

RYEDALE METHODIST CIRCUIT 29/34

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

RYEDALE METHODIST CIRCUIT

ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Circuit Number: 29/34

Circuit Staff:

Ordained:
Superintendent Minister: Rev Peter Sheasby
7 Pinfold Garth, Malton, North Yorkshire, YO17 7XQ
Ministers: Rev Graham Ransom

Lay:

Missional Lay Employee: Mrs Karen Pattison
Administration Assistant: Mrs Ann Thomas

Trustees: All members of the Circuit Meeting. A full list is available on request.

Circuit Stewards: Ms Kate Gibbs
Dr Julia Branson
Mr Steve Arnold
Mr John Foster
Mr Richard Lukey

Independent Examiner: Ms S A Cutting

STRUCTURE GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

The Governing Document	Deed of Union (1932) and Methodist Church Act (1976)
Constituted	Act of Parliament
Selection of Trustees	Appointed by local churches and existing trustees Ministers are automatically trustees
Structure	Part of the Yorkshire North and East District of the Methodist Church Accountable to the Methodist Conference
Risks	Considered by the Leadership Team Take professional advice when required Adopted Safeguarding Policy

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

The Vision of Ryedale Methodist Circuit is to build fellowships of committed followers of Jesus Christ, who will share the Gospel, grow in faith and demonstrate this through loving service in both the local community and the wider world.

This vision will be worked out by:

- Increasing awareness of God's presence and declaring His love in our daily lives;
- Offering safe places for worship where everyone is made to feel welcome and accepted;
- Providing opportunities for spiritual growth and learning;
- Providing time and space for church and community activities;
- Showing care and support for all;
- Sharing tasks of ministry among both lay and ordained people;
- Working for justice and peace for all people, and
- Regularly reviewing opportunities for mission, ministry and worship both within the Methodist Circuit and with others of faith.

Objectives:

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.

STRUCTURE AND DECISION MAKING

The Circuit staff work as a team sharing responsibilities across the Circuit.

Day-to-day management decisions are taken by the Circuit Leadership Team (CLT). The CLT is composed of the Circuit Stewards and ordained staff.

The Circuit Meeting is the principal decision-making body responsible for the affairs of the Circuit and the development of circuit policy, although decision on specific matters is delegated to the CLT when required. It also acts as the focal point of the working fellowship of the churches in the Circuit, overseeing their pastoral, training and evangelistic work. It meets twice yearly, in the autumn and spring.

CLT meets between Circuit Meetings to:

1. discuss the life and work of the Circuit
2. formulate recommendations for the Circuit Meeting
3. carry out work on behalf of the Circuit Meeting, where appropriate.
4. to ensure the Circuit effectively uses its financial resources through:
 - (i) agreeing proposals for the annual circuit budget in advance of the Circuit Meeting
 - (ii) monitoring financial procedures.

The CLT is responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of the manses and has the authority to approve emergency works to manses on behalf of the Circuit Meeting.

All property schemes within the Circuit are examined by the CLT who recommend an appropriate response to the Circuit Meeting. The CLT may seek clarification or modification of an application before making its recommendation to the Circuit Meeting.

In addition to seeking approval, a church may seek financial support from the Circuit for urgent repairs or essential improvements. No limit is placed on this although requests have to be justified and the continuation of the church considered appropriate within the Circuit. For other projects (up to £5000) the CLT may recommend that the Circuit Meeting grant from the Circuit Model Trust Fund up to 15% of the budgeted cost of the scheme (subject to funds being available) depending on how well the scheme fits the approval criteria.

The CLT is also responsible for ensuring staffing levels are maintained at a workable level and may allocate funds for the employment of lay staff to assist with the work of the church when deemed necessary.

RISK MANAGEMENT

The Trustees have examined the major strategic and operational risks facing the Circuit and have established the necessary systems to manage or mitigate these risks.

In particular:

- insurance cover is in place
- the finances of the Circuit are kept under review
- the Circuit has adopted the Methodist Church Safeguarding Policy and ensured it is rolled out to the churches; appointed a Circuit Safeguarding Co-ordinator; appropriate Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks are made and there are regular audits of Safeguarding practices across the Circuit and all its churches.

Public Benefit

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

Ryedale Methodist Circuit carries out a range of activities in pursuance of its mission. The Trustees consider that these activities, summarised below, provide benefit to those who are members of the Circuit through the local Methodist churches and the wider community.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

Religious Activities

Acts of worship and pastoral care

The Circuit produces a quarterly, or bi monthly, preaching plan to ensure regular acts of worship take place at each of the Methodist churches and Local Ecumenical Partnerships under its remit. These are open to all people, without charge. The Ministers have pastoral care for these churches.

Baptisms, Weddings and Funerals

The Circuit staff conducted baptisms, weddings and funerals at each of the churches in the Circuit. These services are available at the discretion of the person with pastoral charge. No charge is made for baptisms. A modest set fee is usually charged for weddings and funerals.

Work with Children, Youth, and Families in the local Community

The Circuit supports the work done in the local churches to

- create and strengthen relationships and help people along their life's journey
- ensure people feel welcome and get a positive experience of Church life
- encourage people to start and continue a journey into faith.

We aim to make these services available to everyone.

People and property

Presbyters, Deacons and Local Preachers

The Circuit spiritually and financially supported the above named Presbyters throughout the year (or for the period shown); a number of active Local Preachers and several Supernumerary Ministers took services and preached in the Circuit's churches during the year.

Lay Employees

The Circuit funded:

- A part time Lay Employee
- A part-time Administrator

Property management

The Circuit maintained two manses throughout the year. Unused manses are rented out until required for new ministers. The properties were only accounted for as manses whilst occupied by ministers. Four further former manses were commercially let. One redundant church was sold during the year and two closed church buildings were transferred to the Circuit.

Volunteers

A substantial part of the Circuit's ministry is accomplished by volunteers. All the Circuit Stewards and the other members of the Circuit Meeting, except for the Ministers and paid lay employees, are volunteers. All the local preachers are volunteers.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

The Accounts for the year ending 31st August 2024 and the Statement of Assets and Liabilities as at 31st August 2024 are contained in Appendix 1. These show a net deficit (gross income less expenditure) of £(25,362) in the year, with total cash funds of £518,889 at the end of the year.

This net surplus figure was mainly attributable to the refund of the Pension contribution made in a previous year of £95,533 and soft loans agreed for two Churches £175K

Unrestricted funds achieved a deficit of £176K.

The principal funding sources for the year to 31st August 2024 are the Assessments received from the churches within the Circuit and property rental. The principal expenditure is the salary costs of the ministers and lay employees of the Circuit.

The Reserves policy is contained in Appendix 2.

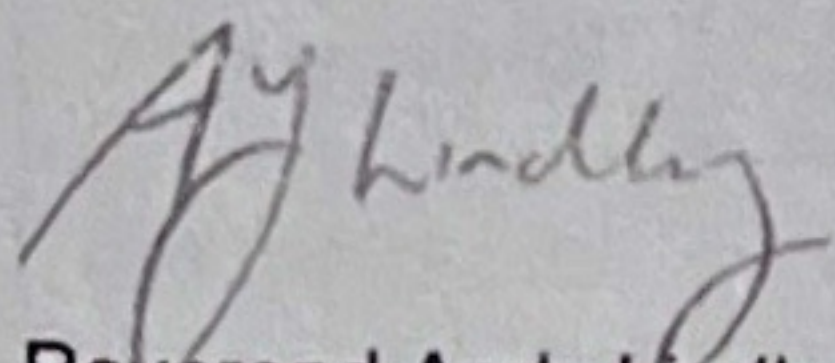
The Trustees have established a policy whereby the unrestricted funds held in the General Reserve should be sufficient to cover six months of general running costs. At 31st August 2024, the level of reserves was £191,366, with net current liabilities deducted (but not including loans) and annual expected expenditure is £368K (including possible grants to churches to help with essential repairs). This approach to reserves is considered prudent and current balances, although higher than required, are considered beneficial in the current uncertain economic climate and will enable the Circuit to help local churches where considered beneficial.

The Trustees have also established a policy whereby the Circuit Model Trust Fund should be maintained at a level sufficient to fund an anticipated level of property projects plus the budgeted transfers to general funds over a five year horizon, after allowing for inflows from property sales. At 31st August 2024, the balance of the CMTF (excluding the restricted funds) is £372,258. The CMTF is currently in a position which exceeds the requirements of the policy.

This reserves policy will be reviewed regularly.

Overall, the Trustees consider the financial position to be satisfactory.

Approved on 27th March 2024 and signed on behalf of the Circuit by:



Reverend Andy Lindley

Superintendent Minister

APPENDIX 1: ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

	Unrestricted Funds	Circuit Model Trust Fund	Other Funds	Total this year	Total last year
RECEIPTS					
Assessment/share	159,973	-	-	159,973	161,465
Capital receipts	-	92,413	-	92,413	59,491
Interest and investment income	10,130	13,235	-	23,365	18,026
Grants	-	-	-	-	288,288
Other receipts	42,548	96,023	-	138,571	43,319
Total receipts	212,651	201,671	-	414,322	570,589
PAYMENTS					
Stipends, salaries, NIC, pension and travel costs	127,678	-	-	127,678	102,748
Manse costs	10,333	-	-	10,333	8,456
Administration etc	1,736	612	-	2,348	5,256
District assessment	31,216	-	-	31,216	34,684
Grants Loans and donations	197,298	-		197,298	309,272
Other payments	20,403	50,408	-	70,811	39,005
Total payments	388,664	51,408	-	439,684	499,421
Net receipts and payments	(176,013)	150,651	-	(25,362)	71,168
Total funds brought forward from last year	319,930	213,533	10,304	543,767	472,599
Transfers and adjustments	(9,652)	8,074	2,062	484	1
Total funds at end of year	134,265	372,258	12,366	518,889	543,768

STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES AS AT 31 AUGUST 2024

	Opening balances	Closing balances
CASH FUNDS HELD		
Bank current account	57,407	53,325
Central Finance Board deposit account	263,685	80,941
Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes	222,676	384,624
Other funds		
Total cash funds held by circuit	543,768	518,890
OTHER ASSETS AND LIABILITIES		
Investments	11,194	11,194
Land and buildings	2,069,300	2,069,300
Other assets	8,266	9,200
Loans	84,810	175,910
Other liabilities	40,706	40,706

APPENDIX 2: RESERVES POLICY

Our Reserves Policy relates to our general (unrestricted) funds which are freely available to be used for any or all of the purposes of the Circuit.

Other funds are also included for the sake of clarity and openness and to show that the Circuit has a policy for the management of all of its money not simply those which are defined as reserves.

Aims

- To secure and sustain the Circuit's viability and future.
- To reassure the general public that the Circuit, which is a charity, intends to use all of the money coming into its care for the purposes of the charity.

Three Step Process

In line with Connexional guidance, we undertake a three step process in setting reserves policy:

- i. set out our mission aims
- ii. decide what financial plans will be necessary to achieve those aims
- iii. determine the appropriate level of reserves required to meet our financial plans.

(1) Mission Policy

The Circuit's Mission Policy is set out in a separate document developed during the merger process.

Essentially, it provides for:

- (a) The ministerial oversight and pastoral care of up to twenty local churches in the Circuit.
- (b) The support of a ministry team of two presbyteral Ministers (1 at 31st Aug 2024), several supernumerary ministers and two lay employees (one plus an Administrator currently).
- (c) The maintenance of the two Circuit manses, four former manses that are currently let out commercially, and any closed chapels that are in the process of being sold.

(2) Financial Plans

Each year, the required levels of expenditure and income are reviewed and a Circuit budget is produced. This covers:

- the total level of expenditure required by the Circuit to meet the costs of 1(a), (b) and (c) above
- expected income from the let properties
- requirement for contributions to the Circuit from individual chapels
- appropriate level of transfer from Circuit Model Trust Fund (budgeted at £10,000 for 2023/24) as a general amount help meet Circuit needs plus exceptional transfers where necessary to fund the Circuit's financial help for Churches.

We make provision for our property maintenance programme by designating an amount per annum for each manse to maintain the properties, and an amount per annum to fund a program of periodic property inspections for all the Circuit properties including quinquennial reports for Circuit churches.

(3) Reserves Policy

The Circuit General Fund

Under Standing Orders the Circuit must meet its financial obligations in relation to the support of its ministers and the maintenance of the manses. The total budgeted expenditure for the next financial year (including planned contributions to the Manse Fund and the Property Inspection Fund) is c.£118,247. A further allowance of £20,000 is included for potential grants to churches.

Our Reserves Policy is to hold at least six month's expenditure in hand. On 31/08/24, the balance was c.£330,613(excluding loans of £175,910) so it represented nearly one year's expenditure. This is above our policy but is considered prudent in the current uncertain financial climate.

Circuit Model Trust Fund

This fund derives from sales of chapels and manses. Historically, the use of this fund has been restricted to specific purposes by the Conference, but more recently Circuits have been given the ability to use their CMTF as they see fit.

Our policy is to use the fund to provide support to the General Fund to further the work of the Circuit (budgeted at £10,000 in 2023/24) and to provide specific support for property related expenditure in individual chapels, through ad-hoc contributions to significant projects. The Circuit also uses this fund through an initiative to provide 15% of small property schemes.

The call upon CMTF reserves is increased in current financially difficult times to cover larger exceptional grants made where financial difficulties are experienced by specific churches.

Our Reserves Policy is to hold sufficient in the CMTF to cover projected expenditure, over a 5 year horizon, after allowing for anticipated proceeds from property sales – this expenditure comprising:

- Continuing support for the General Fund (budgeted at £10,000 for 2023/24)
- Specific allowance for significant projects already committed to or anticipated
- Contributions of £30,000 per annum to future significant projects and repairs
- A running cost of £5,000 per annum from the "15% scheme"

This would suggest a requirement of £225,000 plus the cost of specific projects less proceeds from sales of closed chapels (net of levies and fees).

The actual balance in CMTF at 31/08/24 was £372,258 but this is considered prudent. .

Restricted Funds

These funds comprise trusts managed by Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes (TMCP), where either the funds are committed to a specific project or the income is available for general use but the capital cannot generally be accessed. Restrictions for the latter case funds are in line with the wishes of the benefactors. These funds amounted to just over £10,000 as at 31/08/24.

Holdings of just over £1,100 are held within the Circuit bank account but had previously been held in a segregated savings account and is being treated as restricted until any requirements relating to its provenance can be confirmed.

APPENDIX 3: List of Trustees @31st August 2024

Role	Name
CM Secretary (non Voting)	Mrs R A Thomas
Superintendent	Revd Peter Sheasby
Presbyter	Revd Graham Ransom
Supernumerary	Revd Peter Clark
Supernumerary	Revd Jane Pickering
Supernumerary	Revd Michael Williams
Minister Resident in Circuit	Revd Dr Penny Worth
Minister Resident in Circuit	Revd Mark Haynes
Lay Employee	Mrs Karen Pattison
Circuit Steward	Dr Julia Branson
Circuit Steward	Kate Gibbs
Circuit Steward	Mr Steve Arnold
Circuit Steward	Mr John Foster
Circuit Steward	Mr Richard Lukey
Synod Rep	Mr Robert Rayner
Circuit Steward Finance/Ebberston Treasurer	Mr Philip Evans
Circuit Property Rep	Mr Mike Leng
Local Preachers Rep	Mrs Rachel Prest
Allerston Steward	Howard Parr
Allerston Treasurer	Mary Kemp
Ebberston Representative	Helen Leng
Ebberston Steward	Mike Peck
Helmsley Representative	Andrew Leckenby
Helmsley Steward	Les Helm
Helmsley Treasurer	Christine Wright

Hovingham Steward	Sue Goodwill
KMS Representative	Kath Hall
KMS Representative	Audrey Windress
KMS Steward	Janet Brown
KMS Treasurer	Stuart Brown
Leavening Steward	Steve Langton
Leavening Treasurer	Nancy Spencer
Malton Rep	Paul Emberley
Malton Steward	Ann Lonsdale
Malton Treasurer	Roger Hadfield
Norton Bethel Representative	Jonathan Piercy
Norton Bethel Steward	Veronica Piercy
Norton Bethel Treasurer	Margaret Graham
Norton Trinity Representative	John Hubery
Norton Trinity Steward	Sue Holmes
Norton Trinity Treasurer	Suzanne West
Pickering Representative	Pam Sellers
Pickering Steward	Ruth Hall
Pickering Treasurer	Martin Redgard
Rievaulx Steward	Edward Garbutt
Rievaulx Treasurer	Sheila Foster
Scagglethorpe Rep	Janet Smith
Scagglethorpe Steward	Paul Douthwaite
Scagglethorpe Treasurer	Nancy Wilson
Sinnington Steward	David Scaling
Slingsby Representative	Stephen Prest
Slingsby Steward	Audrey Foster

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 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 Ms S A Cutting

Relevant professional qualification of independent examiner AAT

Address 33 South Road, Dodsworth, Barnsley, South Yorkshire, S75 3LG

Date 