

Churches Together In Lancashire

Financial Accounts

For The Year Ended

31st December 2024

Towers + Gornall Ltd
Chartered Certified Accountants
Garstang, Preston

Independent examiner's report on the accounts of Churches Together in Lancashire

Report on the accounts for the year ended 31 December 2024.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner:

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144 of the Act and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the Charities Act,
- to follow the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 145(5)(b) of the Act, and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention

Basis of independent examiner's statement

My examination was carried out in accordance with 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 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 material matters have come to my attention which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- The accounts did 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.

Signed.......... Date.....

Mick Gornall
Towers & Gornall
River View
96 High Street
Garstang
PR3 1WZ

Statement of Accounts for the period ended 31st December 2024		
Churches Together in Lancashire	2024	2023
Income		
General Denominational Contributions	45,642	13,969
Other Income		
Grants received	1,750	
Total Income	47,392	20,249
Expenditure		
Ecumenical Development Officer:		
Salary and Pension	39,069	27,688
Travel and home telephone	2,554	5,952
Consultations, courses and resources	41,623	- 33,640
HMRC Payments - PAYE, Tax,& NICs	8,655	4,317
Forums, conferences & local review expenses	5,348	8,560
Office Costs:		
Equipment	850	394
Insurance	292	292
	1,142	686
Affiliations	380	1,198
Grants (accounts / payroll)	-	300
Other Expenses	683	1,392
Total Expenses	57,832	50,093
Income Less Expenditure	- 10,440	- 36,124
Cleared Liabilities from previous year	-	-
Profit for the year	- 10,440	- 36,124
Assets		
HSBC Current Account	25,128	35,568
HSBC Deposit Account	25,128	- 35,568
CAF Cash Account	1	1
CAF Gold Account	1	- 1
Churches Together In Scorton	25,129	35,569
Liabilities		
General contributions received in advance	-	-
Net Assets	25,129	35,569
Represented by:		
Last years general funds	35,569	71,693
Balance of Income and Expenditure for the year	- 10,440	- 36,124
Current Liabilities	-	-
	25,129	35,569



***Churches Together in Lancashire
Annual General Meeting
for the year ending 31st December 2024
Held by Zoom on 27th February 2025
Reports***

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"πορευθέντες οὖν μαθητεύσατε πάντα τὰ ἔθνη βαπτίζοντες αὐτοὺς εἰς τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ πατρὸς καὶ τοῦ υἱοῦ καὶ τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος"

Ματθαῖος 28v19

***Annual General Meeting for the year ending 31st December 2024
Held by Zoom on 27th February 2025***



**Chairman's Report 2023 (On behalf of the Trustees)
The Revd Dr Peter Colwell**

I am delighted to have been invited to take on the role of Chair of Churches Together in Lancashire. I am born and raised in Lancashire and live in Cleveleys. I am an ordained minister in the United Reformed Church and serve as the Deputy General Secretary of CTBI, Churches Together in Britain and Ireland.

As with previous "Chairs" my term of office began with Lancashire Carers Sing Christmas which was an excellent opportunity to be introduced on air to the County as your new Chair. It is a fantastic event reaching over 10,000 people and highlighting the very special work done by individuals and organisations who provide care for the most vulnerable in our community. (We heard from Adam Brogden of the St John Ambulance who came with Joan Wright, a volunteer for 64 years, and was a nurse for fifty years. The programme also introduced Zoë Abernethy, the Northwest Church Engagement Officer for Christian Aid. There was a moving interview with Cameron Murray from Derian House. There were live-links out to the Darwen Asylum Refugee Enterprise where Christmas Hampers were being distributed and to the Heskin Community centre where Lorna Bowling shared the work of a group that support those living with Parkinsons Disease.)

The Churches were represented by the Northwest Divisional Commander of the Salvation Army, Major David Taylor. David retires this year and so our prayers are with David and Kathy as they look to the future. The annual message and prayer were delivered by the Archbishop of Liverpool, the Most Reverend Malcom McMahon focussing on the work of those who care for others and prayed for lasting peace in those places of conflict in the world.

The Carols were led brilliantly by our friends from the Blackburn Salvation Army Band under baton of Eric Millest and the Blackburn Community Choir under that baton of Jeff Borradaile.

Churches Together in Lancashire was invited to the Christian Police Association Carol Service by its chair PC Paul Pountain. This was attended by the Chief Constable, Sacha Hatchett Stasia Osiowy (O-sho-vy) the Divisional Commander for the South Division, which covers Preston, South Ribble, Chorley, Ormskirk and Skelmersdale.

Building relationships with Civic Leaders, Local Authorities, Police and Community Services, the NHS, continues to be a priority for Churches Together in Lancashire. Out of the relationship with the Lancashire Constabulary came the invitation to +Philip, the Bishop of Blackburn, to preach at the national conference of the Christian Police Association which took place at Salmesbury Hall.

Throughout the year the Church Leaders for Lancashire have met either in person or by Zoom. These meetings have been well attended and represent the most important aspect of Churches Together in Lancashire which is the bringing together of all Christians for prayer and fellowship in the name of Jesus Christ.

***Annual General Meeting for the year ending 31st December 2024
Held by Zoom on 27th February 2025***

Each denomination has an appointed ecumenical officer which gathers monthly in person or online under the direction of The Revd Anton Müller, County Ecumenical Officer for Lancashire. The role of the DEO is to encourage and support ecumenical activity in all of denominations churches. To do this the DEOs continue to build ecumenical points of contacts in each Deanery, Circuit and Mission Area.

Most churches and groups do come together for the Week of Prayer, a Walk of Witness, Pentecost Praise. There are also many activities taking place with monthly prayer meetings, ecumenical services on the 5th Sundays of the month alongside the weekly provision of care in the community which demonstrate the good examples of churches working together in mission and ministry.

In addition to the work with local groups, Churches Together in Lancashire continues to grow its Network Partners and working groups, referred to as “enabling groups”.

In May of this year Churches Together in Lancashire worked with Network Partner Karen Livesey, the Director of No Whispers CIC. This organisation delivers awareness training in identifying and responding effectively to Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), Child Sexual Abuse (CSA) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE). The event held at Whalley Abbey brought together safeguarding leads from across the denominations which revealed the differences in practice that can create gaps in the provision of safeguarding for all.

Many of our network partners and enabling groups joined us again in the Church Tent at the Royal Lancashire over the third weekend of July. The Church Tent signposted a range of church-based resources for supporting farming and rural communities. The lead partner for 2024 was Lancashire Mind to raise awareness of farming and mental health. (The other partners included PLASP, the Pan Lancashire Anti-Slavery Partnership. Christian Police Association Preston Street Pastors, NHS Community Roots, Farming Community Network, Anna Chaplaincy, Field Nurses, No Whispers, the Agricultural Chaplaincy Association and the Lancashire Churches Rural Focus Group. We also gave space to the MND Association.)

The Church Tent service was led by an all-female ministry team across the denominations. This year the music was led by the Balderstone Brass Band.

We are very grateful to the Duchy of Lancaster Benevolent Fund and the Lancashire Foundation. The grants received covered the cost of the Marquee, the electrical supply and the provision of free hot and cold drinks by Preston Fair Trade.

The Church Tent was visited by The Lord Lieutenant, Mrs Amanda Parker, the Mayors of Blackburn and Burnley, The Bishops of Blackburn and Burnley along with a steady stream of visitors grateful for a free cuppa and somewhere to sit down.

This year the Church Tent Community will gather again joined by Citizens UK which will focus on Rural Poverty and the Living Wage Campaign. We are again seeking grants to cover the £2,500 costs of this important Christian presentation at the Royal Lancashire Show.

**Annual General Meeting for the year ending 31st December 2024
Held by Zoom on 27th February 2025**

2024 was milestone in the life of the Methodist Districts across the Northwest. Churches Together in Lancashire was represented at the launch of the Northwest England Methodist District held at the Victoria Hall in Bolton. The Revd Dr James Tebbutt was commissioned as the overall chair of the new District.

Seeking to transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and to pursue peace and reconciliation is one of the Five Marks of Mission which underpin the work of Churches Together in Lancashire. This is one of the areas where all churches can join as one to be a powerful voice to challenge injustice and pursue peace in the world and in our own communities where social cohesion and service is so important.

We were dismayed when funding for the Interfaith Network was withdrawn by the previous Government. The Church Leaders for Lancashire came together to write in support of the work of Churches Together in Britain and Ireland that has campaigned, successfully, for the recreation of some kind of programme to generate inter faith relations.

Churches Together in Lancashire is also working to raise awareness of the situation in Palestine and Gaza. This has a long and complex history, and churches have different even opposing opinions. It is why I am delighted to be in conversation with Dr Marwan Darweish shortly.

Most recently Churches Together in Lancashire has begun to work with Church Action on Poverty and the "Your Local Pantry" scheme which takes the provision foodbanks much further in order to create a sustainable programme in the manner of the original co-operatives.

Ecumenism is a day-to-day expression of what it means to be church. At times it is right to highlight special events that mark the ecumenical journey that all Christians must make as they seek to usher in the Kingdom which for is all, not just a few.

This year 2025, marks the 1700th Anniversary of the Council of Nicaea. This was the first ecumenical council that led to what is known as the Nicene Creed. Whilst it brought much unity to the Early Church, which was destroying itself over doctrinal conflict, there remains disagreement over some small, but by no means insignificant differences.

You have the opportunity to explore all of this over the weekend of 12th – 14th September when Blackburn Cathedral will host an ecumenical programme to mark this 1700th Anniversary. There is so much to share but I will end this report here because it is here, the statement of faith, that stands at the centre of all that we are.

The Revd Dr Peter Colwell
Deputy General Secretary of Churches Together in Britain & Ireland
Chair of Churches Together in Lancashire 27th February 2025

**The County Ecumenical Officer's Report
The Revd Anton Müller MA**

It has been another busy year packed with ecumenical activities, events and programmes.

I received reports of a good number of services and gathering for prayers in the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. I took part in the event held at St Anne's Lytham. We did hold an online event which the few people who attended found helpful. I am not planning a CTL online gathering in 2025.

Engaging with Churches & Groups

Over the year I have taken services at Penwortham URC, St Leonards CofE in Langho, Trinity Community Church Accrington, our only Baptist/Anglican LEP.

I have attended meetings of the Blackburn and Darwen Leaders Group, the Fylde Leaders Group, Churches Together in North Blackburn, Accrington Deanery Synod.

It was very moving to attend the launch of the Northwest England Methodist District and then the following day attend the welcome service for the Revd Michaela Barker at Kirkham & Fairhaven Methodist Church with a message of welcome and greeting on behalf of Churches Together in Lancashire.

Meetings of the Presidents and Denominational Ecumenical Officers

There have been five meetings of the Presidents (the Church Leaders for Lancashire). These have been well attended by Zoom and at various venues around the County. In 2025 there will be four meetings. Two by Zoom and two in person. The main purpose of the meeting is to strengthen Christian unity across the denominations through prayer, reflection and fellowship. The meetings also bring shared issues and concerns to the table. A joint statement was sent by the Presidents in response to the last Government's withdrawal of funding to the Interfaith Network. There was also considerable discussion on the Assisted Dying Bill on which there are diverse views across the churches.

There have been ten meetings of the Denominational Ecumenical Officers split between online and attended meetings. There is an emphasis on prayer, reflection and fellowship. These gatherings also represent something of the engine-room of ecumenism in Lancashire as each member relates to various groups and activities around the County. Most importantly they support and encourage ecumenical development in their own denominations. The Revd Daleen Ten Cate, DEO for the Northwest Synod comments: *"Highlights for me of last year was to work with all the people who was part of the RLS CTL, on grassroots level such as Lancashire Citizens, PLASP, St Johns Ambulance etc. It is always important to me that the relationships we build, trickle down to grassroots levels. It was also special to be part of the first women's only team presiding the Love Feast at the RLS."*

Partnership Working

The Enabling Group for environment is developing well. Dave Champness has taken on the role of Chair of the Environment Group. It is planned to carry out a cross denominational survey of church and environment matters, to encourage all churches to engage creatively for a cleaner environment and assist those working towards the Eco Church Awards.

The Enabling Group for Social Justice & Responsibility is covered by the work being done by Dr Peter Lumsden who is making progress with various NHS bodies and Social Prescribing

CTL's network partners now include Sanctuary Mental Health, Citizens UK, Lancashire Association of Councils for Voluntary Service, No Whispers CIC, Housing Justice, Church Action on Poverty, Your Local Pantry Scheme, Lancashire Mind, The Christian Police Association, Field Nurses, Parish Nursing, Farming Community Network, Hope at Home, the Pan Lancashire Anti-Slavery Partnership, (PLASP), NHS Community Roots, Christian Aid, the Lancashire Churches Rural Focus Group and the Agricultural Chaplaincy. All of these were represented in the Church Tent at the Royal Lancashire Show which received grants from the Lord Lieutenant's Duchy Fund and the Lancashire Foundation. The Church Tent was visited by the Lord Lieutenant, Mrs Amanda Parker, the Mayor of Blackburn, the Mayor of Hyndburn, the Bishops of Burnley and Blackburn.

Engaging with the regional and national work of ecumenism

In my wider remit I have continued to represent the Northwest region of Churches Together in England on its Enabling Group. This is a role that I share with my counterpart in Merseyside, Elisabeth Hachmoeller. Between us we co-ordinate the meetings of the Northwest region in various locations and online.

The Northwest Synod of the United Reformed Church has appointed the Revd Darren Holland as its Ecumenical Officer across the Northwest supporting its churches and local ecumenical officers. Darren attends the Northwest CEO group, the Lancashire DEO meetings and the meetings of the Lancashire Church Leaders.

In my role as the Moderator of the National Forum of Churches Together in England I have attended the annual meetings of the Staff & Trustees, contributed to the discussions on its strategic and organisational development and chaired the Forum Planning Group.

Ensuring a future for skilled ecumenical work

After two years of work to create and promote the development of a Common Awards Ecumenical Module for lay and ordained ministerial training this has now been accepted by Ripon College, Cuddesdon, Oxford.

**Annual General Meeting for the year ending 31st December 2024
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An ecumenical celebration of Christmas

9th December: Christian Police Association Carol Service

Churches Together in Lancashire was well represented at this event, and we hope to be fully part of the event again. I gave one of the readings. The new Chief Constable for Lancashire Constabulary, Sacha Hatchett, took part along with the Chief Superintendent Stasia Osiowy who is the Divisional Commander for South Division, which covers Preston, South Ribble, Chorley, Ormskirk and Skelmersdale. for South Ribble. The music was led by the Preston Salvation Army Corp Band. I would like CTL to give this more support and encourage the Church Leaders to attend and take part as they are able. The event was featured in "The Salvationist" the national magazine of the Salvation Army with a picture of Major David Taylor, NW Div Commander with the Chief Constable.

18th December: Lancashire Carers Sing Christmas

This event went very well and was reported on BBC Northwest Television across two programmes. The Archbishop of Liverpool, the Most Revd Malcom McMahon gave the message this year which recognised the work of carers, both individuals and organisations. There was also a call and prayer for peace in the various places of conflict. The Revd Peter Colwell, Chair of CTL was amongst those interviewed during the programme and featured on BBC Northwest Tonight.

Less groups now sign up to host local venues because of the time of the programme, although a small number did host evening events using BBC Sounds. I intend to encourage more participation in the daytime and at other times using the BBC Sounds option.

21st December Romanian Orthodox Church Christmas Event

A few of us attended this fabulous Christmas musical event with traditional Romanian music, readings and prayers, and of course traditional Romanian delicacies. Thank you to Fr Ciprian Bidan, the Romanian Orthodox Priest in Preston and to the church for their welcome and hospitality.

Priorities for 2025

- Establishing active contacts in each our local groups remains a challenge. Comms remains key to keep ecumenism visible
- Encouraging groups to build on their programmes and to explore the ecumenical dimension across the various ministries taking place.
- Encouraging the ecumenical dimension in lay and ordained ministerial formation.
- Launch of the Common Awards module "Theory and Practice of Ecumenism" with Ripon College, Cuddesdon.
- Strengthening the support for each DEO by their Church Leader and creating a network of ecumenical contacts in each denomination across the County.

**Annual General Meeting for the year ending 31st December 2024
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Church Leaders should regularly invite the DEOs to bring an ecumenical dimension to denominational strategic planning and organisation.

- Developing the civic and community relationships through the creation, support and development of enabling groups around key issues and network partnerships.
- Continue to build up the directory of recognised Independent Free Churches.
- Continue to identify and build relationship with BAME led churches.
- Identify and support young adults/youth in ecumenism linked to the CTE Bill Snelson Fund for young ecumenists. Linked to this is to have greater involvement in Surfstage, youth and young adult pilgrimages

Events in 2025

2025 is a year of Jubilee. The 2025 Catholic Jubilee Year is a Holy Year of Jubilee that began on December 24, 2024, and will end on January 6, 2026. The theme for the year is "Pilgrims of Hope." There will be events taking place globally as across the three Dioceses in Lancashire. <https://www.cbcew.org.uk/jubilee-2025/>

Vision 2026 The Diocese of Blackburn is planning a programme which will take it forward as it approached its centenary year. The Diocesan Ecumenical Officers are working on the inclusion of ecumenical development and engagement in the next stage of the Diocesan Vision after 2026.

17-19th March: The Churches Together in England Forum 2025

One but not same: celebrating diversity – living with difference.

The Lancashire delegates are The Revd Stephen Brown, DEO for the Archdeaconry of Blackburn, Captain Tracy Collis, DEO and Church Leader representative for the NW Division of the Salvation Army.

Fr Paul Cannon & Sharon Beech (Diocese of Salford), Deacon Pru Cahill (NWE Methodist District). The Revd Kevin Huggett (URC NW Synod) is the Forum Director of Music. Bishop Anderson Jeremiah is now a Trustee of CTE and will be giving the keynote address in place of Justin Welby following his recent resignation.

4th-6th July Surfstage: All Age Christian Festival at Parbold – this has the potential to be the Greenbelt of the North.

18th – 20th July Royal Lancashire Show: The Church Tent will host a range of partner organisations with a particular focus this year on Rural Poverty and the Living Wage Campaign. Network Partner "Citizens UK" will lead on this aspect.

12th – 14th September: Nicaea 25 – a celebration of faith, belief and the unity we share in Christ and established at the first Council of Nicaea in 325 with the formulation of the first ecumenical document we know as the Nicene Creed. Prof Rachel Muers (Quaker) has accepted our invitation to take part.

<https://edwebprofiles.ed.ac.uk/profile/professor-rachel-muers>

**Annual General Meeting for the year ending 31st December 2024
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Other participants include Dr Victoria Turner (URC), Ripon College, Cuddesdon; Fr Andrew Louth, Emeritus Professor of Orthodox Studies (Durham University); The Revd Tim Norwood, CofE National Ecumenical Officer for Local Ecumenism. There will be other denominational representatives taking part.

Please save the dates, especially the ecumenical gathering on Saturday afternoon 13th September.

18th December 2025 Lancashire Carers Sing Christmas with Radio Lancashire

We have the new Bishop of Burnley, The Rt Revd Joe Kennedy taking part and provisionally the new Chief Fire Officer for Lancashire & Rescue.

So why bother with Ecumenism?

Because Jesus prays for it, and we are called to make it so.

John 17vv18-24

¹⁸ As you have sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. ¹⁹ And for their sakes I sanctify myself, so that they also may be sanctified in truth. ²⁰ 'I ask not only on behalf of these, but also on behalf of those who will believe in me through their word, ²¹ that they may all be one.

As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. ²² The glory that you have given me I have given them, so that they may be one, as we are one, ²³ I in them and you in me, that they may become completely one,

But why?

so that the world may know that you have sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me. ²⁴ Father, I desire that those also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory, which you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world.

Why?

so that the world may know that you have sent me...
so that the world may know that you have sent me...
so that the world may knowYou!

It's a Mission Imperative not a Mission Impossible!

***Annual General Meeting for the year ending 31st December :
Held by Zoom on 27th February 2025***



Report from the Anglican Denominational Ecumenical Officers
The Revd Stephen Brown, The Revd Gary Lewis
Diocese of Blackburn

Next year will mark the centenary of the foundation of the Church of England Blackburn Diocese. For the last decade the Diocese has been working towards priorities established through a process called Vision [2026](#), around Christian discipleship and leadership, children and young people, and witness to Christ in daily living. As that programme finishes, a period of consultation is underway to discern a renewed focus and direction.

It seems fair to say that ecumenism has not featured greatly in recent times in our collective thinking. Towards the end of last year, a successful bid for (amount??) from central church funds, focused on evangelistic renewal, gave cause for much celebration. Clearly it offers exciting possibilities, but it is nevertheless noticeable that the considerable work that's been done locally to attract it took little account of what all our non-Anglican neighbours are doing, despite trying to be faithful to the same gospel, and in the same geographical areas - and, indeed, facing many of the same challenges.

Following my own recent retirement as a Vicar in Haslingden and having had a chance to spent many of the Sundays over the last four months visiting other congregations around Accrington, I now have a renewed perspective on the bigger picture of which we are all part. It is not always something that we seem to recognise or want to acknowledge.

The two Anglican DEOs are currently liaising with Anton and with national ecumenical officers as to how best to present the case for thinking (and praying) more ecumenically, and how to get ecumenism back in the centre of our agenda, post Vision [2026](#).

Coincidentally, there are projects going on across Lancashire, coordinated through an initiative called Gather, which aim to map the work that local churches and faith groups are doing systematically, especially around care for children and families, care for homeless people, and provision of food banks and community pantries. This seems likely to produce clear evidence for the value of including churches in discussions about funding for new partnership projects, not least with local authorities and the NHS. But mapping such things may also alert churches themselves to the importance of each other's presence and gifts.

Surely that must be to the greater glory of our God, whose providence we are called to witness to not least in the honouring of one another, and through each of our distinctive voices joined in together in singing the music of Christ.

The Revd Stephen Brown
DEO for the Blackburn Archdeaconry, Diocese of Blackburn



Report from Enabling Group for Church and Environment

Chair: Mr Dave Champness

Dioceses of Blackburn & Carlisle Net Carbon Zero Senior Project Mgr

Terms of Reference:

Representatives from the URC, CoE and RC (Quakers), met in July with the Revd Anton Müller, County Ecumenical Officer for Churches in Lancashire, to explore the potential to reinvigorate the Environmental Enabling Group that last met pre-Covid.

This document discusses some potential topics/issues for collaboration across the counties of Lancashire and Cumbria reflecting the broader geographically overlapping areas covered by the NW Synod of the URC, NW Methodist District, the CoE dioceses of Blackburn and Carlisle (who are collaborating on carbon net zero) and the RC Diocese of Lancaster that also covers Cumbria (see map at end of document).

Topics/issues for collaboration

- Ecodiocese/Ecosynod/Ecochurch – providing a regional/strategic point of contact for ARocha/Caring for God's Acre officers and a mechanism for sharing mutual learning/collaborative events on topics such as:
 - Churchyards' maintenance/biodiversity
 - Workshops for churches working towards bronze/silver/gold status
 - Raising awareness of regional and local council/third sector support
- Net Carbon Zero – providing a point of contact for regional officers to collaborate on topics such as:
 - Church Schools – learning from heat decarbonisation plans
 - Church/cathedral/office/retreat house buildings – learning from energy audit/heat decarbonisation plans and demonstrator projects
 - Vicarages/manses – learning from heat decarbonisation plans and demonstrator projects
 - Land not in churchyards – learning from strategic planning and interventions
 - Carbon off-setting – learning from strategic planning and interventions
- Providing a united voice/point of contact for environmental issues with statutory and grant funding bodies in the geographic area eg local authorities, Natural England
- Providing a point of contact for regional third sector environment charities eg Cumbria/Lancashire Wildlife Trusts
- Enabling a response to matters of environmental justice as experienced by the population of north-west England eg Cumbria coal-mine
- Enabling environmental-themed content at the CTL tent at the Lancashire Show.
- Sharing resources for local campaigning (eg writing letters to MP's) regarding Climate Justice and Environment issues

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Topics/issues out-of-scope

- Matters predominantly related to social justice and/or general rural affairs eg affordability of energy bills, local food supply chain
- Matters predominantly related to animal welfare
- Planning and response to natural disasters linked to climate change eg flooding, heatwaves

Proposed membership and meeting frequency

A Core Group to meet termly

- Dave Champness (Church of England)
- The Revd Anton Müller (Churches Together in Lancashire)
- The Revd Daleen Ten Cate (URC)
- The Revd Karen Herschell Lancashire Rural Focus Group
- Stephen Garsed (Environmental Officer, Diocese of Salford)
- Ian Marshall (Quakers)
- Zoe Abernethy (Christian Aid)
- Stephanie Roux, (Properties Manager, NWE Methodist District)

'Topic' sub-groups to be formed with other input from knowledgeable individuals eg Diocesan Environmental Officers (DEnvO) to meet as frequently as they determine

- Ecochurch/Ecodiocese
- Net Carbon Zero

'Task and Finish' sub-groups to be formed to resolve time-limited topics eg Lancashire Show preparation.

Update:

1. The synods of both the dioceses of Blackburn and Carlisle received updates on progress with their respective Net Carbon Zero/Ecodiocese action plans at meetings on 19th October. Funding from The Church Commissioners has provided additional staffing capacity and funding for
 - a. Energy Audits/Heat Decarbonisation Plans for all church schools and the higher emitting churches
 - b. Small value grants (up to £2,000) for churches undertaking energy reduction projects
 - c. Funding for a small number of 'demonstrator' projects - both churches and vicarages
2. Both dioceses are actively working towards achieving silver Ecodiocese status with the main challenge being encouraging more churches to register/work toward an Ecochurch award.
3. In July 2024, The General Assembly of URC received an update on progress with implementing the Environmental Policy adopted in 2022.
4. Following a well-attended Ecochurch event hosted by Carlisle Cathedral on 5th October featuring input from Rev Canon Grace Thomas (Manchester Cathedral residentiary canon and Diocesan Environmental Officer), plans will be developed with Blackburn Cathedral to host something similar in 2025

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5. A group of churches in the Lancaster/Morecambe area are planning an ecumenical Ecochurch day on 14th June 2025.

Introducing the Revd Karen Herschell Stephanie Roux and members reports

- Karen's is p/t CoE incumbent for four parishes in the Hodder Valley and p/t rural church renewal officer supporting churches to have a growth agenda. She will be asking how Creation Care fits with missional approach. Churches in her two previous benefices made good progress on Ecochurch - Balderstone is a great exemplar for Forest Church.
- Stephanie oversees Methodist buildings (churches/manse) across the NW and is helping to steer churches in their Ecochurch/net zero journey. She will contact Polly Eaton at Arocha to get access to the district's Ecochurch data. Aiming for all manse to have an EPC of at least 'C' and disposing of property where this cannot be met (a similar strategy is being employed by Blackburn Diocese, but harder to find suitable replacement property within some parishes). In Cumbria, God for All strategy looks at the church and school buildings in a community and selects the most appropriate to maintain worship.
- Daleen shared the data for URC engagement with Ecochurch across the NW Synod of which
 - Lancashire. Bronze: 9, silver 5, gold 1 (Clitheroe). Garstang almost gold but finding the church land section challenging to achieve
 - Cumbria. Bronze: 7, silver 6
 - Initial progress made during Covid lockdowns
 - New building person in post. QI reports to include carbon section.
 - Same conversations happening as CoE re: green investment in clergy housing that costs the regional church but benefits the occupiers.
 - URC looking at an affordable housing scheme on land at Bolton-le-Sands
- Stephen explained the 'Live Simply' RC equivalent of Ecochurch that doesn't have grades of awards. It is also applicable to church schools and religious orders.
 - Good engagement in NW Cumbria (Cockermouth/Workington) and poor in Preston which is consistent with URC/CoE currently
 - Wider challenge of engaging priests who have come from overseas to lead parishes on eco matters. Mixed response.
- It was agreed that we should ask the 70 local Churches Together Group Leaders (of whom approximately 20 respond usually) whether eco/creation

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care/net zero has been discussed locally and for stories of ecumenical working on the topic. **ACTION: Dave/Anton to devise and circulate a questionnaire**

- The Christian Aid update was shared
- Anton reported on the Church Leaders' meeting at end January. The AGM is 27th Feb at 7.30pm online. The leaders' next meeting is 6th March at which he will provide an update from this meeting.
- Royal Lancashire Show tent provides missional resources for supporting rural communities - historically there was some resource for rural chaplaincy but this ceased 8+ years ago.



Resources:

Arocha:

<https://arocha.org/en/theology-churches/faith-distinctives/>

Baptist Union of Great Britain

https://www.baptist.org.uk/Articles/618427/Climate_resources_for.aspx

Catholic Church Laudate Si:

https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20150524_enciclica-laudato-si.html

Church of England Net Zero Carbon Church

<https://www.churchofengland.org/resources/churchcare/net-zero-carbon-church>

The Methodist Church in Britain

<https://www.methodist.org.uk/action/climate/take-action-become-an-eco-church/>

Quakers in Britain

<https://www.quaker.org.uk/events/quaker-eco-church-network-steps-to-accreditation>

The Salvation Army

<https://www.salvationarmy.org.uk/about-us/policies/environment>

United Reformed Church Eco Awards

<https://urc.org.uk/category/eco/> <https://nwsynod.org.uk/mission-green-apostles/>

Six Christian Charities that help the Environment

<https://www.stewardship.org.uk/blogs/6-christian-environment-organisations>

Christian Aid Climate Justice

<https://www.christianaid.org.uk/get-involved/campaigns/talking-climate-justice-tour>

Report from the Enabling Group for Social Justice & Responsibility
Faith Partnerships in Lancashire
Dr Peter Lumsden

A. Movement for Recovery <https://gathermovement.org/>

Funding has been secured in Burnley to continue mapping the provision (food, mental health, family support) being made by faith groups, and separate funding to begin the same mapping process in Hyndburn. This work is part of an approach to the development of partnerships “at place”.

B. Countering isolation – Places of Welcome

Community groups, including churches, can provide settings for people to meet, form friendships, and so avoid being isolated and lonely. Such locations can raise their profile, and secure some funding, by registering as a *Place of Welcome*. Any newly registering locations can apply for a small ‘start-up’ grant, of up to £500.

<https://www.placesofwelcome.org.uk/>

Contact Peter Lumsden, regional co-ordinator for more information (Email below).

C. Local authority links

Staff at Lancs CC recognise that the pressures on adult social care are very often a consequence of social isolation (see above), and people not knowing where to go. LCC are working with districts to identify hotspot areas where there is high demand, and how to connect in with their communities. LCC are funding additional ‘Community connector’ posts in all districts. Meanwhile, faith groups can easily engage with local *family hub* networks, and the relevant *community network*,

D. Engaging with Health

An example of shifting provision from hospital to community is the Lancashire and South Cumbria Foundation Trust (LSCFT) health and wellbeing vehicle, the HARRI (health, advice, recovery, resilience, information) bus. This travels to community settings, where staff offer advice and guidance and routine blood pressure checks – these routinely reveal previously undetected high blood pressure in around 10% of attendees. To book HARRI, contact Hasan Sidat (hsidat@lscft.nhs.uk).

E. The VCFSE alliance for Lancashire and South Cumbria (LSC VCFSE)

The Alliance has recently established a Reference Group to contribute to the ICBs *Transforming Community Care (TCC)* Programme. The TCC programme is committed to co-designing a new model of community care for the future so that more people can be treated and cared for outside hospital settings. The key to successfully transforming community care will be for all health and care partners across Lancashire and South Cumbria, including the NHS, local government and the Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise sector (VCFSE) to work better together.

F. Convention of the North

This is a hugely significant annual gathering of regional leaders and policy makers which this year is being held in Preston, Feb 27th and 28th

<https://www.conventionofthenorth.org.uk/news/>

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On the **evening of Feb 26th**, the day before the convention, Northern chapters of Citizens UK (including Lancashire, Greater Manchester, and Liverpool) are organising a 'satellite' event, with a particular focus on public transport but will also a wider view of how Citizens' chapters are helping local people to take action to bring about change to improve lives, including successful campaigns like the Real Living Wage. The Northern Chapters and partners have invited MP's, Mayors and decision makers from their areas to attend the satellite to hear the experiences of ordinary people.

A big turnout from members of the public, including faith groups will increase the impact of this event

To register interest, reserve a seat and to get more information please use this link:
<https://actionnetwork.org/events/citizens-of-the-north-convention-of-the-north>

Peter Lumsden (pjlumsden58@gmail.com)
Network partner of CTL (Churches Together), Representing Faith Networks on the LSC VCFSE alliance, and public issues officer NW England Methodist district

Resources

NHS Social Prescribing

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/personalisedcare/social-prescribing/>
<https://www.england.nhs.uk/about/equality/equality-hub/>

Gather Movement

<https://gathermovement.org/>

Places of Welcome

<https://www.placesofwelcome.org.uk/>

Community Roots HARRI Bus

<https://www.lscft.nhs.uk/communityroots/about-us/harri-bus>

VCFSE alliance for Lancashire and South Cumbria

<https://www.healthierlsc.co.uk/VCFSE>

Church Action on Poverty

<https://www.church-poverty.org.uk/>

Christians Against Poverty

<https://capuk.org/get-involved/campaign-with-us>

Convention of the North

<https://www.conventionofthenorth.org.uk/news/>

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Finance Summary for the year ending 31st December 2024

Receipts

Denominational contributions (late from 2023 and all 2024)	£45642.00
Other receipts	
Grants received towards Royal Lancs Show	£ 1750.00
Miscellaneous	£ 1854
Total Receipts	£49246.00

Expenditure

CEO Salary	£34363 *includes backdated housing allowance
HMRC	£ 8655
Pension	£ 3704
Officer's Expenses	£ 4288
Office, including insurance	£ 970
Banking costs	£ 60
Meetings, conferences, costs	£ 3916
Royal Lancs Show	£ 2693

Total Expenditure **£58649.00**

Deficit for the year **-£ 9403.00**

Account Balance **£24027.00**

Notes

Salary and PAYE costs were inflated by about £9k due to the backdated housing allowance, which more or less accounts for the deficit.

It may be time to make some adjustments to the level and distribution of denominational contributions. Contributions have been static for the seven years that I have been keeping the records indicating that contributions have not increased for a lot longer.

Jim Fisher
Treasurer

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Churches Together in Lancashire Chair & Presidents & Trustees
<https://www.ctlancashire.org.uk/whos-who/>

The Revd Dr Peter Colwell
Deputy General Secretary, CTBI
Chair

The Revd Anton Müller MA
County Ecumenical Officer
Secretary

The Rt Revd John Arnold,
(Fr Peter Hopkinson VG)
Catholic Diocese of Salford
(Trustee)

DEO Fr Paul Cannon

The Rt Revd Tom Neylon
(Canon Peter Stanley)
Archdiocese of Liverpool
Lancashire Deanery

DEO Canon Peter Stanley

The Rt Revd Paul Swarbrick
Catholic Diocese of Lancaster
(Trustee)

DEO Fr Peter Burns

Fr Jonathan Hemming
Antiochian Orthodox

DEO Fr Ciprian Bidan
(Romanian Orthodox)

The Rt Revd Philip North
Diocese of Blackburn
(Trustee)

DEO The Revd Stephen Brown

The Rt Revd Dr Jill Duff
Diocese of Blackburn

DEO The Revd Gary Lewis

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The Rt Revd Dr Joe Kennedy
Diocese of Blackburn

The Rt Revd Dr John Fenwick
Free Church of England

(Rep The Revd Tony Ford)

The Revd Phil Jump
(The Revd Brian Drury)
Northwest Baptist Association

DEO The Revd Brian Drury
(Trustee)

The Revd Dr James Tebbutt
Northwest England Methodist District
District Chair

The Revd Sharon Read
Northwest England Methodist District
Lancashire Mission Area Lead
(Trustee)

DEO The Revd Stuart Wild

The Revd Clare Downing
(The Revd Darren Holland)
United Reformed Church NW Synod

DEO The Revd Daleen Ten Cate
NW Synod Ecumenical Officer)

Major David Taylor
(Captain Tracy Collis)
Northwest Division Salvation Army

DEO Captain Tracy Collis

Roy Stephenson
Lancashire Quakers
(Trustee)

DEO Ian Marshall

Churches Together in Lancashire is an Intermediate Body of Churches Together in England. <https://cte.org.uk/>



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A prayer of commitment and unity

We as part of the whole Christian Church in Lancashire confess our faith in One God, the Father, Creator, the Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour, the Holy Spirit, guiding His Church, the Body of Christ, into all truth.

We repent of all that is wrong in our past histories and present attitudes. We rejoice in the riches of the traditions we have inherited and seek to share them more fully with one another in the unity which is the will and gift of God.

We commit ourselves to deepening our fellowship with Christ and with one another so that we may know, understand and value each other and together seek through prayer God's will for His people.

We will seek to work together in pastoral care and mission as we reach out with the love of God to the people of Lancashire.

Amen

