

**Sidley Baptist Church  
Known as  
Freedom Church Bexhill**

**Report and Accounts  
For the Year Ended  
31 December 2024**

**Charity number: 1158651**

**Freedom Church Bexhill**  
**Year Ended 31 December 2024**

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**Freedom Church Bexhill**  
**Year Ended 31 December 2024**  
**Legal and Administrative Details**

Charity Name	Freedom Church Bexhill
Charity Registration Number	1158651
Mailing Address	Claremont Road Bexhill On Sea East Sussex TN39 5BX
Trustees	P Asselin ( Resigned 12/06/24) B Chaseley (Resigned May 2024) P Goldsmith (Appointed Oct 2023) K Davis (Appointed Oct 2023 Resigned Jan 2024) L Daniels (Appointed Oct 2023 Resigned June 2024) M Scarlett (Appointed 12/06/24) S Briton (Appointed 12/06/24) P Mullens (Appointed 12/06/24) T Purfield (Appointed 12/06/24 resigned November 2024) I Costley (Appointed 12/06/24) H Belton (Appointed 12/06/24) Rev Sally Sago (Appointed Feb 2024)
Property Trustees	The Baptist Union Corporation Ltd., Baptist House, 129 Broadway, Didcot, Oxfordshire OX11 8RT
Independent Examiners	Ryefields Limited Unit 139 Airport House Purley Way Croydon Surrey CR0 0XZ

**Freedom Church Bexhill**  
**Year Ended 31 December 2024**  
**Report of the Trustees**

The Trustees presents their report and unaudited financial statements for the year ended 31st December 2024

**Governance, Structure and Management**

The Charity is governed by a constitution based on the Approved Governing Document for Baptist Churches.

The principal purpose of the charity is the advancement of the Christian faith according to the principles of the Baptist denomination to include the advancement of education, community service and other such general charitable purposes in such parts of the United Kingdom and the world as the Church shall determine.

**Membership and Trustees**

Members of the Church are accepted in accordance with the Constitution wherein baptism by immersion upon a personal profession of faith is the normal mode of entry but persons seeking membership who have not been baptised may be accepted at the discretion of the Church Members' Meeting on their own public profession of faith.

The members Meeting normally takes place 4-6 times a year and has responsibility for the overall policy of the church.

In accordance with the Constitution, the members appoint up to 12 Trustees including the Minister, Church Secretary and Treasurer. They are responsible for the day to day running of the church's work and witness, and the financial and legal aspects of the charity.

All members are encouraged to take an appropriate part in the spiritual and practical tasks involved in the furtherance of the charitable objective.

Relevant matters may be submitted to the Church meeting by the Trustees for guidance or may be raised by members in Church meeting for further consideration by the Trustees. Though the Constitution permits decisions to be made at Church meetings by appropriate majorities, the Church seeks to work by consensus wherever possible.

**Public Benefit**

The Church has read the Charity Commission guidance on public benefit and is satisfied that there is clear benefit to the public through the activities it carries out in meeting its purpose and objectives.

This is particularly shown by:

- Public opportunity to attend Worship events on Sundays including Sunday morning services and evening zoom meetings
- Open access to outreach activities
- Public access to Little Seeds (Parent and Toddler group)
- Public access to Market Place (a community food larder and café)
- Accommodating other publicly accessible activities and private hire agreements eg. Community & Church lunches, Dance groups, Cookery Classes, Art Classes, Older Peoples groups, Family Parties and Partnering with Local Charities for special events.

**Freedom Church Bexhill**  
**Year Ended 31 December 2024**  
**Report of the Trustee (Cont)**

**Objectives and Activities**

**Core Activities**

In order to achieve the principal objective, which is set out above, the Church seeks to provide a variety of activities both for its membership and the wider community of Sidley and beyond. The aim is to show the love of Jesus Christ in both word and deed and to bring people into a closer relationship with him as living Lord.

Central to the work and witness of the Church is the provision of regular public services of Christian worship. The main services take place each Sunday at 10.30 am, this service is live streamed. This enables those who cannot get to the building to continue to engage and worship with us. There is a quieter worship and prayer service on zoom at 6pm on Sundays, with a face-to-face meeting called 'The Well', at 6pm on the last Sunday of the month in the church sanctuary.

Other occasional services are advertised on the church notice board, the website and using the weekly newsheet.

Early in the year the AV desk was improved with the replacement and reconfiguring of some of the existing equipment. This was financed by the members through a special gift appeal. This resulted in improved sound quality both in the church and online for streamed services. Thanks to Andy Sago for all his work in this area. Thanks also to those who worked as part of the team each week on the sound and visuals to support the services.

Many teams contributed to Sunday service provision, this included the Sunday School team, the worship band, the welcome team, the prayer ministry team, those providing refreshments, those preaching and those bringing all age messages. All volunteers and all working to fulfil our aim of sharing the love of Jesus to all who come into the church.

Attendance over the year was relatively static with occasional peaks for special occasions.

A full children's programme is provided during the morning services and numbers of children grew slightly over the year. Thanks to the Sunday team of volunteers who dedicated time and energy to providing teaching and activities week by week for varying ages of the children and young people who came along to church.

The Church runs several Explore groups for the growth of faith, fellowship and discipleship in the homes of some members, and in the church during each week. These groups continued to be fully subscribed. At the end of the year planning was taking place to consider how capacity and provision may be increased in the new year. These groups only run due to the commitment and dedication of those willing to lead and those opening their homes where the groups take place. We are grateful to them. The groups play an important part in the discipleship journey of faithful Christians and contribute to the overall unity and deeper relationships that characterise church life.

The Church is responsible for a Toddler Group which meets in the Church premises on Wednesday mornings, with the purpose of assisting the community and demonstrating the love of Jesus Christ, whilst helping in the development of learning and social skills in those under 5. This has continued to thrive during this year being very popular with parents and their children. We thank Angie Young for leading this group so well over the last eighteen months and all the team working with her as she stood in the gap whilst there was no Children and Families Worker.

The Market place is a community Food Larder which seeks to serve the local Sidley community as the impact of economic hardship has had a considerable effect on those living in the area. By providing very cheap food, much of which is donated by local supermarkets etc the work brings some needed relief and support. This project allows the church to work in partnership with many local agencies, local businesses and local schools.



## **Freedom Church Bexhill**

**Year Ended 31 December 2024**

### **Report of the Trustee (Cont)**

Through the provision of a café at Market Place, this work also provides a place for those isolated, seeking friendship as well as a safe place for parents and their pre-school children to play.

The Market Place is led by project leader Maureen Chaseley a church member who worked tirelessly throughout the year, not only on the premises but across the voluntary sector, partnering with many local businesses and charities, accessing grant funding to support the cost of food and social events for those who consider Market Place their community. In 2024 the Market place provided the equivalent of 8616 meals to local people. There were 3 social events plus a summer barbecue and a harvest supper all of which provided meals as part of the gatherings resulting another 110 meals. We consider this a massive achievement by the team of volunteers.

We were hugely proud to celebrate Maureen's award as East Sussex Woman of the Year in recognition of all her work in May. The team were also nominated this year for BBC Radio Sussex and BBC Radio Surrey's Make a Difference Award. Also, at the Rother Voluntary Action (RVA) group's AGM in October, two of the team, Chris Miles and Tony Purfield received awards recognising their work and commitment as volunteers at the Market place.

### **Christians Against Poverty (CAP)**

The church is the lead church for Bexhill and Hastings for CAP providing office accommodation for the CAP team within the church building. The church also assists with financial and practical support towards the much-needed work that the team provide to those struggling with debt.

Rev Guy Partridge, a member of the church, continued as the centre manager, overseeing growth in the team with additional staff and volunteers. This work sees many helped to escape overwhelming debt as well as introducing them where possible to Jesus.

### **Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults**

The Church operates systems to ensure that all people working with children and vulnerable adults are appropriately vetted in line with the Disclosure and Barring Service. The policy is reviewed annually. Access to suitable and appropriate training is provided to all those in roles which require it.

Grateful thanks are expressed to Helen Goldsmith who was appointed as Designated Person for Safeguarding with Luci Partridge as her, deputy in June 2024. Paula Mullens became our Safeguarding Trustee. Helen led the team and worked closely with the minister and organisational teams to update church practices where needed and to raise the awareness of safeguarding within the church.

### **Achievements and Performance**

The Church does not measure the success of its programmes only in numbers, including financial numbers, but also in less tangible areas like fellowship and encouragement. 2024 was a time of change in the leadership of the church. The previous minister in training had left a pastoral vacancy in June 2023 and this was filled by the calling of Rev Sally Sago to full time ministry in February 2024. An induction service was held in March led by Rev Joth Hunt, SEBA Regional Minister Team Leader and the speaker was Rev Beth Powney. This was attended by many representatives of local churches as well as members and friends from Sally's previous church in Norfolk.

Barry Chaseley ended his 3-year term of office in May and the then treasurer, Phil Asselin fulfilled his extended term of office and stood down in June. The church recognised their contributions with gifts and thanks as they stepped down.

Liz Daniels resigned as a trustee also in June, after resigning her role as church administrator and finishing in May. We are grateful for all her help in overseeing and handing over the work of the office to temporary volunteers as she worked her notice and prepared to move away from the area, and again the church expressed their thanks with a gift as she relinquished her roles of administrator and trustee.

**Freedom Church Bexhill**  
**Year Ended 31 December 2024**  
**Report of the Trustee (Cont)**

Trustee elections were held at the members meeting in June and 5 new trustees were elected. Heidi Belton, Sharon Britton, Isobel Costley, Paula Mullens and Tony Purfield.

Mike Scarlett was appointed as Treasurer.

Along with Peter Goldsmith, Church Secretary and Rev Sally Sago this resulted in a team of 8 Trustees. A Core Leaders Training session was held in November led by Paul Kerley Regional Minister for SEBA.

During July/August the church provided a placement to Yuki Kim a student ordinand with Westminster College Cambridge. This was a positive experience for both the church and Yuki.

**Paid staff**

The church continues to employ a cleaner 6 hrs per week, Deborah Brown who does a fantastic job.

A new church administrator, Jo Marder was appointed in August to oversee the work of the church office four mornings a week.

In response to advertising for a Children and Families Worker to replace the vacancy left in June 2023, no applicants were interviewed, and it was decided by the trustees to increase the salary being offered. This resulted in a successful candidate being appointed who will start in January 2025 working 15hrs per week.

**Membership**

A membership and baptism information evening was held in July and was attended by 7 people.

On 31 December 2024 the membership stood at 50 compared to 52 a year earlier.

3 people were received into church membership.

1 member died

4 members resigned

Attendance is between 50-65 per week on Sunday mornings. (average =57)

**Other Activities**

The church continued to welcome local organisations into the building and to hire the premises for functions and charity events as mentioned above as well as being used as a Polling Station for election purposes. These activities are reliant on our volunteer caretakers who lock and unlock the building, and we appreciate all the hard work of John Knight, Fred Ginbey and Simon Green throughout the year.

The church joined with Churches Together in Bexhill at Easter and in the summer for ecumenical gatherings.

Links were also maintained with Hopes, a house of prayer and The Pelham a local community hub and coffee lounge. Speakers were welcomed from International Mission to Jewish People, Beachy Head Chaplaincy Team and Geoff Thompkins (Jesus Loves Bexhill).

**Freedom Church Bexhill**  
**Year Ended 31 December 2024**  
**Report of the Trustee (Cont)**

**New initiatives**

Towards the end of the year the church was delighted to celebrate with 'Jesus Loves Bexhill' a litter picking community group as they launched a new 'Jesus Loves Sidley' team. The church support them with use of the premises for prayer cover and refreshments as well as joining in with letter picking in our local area.

The church also began a monthly prayer walking initiative, walking the streets praying and meeting local people out and about in December.

**Building and Maintenance**

On behalf of the trustees Peter Goldsmith led the oversight and implementation of various building and maintenance tasks during the year. This included the replacement and installation of a new servery in the café area of the sanctuary. This was financed by grants in support of Market place.

A quinquennial survey report was also undertaken for the first time in 2024 and this will provide a plan of action for necessary work to the building going forward.

The work is ongoing, constant and demanding and moving forward the hope is that a team may be developed to help with the work needed in 2025. Thanks to Barry Chaseley and Tony Williams who assisted in various tasks during the year.

**Financial Review**

Mike Scarlett was appointed Treasurer in June and our thanks are offered to him for all his hard work week by week and the production of the yearly accounts below.

The Church continues to raise the funds which it needs to carry on its activities from within its own membership and congregation together with grants from a number of sympathetic charities in support of the Market Place

Financial systems are in place, as are policies for accountability and management, which are reviewed regularly.

The Church is heavily dependent on its membership working as volunteers in all aspects of the church's activities, many of which run with little or no impact on the church's expenditure, but nevertheless contribute substantially to the achievement of the church's objectives.

**Reserves Policy**

The Trustees have established a Reserves Policy to enable the church to function effectively and meet its obligations in the event of a decline in our income or a major cost.

**Statement from policy**

Freedom Church Reserves Policy is as follows:

*"To hold three months of all expenditure plus a further three months staff costs to adapt to any changes in the income or expenditure of the church. The policy will be reviewed annually."*

**This Report was accepted by the Trustees Date:**

**Signed: Church Secretary**

**Treasurer**



**Freedom Church Bexhill**  
**Year Ended 31 December 2024**  
**Independent examiner's report to the trustees**

I report on the accounts of the Trust for the period ended 31 December 2024, which are set out on pages 7 to 10.

**Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner**

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2011 Act;  
to follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act; and  
to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

**Basis of independent examiner's report**

My examination was carried out in accordance with the general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

**Independent examiner's statement**

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

(1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:

- to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act; and
- to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the 2011 Act

have not been met; or

(2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

**Name: Leslie John Tasker FCCA**

Relevant professional qualification or body: Association of Chartered Certified Accountants

Address: Ryefields Ltd. Unit 139 Airport House, Purley Way, Croydon. Surrey CR0 0XZ.

Date: 19 September 2025

# Freedom Church Bexhill

## Receipts and Payments Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2024

		Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Designated funds	Total funds	
		2024	2024	2024	2024	2023
	Notes	£	£	£	£	£
<b>Incoming resources</b>						
Charitable giving:						
Giving to the church	2	72,550	10,651	-	83,202	59,171
Other income:	2	16,100	-	-	16,100	28,865
Grants received		-	27,136	-	27,136	19,491
Bank interest	2	5,329	-	-	5,329	5,331
<b>Total incoming resources</b>		<b>93,979</b>	<b>37,787</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>131,766</b>	<b>112,858</b>
<b>Resources expended</b>						
Charitable activities	3	102,144	30,086	-	132,230	113,532
<b>Total resources expended</b>		<b>102,144</b>	<b>30,086</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>132,230</b>	<b>113,532</b>
<b>Net incoming/ (outgoing) resources for the year</b>		<b>(8,165)</b>	<b>7,701</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(464)</b>	<b>(674)</b>
Transfers between funds		150,238	(150,238)	-	-	-
<b>Reconciliation of funds</b>						
Total funds brought forward		48,762	182,628	-	231,390	232,064
<b>Total funds carried forward</b>		<b>190,835</b>	<b>40,091</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>230,926</b>	<b>231,390</b>
<b>Represented by:</b>						
Petty cash		182	-	-	182	178
Bank		190,653	40,091	-	230,744	231,212
		<b>190,835</b>	<b>40,091</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>230,926</b>	<b>231,390</b>

Approved by the Trustees on .....

.....

The notes on pages 9 and 10 form part of these accounts.

## Freedom Church Bexhill

### Notes forming part of the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2024

#### 1 Accounting policies

The principal accounting policies are summarised below. The accounting policies have been applied consistently throughout the year.

- (a) The accounts have been prepared on the receipts and payments basis.
- (b) • Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the charity.
  - Designated funds are unrestricted funds earmarked by the Trustees for particular purposes.
  - Restricted funds are subjected to restrictions on their expenditure imposed by the donor or through the terms of an appeal.
- (c) Voluntary income is received by way of grants, donations and gifts.
- (d) • Charitable expenditure comprises those costs incurred by the charity in the delivery of its activities and services for its beneficiaries. It includes both costs that can be allocated directly to such activities and those costs of an indirect nature necessary to support them.
  - Governance costs include those costs associated with meeting the constitutional and statutory requirements of the charity and include costs linked to the strategic management of the charity.
- e) Capital expenditure is written off on purchase.

#### 2 Giving to the church

	Unrestricted	Restricted	Designated	2024 Total	2023 Total
	£	£	£	£	£
Gifts and donations	65,945	10,651	-	76,596	51827
Interest	5,329	-	-	5,329	5331
Property letting	15,159	-	-	15,159	14333
Other Income	445	-	-	445	999
Income form Market Place	-	-	-	-	13054
BMS - Birthday Scheme	-	-	-	-	50
Little Seeds/Messy	495	-	-	495	429
Gants - New Garden	-	-	-	-	9971
Garnts - Other	-	27,136	-	27,136	9520
Tax recovered	6,606	-	-	6,606	7344
	<u>93,979</u>	<u>37,787</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>131,766</u>	<u>112858</u>

# Freedom Church Bexhill

Notes forming part of the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2024

## 3 Total resources expended

	Unrestricted	Restricted	Designated	2024 Total	2023 Total
	£	£	£	£	£
C & FW costs	-	504		504	-
Hospitality	1,048			1,048	2991
Children's work resources	1,575			1,575	877
Telephone, internet & Zoom	1,099			1,099	910
Insurance	1,618			1,618	1581
grants made	6,170	1,128		7,298	6888
Charitable trading		11,536		11,536	10377
Worship and PA resources	966			966	818
Safeguarding	331			331	-
Travel and subsistence	87			87	2863
Stationery & printing	798			798	1467
Equipment costs	1,858		-	1,858	882
Subscriptions	643			643	1189
Leasing costs	886		-	886	955
Advertising and marketing	137		-	137	792
Training and resources	535		-	535	315
Bank Charges	172		-	172	-
Manse costs	21,903		-	21,903	7128
Premise costs	8,846		-	8,846	6409
Rates and Water	1,172		-	1,172	897
Light and Heat	8,440		-	8,440	7705
Clearing and waste	812		-	812	5049
Church suite	414		-	414	-
AV upgrade		3,290		3,290	-
Servery area refurbishment		13,628		13,628	294
New Garden			-	-	14873
Kitchen	-	-	-	-	3651
Professional Fees	1,968		-	1,968	5740
Administration costs	638		-	638	1222
Employment costs	40,028	-	-	40,028	27659
	<u>102,144</u>	<u>30,086</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>132,230</u>	<u>113532</u>

## 4 Movement of funds

	Balance at 1 Dec 2024	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	Balance at 31 Dec 2024
	£	£	£	£	£
Unrestricted funds	48,762	93,979	(102,144)	150,238	190,835
Restricted funds	182,628	37,787	(30,086)	(150,238)	40,091
Designated funds	-	-	-	-	-
	<u>231,390</u>	<u>131,766</u>	<u>(132,230)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>230,926</u>



**Freedom Church Bexhill****Notes forming part of the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2024****5 Assets**

At 31 December 2024 the Charity had the following assets:

	<b>Unrestricted</b>	<b>Restricted</b>	<b>Designated</b>	<b>£</b>
Current Account	18,124			18,124
Savings Accounts	22,653	29,336		51,989
Manse Trust fund	150,238	10,755		160,993
Cash held	182			182
PAYE Paid in January 2025	-362			-362
	<u>190,835</u>	<u>40,091</u>		<u>230,926</u>

**6 Defined contribution pension schemes**

The charity utilises the services of the Baptist Union Pension Scheme in respect of the Minister's pension and NEST for the Administrator's pension.

**7 Remuneration and payments to Trustees and persons connected with them**

No Trustees or persons connected with them received any remuneration from the charity or any related entity other than as disclosed below.

Rev Sally Sago acts as one of the church's trustees and receives remuneration and other benefits in respect of her services as minister. This includes rent paid by the church for the provision of manse accommodation in the private residence of the minister and her husband.

Liz Daniels, one of the trustees, received remuneration in respect of her services as church Administrator, until her resignation in June 2024.