



NORTH EAST CHURCHES
ACTING TOGETHER

North East Churches Acting Together

Annual Report and Financial Statements

Year ended: 31 August 2024

Charity no: 1157138

North East Churches Acting Together
Reports and Financial Statements
Year ended: 31 August 2024

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Legal and administrative information

Trustees:

Dr MA Bonnington
Mrs R Maudslay
Mr W Offer
Mr D Pigeon (Resigned 2 February 2024)
Rt Revd M Wroe

Chairman:

Dr MA Bonnington

Treasurer:

Mr D Pigeon (Resigned 2 February 2024)

Regional Officer:

Ms C Stehouwer

Address:

30 Fieldhouse Lane
Durham
DH1 4LT

Independent Examiner:

Neil Mullen FCA FCCA
Mullen Stoker Ltd
Mullen Stoker House
Mandale Business Park
Belmont Industrial Estate
Durham
DH1 1TH

Bankers:

Barclays Bank PLC
The North Tyneside Group
3 Northumberland Square
North Shields
NE30 1QX

North East Churches Acting Together

Trustees' Annual Report for the year ended 31 August 2024

The Trustees present their report and the unaudited financial statements of the charity for the year ending 31 August 2024

Reference and Administrative Details

Name of the charity	North East Churches Acting Together
Charity number	1157138
Registered office	30 Fieldhouse Lane Durham DH1 4LT

The Trustees

The Trustees who served the Charity during the year ended 31 August 2024 were:

Dr MA Bonnington
Mrs R Maudsley
Mr W Offler
Mr D Pigeon (Resigned 2 February 2024)
Rt Revd M Wroe

Independent Examiner

Neil Mullen FCA FCCA
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North East Churches Acting Together Trustees' Annual Report for the year ended 31 August 2024

Structure, Governance and Management

North East Churches Acting Together (NECAT) was registered as a charitable incorporated organisation (CIO) on 21st May 2014. The governing documents are the memorandum and articles of association of the CIO.

Organisational Structure

The Trustees consist of nominated trustees representing the Churches Together groups, the regional denominational ecumenical officers and the Northern Church leaders as well as other appointed Trustees. The Trustees who have served during the year and since the year end are set out on page two. Trustees usually meet four times each year and are responsible for formally monitoring the Charity. Trustees give their time voluntarily and receive no benefit from the Charity. No expenses were reclaimed by Trustees from the Charity during the year.

Tees Valley Ministry

Oversight and financial guidance of Tees Valley Ministry is the responsibility of NECAT.

Objectives

To advance the Christian religion and the promotion of the churches mission in the North East of England for the benefit of church members, local churches, the wider church, and the public generally through:

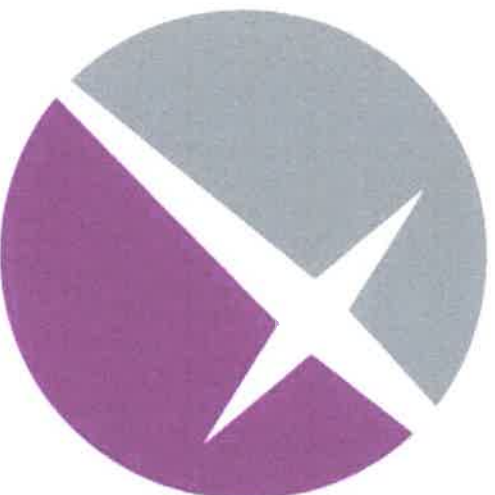
- identifying opportunities for prayer and worship.
- promoting spirituality and theological reflection.
- providing advice, support and training to local churches, local churches together groups and other ecumenical bodies.
- identifying priorities and managing resources.
- bringing together statutory, voluntary, community, commercial, artistic, and cultural agencies in a common attempt to advance the churches mission.
- interpreting key social and economic trends and issues from the perspective of the Christian faith and developing appropriate responses.
- promoting religious harmony for the benefit of the common good.

NECAT is an ecumenical body in the North East of England, serving a region with a distinct culture, spiritual life and self-awareness. NECAT was formed as a result of a review of the ecumenical structures in the North East and a combining of North East Christian Churches Together (NECCT) and The Churches' Regional Commission in the North East (CRCNE).

NECAT seeks to serve the Kingdom of God in the North East by being a partnership of churches and Christian organisations dedicated to answering the call of Jesus Christ and working ecumenically for the renewal of the region through specific and local action to bring about change for the common good.

NECAT's aim and method of working is to encourage and support churches to work together and with other partners both locally and regionally and to identify and release resources which will bring tangible benefits especially to communities and churches working with vulnerable people and groups. Its process within the rich inheritance of the Christian tradition is for action-reflection aimed to bring about changes which will improve the lives of people in local communities and the region. NECAT will offer a voice for the region and its ecumenical vision in national and inter-regional forums. NECAT will be about action to encourage renewal, and the action being undertaken with others wherever possible. Working together will be a catalyst for talking together. Reflection and analysis will follow practical actions benefiting local communities across the region.

North East Churches Acting Together works to support the churches of the North East in their relationships with one another and in their wider mission in the world. Our aim is to work in partnership and help to encourage partnership working with churches, voluntary agencies and other public bodies. Churches Together Groups in the region hold a key role in contributing to the work of the church locally. They and other Ecumenical agencies are supported by the Regional Officer and denominational Ecumenical Officers who together with representation from the Northern Church Leaders Group form the Local Ecumenical Group (LEG).



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North East Churches Acting Together

Annual Report and Financial Statements

Year ended: 31 August 2024

Charity no: 1157138

North East Churches Acting Together
Reports and Financial Statements
Year ended: 31 August 2024

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North East Churches Acting Together

Trustees' Annual Report for the year ended 31 August 2023

Churches Together

We currently have 50 Churches Together groups formally registered with NECAT, these vary from large groups, who are in themselves separate charities, to small local alliances and fellowship groups. Many groups are still recovering from the pandemic – others are in good heart. Many have spent time reassessing their focus and mission.

We recognise the good missional work that Churches acting together do, the huge range of activities they provide and give thanks for all of those who volunteer with them and support the work and operation of their local churches Together group.

The Regional Church Leaders' Group

The North East Ecumenical Church Leaders group continues to meet online to pray together, discuss local and national issues and to liaise with one another across the churches.

A number of significant departures took place during the year including the retirement of the Bishop of Durham the Right Revd Paul Butler and the chair of the Newcastle Methodist district Revd Dr Stephen Lindridge, who also coordinated the church leaders' group meetings. The Anglican Bishop of Whitley Right Revd Paul Ferguson also retired in the summer of 2024. The churches and church leaders of the North East have benefited significantly from the leadership and the strong commitment to ecumenical co-working of these leaders over a number of years. New appointments were made, including the appointment of two knew Baptist northern Baptist association leaders Revd Linda Donaldson and Revd Johnny Pozzo. It was announced that the Chair of the Darlington Methodist District, Revd Richard Andrew, will become the President of the Methodist conference from the Summer of 2025.

Tees Valley Ministry (TVM)

TVM is a charity set up to work in the Tees Valley to promote and support workplace chaplaincy by supporting volunteer chaplains and being an advocate of the Christian in the workplace. It has been part of NECAT since 2015 and NECAT continue to work with Regional Church leaders to discern the future direction and projects of TVM.

Regional Officer

The Trustees were delighted to appoint Ms Coryn Stehouwer as the new regional officer for NECAT. She took up her post on 1 January 2024. Coryn is Canadian and brought a refreshing and energetic outsider's perspective on the life and ministry of churches in the northeast. Coryn has impressed nearly everybody who has met her. Her contribution to the work of NECAT has been substantial. As well as expending considerable energy getting to know the people and churches of the region, she has energised contact with and discussion amongst Churches Together Groups, joined the Church Leaders for prayers brought together and supported ecumenical initiatives and represented the region at CTE meetings and Ecumenical Officers' gatherings. We are sorry to say that Coryn will be returning to Canada to take up a post there in early 2024. We will be most sorry to lose her.

Ecumenical Officers and the Local Ecumenical Group

NECAT acts as the sponsoring body for the formal ecumenical structures in the North East including the Local Ecumenical Group which, on behalf of the denominations, is available to support Local Ecumenical Partnerships and initiate reviews. The Denominational Ecumenical Officers (DEO) and continue to meet regularly and to offer that support to LEPs, Covenant Partnerships and other ecumenical structures. The number of denominational Ecumenical officers has grown slightly during the year, despite the retirement after long service of Mr Andy Lie as URC ecumenical officer. Many across the denominations of the region are grateful to Andy for his long service of and commitment to ecumenism in the region and we wish him a happy retirement. This does mean that it is difficult to give the support that we would like to and we are having to rethink the way in which we have worked and are trying to build up a team of volunteers able to help with reviews. LEG concerns about the future of the group and its ability to deliver the required support remain. However, across the churches, a new commitment vision of missional co-working seems to many a positive trajectory, despite pressures from within denominations to focus on internal life. The Churches Together in England toolkit, 'A New Framework for Local Unity' helps local groups ask the right questions as to what might be a good partnership model for them, enabling them to do what is needed with the minimal amount of bureaucracy, but ensuring the right documentation is in place to support their work and fellowship.

North East Churches Acting Together Trustees' Annual Report for the year ended 31 August 2023

Treasurer

Mr Danny Pigeon had been treasurer for NECAT since its inception until his retirement at the AGM in January 2024. Danny's quiet efficiency and effectiveness has made a huge contribution to the work of the CIO and we are grateful to him for all the expert and accurate work he has done on NECAT finances. NECAT will seek to appoint someone with financial skills to replace Danny during the 2024-25 financial year. In the meantime, we are grateful to Carol Mullen, of Mullen Stoker Ltd, our independent examiners, for their work in support of NECAT over the year.

Ecumenical Initiatives

North East Churches Acting Together is committed to working in partnership and trying to operate as a link or build networks between different churches and denominations and between churches and other agencies. We are delighted that in the past year the St Thomas Indian Orthodox Church has joined NECAT.

Plans for future periods

The NECAT Trustees have agreed to commence the appointment process for a new Regional Officer to replace Ms Coryn Stehouwer and we hope to have someone in place by the Spring of 2025. In order, as far as possible, to maintain the momentum developed in NECAT's work in 2024. We are also actively seeking a replacement for Mr Danny Pigeon as Trustee and Treasurer, alongside broadening the denominational and geographical spread of the Trustees.

Our website is www.necat.co.uk and Facebook page is www.facebook.com/northeastchurchesactingtogether

Mission Fund

All Churches Together Groups and informal ecumenical groups are able to submit applications for funding for work they may wish to do in the local communities. Further information and advice can be obtained from the following email address regionalofficer@necat.co.uk.

Financial review

The Charity's work is entirely reliant on income provided in the form of grants received from the Church Denominations and donations received from the Churches Together Groups in the North East.

Reserves policy

The Trustees aim to maintain reserves in a restricted fund at a level which equates to approximately six months of unrestricted charitable expenses. The Trustees consider that this will provide sufficient funds to ensure that support and governance costs are covered. Total reserves at 31 August 2024 amounted to £107,345 (2023: £126,971) of which £57,557 (2023: £54,183) were restricted.

This report was approved by the Trustees on 23/01/2025.

Mr W Offer (Trustee)



North East Churches Acting Together

Year ended: 31 August 2024

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of North East Churches Acting Together

I report to the Charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the charity (number 1157138) for the year ended 31 August 2024 which are set out on pages 7 to 12.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the Charity'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 Charity'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.

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 giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

- 1 accounting records were not kept in respect of the Charity as required by section 130 of the Charities Act; or
- 2 the accounts do not accord with those records; or
- 3 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.

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.

Neil Mullen FCA FCCA

Mullen Stoker House
Mandale Business Park
Belmont Industrial Estate
Durham
DH1 1TH

Date 23/01/2025

North East Churches Acting Together **Statement of Financial Activities including summary income and expenditure account for the year ended 31 August 2024**

		Unrestricted Funds	Designated Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2024	Total 2023
	Notes	£	£	£	£	£
Income from:						
Churches and denominations		8,183	0	0	8,183	25,216
Churches together groups		245	0	0	245	175
Sundry Income		0	0	0	0	340
Investment income - Bank interest	3	278	0	889	1,167	542
Investment income - Dividends		0	0	621	621	618
Total		<u>8,706</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>1,510</u>	<u>10,216</u>	<u>26,891</u>
Expenditure on:						
NECAT operation	4	31,706	0	0	31,706	6,439
Covid Recovery	4	0	0	0	0	30,092
TVM operation	4	0	0	0	0	250
Total		<u>31,706</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>31,706</u>	<u>36,781</u>
Net incoming resources / (resources expended) before transfers		<u>(23,000)</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>1,510</u>	<u>(21,490)</u>	<u>(9,890)</u>
Transfers between funds		0	0	0	0	0
Net incoming resources/(resources expended)		<u>(23,000)</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>1,510</u>	<u>(21,490)</u>	<u>(9,890)</u>
Realised (loss)/gain on investment assets		0	0	1,864	1,864	667
Net incoming resources / (resources expended) including realised gains on investments		<u>(23,000)</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>3,374</u>	<u>(19,626)</u>	<u>(9,223)</u>
Unrealised gain on investment assets		0	0	0	0	0
Net movement in funds		<u>(23,000)</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>3,374</u>	<u>(19,626)</u>	<u>(9,223)</u>
Fund balances brought forward at 1 September 2023		50,598	22,190	54,183	126,971	136,194
Fund balances carried forward at 31 August 2023		<u>27,598</u>	<u>22,190</u>	<u>57,557</u>	<u>107,345</u>	<u>126,971</u>


All of the above results are derived from continuing activities. All gains and losses recognised in the year are included above.


North East Churches Acting Together

Balance Sheet as at 31 August 2024

	Notes	Charity 2024 £	Charity 2024 £	Charity 2023 £	Charity 2023 £
Fixed assets					
Investments	5	23,262	23,262	21,398	
		<u>23,262</u>		<u>21,398</u>	
Current assets					
Cash at bank and in hand		86,803		106,215	
Prepayments	6	54		0	
		<u>86,857</u>		<u>106,215</u>	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	7	(2,774)		(642)	
		<u>107,345</u>		<u>105,573</u>	
Net current assets		<u>107,345</u>		<u>105,573</u>	
Net assets		<u>107,345</u>		<u>126,971</u>	
Funds:					
Unrestricted funds					
General fund	8	27,598		50,598	
Designated funds					
Mission fund	8	2,190		2190	
Reserve fund	8	20,000		20,000	
		<u>22,190</u>		<u>22,190</u>	
Total unrestricted funds		<u>49,788</u>		<u>72,788</u>	
Restricted funds					
Publicity fund	8	614		614	
Refuges and asylum seekers fund	8	1,525		1,525	
Big Society fund	8	9,402		9,402	
TVM fund	8	46,016		42,642	
		<u>57,557</u>		<u>54,183</u>	
Total funds	8	<u>107,345</u>		<u>126,971</u>	

The financial statements on pages 7 to 12 were approved by the Executive Committee and authorised for issue by the trustees on 23 January 2025 and signed on their behalf by:


Dr MA Bonnington
Chairman


Mr W Offer
Trustee

North East Churches Acting Together

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 August 2024

Accounting policies

- (a) **Basis of preparation and going concern**
- The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, with the exception of investments which are included at market value. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Charities Act 2011.
- The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the charity. Monetary amounts in these financial statements are rounded to the nearest £1.
- The Charity constitutes a Public Benefit Entity as defined by FRS 102.
- The trustees consider that there are no material uncertainties about the Charity's ability to continue as a going concern.
- (b) **Fund accounting**
- General funds are unrestricted funds which are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the charity and which have not been designated for other purposes.
- Designated funds have been transferred from unrestricted funds for a particular purpose and are to be used in accordance with that purpose as imposed by the trustees.
- Restricted funds are funds which are to be used in accordance with specific restrictions imposed by donors or which have been raised by the charity for a particular purpose. The cost of raising and administering such funds are charged against the specific fund.
- Investment income and gains are allocated to the appropriate fund.
- (c) **Incoming resources**
- All incoming resources are included in the Statement of Financial Activities when the charity is legally entitled to the income and the amount can be quantified with reasonable accuracy.
- Gifts in kind donated for distribution are included at valuation and recognised as income when they are distributed to the projects. Gifts donated for resale are included as income when they are sold. Donated facilities are included at the value to the charity where this can be quantified and a third party is bearing the cost. No amounts are included in the financial statements for services donated by volunteers.
- (d) **Grant income**
- Grants and contributions received for current year expenditure are recognised in full in the Statement of Financial Activities in the period in which they are received, provided that the conditions for receipt have been complied with. Where income is received in advance for expenditure in a future accounting period, it is deferred and recognised in the future period to which it relates.
- (e) **Resources expended**
- All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all costs related to the category.
- (f) **Investments**
- Investments are stated at market value at the balance sheet date. The Statement of Financial Activities includes the net gains and losses arising on revaluations and disposals throughout the year.

North East Churches Acting Together

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 August 2024

(g) Defined contribution pension scheme

Existing employees of the Charity were entitled to join The Peoples Partnership which is funded by contributions from the employee and employer. New and existing employees were automatically enrolled into the master trust with the option to opt out should they choose to do so.

2 Related party transactions and trustees' expenses and remuneration

The trustees give freely their time and expertise without any form of remuneration or other benefit in cash or kind (2023: £nil). Expenses, in respect of travel and subsistence, paid to trustees in the year totalled £nil (2023: £nil).

3 Investment income

	Unrestricted Funds	Designated Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2024	Total 2023
Interest receivable - Barclays Active Saver a/c	£ 278	£ 0	£ 0	£ 278	£ 73
Interest receivable - CBF Deposit a/c	0	0	889	889	469
	278	0	889	1,167	542

4 Resources expended

	Unrestricted	Designated	Restricted	Total 2024	Total 2023
	£	£	£	£	£
Stationery and printing	122	0	0	122	1
Necat management fee	0	0	0	0	250
Computer software/website	314	0	0	314	334
Telephone - emails	470	0	0	470	406
Web expenses	0	0	0	0	270
Advertising	0	0	0	0	1,669
Travel and subsistence	2,410	0	0	2,410	106
Conferences and coursed	678	0	0	678	0
Office allowance	0	0	0	0	0
Subscriptions	761	0	0	761	700
Insurance	415	0	0	415	458
Salaries	22,310	0	0	22,310	1,373
Employers pension payment	2,060	0	0	2,060	0
Sundries	238	0	0	238	151
Wages/TPP processing	338	0	0	338	329
Independent examination	990	0	0	990	642
TPP set up	600	0	0	600	0
Covid recovery	0	0	0	0	30,092
	31,706	0	0	31,706	36,781

The average number of employees during the year was 1 (2023: 0) with all employee time involved in providing either support to the governance of the charity or support services to charitable activities. The total employment benefits including employer pension contributions of the key management personnel were £2,060 (2023: £nil). No employees had employee benefits (excluding employer pension costs) in excess of £60,000 (2023: £nil).

North East Churches Acting Together **Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 August 2024**

5 Fixed asset investments

	2024 £	2023 £
Within the UK		
Church of England Investment Fund at market value	23,262	21,398

6 Prepayments

	2024 £	2023 £
Insurance	54	0

7 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2024 £	2023 £
Creditors and accruals:				
HMRC PAYE and NI	936	0	936	0
Employers pension payment	680	0	680	0
Regional Officer expenses	28	0	28	0
Independent examination	990	0	990	642
Wages/TPP processing	140	0	140	
	<u>2,774</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>2,774</u>	<u>642</u>

North East Churches Acting Together

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 August 2024

8 Statement of funds

	At 1 Sept 2023 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Investment gains £	Transfers £	At 31 August 2024 £
Unrestricted						
General fund	50,598	8,706	(31,706)	0	0	27,598
Designated funds:						
Mission fund	2,190	0	0	0	0	2,190
Reserve fund	20,000	0	0	0	0	20,000
Total unrestricted funds	72,788	8,706	(31,706)	0	0	49,788
Restricted funds:						
Publicity fund	614	0	0	0	0	614
Refugees and asylum seekers fund	1,525	0	0	0	0	1,525
Big society fund	9,402	0	0	0	0	9,402
TVM fund	42,642	1,510	0	1864	0	46,016
Total restricted funds	54,183	1,510	0	1864	0	57,557
Total funds	126,971	10,216	(31,706)	1864	0	107,345

General funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the charity and which have not been designated for other purposes.

Mission funds provide small grants to Local Churches Together and similar groups such as Regional bodies/initiatives and ad hoc groups formed for a particular event.

Designated reserve funds are to be used to pay expenses due should the aims and objectives of NECAT, as originally envisaged, cease resulting in the cessation of NECAT.

Publicity funds are for the purpose of publicising NECAT and /or regional events.

Refugees and asylum seekers funds seek to provide support and integration into the community.

Big society fund is a social impact fund which looks into the feasibility of using church land and buildings to provide affordable housing. It supports a feasible project's further planning and securing its financing where appropriate.

TVM fund operates in the Tees Valley to promote and support workplace chaplaincy by supporting volunteer chaplains and being an advocate of the Christian in the workplace.