubs of Southampton. These were collected by a member of Amber during our service at the start of Advent who told us how the demand for their services had expanded and our gifts were so welcomed.

The church has been used for events in both the Romsey Festival and the Romsey Chamber Music Festivals as well as hosting concerts by local groups. Many of these groups give their time free of charge and donated the proceeds of their concert to worthy causes.

Our church buildings have presented problems, with a significant amount of reserves being used to repairs to a leak in the church roof. This has meant other works have been placed on hold until these works were completed. However, we have been pleased that the weekly meetings of Alcoholics Anonymous and the monthly meetings of Romsey branch of Amnesty International were not affected by these works and continued throughout the year in our hall and Lounge, as

have regular hirers offering a range of activities from drama, music, and health as well as family parties and art exhibitions.

The church continued to offer facilities for baptisms, weddings and funerals. Unfortunately, several of these were cancelled due to the scaffolding in the church with couples deciding to seek alternative venues. In total five children were baptised, two couples were married and two funerals were held in the church, with the Minister taking other funerals at the newly opened local crematorium. As part of the “all welcoming” policy of the church, the church decided to register to hold Same Sex marriages with registration being expected in early 2024.

Some members of the church are designated as Church Friends, these being encouraged to maintain contact with people within the fellowship. The Minister and other designated members also visited those in Care Homes or were housebound, often taking them flowers on behalf of the church fellowship. Christmas and Easter cards were sent to friends no longer able to attend church activities so that they knew they are not forgotten. Our BALM Group continued to meet each month to offer comfort to bereaved people trying to adjust after the loss of a loved one whilst older members enjoyed an opportunity to chat and reminisce during our Annual Over Nineties Tea.

Looking at the provision for youth, the congregation continued to support the fund-raising efforts for one of its youth members to enable him to attend the Scouts international Jamboree in South Korea. With only a few young people in the fellowship they were also encouraged to join in wider URC Synod events, whilst being offered weekly opportunities to meet and discuss issues relating their Christian faith within today's society.

In an endeavour to seek to meet the needs of younger children and their families a weekly Coffee Morning was started offering a Warm Space to young parents and relatives after they had taken their children to school. A Christmas Storytime was also held, and it is hoped to develop these more in 2024.

2023 saw the national United Reformed Church look at its distribution of Ministers throughout the denomination. For Romsey this will see a change in Ministerial leadership from sharing one Minister with our sister church in Braishfield to sharing two Ministers with churches in Braishfield, plus three other churches in Southampton. This will offer new and exciting opportunities for working together across a wider area in the future.

Financial Review

The principal source of income is offerings made at church and offerings by standing order made by church members and attendees. Gift Aid is also claimed for donations made by taxpayers who have signed Gift Aid forms and the church also claims under the small donations scheme (GASDS). There is also income from letting out the church and church hall.

Total income for the year was £139,561, a decrease of £10,868 from 2022. In 2022, there was a bequest of £50,000, a donation of £20,000 and insurance receipt of over £9,000 for loss of income from letting the church and hall in 2020 and 2021 due to Covid 19. In 2023, Wessex Synod made a grant of £55,590 towards the cost of repairs to the church roof and ceiling.

Outgoings increased from £96,719 in 2022 to £182,574 in 2023. The main reason was the £92,161 cost of repairs to the church roof and ceiling.

Net fund balances at the end of 2023 were £168,950, a reduction of £43,014 from the £211,964 at the end of 2022. As explained above the main reason for the reduction was the church's £36,570 contribution to the cost of church roof and ceiling repairs offset in part by profit from asset sales.

Reserves Policy

We would normally have aimed to have one year's running costs in reserve but the large legacies we have recently received have put our reserves above this level. The expenditure from reserves of £46,411 in 2015 and the £92,597 cost of repairs in 2023 highlight the need to make provision for future large outlays on our old buildings so the current level of reserves is justified by the obligation we have to maintain and repair the old buildings as well as the running costs to achieve the objectives of the church. We are currently awaiting estimates for the cost of necessary repairs to all four buildings.

In 2023 the General Fund reduced by £13,090. The Designated Fund reduced by £28,818 mainly being the net cost of the church roof and ceiling repairs and the Synod grant less a gain on sale of investments of £6,329

Declaration

The Trustees declare that they have approved the Trustees Report above.

Signed on behalf of the Charity's Trustees:

Signature:

Full Name: Reverend Mike Perrott MA

Position: Minister & Chairman of Trustees

Date: 22nd May 2024

ABBAY UNITED REFORMED CHURCH ROMSEY CHARITY

STATEMENT OF ASSETS & LIABILITIES AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2023

2022 £	STATEMENT OF ASSETS & LIABILITIES	2023 £
	Cash Funds	
53,685.32	National Savings	0.00
21,292.84	National Westminster Current Account	20,398.93
31,152.06	National Westminster Reserve Account	10,548.77
4,331.78	CAF current account	1,279.36
	CAF Gold savings account	50,012.95
110,462.00	Total Cash Funds	82,240.01
	Investments	
39,965.39	M&G Charifund at Cost	27,953.73
(67,155.09)	Market value at 31 December	(48,676.34)
60,000.00	CCLA COIF Ethical Investment at Cost	40,967.22
(61,080.45)	Market value at 31 December	(45,801.18)
99,965.39	Total Investments	68,920.95
	Creditors	
(261.00)	Magazine Advance Payments	(386.50)
	Synod VAT repayment	(335.00)
(261.00)	Total Creditors	(721.50)
	Debtors	
730.90	Donations	
1066.78	Electricity refund	
	Total VAT recovery	18,510.10
1,797.68	Total Debtors	18,510.10
211,964.07	NET ASSETS REPRESENTING	168,949.56
58,615.90	General Funds	45,525.55
136,938.12	Designated Funds	108,120.48
16,410.05	Restricted Funds	15,303.53
211,964.07		168,949.56

ABBEY UNITED REFORMED CHURCH, ROMSEY CHARITY

FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR 2023

2022 Total Funds £		2023 Total Funds £	General Fund £	Designated Funds £	Restricted Funds £
INCOMING RESOURCES					
39,662.16	Offerings including Gift Aid	38,540.75	38,540.75		
78,958.87	Grants & Donations incl. Gift Aid	9,510.86	9,510.86		
15,675.36	Use of Premises	18,452.02	18,452.02		
3,306.93	Fundraising	2,576.12	2,576.12		
2,321.08	Collections for Others incl. Gift Aid	1,654.87			1,654.87
	Manse maintenance grant	1,647.88	1,647.88		
	Church maintenance grant	55,590.50		55,590.50	
9,251.27	Insurance claim				
	Gain from sale of Charifund and CCLA units	8,955.56	1,876.89	6,328.92	749.75
1,253.69	Interest & dividends	2,632.28	551.67	1,860.24	220.37
150,429.36	Total Incoming resources	139,560.84	73,156.19	63,779.66	2,624.99
RESOURCES USED					
42,636.00	Ministry & Mission Contributions	42,636.00	42,636.00		
3,079.47	Other Ministerial	2,737.41	2,400.77		336.64
36,291.89	Premises Costs less VAT recovered	126,484.76	33,887.46	92,597.30	
5,646.26	Other Expenses	6,922.31	6,922.31		
2,921.08	Donations to Charities	2,054.87	400.00		1,654.87
6,144.40	Piano & Organ	1,740.00			1,740.00
96,719.10	Total Resources Used	182,575.35	86,246.54	92,597.30	3,731.51
53,710.26	Net Incoming / (outgoing) before Transfers	(43,014.51)	(13,090.35)	(28,817.64)	(1,106.52)
Transfers					
53,710.26	Net Incoming/(outgoing)	(43,014.51)	(13,090.35)	(28,817.64)	(1,106.52)
158,253.81	Balances at beginning of year	211,964.07	58,615.90	136,938.12	16,410.05
211,964.07	Balances at end of Year	168,949.56	45,525.55	108,120.48	15,303.53

ABBEY UNITED REFORMED CHURCH ROMSEY CHARITY

GENERAL FUND

INCOMING RESOURCES

	2022 £	2023 £
Offerings		
Envelopes	4,104.00	3,470.00
Standing Orders	25,763.07	25,683.00
Loose Cash	2,026.19	2,164.45
Income Tax recovered	7,768.90	7,223.30
Donations		
Individual & Community	7,480.87	7,855.86
Wedding & Funerals	1,478.00	1,655.00
Hall Lettings	15,675.36	18,452.02
Fundraising		
Magazine	780.98	579.56
Other fundraising	2,525.95	1,996.56
Other		
Manse maintenance grant		1,647.88
Insurance claim	9,251.27	
Gain from sale of Charifund & CCLA units		1,876.89
Interest & Dividends	295.36	551.67
Total Incoming Resources	77,149.95	73,156.19
Deduct total resources used	86,750.31	86,246.54
Net incoming/(outgoing) before transfers	(9,600.36)	(13,090.35)
Transfer from:		
Designated Funds	60,000.00	
Restricted Funds		
Total Transfers	60,000.00	
Net Incoming/(outgoing)	50,399.64	(13,090.35)
Balance in General Reserve Fund at beginning of year	8,216.26	58,615.90
Balance in General Reserve Fund at end of year	58,615.90	45,525.55

RESOURCES USED

	2022 £	2023 £
Ministry		
M&M	42,636.00	42,636.00
General Ministry	1,169.36	906.92
Travel	1,531.80	1,493.85
Premises Costs		
Manse Utilities	1,446.97	1,032.87
Manse Council tax	2,511.44	2,864.54
Manse maintenance	0.00	1,671.37
Church Utilities	3,418.97	3,792.90
Church Insurance	4,983.36	5,771.01
Church Maintenance	3,139.45	3,257.85
Hall Utilities	3,869.50	4,016.20
Hall Insurance	1,063.57	1,231.68
Hall Maintenance	2,893.46	4,710.57
Caretaking	3,300.00	3,666.00
1 Abbey Water Utilities	606.78	718.77
1 Abbey Water Insurance	1,101.56	988.70
1 Abbey Water Maintenance	6,831.83	165.00
Other Expenses		
Music	2,369.11	3,089.35
Magazine (printing & electronic)	1,067.50	1,262.63
Administration & Other	2,209.65	2,570.33
Charity Donations	600.00	400.00
Total Resources Used	86,750.31	86,246.54

ABBAY UNITED REFORMED CHURCH ROMSEY CHARITY

DESIGNATED FUND

2022		2023
Suspense Fund £		Suspense Fund £
INCOMING RESOURCES		
70,000.00	Legacies & Donations	
	Synod Grants less VAT recovered	55,590.50
	Gain from sale of Charifund & CCLA Units	6,328.92
849.75	Interest & Dividends	1,860.24
70,849.75	Total Incoming resources	63,779.66
RESOURCES USED		
	Church ceiling refurbishment less VAT	92,160.50
	Curtain material	436.80
1,125.00	Church organ pipe refurbishment	
1,125.00	Total Resources Used	92,597.30
69,724.75	Net Incoming / (outgoing) before Transfers	(28,817.60)
60,000.00	Transfers	
9,724.75	Net Incoming / (Outgoing)	(28,817.60)
127,213.37	Balances at beginning of year	136,938.12
136,938.12	Balances at end of year	108,120.48

ABBEY UNITED REFORMED CHURCH ROMSEY CHARITY

RESTRICTED FUNDS

2022		2023			
Restricted		Restricted	Communion	TWW Bequest Fund	Organ
Funds £		Funds £	Fund £	Fund £	Fund £
INCOMING RESOURCES					
2,321.08	Collections for Others inc. Gift Aid	1,654.87	1,654.87		
0.00	Donations				
0.00	Gain from sale of Charifund & CCLA Units	749.75	48.98	569.15	131.62
108.58	Interest & dividends	220.37	14.39	167.29	38.69
2,429.66	Total Incoming resources	2,624.99	1,718.24	736.44	170.31
RESOURCES USED					
195.93	Other Ministerial	170.05	170.05		
182.38	Pastoral flowers (net)	166.59	166.59		
6,144.40	Piano/Organ	1,740.00			1,740.00
2,321.08	Charity Donations inc gift aid	1,654.87	1,654.87		
8,843.79	Total Resources Used	3,731.51	1,991.51	0.00	1,740.00
(6,414.13)	Net Incoming / (outgoing) resources before Transfers	(1,106.52)	(273.27)	736.44	(1,569.69)
	Transfers				
(6,414.13)	Net Incoming/(Outgoing) Resources	(1,106.52)	(273.27)	736.44	(1,569.69)
22,824.18	Balances at beginning of Year (inc, piano funds)	16,410.05	809.70	11,669.20	3,931.06
16,410.05	Balances at end of Year	15,303.53	536.52	12,405.64	2,361.37

ABBEY UNITED REFORMED CHURCH ROMSEY CHARITY

Notes to the Accounts

Note 1 – Accounting Policies

These accounts have been prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice – “Accounting by Charities” with the exception of not including non-historic tangible assets.

1. Classification of Funds

Funds are classified according to the manner in which they are permitted to be spent.

The General Fund and the associated General Reserve Fund can be spent generally for furthering the religious and charitable work of the Church.

The only Designated Fund is the Suspense Fund. It is the aggregate of bequests or large donations to the Church that had not specified restriction on their use. This fund is used by the Church for sizable items of activity, which could be identified as being in memory of the donors. These funds can be returned to the General Fund at any time if the Elders or Church Meeting decide.

The Restricted Funds uses are limited to those purposes for which they were given, for example refurbishment of the organ, support of the needy, specific causes.

2. Tangible Fixed Assets

The Church, hall, manse and caretaker's residence, being vested in the United Reformed Church (Wessex) Trust Limited as trustee, are not capitalized into the accounts.

3. Investments

Investments are shown at cost and market value at 31st December.

4. Income and Expenditure

Income is included as cash when received.

Expenditure is recorded when payment is made.

5. Legacies/Donations

Income from legacies or donations is credited to the relevant fund in the year in which it is received. If not otherwise specified by the testator or donor, legacies are added to the Suspense Fund, donations mainly to the General Fund but on occasions to the Suspense Fund, if in the light of future plans it is deemed more appropriate by the trustees.

ABBEY UNITED REFORMED CHURCH ROMSEY CHARITY

Report of the Independent Examiner to the Trustees of ABBEY UNITED REFORMED CHURCH ROMSEY CHARITY

We report on the financial statements of the Charity for the year to 31st December 2023 as set out on pages 6 to 11 which have been prepared under the historical cost convention and the accounting policies set out on page 12.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

As described on page 1, the charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of financial statements. You consider that the audit requirement of section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the Act) does not apply. It is our responsibility to state on the basis of the procedures specified in the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners under section 145(5) of the Act whether particular matters have come to our attention.

Basis of independent examiners report

Our examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from your trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently we do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with our examination, no matter has come to our attention:

- 1) which gives us reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:
 - a) to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the Act; and
 - b) to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and to comply with the accounting requirements of the Act, have not been met; or
- 2) to which, in our opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Bell & Co Chartered Accountants

Date: 19th March 2024