



**Birtley Community Church
Financial Statements
For the period ended
31 December 2023**



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Legal and Administrative Information.

Name: Birtley Community Church

Charity No: 1133513

Address:

Edward Road
Birtley
Chester-le-Street
Co Durham
DH3 1HG

Trustees:

Prof Patrick Roy Briddon Bsc Phd (Chair)
Mr Rowan Marsh Phillimore (Secretary)
Mrs Joanna Rachel Snaith (Administrator)
Mr Joseph James Clifford. (Treasurer)

Document Prepared by:

Mr Joseph James Clifford. (Treasurer)

Governing Document:

The Charity is operated under the rules of its constitution adopted 6 November 2009

Bankers:

Lloyds TSB
Blaydon-on-Tyne Branch
3 Wesley Court
Blaydon-on-Tyne
NE21 5BY

Independent Examiner:

Mark Thompson
42 Lesbury Road
Newcastle
NE6 5LB



Birtley Community Church Trustees' Annual report 2023

Objects:

The objects of the Birtley Community Church Trust (referred to as "the Trust" below) are as follows:

1. To advance the Christian faith in accordance with the Statement in such ways and in such parts of the United Kingdom or the world as the Church Council from time to time may think fit.
2. To relieve sickness and financial hardship and to promote and preserve good health by the provision of funds, goods or services of any kind including through the provision of counselling and support in such parts of the United Kingdom or the world as the Church Council from time-to-time think fit
3. To advance education in such ways and in such parts of the United Kingdom or the world as the Church Council from time to time may think fit

Summary

The year 2023 has been the first year for some time in which activities were only marginally affected by Covid. The year marked stability or growth in all areas of church life and ministry with Sunday attendance increasing and significant numbers of children from the local community attending Royal Rangers and Messy Church activities. In summary, the Trustees believe that the Charity is continuing to thrive and to fulfil its objectives.

Leadership and Oversight

The leadership of Birtley Community Church is unchanged in 2022.

The trustees (alphabetic order) are:

Patrick Briddon (Chairman),

Joe Clifford (Treasurer),

Phil Phillimore (Secretary) and

Rachel Snaith (Administrator).



The elders responsible for spiritual leadership remain Patrick Briddon and Phil Phillimore. John and Meme Cama continue to participate in leadership decision making.

We continue to receive support and oversight from Taking Ground, formerly a regional sphere of Salt and Light, but now an independent network of 7 churches.

Dawn Wolfington will take over from Joe Clifford as treasurer in 2024.

Church Worship and Teaching

As outlined above, our Sunday meetings have retained a much more normal format this year. It has been particularly encouraging that our attendance has remained significantly higher our position prior to Covid, with Sunday attendance typically 50 throughout most of the year although some meetings have been somewhat larger. As a church family we have also continued to evolve to a church more closely representing the makeup of our part of Gateshead with families from Fiji, Nigeria, Russia and China now being part of our church family. This has also introduced more younger people with children into the church helping to balance our age demographic.

Bible teaching and its application has continued through Sunday ministry, but also in mid-week housegroups, and I will return to these later. In addition, four members completed one year of learning at the Taking Group *School of Applied Theology*.

A weekend away was held at Minsteracres, 12-14 May 2024. A total of 52 people attended, 48 of whom stayed overnight (38 adults, 10 children), and a further four attended in the daytime only. This is our largest number to date – for comparison, pre-covid in 2019, only 26 people attended including 2 children. Ray and Sylvia Mills ministered to us, and this was a positive spiritual experience in which members grew in faith but it was also a good time for the church to spend together, given the large percentage of newer church members. The children's activities were run throughout the weekend by Feo and Lisa and the children were really thrilled by the experience. This weekend involved a significant investment of approximately £4500 by the church, but this was nevertheless believed by the trustees to be beneficial in terms of achieving our first object.

It is part of the church's ethos that we encourage members to grow in gifting and confidence. It was particularly encouraging that, even though Phil and Linda became ill the night before the retreat, other members of the church were able to lead us in worship throughout the weekend. We also have rotas of people sharing and leading communion, worship, Sunday school and a stewarding team, so that than half the church members are actively serving in some capacity. It is particularly pleasing that the newer members who joined during lockdown are now serving and leading alongside others.

Ladies Breakfasts have been held on Saturday mornings. These are open to ladies from the church plus friends, family and others from the local community. They have been well attended, by up to 70 ladies. In addition to this, we have continued a biweekly meeting for



ladies, which remains popular. This is to give a further opportunity for support and fellowship, especially important given the make-up of the church.

The Trustees consider that in these ways, we have continued to make progress with the first object of our Trust.

Pastoral Care and Housegroups

Clearly pastoral care has been especially important as we readjusted following the covid hiatus:

- Particular attention was given to people who may have been particularly vulnerable or badly affected by the lockdown.
- Home visits by leaders have also taken place where this was needed.

We run three housegroups led by the Briddons, the Camas and the Phillimores. These are provided so that members have the opportunity to share and pray with each other as well as study the Bible. Approximately 30 adults are involved with these, mainly from our church.

Church Ministries: Children and Community

Royal Rangers (<https://www.royalrangers.co.uk/>) ran throughout the year, meeting regularly on Saturday mornings with a team of helpers from the church. After a small dip in the early part of the year, the numbers of children at these meetings gradually built up to about 20-25. It has been very positive development to see leaders in this growing in confidence and attending training events. We now have a team of 6 helpers and leaders who have the confidence to lead many different types of activities. The church invested £878 into this ministry in 2023. For the first time post-covid, Royal Rangers ran a three-day camp at the Moor House adventure centre, just outside Durham. This included overnight stays in tents for over 7s, while younger children just attended during the daytime. 49 people registered for the camp in total: 36 children and 13 adults, including 29 children from our regular group and 7 from Germany. It went very well indeed, with lots of very positive feedback from both children and from parents. It was especially good to see our children mixing with the team from Germany who joined us for the camp. In July 2024, we will be taking our older Rangers children to Eurocamp, a Europe-wide camp in Hungary with above 5000 European Rangers expected to attend. 16 people will go from our outpost. The estimated budget for this is £7300 including £2750 of fundraising/gifts and church support £1200.

The Messy Church ministry (<https://www.messychurch.org.uk/>) meets monthly on Saturdays and ran successfully throughout most of the year, now led by Pauline. This had a slower start



but gained in momentum towards the end of the year with a new group of very enthusiastic attenders joining us. We look forward to this continuing to build in strength in 2024.

Sunday school has also grown with the arrival of new families in the church, and has up to 8 children each week.

These activities promote the first object of the Trust, with the Rangers ministry also contributing to education and growth in social and leadership skills of young children from our community.

Birtley Churches Together

Birtley Community Church remains part of Birtley Churches together. This year our main event together was a "Pie and Pea" evening in which nearly £300 was raised as part of Christian Aid week.

.Church Staff

Our church administrator, Rachel Snaith, is now in her fifth year with the church, working 10 hours per week. The main projects she has worked on during 2023 are:

- Conducting Human Resources activities relating to the employment of staff and hosting volunteers, including policy development and implementation.
- Running the church payroll.
- Updating, maintaining and implementing our Safeguarding policy and procedures. This included undertaking and delivering training, developing of policies and guidelines for engagement of children and vulnerable adults using social media or on-line platforms and updating policies and procedures in view of state of external advice.
- Producing a safe recruitment policy that we are now implementing for all new volunteers with the church.
- Maintaining rotas for church activities.
- General administration (for example, updating our address book).

These activities are crucial to our efficient and legal operation as a trust.

From Jan-July we had two charity volunteers, Feo Lotz and Lisa Teifel, recruited from Germany. They were sent as part of a programme run by Arbeitsgemeinschaft Pfingstlich-Charismatischer Missionen (APCM) and recruited by us on a Tier-5 UK visa which we are now approved by the Home Office to sponsor. They mainly supported children's work in the church (Rangers, Messy Church, Sunday School) but also contributed in further ways to our work and ministry. They made an excellent contribution during their time with us (as indicated



by some of the activities above) and we maintain a close friendship with them even though they are now studying in Germany. A new Charity Volunteer, FeiFei Chen is now working with us.

Estates

We have not undertaken significant projects investing in our estate during 2023. It should be noted that our properties are in a good condition following last year's investment into the Manse. A year on, it can now be seen that the decision to upgrade of our projection system has been a success.

Gifts

Birtley Community Church has continued to support a number of external organisations and people, giving a total £2236. All these gifts were within the scope of our objectives as a charitable trust.

Financial Review:

The income from Sunday morning offerings and standing orders was £29,566 compared to £32,081 in 2022. This is a decrease in giving of £2,515. Overall income amounted to £47,609 compared to £44,441 in 2022. Gift aid provision, based on donations in 2023, was £2,731, whereas in 2022 it was £3,042. Interest earned was £2,396, in 2022 this was £139.

The overall expenditure in 2023 was £43,585 compared to £41,329 in 2022. This is an increase of £2,256 as a result of additional expenditure on the church retreat and the Royal Rangers young people's work.

Salaries and expenses amounted to £6,984 in 2023 compared to £6,101 in 2022.

The loan, which was authorised in 2019, has continued to be repaid, but only 1 payment was made in 2023. The amount outstanding is £701.32.

The Church's finances were in surplus of £4,024 in 2023 compared to £3,112 in 2022.

The total of our bank balances in deposit and current accounts was £289,152 at the end of December 2023.

The value of our land and buildings was continued to be estimated at £230,000 as at the end of December 2022,

The Trustees consider the financial position of the charity to be stable.



Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees/members of Birtley Community Church on Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2023 set out on pages 11-15.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year (under s.144 of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act')), and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- Examine the accounts under s.145 of the 2011 Act;
- Follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145 (5)(b) of the 2011 Act; and
- State whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of examiner's statement

My examination was carried out in accordance with 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 these records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts and seeking explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent examiner's statement

In the course of my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

1. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in, any material respect, the trustees have not met the requirements to ensure that:

- proper accounting records are kept (in accordance with section 130 of the Act); and
- accounts are prepared which agree with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Act; or

2. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark Thompson", is written over a horizontal line.

Mark Thompson MAAT
42 Lesbury Road
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE6 5LB

Date: 21st March 2024



Statement of Financial Activities

Birtley Community Church

for the period ended 31 December 2023

Note	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2023 £	Total Funds 2022 £
Income and Endowments from:				
Donations and Legacies	32,828		32,828	35,165
Charitable Activities	11,785	0	11,785	8,837
Other Trading Activities			0	0
Investments	2,396		2,396	139
Other	600		600	300
Total Incoming Resources	47,609	0	47,609	44,441
Expenditure on:				
Raising Funds	0		0	0
Charitable Activities	43,585	0	43,585	41,329
Other			0	0
Total	43,585	0	43,585	41,329
Net income/(expenditure)	4,024	0	4,024	3,112
Transfers between funds				
Net movement in funds	4,024	0	4,024	3,112
Total Funds brought forward	518,560		518,560	515,448
Total funds carried forward	522,584	0	522,584	518,560



Balance Sheet

Birtley Community Church
as at 31 December 2023

	Note	Total Funds £	Total Funds 2022 £
Fixed Assets			
Land and Buildings		230,000	230,000
		<u>230,000</u>	<u>230,000</u>
Current Assets			
Debtors		701	746
Hardship Loan HMRC		2,731	3,042
Cash at Bank and In Hand	*1	289,152	284,922
Total Current Assets		<u>292,584</u>	<u>288,710</u>
Total Assets		<u>522,584</u>	<u>518,710</u>
Liabilities			
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year		0	150
Hardship Payment		0	0
Creditors: Amounts falling due after one year		0	0
Total Assets less Total Liabilities		<u>522,584</u>	<u>518,560</u>
The Funds of the Charity:			
Restricted income funds		0	0
Unrestricted income funds		522,584	518,560
TOTAL CHARITY FUNDS		<u>522,584</u>	<u>518,560</u>

*1 Cash at bank includes uncleared year end items

Print Name *Prof. P R Briddon*

Signature *P R Briddon*

Date of Approval 25/03/2024



NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the period 1 January to 31 December 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 have been prepared in accordance with:

- the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) issued on 16 July 2014;
- and with the Charities Act 2011

There has been no change to the accounting policies, valuation rules and methods of accounting since last year.

No changes have been made to accounts for previous years.

Incoming Resources

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

- the charity becomes entitled to the resources;
- the trustees are virtually certain they will receive the resources; and
- the monetary value can be measured with sufficient reliability

Grants and donations are only included in the SOFA when the charity has unconditional entitlement to the resources.

Resources expended have been analysed using a natural classification.

Investment Income is included in the accounts when receivable

The value of volunteer help is not included in the accounts but is described in the Trustees Annual Report.



Expenditure and Liabilities

Liabilities are recognised as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to pay out resources.

Governance costs include costs of Trustee meetings and relevant travel expenses.

Grants are recognised in the accounts as they are paid to the charity.

2 Funds

The Charity has one fund: An unrestricted general fund.

3 Detailed Income & Expenditure

Income

Collections & Donations	29,566
Covenant Income	3,262
Church Retreat	2,795
Bank Interest	2,396
Breakfasts	1,027
Accommodation	600
Other	349
Royal Rangers	7,614
Total Income	47,609

Expenditure

Visiting Speakers	300
Gifts	1,936
Utilities & Building	10,544
Furniture and Equipment	764
Salaries and Expenses	6,984
Administration	1,778
Church Retreat	9,292
Breakfasts	1,056
Evangelism	996
Other Expenditure	1,081
Training & development	362
Royal Rangers	8,492
Total Expenditure	43,585