

Trustees' Annual Report for the period					
From	Period start date		To	Period end date	
1 st	January	2021	31 st	December	2021

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		1 st January 2021 to 15 th March 2021	
6	Maureen Hulbert	Treasurer		

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.

We are: members of the Evangelical Alliance

registered with the Information Commissioner's Office
(reg. no. ZA400221) <https://ico.org.uk>

members of Partnership UK <https://partnershipuk.org>

subscribers to Stewardship Consultancy Helpline
<https://www.stewardship.org.uk/about-us/about-us-1>

Our Pastor is a member of the Ashford Pastors' Fellowship which forms the leadership core of Churches Together in Ashford.

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).

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

We believe that 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 to live a useful life. ('His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness...' 2 Peter ch 1 v 3a).

So, although the COVID-19 pandemic has greatly limited our activities within the church buildings, we have been able to use technology to broadcast via YouTube the Good News of Jesus Christ's love - this we believe to be so essential for people in this life and also for eternity. These broadcasts are easily accessible to all, and, on several occasions, over the year, we have delivered cards to houses in the neighbouring streets advertising our services.

Our Leadership Group has ensured that government guidelines have been publicised and adhered to throughout the year. As guidelines have relaxed we have gradually begun to return to meeting in the church buildings and people's homes while still maintaining the online ministry. In September we were able to hold a Saturday afternoon of celebration in the church for people from the locality, and on the Sunday a service of remembrance for those who had suffered in the pandemic, and thanks for those who had cared for them.

We have made our buildings safe for community groups from the locality, and they are beginning to use our premises once again.

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.

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)

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 leader of the WW group, and the Ashford Borough Council employees who run national and local elections.

Section D

Achievements and performance

Summary of the main achievements of the charity during the year

The main achievement of our charity in 2021 is, with God's help, to have survived another year dominated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The church family has been kept together, encouraged, and 'fed' spiritually with the use of online technology.

We have also used this technology to reach out into the community.

Here are extracts from a review of the year given by Peter Hobbs, our Pastor, on Sunday 2nd January 2022.

REVIEW OF THE YEAR 2021

A TIME FOR EVERYTHING (ECCLESIASTES 3:1)

Who could have foreseen that, after nearly two years, our lives, our society, and our church would still be so dominated by the spectre of Coronavirus?

It has therefore been a tough time for our church (and all churches), yet it has also been a time of preparation for rebuilding. This was seen from the very start of the year in our continuing vision which was that of a "New Beginning" for our church and for our whole society and for our individual lives.

Like last year:

"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"

Yet we have seen, again like last year:

"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"

Unlike last year we have been able to celebrate Easter and Christmas together in our church building. Yes, there have been restrictions, but most of us have been able to enjoy face-to-face contact with one another again.

I believe that our church family is now in a good position to go forward and grow numerically and spiritually as we go together into the New Year of 2022.

THE CHURCH FAMILY – MEETING AND CARING

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 that we are a church family who care for each other and for those around us in the community. Oh, we are not perfect, and we regret with great sorrow that there are some who have lacked care during the year. However, through our Housegroups, through hospitality that so many of you have shown, through a structure that has continued to make sure that the most vulnerable are contacted and looked after, we have ensured that our church really is part of the family of God – that we love one another as He has loved us. This has been a year of change in the Eldership and management of the church. After a lot of heart-searching and internal struggles Alasdair and Steve both stepped down from Eldership after many years of faithful and hard-working service. At the start of December Jim began a 4 month rest from his Eldership duties. In the meantime, Trustees, Elders and Alistair Hornal worked on a strategy for a new Leadership Team made up of Elders and Deacons who can ensure the day-to-day management of the church. New Eldership recognition and Deacon elections are planned for the New Year.

We thank God for the regular meetings that are held amongst us and remember them now:

- SUNDAY:

- I have been part of this church family for 4 ¼ years now. We thank God for our Sunday services – our “showcase” of God’s love and presence within the community. Numbers of attendees have been affected by Coronavirus and since returning to services in the church building we have seen between 40 and 50 people each week meeting in the Main Hall, watching in the Rear Hall (for those who wish or need to remain socially distanced and “masked”), or joining us on YouTube and TEAMS. This reduction in numbers from pre-pandemic levels is reflected in most, if not all, of the Ashford churches. We thank God for the technology that has allowed us to maintain our worship so effectively on a Sunday.
- WORSHIP – For the first three months of the year we were unable to meet in our church building – but Chris and Peter broadcast via TEAMS from an often very cold church building to the congregation. Thanks go to STAG church and Elizabeth and Matt for enabling us to record video songs that allowed us to use music that was not limited by copyright. Once back in the church building from April we had to wear masks and sit socially distanced with doors and windows open for much of the year – with only the Worship Team allowed to sing out loud. Thank God we have been able to move on from this since September! And thank God that our worship has been able to continue throughout!
- TEACHING SERIES – January focused on “New Beginnings” as we looked forward to life after Lockdown. In February we studied the power and mercy of “God the Good Judge”. In March we were challenged to be ready for service with “Here am I, send me”. In April we learnt many lessons of God’s unlimited love for us in our study of “Ruth”. June saw us focusing on the call to “Worship” whatever the situation in our lives. In August we began a major new series looking at “Daughters of Eve” and the lessons to be learnt from women in the Bible. Our Advent series called us to be the new “Star of Bethlehem” to the world.
- Although Peter led most of this teaching, we have been blessed by many internal and outside guest speakers this year as well. Brian C has twice encouraged us to remember the “Persecuted Church”; Ernest challenged our beliefs with his look at the “Exodus”; Jim spoke to us powerfully on two occasions on his life story and the

question of "What gets you through?"; Street Pastors so moved us in May that 3 of our number – Zandra, Brian C and Peter – have joined up, been trained, and now serve on patrol with this wonderful group; Dudley inspired us on two occasions in June and October; Alistair Hornal, so helpful to our church during difficult times, spoke to us in June; Chris spoke to us three times on the subject of the "Kingdom of God"; Tim Dieppe moved us with stories from "Christian Concern" in July; Dave W spoke passionately about his work in home mission in August; Brian R made his speaking debut in September; Paul Dunning enlightened us on the work of MAF in November; and Geoff Gould spoke to us twice in that month as well. We thank God for the central place that teaching plays in the life of the church.

- SUNDAY CLUB AND CHILDREN'S WORK – In line with most churches in Ashford, the pandemic has been a time of collapse in children's work. Sunday Club has been in abeyance; "Friday Youth Night" has not re-opened. However, there are some hopeful signs. Children are being born into our fellowship. Youngsters are beginning to appear. The Middle Hall has been set up as a creche with loudspeakers allowing the service to be heard. Singing and storytelling has been taking place here too.

Resources are being given out to the children in the church to work on during the services.

- MONDAY:
 - U3A – have been using the church for play reading in October and November.
- TUESDAY:
 - OPEN ARMS – we have been really blessed to have this organisation return to us this year. Rather than a full-blown meal, their new vision has been for a more relaxed social time for those who are homeless or vulnerable.
- WEDNESDAY:
 - WEIGHT-WATCHERS – have used our building whenever lifting of restrictions has allowed.
 - HOUSEGROUPS AND MONTHLY SUPERGROUP – for much of the first half of the year these were solely online. But we have been blessed in the second half of the year in being able to hold these both on TEAMS and face-to-face in homes or in the church building.
- THURSDAY:
 - BIBLE STUDY – A committed group meet fortnightly (weekly in December) – initially online, it was a joy to get back into face-to-face discussion in people's houses.
 - 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 – returning to us in September.
 - WORSHIP PRACTICE – now on a new night – this remains open to not only the Worship Team but all who would like to come along and sing.
- FRIDAY:
 - REVIVAL PRAYER - I remain in awe of the tremendous turnout week-after-week to this prayer meeting – proof of our belief in the power of prayer to bring revival to this area. Now driven by "Prayer Points" we meet both in person (in the church or in Church House) and on TEAMS.
 - U3A – have returned to our church building for singing from September
 - 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 – It was good from the summertime (with BBQs!) to move back to face-to-face meetings. From September we have been joined by new people and are currently following the "Freedom in Christ" course called "Disciple". On

alternate Fridays we have been joining with young adults from Vineyard Church for social gatherings

- **SATURDAY:**

- It would be good here to mention that our Street Pastors have been following an intensive online and in-person training course on Saturday mornings for most of the second half of this year.

HIGHLIGHTS OF 2021

- **BIRTHS AND DEDICATIONS:** Peter became a granddad again at the end of February while Poppy was born to Fiona and Ricky in early April. Back in the church building we were able to dedicate Joshua on the 30th May and then Poppy on the 3rd October.
- Easter cards and Christmas cards were delivered to 1500 houses around our church – a witness in themselves.
- Zandra, Brian C and Peter signed up to become Street Pastors – beginning their training in June and going on their first patrols in the latter part of the year. They were formally commissioned on the 19th November.
- We were delighted by the wedding of Sarah and Matthew on the 31st July in Cambridge – Linda and Ernest could be justly proud.
- On the 4th September, after much work and preparation and delivery of 1500 invitations, the church hosted a Celebration and Remembrance afternoon to give thanks for the lifting of Lockdown restrictions and to remember those who had died and to honour those who were grieving. Bouncy castle, cream teas, many games and crafts with writing messages of remembrance and thanks on hearts filled the afternoon which was well attended.
- Once again Linda led us in our annual Macmillan Cancer Care coffee afternoon – held in the church after the morning service on the 26th September – and then the “Shoebox Appeal” in October and November.
- On the 15th December – at a time when “Plan B” restrictions had come into force, we were able to take carol singing around Victoria Quarter – an outreach that we know touched the hearts of many.

2021 – 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

- 01/01/21: ONLINE “HAPPY NEW YEAR” PRAYER AND GAMES (LED ABLY BY ELIZABETH AND SARAH)
- 03/01/21: “NEW BEGINNINGS” TEACHING SERIES BEGINS
- 05/01/21: NATIONAL LOCKDOWN LEADS TO OUR CLOSING THE CHURCH BUILDING – BUT WORSHIP CONTINUES THROUGH THE USE OF TEAMS AND THEN YOUTUBE
- 02/02/21: ELDERS’ ONLINE AWAYDAY
- 19,21/02/21: ALASDAIR AND STEVE STEP DOWN FROM ELDERSHIP – AFTER SO MANY YEARS OF FAITHFUL AND HARD-WORKING SERVICE WE THANK THEM
- 27/02/21: BIRTH OF ELOISE – PETER IS A GRANDDAD AGAIN!
- 07/03/21: RESUMPTION OF LIVESTREAM SERVICES ON A SUNDAY
- 11/03/21: START OF “COFFEE AND CHAT” ONLINE SOCIAL MEETINGS
- 20/03/21: EASTER CARDS AND INVITATIONS BEGIN TO GO OUT
- 02/04/21: CHURCH BUILDING REOPENS FOR SUNDAY SERVICES ALLOWING US TO HOLD GOOD FRIDAY AND EASTER SUNDAY SERVICES IN THE BUILDING AS WELL AS ONLINE WITH LIVESTREAM AND TEAMS
- 04/04/21: ONLINE SPRING HARVEST ATTENDED BY A FEW FROM THE CHURCH FAMILY
- 07/04/21: BIRTH OF POPPY
- 22/04/21: RESUMPTION OF WORSHIP PRACTICE IN THE CHURCH BUILDING
- 02/05/21: STREET PASTOR SERVICE
- 30/05/21: DEDICATION OF JOSHUA

19/06/21:	STREET PASTOR TRAINING COMMENCES
26/06/21:	ALISTAIR HORNAL, TRUSTEES AND ELDERS DISCUSS WAY FORWARD OF CHURCH GOVERNANCE
19/07/21:	LIFTING OF RESTRICTIONS ON CHURCH MEETINGS – ALL MEETINGS CAN NOW BE HELD IN PERSON
31/07/21:	WEDDING OF SARAH AND MATTHEW
03/08/21:	OPEN ARMS STARTS UP AGAIN
AUG 21:	SUMMER SOCIALS ON A WEDNESDAY
04/09/21:	"CELEBRATION SATURDAY" TO GIVE THANKS FOR COMING OUT OF LOCKDOWN AND TO REMEMBER THOSE WHO ARE GRIEVING. FUN AND GAMES IN THE CHURCH
05/09/21:	CELEBRATION SUNDAY TO FOLLOW ON FROM THIS
24/09/21:	"PIZZA AND HOT TOPICS" WELCOMES NEW MEMBERS AND BEGINS "DISCIPLE"
26/09/21:	MACMILLAN COFFEE APPEAL AFTER SUNDAY SERVICE
03/10/21:	DEDICATION OF POPPY
12/10/21:	"CHRISTIAN RESOURCES EXHIBITION" AT SANDOWN RACECOURSE
29/10/21:	JOINT YOUNG PERSONS' SOCIAL WITH VINEYARD BEGINS
02/11/21:	FIRST "LEADERSHIP TEAM" PLANNING MEETING
17/11/21:	ELDERS' AWAYDAY
19/11/21:	COMMISSIONING OF STREET PASTORS AT WILLESBOROUGH BAPTIST CHURCH
01/12/21:	JIM TAKES A 4 MONTH REST FROM ELDERSHIP DUTIES
02/12/21:	JULIE AND DIANA BEGIN CHURCH CHRISTMAS DECORATION
10/12/21:	DELIVERY OF CHRISTMAS CARDS BEGINS
12/12/21:	"PLAN B" BY GOVERNMENT MEANS RE-ESTABLISHMENT OF FACE COVERINGS
15/12/21:	CAROL SINGING IN VICTORIA QUARTER
19/12/21:	CAROLS BY CANDLELIGHT SERVICE
24/12/21:	MIDNIGHT "FIRST COMMUNION OF CHRISTMAS" SERVICE
25/12/21:	CHRISTMAS DAY SERVICE

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 an identifiable reason or 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 been less than our regular outgoings this year by approximately £300 per month. At this rate we will be down to our reserve amount in three years. There are signs that this trend is reversing as the COVID-19 restrictions are relaxed and more people and organisations come into the building. (The large balance we have at the moment includes a legacy which has been earmarked for projects the church family feel would be in line with the donors' wishes).

Section F Other optional information

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 a 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)	E.M. Pate	OHS Dukes
Full name(s)	ERNEST MICHAEL PATE	OWEN HENRY SHILLINGTON DARLWICH
Position (eg Secretary, Chair, etc)	Trustee	Chair Trustee
Date	29-03-2022	

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.



Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

**Report to the trustees/
members of**

Charity Name

ASHFORD COMMUNITY CHURCH

**On accounts for the year
ended**

31ST DECEMBER 2021

**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 31/12/2021~~YYY~~.

**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:

25/10/2022

Name:

ROGER ASHLEY HUGHES

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

ICPA

Address:

WAYSIDE

ALDINGTON ASHFORD KENT

TN25 7DT