

Annual report 1 September 2024 – 31 August 2025

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

This report relates to Bath Methodist Church to 31.8.2025, registered with the Charity Commission under Charity Number 1134062.

All correspondence for the church should be addressed to:

Mrs Sharon Keevill – Church Administrator
Bath Methodist Church
Walcot Methodist Chapel
Nelson Place East
Bath BA1 5DA
Telephone: 01225 461509
Email: admin@bathmethodists.org.uk

Further and latest information is available on our website: bathmethodists.org.uk

The membership of Bath Methodist Church stood at **134** members as of August 31st 2025:

The Managing Trustees for the year 2024 - 25 were:

Ministers: Revd Simon Topping (Superintendent Minister), Revd Jan Tate, Deacon Elizabeth Harfleet

Church Council Secretary: Jane Stanfield

Treasurer: Trevor Purches

Administrator: Sharon Keevill

Stewards:, Allan Bain, Julia Barratt (Joint Senior Steward), Gwen Essam, Gareth James, Elizabeth Kenyon (Joint Senior Steward), Tricia Mills, David Pendle.

Safeguarding Officer: Steven Barratt

Congregational reps: Anne Allen, Steven Barratt, Greville Mills, Claire Phillips, Michael Priscott, Hazel Roch, Ben Sykes.

Interfaith rep: Revd David Musgrave (2024), Rupert Kaye (2025)

Chapel House rep: Peter Keevill

Circuit Steward: Ian Sims

Decisions concerning the activities of Bath Methodist Church and the appointment of its Trustees are made at Church Council meetings of which there are a minimum of three each year.

Bath Methodist Church was launched on 1st September 2022 when the existing Methodist Societies of Beechen Cliff, Horizon, Nexus and Weston were merged to form a single society. The church buildings - Walcot Chapel (the former Nexus site), Beechen Cliff and Weston - were retained for church and community use and Southdown Methodist Church Centre (managed by Trustees appointed by the North East Somerset & Bath Methodist Circuit) is also used for worship.

Aims And Organisation

The aims of Bath Methodist Church are as defined in the Methodist Church Act 1976 namely:

The advancement of

- a) the Christian faith in accordance with the doctrinal standards and the discipline of the Methodist Church.
- b) any charitable purpose for the time being of any Connexional, district, circuit, local or other organisation of the Methodist Church.
- c) any charitable purpose for the time being of any society or institution subsidiary or ancillary to the Methodist Church.
- d) any purpose for the time being of any charity being a charity subsidiary or ancillary of the Methodist church.

This is achieved by:

- a) Holding regular acts of public worship open to members and public alike.
- b) providing pastoral care for members of our community visiting sick and bereaved.
- c) teaching Christianity through sermons, courses and small groups – both in person and online.
- d) Promoting Christianity through events and services.
- e) Provision of activities and clubs to support need in the community such as lunch clubs /foodcycle for elderly and homeless.
- f) Letting premises for community organisations - for example local choirs , pre-schools, health and wellbeing classes.
- g) Supporting other charities with finance and prayer in accordance with Christian values to promote Christian mission and by addressing poverty and social need in both UK and the World.

Review of activities, progress and achievements (September 2024 – August 2025)

The mission of the Bath Methodist Society is to promote and practise 'A Methodist Way of Life'.

We will seek to live out this mission by sustaining and nurturing both our Christian journey inwards and our Christian journey outwards.

The 'Inner Journey':

- daily prayer - keeping connected to each other through prayer groups and prayer times
- worshipping together – Sundays and during the week
- pastoral care of members and adherents
- small groups – for fellowship, prayer and bible study/learning
- discipleship formation – stepping stones to discipleship - from enquirers' events to fully committed participation in the Methodist Way of Life
- building up our fellowship through social activities

The 'Journey Outwards':

- outreach to the local community (hospitality and generosity)
- commitment to social justice
- care for creation
- practising an inclusive welcome to all
- outreach to University students/Chapel House Community
- commitment to the Southdown Church and Community Project
- sharing the faith – actively seeking ways to tell the Christian story

‘Inner Journey’

Sunday Worship:

Sunday morning worship is held at Walcot Chapel and Southdown Methodist Church Centre on the 1st, 2nd and 3rd Sundays of the month. On the 4th and 5th Sundays, there is a joint service alternating between the two sites.

On the 1st Sunday of the month, there is also a short service of Morning Prayer at Walcot, followed by breakfast.

We offer paper worship resource for those unable to attend in-person services.

Worship for all ages

- ‘Creative Worship’ – quarterly at Walcot and Southdown as part of morning worship. This is a new initiative to provide worship accessible for all ages.

Midweek Devotions:

- Weekly prayer meeting via Zoom. Each week we hear and reflect on a passage from scripture. Our prayers focus on one local topic, our church, a step from A Methodist Way of Life, a national or international topic and prayers from the Methodist Prayer Handbook.
- Weekly Celtic Prayers at Southdown - following liturgy from the Northumbria Community

Bible Study & Fellowship

Study groups are held during Advent, Lent and Bible Month (June). There are several fellowship groups meeting in-person or online.

Pastoral Care

Our pastoral visitors have remained in contact with those on their lists and have continued to support members of the congregation.

Church-run groups

- ‘Tea & Cake’ meets weekly at Walcot in the Concourse (and church garden weather-permitting). This is both an opportunity for people to meet socially and for the main church doors to be open to anyone passing by.
- ‘Coffee Plus’ is a monthly evening event at Walcot with talks on a range of topics by local speakers.
- ‘Tigerlilies’ Parent and Toddler group meets weekly in term time at Weston. It is run by church members for families in the local community
- ‘Soup Plus’ – a new monthly initiative from October 2024 – March 2025. A simple soup lunch followed by a social activity.

Journey Outwards

EcoChurch

This scheme encourages churches to commit to care for the environment in worship and teaching, management of church buildings and land, community and global engagement and the lifestyle of church members.

- ‘No-Mow May’ – we took part in this national initiative to encourage wildflowers in the lawn at Walcot and continue to develop the garden to encourage biodiversity
- Continuing to work towards the A Rocha ‘EcoChurch’ Award Scheme – the Walcot and Southdown buildings have previously been awarded the Bronze certificate.
- Promoting Fairtrade Fortnight during worship in September and through the magazine throughout the year

Social justice

The Methodist Church is committed to challenge injustice in our local communities and throughout the world. As Bath Methodist Church we do this by supporting local, national and global initiatives, campaigning and informing.

- Regular updates on social justice issues (eg Israel/Palestine) in our monthly magazine
- Supporting Christian Aid Week with a special service and lunch and other fundraising initiatives
- Charity Collections – eg Action for Children.
- Supporting the Southdown Whiteway Church & Community Partnership through volunteering and Harvest and Christmas Appeals.
- Volunteering and financial support for the Southdown Food Pantry
- Supporting our twinned church in Rwanda

Interfaith

- Methodist representative on the Bath Interfaith Group
- Taking part in events organised by the Bath Interfaith Group

Community use:

Our church buildings have rooms available for hire and are used by several community groups:

Walcot:

- FoodCycle – using surplus food from supermarkets to provide free meals and a place to meet.
- Bath Child Contact Centre – a safe place for children from separated families to meet their absent parent.
- ‘Pixies’ Steiner Playgroup (to April 2025)
- 57th Bathampton Guides
- Choirs – Horizons Choir, Bath Minerva Choir and CWM Male Choir
- Exercise classes – Pilates
- Events
 - A venue for Bath Festivals ‘Party in the City’ event
 - Fundraising concerts

Beechen Cliff:

- Korean Methodist Community weekly Sunday worship and Bible study
- Bear Flat Association – monthly Community Tea and Community Market
- Bath Share & Repair Café - monthly
- Green Shoots Pre-School – 4 days per week in school term time.
- Choirs - City of Bath Male Choir and Birch Tree Choir
- Exercise classes – Yoga and Pilates
- Children's birthday parties

Weston:

- Peter Pan Pre-School continues to meet on the premises for 4 days per week during school term time. This is an OFSTED and Local Authority approved provision.
- Uniformed organisations (Rainbows, Brownies, Beaver Scouts)
- Several physical and mental health activities including Yoga and Pilates
- Newbridge Arts Trail: This is an annual event, for a weekend, involving local artists who exhibits from their homes and public places.
- Space for Consultation with the public about local issues such as proposals for parking permits or road closures.
- Children's birthday parties
- The New Testament Church of God – weekly Sunday worship

Southdown Church and Community Partnership

This is a project of the North East Somerset and Bath Methodist Circuit and is based at Southdown Methodist Church Centre. Many of our church members are involved as volunteers for the activities organised and supported by the Partnership:

- Lunch Club
- Community Charity Shop
- Toddler group
- Roundhill Food Pantry (in partnership with Oasis Bath).

Chapel House

Chapel House is a student residence next to Walcot Methodist Chapel, run by Bath Methodist Church.

The Chapel House Community is made up of 2 parts: the resident students who live in Chapel House, and an extended, non-residential community made up of others who have committed to follow the same way of life and to pray for those who live in the house.

The Chapel House Community meets together for monthly meals in the hall at Walcot.

Administration and Compliance

Church Administrator:

The church administrator is responsible for producing the weekly notice sheets and monthly magazines, updating the website, dealing with telephone and email enquiries, updating the membership list, ensuring compliance with GDPR, producing publicity material for church events and activities and dealing with room hire enquiries.

The administrator keeps church members informed via weekly emails or by distributing printed resources to those without internet access.

Stewards

The team of Stewards are responsible for the smooth running of the church, ensuring services and other events are organised properly plus keeping an oversight over the various committees/church groups and indeed the overall life of the church.

Safeguarding

As part of the Methodist Church we are committed to safeguarding as an integral part of our life and ministry. Safeguarding is about the action the Church takes to promote a safer culture. This means we will:

- promote the welfare of children, young people and adults
- work to prevent abuse from occurring
- seek to protect and respond well to those that have been abused.

All those who hold roles and responsibilities within the church are required to undertake safeguarding training and DBS checks in line with the policies and procedures of the national Methodist Church.

The Church Safeguarding Policy is reviewed annually and made accessible to all users of our buildings.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

As part of The Methodist Church commitment to Justice, Dignity and Solidarity, people in certain roles are now required to undertake EDI (Equality, Diversity and Inclusion) training.

EDI training is mandatory for Church Stewards, Circuit Stewards and Local Preachers but others, such as members of the Church Council, are encouraged to undertake the training.

General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

The Data Protection Checklist is submitted annually to ensure that all personal data held by the church complies with GDPR.

Property

Bath Methodist Church are Managing Trustees for :

- Walcot Chapel – BMC worship space and community rooms
- Beechen Cliff – worship space used by Korean Methodist Community and community rooms
- Weston – worship space used by New Testament Church of God and community rooms
- Chapel House – Christian Student residential community

All are maintained to be fit for purpose according to the recommendations of the 5-year independent inspections.

Southdown Methodist Church Centre is managed by the North East Somerset and Bath Methodist Circuit, which appoints its trustees. It is used by Bath Methodist Church for worship and meetings and to support community activities.

Future Plans

Feasibility Study for the future use of Church buildings

As reported in the 2023-2024 annual report, Bath Methodist Church is undertaking a feasibility study to examine the potential future use of its church buildings at Walcot, Beechen Cliff and Weston.

A team led by Futureground in conjunction with architects BiBO were appointed to undertake this work in April 2024.

The study was divided into 3 phases:

Phase 1: Information gathering and some community consultation.

Phase 2: Development of design options for modifying the buildings (three options for each of the three buildings).

Following Phase 2, the options were presented to the church by the Property and Mission Group both via the Church Consultation meeting on 29 September 2024 and summarised in a document which was distributed as widely as possible amongst the church community. Feedback and preferences were then invited on these proposals via feedback forms to the Property and Mission Group.

The Property and Mission Group then brought a proposal for each of the three sites to the Church Council on 16 October 2024. This proposal sought to reflect the preferences expressed within the feedback in the light of our church mission priorities (within our Mission Statement). This proposal was approved by the Church Council with no votes against and with one abstention. So here is a summary of the proposal that was approved:

Walcot Chapel

- To enhance the existing worship area on the ground floor both for worship and also for use as a performance/event/wedding space and expansion of the Concourse area with upgraded kitchen/servery facilities.
- To adapt the lower ground floor in order to provide accommodation and facilities for a small residential Methodist community. Some of the accommodation would be made available for paying guests of the community.

Weston

- To develop the lower ground floor as space for pre-school activities.
- To develop the upper floor to provide key worker/affordable housing units.

Beechen Cliff

- The feedback from the church consultation was very inconclusive and the Property and Mission Group will ask the feasibility study consultants to do some more work on option one from the feasibility study (Expanded pre-School and wrap around care) and option two (Co-living with community use and nursery) before returning to the Church Council for a decision.

The proposals were then taken back to the consultants for Phase 3 of the feasibility study:

- Refinement of the development plans for each building following the consultation with the congregation and our selection of preferred options
- Examining how the development might be financed and contacting potential partners to obtain their views on the development plans
- Identifying possible business models for the operation of the buildings in the future
- Considering the timing and phasing of future works

The final report was presented to Church Council in March 2025 and followed up in detail by the Property and Mission Group. This involved meeting with potential partners and also the Methodist Connexional Property Team whose approval is essential for progressing any building plans.

The Property and Mission Group brought the following proposal to Church Council in June 2025:

To commence a Methodist Property Project and Development Scheme to develop detailed plans and raise funds to adapt Walcot Chapel for use by a resident Intentional Community and replace the community spaces, lost in the process, through changes to the concourse and worship area.

The proposal was agreed (by secret ballot - 15 for the proposal, 6 against). The proposals were shared with the congregation at the Annual Church Meeting in late June 2025.

At the time of this report, discussions with potential partners for Beechen Cliff and Weston are still ongoing and will be taken to future Church Council meetings.

Finance

THE CHURCH'S BANKERS

The Church has accounts with the following banks:

Central Finance Board

9 Bonhill Street
London
EC2A 4PE

CAF Bank

25 Kings Hill Avenue,
Kings Hill
West Malling,
Kent ME19 4JQ

Treasurer's Report 2024 - 25 financial year

Summary

In the year 2024-25 we received £220,000 of income and spent £311,000. This shortfall has been ameliorated by £22,000 of grants, bequest and refund of utility deposit and TMCP loans. The actual deficit was £69,000. We now have £34,000 of restricted reserves and £100,000 of unrestricted reserves.

The key points have been significant expenditure on:

- the guttering, roof and ventilation box at Weston,
- The vestry roof leak, repointing south facing stonework and refurbishment of windows at Walcot Chapel, and
- Window repair and other repairs and replacements of Chapel House.

More detail

There has been a positive response to the request for members to consider their giving year on year with increases from many, typically in order of 5 to 10%. We have lost several members over the year several who were significant contributors. It is difficult to predict the effect over a full year but last year donation income was down £5000. There is continued inflationary pressure on expenditure. Despite spending more than usual on repairs Chapel House is the only building that operates at a surplus. The mission and property plan is that the retained buildings will each provide a surplus and support the finances of the church. Only then can we access future finance strategy for our budget, particularly concerning membership donation and operational costs. I.E how to balance the books.

We have reduced the pledge for 25-26 by £6000 which will ease the deficit. We are currently contributing a £4000 grant towards the Student Outreach Chaplain. This will be raised to £5000 in line with the initial SOC budget.

Trevor Purches: treasurer

THE METHODIST CHURCH
STANDARD FORM OF ACCOUNTS

BATH METHODIST

Church

FOR THE YEAR ENDED

31 August 2025

Circuit	Circuit no.	7/13
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Registered Charity - Charity Registration number

1134062

**If not a registered charity His Majesty's Revenue and
Customs Gift Aid number**

(The HMRC number is equivalent to a registered charity number in terms of evidence of charitable status and may be used to give to donors or grant funders wishing to see evidence of the organisation's charitable status. Methodist charities in England and Wales that are not registered charities are excepted from registration under Statutory Instrument 2014 No.242)

Minister:

Revd Simon Topping, Revd Jan Tate (restationed Aug2025), Deacon Elizabeth Harfleet

Church Stewards:

Julia Barratt	Elizabeth Kenyon
Gwen Essam	Patricia Mills
David Pendle	Gareth James
Alan Bain	

Treasurer:

Trevor Purches

Assts Steve Barratt, Roger Chapman, Paul Udey

SECTION A		Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Totals this year	Totals last year
		£	£	£	£
a1	RECEIPTS	Note			
a2	Offerings and Tax recovered	99,942		99,942	102,932
a3	Bank and CFB interest and Investment income	3,109		3,109	4,984
a4	Lettings	106,648		106,648	96,960
a5	Other receipts	including fund movement 10797.50		10,798	27,151
a6	TOTAL RECEIPTS		220,497	220,497 (a7)	232,028

SECTION B					
b1	PAYMENTS				
b2	Circuit Assessment or Share	121,320		121,320	113,400
b3	Donations	8,693		8,693	6,085
b4	Repairs and Maintenance	106,078		106,078	42,539
b5	Utilities (Insurances, water charges, heating & lighting)	59,957		59,957	57,563
b6	Fund Movement	(21,050)		(21,050)	
b7	Other payments	14,841		14,841	10,843
b8	TOTAL PAYMENTS		289,840	289,840 (b9)	230,431

SECTION C					
c1	NET RECEIPTS/PAYMENTS FOR THE YEAR	(a6-b8)	(69,343)	(69,343)	1,598
c2	Total funds brought forward from last year		92,773	111,453	204,226 (c6)
c3	Sub total	(c1+c2)	23,430	111,453	134,883
c4	Transfers and adjustments				(c7)
c5	TOTAL FUNDS AT END OF YEAR	(c3+c4)	23,430	111,453	134,883 (c8)
					204,226 (c6)

SECTION D					
FOR INFORMATION ONLY: MONEY RECEIVED AND PASSED ON TO EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS					
d	(these amounts are not to be included in total receipts/payments figures above)		£	£	
d1	Balance brought forward from last year				(93)
d2	Offerings/Gifts - received for external organisations		1,520		1,767
d3	Offerings/Gifts - passed to external organisations		1,600		1,674
d4	BALANCE STILL TO BE PAID	(d1+d2-d3)	(80)		2 of 5

SUMMARY OF CHURCH ACCOUNTS AND INTERNAL ORGANISATIONS REPORTING TO THE CHURCH COUNCIL**SECTION E**

Please follow the Guidance Notes to complete this page

Summary of the Church accounts for the year ended 31 August 2025 and Internal Organisations reporting to the Church Council/Church Meeting. Note that the funds of an Internal Organisation would normally be Restricted funds unless it could be clearly shown that they could be used for any Methodist purpose. This section must be completed to arrive at the gross income and expenditure totals of the Church. If gross income exceeds the Accruals threshold, then the Accruals method of accounting AND A DIFFERENT FORM must be used to report the accounts (see Methodist website). Please refer to the guidance notes regarding transfers between the District and connected District Organisations.

INTERNAL ORGANISATIONS	Receipts	Payments	Net Receipts/ Payments	Adjustments	Opening balances	Closing balances
e1						
e2						
e3						
e4						
e5						
e6						
e7						
e8 Sub total of Internal Organisations funds					(e11)	(e12)
e9 Church accounts (totals brought forward from page 2 - totals column)	220,497 (a7)	289,840 (b9)	(69,343)	(c7)	204,226 (c6)	134,883 (e8)
e10 TOTAL CASH FUNDS HELD BY CHURCH	220,497	289,840	(69,343)		204,226 (x)	134,883 (y)
Continue on a separate sheet if necessary and bring the totals forward	TOTAL RECEIPTS	TOTAL PAYMENTS				

SECTION F**STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES****CHURCH - CASH FUNDS HELD at 31 August 2025**

		OPENING BALANCES	CLOSING BALANCES
f1 Cash in hand			
f2 Bank Current Account	CAF	51,394	21,751
f3 Bank Deposit Account	Lloyds	9,470	260
f4 Central Finance Board		88,722	71744.67
f5 Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes		54,640	41,127
f6 Other funds			
f7 SUB TOTAL - Church accounts		204,226 (c6)	134,883 (e8)
f8 Total funds held by Internal Organisations (the closing balance total from above) (e12)		(e11)	(e12)
f9 TOTAL CASH FUNDS HELD BY CHURCH		204,226 (x)	134,883 (y)

SECTION G**OTHER ASSETS and LIABILITIES**

	At 1 September 2024	At 31 August 2025
g1 Investments (include Endowments)		
g2 Land & Buildings (see notes re Insurance value)		
g3 Other Assets		
g4 Loan(s) - show amount outstanding at year end		
g5 Other Liabilities		

f4 Include only Funds held at the Central Finance Board

f5 Include only Funds held at Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes

g1 Include any other investments (not the cash element of TMCP trusts accounts this is included in line f5)

Declarations and Scrutiny

I confirm that these Receipt and Payment based accounts for the year to 31 August 2025 have been prepared from the records of the Church and that they include all funds under the control of the Church trustees.

Signature of treasurer  Date..... 3, Sep, 2025

Name and address of treasurer TREVOR PURCHES

6 Christchurch Road, Bradford-on-Avon BA15 1TB

Presentation to the Church trustees

I confirm that the annual report and accounts for the year ended 31 August 2025 were presented to the meeting of the Church trustees held on 15th October 2025

Signature of the Chair of the meeting 

Name of the Chair of the meeting .. Revd Simon Topping 15-Oct-25

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of the

BATH METHODIST CHURCH

Charity Number 1134062

Responsibilities and basis of report

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the BATH METHODIST Church for the year ended 31 August 2025 set out on pages 1 to 3 As the Church's trustees, 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 Church's accounts carried out under section 145 of the Act and, in carrying out my examination, I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

* delete or circle as appropriate

Name of Church ... BATH METHODIST CHURCH

NO 7/13

Independent Examiner's Statement

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

- the 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 this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

I have/have not* obtained independent verification of all investments with the Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes or held in other trusts, bank balances and funds at the Central Finance Board of the Methodist Church which are individually in excess of £10,000 (ten thousand pounds) at the balance sheet date.

Signature of independent examiner

A. du Pré

Name of independent examiner ALEX DU PRE

Relevant professional qualification of independent examiner Chartered Engineer

Name of firm (where appropriate) N/A

Address 15 Mitchell Walk, Bridgegate, Bristol

..... Post Code .. BS305XY

Date ... 12/10/2025

* delete or circle as appropriate