

Trustees' Annual Report for the period							
From		Period start date		To		Period end date	
1 st	January	2020		31 st	December	2020	

Section A Reference and administration details

Charity name

Francis Road Evangelical Church

Other names charity is known by

ASHFORD COMMUNITY CHURCH

Registered charity number (if any)

1165151

Charity's principal address

Francis Road

ASHFORD

Kent

Postcode TN23 7UR

Names of the charity trustees who manage the charity

	Trustee name	Office (if any)	Dates acted if not for whole year	Name of person (or body) entitled to appoint trustee (if any)
1	Gill Adsett			
2	Ernest Bate			
3	Owen Darling	Chair		
4	Geoff Gould			
5	Alasdair Hope			
6	Maureen Hulbert	Treasurer		
7	James Shaw-Cotterill		1 st January 2020 to March 10 th 2020	

Names of the trustees for the charity, if any, (for example, any custodian trustees)

Name	Dates acted if not for whole year

Names and addresses of advisers (Optional information)

Type of adviser	Name	Address
Accountant	Roger Hughes	Wayside, Forge Hill, ALDINGTON, Kent TN25 7DT
Solicitor		Hallett & Co, 11 Bank Street, ASHFORD, Kent TN23 1DA

Name of chief executive or names of senior staff members (Optional information)

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Section B Structure, governance and management

Description of the charity's trusts

Type of governing document (eg. trust deed, constitution)	Constitution.
How the charity is constituted (eg. trust, association, company)	Charitable Incorporated Organisation.
Trustee selection methods (eg. appointed by, elected by)	Appointed by existing trustees.

Additional governance issues (Optional information)

You **may choose** to include additional information, where relevant, about:

- policies and procedures adopted for the induction and training of trustees;
- the charity's organisational structure and any wider network with which the charity works;
- relationship with any related parties;
- trustees' consideration of major risks and the system and procedures to manage them.

<p>We are: members of the Evangelical Alliance.</p> <p>registered with the Information Commissioners Office (reg. no. ZA400221) https://ico.org.uk</p> <p>Members of Partnership UK https://partnershipuk.org</p> <p>Subscribers to Stewardship Consultancy help line. https://www.stewardship.org.uk/about-us/about-us-1</p> <p>Our Pastor is a member of the Ashford Pastors' Fellowship which forms the leadership core of 'Churches Together in Ashford.'</p>

Summary of the objects of the charity set out in its governing document

Our object is to advance the Christian Faith for the public benefit in accordance with our statement of beliefs (see section F of this report).

Summary of the main activities undertaken for the public benefit in relation to these objects (include within this section the statutory declaration that trustees have had regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit)

The trustees have been conscious of the need to carry out our purposes for the public benefit.

The Christian faith provides guidelines for living that are good for the individual and for society in general. A living Faith in Jesus Christ provides the strength and peace of mind to follow these guidelines and live a useful life. ('His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness...' 2 Peter ch. 1 v 3a).

So, before the Covid-19 pandemic we held weekly services in church, classes for children and small group discussions that aimed to inform **anyone** interested about God and Jesus Christ, explaining the relevance of the Bible and Christian Faith for everyday life and into eternity.

As we want to carry out Jesus' command to 'Love your neighbour as yourself' (Matthew ch. 19 v 19b) we looked at the needs of our neighbourhood and tried to help address them by providing facilities for local community activities to meet, and a good kitchen for a lunch club for homeless and vulnerable people.

Since March most of the activities based in the buildings have had to stop. We have worked within the constraints imposed by the pandemic. We have remained open where possible and have developed and advertised an online ministry to provide Spiritual encouragement to any who wish to tune in.

We support Missionary and Relief Organisations financially and give one-off gifts to individuals in need.

Details of the year's activities are recorded in Section D.

Additional details of objectives and activities (Optional information)

You **may choose** to include further statements, where relevant, about:

- policy on grant-making;
- policy programme related investment;
- contribution made by volunteers.

Most of the activities held in our church use volunteers. The exceptions are the local and national polls that are run by Ashford Borough Council employees and the leader of the WW group.

Summary of the main achievements of the charity during the year

This year has been dominated by the Covid-19 pandemic.

In March a 'Coronavirus Management Strategy Group,' made up of trustees and others with specialist knowledge, was set up with the objectives of:

- a) Safeguarding all in the Fellowship
- b) Minimising the impact of the virus on the Church
- c) Maintaining as many of the activities as possible
- d) Ensuring good communication within the Church Family
- e) Facilitating a return to normal Church life as early as is safely possible.

A 'Delivery Team' of three met regularly online to respond rapidly to changing circumstances. A Covid Risk Assessment was carried out and regularly reviewed to ensure compliance with government guidelines and legislation.

Much time and considerable resources were put into developing an online 'church', making use of Microsoft Teams, which allowed individual members of the church family to see and talk to each other. Also, when possible, services have been put on our YouTube channel - either livestreamed as they occur, or as recordings.

We are grateful to God for providing us with one member who is skilled and trained in Crisis Management and another whom is an IT expert for an international Missionary Organisation. Their skills and hard work helped to ensure that our Church Family has stayed together throughout the pandemic.

The buildings have been kept in good repair. The mezzanine has been completed and is awaiting decoration. The toilets, corridor and minor hall have been decorated.

Our Pastor, Peter Hobbs, has worked hard through the year to encourage us with the great promises of God found in the Bible and to challenge us, with God's Spirit within us, to live useful and effective lives.

He has become expert in the use of online methods and resources, and we expect we will continue to use these once the pandemic is over.

Here are extracts from Peter's review of the year given on Sunday 27th December 2020:

REVIEW OF THE YEAR 2020

A YEAR OF LOSS OR A YEAR OF GAIN?

Many of us – me included – have found this year a truly awful one on a personal level.

It has been a time of loss personally.

It also has been a time of loss for the church.

Due to this pandemic we have entered an unprecedented time where we:

- *Have had periods when we have not been able to meet together in our church building*
- *Have not been allowed to sing together*
- *Have not been allowed to hug each other*
- *Have not been allowed to eat together or even to talk together*
- *Have not been able to celebrate Easter, Harvest or Christmas together in our normal way*

BUT this has also been a year of unprecedented GAIN for the church and let us focus on this and not on the loss. For we have been promised that:

*“we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose”
(Romans 8:28)*

This has been a year where we have:

- *Seen more clearly than ever that we, and not the building, are the church*
- *Set up TEAMS so that we can continue to meet together and worship together*
- *Established LiveStream that has reached out way beyond our local community*
- *Been reminded that we all have testimonies and answers to prayer that we can share*
- *Established structures within the church that will stand us in good stead for the future*

So, let us review a year that has been VERY different from those that have gone before.

Let us thank God for all His mercies and blessings on us this year.

Let us learn from God so that 2021 will be a better year than this one.

“PASSING THE BATON”

A YEAR OF VISION – “2020 VISION”

From the start of the year the Vision of the church was to equip others for ministry – to look for our successors in every area – to train them up and to release them – to “pass the baton”.

This is not just a vision for me and the other elders. This is a vision for us

all – who are you “training up” to first assist and then take over from you in the ministry you are fulfilling in the church?

This Vision 2020 is still very much on our hearts but has been very much affected by the most profound event of 2020...

2020 – A YEAR OF LOCKDOWN

Towards the end of 2019 reports began to come out of China of a new Coronavirus – soon designated COVID-19. It appeared in the UK in the first couple of months of 2020 and then overwhelmed us like a tidal wave in March.

On the 18th March the decision was made to shut the church building – prior to the Government ordering all church buildings to shut. The VERY NEXT DAY – the 19th March – Chris and Vince began to work on the technology needed to enable us to continue church services through LiveStreaming – first on Facebook Live, then on YouTube – and the setting up of the TEAMS networking of virtual meeting rooms.

We do not know whether this pandemic has its origin in man, in an attack of the devil or the judgement of God. But this we DO know that God will use ALL things for good. And technology and approaches to church that we had never even considered before have been developed and have become the norm.

The church has been seen, more than ever, to be a people and not a building. The church has been challenged to grow strong in the Lord. The technology has enabled us to reach out with the Good News WAY BEYOND Ashford – even to the Ukraine!

We thank God for blessing us with Chris and Vince and all the technology which has meant that this year – 2020 – has seen us launch into a new era of church work.

LOOKING BACK AND REMEMBERING

Every week, as a church family, we take Communion. When we eat the bread we remember that Jesus gave His body for us. When we take the “cup” we remember that Jesus shed His blood for us. We will never forget His substitutionary death because the symbols always remind us. Remembering is SO important.

In the Old Testament book of Joshua the true story is told that, after 40 years of wandering in the desert, the Israelites finally crossed over the River Jordan and into the “Promised Land” (Joshua 3). A miracle was wrought and as the priests stood in the middle of the Jordan River, bearing the Ark of the Covenant, the waters piled up and the people crossed over on the dried up river bed. When all had crossed over the waters flowed again. They were then told to take 12 stones from that river bed (one for each tribe of Israel) and to built a memorial from them

that all would see as they passed by from that time onwards – the need to remember and never forget was established (Joshua 4: 1-7).

THE CHURCH WEEK

We begin by thanking God that we have a church building – that we want to be used more and more and more for His glory. Yet, this year has shown us, as never before, that WE are the church and we have continued to be together as church whether in the building or online. And we thank God for the regular meetings that are held amongst us and remember them now -

- **SUNDAY:**

- *GROWING IN WORSHIP AND NUMBERS – I have been part of this church family for 3 ¼ years now. When I first came we regularly got about 25 people attending. This year we were often seeing 50 or more people on a Sunday. At the height of LiveStreaming in July we were getting up to 90 people “tuning in” to us – some as far away as the Ukraine and EVEN Scotland!!! We thank God for this. Numbers are not as important as spirituality – but they’re a good indicator of God’s blessing on our fellowship.*
- *TEACHING SERIES – this year God has led us on a clear journey in our teaching and learning that we must not forget. We focused first on “2020 Vision” and saw through the lives of Elijah and Elisha, Moses and Joshua, Aaron and Hur, the principle of “passing the baton” and of upholding one another in prayer. At the beginning of February we began our “All-In” series on the “10 Commandments”. And then we were hit by “Lockdown”. LiveStream focused initially on recognising that church could never be the same again – we needed to start to develop new “norms” of church life which are more about going OUT to the community around us rather than hoping that they will come in to us. During the month of August the focus was less on teaching series and more on family sharing and interaction – we had two separate services at this time – one in the building led by Dudley and one on TEAMS led by Owen and Ernest. In September these two services came back together again and our focus was on “The Journey of Life” – how God is with us through times of trouble and how He has plans for us to bless us. And so we have come to the Christmas period where our focus has been on “The God of Hope”.*
- *In the midst of this teaching, we have been blessed by guest speakers throughout the year. Vince and Chris*

launched their speaking ministry in the church. Dudley has shown us how gifted he is in speaking. And we have had visitors to talk to us – Geoff Gould on two occasions and Alistair Hornal on one.

➤ **SUNDAY CLUB**

• **MONDAY:**

➤ *U3A – used the church for play reading in January and February.*

• **TUESDAY:**

➤ *OPEN ARMS – continued to serve the homeless and vulnerable from our church building till the Lockdown in late March. Since that time they have made the decision to focus on getting a town centre venue which they can use on a daily basis and it is with great sadness that we have therefore had to say “goodbye” to them.*

➤ *WORSHIP PRACTICE – this not only continues but has, this year, been opened up to any from the church (and beyond) who wish to come along on a Tuesday night and sing and worship.*

• **WEDNESDAY:**

➤ *WEIGHT WATCHERS – are now firmly established in our church building – which is a constant witness to them. For a while this was meeting on a Monday as well. There have been two changes of leadership this year but, as a group, they continue to value using our building.*

➤ *HOUSEGROUPS and monthly SUPERGROUP – these have continued throughout the year and remain a fundamental way in which we maintain care and teaching during the week – though since March they have been meeting via TEAMS.*

• **THURSDAY:**

➤ *EKC – What a blessing it is to continue having this wonderful choir practising in our building on a Thursday! It has been tough for them since the Lockdown but they have remained committed to using our church building.*

➤ *SIGNING GROUP – Alasdair was able to start yet another course.*

- **FRIDAY:**

- *REVIVAL PRAYER – I remain in awe of the tremendous turn out week-after-week to this prayer meeting – proof of our belief in the power of prayer to bring revival to this area. This has moved seamlessly to a weekly online prayer time.*
- *BIBLE STUDY – Until March this continued to meet in Church House. Then, from the end of March, it became a weekly online meeting. For a few weeks in September till the second Lockdown we were meeting at Maureen’s home but are now back on TEAMS again.*
- *U3A – have been singing in our church on a Friday afternoon until the pandemic caused them to cease.*
- *LADIES’ FELLOWSHIP – well...I can’t say too much about this...as I am not allowed to attend! But, I understand that it continues to be a time of great joy and challenge for our ladies – and has also seamlessly moved to an online platform.*
- *PIZZA AND HOT TOPICS – Since March this has moved to being online and every week. It is one of my highlights – and takes the regular form of sharing how we are all doing, taking part in a Bible quiz to learn more of the Word and looking at current issues.*
- *FYN – Sue Parker joined us and was beginning to establish her identity in the group but since March this group has stopped – and we have the opportunity to rethink the whole structure of the group before we restart it at the earliest opportunity.*

2020 – A TIME OF MANY EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

Now let us go through the year chronologically to remember all the tremendous things that have taken place:

01/01/20: NEW YEAR’S DAY WALK AND MEAL AT CLOKE FARM
31 PEOPLE ATTENDED!

05/01/20: 2020 VISION REVEALED

12/01/20: DEDICATION OF ASER CURT (MIRELA’S SON)

12/01/20: SUNDAY CLUB PARTY

17/01/20: PANTOMIME FOR “PIZZA AND HOT TOPICS”

19/01/20: MANUELA JOINS THE LEADERSHIP OF SUNDAY CLUB

19/01/20: VINCE PREACHES FOR THE FIRST TIME

19/01/20: CHURCH SAYS “GOODBYE” TO ANN TUTT

21/01/20: BAPTISM CLASS BEGINS (JULIE HORSFORD)

24/01/20: SUE PARKER STARTS ATTENDING FYN

31/01/20: “PIZZA AND HOT TOPICS” MOVE TO
AARON AND ADELE’S HOUSE

02/02/20:	NEW ALL-IN SERIES BEGINS – “THE 10 COMMANDMENTS”
02/02/20:	FELLOWSHIP MEAL IN THE CHURCH
16/02/20:	CHRIS AND HELEN HILL BROUGHT INTO ACC FAMILY
16/02/20:	CHRIS HILL PREACHES HIS FIRST SERMON AT ACC
16/02/20:	“STREET-A-WEEK” INITIATIVE STARTS
22/02/20:	DUDLEY PREACHING AT CHURCH
26/02/20:	“THE SHACK” SHOWN FOR ACC FILM CLUB
27/02/20:	ADELE AND PETER ATTEND “FREEDOM IN CHRIST – DISCIPLESHIP CHALLENGE” CONFERENCE
08/03/20:	BAPTISM OF JULIE HORSFORD
15/03/20:	VINCE PREACHES FOR THE SECOND TIME
18/03/20:	DECISION MADE TO SUSPEND CHURCH MEETINGS FOR DURATION OF CORONAVIRUS
19/03/20:	DEVELOPMENT OF CHURCH “LIVELINK” BEGINS (CHRIS AND VINCE)
22/03/20:	FIRST LIVESTREAM OF CHURCH SERVICE
25/03/20:	FIRST VIRTUAL HOUSEGROUP MEETING VIA “TEAMS”
29/03/20:	DAY OF PRAYER RE THE CORONAVIRUS
03/04/20:	FIRST VIRTUAL REVIVAL PRAYER MEETING
05/04/20:	FIRST USE OF VIDEO CLIP AND POWERPOINT IN LIVESTREAM
10/04/20:	LIVESTREAM GOOD FRIDAY SERVICE
12/04/20:	LIVESTREAM EASTER CELEBRATION
19/04/20:	FIRST LIVESTREAM ON YOUTUBE
24/04/20:	FIRST VIRTUAL “PIZZA AND HOT TOPICS”
28/04/20:	FIRST NEW LOOK NEWSLETTER VIA MAILCHIMP (AFTER 2 MONTHS OF ALMOST DAILY INFORMATION EMAILS)
29/04/20:	FIRST “SUPERGROUP WEDNESDAY” – JOINT HOUSEGROUP
14/05/20:	FIRST VIRTUAL BIBLE STUDY (“FREEDOM”)
31/05/20:	THE “ASHFORD BLESSING” INCLUDES CHRIS AND BRIAN
23/06/20:	FIRST OPENING OF CHURCH FOR INDIVIDUAL PRAYER – 3 TIMES A WEEK
29/06/20:	INSTALLATION OF VIRGINMEDIA BROADBAND
05/07/20:	TEST LIVESTREAM BROADCAST FROM CHURCH BUILDING
12/07/20:	FIRST CELEBRATION SERVICE BACK IN THE CHURCH BUILDING – WITH LIVESTREAM!
02/08/20:	SUMMER BREAKING OF BREAD – IN CHURCH (DUDLEY), ON TEAMS (OWEN AND ERNEST)
00/08/20:	PAT AND BRIAN RE-TAKE-OVER BIBLE STUDY AT THEIR HOUSE
20/09/20:	FIRST JOINT TEAMS SUNDAY SERVICE (NOT YET RETURN TO LIVESTREAM)
28/09/20:	GOODBYE TO THE RUSSO FAMILY
27/10/20:	MACMILLAN COFFEE EVENTS WEEK
01/11/20:	GEOFF GOULD AS VISITING SPEAKER
05/11/20:	LOCKDOWN 2 BEGINS – CHURCH CLOSED FOR SERVICES +

	<i>ACTIVITIES</i>
<i>08/11/20:</i>	<i>SERVICE BROADCAST FROM CHURCH FOR SECOND LOCKDOWN</i>
<i>15/11/20:</i>	<i>RESUMPTION OF LIVESTREAMING – FROM CHURCH</i>
<i>29/11/20:</i>	<i>GEOFF GOULD VISITING SPEAKER</i>
<i>06/12/20:</i>	<i>ALISTAIR HORNAL VISITING SPEAKER</i>
<i>16/12/20:</i>	<i>CAROL SINGING IN VICTORIA QUARTER</i>
<i>19/12/20:</i>	<i>CHRISTMAS TABLEAU OUTSIDE THE CHURCH</i>
<i>20/12/20:</i>	<i>ADAPTED CAROL SERVICE IN CHURCH BUILDING</i>
<i>24/12/20:</i>	<i>“MIDNIGHT FIRST COMMUNION OF CHRISTMAS” SERVICE</i>
<i>25/12/20:</i>	<i>CHRISTMAS MORNING SERVICE – MEDITATING ON THE BIRTH OF CHRIST</i>
<i>25/12/20:</i>	<i>BIRTH OF JOSHUA ISAAC HILL</i>

Section E Financial review

Brief statement of the charity’s policy on reserves

Our policy is to retain sufficient reserves:

- To ensure that the Church has sufficient funds to meet its financial commitments;
- To ensure that the Church is able to manage future unforeseen financial difficulties;
- To ensure that excessive funds are not held without any identifiable reason or for any identifiable purpose.

Details of any funds materially in deficit

Further financial review details (Optional information)

You **may choose** to include additional information, where relevant about:

- the charity’s principal sources of funds (including any fundraising);
- how expenditure has supported the key objectives of the charity;
- investment policy and objectives including any ethical investment policy adopted.

Most of our funds come from members’ donations. Gifts by bank transfer have increased. Restraints on the use of the buildings during the pandemic has meant that offerings made at church services and money from hiring the building to community groups have greatly reduced. Our regular income has covered our regular outgoings this year. Our bank balance has increased substantially. Ashford Borough Council has paid the money granted to us for the toilet refurbishment (completed in 2019) and we received two legacies from people who worshipped with us for many years.

What we believe in:

1 The one true God who lives eternally in three persons - the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

2 The love, grace and sovereignty of God in creating, sustaining, ruling, redeeming and judging the world.

3 The divine inspiration and supreme authority of the Old and New Testament Scriptures, which are the written Word of God - fully trustworthy for faith and conduct.

4 The dignity of all people, made male and female in God's image to love, be holy and care for creation, yet corrupted by sin, which incurs divine judgement.

5 The incarnation of God's eternal Son, the Lord Jesus Christ-born of the virgin Mary; truly divine and truly human, yet without sin.

6 The atoning sacrifice of Christ on the cross: dying in our place, paying the price of sin and defeating evil, so reconciling us with God.

7 The bodily resurrection of Christ, the first-fruits of our resurrection; His ascension to the Father, and His reign and mediation as the only Saviour of the world.

8 The justification of sinners solely by the grace of God and faith in Jesus Christ.

9 The ministry of God the Holy Spirit, who leads us to repentance, unites us with Christ through new birth, empowers our discipleship and enables our witness.

10 The Church, the body of Christ both local and universal, the priesthood of all believers given life by the Spirit and endowed with the Spirit's gifts to worship God and proclaim the gospel, promoting justice and love.

11 The personal and visible return of Jesus Christ to fulfill the purposes of God who will raise all people to judgement, bring eternal life to the redeemed and eternal condemnation to the lost, and establish a new heaven and new earth.

Section G

Declaration

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

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees

Signature(s)	<i>M. Hulbert</i>	<i>OHS Darling</i>
Full name(s)	<i>MAUREEN HULBERT</i>	<i>Owen Henry SULLINGTON DARLING</i>
Position (eg Secretary, Chair, etc)	<i>TREASURER</i>	<i>Chair</i>

Date

15/03/21

Ashford Community Church
Statement of Income and Expenditure
Year ended 31st December 2020

<u>By income received</u>				<u>2019</u>
Tithes and offerings	38631		38630	
Gift aid refund/Other income	7877		8758	
Rent of church facilities	2297		4389	
Donations to specific work	3210		4861	
Grant	10000			
Sundries	<u>23223</u>	<u>85239</u>	<u>138</u>	<u>56776</u>
		85239		56776
<u>Less expenditure</u>				
Salary and Expenses	26263		25712	
Printing postage and stationery	72		28	
Licence fees	344		687	
Insurance	1079		1019	
Church activities, refreshments and sundries	2334		3115	
Overseas Mission	6364		4942	
Home Mission	5300		3397	
Speakers expenses and gifts	155		1224	
Church maintenance	10192		24060	
Heat and light	<u>1931</u>	<u>54034</u>	2073	
		31205		
<u>Church House</u>				
Church house maintenance	1860		1441	
Church house utilities	1869		1845	
Church house insurance	209		299	3585
Sundries				119
Professional fees	1980		220	
Depreciation	1418	<u>7335</u>	<u>1668</u>	<u>71849</u>
<u>Excess of income over expenditure</u>		23869		-15073
<u>Other income</u> Interest received		<u>0</u>		1
		<u>23869</u>		<u>-15072</u>



Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

**Report to the trustees/
members of**

FRANCIS ROAD EVANGELICAL CHURCH

**On accounts for the year
ended**

31ST DECEMBER 2020

**Charity no
(if any)**

1165151

Set out on pages

(remember to include the page numbers of additional sheets)

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31/12/2020.

**Responsibilities and
basis of report**

As the charity trustees of the Trust, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

**Independent
examiner's statement**

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention (other than that disclosed below *) in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act or
- the accounts do not accord with the accounting records

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

* Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply.

Signed:

Date: 21/10/2021

Name: ROGER ASHLEY HUGHES

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

Address: WAYSIDE

FORGE HILL

ALDINGTON ASHFORD KENT TN25 7DT

Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight matters of concern (see CC32, Independent examination of charity accounts: directions and guidance for examiners).

Give here brief details of any items that the examiner wishes to disclose.