



Spring Mount Christian Fellowship

Report and Accounts

For the year ended

31 December 2024

Spring Mount Christian Fellowship

Year Ended 31 December 2024

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Trustees' Report for the year 01 January 2024 to 31 December 2024



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1. Reference and Administration Details

Charity Name: Spring Mount Christian Fellowship (SMCF), known as Spring Mount Church

Registered Charity Number: 1163628

Principal Address: Salthouse Pavilion,
Roose Road
Barrow-in-Furness,
Cumbria LA13 9RQ

Online: Website: www.springmount.church

Facebook: facebook.com/springmount.church

Twitter: twitter.com/springmountch

Charity Trustees who Manage the Charity (known as the Church Leadership Team):

- Tim Baalham — Communications
- Alan Docker — Pastoral
- Paul Hardingham — Finance
- Shirley Waters — Secretary, Sunday School

2. Executive Summary

2024 was a particularly challenging year for Spring Mount Church. It started as most others, but it soon became apparent that there were many challenges ahead. In July, after many years of service Jonny Harrison stepped down as the full time Pastor, member of the Leadership Team and Trustee for personal reasons. This resulted in a lot of additional responsibility for the remaining leadership, all of whom carry out their roles in a voluntary, rather than paid capacity.

The unexpected change was recognised as an opportunity to take stock and then move forward. The Leadership embarked on a revaluation of all the ways of working, structures and vision of the church. It recognises that this will be a long process which continues into 2025 and beyond. The Leadership was assisted greatly at this time by the appointment of Iain Salter prior to Jonny's resignation. Iain brings a wealth of experience in many relevant matters and calm pragmatism to the role.

The church has continued to thrive and grow. It has been particularly encouraged by the number of newcomers on a Sunday morning and by how many people have stepped into new roles and taken on more responsibility. Church continued to be blessed by the increased ethnic diversity with people joining from many different countries. These included those moving permanently to the area for work, people on short term contracts but also several refugees and asylum seekers fleeing persecution in their homelands. It was a privilege to welcome people from all over the world with God's love, despite there sometimes being language difficulties.

The focus and vision of the church remains to be outward looking towards the disadvantaged people in the local community. The work of Christians Against Poverty (CAP) (ref: 9.1) continued and evolved with the appointment of Sandra Faulds-Mariscal to CAP team. The Green Pastures house (ref: 9.2) which was set up in 2020 gave stability and a home for men who may otherwise have been homeless. There were a series of very successful Holiday Activities with Food (HAF, Ref: 9.3) during which literally hundreds of children and families were helped, fed and entertained.

Because of a shortage in the provision of church volunteers for church run activities on Walney, the church run activities were either transferred into Walney Community Trust responsibility (Ref: 9.4), or to the Salthouse Pavilion.

Throughout the changes, the leadership and the wider church recognise that they are ultimately part of a process of change and improvement for the future and believe that God will continue to show us how to achieve this.

3. Structure, Governance and Management

SMCF is an active church organisation which was founded in the early 20th century. The church was registered with the Charity Commission as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) in 2015. Church trustees are appointed by the church Leadership Team. Trustee term of service is 3 years.

SMCF is staffed primarily by volunteers from within its membership. The trustees retain overall management of all Trust affairs but delegate day to day administration to volunteer workers for areas of specific responsibility.

Jonny Harrison had been employed full time as the church pastor since 2018, however, Jonny unexpectedly resigned the position in July 2024 for personal reasons.

Donna Docker continued her part time employment leading and co-ordinating the work of Christians Against Poverty (CAP) (ref: 9.1). While retaining overall responsibility for CAP, Donna started to transition to a new role within the church in November and at the same time Sandra Faulds-Mariscal was engaged on a part time basis to train and work as a CAP Debt Coach. Wes Tudor continues to be employed as the church's youth worker. The paid part time administrator role transferred from Rebecca McIlgorm to Gill Pickup.

In July 2024 Iain Salter joined the Leadership Team (although did not take up a position as a Trustee). Iain is an experienced Christian with approximately 20 years involvement at Spring Mount Church. He brings a wealth of both spiritual and practical experience to the team, and has the benefit of having worked with the Leadership Team while overseeing the renovation work to the Pavilion.

The Leadership Team meet formally at least once a month for business and prayer. This increased in frequency following the resignation of Jonny in consideration of the many additional decisions and responsibilities shouldered by the volunteer trustees. The leaders continue to recognise a need for more prayer and therefore a significant proportion of Leadership Team business meetings have been devoted to prayer.

In the latter half of the year, the Leadership Team began a full review of the church vision and structure, decision making, policies and support as well as a review of most of its activities and means of operation. The aim was to confirm the church vision and that its activities align with the

vision, ensure appropriate leadership is in place and is properly supported, responsibilities delegated proportionately, and communications improved. Considerations have included affiliation to larger church organisations. It is recognised the review will take place over an extended period.

The Leadership Team outlines current plans, activities and concerns during Sunday services and encourages feedback, especially via the Connect Groups and the Sunday evening prayer times. The Leadership prayer times are occasionally open to the wider church as a way of seeking and sharing vision collectively.

Property title is held by the CIO.

4. Objectives and Activities

SMCF objectives are summarised in the SMCF CIO constitution as follows:

1. The advancement of the Christian faith for the benefit of the public in accordance with the SMCF Statement of Identity (attached to the Constitution as Schedule 1 "Statement of Identity")
2. Such other purposes as are exclusively charitable in accordance with the laws of England and Wales as the trustees may from time to time determine.

The Constitution Schedule 1 "Statement of Identity" sets out SMCF's concerns, principles, beliefs, practices and membership. Associated appendices include the SMCF Mission Statement, Statement of Doctrine and an accompanying statement of Privileges and Responsibilities of being Part of a Local Church, all broadly as published in past Trustees Reports.

The Constitution Schedule 1 summarises SMCF's primary concern as follows:

'For children, young people, men and women of all ages that they may know that salvation through Christ can transform lives wherever they are lived out including home, school, work and leisure. To that end, SMCF's ultimate aims are that they will come to faith in Christ by whatever means and will continually grow as disciples of Jesus Christ, whether or not they remain with Spring Mount'

SMCF's Mission Statement (why SMCF exists) is presented in the Constitution Schedule 1 as follows:

Our Mission: "To reach, teach, grow and send"

- Reach others for Christ
- Teach others about Christ
- Grow in Christ
- Send for Christ

SMCF's vision (what will SMCF look like) is currently as follows:

- For three worshipping communities, all benefiting from mutual support under the SMCF umbrella.
- For discipleship (individual and corporate) for SMCF members to grow in faith and service, developing people's gifts.

SMCF's strategy (how SMCF will get there) is currently as follows:

- *"Don't just come to church, be the church"*
To encourage all regular SMCF worshippers to participate in different activities and to serve the needs of the church and wider community. To find and then fulfil their role in the Body of Christ (the church).
- *Mentoring and Support*
Encourage all regular SMCF worshippers to be within a partnership of two or three people to pray and mentor each other or be a member of a small group or Connect Group.
Support was put in place for the Connect Group Leaders.
- *Develop Salthouse Pavilion*
Continue the refurbishment of the Salthouse Pavilion to maximise the potential use. To expand the work of SMCF into this community in Barrow, such that more people may experience the love of God and be helped into a faith in Christ. *Builders' work to bring the ground floor of the Annex into use was completed.*
- *Develop Work on Walney*
To develop the worshipping community on Walney, in conjunction with other aspects of church life already happening in the Walney building, to "strengthen the stakes".
Changes to the church work on Walney are outlined later in this report including transferring some responsibilities to Walney Community Trust.
- *Develop Options for Abbey Road Building*
The lessors of the Abbey Road building advised in the later part of the year that they were not renewing the lease. *Alternatives are being sought.*
- *"People, People, People"*
The priority remains a concern for all people which has helped keep the church's focus on its core objectives to help and serve people in the church and wider community. In particular, the church feels that it should concentrate its work amongst people experiencing greatest need and hardship thus following the example of Jesus.

SMCF's vision and strategy are live items which are expected to develop over time. Impetus was added to this process during 2024 following the resignation of Jonny.

Activities undertaken to support SMCF's objectives are described in the following section.

5. Achievements and Performance

The following sections give a more detailed report of the activities of Spring Mount Church and a brief summary of how these link to the general mission objectives are *highlighted in red text*.

Quotes from activity leaders are in *blue text*.

5.1 General Activities

5.1.1 Weekly Sunday Services

The principal expressions of the church's community are the weekly services of worship.

The mornings cater for all ages, including Sunday School groups, a youth church and a crèche for children. The morning services were a mixture of sung worship, communion and a sermon which usually formed part of a larger sermon series. Tea and coffee were served after the service. Teams of individuals served in various capacities to ensure the smooth running of the service and its activities. The Leadership Team played a more visible part in these morning services during the second half of the year, especially during the serving of communion.

The evening service is a less formal setting with an emphasis on corporate prayer. The Leadership Team led the meetings in the second half of the year before asking the Prayer Ministry lead to take responsibility.

Spring Mount Church believes in the importance of regular services both for the worship of God and the benefit of the individual.

5.1.2 Prayer Meetings

In addition to the Sunday evening prayer focus, there was a weekly Tuesday night prayer meeting with a focus on Christian activity outside Spring Mount, including the persecuted church using material from Open Doors (ref: 9.8).

Sandra Faulds-Mariscal was responsible for the "Prayer Team" who met prior to the morning service and then minister to those wishing to receive prayer support during and after the service. This Team is carefully chosen, vetted, and trained in how to pray for people sensitively and sympathetically, always in pairs.

The administration of the Prayer Network allowed prayer requests to be circulated rapidly to those who have committed to pray for issues and situations as they arise. This was carried out confidentially to ensure all GDPR and confidentiality requirements were fully met.

5.1.3 Connect and Other Small Groups

The Leadership Team continued to encourage participation in a Connect Group as a means of support, prayer and Bible study. They were held on different days and at different times to cater for as many people as possible. For example, one of these groups was aimed to appeal to people in their 20s and 30s, one was held during the day for ladies and another group was established for young parents. Each group is encouraged to follow on from the Sunday morning sermon to provide continuity and an opportunity to discuss the points raised in a safe, small group setting. It is also a forum for sharing and discussing the vision and opportunities in the church. It is the Leadership Team's desire to see as many people from within the fellowship as possible linked to a Connect Group.

Paul and Alison Hardingham were given the responsibility of supporting the connect group leaders. They arranged regular meetings and communications as a way of ensuring mutual support and communication from the Leadership Team, through the connect groups to the wider church. This was a step in the part of strengthening the support structures within the church.

The group of Filipino Christians, led by Gerald Ybosa continued to meet as a connect group attracting large numbers of people from the Filipino community. This was brought under the umbrella of support offered by Paul and Alison to the other groups.

The Book Club met on a Friday afternoon remotely via Zoom to review a Christian book. They read a chapter each week and then undertook an online discussion of the issues raised as well as praying together and encouraging one another.

5.1.4 Children's Work

A toddler group met every Wednesday led by Shirley Waters and volunteers. A different toddler group also met on Tuesday and Thursdays at Walney. In May 2024 responsibility for this was transferred formally to the Walney Community Trust. Both groups attract many parents, carers, and children from diverse backgrounds across the community. The groups provide safe environments for parents and small children to chat and play. Shirley says:



"Every Wednesday morning, during term time, we run a toddler group from 9.30-11.00. The first hour is free play for the children with plenty of different toys for them to play with. During the morning there are drinks and biscuits available for all. At about 10.30 the children then get further snacks, usually comprising of grapes, cheese, some sort of crisp and toast. We then end the time with some singing and the children have instruments to play with, finally ending with "sleeping bunnies" which the children love singing.

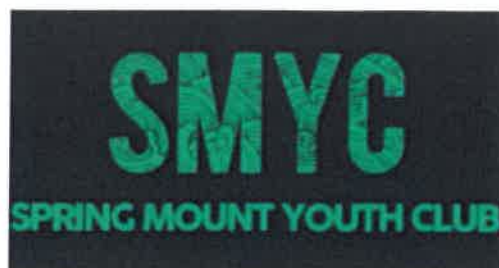
At Easter, apart from an Easter egg, the children are given a small booklet on the true Easter story. At Christmas they are given a book on the true meaning of Christmas, and when they leave to go to nursery they are given a Bible for toddlers.

All the children appear to enjoy their time at toddlers, as it is sometimes hard to get them to leave!!!"

Sunday School met every Sunday during the main morning service in which children from the age of three to eleven were taught about stories from the Bible in a fun and interesting way. It was encouraging to see new people stepping into the roles of teaching the children. Due to the number of children this is organised into different classes for different ages. They performed a very successful Nativity service in December.

5.1.5 Youth Work

In November 2022 SMCF appointed Wes Tudor as a Youth Worker. He is employed to work with the youth and coordinate the work with the help of volunteers. During 2024 the youth work grew into new areas and the numbers of young people attending increased. Other volunteers from within SMCF also helped with running various youth clubs. Wes says:



"This past year we have run several different safe spaces for kids and young people to connect and learn about faith, good morals and what it means to connect with each other. We have supplied connection groups and opportunities such as school lunch club drop ins, church drop-ins, youth band, Youth Church, Youth Bible study, one to one mentoring and The Big One (trip to Keswick)

We're slowly rebuilding the clubs with a more Christian ethos and focus. We're also building relationships with year groups moving on (year 11' school leavers and year 6 moving up to secondary school). The young people are learning more about what it means to love one another, which has given them confidence to invite friends of friends to come along to these events.

Throughout all these events, we have reached over 120 kids from year group 3 all the way to year 11. Many of which are now becoming increasingly confident, and asking questions to better understand their faith, praying for each other, praying within a group setting and reading from their Bibles/church Bibles, even memorising scripture. We've had one of Spring Mount's young people be baptised and become a great leader and encourager towards the other young people. That has been a huge blessing as they are stepping out in their faith. Overall, the kids and youth groups are increasing in numbers attending, depths of relationships with each other and understanding the God who loves them."

5.1.6 Seniors



A monthly meeting for more senior folk known as SMILE provided a tea, entertainment, and devotional time. It attracted people from the church and the wider community and helped to build relationships with senior folk and tackle the problem of loneliness and isolation within this age group. This was run by volunteers headed up by Sue Durham. Sue says:

"We are a group that meet once a month at Spring Mount Church. We are open to all but usually have more senior people coming. There is a varied programme followed by a delicious afternoon tea.

The programme for 2024 included talks by the Rev Clive Duxbury on his time as a Prison Chaplain, and an interesting talk and photos on the life of Beatrix Potter and a talk and photos of Old Barrow. The group was also entertained by a Ukulele group, a beautiful flower demonstration and Greengate Junior Voice Choir who were lots of fun and even had us joining in some songs. We had two trips during 2024, a coach trip to Boundary Mill at Colne, Lancashire and a lovely lunch at Barrow Golf Club.

Everyone enjoys coming and meeting up, chatting having a lovely afternoon in a warm, friendly, loving environment."

5.2 Other Regular Events

5.2.1 Men's Ministry



A regular men's social meeting continued to provide a social setting for the men of the church and to bring friends. It provided different cuisine themed from different parts of the world.

In November approximately 25 men attended the two-day Excel Men's conference at Life Church in Bradford meeting with Christians from across the country for teaching and worship. This regular event on the church calendar provided encouragement and helped build bonds and friendships

amongst the men who attended.

5.2.2 Ladies' Ministry

In March Spring Mount held its annual Ladies "Flourish" conference. It was led by Helen Bailie on the theme of "Best to Invest".

Approximately 120 ladies from across the area and further afield met together across a whole day of teaching, worship, prayer and ministry.



A series of regular bring and share meals exclusively for ladies were held throughout the year. This provided an opportunity for socialising, support and to invite friends into the church.

A ladies' Bible Study continued every fortnight for women to pray and read the Bible together.

5.2.3 Spring Mount in Stitches

The sewing group called "Spring Mount in Stitches" met throughout 2024 allowing ladies to be creative and socialise on a Wednesday night. It was encouraging that some ladies who had not previously attended church started attending the main services on a Sunday morning.



5.2.4 Ad Hoc Events

The church held another very successful international food and dancing event to celebrate the great cultural diversity within the church. People brought representative food from their own nationality and dressed in their national costumes. Christian music from various cultures was played and people enjoyed dancing and celebrating together. Over 15 different nationalities were represented.

In May, a social event, "Picnic at the Pav" was held during a Sunday afternoon to celebrate Pentecost. People brought food and there was a time of worship.

In June and December, there were Baptism services at which a total of eight people made a public declaration of faith in Jesus Christ and were baptised.

During 2024 there were two weddings at the Pavilion. David Mansergh and Suzanne Robinson were married in August, and John Quayle and Alison Gill were married in November.

The Pavilion was also hired to external groups including a group of recovering addicts for regular meetings. It was also used as a polling station. The local MP also held their surgery in the building.

All the regular and ad hoc events described in 5.1 and 5.2 succeeded in reaching and teaching people about Christ and helped many within the church to grow in their faith and serve their community.

5.3 Community Involvement

5.3.1. Emergency Support

In the winter months, Spring Mount provided daily warm spaces as part of a national initiative to help the most vulnerable people with the “cost of living crisis”. Both Salthouse Pavilion and the Walney buildings were open for several hours per day allowing those who wanted to come in and take advantage of the warmth as well as a warm welcome.



Following on from the successful partnership between SMCF, Walney Community Trust and the local council during the Covid Pandemic, Barrow Borough Council continued to ask Shirley Waters to head up the distribution of a special hardship grant. This allowed for the purchase and distribution of emergency items such as white goods and furniture for people in need across the Barrow area. The people were referred by Social Services, the council and local schools. Approximately 300 different households were helped. They were also given vouchers for the Barrow Foodbank and a one-off top up for their electricity or gas meters as appropriate. This council initiative was to help some of the most vulnerable with the cost-of-living crisis. It was also an opportunity to come alongside people and offer longer term help and advice by signposting them to our life skills and money courses. Spring Mount continued to administer funds for the Lancashire and South Cumbria NHS Foundation Trust. The bus travels around to local communities to promote health and wellbeing (including mental health).

The council funded life skills course is to equip people with the skills needed to help them in life, i.e. Money Budgeting, shopping on a budget and getting the best deals, cooking on a budget etc.

It includes making meals together from scratch and making healthy choices. The cooking weeks people get to cook on site together, preparing the food, chopping vegetables etc. and using fresh ingredients. The meal is then eaten together, and the remainder is boxed up for the people to take home for more immediate food for themselves and their family, or to freeze for their future use.

The poverty relief work was further enhanced by grants from Acts435 (ref: 9.14).

This practical show of Christian love in the local community's time of need was a key element of Spring Mount's vision to share God's love to everyone, especially the most disadvantaged and in need. The connections made with people and the links made to agencies and bodies within the town are a good base from which to build further practical ministries in the future. We are privileged to have been recognised by Barrow Borough Council as a partner organisation to distribute their hardship funds.

5.3.2 Walney Worshipping Community.

Walney Community Trust (WCT) (Ref: 9.4) continues to form a backbone to the local community on Walney. SMCF had historically funded utility supplies to the Walney building, however, in order to facilitate WCT access to funding for improved energy efficiency, SMCF handed responsibility for the

utility accounts to WCT. Difficulties in the supply of church volunteers resulted in the popular church run toddler group being transferred to WCT responsibility and for similar reasons the church run Monday community meal was transferred to the Salthouse Pavilion which also was closer to where most people accessing the meal were living.

Spring Mount Church continues to maintain a positive relationship with the Trust and its board and is supportive of the work it carries out on the island.

5.3.3 Holiday Activity and Food (HAF Ref: 9.3)

During all the school holidays Spring Mount provided free activity sessions for young children and their parents and carers. Over 1,000 children were provided with a hot meal and took part in the crafts and fun activities provided. This was all provided with the support of Barrow Borough Council as part of the government's initiative to provide an alternative to free school meals for those who need it during the school holidays. It is recognised that when such provision is no longer available to those most vulnerable children, they often end up going without a hot meal.

The council grants only provided funding for HAF sessions in the main school holidays. The church felt that it provided such a deep community need that additional sessions were provided in the February, May and October half terms and were funded wholly by the church.

The sessions were provided by over 20 Spring Mount volunteers. Shirley says:

"Three times a year we run children's activities funded by HAF – Holiday Activity and Food. Our activities are open to children of all ages as we also fund those who do not come under the criteria for the HAF grant. At these activities we get an average of 100 children per session, together with adults. The activities are run at Easter, Summer (August) and Winter (December). During other school holidays, May and October, we run craft café, which is run the same as the HAF activities but funded by ourselves.

At all these activities we have a large bouncy castle (assault course), a circus lady, who shows the children many different skills, which the children love trying to do themselves. We also have craft tables with many different and varied crafts, and some days we have a visit from the library who bring various interactive activities for the children to play with. Children of all ages are catered for as we also have toys for very young children. Children under 12 need to be accompanied by an adult who is responsible for them. During the day drinks are provided for everyone, together with plenty of fruit, including apples, bananas and grapes. At lunch time we provide a hot healthy meal, followed by a pudding.

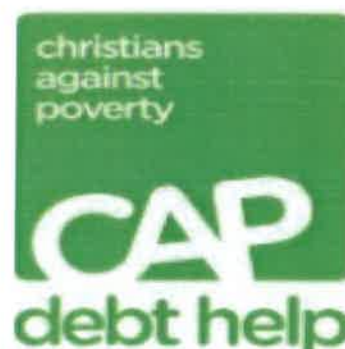
The children, and parents, leave thanking us for a great time. One girl left a message saying "the best day ever". The children go home tired but very happy, and we have been told that their child/children have slept better at night. Others have stated how much the children look forward to coming and press their parent/carer if they can come back again. It is also a good time for adults to get out and mix with other adults, which helps their mental well-being."

5.3.4 Christians Against Poverty (CAP)

CAP Debt Centre

Spring Mount ran a local debt centre (established in November 2016) for CAP (ref: 9.1) with Donna Docker employed as the centre manager.

In November, Donna began the move to a different role within the church. She maintained some CAP work in the transitional period whilst Sandra Faulds-Mariscal undertook training to become a CAP Debt Coach. Sandra was employed to carry out 15 hours work, and her employment started in December.



The CAP engagement model is that people can refer to the service through the central administration in Bradford and then a debt coach contacts them locally. Over a series of appointments, the coach collects and then sends detailed financial information for assessment at the central Bradford CAP office. The client is then presented with the most appropriate options to help them manage their finances to go debt free.

Throughout the process, the coach provides a sympathetic, Christian non-judgemental approach and ideally a “befriender” from within the church is also introduced to provide the client with an additional point of contact and relationship. The multi-award-winning CAP philosophy aims to provide people who are often completely burdened by debt and its associated problems with a wholistic solution including offering to pray with clients if they wish. Donna says:

“During 2024 we saw 27 new households whilst also working with many existing clients

Of these clients, 7 households are now debt free already with a further 11 debt free through insolvency. Sadly, 3 clients stopped engaging with us before they were able to complete the process.

Many clients are working well on debt repayment plans, and it was encouraging that one client finally went debt free after completing their 7-year repayment plan.

Unfortunately, we had several bookings last summer that didn't follow through with appointments. We also had an unusual 2-month period (August and September) of receiving no bookings at all which left October and November without any new clients. This turned out to be fortuitous in terms of extra work that was required for futureproofing and planning, taking on another worker in Sandra, and seeing several complex cases moved forward to now being debt free.

Happily, 7 of the debt free people this year are recovering addicts, who can now start afresh debt free as well as drug and alcohol free.

In the last year a total of 20 households went debt free, this includes 21 adults and 27 children affected.

In total now, over the last 9 years we have seen 130 households go debt free, this includes 142 adults and 129 children, which is 271 people affected positively!

Church giving has enabled food and fuel support to be given this year. We have also accessed £2,500 of funding for food and fuel support for our clients as well as white goods and furniture for those in need. We continue to be able to provide three lots of fuel vouchers from the national fuel bank for our clients who request it and this has greatly benefitted many of them this year.”

The work of CAP formed a key part of the strategy to prioritise the needs of people, especially those experiencing greatest need and hardship. A significant number of individuals and households have been helped practically by this work and through that have also found a spiritual home in SMCF and seen positive, transformational changes to their lives.

5.3.5 Housing Support

Spring Mount's vision is to provide safe, affordable, quality housing for those most in need.

In 2020 we acquired a two-bedroom property in partnership with Green Pastures (ref: 9.2) in the Salthouse area very close to the Pavilion. The running and maintenance of it is the responsibility of Spring Mount.

The house provides emergency and short-term housing for two residents who agree to access support available through the church. This includes volunteering under supervision and accessing a variety of activities.

To consolidate and expand the church's vision for housing, it took on a formal responsibility in 2022 to manage two additional properties which continued into 2024. They are owned by two different members of the church who share the vision to provide for those in need of an affordable home. Spring Mount co-ordinates the tenants who are people the church is closely associated with. It takes a fair rent and provides a quality home. A formal agreement with the property owners outlining responsibility for maintenance and reimbursement has been agreed with each owner.

The church administrator continued to have responsibility for the management of the paperwork required for this ministry. This included submitting claims for housing benefits and other official documentation for Green Pastures.

It is anticipated these houses will allow people experiencing short-medium term need for housing to be housed and integrated into activities in the church to be supported and helped to put their lives back on track. They form a key part of the strategy to meet people's practical needs within the community. The Leadership Team continued to explore how to expand this ministry further in the future.

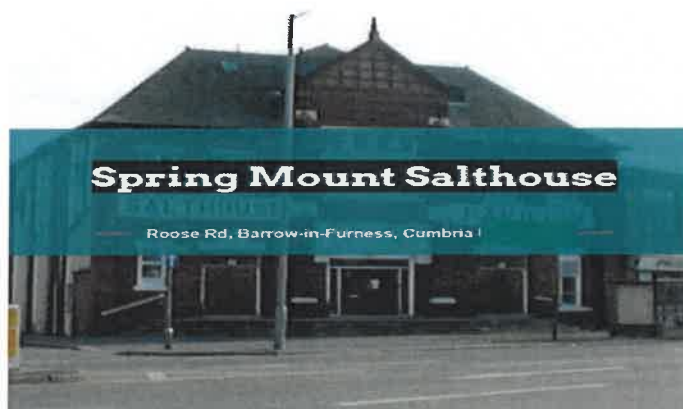
5.3.6 Foodbank

SMCF continues to support the Barrow Foodbank (ref: 9.5).

5.4 Buildings

5.4.1 Salthouse Pavilion

In February 2015 Spring Mount purchased Salthouse Pavilion as a long-term solution to the lack of space in Abbey Road and as part of a strategy to grow the church including reaching into a new community. After four years of development the permanent move into the building took place in 2019.



Although the bulk of the renovation work has been completed to allow for church services and activities to take place, there remain several areas of the building which still require development and improvement.

Work was started on the downstairs of the annex to provide additional small rooms with a completely independent entrance. The builder's work was completed in 2024 and the ground floor just requires final decoration before coming into full use in 2025. These rooms are designed for flexible uses, from a youth room to provide more Sunday School space, to a prayer room or small meeting room. The annex will allow small scale meetings or one to one appointments without the need to access the whole building. This will be a valuable new facility.

5.4.2 Abbey Road

Following transfer of church activities from the Abbey Road site to the Salthouse Pavilion, the building has been let to a national firm of funeral directors. However, the lessors advised in the later part of the year that they were not renewing the lease. The property remains a valuable asset and alternative uses were sought.



5.5 Media

The website www.springmount.church was developed and maintained by Naomi Chad. It provides sophisticated content to showcase and advertise the work of the church. All activities are listed and described together with links to newsletters, videos, and articles. All services and sermons are available to download or watch via podcast. Links are available to contact the church leadership team. There are links to the church Facebook, Twitter and Instagram accounts. An email account is given to the leadership team and other key church workers to send and receive church related email.

The pandemic led to a rapid shift towards new ways of connecting with church via online media. These continued to be offered after physical meeting became possible again as a permanent change of behaviour. The Sunday morning services were broadcast live via YouTube, Facebook and then the recorded service could also be accessed via the church website afterwards. The recorded service was also distributed via other digital formats to those who could not access the service via online formats. We have found that we have connected with people who would not have otherwise attended the church physically. A church playlist of regular and new worship songs is available to help people worship at home and familiarise themselves with the music sung at church on a Sunday morning. There are now groups which meet exclusively online which gives people who cannot attend in person the option of still being a part of a group.

5.6 External Prayer and Financial Support

UGANDA - Various fund-raising events and initiatives took place throughout the year for Blessed Hill school and orphanage in Kampala (Ref: 9.6) including the scheme for people to buy bricks for £1 each to help finance a new building project at the school. However, the situation on the

ground changed and the decision was made for church to cease being a channel for donations to Blessed Hill.

ROMANIA - The usual appeal for shoeboxes (filled with gifts for children) in the run-up to Christmas saw approximately 150 given by members of SMCF. In previous years the shoeboxes had been collected and transported to Romania through Boxes of Hope, Cumbria, however the charity is no longer operating. In 2024 the shoebox collection and transportation was conducted personally by Alan and Hilly Docker in collaboration with Nicu and the Romanian Charity People to People with whom they have very close personal ties and were the recipients of the shoeboxes from Boxes of Hope Cumbria. These shoeboxes were distributed to children in both Romania and Ukraine.

PERSECUTED CHURCH - SMCF continued to support the persecuted church through the charity "Open Doors" (ref: 9.8).

LIFECENTRE SALFORD - SMCF continued regular financial support to Salford's Lifecentre Church's Youth Worker project. This is seen as a token of gratitude for Lifecentre's support to Spring Mount in previous years and a tangible demonstration of standing alongside a church with similar objectives to Spring Mount (Ref: 9.9).

OTHER - SMCF continued to support Capernwray (local Bible College) (Ref: 9.10) and Dan Randal working for HOPE Together (Ref: 9.11). Dan spent his teenage years at Spring Mount growing in the Christian faith.

6. Risk

6.1 Insurance

Insurance has been reviewed. Insurance includes public and employer's liability for all church activities including the housing project.

The Missing Document Insurance policy purchased during the acquisition of the Pavilion was for a one-off premium and remains in force with no need for renewal.

Landlord's property insurance has been renewed to cover risks associated with letting out the Abbey Road building.

The copyright licenses have been reviewed and renewed.

6.2 Policies

All policies are maintained and reviewed annually including the following.

- Child Protection Policy. Spring Mount is a member of ThirtyOne-eight (formally Churches Child Protection Advisory Service). Membership of this enables access to consultancy, training, DBS checks and a 24-hour helpline.
- Vulnerable Adults Policy.
- Health and Safety Policy.

- Data Protection Policy to ensure all data held and shared complies with General Data Protection Regulations.
- Equality and Diversity Policy.
- Social Media Policy.

6.3 Safeguarding

Phil and Marie Last acted as Safeguarding leads for the church to coordinate safeguarding policy and to act as a point of contact for the reporting of any concerns. Tim and Isabela Baalham acted as Deputy Safeguarding leads to assist in this role.

6.4 Buildings (including Security)

The Health and Safety File compiled during the Salthouse Pavilion refurbishment works is maintained as a live file in compliance with the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015.

The asbestos survey undertaken in 2015 provides the basis for an on-going asbestos register to manage remaining asbestos. No alterations have been required to the asbestos register.

The Pavilion alarms (fire and intruder) are actively managed and maintained.

6.5 Planned Maintenance

Appliances and equipment (including fire extinguishers) have been serviced and maintained as appropriate.

Portable Electrical Appliance testing (PAT) is undertaken by SMCF members who have been trained to undertake the testing.

6.6 Financial

See Section 7 Financial Review below for comment on loan liabilities.

7. Financial Review

7.1 Policy

All regular income is by way of voluntary gifts and donations.

The Trustees appreciate the government's Gift Aid scheme and encourages gifts to be made using this means. Gift Aid claims to HMRC are made on an annual basis. The return to in-person meetings following the Covid-19 pandemic restrictions has resulted in an increase of cash gifts and this has in turn facilitated a gift aid top top-up using the government's Gift Aid on Small Donations Scheme (GASDS).

Gift income is used for general running expenses, the Salthouse Pavilion refurbishment project, and donations which are made to Christian UK organisations who work both locally and abroad, based on perceived need, in accordance with SMCF's objectives.

No new loans were taken out during 2024. Repayment of the secured loan (Methodist Chapel Aid Ltd) continued through monthly repayments, all in accordance with the conditions of the loan.

Donations from Keswick2Barrow Committee are appreciated. £2,200 was received from the May 2024 walk which was allocated to SMCF's social action activities.

Grant income was appreciated from grant making bodies as follows and used as described elsewhere in this report:

- Holiday Activities with Food (HAF) (Westmorland and Furness Council)
- Life Skills and Community HAF (Westmorland and Furness Council)
- Warm Hub (Westmorland and Furness Council)
- Wellbeing, including Christmas Hampers (Westmorland and Furness Council)
- Poverty Relief (Acts435)
- Harri Bus (NHS Lancashire and South Cumbria, Westmorland and Furness Council)

SMCF continues to meet all on-going financial commitments as a going concern.

7.2 Independent Examination

SMCF's accounts were subject to Independent Examination. Building on experience gained during previous examinations (which were first conducted for the year 2007 to 2008), a local firm of Chartered Accountants with experience in the charity sector (R F Miller & Co) undertook the Examination. The Examination was successfully concluded and found the accounts to be compliant with regulatory requirements.

7.3 Bankers

SMCF continues to use Barclays Bank PLC. The local Barclays branch closed in 2024, however, counter services continue to be accessed via local Post Offices and the local Barclays pop-up desk.

8. Declaration

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees report above.

Signed for on behalf of the SMCF Trustees:

Signature:
Full name:	Tim Baalham
Position:	Trustee
Date:

9. Appendix: Charities with Links to Spring Mount

9.1 Christians Against Poverty (CAP) is a nationally recognised charity started in Bradford in the 1990s which seeks to help people in poverty by giving debt advice to clients referred to them. It seeks to address the root causes of poverty and provide practical financial advice and help to those in need. It provides help to all who request it irrespective of their faith, however, CAP is a Christian charity which seeks to ultimately assist with a holistic solution to a person's problems.

The debt manager sets up appointments to meet with potential clients and together with a "befriender" will seek to build a trusting relationship with the client. The details of the client's financial situation are then passed to experts at CAP central office in Bradford who will identify a strategy to assist the client to become debt free. On subsequent visits they will pass on that plan and, if the client accepts it, CAP will support the client in following that new path. The befriender is there as an on-going moral support for the client throughout the whole process to financial independence. This model has been successfully used for over 20 years throughout the UK by CAP.

9.2 Green Pastures is a national Christian social enterprise that provides homes for the homeless and those in most need. The successful model adopted by Green Pastures is that they purchase a suitable property, in consultation with the partner church and provide the financial resources needed. The partner church then manages the day to day running and maintenance of the property, renting it exclusively to homeless people or those in real need of short term accommodation. The church administers the rent collection and deals with the local authorities or other agencies. This pays the lease of the property to Green Pastures. The tenant is required to engage in activity through the church each week as part of their agreement. In the case of SMCF, this will be through taking CAP courses, volunteering and being mentored. This supervised activity allows the individual to get the help they need, turn their life around and find community within the wider church.

9.3 Holiday Activities with Food (HAF) is government initiative started in October 2021 which aims to tackle the problem of social isolation and poor nutrition amongst the most vulnerable children in society. The government recognised that children in receipt of free school meals often have no access to a hot meal during the school holidays as well as being less likely to engage in out of school social activities. The HAF programme provides £200 million per year in funding to local authorities to assist with this by running clubs and activities through local charities and other providers.

9.4 Walney Community Trust (WCT) has close ties to SMCF. It is led by Jeff Chadd (also a member of SMCF) with the vision of serving the community of Walney. It employs community and youth workers to provide youth clubs, courses and community activities throughout the week. Whilst independent organisations, the WCT links with SMCF activities such that both charities can benefit from each other. Some of the trustees for the charity are also a part of Spring Mount Church.

9.5 Barrow Foodbank is operated by the local churches to respond to and provide emergency food parcels to those in desperate need. It forms part of a national network of foodbanks linked to the Trussell Trust.

9.6 Blessed Hill Children's Centre is a Christian based organisation which runs an orphanage and school in Kampala, Uganda. Close ties have been built up and maintained between it and Spring Mount Church. Regular support is provided through a £6/month scheme (commenced in 2011) which provides enough money to feed all the children at Blessed Hill every day. The scheme has continued through most of the current year with regular gifts to support the school/orphanage. Fund raising events for the Uganda projects included a garden party at the home of Alan and Hilly Docker in Barrow.

9.7 Acts435 is a giving website that allows people to give money directly to others. The charity runs through Acts435 Advocates from a network of church and local charities. The Advocate posts requests directly onto the Acts435 website for people in their community who are in need. 100% of what is donated to the request goes directly to those in need.

9.8 Open Doors International is an organisation serving and raising awareness of the persecuted church across the world. It seeks to help Christians on the ground in these countries as well as mobilising the UK church to support and pray for Christians under religious persecution. Spring Mount Church supported their regular initiatives and encouraged regular prayer meetings for them.

9.9 Lifecentre, Salford is part of Langworthy community church, a small church plant on an estate with great social challenges. As a church they model a community-based approach and Spring Mount has benefitted greatly from their advice and example as we have tried to work in our similar communities.

9.10 Capernwray is a bible college based near Carnforth. SMCF has benefited in previous years from college staff speaking at SMCF and from bible course at the college.

9.11 HOPE Together seeks to empower the global church and local leaders to make Jesus known in word and action.

Independent Examiner's Report

To the Trustees of

Spring Mount Christian Fellowship

I report on the accounts of Spring Mount Christian Fellowship for the year ended 31 December 2024 which are set out on pages 22 to 23.

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

Basis of independent examiner's report

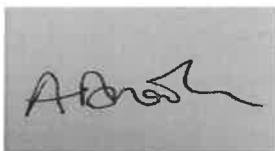
My examination was carried out in accordance with the general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or 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

The Charity's gross income exceeded £250,000 in the previous year, however this has reduced within the current reporting year. I am qualified to undertake the examination by being a qualified member of ACCA.

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 Acthave 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.



Anita Brook

R F Miller & Co

Doubletree Court

10A Cavendish Street

Ulverston

Cumbria LA12 7AD

Spring Mount Christian Fellowship

Statement of financial activities

for the year ended 31 December 2024

	Restricted Funds 2024		Unrestricted Funds 2024		Total Funds 2024	Total Funds 2023	
	£	£	£	£		£	£
Incoming resources							
Voluntary income							
Grants and Donations	42,137		9,000		51,137	280,387	
Offerings	-		127,106		127,106	148,936	
Specified gifts	-		5,026		5,026	8,299	
Housing Project	-		-		-	-	
Auxiliaries	-		200		200	900	
Misc	-		5,904		5,904	4,830	
		42,137		147,236	189,373		443,352
Activities for generating funds							
Rentals	-		23,510		23,510	26,342	
Events	-		-		-	-	
		-		23,510	23,510		26,342
Investment income							
Interest received	-		1,248		1,248	496	
		-		1,248	1,248		496
		42,137		171,994	214,131		470,190
Resources expended							
Governance costs							
Professional fees	-		1,453		1,453	1,299	
		-		1,453	1,453		1,299
Other resources expended							
Rates & water	-		595		595	4,435	
Heat & Light	1,000		3,422		4,422	8,123	
Telephone	-		562		562	462	
Insurance	-		2,758		2,758	2,534	
Speaker's expenses & gifts	-		1,290		1,290	1,190	
Sunday School	-		49		49	140	
Printing, Postage, Stationery & Website costs	-		916		916	1,050	
Training & Courses	-		420		420	139	
Catering	-		1,915		1,915	3,193	
Freedom in Christ	-		105		105	180	
Personnel related costs	17,578		74,426		92,004	87,035	
Support gifts	3,307		17,747		21,054	262,246	
Support grants	41,322		-		41,322	-	
Event Costs	-		-		-	30	
Bank Charges	-		104		104	351	
Consumables	-		505		505	800	
Miscellaneous	-		702		702	13,333	
Depreciation	-		16,392		16,392	14,626	
Housing Project Costs	-		1,423		1,423	191	
Pavillion costs	-		35,551		35,551	4,018	
Interest on loans	-		3,336		3,336	3,415	
(Profit)/Loss on disposal of assets	-		-		-	405	
		63,207		162,218	225,425		407,895
		63,207		163,670	226,878		409,194
Excess of expenditure over income		(21,070)		8,323	(12,747)		60,995
Balance brought forward from previous year		21,070		108,688	129,758		68,763
Balance at end of year		-		117,012	117,012		129,758

Spring Mount Christian Fellowship
for the year ended 31 December 2024

Balance Sheet

at 31 December 2024

	Restricted Funds 2024		Unrestricted Funds 2024		Total Funds 2024		Total Funds 2023	
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Fixed assets								
Property		-		1,581,060		1,581,060		1,581,060
Fixtures & Fittings		-		17,785		17,785		16,437
Appliances		-		1,427		1,427		1,781
Projectors		-		2,534		2,534		5,068
Computer Equipment		-		984		984		1,721
Audio Equipment		-		5,716		5,716		10,609
Total fixed assets		-		1,609,507		1,609,507		1,616,675
Current assets								
Debtors		-		-		-		-
Prepayments		-		1,661		1,661		1,680
VAT		-		-		-		-
Other Assets								
Gift Aid	-	-	11,801	-	11,801	-	12,570	-
GASD3	-	-	1,125	-	1,125	-	1,125	-
		-		12,926		12,926		13,695
Investments		-		-		-		-
Cash at bank								
Savings account		-		77,227		77,227		73,347
Current account		-		11,261		11,261		34,908
Total current assets		-		103,075		103,075		123,629
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year								
Loans		-		13,749		13,749		13,749
Accruals		-		660		660		601
PAYE		-		805		805		1,895
Pension		-		196		196		363
Creditors		-		51		51		-
Net current assets		-		1,697,121		1,697,121		1,723,696
Creditors: amounts falling over within one year								
Loans		-		38,640		38,640		52,468
Net assets		-		1,658,481		1,658,481		1,671,228
Represented by								
Funds of the charity								
Unrestricted funds			1,650,158		1,650,158		1,594,467	
Restricted funds	21,070				21,070		15,766	

Add: Net assets (first completion of balance sheet)

Add	Excess of expenditure over income for the year	(21,070)	8,323	(12,747)	60,995
Total funds as at 31 December 2024		- 0	1,658,481	1,658,481	1,671,228

I approve the financial information.

I acknowledge my responsibility for the financial information, including the appropriateness of the accounting basis as set out and for providing R F Miller & Co with all the information and explanations necessary for its completion.

The financial information was approved on

Signed _____