

Churches Together in South Tyneside
Annual Report for Financial Year:
January 1st 2024– December 31st 2024



Charity's Name:

CHURCHES TOGETHER IN SOUTH TYNESIDE

Any other name the Charity uses: **Churches Together South Tyneside; CTST; South Tyneside Churches Together**

Charity's Number: 1153612

Charity's Registered Address:

52 Lawe Road, South Shields, Tyne and Wear NE33 2AL

Names of Charity's Trustees on December 31st 2024

Jane Arthurs, Bernadette Askins, Stephen Slade, Audrey Tennet, Hilary Thompson, Ann Trollope

Structure, Governance and management:

CTST is a charitable incorporated organisation (CIO). The present constitution of CTST was finalised on August 22nd, 2013. It outlines the objects, powers, policy on income, property and controls about payments, regulations re charity trustees and connected persons, conflicts of interest and loyalty, liabilities, membership, decision making, and meetings.

CTST has trustees. At the AGM the trustees, chair and deputy chair are elected. The secretary and treasurer are appointed. New trustees are inducted by the Chair in line with the constitution. Several trustees are involved with other charities and share their expertise with the group. New trustees are recruited through connections within the churches in South Tyneside and local social action projects and charities. New trustees are nominated and appointed at the AGMs. New trustees can be co-opted midterm and will be confirmed at the next AGM. Working groups may be set up to carry out agreed tasks.

The Trustees hold monthly meetings where they set overall strategy, review and monitor the charities activities, finances and make decisions. Meetings mostly take place online and occasionally in person. Minutes are circulated electronically.

Our main activities (projects) have their own management committees which monitor their work and finances. A trustee chairs each project management committee. Trustees receive the minutes of these meetings. We encourage volunteers and beneficiaries to become committee members and contribute to decision making.

CTST members are our stakeholders - volunteers, beneficiaries, local churches, social action projects and individuals who share our values and want to support our work.

100 people volunteer regularly to support our projects. This amounts to a contribution of 5250 hrs per annum.

The projects have been supported by an Executive Lead (appointed August 2021), who retired on 31st December 2024 and 6 other part time paid project workers, who support the trustees and volunteers and attend management committee meetings.

Financial review

Principal Funding Sources

1. Donations from
 - a. local churches
 - b. local organisations- John Lewis, Asda
 - c. private sources- personal gifts, legacy, funeral donations,
 - d. individuals
2. Fund raising events- Great North Run, St Gregory's and Westoe Fayre for Nurturing Dementia, Westoe Fayre for Happy at Home
3. Grants from trusts and foundations:
 - Core costs: Greggs, Sir James Knott, Dogger Bank
 - Happy at Home: South Tyneside Council, Community Foundation NT&W (Kellett 5, Prime Fund, National Lottery Community Fund), Ballinger, Arnold Clark, Barchester, Bentley Foundation, Sherburn House Charity Foundation
 - Nurturing Dementia: Coalfields Regeneration Trust, McCarthy & Stone, Community Foundation NT&W, Catherine Cookson, Storm Tempest, Inspire, Christmas Connections, Ballinger, Caritas
 - The Reflecting Together Project: William Leech Research Fund
4. Service Level Agreement: South Tyneside Council/ Happy at Home £11,000

Free Reserves Policy

The trustees aim to have free reserves of 6 months operating costs to enable them to make provision for the vulnerable people that are supported by the projects in the event of funding not being secured, time to raise further grants and if necessary to cover possible future costs of redundancies and wind down the charity in an orderly way. We are working towards this goal. Our Free Reserves at present are £37,984

Public Benefit

Churches Together has referred to the guidance on public benefit when reviewing our aims and objectives and in planning future activities. Our charity's activities reflect our aims and objectives and are designed to provide accessible services and activities that benefit the appropriate sector of the public in accordance with our charitable aims.

Objectives

- 1) **THE ADVANCEMENT OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION FOR THE PUBLIC BENEFIT IN SOUTH TYNESIDE.**
CTST seeks to put into practice Christian teaching by carrying out practical social action for the benefit of the whole community with particular regard for the most vulnerable. Its activities give direct help as well as raising awareness of issues facing contemporary society. CTST also looks for ways to work with others for a more just society.

2) THE PROMOTION OF RELIGIOUS HARMONY FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE PUBLIC by:

Developing relationships with leaders of other faiths and working together on practical activities that improve the lives of local people.

Activities

CTST has three activities which are directly responsible to the trustees - Happy at Home, Nurturing Dementia and Street Angels. Another activity, Key to Life, is a partnership between CTST and Key Community, another local charity, as is a collaboration with Money Advice South Tyneside. CTST also organises local collections for Operation Christmas Child. There are other activities which vary from year to year.

CTST Activities

Happy at Home -improves older people's lives with compassion and kindness. We do this by offering a range of activities: one to one befriending, Happy Hubs (lunch clubs with entertainment and activities), men's group, 'Joyrides' (outing along the coast with lunch provided), parties, theatre trips and day trips to local garden centres. We operate throughout the borough of South Tyneside. We have a large volunteer group who we support and have regular volunteer activities to build up friendships and rapport amongst the group.

Nurturing Dementia- Dementia Friendly Christmas events. Dementia Friendly Churches. Dementia Engagement and Empowerment Project. Care Connect project with 3 local care homes.

Street Angels - Supporting those in need, during the night-time economy in South Shields Town Centre at weekends. Partners with South Tyneside Council and Northumbria Police, meeting the Police Area Community Inspector for updates. Collaboration with Pubwatch, attending monthly meetings.

Activity in Partnership

Key to Life – working with an associated charity, Key Community, to run a foodbank, children's holiday activities and food programmes, school uniform recycling, working with the fuel foundation, raising awareness of poverty issues, referrals to other agencies.

Money Advice South Tyneside- working with the Anglican parishes in Jarrow to support people in debt, for example dispersing household support grants.

Reflecting Together

In collaboration with Regent's College, Oxford University, CTST embarked on a year long project to learn about the experiences of loneliness and isolation of older people in South Tyneside and find ways to improve their lives.

Activity for another charity

Operation Christmas Child - organising collections from schools, churches and individuals of 'shoeboxes' with Christmas presents for children overseas.

Other CTST activities

CTST has a website, social media presence and does occasional press releases. CTST circulates news about events and initiatives that support its purposes to its members.

CTST addresses topical and ethical issues at its events and by organising hustings before general elections.

CTST publishes and circulates weekly Prayer Points which touch on local, national and international matters.

CTST organises an ecumenical Easter Sunrise Service at the sea front followed by a breakfast, usually in a Church Hall.

Charities and projects we support

CTST supports other church-related projects by promoting their work and/or identifying funding opportunities:

Places of Welcome offers a "cuppa", food and friendship and 'Mental Health First Aid'.

South Tyneside Asylum Seeker Refugee Church Help (STARCH) - provides practical and personal support for asylum seekers and refugees.

Prison Matters: provides a safe space, friendship and support for ex-offenders.

Grace Place – a drop in café for lonely and homeless people.

Key Community supports young people who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. Key was originally founded by CTST.

Achievements and performance for 2024

Activities:

Happy at Home

In 2024 we visited around 70 people weekly with our befriending service. Our Hubs are ever popular, often reaching full capacity in Shields and Jarrow. Our Hubs have also provided a gateway to other forms of support with external facilitators attending to run activities, health checks and giving welfare advice to our beneficiaries. We have had a lot more community engagement: developing links with local primary schools, care providers and libraries. Our Men's Group enjoyed varied activities – with the addition of new activities like Japan golf and carpet bowls.

There were 4 hub parties at Christmas with one larger party for the volunteers and those they visit. 30 people attended the local pantomime, 25 enjoyed a Christmas shopping trip. Christmas Eve boxes were given to the housebound and Christmas dinners delivered to those spending the day alone.

A summer Hawaiian themed celebration for the volunteers and those they visit which went down very well with much dressing up. Our Summer Hubs' theme remembered the D-day victory with lots of nostalgia and 1940s style buffet and singing.

We recruited new volunteers to meet the growing demand for the befriending service and continued our new volunteer activities to create community and aid volunteer retention.

Our staff, volunteers and beneficiaries played a central role in a research project into loneliness and social isolation in South Tyneside (described later in this report) working with Stefanie Conratt, a research fellow from Regent's College, Oxford, supported by the William Leech Research Fund.

We have engaged around 200 older people in our events and activities throughout the year.



Nurturing Dementia

4 Dementia Friendly Christmas Carol Services were facilitated at four churches across the borough. Approximately 120 attended including people from Church communities and 5 schools. The feedback was very positive.

Dementia Friendly Churches together with St Gregory's parish has improved engagement for people with dementia at social events. They also facilitated Spirituality in Dementia Workshop for local churches and communities.

Nurturing Dementia helped facilitate a monthly Dementia Empowerment and Engagement group for people with dementia in South Tyneside. The group have called themselves The WAVE (we are valued equally) Dementia Club. The group has grown in numbers and are actively involved in raising their profile for example they are engaged in raising concerns regarding the lack of public conveniences in South Shields.

The Commencement of Care Connect project with 3 local care homes has established new ways of working between two care homes and the local community in Jarrow that has promoted relationships and friendships that have enriched residents' lives.



Street Angels

There are two new volunteers, and these have been essential in us continuing to provide a valuable service within South Shields town centre. We still, however, need more volunteers to come forward to enable the service to return to us being able to provide a weekly patrol. We currently have been able to provide a fortnightly patrol.

The town nightlife is still weak compared to what it was pre-covid and this has meant that Street Angels are still facing the challenge of maintaining a presence when, at times, we have had little to do apart from being a 'presence'. The significance of this however cannot be overemphasized. Our aim of 'Offering non-judgemental support to anyone who is vulnerable, in need or in difficulty' continues to be recognised and appreciated within the community.

Key to Life—Partnership Activity

A CTST Trustee and the Executive Lead serve on the Key to Life Management Committee alongside representatives from Key Community and staff involved in the Foodbank. The CTST Trustee is Chair at present. CTST promotes the work of Key to Life and other initiatives associated with food poverty through its circular emails and on social media, as well as word of mouth. Across 2024 Key to Life supported 7368 individuals which included 5660 adults, 2754 children and young people and 1954 pets. Through the Fuel Bank Foundation, Key to Life supported 274 households. During the school holidays activities and food were provided for over 300 children. School uniforms were provided for 206 children. Christmas gifts and treat hampers were distributed to 392 children. Referrals continue to be made to other services to support those in crisis. The cost-of-living crisis continues to stop donors giving as much as in the past. The Foodbank continues to shop more to keep up supplies and supermarket collections make a difference. A drop in numbers from 2023 is largely because there are more providers for those facing food poverty.

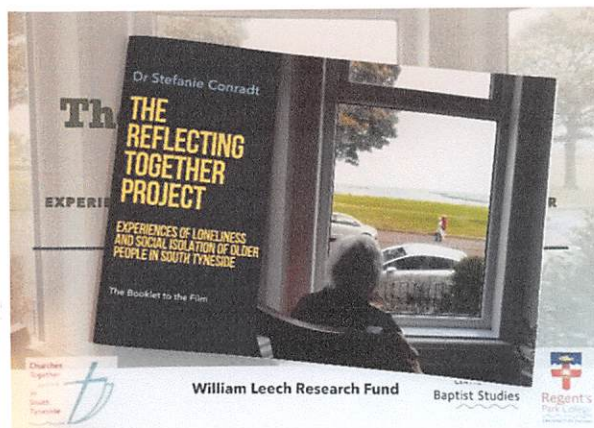
Key to Life's relationships with local schools, churches and funders have continued to be strengthened through the collaboration of CTST and Key Community.



The Reflecting Together Project- Partnership Activity

We wanted to learn about the experiences of loneliness and isolation of older people in South Tyneside and find ways to improve their lives. Churches Together South Tyneside and the principal investigator, Dr Stefanie Conradt, from Regent's Park College, Oxford University, worked in partnership to find new ways of tackling the suffering experienced as a result of

loneliness and isolation. We held conversations with the older people and then reflected on these with the 6 trustees, 7 staff, 12 members of local churches, 5 social care and health care agencies and representatives of South Tyneside Council. Report, film and booklet were produced, and these were launched on November 14th to an audience of guests from South Tyneside and the wider region. The Project has shown the need for a community response to address individual needs as well as structural challenges. In 2025, we plan to work with local churches and agencies to disseminate the research findings and bring about change. The findings have already been incorporated into South Tyneside Council's Isolation and Loneliness Strategy. The Reflecting Together Report, Booklet and Film can be accessed at <https://www.rpc.ox.ac.uk/research-life/centre-for-baptist-studies/research-projects-partnerships/reflecting-together-project/>



Operation Christmas Child **Local collection**

Arrangements for this was delayed due to Samaritans Purse moving their Warehousing & Headquarters until the end of September. The week of O.C.C. was from 13th to 20th November with us picking up the shoeboxes and cartons from the 20th to 24th November. Not as many schools supported this year but the response from local Churches was much appreciated. Having our local arrangements in place we were able to collect, and transport to the Wallsend Safe Store just under 70 cartons, the majority holding 12 shoeboxes.

We were also able to forward to Samaritans Purse a total of £520 in cash. In addition, some local churches sent donations directly. These were mainly toys/toiletries as well as other items specified by O.C.C. and several knitted items. We are already looking to working again with O.C.C. in the coming year and have a date in the diary for our planning to commence.

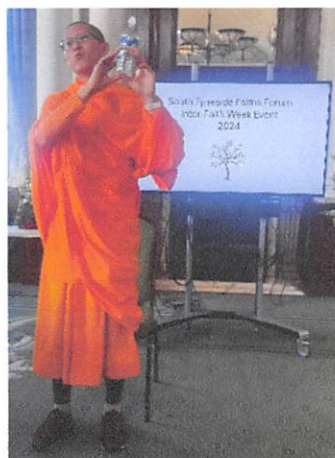
Other Achievements

Governance

Churches Together in South Tyneside regularly review and assess the risks faced by the CIO in all areas of work and plan for the management of those risks. In September 2024 Churches Together in South Tyneside reviewed risks and evaluated what action was needed to address existing risks. Potential risks were identified and actions to be taken were put in an action plan.

Churches Together in South Tyneside communicated the core values of the charity and the founding Christian principles of the organisation to a wide group of beneficiaries, staff, trustees, membership and external agencies in the research project Reflecting Together and to the membership in area church groups.

Policy and procedure development continued with reviews of staff induction and supervision; trustee introduction and induction/succession planning; health and safety. Safeguarding Policy annual review and approval in 2024.



Faiths Forum

The Executive Lead continued to convene the South Tyneside Faiths Forum. In 2024 member of the Faiths Forum have visited the Buddhist Temple and held an Interfaith event at South Shields Town Hall in November 2024 bringing together representatives of the different faith communities in the borough. The gathering included a Faith Quiz, Hindu dance, an Islamic Recitation, two Christian hymns, a Buddhist meditation, a gift for all of "Noah's Pudding" from the Dialogue Society and a common Act of Commitment.

Household Support Grants

This year, we supported 70 households through the distribution of Household Support Grants. These grants provided vital help to individuals and families facing financial hardship due to the ongoing cost-of-living crisis. With this funding, we assisted people in meeting essential needs such as food, heating, and basic household items. For many, the grants offered not just practical help, but also a sense of hope and dignity. One recipient shared, "It meant I could keep the heating on a bit longer and buy food without panic. I felt someone cared."

Hustings

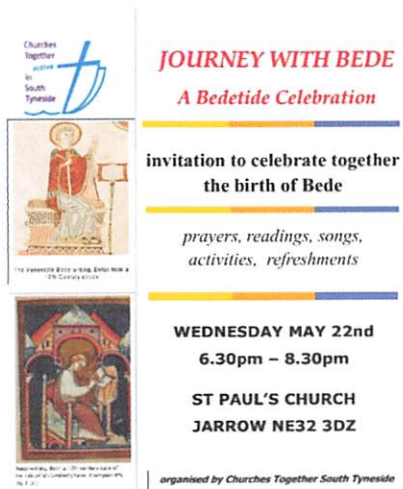
CTST held a Hustings in June for the 2024 General Election at Living Waters Church. It was well attended and Rev Lesley Jones, chairing the gathering, set the tone for an informative and amicable evening.

Welcoming Spaces

Following our promotion of the South Tyneside Warm Spaces initiative in 2022, in 2024 14 churches continued to open their church halls to welcome the community. The scheme is now known as Welcoming Spaces.

The Old Oak: an invitation to a special viewing

In January 2024 CTST invited its members and contacts to a viewing of The Old Oak, a film by Ken Loach, exploring the response to a group of Syrian refugees arriving in a former mining town in County Durham. The film was followed by a Q&A with actors from the film. Over 80 attended the event which was hosted by St Jude's Church.



Bedetide Ecumenical Service

CTST was invited by the Parish of Jarrow and Simonside to hold an ecumenical service as part of the Bedetide events at the former monastery marking 1350 years since St Bede's birth.

Annual Narrative Report for Churches Together South Tyneside 2024

Approved by the Board of Trustees,

Mrs A Tennet, Chair

A Tennet

Mrs B Askins, Deputy Chair

B. Askins

Friday 6th June 2025

Churches Together in South Tyneside

(Charitable Incorporated Organisation)

Charity Number **11553612**

Financial Statements for the Year

January 1st 2024 - December 31st 2024



Churches Together in South Tyneside
Receipts and Payments Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2024

Receipts

	Unrestricted	Restricted	2024 Total	2023 Total
Incoming Receipts				
Grants	11,000	121,020	132,020	149,862
Donations	27,281		27,281	23,019
Subscriptions	790		790	650
Total Receipts	39,071	121,020	160,091	173,531

Payments

Project costs	3,169	29,415	32,584	27,254
Salaries	3,820	80,299	84,118	85,585
Travel	94	1,756	1,850	2,039
Meeting Costs	677	56	733	163
Volunteer Retention	0	3,690	3,690	0
Office Costs	139	2,950	3,089	3,490
Telephone	35	1,290	1,325	1,632
Printing & Stationery	195	678	873	450
IT Costs	1,806	5,039	6,845	3,617
Legal & Professional	100	0	100	100
Insurance	917	305	1,222	1,175
Depreciation	0	1,680	1,680	1,680
Training	0	482	482	28
Subscriptions	216	0	216	376
	11,167	127,639	138,806	127,588

Surplus/ - Defecit for the year	27,904	-6,619	21,285	45,943
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Churches Together in South Tyneside
Statement of Assets and Liabilities as at 31 December 2024

	Unrestricted	Restricted	2024 Total	2023 Total
Fixed Assets			1,685	3,364
Current Assets				
Cash at Bank and in Hand				
Bank Accounts	74,931	142,512	217,443	196,415
Cash Accounts	326		326	1,062
Total Current Assets	75,257	142,512	217,769	197,477
Current Liabilities				
Legacy			50,000	50,000
PAYE and NIC			2,548	3,103
Redundancy Reserve			7,028	9,147
Total Current Liabilities			59,576	62,250
Total Net Assets			<u>159,878</u>	<u>138,591</u>
Equity				
Reserves b/f			138,591	94,648
Profit/ - Loss for the year			21,285	43,943
			<u>159,876</u>	<u>138,591</u>

Approved by the board of trustees xxxxxxxx

Mrs A Tennet (Chairperson)

A Tennet

Mrs B Askins (Deputy Chairperson)

B Askins



CHARITY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Independent examiner's report on the accounts

Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees/ members of	Churches Together in South Tyneside		
On accounts for the year ended	31 st December 2024	Charity no (if any)	11536612
Set out on pages			

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31/12/2024

Responsibilities and basis of report As the charity trustees of the Trust, 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 Trust'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 Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention (other than that disclosed below *) 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 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 order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

* Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply.

Signed: A Brady 16/4/2025

Name: AILSA BRADY

Relevant professional qualification(s) or body (if any): CIMA QUALIFIED ACCOUNTANT

Address: 8 RAMSHAW CLOSE
NEWCASTLE
NE7 7GP

Section B

Disclosure

Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight matters of concern (see CC32, Independent examination of charity accounts: directions and guidance for examiners). N/A