

ANNUAL REPORT

1st JANUARY 2023 – 31st DECEMBER 2023

OVERVIEW

The Trustees of Shropshire Hope (SH) present this report summarising activities undertaken as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) during the period 1st January to 31st December 2023.

Minutes and Agreed Action Points from meetings of the Organising Team are available for inspection together with further information on finances, although a Statement of Income & Expenditure is provided in Appendix 1.

LEGAL STATUS

On 2nd November 2015 SH was entered into the Register of Charities – number 1164220 – following successful submission of a charitable application.

The principal purpose of the CIO is the advancement of the Christian faith throughout Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin. The CIO may also advance education and relieve poverty and sickness in such other parts of the United Kingdom and/or other parts of the world as the Trustees may from time to time think fit.

A copy of the Constitution is available on request or may be viewed or downloaded from the SH website.

The Trustees term of office will be reviewed in January 2025. The existing Trustees are listed below and their specific roles:

Name	Specific Roles
Pauline Dorothy Mack	Chair
Leslie James Burke	Telford Christians Together Link
Douglas Mark Savill	Worship
Geoffrey Nankivell (Retired October 2024)	NorthWest Shropshire Co-ordinator
Dave Mathias (Appointed October 2024)	Shrewsbury Co-ordinator

The planning and facilitating of activities during this period was supplemented by additional members of an Organising Team, members of which currently include the Trustees plus:

- Andy Ackroyd: Rural Dean for Shrewsbury and Wrekin CofE Deanery
- Chris Densham: Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin Mission Enabler (Retired 31 August 2023)
- Bernard Langford (Treasurer): who is a deacon at the Telford Elim Community Church (Retired 31 August 2023)
- David Matthias: Lead Elder of Barnabas Community Church, Shrewsbury
- Jane Newey (Secretary): Pray for Schools England Co-ordinator
- Sarah Kaul: Leader of The Lighthouse Church, Telford and Telford Food Pantry (Appointed May 2024)

SH is supported by a variety of external advisers representing Christian denominations involved in the county. These include both Anglican Bishops in Shropshire together with senior representatives from

Baptist, Methodist, Roman Catholic and United Reformed churches. We value their wisdom, encouragement and support, both practical and financial, to accomplish our mission.

ACTIVITIES DURING THE YEAR

OBJECTIVES

The SH Organising Team set out the following objectives for 2023:

- In this first year after the post Covid rest year we restarted the annual Prayer Breakfast, this met our aim to develop Christian Prayer and Mission across Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin – we focussed on further developing the annual Prayer Breakfast into a morning conference introducing original thinking on the opportunities and challenges facing the UK Church today
- Support and practically assist wherever possible other prayer initiatives within the county including Thy Kingdom Come.
- Provide a spiritual leadership covering to the development of the Beautiful Gate prayer community at Halfway House on the Wrekin.

ACHIEVEMENTS

Prayer Initiatives

In 2019, Shropshire helped link Shropshire with the national 'thykingdomcome' initiative – 'Thykingdomcomeshropshire.' That year a relay of teams, prayer walked right around the Shropshire Way – called 'Shropshire Way Pilgrimage.' It was a huge undertaking but well supported and helped forge new working relationships between a number of those who took part. As part of this a prayer gathering was held on top of the Wrekin Hill in Telford which gives a commanding view of most of the county.

This pilgrimage sought to establish God's plan for Shropshire. An answer to those prayers was the opportunity to bring Halfway House, an iconic venue on the Wrekin into Christian ownership. Yellow Ribbon Community Chaplaincy, a charity set up to support and improve opportunities for those at risk of offending was well placed to access Community Ownership Funding and made a successful bid to purchase this asset.

This now seeks to develop as a hub for county wide prayer initiatives.

Shropshire Hope Prayer Breakfast 2023

Our annual event was held at Bayston Hill Church of England building, Shrewsbury on Saturday 22nd April 2023 with keynote speaker, Bishop Mike Royal, General Secretary Churches Together in England. The theme was, 'Sharing the Opportunities and challenges facing the UK church.' The event was attended by 78 individuals.

Bishop Mike set the scene initially by reflecting on “Where we are?” and “Where we are going next? In 2023, we were reeling from the pandemic and its impact on people’s wellbeing, mental health and social anxiety. There is a weariness in volunteers. The challenges faced by the church include pastoral care and the disproportionate impact of the cost-of-living crisis on the poor.

As the General Secretary of Churches Together in England, Mike shared a particular focus on an ecumenism which renews local churches to look after one another in a deeper way, that is locking and interlocking. For instance, many churches do not have a fulltime minister. There is also a new generation of ecumenism engaging with the issues of young people, climate change, street pastors and the root causes of poverty.

This was followed by a very helpful Q&A session when a panel, in response to the questions asked, were able to unpack points from Bishop Mike’s talk.

Two Kingdom initiatives in Shropshire were shared. Firstly, Sarah and Rick Kaul presented the significant impact of the Food Pantry in Ketley. They had several thousand people registered resulting with many connections with local people that have led to a growth in many new Christians now attending the Lighthouse church. Pauline Mack from Yellow Ribbon Community Chaplaincy also shared their vision to purchase the iconic Halfway House on the Wrekin. This would become a substantial expansion in scope to reach out to young people and vulnerable groups as well as the public through the café. It would also become a prayer and worship base.

Then other new initiatives in the county known to those attending were placed onto a map of the county. After this a wonderful opportunity to pray for one another provided much encouragement for all there.

A decision by the SH Team was taken to make this event one where no charge was levied with donations requested to cover costs publicised. This Prayer Breakfast incurred costs of £458.86 and Donations of £145 were received leaving a deficit of £313.86.

All the 2023 objectives were achieved.

SAFEGUARDING

In response to the heightened need to put in place strong safeguarding arrangements for events. we will only choose venues that already have effective arrangements in place so that Shropshire Hope activities can come under the hosting venue’s insurance. In future, Shropshire Hope will work towards exploring coming under Telford Christians Together arrangements.

RISK MANAGEMENT

A summary of our Risk Management procedures and policies is provided in Appendix 2.

Copies of these documents plus the Privacy Statement & GDPR compliance are available if required on the Shropshire Hope website.

FUTURE PLANS

In order to develop our vision for 2024/5, a prayer and vision evening was held on 23 August. The following were prioritised for 2024/5:

- Work with Catalyst Youth Trust to help facilitate a Christian Youth Leaders Prayer Breakfast for leaders in February 2025, as a way of sharing the 24-7 youth prayer vision for Shropshire.
- Plan and organise a 2024 SH Conference on Saturday 20 July with keynote speaker, Rachel Jordan-Wolf. The focus to be on 'Creating Disciple Making Communities'
- Start to consider ways we can support Christian leaders in the spheres, such as business and NHS
- Reflect on the centrality of prayer to Christian community and how we could assist in enabling growth and greater participation in the prophetic and emerging houses of prayer and new worshipping communities in Shropshire and the borders
- Liaise with and support other prayer and/or mission initiatives within the county including Thy Kingdom Come.
- Continue to liaise with the county Denominational Leaders.
- Continue to update the website and encourage churches and other Christian ministries to use it as resource to publicise events.
- Publicise national HOPE Together initiatives and resources through the SH Mailing list, as well as local events.

CONCLUSIONS

The Trustees of Shropshire Hope would like to thank all those who have helped achieve our aim of *"...bringing HOPE to the people of Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin"* during this year. We especially thank the Non-Trustee members of the Organising Team for their contribution and support as well as the Denominational Leaders of the county.

We are grateful to God for His faithfulness and blessing on our activities and look forward to being involved in the further expansion of His Kingdom in the future.

We believe we have undertaken all our legal and statutory responsibilities.

On behalf of the Trustees: 24 October 2024

P D Mack

Pauline Mack
Chair of Trustees

Jane Newey

Jane Newey
Secretary

Appendix 1

STATEMENT OF INCOME & EXPENDITURE

Accounting Period: 1st January 2023 to 31st December 2023

<u>Income</u>			
	£	£	£
Prayer Breakfast donations for event 22 April 2023		145	
TOTAL INCOME			145
<u>Expenditure</u>			
- Food costs	208.86		
<u>Speakers Fees & Travel</u>			
- Mike Royal	250.00		
<u>Printing & Publicity</u>			
- Website domain renewal	9.54		
<u>Banking costs</u>			
Bank Charges	60.40		
TOTAL EXPENDITURE			528.40
DEFICIT for year			383.80

Balance Sheet

Current Assets:	2023	2022
Cash at Bank	£508.88	£892.68
Current Liabilities:		
Creditors	£0.00	£0.00
Net Assets – Unrestricted Funds	£508.88	£892.68

The charitable company is entitled to exemption from audit under Section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 for the year ended 31st December 2023. The Trustees have not required the charitable company to obtain an audit of its financial statements for the year ended 31st December 2023 in accordance with Section 476 of the Companies Act 2006.

The Trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for:

- a. ensuring that the charitable company keeps accounting records that comply with Sections 386 and 387 of the Companies Act 2006 and
- b. preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company as at the end of each financial year and of its surplus or deficit for each financial year in accordance with the requirements of Sections 394 and 395 and which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 relating to financial statements, so far as applicable to the charitable company.

Approved by the Board of Trustees and signed on its behalf on 24 October 2024

P D Mack

Pauline Mack
Chair of Trustees

24 October 2024

Jane Newey

Jane Newey
Secretary

Appendix 2

RISK MANAGEMENT

The Trustees believe that all necessary steps have been taken to mitigate risks that could be foreseen, in particular:

Child & Vulnerable Adult Protection

All of the Trustees and members of the Organising Team have undertaken Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) checks and are able to work with children, young people and vulnerable adults. However it would be highly unlikely for anyone acting on behalf of the CIO – Trustees, Organising Team members or volunteers, to be in situations where direct supervision of vulnerable persons would occur.

Privacy Statement and GDPR Compliance

We work closely with the national charity, HOPE Together. As such we follow the national guidelines laid out by them with regard to their Privacy Statement and GDPR compliance. The national HOPE Together Privacy Policy can be found at: www.hopetogether.org.uk/User/PrivacyPolicy.aspx

This is reviewed and updated on a regular basis by them.

Financial Reserves Policy

At this time the Trustees have determined that there is no need to maintain a specific financial reserve. It is our normal policy that all activities undertaken should be self-funded although this may change in the future. We have a number of supporters who would be prepared to underwrite specific activities if required.

Investment Policy

The Trustees have determined that in view of the above there is no requirement to have an Investment Policy for the following reasons:

- All activities are self-funded and would not take place unless sufficient funds were in hand or underwritten in advance
- We do not employ any members of staff so no salaries are at risk
- We do not rent or own property so we have no capital or other associated expenditure

Conflict of Interest Policy

In accordance with the Constitution of the CIO, all Trustees must declare any interest, financial or otherwise, in connection with a purchase, sale or the leasing of property and/or the purchase or leasing of any goods or services that the CIO is considering. Trustees must also declare any interest of an associated person with whom they are connected.

This does not preclude a Trustee or associated person from being paid for the provision of goods or services, but they must abstain from all discussions regarding such transactions which must be recorded in the CIO's Minute Book.

Payments are not made to any Trustee as a result of them acting as a Trustee of the CIO.

Managing Volunteers Policy

The CIO has three primary volunteer roles:

- **Ambassador:** represents the vision of Shropshire Hope to external organisations such as the media; local authorities and other public bodies, charities, businesses and organisations
- **Advocate:** promotes Shropshire Hope in their local church, mobilising support for our activities and encouraging church leaders to engage with the CIO in developing local mission initiatives
- **Associate:** individuals with skills in finance and fundraising; database management; literature design; presenting (e.g. using PowerPoint etc.); PA & AV; video making; website design or are available to help with setting up venues; providing transportation and generally helping with other logistical items

Where appropriate suitable instruction and guidance will be provided to ensure the persons concerned act in the best interests of the CIO.

Complaints Policy

Any complaints received in respect of the CIO will be referred initially to the Organising Team; we will endeavour to resolve the matter within appropriate timescales.

- Verbal complaints made in person or received via telephone conversation will normally be acknowledged by an Organising Team member who in conjunction with the Chair of Trustees will respond accordingly. The complainant may be asked to provide a written summary of the issues involved if further investigation is deemed necessary
- Written complaints will normally be reviewed by the Chair of Trustees and where appropriate referred to the Organising Team for review and resolution

Should resolution not be possible, we will invite the complainant to refer the matter to a member of our Council of Reference for review.

In all cases our desire will be to resolve any issues justly and fairly and as speedily as possible.