



Ministry Overview



Encouraging Christians facing same-sex temptations with biblical clarity and supportive community

MAY 2021 - APRIL 2022

TFT's stated public benefit is "the advancement of the Christian faith, in particular (but not limited to) providing teaching based on the biblical principles in the Statement of Faith on issues around sexuality and by providing support for those who are struggling with such issues."

In practice, this means providing teaching within churches on issues related to same-sex attraction, as well as providing pastoral care and guidance to church leaders, individuals and families affected. The main activities undertaken for the public benefit include pastoral support and teaching at churches, colleges and other organisations.

Index

1

Introduction

From TFT's Director

2

Ministry Overview

2.1 - Ascend Magazine

2.2 - Speaking and Teaching

2.3 - Support Groups

2.4 - Conferences

2.5 - Financial Review

2.6 - Online Content

2.7 - Women's Work

3

Plans for 2022- 2023

4

Governance

4.1 - Voluntary Workers

4.2 - Membership

4.3 - Trustees

4.4 - Staff

1 - Introduction

The story of 2021-22 for True Freedom Trust (TFT) was about returning to ministry in-person, whilst keeping hold of what worked well online. The greater appetite and access to online gatherings meant that we ran our first series of Online Workshops for church leaders in April/May 2021 and then repeated the series in November 2021. These workshops equipped leaders to provide good quality pastoral care for same-sex attracted people in their churches and were much appreciated.

There was great anticipation about holding our National Conference in person in October 2021, having held the previous year's event online. The attendance was good as everyone enjoyed being back together for a long weekend, appreciating the fellowship and the teaching about being a "light to the world". Another long-awaited moment happened in April 2022, when we were able to hold the first of our touring "Steadfast" day conferences, having had to cancel the first in the series we had planned way back in March 2020 due to Covid.

The autumn of 2021 also marked a significant return to activity for our speaking ministry, which had been largely on hold for the preceding eighteen months. Indeed, there was one weekend in November 2021 when we managed to provide speakers for four separate speaking engagements – definitely helped by now having a team of speakers!

During this year, we have also provided information to members who wished to engage with the Westminster government's consultation on conversion therapy legislation. Whilst TFT does not offer therapy of any kind, nor does it seek to change anyone's sexual orientation, we have been keen to ensure that freedoms continue for Christians with same-sex feelings to receive support, prayer and pastoral care.

I'm so thankful to God for all our trustees, volunteers and members who have kept on supporting one another during a long period that has been so isolating for many. At a time when some are turning their backs on biblical teaching, it's been a great encouragement for TFT members to keep spurring one another on in their faith.

Stuart Parker, Director of TFT





2 - Ministry Overview

Ascend Magazine

In 2021-22, we produced another four editions of Ascend. We covered the themes of “responding well to opposition”, “caring for one another”, “marriage and singleness” and “biblical inclusion and diversity”. Ruth, our women’s worker, was our guest editor for the Spring 2022 edition, as part of our effort to increase the diversity of our pool of writers.

We continue to send out copies of Ascend by post and email to anyone who signs up to receive it. With the return to speaking engagements in person, we have once more started printing additional copies to hand out at those events.

Speaking and Teaching

It was a great encouragement to us to see our speaking & teaching ministry return to normal following the easing of coronavirus restrictions in the latter half of 2021. We received a number of bookings for the autumn term, from both longstanding supporters of TFT and new churches we have not visited before. In particular, a number of speaking requests have come in off the back of the conversations going on in various denominations, where churches hope to discern a way forward on issues such as same-sex marriage. We do not take these opportunities for granted, and are thankful for the many opportunities we have had to present the joy and hope found in the gospel of Jesus Christ. We undertook 30 speaking engagements at 23 locations throughout the year, broken down as follows:

- Bible Colleges: 6
- Internal: 4
- Church Services: 9
- Seminars: 11

The year also marked a significant change to our way of working as, instead of having a dedicated member of staff attending all engagements themselves, we have launched our speaking team comprising of TFT volunteers specifically trained to teach on behalf of TFT. The volunteers are overseen by our Teaching & Outreach Manager, Simon. We closed the year with 11 speakers on our books, with various levels of experience. The speaking team enhances TFT’s ability to speak into different denominations and contexts, and also allows the ministry to operate in a more cost-effective way.

Support Groups

Our support groups (Barnabas Groups) are specifically to help those who have same-sex attraction, but also welcome others who have a serious interest in the issue, such as ministers etc. The groups are led by experienced Voluntary Workers and group size ranges from about four to twenty members. They typically meet monthly for biblically based discussion, sharing and encouragement. Many of the groups meet socially too. Some groups are men only and some mixed gender.



We have groups in Belfast (two groups), Dublin, Edinburgh, Leeds, Preston, Manchester, Southampton/Bournemouth, Guildford, London (two groups), Essex, Wirral, Cambridge, Sheffield and Birmingham. Since the start of the Covid pandemic we have developed more online groups, and these can cater for members not within reach of any of the above locations, including quite a number of people overseas. We now have online groups for men, for women, for mixed gender, one for married men and one for parents of same-sex attracted children. This means a significant increase in total membership of Barnabas Groups.

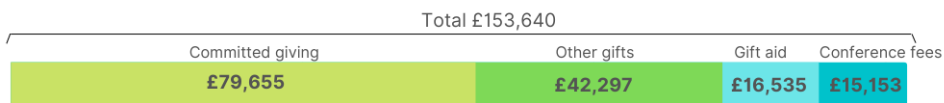
Conferences

Owing to Covid restrictions we had a second year with no local day conferences. We ran “Exiles” online instead in June 2021. The speakers were Andy Robinson (Living Out) and Stuart Parker. About 70 delegates attended. Our residential National Conference “Light to the World” in October 2021, with speaker Anne Witton, was the first return to meeting in-person. About 100 delegates attended.



Financial Review

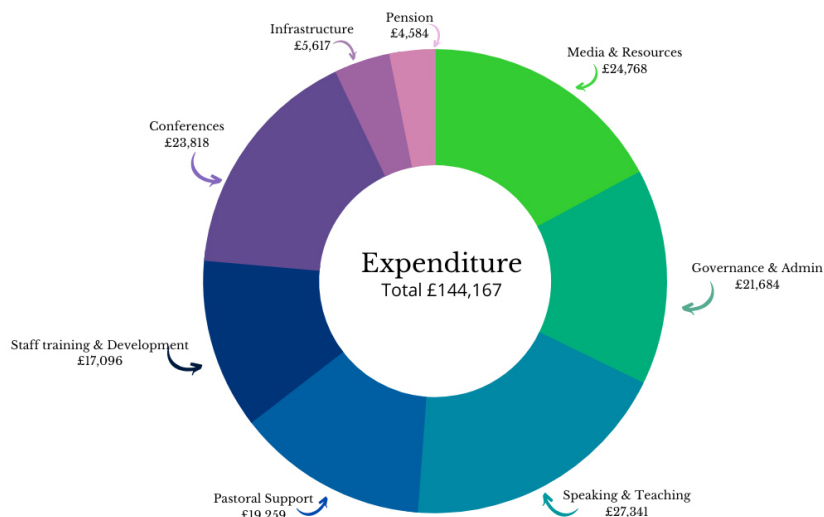
Income



As a charity, we rely exclusively on donations from our supporters, and we are very grateful to the TFT members, churches and other organisations who have donated over the last year.

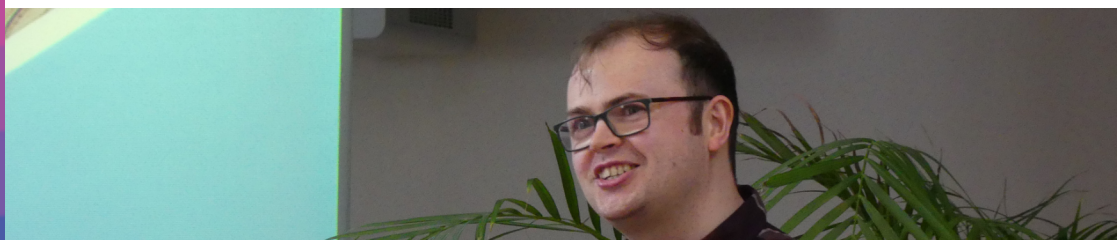
Over the the 2021/2022 year, expenditure was lower than usual due to the impact of the Covid pandemic on our usual operations.

Thanks to the generosity of so many and the situation just described, we ended the year with a surplus of £9,473. We kept our statutory reserve at £31,000 for the year, which will be increased for next year.



The chart above illustrates how our financial resources were spent during the reporting period. A little under 80% of our expenditure went towards staff salaries and pensions to enable them to carry out our core activities. Expenditure for our Speaking & Teaching ministry increased on the prior year due to us having a dedicated member of staff looking after this area once again, and we were pleased to be able to attend speaking engagements in person once Covid restrictions were lifted in the autumn term. We remain grateful for our team of volunteers, without whom our costs would be much higher.

As said earlier, we have been able to start to meet in person again, which has increased some of our costs, but it's been great to be back at conferences meeting people face to face. We recognise the next financial year will be hard with the increase in inflation rates.



Online content

The TFT website enables us to publish and release resources which teach sexual ethics from the historic Christian perspective. It allows us to advertise events, enable people to donate to the ministry and it also provides a means for members of the public to contact us and access our services. The website enjoyed a total of 319,143 page views during the reporting period, which was just under half the visits received during the previous year. We noted fewer visits as the summer months came and Covid restrictions lifted.

Our podcast, Ascend Higher, has now been running for almost two years, with each podcast receiving an average of 150 downloads. What started as something to be released alongside our quarterly magazine has now attracted several other contributors wanting to take part and a number of “specials” have been recorded to release in the future. We continue to maintain Facebook, Twitter and YouTube pages, all of which provide us with additional outreach.

Members of the staff team meet regularly to review the website's content and design and keep elements fresh. Quite a lot of work has been done behind the scenes in the 21/22 period upgrading the software on which our website/servers operate, and a number of actions have been taken to improve page rankings on search engines such as Google. The most popular articles of the last year were:

- “What does the Bible teach about same-sex practice?” – 174,038 views
- “Is it OK to masturbate?” – 65,116 views
- “Freedom from masturbation” – 4,144 views
- Book Review: “What does the Bible really teach about homosexuality?” - 2,485 views
- “Why would a loving God be against loving same-sex relationships?” - 2,143 views



Women's Work

The women's work is thriving with many new members joining groups and participating in conferences. As well as Anne as speaker at our National Conference, we held a day conference in February. The women's weekend away took place in May in Wirral with 10 women enjoying community with Bible teaching on the theme of "Strength for the Journey", food, games and outdoor activities. 2 new Voluntary Workers were appointed, one to support married women.

We held 2 Zoominars, where two women gave their testimonies and there were questions from participants about their stories. A second online Barnabas Group was set up for those unable to join a physical group near to them. Our European and overseas members see these groups as a lifeline, as similar ministries abroad are unable to function under government restrictions. Two book clubs meet monthly online. There are 48 members in our private Facebook group, "Women of Light", and the majority of those women are also connected to each other in WhatsApp groups. Women regularly write articles, reviews and testimonies for the Ascend magazine, anchor and lead at conferences and events and are members of the speaking team at TFT.

3 - Plans for 2022-2023

In May and June 2022, we are completing our "Steadfast" day conferences in Merseyside and London, encouraging Christians to remain steadfast in their faith, whatever the pressures they may face from the world around. For the London conference, we have extended a particular welcome to members from overseas to join us and to use the day to build connections with other ministries across Europe in particular.

In Autumn 2022, we have Julian Hardyman coming to speak at our National Conference on the theme of "Jesus, lover of my soul", based on his 2020 book of the same name. Julian will be explaining from the Bible book, Song of Songs, about Jesus' desire for us and how we can receive God's love for us as being wholehearted and full.



Jesus, Lover of My Soul
National Conference 2022

Whilst we are enjoying being able to put on conferences in-person once more, we also want to retain the best of the online provision that has worked so well during the lockdowns of 2020-21. We will continue providing online Barnabas Groups as well as the in-person ones. A much-appreciated recent innovation has been online Night Prayers, where members meet for 15 minutes of prayer together on weekday evenings. We plan to continue making as much of the teaching from in-person conferences available online as possible.

We will continue to strengthen our team of speakers, aiming to provide a network of trained speakers to help churches, Bible colleges and Christian events to understand the Bible well and to pastor people effectively. As demand continues to grow in the area of transgender, we will continue to learn and train our speakers and pastoral support workers in this matter.

With Simon now appointed as Teaching & Outreach Manager, we have slightly more capacity for outreach. This will involve building our profile and connections with churches and denominations that have had limited or no contact with TFT in the past.

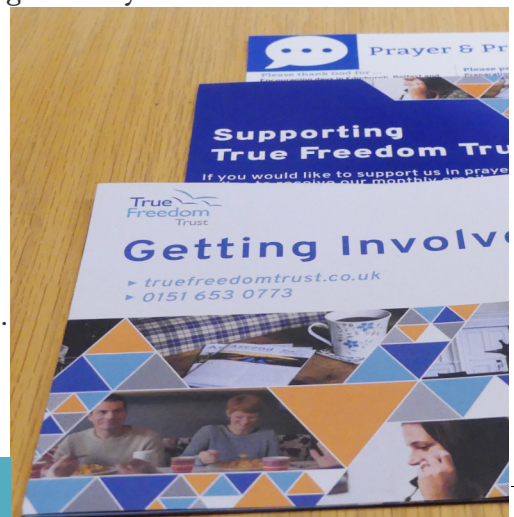
4 - Governance

Voluntary Workers

The majority of our voluntary workers provide one-to-one support and advice for those struggling with same-sex attraction (SSA) and for their pastors, families etc. This may be face to face or by other means according to geographical location and the needs of the situation, although of course for much of the year it had to be done remotely – using Zoom, phone etc.

This has probably instituted a permanent shift towards remote contact. However, as far as possible, a Barnabas Group leader will always meet a new applicant for his/her group. New requests for pastoral support come in at a rate of about a dozen per month. There is huge variety in terms of outcomes, but many of these become TFT members, attend events or join a Barnabas Group. During the year we had about forty volunteers on our register, a couple stepped down from service and we were delighted to make four new appointments. The pastoral volunteers specialise in support to one or more of the groups: parents with same-sex attracted sons/ daughters, SSA men, SSA women, married SSA men, spouses of SSA men, married SSA women and gender issues.

The VWs are organised into teams, each led by a Support VW who review their team



twice yearly, in particular ensuring that they still agree fully with the Basis of Belief, the Confidentiality Policy and the Safeguarding Policy. We were able to run two half-day training sessions using Zoom, at which the substantive issues were transgender issues, pastoral referrals and conversations, mental health issues, sexual addiction, and leading Barnabas Groups.

Membership

The project to refine our membership in order to strengthen our sense of unity and commitment has continued and we now have 1670 members. We continue to work through renewal as each member reaches the end of their five years of membership. The implementation of a stricter system for people to become members has proved effective and well-appreciated by both new members and by the TFT staff.

"I found that the honesty and openness from everyone at the TFT conference was refreshing, encouraging and unique. Everyone was happy to tell their stories and the reasons why they needed TFT. They were open about the battle and the struggle. Even the teaching from the front included personal sharing and was real." - Rachel

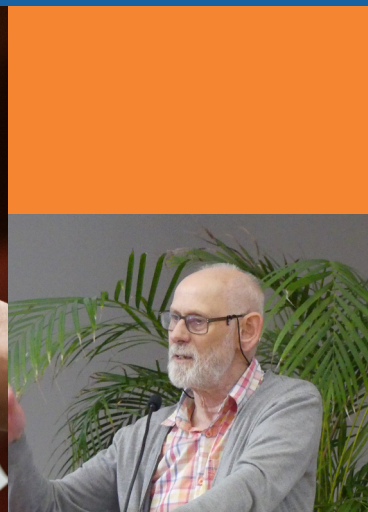
Trustees

During 2021-22, one Trustee retired, and two new Trustees were appointed. The Trustees going into 2022-23 are Iain Baker, Donald Dewar (Chair), Graham Baker, Naomi Skull, Robert Walsh, Laura Oliver, Duncan Beet and Jane Gibbs. From June 2021, they were able to meet once again in person.

Staff

During the year, Harry Warrell left the staff team to take up a position as a worship pastor. The staff team going into 2022-23 consists of Stuart Parker (Director), Simon Byrne (Teaching & Outreach Manager), Paul Bach (Pastoral & Events Co-ordinator), Ruth Daly (Women's Worker) and Owen Leadbetter (Digital Media Technician & Team Administrator).





TRUE FREEDOM TRUST (TFT) is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO), governed by constitution dated 29/10/2014, registered in England and Wales with the Charity Commission. Charity number: 1159015

Receipts and Payments Accounts for the period 01/05/21 to 30/04/22

Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds to the nearest £	Total funds to the nearest £	Last Year Total funds to the nearest £
Receipts			
Total Donations	£138,487	£138,487	£172,453
Sales and fees	£15,153	£15,153	£390
<i>Total receipts</i>	£153,640	£153,640	£172,843
Payments			
Expenses	£8,597	£8,597	£2,123
Media & Resources	£4,038	£4,038	£4,176
Salaries & Nat. Insurance	£105,849	£105,849	£100,709
Office Rent & Utilities	£3,661	£3,661	£3,603
Post	£2,316	£2,316	£2,855
Phone & Internet	£1,155	£1,155	£958
Office Equipment	£901	£901	£1,084
Admin Fees	£1,017	£1,017	£3,120
Miscellaneous expenses	£38	£38	£0
Conferences & Meetings	£12,010	£12,010	£1,473
Pensions	£4,584	£4,584	£4,601
<i>Total Payments</i>	£144,167	£144,167	£124,702
Net of receipts/payments	£9,473	£9,473	£48,141
<i>Cash funds last year end</i>	£86,921	£86,921	
<i>Cash funds this year end</i>	£96,394	£96,394	

Statement of assets & liabilities at the end of the period

	Unrestricted funds to the nearest £
Cash funds	
Bank	£95,537
PayPal	£836
Cash	£22
<i>Total</i>	£96,395

No other assets or liabilities

Signed by the Treasurer

Date:



Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

**Report to the trustees/
members of**

True Freedom Trust

**On accounts for the year
ended**

30th April 2022

**Charity no
(if any)**

1159015

Set out on pages

1 of 1

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 30/04/2022.

**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 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.

Signed:

Date: 07/12/22

Name:

Mr Stuart Hull B.A. CPFA

**Relevant professional
qualification(s) or body
(if any):**

The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA)
Membership Number: 00103466

Address:

8 Whiteways

Wimborne

Dorset, BH21 2PQ