

BRIGHTON and HOVE METHODIST CIRCUIT

Registered Charity 1134137

Trustees' Annual Report

For the Connexional Year 2023 – 2024

The Trustees of the Brighton and Hove Methodist Circuit welcome readers of their Annual Report covering the Financial Year ended 31 August 2024.

1. Aim and Purpose

- a) All our churches are committed to sharing the good news of Jesus Christ in word and action. We aim to increase awareness of God's presence and celebrate God's love; be good neighbours to people in need and to challenge injustice; make more followers of Christ; and help people to learn and grow in faith. We offer safe and caring communities of nurture and respect that are committed to the safeguarding and protection of all children, young people and vulnerable adults.
- b) The Circuit is the primary unit in which local churches express and experience their interconnexion as the body of Christ, for purposes of mission, mutual encouragement and help.
- c) It is to the Circuit that presbyters and probationers are stationed and in which local preachers are trained, admitted and exercise their calling.
- d) The purposes of the Circuit include the effective deployment of the resources for ministry which include people, property and finance.

2. Objectives and Activities

- a) In planning its activities, the Circuit has considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit, and in particular the specific guidance on charities for the advancement of religion together with the 'Our Calling' framework as defined by the Methodist Church of Great Britain. Our services and worship put faith into practice through prayer and scripture, music and sacrament as we try to enable people to live out their faith as part of the wider community.

3. Achievements and Performance

a) Worship

- i. Throughout the year all churches offered an onsite Sunday morning service.
- ii. A Circuit online service called Thinking Aloud with a progressive focus is held monthly.
- iii. A Circuit Together Service continues to be scheduled quarterly, held in one of the five churches with all members from across the circuit meeting together for unified worship and fellowship.
- iv. An evening Healing Service is now held monthly at Dorset Gardens Methodist Church, led by the Rev Cynthia Park and Shirley Veater. This quiet, meditative service includes communion and the opportunity for the laying on of hands.
- v. At an All-Saints Day service held on 1st November at Stanford Avenue Methodist Church, over fifty family members and friends remembered 32 people who died over the previous twelve months.
- vi. All churches held a full range of special services marking the key Christian festivals of Easter and Christmas.

b) Service

- i. Every effort is made by all our churches to provide pastoral care and engage both with the family of faith and the wider community. This has included lunch clubs, coffee groups, arts and crafts, a range of children's activities and facilitating in person contact with all members.
- ii. **University Chaplaincy**
Historically the Brighton & Hove Methodist Circuit has supported Chaplaincy work at The University of Sussex and the University of Brighton and is part of the Student Christian

Movement (SCM). Whilst Student Development Worker Sue Harrington retired at the end of August 2022, she maintains contact, particularly at Sussex where there is a dedicated Chaplaincy Hub and helps as a volunteer as required. She also still administers the Brighton Facebook group and is happy for the Faith and Spirituality Advisors to refer any Methodist enquiries to her.

c) **Mission and Evangelism**

i. *Circuit Refugee Project*

Vision

Launched on 1 January 2022, the Circuit Refugee Project was born from a shared vision: *To make our Circuit a Sanctuary for All — a place where everyone feels safe and welcomed, including those fleeing violence, conflict, and persecution.*

Through this initiative, we aim to live out God's purpose and mission by offering hospitality, kindness, love, and sanctuary to all. We are committed to creating a culture of outreach and service, responding to the needs of individuals and families experiencing relocation and displacement. Our goal is to support and advocate for refugees by working in partnership with individuals, churches, and community groups — especially with those who have lived experience of displacement.

Ongoing Work and Impact

Following the Circuit receiving the *Church of Sanctuary* award in Spring 2023, all churches have continued to deepen their commitment to refugee support. Activities have included:

- Hosting events such as Refugee Sunday in June, where refugees are invited to share their stories.
- Organising educational initiatives to challenge and change negative perceptions of migrants.
- Collecting and distributing clothing for newly arrived asylum seekers in local hotels.
- Contributing to food banks and hosting community social events for refugees.

Fundraising Highlight: Journey4Sanctuary

Our major fundraising event, **Journey4Sanctuary**, took place on 18 May 2024 and raised over **£2,100**. These funds were shared among six local charities dedicated to supporting and welcoming asylum seekers and refugees in Brighton & Hove:

- Care4Calais Brighton
- The Jollof Cafe (Sussex Refugee & Migrant Self Support Group)
- The Network of International Women, Brighton & Hove
- Sanctuary on Sea
- Thousand for Thousand (T4K)
- Voices in Exile

Gratitude from Our Partners

We were humbled to receive messages of thanks from our partner organisations:

"What a fantastic achievement. Thank you so much to everyone for this support and for the awareness you have brought to vulnerable asylum seekers and refugees in our community. We are very grateful for this money and would like to buy food and toiletries for our food bank. Also, thank you for the two bags of food donations this week — all very much appreciated!"

— Stephen Cummiskey, Food Bank Coordinator, Voices in Exile

"This is wonderful, wow! Thank you so much for all your amazing work in getting the walk to happen, and for raising so much money. We will certainly let you know what we do with it so you can feed that back."

— Cathy Maxwell, Network of International Women

Through this project, we continue to walk alongside those seeking sanctuary — offering not only practical support, but also solidarity, hope, and welcome.

4. Financial Review

a) Income & Expenditure

- (i) The single largest expense is that relates to the employment of ministerial staff. This includes stipends; National Insurance contributions; pension contributions and the provision and maintenance of the manses. Expenditure for this year remained within the budget forecast. Circuit income was in line with budget projections.
- (ii) Following the reduction in the number of ministers appointed to the circuit, it was decided to let the manse at Surrenden Road. The Circuit Meeting approved the use of reserves for the refurbishment of the property which was completed in October 2023.

b) Reserves Policy

The Reserves Policy was reviewed and updated.

5. Structure, Governance and Management

a) The Circuit Meeting

- (i) The Circuit Meeting of the Brighton and Hove Circuit is the body of Managing Trustees and is responsible for the affairs of the Circuit and the development of Circuit Policy. The Circuit Meeting together with the Superintendent Minister and the Circuit Leadership team exercises that combination of spiritual leadership and administrative efficiency which enables the Circuit to fulfil its purposes as set out in the Standing Orders of the Methodist Church. The Circuit Meeting acts as the focal point of the working fellowship of the churches in the Circuit, overseeing their pastoral, training and evangelistic work.
- (ii) Circuit Archive set up at Dorset Gardens Methodist Church
This Archive is of material relating to the history of all branches of Methodism in Brighton and Hove that has been collected over the years. Much of it was used for writing histories of the Circuit and various Methodist Churches in the city. Researchers are most welcome.
<https://brightonhovemethodistcircuit.org.uk/methodist-archive/>
- (iii) *General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)*
We strive to ensure that our circuit and each of our churches and particularly all managing trustees complete their Annual GDPR Checklist to be compliant with the requirement from the Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes (TMCP).
- (iv) The Circuit Meeting met on four occasions, on 18th September and 23rd November 2023 and 18th March and 27th June 2024

b) Churches

Brighton and Hove Methodist Circuit www.brightonhovemethodistcircuit.org.uk
There are five churches in the Circuit:
Dorset Gardens Methodist Church www.dgmc.org.uk
Hove Methodist Church www.hovemethodistchurch.co.uk
Patcham Methodist Church www.patchammethodistchurch.co.uk
Stanford Avenue Methodist Church www.stanfordavenuemeth.co.uk
Woodingdean Methodist Church www.woodingdeanmethodistchurch.co.uk
On 1 Nov. 2023 the Circuit had 279 members

c) Staffing

Revd. Andrew Lowe, Circuit Superintendent,
Revd. Dan Woodhouse
Steve Preston, Circuit Operations Manager

6. Administrative Information

a) Safeguarding

Rosemary Cuthbert continues as Circuit Safeguarding Officer.
We continue to promote training & education via the *Creating Safer Space* methodist foundation/refresher and Advanced training modules or utilising the online Church of England 'Foundations' course.
No Safeguarding issues were reported during the period.

THE METHODIST CHURCH
STANDARD FORM OF ACCOUNTS

Brighton and Hove	Circuit
-------------------	---------

FOR THE YEAR ENDED
31 August 2024

South East	District	Circuit no	36/12
------------	----------	------------	-------

Registered Charity - Charity Registration number

1134137

If not a registered charity Her 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)

Ministers:

Reverend Andy Lowe (Superintendent)
Reverend Daniel Woodhouse
Reverend Heather Leake-Date

Circuit Stewards:

Ann Collins (Senior Steward)
Stella Goddard
Jonathan Gravestock

Treasurer:

Stella Goddard

SECTION A			Un - restricted Funds	Circuit Model Trust Fund	Restricted Funds	Totals this year	Totals last year
	Note		£	£	£	£	£
a1	RECEIPTS						
a2	Assessment/Share		172,742			172,742	159,144
a3	Capital receipts						
a4	Bank and CFB interest and Investment income		580	2,117		2,697	3,584
a5	Grants						
a6	Other receipts Manse rental income		34,250			34,250	
a7	TOTAL RECEIPTS		207,572	2,117		209,689 (a8)	162,728

SECTION B							
b1	PAYMENTS						
b2	Stipends, salaries, NIC, Pension and travel costs		84,530			84,530	115,136
b3	Manse Costs		36,444			36,444	15,499
b4	Administration etc		31,052			31,052	27,361
b5	District Assessment		42,233			42,233	40,219
b6	Grants & donations			1,549		1,549	4,990
b7	Surrenden Road Renal refurbishment		40,117			40,117	
b8	Other payments		3,350			3,350	31,930
b9	TOTAL PAYMENTS		237,726	1,549		239,275 (b9)	235,135

SECTION C							
c1	NET RECEIPTS/PAYMENTS FOR THE YEAR	(a7-b9)	(30,154)	568		(29,586)	(72,407)
c2	Total funds brought forward from last year		(3,808)	61,952		58,144 (c6)	130,551
c3	Sub total	(c1+c2)	(33,962)	62,520		28,558	58,144
c4	Transfers and adjustments		38,595	(38,595)			(c7)
c5	TOTAL FUNDS AT END OF YEAR	(c3+c4)	4,633	23,925		28,558 (c8)	58,144 (c6)

SECTION D							
d	FOR INFORMATION ONLY: MONEY RECEIVED AND PASSED ON TO EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS (these amounts should not be included in total receipts/payments above)						
d1	Balance brought forward from last year					3,037	1,353
d2	Offerings/Gifts - received for external organisations					3,036	2,704
d3	Offerings/Gifts - passed to external organisations					4,007	1,020
d4	BALANCE STILL TO BE PAID (d1 + d2 - d3)					2,066	3,037

SUMMARY OF CIRCUIT ACCOUNTS AND INTERNAL ORGANISATION REPORTING TO THE CIRCUIT MEETING**SECTION E****Please follow the Guidance Notes to complete this page**

Summary of the Circuit accounts for the year ended 31 August 2023 and Internal Organisations reporting to the Circuit 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 receipts and payments totals of the Circuit. If gross income exceeds the Accruals threshold of £250,000, 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 Circuit and connected Circuit 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)
c9 Circuit accounts (totals brought forward from page 2 - totals column)	209,689 (a8)	239,275 (b9)	(29,586)	(c7)	58,144 (c6)	28,558 (c8)
e10 TOTAL CASH FUNDS HELD BY CIRCUIT	209,689	239,275	(29,586)		58,144 (x)	28,558 (y)
Continue on a separate sheet if necessary and bring the totals forward	TOTAL RECEIPTS	TOTAL PAYMENTS				

SECTION F**STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES****CIRCUIT - CASH FUNDS HELD at 31 August 2023**

	OPENING BALANCES	CLOSING BALANCES
f1 Cash in hand		
f2 Bank Current Account	11,943	29,775
f3 Bank Deposit Account		
f4 Central Finance Board	22,287	10,098
f5 Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes	70,470	23,924
f6 Other funds	(46,556)	(35,239)
f7 SUB TOTAL	58,144 (c6)	28,558 (c8)
f8 Total funds held by Internal Organisations (the closing balance totals above) (e12)		(e12)
f9 TOTAL CASH FUNDS HELD BY CIRCUIT	58,144 (x)	28,558 (y)

SECTION G**OTHER ASSETS and LIABILITIES**

	At 1 September 2023	At 31 August 2024
g1 Investments (include Endowments)		
g2 Land and Buildings (see notes re Insurance value)	2,100,000	
g3 Other Assets		
g4 Loan(s) - show amount outstanding at year end	46,000	34,500
g5 Other Liabilities		

f4 Include only Funds held at the Central Finance Board

f5 Include only CFB Funds held at Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes

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

Declarations and Scrutiny

I confirm that these Receipt and Payment based accounts for the year to 31 August 2023 have been prepared from the records of the Circuit and that they include all funds under the control of the Circuit meeting.

Signature of treasurer ..


Stella Goddard

Date.. 28/11/24

Name and address of treasurer Mrs Stella Goddard 28 Crest Way Portslade

Post Code.. BN41 2EY

Presentation to the Circuit meeting

I confirm that the annual report and accounts for the year ended 31 August 2024 were presented to the Circuit meeting held 28th November 2024

Signature of the Chair of the meeting



Name of the Chair of the meeting .. Rev Andrew Lowe

Date

28th November 2024

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of the

..... Brighton and Hove

Methodist Circuit

Charity Number 1134137

Responsibilities and basis of report

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the Brighton and Hove Circuit for the year ended 31 August 2023 set out on pages ... to As the Circuit'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 Circuit'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.

Name of Circuit Brighton and Hove


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 

Name of independent examiner S J Neate

Relevant professional qualification of independent examiner FMAAT

Name of firm (where appropriate)

Address 23 Surrenden Lodge Surrenden Road Brighton

..... Post Code BN1 6QB

Date 1st January 2024

* delete or circle as appropriate

Form reviewed

May-23

Declarations and Scrutiny

I confirm that these Receipt and Payment based accounts for the year to 31 August 2023 have been prepared from the records of the Circuit and that they include all funds under the control of the Circuit meeting.

Signature of treasurer ..


Stella Goddard

Date.. 28/11/24

Name and address of treasurer Mrs Stella Goddard 28 Crest Way Portslade

Post Code.. BN41 2EY

Presentation to the Circuit meeting

I confirm that the annual report and accounts for the year ended 31 August 2024 were presented to the Circuit meeting held 28th November 2024

Signature of the Chair of the meeting ..



Name of the Chair of the meeting .. Rev Andrew Lowe

Date

28th November 2024

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of the

..... Brighton and Hove

Methodist Circuit

Charity Number 1134137

Responsibilities and basis of report

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the Brighton and Hove Circuit for the year ended 31 August 2023 set out on pages ... to As the Circuit'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 Circuit'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.

Name of Circuit Brighton and Hove


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 

Name of independent examiner S J Neate

Relevant professional qualification of independent examiner FMAAT

Name of firm (where appropriate)

Address 23 Surrenden Lodge Surrenden Road Brighton

..... Post Code BN1 6QB

Date 1st January 2024

* delete or circle as appropriate

Form reviewed

May-23