

BLACKHEATH AND CRYSTAL PALACE CIRCUIT OF THE METHODIST CHURCH

REGISTERED CHARITY No. 1137991

ANNUAL REPORT

for the period 1st September 2023 to 31st August 2024

Introduction

I am pleased to be able to present the Annual Report for our Methodist Circuit, and trust that you will find the contents to be of interest.

It is my strongly held belief that the churches of our circuit remain firm in faith and resolute in their determination to offer the Gospel message to the people of South London.

Revd Richard Grocott,
Superintendent Minister

The registered address for correspondence is:

Circuit Administrator,
Blackheath & Crystal Palace Circuit Office,
Burnt Ash Methodist Church Hall,
Burnt Ash Hill,
London, SE12 0QD

The trustees who serve the charity are those specifically appointed to positions within the circuit, those who represent each of the nine church communities, plus ministers of religion who reside within the circuit or who have served within the Methodist Church and who have retired to live in the area.

Aims and organisation

The registered objectives of the Charity for the Methodist Church:

‘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 charity's mission statement states that:

The Blackheath and Crystal Palace Circuit promotes Methodism and Christian communities by actively Empowering, Supporting, Resourcing and Encouraging its member churches to increase awareness of God's saving grace through Christ and His everlasting love.

The Charity's approach to achieving that mission is by:

- Providing the best possible resources to enable Christian worship, witness and service in each of our nine Church communities.
- Organising and resourcing regular public acts of worship open to members of the church and non-members alike.
- The teaching of Christianity through sermons, courses and small groups.
- Encouraging training and preparation for all aspects of church life.
- The resourcing of pastoral work including visiting the sick and bereaved.
- Exercising Christian ministry throughout the community without discrimination.
- Mutually encouraging and supporting the ministry of the whole people of God.
- Fostering the Connexional spirit of Methodism within the Circuit and beyond.
- Nurturing ecumenical and other faith relationships.

Public Benefit

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

Structure, Governance and Management

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).

The practical management of the charity is undertaken by a Circuit Leadership Team comprising the ministers of religion, who are each appointed initially for five years - but who may stay for longer, the circuit stewards who are appointed each year by the Circuit Meeting and the Circuit Treasurer who is also appointed annually. Co-opted members include the Circuit Safeguarding Officer and the Circuit Manses Officer.

The circuit was successful in satisfying all of its key responsibilities, i.e. in the provision of ministers, co-ordinating the preaching plan, maintaining the manses, monitoring the governance of each of the nine churches, as well as supporting and encouraging each church in their mission of proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ. The circuit has been represented at District Synod.

Trustee Training

A range of guidance produced by Methodist Connexion to support the effective running of the circuit, specifically the leaflet 'The Role of a Trustee in The Methodist Church' is available to all new Circuit meeting members via the Circuit website, as induction to their role as trustees.

The handbook 'Role of a Circuit Steward' has been made available to all Circuit Stewards.

Related Parties

The Circuit is part of the London District and is also accountable to the Methodist Conference.

The following Methodist Churches are linked to the circuit

Anerley Methodist Church
Burnt Ash Methodist Church
Eltham Park Methodist Church
Forest Hill Methodist Church
Hither Green Methodist Church
Lewisham Methodist Church
Sunfields Methodist Church
Upper Norwood Methodist Church
Wesley Hall Methodist Church

Risk Management

The major risks have been identified and recorded by the Circuit Finance and Property Committee with professional advice taken as required.

There is a regular annual review process undertaken and recorded.

Income and Expenditure is being monitored in total and is compared with the approved annual budget on a half yearly basis to detect trends as part of the risk management process to avoid unforeseen calls on reserves.

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. Among 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
- 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.
- We will seek to strongly encourage consideration for, and training in, principles of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.
- In all these principles we will follow legislation, guidance and recognised good practice

The Blackheath & Crystal Palace 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 Blackheath & Crystal Palace 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.

Brief financial review of the year

Income

Circuit income is primarily drawn from the assessment of £255,791 paid in full by the Circuit churches.

Expenditure

Expenditure in the year was £270,970.

61.3% of expenditure was on stipends, travel costs. etc.

17.6% was the Circuit contribution to the District and Connexion, of which a significant part is used to fund the work of the wider Methodist Church.

The other expenditure, 21.1%, includes administration and manse costs.

Fund balances

As at 31 August 2024, the net current assets of the Circuit (including the Circuit Model Trust Fund) were £164,673 compared to £179,852 at the start of the year.

Although there has been a reduction in Fund Balances, sufficient reserves are held to cover day-to-day expenditure, unexpected maintenance costs and to provide funding for any projects required to meet the Circuit's Mission Statement.

Plans for 2024/25

Circuit financial plans for the coming year have been prepared on the basis that there are four full time ordained staff and one part administration staff with anticipated cost of living stipend increases.

Basis of preparation and legal framework

Although the Charity's gross income was more than £250,000 in the year to 31 August 2024, Receipts and Payments reporting has been used rather than Accruals as forecasted revenue for the next two years is anticipated to be less than £250k. This is primarily because of a planned reduction in ministerial numbers from 1 September 2025, with the resultant reduction in circuit assessment.

Full Name of Charity: Blackheath & Crystal Palace Circuit

Registration Charity Number: 1137991

Date of registration: 1 September 2012

Main communication address:

The Circuit Administrator,
Burnt Ash Methodist Church Hall,
Burnt Ash Hill,
London, SE12 0QD

The members of the Blackheath & Crystal Palace Methodist Circuit meeting are the Charity Trustees, membership being made up of circuit office holders, ministers and representatives appointed by the local churches.

Fully membership is shown as Appendix A to this report.

Active Circuit Ministers	Rev Richard Grocott Rev Charles ILunga Rev Craig Gaffney Rev William Davis
Circuit Stewards	Dr Garry Young (Senior) Mrs Margaret Boreham Mrs Helena Green Mr Samuel Newlove-Agbonlahor Dr Linda Ryan (from 11 th April 2024) Mrs Jessica Matumika-Limba <i>ex officio</i>
Administrator:	Dr Linda Ryan

Name of the circuit steward who acted as the principal officer overseeing the day-to-day financial management and accounting for the circuit during the year (treasurer) was Mrs Jessica Matumika-Limba.

Independent examiner	Mr David West, 67 Heathwood Gardens, London, SE7 8ET
Investment Bankers	Central Finance Board of the Methodist Church Trustees for Methodist Church purposes
Current bank accounts	Barclays

Reserves Policy

As at 31 August 2024, the circuit had the following cash reserves:

	Balances at 31 Aug 2024
Bank accounts (General Fund)	£ 12,832
CFB account (General Fund):	£ 97,999
Circuit Model Trust Fund:	£ 53,742

In addition, investments valued at £25,206 were held in the Circuit Model Trust Fund, so that the total funds available to the Circuit were approximately £189,879

The Circuit holds the following sums as designated reserves:

1. District Assessment Reserve (£60,000), being the equivalent of one year's assessment payable by the Circuit to the London District.
2. Cash Flow Reserve (£70,000) being an operational reserve covering approximately 42% of normal annual cash flow of about £166,000, other than the District Assessment, provided for above.
3. Manse Repair Reserve (£60,000) to cover unforeseen expenditure above the regular programme of work so as to ensure the proper and adequate provision of ministerial housing.

The Circuit considers this level of total reserves of £190,000, to be appropriate for its current needs. It is the expectation that the combined value of the General Fund and Circuit Model Trust Fund of £189,879 will reduce gradually in future.

Declaration

The trustees declare that

- they have understood all of the requirements associated with the submission of the annual return and all of the statements contained within it; and
- the information provided in the relevant parts of the annual return is correct and complete to the best of their knowledge and belief and has been brought to the attention of the charity trustees who have each individually verified this and given their informed express consent to this submission with full knowledge, understanding and acceptance of the contents of the privacy notice.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees

Signatures:



Rev. Richard Grocott
(Chairman)



Mr. Jessica Matumika-Limba
(Treasurer)

Date: 27th February 2025

APPENDIX A

Names of the trustees who managed the charity in the year 1 September 2023 to 31 August 2024:

Rev. Richard Grocott
Rev. William Davis
Mrs Claire Pennycard
Mrs Margaret Boreham
Mr Graham Sparkes
Mrs Marian Young
Dr. Linda Ryan
Mrs Barbara Charlick
Mrs Marion Thompson
Mrs Brenda Renshaw
Mrs Saira Bonhan-Croft
Ms Bernadetta Banda
Mrs Alecia Austin
Ms Cynthia Davis
Mrs Judith Crane-St.Hill
Mrs Margaret Price
Miss Sandra Clifton
Mrs Evelyn Richards
Mrs Hilary Waterhouse
Mrs Comfort Oppong
Mrs Helena Green
Mr Alfred Macauley-James
Mrs Gifty Quartey
Miss Lorna White
Ms Vicky Hayford
Mrs Rosie Dada

Rev. Craig Gaffney
Rev Charles ILunga
Dr Garry Young
Mr. Milton Boothe
Mr Andrew Tredinnick
Miss Ruth Potter
Mrs Esme Russell-Mitra
Mr Samuel Newlove-Agbonlahor
Ms Brenda Onatade
Mr. Gerald Hardy
Mrs Jessica Matumika Limba
Mr. Winston Fraser
Mr Graham Green
Mr Andrew Gibbs
Mr Kwesi Eshun
Mrs Jean Taylor
Ms Sandra Floy
Mrs Valerie Tredinnick
Mrs Mary Sparkes
Mrs Sibongile Mnguni
Mr Sylvester Oppong
Mr Chris Watkins
Ms Eunice Millett
Mrs Jeannette Warren
Mr Robert Munro

THE METHODIST CHURCH STANDARD FORM OF ACCOUNTS

Blackheath & Crystal Palace Circuit	Circuit
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**FOR THE YEAR ENDED
31 August 2024**

London	District	Circuit no	35/28
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Registered Charity - Charity Registration number

1137991

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

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(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:

Rev Richard Grocott
Rev William Davis
Rev Charles Ilunga
Rev Craig Gaffney

Circuit Stewards:

Dr GarRy Young
Mrs Margaret Boreham
Mrs Helena Green
Dr Linda Ryan

Treasurer:

Mrs Jessica Matumika Limba

ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 August 2024

Blackheath & Crystal Palace

Circuit

Circuit

SECTION A			Un - restricted Funds	Circuit Model Trust Fund	Restricted Funds	Totals this year	Totals last year
a1	RECEIPTS	Note	£	£	£	£	£
a2	Assessment/Share		250,000			250,000	235,750
a3	Capital receipts						
a4	Bank and CFB interest and Investment income		4,184	1,345		5,529	5,841
a5	Grants						
a6	Other receipts		262			262	800
a7	TOTAL RECEIPTS		254,446	1,345		255,791 (a8)	242,391

SECTION B							
b1	PAYMENTS						
b2	Stipends, salaries, NIC, Pension and travel costs		166,109			166,109	155,330
b3	Manse Costs		36,244			36,244	29,432
b4	Administration etc		14,920			14,920	31,297
b5	District Assessment		47,740			47,740	48,264
b6	Grants & donations		2,000			2,000	2,000
b7							
b8	Other payments		3,957			3,957	2,816
b9	TOTAL PAYMENTS		270,970			270,970 (b9)	269,139

SECTION C							
c1	NET RECEIPTS/PAYMENTS FOR THE YEAR	(a7-b9)	(16,524)	1,345		(15,179)	(26,748)
c2	Total funds brought forward from last year		127,456	52,396		179,852 (c6)	206,600
c3	Sub total	(c1+c2)	110,932	53,741		164,673	179,852
c4	Transfers and adjustments					(c7)	
c5	TOTAL FUNDS AT END OF YEAR	(c3+c4)	110,932	53,741		164,673 (c8)	179,852 (c6)

Dr Linda Ryan

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						
d2	Offerings/Gifts - received for external organisations						
d3	Offerings/Gifts - passed to external organisations						
d4	BALANCE STILL TO BE PAID (d1 + d2 - d3)						

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 2024 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)
e9	Circuit accounts (totals brought forward from page 2 - totals column)	255,791 (a8)	270,970 (b9)	(15,179)	179,852 (c6)	164,673 (c8)
e10	TOTAL CASH FUNDS HELD BY CIRCUIT	255,791	270,970	(15,179)	179,852 (x)	164,673 (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 2024

	OPENING BALANCES	CLOSING BALANCES
f1	100	100
f2	5,557	12,832
f3		
f4	121,798	97,999
f5	52,397	53,742
f6		
f7	179,852 (c6)	164,673 (c8)
f8	(e11)	(e12)
Dr I	179,852 (x)	164,673 (y)

SECTION G

OTHER ASSETS and LIABILITIES

	At 1 September 2023	At 31 August 2024
g1	23,395	25,206
Mrs	2,200,000	2,388,344
g3	16,498	16,498
g4		
g5		

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)

Name of Circuit Blackheath & Crystal Palace No. 35/28

Declarations and Scrutiny

I confirm that these Receipt and Payment based accounts for the year to 31 August 2024 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 [Signature] Date 30/01/25

Name and address of treasurer Jessica Matumwa
30 Westmead Court, Adenmore Road Post Code SE6 4EB

Presentation to the Circuit meeting

I confirm that the annual report and accounts for the year ended 31 August 2024 were/will be* presented to the Circuit meeting held on 27th February 2025

Signature of the Chair of the meeting [Signature]

Name of the Chair of the meeting Rev. Richard Grocott Date 27/2/25

~~Dr Linda Ryan~~

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of the

BLACKHEATH & CRYSTAL PALACE Circuit

Charity Number 1137991

Responsibilities and basis of report

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the Circuit for the year ended 31 August 2024 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.

* delete or circle as appropriate

Name of Circuit BLACKHEATH & CRYSTAL PALACE No .. 35/28 ..

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 DAVID WEST

Relevant professional qualification of independent examiner

Name of firm (where appropriate)

Address 44 STRONGBOW ROAD

..... ELTHAM LONDON Post Code SE9 1DT

Date 28/1/25

* delete or circle as appropriate

Circuit Accounts

The Circuit Accounts are completed pending independent examination as per the attachment. Though the circuit revenue reached the threshold of £250k, receipts and payments reporting has been used and not accruals, for the mere fact that the forecasted revenue for the next two years will be less than £250k due to the reduction in the number of ministers as per circuit structuring which will also result in reduction in the circuit assessment. As per Charity Commission, we can only change to accruals reporting if we are expecting higher revenues for the foreseeable periods and not only one period.

The accounts for 2023/24 shows a deficit £15,637. The standard form of accounts has a figure of (£16,524), for some unknown reasons during the year the payroll bureau were paying the property manager for Upper Norwood from the circuit accounts. After I rectified this Upper Norwood later refunded the money to the circuit account and the balance of £887 was paid after 31 August so it will be reflecting in the 2024/25 accounts.

- 1 No major repairs were done in the manses and the repairs costed £16,373
- 2 Water, telephone and council tax costed £19,871
- 3 Circuit administration costs were £14,920

General Fund & Circuit Model Trust Fund

As of 31 August 2024, deposits and cash totalled £164,673, as per the draft accounts for the year. There was also a CFB investment held by the Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes valued at £25,206, which is unrestricted. The Total Funds available to the circuit were therefore £164,673 + £25,206 = £189,879

At the year end, the unrestricted General Fund, including the CFB investment, the Circuit Model Trust Fund stood at £164,673 and the investment was £25,206

Level of reserves

General Fund reserve levels are listed below which amount to £189,879 and are ideal for the smooth operations of the circuit. The reserves have been designated as per below:

District Assessment Reserve (£60,000)

The Circuit has an obligation to meet the annual District assessment. For 2024/25 the assessment is £57,608. Due to the increment in the District assessment from last year I have had to revise the reserve policy.

Cash Flow Reserve (£70,000)

To ensure the circuit to meet the obligation of remitting ministers' stipends it is ideal to set aside funds for this purpose. An operational reserve, of approximately 42% of the

Minsters Stipends, Nlc, pension and other expenses ensures the smooth running of circuit operations. Stipends constitute 80% of circuit costs. This reserve has been reviewed in this year.

Manse Repair and other Ad hoc Reserve (£60,000)

To meet the requirements of the quinquennial reports, the manses are supposed to be maintained at a certain standard. Repairs to the manses are done regularly as and when need be, hence, the need to have funds at disposal. This has worked well in past and continues to do so at present

Periodic Review of the Policy

It will be ideal to review the reserve policy in the coming year due to circuit restructuring happening in 2024/26

Jessica Matumika, 20 January 2024