

BURY ST EDMUNDS METHODIST CIRCUIT *(Registered Charity 1135971)*
ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2021

CIRCUIT MINISTERS FOR THE YEAR

Reverend Debbie Borda 14 Well Street Bury St Edmunds IP33 1EQ
Reverend Rita Carr 12 Shakespeare Road Stowmarket IP14 1TJ
Reverend Ruth Ridge 4 Kedington Court Acton CO10 0XB

CIRCUIT STEWARDS FOR THE YEAR

Mr Bill Humm 52 Farriers Road Stowmarket IP14 1TJ
Mr Andy Flack 16 Crown Mill Elmswell IP30 9GF

CIRCUIT TREASURER FOR THE YEAR

Mr Richard Meadows 16 Greene Mews Bury St Edmunds IP33 1QL

THE TRUSTEES are those persons appointed by the Circuit Meeting under Methodist Church rules by the Circuit Meeting.

THE CIRCUIT is the primary unit in which local Churches express and experience their interconnection in the body of Christ, for purposes of mission, mutual encouragement and help. The Circuit has a Methodist team of two and a half ministers covering a mainly rural area of some 500 square miles. There were 3 active supernumeraries and 10 local preachers with two more on trial. From time to time services are held on a local arrangement basis. There are nine churches, Cotton having closed from the 1 September 2020. Reverend Debbie Borda retired at the end of August 2021. She had led the Circuit for six years as its Superintendent. We are grateful to Debbie for her witness, leadership and her attention to peoples' welfare throughout the Circuit. Her last service was held in July followed by a farewell tea in August. The post of Circuit Superintendent has been taken over by the Reverend Jason Vinyard. Andy Flack and the Circuit Secretary, Ruth Logan, stood down at the end of the year following moves to new homes outside the Circuit. We are grateful for their diligence in managing the Circuit's affairs.

CIRCUIT ACTIVITIES

Circuit activities continued to be dominated by Covid restrictions. Churches reopened for some services in September 2020, with appropriate safeguards and risk assessments. However, lockdown resulted in further closures from late December with Christmas services being conducted on-line or over Zoom. Services started to be resumed in April 2021, at first monthly and then, from mid-July, weekly. To continue meeting peoples' spiritual, pastoral and social needs the Circuit maintained throughout the year Sunday services over Zoom together with a weekly newsletter and service sheets. Special care was taken by ministers and pastoral teams to keep in touch with people via emails and telephone calls, particularly with those living alone. These measures continued to result in an increased ministerial work load. Sadly two of the Circuit's Supernumerary Ministers, Reverend Peter Dainty and Reverend Jack Bingham, passed away. The use of Zoom for Circuit Leadership Team meetings and Circuit Meetings enabled Circuit's administrative wheels to continue to run smoothly.

THE CHURCHES

Membership numbers were as follows:

	NOVEMBER 2020	NOVEMBER 2021
Bradfield	7	7
Glemsford	8	8
Ixworth	14	14
Needham Market	37	36
Northumberland Avenue	20	20
Old Newton	20	18
St John's Sudbury	71	70
Stowmarket	29	32
Trinity Bury St Edmunds	120	124
Total	326	329

There was no October 2020 count of church attendance numbers.

CHURCH ACTIVITIES

Most of the local churches supplemented Circuit activities with initiatives of their own, using Zoom or on-line facilities for church services and for maintaining regular activities such as bible study groups and house groups. Towards the end of the year some activities such as toddler groups restarted. In other cases planning was in hand for early resumption of face to face meetings. At Bradfield two key members sadly died in September 2020 and the Church was grateful that it was possible to meet so members could support each other. Encouraging local links with the Anglican benefice were made. Glemsford enjoyed a joint on-line Christingle service with the parish Church. A baptism was held in the early summer, a joyful but challenging occasion. The Minister regularly led assemblies in local schools. At St John's the Community Worker's contract was extended by a year. Links with the local family centre and neighbourhood chaplaincy team were built up. Two outdoor family trail events were held. Messy church, shared with other churches in the town, was held on-line and there was a shared Christingle service with one of the Town's Anglican churches. At Stowmarket by the end of August 2021 regular events were in the course of being resumed, or at an advanced stage of planning, including after worship coffee. A notable event was a delayed baptism. At Old Newton plans for a return to normality were similarly advanced including links with the parish church. At Christchurch a new screen and computer were installed, with clips greatly enhancing services when no singing was allowed. Resumed activities included toddler sessions – particularly important for new mothers who had seen little peer support during lockdown. At Ixworth a website was set up hosting on-line events. These included a virtual Christmas Tree festival and a Spring festival, the former raising funds for initiatives in Haiti, Uganda, Pakistan and Nigeria. At Northumberland Avenue the Woman's Fellowship resumed at the end of June with outside meetings. The Church hosted the farewell Circuit service for its Superintendent, Debbie Borda, and a farewell tea party for the Churches of which she was Minister (Trinity, Northumberland Avenue and Ixworth). At Trinity monthly services were held from September to December 2020 resuming by May 2021, with a return to weekly services in July. Failure of the lift resulted in services being moved to the down stair hall. Fund raising was put in hand to cover the cost of repairs and the Church is grateful for the generous responses. Repairs to the roof went ahead. Members enjoyed the lovely farewell tea for Debbie at Northumberland Avenue.

CIRCUIT FINANCES

The accounts show a deficit of £35,750, which has been met from reserves. There was a shortfall of some £31,000 in income from assessments due to relief granted to churches unable to pay their full amounts because of Covid, and the closure of Cotton Church. There was extra expenditure on manse maintenance at Well Street because the boiler had to be replaced at short notice and extra work was carried out in preparation for the new Minister and his family. Funds of £14,015 were transferred to the Circuit following the closure of Cotton. These are being used to finance ongoing costs, eg maintenance and insurance, while the future of the premises is decided. Total funds in hand at 31 August 2021 were £354,476. Their future allocation in furthering the Circuit's objectives is being reviewed by the Trustees. It is too soon to judge the effects that Covid will have had on Circuit finances. With a small exception it seems likely that churches will pay in full their August and November 2021 and February and May 2022 assessments. The Circuit is very grateful to the churches. The Circuit is drawing up a five year rolling financial projection to ensure that its development plans are consistent with its expected financial position taking into account, in particular, forecasts of assessment income from the churches.

BURY ST EDMUNDS METHODIST CIRCUIT 14/03
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES - YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2021

	Note	2020-21 Unrestric- ted £	2020-21 Restric- ted £	2020-21 Total £	2019-20 Total £
INCOME					0
Assessments	1	126,561	0	126,561	174,843
Collections		0	0	0	256
Rent from manse		14,300		14,300	11,700
Interest		920	4	924	3,130
Other		2	0	2	811
TOTAL INCOME FROM ONGOING ACTIVITIES		141,783	4	141,787	190,740
EXPENDITURE					
District assessment		32,015	0	32,015	32,666
Ministerial support					
Ministers' stipends and pensions	2	90,068	0	90,068	87,659
EAD Travel Fund	3	3,050	0	3,050	3,895
Manse water and council tax		5,305	0	5,305	5,643
Manse insurance		2,072	0	2,072	2,083
Manse maintenance	4	21,475	0	21,475	6,563
Telecommunications		977	0	977	997
Pulpit supply		257	0	257	532
Removal costs		5,217	0	5,217	0
Administration and other					
Administrator (part time)	2	4,797		4,797	5,331
Office expenses and TMCP fee		9,788	0	9,788	5,483
Examination fee		0	0	0	200
Quinquennial inspections		1,275	0	1,275	1,140
Grants	5	2,000	0	2,000	2,000
Donations and gifts		100	0	100	674
Management rented manse		1,576	0	1,576	2,378
Other		798	0	798	538
TOTAL EXPENDITURE ONGOING ACTIVITIES		180,770	0	180,770	157,782
SURPLUS / DEFICIT ONGOING ACTIVITIES		- 38,987	4 -	38,983	32,958
EXTRAORDINARY ACTIVITIES					
Annual District Advance Fund Levy	6	-7,688	0	-7,688	-11,103
Funds transfer - Cotton CFB account	7	5,113	0	5,113	0
Funds transfer - Cotton TMCP account	7	0	8,902	8,902	0
Ongoing costs closed chapel - Cotton		-3,094	0	-3,094	0
NET SURPLUS ON YEAR		- 44,656	8,906 -	35,750	21,855
ADD FUNDS START OF YEAR		1,407,226	0	1,407,226	1,385,371
FUNDS AT END OF YEAR		1,362,570	8,906	1,371,476	1,407,226

BURY ST EDMUNDS METHODIST CIRCUIT 14/3
STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES AT 31 AUGUST 2021

		31 August 2021		31 August 2020	
	Note	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total	Total
		£	£	£	£
CURRENT ASSETS					
Debtors and prepayments		2,672	0	2,672	1,919
Central Finance Board		152,426	0	152,426	185,626
Funds held by Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes (TMCP)					
Circuit Advance Fund		184,358	0	184,358	203,765
TMCP funds transferred from Cotton		0	8,906	8,906	0
Bank account and cash		32,965	0	32,965	12,827
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS		372,421	8,906	381,327	404,137
Creditors due under 1 year	8	26,851	0	26,851	13,911
NET CURRENT ASSETS		345,570	8,906	354,476	390,226
Fixed assets - Manses	9	0	1,017,000	1,017,000	1,017,000
TOTAL ASSETS - NET		345,570	1,025,906	1,371,476	1,407,226

REPRESENTED BY:

General fund	161,212	186,461
Circuit Advance Fund held by TMCP	184,358	203,765
TMCP funds transferred from Cotton	8,906	0
Manses - titles held by the Custodian Trustees TMCP	1,017,000	1,017,000
TOTAL	1,371,476	1,407,226

Signed:

Date: Mar 29, 22

V Humm

Senior Circuit Steward

BURY ST EDMUNDS METHODIST CIRCUIT 14/3

ANNUAL ACCOUNTS 2020-21

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

Accounting policies

Basis of accounting These financial statements have been prepared under the historic cost convention, except as noted below in respect of the valuation of manses, and in accordance with Statements of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities, and applicable UK accounting standards and the Charities Act 1993. The estimated net realizable value of the manses has been incorporated in the accounts. There has been no change in accounting policies from the previous year.

Funds The Circuit Advance Fund was previously considered to be a Restricted Fund set aside for specific purposes. However, it has become clear that the fund is not a restricted one. It can be used for any of the Circuit's legal charitable objectives.

Reserves Total net current assets at the end of the year were £354,476. Circuit policy is to hold unrestricted reserves equivalent to about six months expenditure. The Circuit is currently drawing up a reserves policy in order to establish how funds in excess of that could best be used to meet its charitable objectives.

Incoming resources All incoming resources are recognized once the Circuit has entitlement to them, it is certain they will be received and the monetary value of incoming resources can be measured with sufficient reliability.

Resources expended Liabilities are recognized as resources expended as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation which commits the Circuit to the expenditure. All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all costs relating to that category.

Irrecoverable VAT Irrecoverable VAT is charged against the category of resource expended for which it was incurred.

Tangible fixed assets Tangible fixed assets are capitalized if they have a cost in excess of £2,000 and can be used for more than one year. The only such assets are the manses in Bury St Edmunds, Stowmarket and Sudbury.

1 Assessments

Assessments are based on perceived ability to pay as indicated by the average income of each church over the previous five years. Allowance is made for any extraordinary income such as bequests and grants. The total assessment required to support circuit is then shared between the churches pro-rata to income. Assessments received were:

	2020-21(£)	2019-20(£)
Bradfield	6,047	7,860
Cotton	0	5,624
Glemsford	2,000	3,000
Ixworth	5,251	6,612
Needham Market	8,367	11,701
Northumberland Avenue	8,226	11,068
Old Newton	8,661	12,760
St John's Sudbury	35,018	45,716
Stowmarket	9,786	14,782
Trinity Bury St Edmunds	43,205	55,720
Total	126,561	174,843

Total income in 2020-21 was some £31,500 less than expected due to the closure of Cotton Church and relief granted to churches unable to pay the full amount due to Covid.

2 Staff costs	2020-21(£)	2019-20(£)
Stipends	71,898	
Pension contributions	17,378	
Employers NI	5,590	
Total	94,866	92,990
Number of full-time employees	2.75	2.75

3 EADTF East Anglia District Travel Fund

The District operates a pooling arrangement whereby every Circuit contributes the same amount per minister and the ministers claim on the fund for their actual travel expenditure incurred. The cost in both years was much reduced due to Covid-19.

4 Manse maintenance

Expenditure in 2020-21 included the replacement of the boiler and gas fire at Well Street which failed their annual inspections and some works in preparation for the new Minister.

5 Grants

A grant of £2,000 was made towards the Youth Worker project at St John's.

6 Contributions to District Advance Fund

A levy of 2.5% on the first £100,000, 5% between £100,000 and £250,000 and 7.5% above £250,000 is applied by the Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes (TMCP) to the Circuit Advance Fund as at 1 September and paid to the East Anglia Advance Fund.

7 Funds transfer

Funds were transferred to the Circuit following the closure of Cotton. Funds from Cotton's TMCP account have been accounted for as restricted while their status is examined.

8 Creditors

Of the creditors £23,805 is advance payments by churches of part of the first quarterly assessments for 2021-22 and the September's rent payment of £1,300 on the Sudbury manse.

9 Manses

The manses are owned by the TMCP but are managed on their behalf by the Trustees of the Bury St Edmunds Methodist Circuit. As such their value is only reported in these accounts as a convenience to the owners TMCP. The book value is stated as £1,017,000, which the Trustees consider to be prudently conservative. In the event of a sale the Circuit would receive 80% of the first £100,000 of net proceeds and 60% of the remainder. Their value to the Circuit if sold would be about £630,000.

10 Capital commitments

A further year's instalment (£2,000) has been awarded to the Youth Worker project. There are no contingent liabilities.

11 Trustees

None of the Trustees, or persons connected with them, received any remuneration or other benefits from the Circuit or any connected organization as a result of their office during the year.

DECLARATIONS

1. TREASURER

I confirm that I have prepared the accounts from the records of the Circuit and that they include all the funds under the control of the Circuit.

Signature R J Meadows
Circuit Treasurer

Date 27 September 2021

2. INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF THE BURY ST EDMUNDS METHODIST CIRCUIT

This report is on the Circuit accounts for the year ended 31 August 2021.

Respective responsibilities of the Trustees and the Examiner

The Circuit's Trustees are responsible for the preparations of the accounts. The Charity's Trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under Section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 and that an independent examination is required. It is my responsibility to examine the accounts under Section 145 of the Charities Act.

Basis of the Independent Examiner's Report

My examination comprised a review of the accounting records kept by the Circuit Treasurer and a comparison of the accounts with those records. The procedures undertaken do not provide evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently I do not express an audit opinion in the view given by those accounts.

Independent Examiner's statement

In connection with my examination no matter has come to my attention:

- a) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements to keep accounting records in accordance with Section 46 of the Charities Act, and to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and to comply with the Accounting Act have not been met, or
- b) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signature Stephen Cook
Stephen Cook MA FCA 84 Whiting Street Bury St Edmunds IP33 1NZ

Date 13 December 2021

3. PRESENTATION TO THE CIRCUIT MEETING FOR APPROVAL

I confirm the accounts have been presented to the Circuit Meeting on 29 March 2022 and were approved.

Signature of the Chairperson of the meeting Revd Jason Vinyard Date 29 March 2022