

Stafford Methodist Circuit

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST AUGUST 2024

REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER: 1135822

STAFFORD METHODIST CIRCUIT

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Reference and Administrative Details for the Year ended 31st August 2024

Principal Address	Circuit Office Asbury House Merrey Road Stafford ST17 9LX
Registered Charity Number	1135822
Independent Examiner	Melanie Crooks Associates Limited Bellfield House 33 Stafford Road Bloxwich West Midlands WS3 3NJ
Investment Bankers	Central Finance Board of the Methodist Church 9 Bonhill Street London EC2A 4PE The Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes Central Buildings Oldham Street Manchester M1 1JQ

STAFFORD METHODIST CIRCUIT

Reference and Administrative Details for the Year ended 31st August 2024 cont.

The trustees as set out below have held office during the period 1st September 2023 to the date of this report, unless otherwise stated:

Ministers	Rev. D.J. Bintliff Rev. David Middleton (from 1/11/23)	
Lay workers	Mrs C.A. Hamer	Mrs L.B. Reade *
	Mrs I.J. Wakerell (until 31/12/2024)	
Circuit Stewards	Mr P.W. Hardy ** Mrs J. Harrison (until 31/08/24) Mr D.A. Hemingway Dr P.C. Yates (until 19/03/24) Mr K.B. Day (from 5/12/23) Mrs R. Wall (from 26/09/24) Mrs W. Timothy (from 26/09/24)	
Circuit Meeting Secretary	*Mrs L.B. Reade	
Local Preachers Representatives	Mr R.D. Johnson Mr I. Mason Mrs J.M. Timmis	
Circuit Representatives to District Synod	Mrs V.E. Bates Mr P.W. Hardy ** Mrs M.E. Hemingway Dr S. McCready-Shea	
Church Representatives by Church		
Barlaston	Mrs K.A. Ford	Mrs J. O'Byrne (from 01/09/24)
Berkswich	Mrs L.M. Westoby Mr T.A.S. Goodchild Mr A. Lotinga (until 31/08/24) Mr. I. Allred (from 26/09/24)	
Bishops Offley	Mrs A. Hardy Mrs J. Palin (until 31/08/24) Mrs. A. Horton (from 01/09/24)	
Eccleshall	Mrs M. Embrey Mrs C.E. Harper Mrs D.H. Kirkham	
Gnosall	Mr W.D. Basford Mr K.C. Davies Mrs J. Jobling (until 01/05/24)	
Milwich	Mr B. Barker Mrs J. L. Barker	
Rising Brook	Mr I.F. Baldwin Mrs S. Francis	
St. John's Stone	Mrs A.E. Dair Mr D.C. Stewart Mrs B. Godridge	
Trinity Stafford	Mr. A.J. Lowe	
Weston	Mrs B. Gillespie	Mr. C. Gillespie

STAFFORD METHODIST CIRCUIT

Report of the Trustees for the Year ended 31st August 2024

The Trustees present their report with the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31st August 2024. The trustees have adopted the provisions of Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statements of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019).

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

Objectives & Aims

The purposes of the Methodist Church are, and shall be deemed to have been since the Date of Union, the advancement of:

- a) The Christian faith in accordance with the doctrinal standards and 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 to The Methodist Church.

The Circuit produces a bi-monthly preaching plan to ensure the regular acts of worship take place at each of the 7 Methodist Churches and 3 Local Ecumenical Partnerships in its geographical area. The Stafford Circuit is constituted to offer acts of worship in its church communities and to further the mission of the Church in Stafford and across the borough of Stafford. With our primary internal function being that of Christian worship, we aim to provide access to acts of worship in each of the 10 Circuit churches every Sunday.

Our internal structure is based on a Circuit Meeting which meets four times a year; a Local Preachers' meeting which meets around four times a year; Circuit Leadership Team meetings throughout the year, and Staff Meetings which meet weekly. We endeavour to make our meetings focus on the on-going development of the Circuit; they are the place where important decisions are made and within them, we plan our strategies and fulfil our role as Charity Trustees.

Public Benefit

We confirm the trustees have had regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit.

STAFFORD METHODIST CIRCUIT

Report of the Trustees for the Year ended 31st August 2024

ACHIEVEMENT AND PERFORMANCE

Charitable Activities

2023/2024 have been a period of change and development for the charity, with changes in staffing as expected in last year's report, but also the employment of additional support for the charity's endeavours in safeguarding. The Ordained staff of the Circuit now stands as the Superintendent minister, appointed in 2022 and an Authorised Minister from the Baptist Union, who began ministry within the Circuit in November 2023. Alongside the Circuit's ordained staffing, the Circuit continues to employ a core team of lay staff across the Circuit, our administrator and pastoral workers meet with our presbyters regularly to ensure the ministry of the Circuit is effective. In January of 2024 a new Safeguarding and Administrative Worker joined the Circuit team who, alongside the Superintendent oversees the safeguarding practices of the Circuit and its daughter churches are upheld and that activities are regulated as per the requirements of our safeguarding policies.

With the Authorised minister choosing to live within their own accommodation, the Circuit has taken the opportunity to begin the process of relocating one of the two Manses (accommodation for ordained staff) from the very south of the Circuit, to its centre, therefore serving the wider Circuit more appropriately once an incumbent needs this provision again. In the year 2023/2024 the manse was sold, with the expectation that within 2024/2025 a new manse will be purchased that meets the guidance set out for Manses by the Methodist Connexion. Our thanks should be expressed to volunteers within the life of the trust who undertook much of the day-to-day aspects of the sale, working with solicitors approved by the wider Methodist Connexion and TMCP (the custodian trustees of this building). Until the capital is spent on a like for like replacement, TMCP will continue to hold a levy upon the sale of the manse, once a purchase is agreed we are assured that this levy will be reversed.

We continue to hold to the fact that Worship and Teaching are both necessary aspects of our life together as a charity, that through these, the wider aspects of our responsibilities and actions are honed and fashioned, these are often expressed through the nature of "Our Calling" but have worked as a Circuit to develop a mission policy which builds upon the aspects of "Our Calling" and utilises the Methodist Connexional mission and growth strategies around "A Methodist Way of Life"

Our churches seek to embrace the breadth of 'Our Calling' yet we recognise as a Circuit that the expectations for each local community to fulfil all aspects of the life of the church is becoming more difficult, in this way the Circuit is looking to ensure that across the full breadth of its ministry and mission, all aspects of "A Methodist Way of Life" will be undertaken, even if not all of these will be present in every location the Circuit engages within. We are rooted in several different local communities, but our vision is much wider as we seek to serve the wider church and world in our work. Work in the community continues to be an important aspect of the circuit's mission. Our youth workers continue to support young people in a variety of ways.

When considering achievements and performance it is right to pay tribute to the many people throughout the circuit who in their daily lives respond to the call of Jesus "follow me" by offering pastoral care and/or practical help, to our team of Circuit Stewards who support, and lead the Circuit alongside our staff team, and, to the team of Local Preachers who enable services to take place Sunday by Sunday. We operate an open-door policy and welcome all to our church communities and wider work irrespective of race, gender, ethnicity, sexuality, or any kind of disability.

Report of the Trustees for the Year ended 31st August 2024

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Financial position

Income

Circuit income was £260,404 an increase of 13% compared with 2023 (£230,363) – however, this includes the net surplus on the sale of Gnosall Manse (see below).

Under normal circumstances, income is drawn primarily from the assessments paid by the Circuit member churches, and during the year these totalled £194,556 (2023: £205,854). This reduction in assessments had been agreed as part of the budget for the year, which considered the fall in church incomes (see comment on budget 24-25).

There was a kind donation of £957 from the estate of a member of Rowley Street Church, this was used to restore the Superintendent's Discretionary Fund.

The Circuit also received rental income from letting of office space of £1,776 (2023: £1,766) and office income (mainly photocopier charges) totalling £644 (2023: £783).

Income from investment interest on bank and trust accounts totalled £25,877, a 150% increase on last year (2023: £10,398). This was primarily interest on the capital realised from sale of properties in the previous two years, namely Rowley Street and Woodseaves church buildings, which is shown in the income for Designated funds in the accounts of £22,271.

During the year, the Circuit also sold Gnosall manse as this was not required for the second Minister and the property would have required considerable upgrade to meet the amended current standards for manses for future residency by a minister. This sale realised a sales price of £313,795 against an asset value of £175,000, giving a net income of £138,795, after marketing & conveyancing costs. From this TMCP levy and survey costs of £102,598 were deducted giving rise to an overall surplus of £36,197.

Expenditure

Overall expenditure total for the year at £273,846 compared to £284,424 in the prior year.

Spending under General Funds was up 4.8% at £248,202 (2023: £236,827), within this figure, the largest increase was a budgeted increase in Stipends & Salary, with the additional part-time lay worker (Safeguarding officer) and increases in remuneration to adjust for the cost-of-living.

Other significant changes under general expenditure, in descending order of difference, were:

- a) A £3,678 or 44% reduction in Utilities due to a refund on utilities for the redundant manse plus a reduction in gas prices for the office
- b) A £1,690 or 4.4% budgeted increase in District Assessment and
- c) A £1,506 or 60% increase in maintenance of manses for on-going work to repair issues

Also, some savings in the Designated Redundant property fund utilities and insurance due to previous year's sale of redundant churches. There was also an extraordinary expense of £21,529 being the District Levy to the DAF from the sale of the redundant church properties in 22-23.

STAFFORD METHODIST CIRCUIT

There were small changes in the General cost areas under Expenditure on charitable activities, which include Property & Office costs, Telephone & Travel expenses.

Net position and transfers.

The Circuit Meeting approved a budget for the year 23-24 with an expected operational deficit of around £76,000. This required to draw down income from sale of the property assets of Rowley St & Woodseaves and to use some of these monies to maintain the level of Circuit Ministry. By comparison the budget for the previous year was a working deficit of £80,346 (2022: actual deficit £47,094).

In the event, the general operational deficit was £47,222, offset with the £33,780 surplus in the Designated Funds, primarily from net proceeds from the sale as shown in these accounts.

The overall position, for the year ending August '24 was a deficit and reduction of net position of £13,442 This compared to a deficit of £54,061 for the previous year ending August '23.

Effect on Funds & Reserves

The major investment reserve fund of the Circuit, which is held by the Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes (TMCP), and previously referred to as the Circuit Model Trust Fund, has been renamed in the accounts as 'Circuit Investment Fund' to more clearly designate its purpose. This fund had a closing value of £130,538 at 31st August '23. During the year 23-24, this fund received the income from the sale of Gnosall manse £138,795 plus generated interest at £20,559. Costs allocated to the fund were the CPF Levy on the property sale, and District Levy on the previous year's interest of £21,529, plus some £1,151 bank charges. The Circuit meeting agreed to draw down £90,000 to restore the General Fund following the previous year's deficits. The fund (including a residual £2,932 in a now closed Circuit Model Trust Fund) stood at £498,524 at year end 31st August '24.

Two new funds were agreed by Circuit Meeting in December 2022, namely the Church Support Fund, with the initial value of £11,000 and the Mission Fund with £10,000. Transfers were made in 22-23 from the General Fund to start these. Neither of these funds were used in the year.

Redundant Property Fund: This fund was used for the costs associated with the management & sale of Gnosall Manse, which equated to a £3,650 and was closed by transfer from the Circuit Model Trust Fund.

Property Refurbishment Fund: After being topped up with £15,000 from the General Fund after a gap of three years and having expenditure of £4,807 in 22-23, this fund has not been used in 23-24 but, in accordance with the original design of the fund has been replenished and brought up to the desired £20,000 with a further transfer of £9,360.

With all the above, as at 31st August 2024, total funds reduced by £13,442 to £1,071,291 (2023: £1,084,733). In summary:

- The unrestricted General Funds stands at £492,421 (2023: £634,019). This includes Land & Buildings (with a fixed asset value of £425,000), so the current asset value of the Circuit General Fund stands at £67,421*.
- Funds designated for specific purposes, stand at £576,654 comprising:
 - Circuit Investment Fund £ 498,524

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- | | |
|----------------------------------|----------|
| ○ St. Johns Mission | £ 34,404 |
| ○ Church Support Fund * | £ 11,000 |
| ○ Mission Support Fund* | £ 10,000 |
| ○ Property Refurbishment* | £ 20,000 |
| ○ Superintendents Discretionary* | £ 1,956 |
| ○ Circuit Youth Fund* | £ 770 |
- The restricted fund (Berkswich CWF) stands at £2,216.

General Reserves Policy

It is the Trustees policy to maintain a balance of unrestricted and undesignated funds equivalent to between three and four months average unrestricted expenditure, to cover unexpected requirement which may occur from time to time, this equates to between £65,000 and £85,000.

In addition, the Circuit Reserves Policy is to maintain accessible funds of between £50,000 and £75,000 to enable the Circuit to assist its churches with appropriate grants and loans.

With the above two provisions, the General Reserve Policy equates to a minimum of £115,000 and a maximum of £160,000.

The funds which form part of the General Reserves, also shown by * (asterix) in the list above with their respective balances, on 31st August '24 include:

- Unrestricted - General (current assets) £67,421, and
- Designated - Church Support Fund £11,000, Mission Support Fund £10,000, Property Refurbishment Fund £20,000, Superintendents Discretionary Fund £1957 and Circuit Youth Work Fund £770,
- which add to a total General Reserve of £111,148.

The General Reserves were therefore just below minimum of the Reserves Policy scale at the year end.

Principal Funds

In addition to the Unrestricted General Fund, into and from which most of the financial transactions of the Circuit are made, the Circuit Meeting have determined certain designated and restricted funds for specific purposes.

Circuit Model Trust Fund (Designated)

Held and invested by the Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes (TMCP) and consists of income from churches. They have wide purposes, as defined by TMCP, and permission must be sought by the Circuit Meeting from TMCP to call upon money for specific building projects or to support the mission in general.

Redundant Property Fund (Designated)

This fund was set up for the purposes of tracking the income & expenditure related to the management and eventual sale of two church properties, namely Rowley Street and Woodseaves Chapel in 22-23 and Gnosall Manse in 23-24. These projects are now complete, and the net assets from the sale have been transferred to TMCP Circuit Investment Fund. It is proposed that this fund should be renamed and re-used for the purposes of purchasing a replacement Manse.

St. John's Mission & Development Fund (Designated)

This fund, set up with the Methodist share of the proceeds from the sale of St. John's Church building, has been designated for St. John's use in developing its future mission plans. The fund is monitored by the Circuit Meeting, to ensure that monies will be used, both for an approved purpose and within a reasonable timescale.

Property Refurbishment Fund (Designated)

Manse refurbishments are carried out at irregular intervals, usually to coincide with the change in Ministers and can, therefore, fluctuate considerably from year to year. Whilst this fund has been part of the Circuit fund portfolio for several years, but had not received transfers in for two years, so it was largely used up with refurbishment prior to the arrival of the current Superintendent in 21-22. As the intention is that the fund will receive between £5000 and £8000 per year from general funds, the decision was made to top up to £20,000.

Mission Support Fund (Designated)

This fund is for the purpose of enabling and supporting mission initiatives within the Circuit. The aim is to set a principal that such mission projects already have money put aside within the Circuit budget (originally set at a level of £10,000), and proposals will be received for approval by representatives of the Trustees. This fund has been retained at £10,000 in preparation for 24-25.

Church Support Fund (Designated)

The Church Support Fund is designed to be the vehicle by which the Circuit can respond to a need for financial support that is raised by any church when it is unable to meet these through its own resources. Such a request for a grant or loan may be made to meet challenges in cash flow, unexpected expenditure or indeed, to allow the church time to respond to a significant risk to its sustainability. This fund was used in 22-23 to make payments but has not been drawn upon in 23-24 and has an opening balance of £11,000 for 24-25.

Other Funds

Circuit Youth Work Fund (Designated)

To support Youth Work in the Circuit – has not been accessed in 23-24.

Superintendents Discretionary Fund (Designated)

The fund is for spend in cases of local individual need at the discretion of the Superintendent. The fund stood at an annual opening balance of £1,000, as per design, but was not used throughout the year and received a specific memorial donation of £957 in 23-24, so is at £1,957 for 24-25.

Berkswich Families Fund (Restricted)

This fund, originally set up by a donation, as the Children's Worker Fund. The fund is to be restored for 24-25 to provide for the payroll services of a Community Families Worker, working alongside Berkswich Church.

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Report of the Trustees for the Year ended 31st August 2024

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Governing Document

The charity is controlled by its governing document, a deed of trust and constitutes an unincorporated charity.

The governing document for the circuit is the Deed of Union (1932) and Methodist Church Act (1976).

Detailed governance arrangements are outlined within the Constitutional Practice and Discipline of the Methodist Church by order of the annual conference (CPD).

Induction and training of new trustees

The charity is controlled by its governing document, a deed of trust and constitutes an unincorporated charity.

The governing document for the circuit is the Deed of Union (1932) and Methodist Church Act (1976).

Detailed governance arrangements are outlined within the Constitutional Practice and Discipline of the Methodist Church by order of the annual conference (CPD).

Related Parties

The Circuit is part of the Wolverhampton & Shrewsbury District and is also accountable to the Methodist Conference.

The following Methodist Churches/LEPs are linked to the circuit: Barlaston, Berkswich, Bishops Offley, Eccleshall, Gnosall, Milwich (LEP), Rising Brook, St. John's-Stone (LEP), Trinity (LEP), Weston.

Audit and Risk Management

As the gross income for the charity in 23-24 is less than the statutory audit threshold (£500,000 or £250,000 with assets exceeding £3.26m) but more than the £250,000 threshold for requiring an independent examination, the Circuit trustees have taken direction from the CC32 Guidance to choose an independent examination for this report.

The Charity Commission Guidance on Risk Management (CC26) requires only those charities that are above statutory audit threshold to make a risk management statement, however, it encourages smaller charities to do so. Therefore, the Circuit Leadership team will be undertaking an assessment in the financial year 24-25 with a view to include this in the trustees report for next year.

Safeguarding

Every Person has a value and dignity which comes directly from the creation of male and female in God's own image and likeness. Christians see this potential as fulfilled by God's re-creation of us in Christ. Amongst other things this implies a duty to value all people as bearing the image of God and therefore to protect them from harm.

Methodist Connexional practice outlines commitment to the following principles:

- The care and nurture of, and respectful pastoral ministry with, all children, young people and adults

STAFFORD METHODIST CIRCUIT

- The safeguarding and protection of all children, young people and adults when they are vulnerable
- The establishing of safe, caring communities which provide a loving environment where there is informed vigilance as to the dangers of abuse.
- We will carefully select and train all those with any responsibility within the Church, in line with Safer Recruitment principles, including the use of criminal records disclosures and registration with the relevant vetting and barring schemes.
- We will respond without delay to every complaint made which suggests that an adult, child or young person may have been harmed, cooperating with the police and local authority in any investigation.
- We will seek to work with anyone who has suffered abuse, developing with them an appropriate ministry of informed pastoral care.
- We will seek to challenge any abuse of power, especially by anyone in a position of trust.
- We will seek to offer pastoral care and support, including supervision and referral to the proper authorities, to any member of our church community known to have offended against a child, young person or vulnerable adult.
- In all these principles we will follow legislation, guidance and recognised good practice.

The Stafford Methodist Circuit commits itself to ensuring the implementation of Connexional Safeguarding Policy; government legislation, guidance and safe practice in the circuit and in the churches.

The Stafford Methodist Circuit commits itself to the provision of support, advice and training for lay and ordained people that will ensure people are clear and confident about their roles and responsibilities in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults who may be vulnerable.

REPORT APPROVAL

Approved by order of the Board of Trustees on 19 March 2025 and signed on its behalf by:



.....

Rev. D.J. Bintliff - Trustee

STAFFORD METHODIST CIRCUIT

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of Stafford Methodist Circuit

Independent Examiners Report to the Trustees of the Stafford Methodist Circuit - Charity number 135822 ("the Circuit")

I report to the Circuit trustees on my examination of the accounts for the Circuit for the year ended 31 August 2024 which are set out on pages 12 to 27.

Responsibilities and basis of report

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

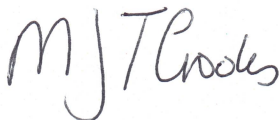
I report in respect of my examination of the Circuit's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act.

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 which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- Accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act: or.
- The accounts do not accord with the accounting records.
- The accounts do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a "true and fair" view, which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.
- The trustee's annual report is not consistent with the accounts

I have no concerns and have 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.



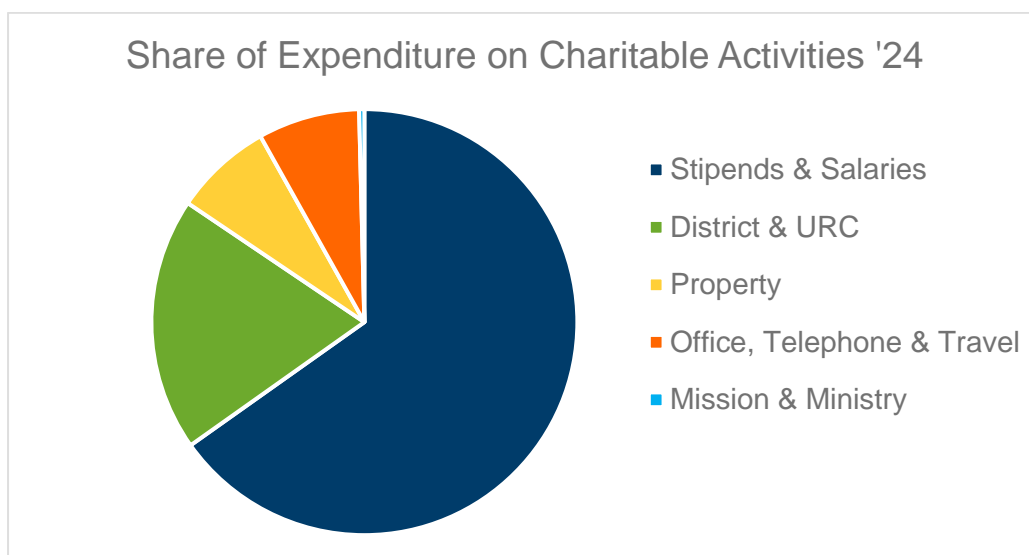
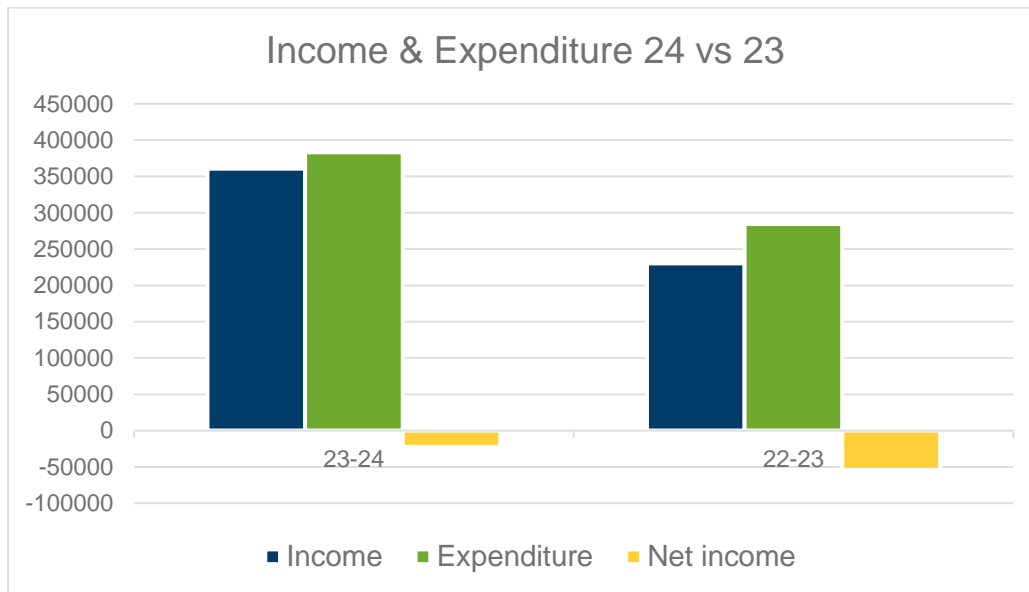
Melanie Crooks
Melanie Crooks Associates Limited
Bellfield House
33 Stafford Road
Bloxwich
West Midlands
Ws3 3NJ

Date: 24.3.2025

STAFFORD METHODIST CIRCUIT

Statement of Financial Activities for the Year ended 31st August 2024

	2024 Unrestricted Funds £	2024 Designated Funds £	2024 Restricted Funds £	2024 Total Funds £	2023 Total Funds £
<i>Income and Endowments from :</i>					
<i>Income from charitable activities</i>					
Donations & Legacies	0	956	0	956	0
Church Assessments	194,556	0	0	194,556	205,854
Office income	644	0	0	644	783
Investments	3,606	58,468	0	62,074	10,398
Rental income	1,776	0	0	1,776	2,256
Other income	398	0	0	398	11,072
Total income	200,980	59,424	0	260,404	230,363
<i>Expenditure on:</i>					
Stipends, salaries, NI and Pensions	161,267	0	0	161,267	155,317
District Assessment	40,431	0	0	40,431	42,717
URC Mission & Ministry	9,412	0	0	9,412	9,424
Property	16,462	2,799	0	19,261	24,736
Office expenses	7,442	1,150	0	8,592	6,668
Telephone & Travel Expenses	11,240	148	0	11,388	10,198
Apprenticeship levy	684	0	0	684	657
Mission & Ministry expenses	1,020	0	0	1,020	476
Other expenditure	244	21,547	0	21,791	34,231
Total expenditure	248,202	25,644	0	273,846	284,424
Net (expenditure) resources before transfer	(47,222)	33,780	0	(13,442)	(54,061)
<i>Transfers:</i>					
Gross transfers between funds - in	183,350	530,301	0	713,651	69,846
Gross transfers between funds - out	(277,726)	(435,925)	0	(713,651)	(69,846)
<i>Other recognised gains and losses:</i>					
Gains /losses on investment assets				0	(51,818)
Net movement in funds	(141,598)	128,156	0	(13,442)	(105,879)
Total funds brought forward	634,019	448,498	2,216	1,084,733	1,190,612
Total funds carried forward	492,421	576,654	2,216	1,071,291	1,084,733



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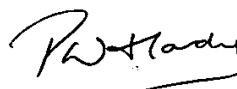
Balance Sheet as of 31st August 2024

		2024	2023
		£	£
Fixed assets	1490: Residential land	75,000	150,000
	1491: Manses	75,000	175,000
	1492: Other Buildings	275,000	275,000
	Total Fixed Assets	425,000	600,000
Current Assets	1501: CAF Bank	20,996	15,031
	1502: Central Finance Board	62,080	60,119
	1503:TMCP:Circuit Model Trust	523,877	403,721
	1504:CFBSt John's M&D Fund	34,404	32,691
	Z06: Prepayments	6,782	4,871
	Total Current Assets	648,139	516,433
Liabilities	Z07: Accounts examination	(1,680)	(1,680)
	Z08: Assessments in advance	(168)	(30,020)
	Total Liabilities	(1,848)	(31,700)
	Net Assets	1,071,291	1,084,733
Represented by:	General (Unrestricted) Fund	492,421	634,019
	Designated Funds	576,654	448,498
	Restricted Funds	2,216	2,216
	Total Funds	1,071,291	1,084,733

The notes 1 to 13 form part of these financial statements. The financial statements were approved by the trustees on 19 March 2025 and signed by:

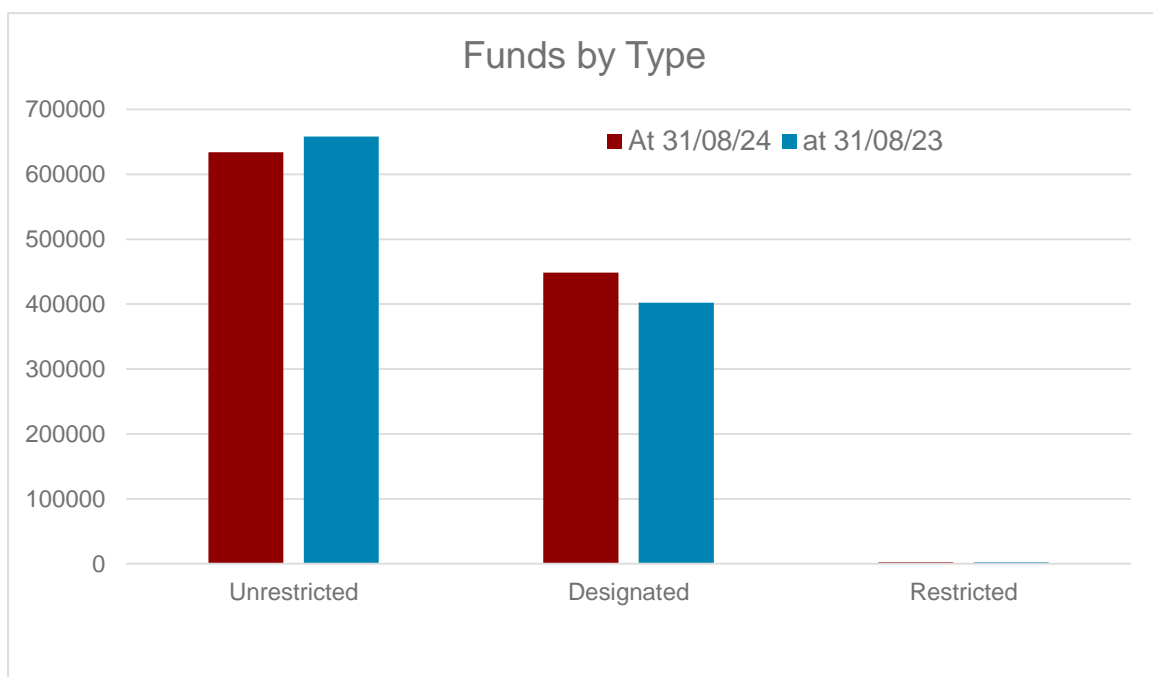
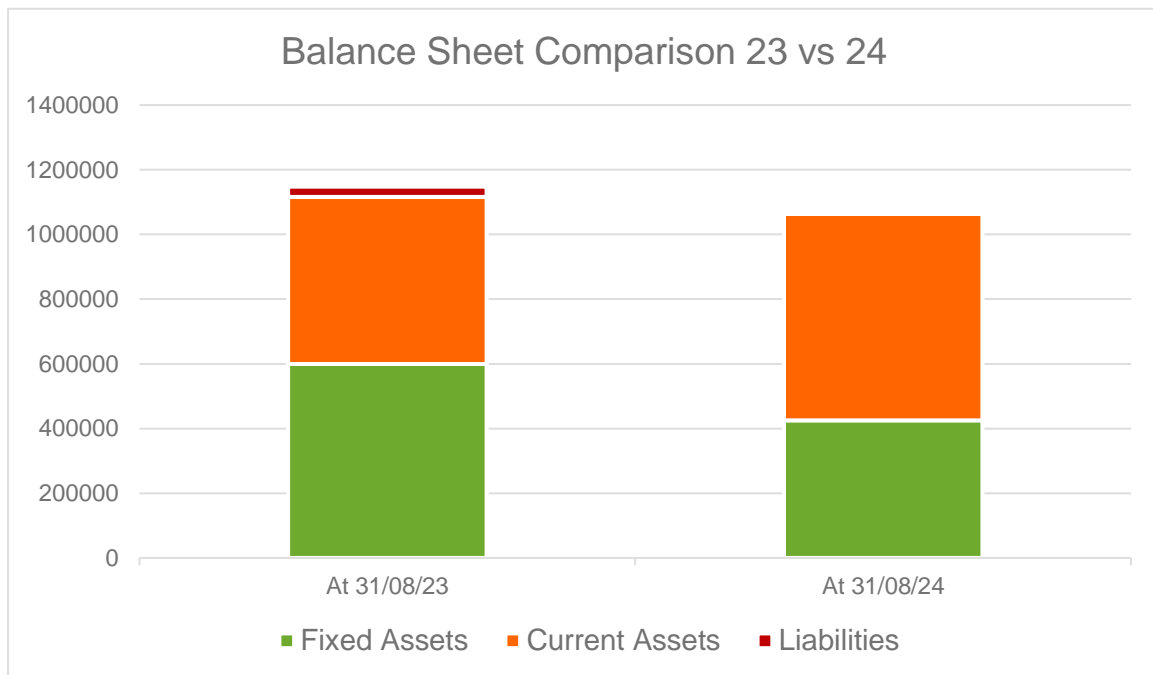


Rev. D.J. Bintliff - Trustee



Mr. P.W.Hardy - Trustee

STAFFORD METHODIST CIRCUIT



Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year ended 31st August 2024

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of preparing the financial statements

The financial statements of the charity, which is a public benefit entity under FRS 102, have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' and the Charities Act 2011. The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention.

The financial information presented is relevant, reliable, comparable and complete. Where estimates are used these are based on experience, research and judgement. The accounts are expressed in £ Sterling, rounded to the nearest pound.

Going concern

The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis as the trustees believe that no material uncertainties exist. The trustees have considered the level of funds held and the expected level of income and expenditure for 12 months from authorising these financial statements.

Consolidation

The Circuit has denominational regulatory oversight in respect of the work of the Churches within the Circuit but has no legal or operational control of those Churches and their governing bodies except in extreme circumstances. For this reason, the financial statements of Churches within the Circuit are not consolidated into these financial statements.

Income

Income is included in the Statement of Financial Activities (SOFA) when the Circuit becomes entitled to the resources, and the trustees are reasonably certain they will receive the resources; and the monetary value can be measured with sufficient reliability.

Expenditure

Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to that expenditure, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all cost related to the category. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings, they have been allocated to activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

Grants made by the Circuit from its own funds are recognised in full at the time of agreement to make a grant without performance conditions or as and when the Circuit accepts that there is a legal or operational obligation to make the payment if it is subject to performance conditions. When the grant is recurrent over more than one year the balance payable in future years is treated as a provision for future commitments in the Balance Sheet against the appropriate fund, the provision being released in future years as instalments are paid in accordance with the originally agreed terms.

Tangible fixed assets

These are capitalised if they can be used for more than one year, and individually cost at least £1,000. The freehold property is shown in the accounts at 2015 deemed values, of which the land component is deemed to be £75,000. No depreciation is provided on the buildings because the trustees consider the current residual value of the property in its present condition to be not less than its current value, and in the absence of any evidence of impairment, any depreciation provision would not be material.

Redundant Churches as Investment Properties

From time to time the Circuit may be required to assume responsibility for Church premises following closure and cessation for worship. This results in the Circuit becoming Managing Trustees for the

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property. At that time the property is recognised as an asset at its anticipated net sale price as determined by a professional valuation. Any expenditure on such assets, if held for reinvestment of the proceeds, as the trustees determine, that is likely to enhance sales value is capitalised at the time the expenditure is incurred. Where the proceeds are intended to be spent on activities, the property is included in current assets at the lower of cost and realisable value.

Taxation

The charity is exempt from tax on its charitable activities.

Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds can be used in accordance with the charitable objectives at the discretion of the trustees.

Restricted funds can only be used for particular restricted purposes within the objects of the charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for restricted purposes.

Further explanation of the nature and purpose of each fund is included in the notes to the financial statements.

Pension costs

The charity operates a defined contribution pension scheme. Contributions payable to the charity's pension scheme are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities in the period to which they relate.

The Circuit is a member of the Connexional pension scheme (MMPS) which covers presbyters and deacons of the Methodist Church. The contribution rates are set each year by the Methodist Conference. The MMPS is a multi-employer scheme and in accordance with the guidance issued by the Charity Commission, the Circuit employees enrolled in a defined contribution pension scheme administered by The Pension Trust. Employer contributions are made into this scheme on behalf of employees who are members.

2. INCOME FROM CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

	2024	2024	2024	2024	2023
	Unrestricted	Designated	Restricted	Total	Total
	Funds	Funds	Funds	Funds	Funds
	£	£	£	£	£
Income and Endowments from :					
Donations and Legacies					
1305- Donations		956		956	0
Income from Donations & legacies Totals	0	956	0	956	0
Income from charitable activities					
1301- Assessments	194,556			194,556	205,854
1309- Administration	644			644	783
Income from charitable activities Totals	195,200	0	0	195,200	206,637
Investments					
1308-Rent	1,776			1,776	2,256
1309-Interest & Investment	3,606			3,606	10,398
1307-Property Sale		58,468		58,468	0
Investment Totals	5,382	58,468	0	63,850	12,654

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Other income

1306-Other income	262			262	10,205
1312-Leaving Gifts	136			136	867
Other income Totals	398	0	0	398	11,072
Income and Endowments Total	200,980	59,424	0	260,404	230,363

Income codes are consistent with the previous year:

- 1301 Assessments - Contribution to Circuit costs donated by the churches in the Circuit
- 1305 Donations – donation made in the form of a legacy
- 1309 Administration – income from office activities e.g. photocopier charge to tenants
- 1308 Rent – Income from rent charged to tenants of Asbury House office space
- 1303 Interest & Investment – Interest from bank accounts & TMCP investments
- 1307 Property Sales – Profit on sale of The Manse at The Flashes, Gnosall
- 1312 Leaving Gifts – Gifts from churches & circuit for ministers & staff (see expenditure

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3. EXPENDITURE ON CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

	2024	2024	2024	2024	2023
	Unrestricted	Designated	Restricted	Total	Total
	Funds	Funds	Funds	Funds	Funds
	£	£	£	£	£
Expenditure on:					
1401- Methodist Stipends	161,267			161,267	155,317
1403-District Levy	0	21,529		21,529	3,976
1404-District Assessment	40,431			40,431	38,741
1402-URC Mission & Ministry	9,412			9,412	9,424
1412- Insurance	2,386	154		2,540	3,655
1413-Utilities	4,286	2,464		6,750	11,778
1414-Maintenance (Office)	4,710			4,710	5,674
1416-Property Management	0			0	72
1418-Property Surveys	1,080			1,080	1,062
1419 - Property Refurbishment					6,157
1428 Maintenance (manses)	4,001	180		4,181	2,495
1405-Administration	5,182			5,182	4,033
1423-Bank Charges	580	1,151		1,731	955
1406-Telephone & Broadband	2,955	148		3,103	3,398
1407-Travel Expenses	8,285			8,285	6,800
1424-Apprenticeship Levy	684			684	657
1410-Pastoral Work	155			155	243
1411 - Donations to Churches	677			677	23,866
1420-Training & Recruitment	100			100	233
1425-Accountancy	1,680			1,680	1,680
1426 - Leaving Gifts					900
1422-Pastoral Work Other	87			87	
1421 - Other expenditure	244	18		262	3,308
Expenditure on charitable activities Total	248,202	25,644	0	273,846	284,424

- 1401 Methodist Stipends – Showing the cost-of-living increase in line with average of CPI & AWEI.
- 1424 Apprenticeship Levy - Apprenticeship Levy is an amount paid to HMRC at a rate of 0.5% of an employer's annual pay bill.
- 1403 District Levy – a levy by the Wolverhampton & Shrewsbury Methodist District on interest earned from TMCP capital.
- 1404 District Assessment & URC Mission & Ministry – payments to District and URC Synod for governance & administrative oversight
- 1412 Insurance, 1413 Utilities and 1406 Telephone & Broadband – running costs for office, manses and redundant properties under the management of the Circuit. These have reduced in 23-24 due to the sale of the redundant churches.
- 1414 Maintenance (Office), 1416 Property Management & 1428 Maintenance (Manses) – relate to costs of maintaining the Circuit property portfolio

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- 1418 Property Surveys – costs of Quinquennial Surveys and pre-sale Reports – these have reduced in 23-24 as most of the costs for the sale of properties were in previous years.
- 1407 Travel Expenses – reimbursement of expenses incurred by staff in carrying out their duties
- 1409 Youth Work and 1410 Pastoral Work – Costs for materials and consumables associated with these areas of ministry
- 1420 Training & Recruitment – direct costs associated with attracting and developing ministerial & staff in the Circuit

4. TRUSTEES' REMUNERATION AND BENEFITS

Certain trustees are remunerated as employees of the Circuit. All payments to trustees are at normal market rates and are subject to review by independent members of the trustee body. Total remuneration paid to these trustees in their lay employment was £57,995 (2023: £56,875).

No expenses were paid to trustees in their capacity as trustees for the year ended 31 August 2024 (2023 £nil).

Trustee indemnity insurance was taken out for the year as part of the Circuit general insurance policy (premium costs for indemnity insurance are not identified within this general insurance policy).

5. STAFF COSTS

	2024	2023
	£	£
Lay Employee Costs (excluding Presbyters)		
Wages and Salaries	75,710	71,795
National Insurance	4,640	4,475
Pension Costs	2,364	2,193
	82,714	78,463

The average monthly number of lay employees during the year was 6 (2023:5). No lay employees received emoluments in excess of £60,000.

The Presbyters stipends are not included within the Circuit staff costs, as they are not employees on the Circuit. The Circuit is merely responsible for the central administration and payment of the stipends on behalf of the churches. However, the Circuit paid on average 2(2023:2) presbyters as office holders and the costs were as follows:

	2024	2023
	£	£
Stipends & Allowances	58,923	56,901
National Insurance	5,510	5,466
Pension	14,120	14,487
	78,553	76,854

The Presbyters of the Circuit are also provided with the use of a manse rent free and council tax and water rates in furtherance of their duties.

Key Management Personnel are considered to be the Superintendent of the Circuit, the other Presbyter and the remaining members of the Circuit Leadership Team (CLT). The Superintendent chairs meetings of the CLT and Circuit Meetings.

The remuneration and pensions of these people amounted to £133,109 (2023:£139,684)

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6. FUNDS & MOVEMENT IN FUNDS

	1.9.2023	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	Gains & Losses	31.8.2024
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Unrestricted:						
General	634,019	200,980	(248,202)	(94,376)	0	492,421
Designated:						
Church Support Fund	11,000					11,000
Circuit Youth Work Fund	770					770
CMT - Circuit Model Trust Fund	0					0
Mission Support Fund	10,000					10,000
Circuit Model Trust Fund	130,538	56,756	(21,976)	333,206		498,524
Superintendent's Discretionary Fund	1,000	956	(18)	18		1,956
Property Refurbishment Fund	10,640			9,360		20,000
St John's Mission & Development Fund	32,692	1,712				34,404
Redundant Property Fund	251,858		(3,650)	(248,208)		0
Total Designated	448,498	59,424	(25,644)	94,376	0	576,654
Restricted:						
Berkswich Children's Worker Fund	2,216	0	0	0	0	2,216
Total Funds	1,084,733	260,404	(273,846)	0	0	1,071,291

	1.9.2022	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	Gains & Losses	31.8.2023
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Unrestricted:						
General	721,946	210,593	(236,826)	(61,694)	0	634,019
Designated:						
Church Support Fund	0		(22,176)	33,176		11,000
Circuit Youth Work Fund	770					770
CMT - Circuit Model Trust Fund	(3,947)	7,580	(4,345)	712		0
Mission Support Fund	0		(3,000)	13,000		10,000
Circuit Model Trust Fund	133,470			(2,932)		130,538
Superintendent's Discretionary Fund	682		(200)	518		1,000

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Property Refurbishment Fund	447		(4,807)	15,000		10,640
St John's Mission & Development Fund	31,594	1,098				32,692
Redundant Property Fund	303,398	4,128	(6,070)	2,220	(51,818)	251,858
Total Designated	466,414	12,806	(40,598)	61,694	(51,818)	448,498

Restricted:

Berkswich Children's Worker Fund	2,252	6,964	(7,000)	0	0	2,216
Total Funds	1,190,612	230,363	(284,424)	0	(51,818)	1,084,733

Principal Funds

In addition to the Unrestricted General Fund, into and from which most of the financial transactions of the Circuit are made, the Circuit Meeting have determined certain designated and restricted funds for specific purposes.

Circuit Model Trust Fund (Designated)

Held and invested by the Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes (TMCP) and consists of income from churches. They have wide purposes, as defined by TMCP, and permission must be sought by the Circuit Meeting from TMCP to call upon money for specific building projects or to support the mission in general. It is managed by TMCP and contain net revenue from the sale of properties and the interest earned from the capital. The District Levy is made from this fund on the interest.

Redundant Property Fund (Designated)

This fund was set up for the purposes of tracking the income & expenditure related to the management and eventual sale of two church properties, namely Rowley St and Woodseaves Chapel. These projects are now complete, and the net assets from the sale are transferred to TMCP Circuit Model Trust Fund.

St. John's Mission & Development Fund (Designated)

This fund, set up with the Methodist share of the proceeds from the sale of St. John's Church building, has been designated for St. John's use in developing its future mission plans. The fund is monitored by the Circuit Meeting, to ensure that monies will be used, both for an approved purpose and within a reasonable timescale.

Property Refurbishment Fund (Designated)

Manse refurbishments are carried out at irregular intervals, usually to coincide with the change in Ministers and can, therefore, fluctuate considerably from year to year. The intention is that the fund will receive between £5-10,000 per year from general funds. A transfer of £9,360 was made from general funds in 23-24 thereby achieving a closing balance of £20,000 at 31 August 2024

Mission Support Fund (Designated)

The fund has the purpose of enabling and supporting mission initiatives within the Circuit. The aim is to set a principal that such mission projects already have money put aside within the Circuit budget and proposals will be received for approval by representatives of the Trustees.

Church Support Fund

The Church Support Fund is designed to be the vehicle by which the Circuit can respond to a need for financial support that is raised by any church when it is unable to meet these through its own resources. Such a request for a grant or loan may be made to meet challenges in cash flow,

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unexpected expenditure or indeed, to allow the church time to respond to a significant risk to its sustainability.

Circuit Youth Work Fund (Designated)

To support Youth Work in the Circuit – has not been accessed in 23-24.

Superintendents Discretionary Fund (Designated)

The fund is for spend in cases of local individual need at the discretion of the Superintendent. The Circuit designated a £956 legacy received in 23-24 to this fund.

Children's Worker Fund (Restricted)

This fund, originally set up by a donation, closed in the year to 2021 as the Children's Worker was made redundant during the pandemic. The fund was to be restored this year to provide for the payroll services of a Schools' Worker, however, this project has now ceased, so the intention is for these remaining monies to be transferred to the Berkswich Church Community Worker Fund.

7. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Land £	Manse £	Other buildings £	Total £
Deemed Cost and carrying value				
As at 1.9.2023	150,000	175,000	275,000	600,000
Disposal	(75,000)	(100,000)		(175,000)
As at 31.8.2024	75,000	75,000	275,000	425,000

Analysed by Funds as follows:	Land £	Manse £	Other buildings £	Total £	2023 £
Unrestricted	75,000	75,000	275,000	425,000	600,000
Designated	0			0	0
Total	75,000	75,000	275,000	425,000	600,000

The properties include the Manse at Widecombe Avenue, Berkswich and Office at Asbury House, Rising Brook, Stafford. The Manse at The Flashes, Gnosall was disposed of during the year ended 31 August 2024. Prior to its disposal the Manse was transferred from the unrestricted general fund to designated funds.

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8. CASH IN BANK AND IN HAND

	2024	2023
	£	£
1501: CAF Bank	20,996	15,031
1502: Central Finance Board	62,080	60,119
1503:TMCP:Circuit Model Trust	523,877	403,721
1504:CFBSt John's M&D Fund	34,404	32,691

Total Cash at Bank	641,357	511,562
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The current asset values are all in bank accounts:

- 1501 CAF Bank – The current account used for general expenditure. The account balance is maintained by periodic transfers from CFB and TMCP accounts.
- 1502 Central Finance Board – this account receives the Church Assessments and is used to make the stipendiary payments and maintain balance of the CAF account.
- 1503 TMCP – the repository for capital realisations from property sales & source of interest on these investments
- 1504 CFB St Johns M&D Fund – managed by the Circuit on behalf of St Johns Church. No transactions made apart from interest earned & retained.

9. DEBTORS & CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	2024	2023
	£	£
Debtors:		
Z06:Prepayments	6,782	4,871

Creditors falling due within 1 Year

Z07: Accounts examination	(1,680)	(1,680)
Z08: Assessments in advance	(168)	(30,020)
	<u>(1,848)</u>	<u>(31,700)</u>

- Z06 Prepayments –September stipendiary payments made in advance of year end 31st August.
- Z07 Accounts Examination – Allowance of £1,680 for 23-24
- Z08 Assessments in advance – these are overpayments made by churches that are repayable and will be done so via offset against the 24-25 assessments.

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10. COMPARATIVES FOR PREVIOUS YEAR 1ST SEPTEMBER '22 TO 31ST AUGUST '23

	2023 Unrestricted Funds £	2023 Designated Funds £	2023 Restricted Funds £	2023 Total Funds £	2022 Total Funds £
<i>Income and Endowments from :</i>					
<i>Income from charitable activities</i>					
Church Assessments	205,854			205,854	213,628
Office income	783			783	997
Investments	1,720	8,678		10,398	990
Rental income	1,776	480		2,256	3,931
Other income	460	3,648	6,964	11,072	2,352
Total income	210,593	12,806	6,964	230,363	221,898
<i>Expenditure on:</i>					
Stipends, salaries, NI and Pensions	148,353		6,964	155,317	141,996
District Assessment	38,741	3,976		42,717	38,873
URC Mission & Ministry	9,424			9,424	9,876
Property	18,674	6,062		24,736	33,369
Office expenses	6,255	377	36	6,668	7,947
Telephone & Travel Expenses	10,198			10,198	9,576
Apprenticeship levy	657			657	570
Mission & Ministry expenses	476			476	573
Other expenditure	4,048	30,183		34,231	26,212
Total expenditure	236,826	40,598	7,000	284,424	268,992
 Net (expenditure) resources before transfer	 (26,233)	 (27,792)	 (36)	 (54,061)	 (47,094)
<i>Transfers:</i>					
Gross transfers between funds - in		69,846		69,846	6,327
Gross transfers between funds - out	(61,694)	(8,152)		(69,846)	(6,327)
<i>Other recognised gains and losses:</i>					
Gains /losses on investment assets		(51,818)		(51,818)	0
Net movement in funds	(87,927)	(17,916)	(36)	(105,879)	(47,094)
Total funds brought forward	721,946	466,414	2,252	1,190,612	1,237,706
Total funds carried forward	634,019	448,498	2,216	1,084,733	1,190,612

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11. NET ASSETS

The net assets of the Circuit may be analysed as follows:

	2024	2024	2024	2024
	Unrestricted	Designated	Restricted	Total
	Funds	Funds	Funds	Funds
	£	£	£	£
Fixed assets	425,000			425,000
Debtors	6,782			6,782
Cash at bank	62,487	576,654	2,216	641,357
Creditors	(1,680)			(1,680)
Creditors -Assessments in advance	(168)			(168)
Total Net Assets	492,421	576,654	2,216	1,071,291

	2023	2023	2023	2023
	Unrestricted	Designated	Restricted	Total
	Funds	Funds	Funds	Funds
	£	£	£	£
Fixed assets	600,000			600,000
Debtors	4,871			4,871
Cash at bank	60,848	448,498	2,216	511,562
Creditors	(1,680)			(1,680)
Creditors -Assessments in advance	(30,020)			(30,020)
Total Net Assets	634,019	448,498	2,216	1,084,733

12. OPERATING LEASE COMMITMENT

As of 31 August 2024, the Circuit was committed to making the following payments under non-cancellable operating leases:

Operating Leases which expire:	2024	2023
	£	£
Within 1 year		
Within 1-2 years		
Within 2-5 years	590	590
More than 5 years		
Total	590	590

13. RELATED PARTIES

Transactions between the Circuit and its member churches

The Circuit received assessments of £194,556 (2023: £205,854) from the churches within the circuit.

The Circuit provided grants to churches in the circuit amounting to £677 (2023: £1,690) in support of technology improvements.

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Transactions between the Circuit and the Wolverhampton & Shrewsbury District & Connexion

The Circuit paid the District £40,431 (2023: £38,741) in district assessments. They also paid them £102,598 (2023: £101,529) by way of levies on the net sale of properties and on the balance of monies held in the Circuit Investment Fund at the start of the financial year.

The Connexional assessment is collected by the District as part of the above District Assessment and in 2024 this was £36,755.