

ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS OF GODALMING UNITARIANS

For the period 1st October 2021 to 30th September 2022

Overview

Although Covid has not completely gone away, over the year we have been able to restart the majority of activities at Godalming Unitarians at the chapel and within our community. Unfortunately our part-time minister, Sheena resigned in October 2021 due to health reasons. Sheena was able to resume duties for a few months taking us through the Christmas period and bowing out with a couple of superlative services in January and then returning for an emotional farewell in June. We are so incredibly grateful for all the years of service that Sheena has put into the chapel and wish her well for the future.

As the year progressed we have benefited from a variety of visiting ministers and lay leaders to deliver a regular Sunday service and are very grateful to Nicola Young for taking on the task of coordinating as well as delivering many services herself. The trustees are looking into all the options for preaching long term taking into consideration the finances of the organisation and the future costs of maintaining our wonderful historic chapel. We are grateful that the chapel members have been able to support the cost of having a minister over many years and it is only through these generous donations that this has been remotely possible - each Unitarian congregation is financially independent so we don't have access to central funds for these purposes and our other income mainly covers the costs of maintaining the buildings.

A full discussion of the financial year is included later at the end of this report.

About Godalming Unitarians CIO

Godalming Unitarians is a member-led democratic group. Our aims and purposes are to promote in Godalming and surrounding areas a free and inquiring religion in accordance with the principles of the General Assembly of Unitarian & Free Christian Churches ("the GA"). We do this through 'the worship of God and the celebration of life; the service of humanity and respect for all creation; and the upholding of the liberal Christian tradition'.

Achievements and Performance

Worship, meditation, and prayer

Worship is at the heart of any religious community and Godalming Unitarians continued to offer regular Sunday services that are inspiring, uplifting and also consoling through the good times and the bad. The trustees have continued the decision to limit our provision to three or four Sunday services each month, keeping one Sunday free. This was due to the added complexity of offering access to services via Zoom and gives us some breathing space when filling the rota from our pool of visiting preachers.

For the months from October to January, Sheena was able to conduct around two services each

month – in chapel and online. We appreciate the efforts required to provide hybrid worship in chapel whilst allowing remote participants to join via Zoom. Particular thanks to Sheena and also Rob Oulton for leading the way and more recently for all those involved in technical support of our hybrid services in particular Adam Baumberg and Paul Richards.

It has been wonderful to be able to re-open the chapel and see the majority of the congregation being comfortable to return to services in chapel. We appreciate that sometimes it is difficult for everyone to attend in person, due to Covid concerns or illness or long distances to travel. So we have continued to try to make our services available online via Zoom and this seems to be working well despite the occasional technical glitch.

As before, we have benefited from a pool of talented members and visiting speakers, including interfaith ministers and lay preachers, to lead Sunday services. Special thanks go to interfaith ministers, Edie Campbell, Lindsay Stevens and Anna Lubelska. Also thanks to our lay preachers and service leaders including Shirley Wardell and Nicola Young who have often stepped in at short notice. We value their contributions and also the work of Nicola Young, our preaching coordinator, who has ensured our preaching rota is complete.

We no longer are able to offer our own weekly meditation group (although Sheena and Rob continue to offer this online under the UK Unitarian banner). However we are now offering a “quiet time” monthly session in chapel where anyone is welcome to attend on the last Wednesday of the month and spend 45 minutes in contemplative reflection in the chapel. Thanks to our chair, Christine Martin for organizing this activity.

As has become our custom, Sheena offered two Christmas services this year: a Zoom-only Xmas Carol service and a more peaceful, contemplative hybrid service the following week also led by Sheena in the chapel. For those who do not wish to meet in person or online, we have made services available to read-through where possible.

Religious education

Due to Covid and Sheena leaving we have not been able to offer engagement groups exploring faith issues but hope these may resume at some point. We also have not been able to provide a Children’s Programme but have enjoyed contributions from the younger members of our community joining in person or via Zoom and also video clips they have produced.

In November, a remembrance service took place from the chapel. In January, Edie Campbell led a Sunday service to mark Holocaust Memorial Day focussing on the inspirational life and writings of Etty Hillesum and in September Anna Lubelska led a service on Peace Building.

Pastoral support and Rites of Passage

Our community is open to people of all faiths and none and it is worth reiterating that there is no dogma or set of beliefs required for those wishing to join or attend Godalming Unitarians.

During the year we have said goodbye to a few members or friends who have moved away from the area or left for health or personal reasons. Membership at the end of the period covered here

remains stable at 32 members. We would also like to encourage those who may be interested to join as members. Those who prefer to remain as friends or simply commit to occasional groups or activities are, of course, always welcome.

During the year there has been one same-sex wedding in the chapel and one naming ceremony, both conducted by Sheena.

The congregation's informal pastoral support network, sensitively led by Dana Daniels, and supported by Christine Hayhurst and other members of the congregation, continued its valuable work behind the scenes, enabling those unable to attend to keep in touch with chapel life.

Wider Unitarian involvement

Godalming Unitarians continues to send delegates to the annual meeting of the General Assembly, which took place in Birmingham this year.

We also maintain a presence at the annual FUSE event (the Festival of Unitarians in the South-East), and will continue to support other events.

Outreach

The monthly Community Art Café has been meeting regularly throughout the year. Thanks to Pam Dalton Williams for getting this going again.

Unfortunately, we were unable to put together a community event for the Jo Cox Great Get-Together or the Jubilee celebrations, although we were able to have a farewell lunch for Sheena at the end of June. Surrey Pride this year was hosted in Camberley and we were able to support this event in person in late August with a stand and a colourful turnout in the parade.

Our premises have historically been a well-used resource within the community for meetings of U3A groups, healers, dowsers, yoga and tai chi enthusiasts, ukulele players and neighbourhood groups. Many of these groups have been able to return to the hall after Covid restrictions have eased.

Helping others in need is a demonstration of our commitment to look beyond ourselves. For online special services we encourage participants to give directly to the charities concerned. We have continued to offer refreshments after the service, and have been collecting coffee-time donations.

We adopted "Send a Child to Hucklow" (SACH) as our Charity for 2022 as it was their 60th Anniversary and they had a special appeal to raise £60K. SACH is a charity that arranges and administers holidays at the Unitarian Holiday Centre, Great Hucklow, Derbyshire for groups of disadvantaged children. So far this calendar year we have raised over £1300 for SACH. However only about half of this fell within our accounting year.

Thanks also to Jill Durrant for keeping our social media updated.

Social activities

Our activities groups help to create community. The Sunday walking group has continued fairly regularly (depending on the weather) - generally a moderate walk with pub or picnic lunch. Thanks to Pam Dalton Williams, Steve Williams and Paul Richards for leading the walks.

The book group continued to meet regularly and discussed a wide range of novels.

Volunteers

We thank all the volunteers who work hard behind the scenes to keep chapel life going – from meeting and greeting, to providing refreshments, flowers, gardening, DIY and many other tasks. Particular thanks go to Paul Richards for taking on the management of the buildings and Rob Oulton for his help in passing this on and long service handling this task. Thanks to the premises team (Christine Hayhurst, Christine Martin and Paul Richards).

Thanks also to the trustees for their dedication and contribution to the smooth running of Godalming Unitarians in all areas of activity.

Governance

During the year, Christine Martin has continued as Chair of the trustees. We currently have just seven trustees so are keen for new members to join us to help keep everything running smoothly. We are a friendly and cohesive bunch. The normal serving period for Trustees is three years according to our constitution, and being a trustee does not need to be a particularly onerous responsibility.

FINANCIAL REVIEW 2021-2022

In the year to 30 September 2022 total receipts exceeded total payments resulting in an overall surplus of £11,475. The reasons behind this surplus are:

- Ministry costs were approximately 2/3 lower this year due to our minister, leaving in January. This is undoubtedly the reason behind the bulk of the surplus.
- Although income from donations and pledges was lower than in 2020-21, letting income was significantly higher.
- And although a considerable amount was spent on cottage maintenance and repairs, costly repairs to a chimney were postponed until the next financial year.

Most other income and expenditure items were up on the previous year, mainly because of the return to Sunday services and other activities in the chapel and the hall.

As always, we are very grateful to our members and friends for their generous support. However, I would like to insert a note of caution here. For the past few years our ability to fund a minister from donations has been decreasing. This is partly due to the fact that we went from a 50% time minister to a 60% time minister in January 2019, but it is also the case that donations have been decreasing in real terms for the past 3 years. If this chapel is to continue to thrive, it behoves us all to consider what we wish to and are able to contribute, both in monetary and non-monetary terms e.g. volunteering to greet or do refreshments or serve as a trustee.

Finally, particular thanks go to the following groups and individuals:

- David Daniels for his continuing assistance to the Treasurer.
- Adam Baumberg, Paul Richards and Christine Martin for their support with on-line and in-person banking.

- Jeff Teagle, for once again acting as our Independent Examiner.
- The Trustees of the Highgate Hill Unitarian Church Fund and the Trustees of the General Baptist Assembly for their continuing monetary support.

Administrative information

Godalming Unitarians is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation, registered by the Charity Commission with number 1166019.

GODALMING UNITARIANS
Receipts & Payments Accounts for the year ended 30 September 2022

	Notes	Restricted Funds £	Unrestricted Funds £	Total 2021-22 £	Total 2020-21 £
Receipts					
Offertory, Pledges, Donations			15,302	15,302	18,131
Gift Aid			3,371	3,371	3,958
Special Services	1	50	420	470	330
Fund Raising Activities and other restricted	2	3,461		3,461	1,150
Grants Received	3	321	253	574	1,152
Hall and Chapel Letting Income	4	30	8,222	8,252	3,701
Cottage Gross Rent			11,594	11,594	11,554
Bank Interest			317	317	31
Other receipts	5		937	937	7,022
Total Receipts		3,862	40,415	44,277	47,029
Payments					
Ministry	3	321	9,256	9,577	26,558
Visiting Preachers	1	150	712	862	604
Musicians	1	65	818	883	385
Subscriptions & donations (unrestricted)			1,548	1,548	1,665
Charitable donations and other restricted	2	3,185		3,185	1,426
Conferences & Courses			490	490	-
Post, Telephone & Stationery			215	215	357
Publicity, Publications & Periodicals			78	78	-
Insurance			1,536	1,536	1,424
Grounds Upkeep			1,650	1,650	1,172
Legal Fees/Licences			-	-	-
Professional fees			891	891	1,673
Chapel Utilities			592	592	574
Chapel Cleaning			968	968	591
Chapel Maintenance & Repairs			277	277	822
Hall Utilities			915	915	683
Hall Cleaning			1,270	1,270	808
Hall Maintenance & Repairs			1,590	1,590	1,150
Cottage Utilities			-	-	-
Cottage Letting Agent Fees			-	-	-
Cottage Maintenance & Repairs			5,981	5,981	647
Bank charges	6		142	142	
Sundry & General Administration (including bank chgs)	7		153	153	678
Total Payments		3,721	29,081	32,802	41,214
Surplus/(Deficit) for the year		141	11,334	11,475	5,816

Notes to Receipts and Payments Accounts:

- 1 Of the fees received for Special Services (weddings & namings) a proportion is set aside to pay the service leader & the musician.
£165 was received in 2020-21 all of which was paid in 2021-22.
£50 was received in 2021-22 all of which was paid in 2021-22.
- 2 The difference between *Fund Raising Activities...* and *Charitable donations...* is £276.
This represents the gift aid on *Fund Raising Activities...* that was received in 2021-22 but attributable to expenditure in 2020-21.
- 3 The £321 restricted grants received relates to ministry
- 4 The £30 restricted Hall and Chapel Letting Income is a Key deposit paid by Waverley Dowsers
- 5 This is the final insurance settlement re Covid-19.
Covers loss of earnings from financial year 2019-20 & part of 2020-21.

6 Bank charges were included in Sundry & General Admin in prior years

7 This is primarily expenditure on cleaning & kitchen supplies, with one exception: £74.93 towards the purchase of 2 new benches

GODALMING UNITARIANS
Statement of Assets and Liabilities for the year ended 30 September 2022

Cash funds:

	Restricted Funds £	Unrestricted Funds £	Total 2021-22 £	Total 2020-21 £
Cash in bank 1 October 2021	(111)	83,678	83,567	77,751
Surplus/(Deficit) this year end	141	11,334	11,475	5,816
Cash in bank 30 September 2022	30	95,012	95,042	83,567

Represented by:

			£
CAF Cash account	30	20,829	20,859
CAF Gold account		15,221	15,221
Charity Bank Deposit Account		50,938	50,938
BOOM! Credit Union Corporate Account		8,024	8,024
	30	95,012	95,042

Notes:

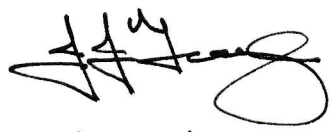
Assets retained for the charity's own use:

	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
Land and buildings - not valued	Restricted	-	-
Furniture, fixtures and fittings - not valued	Unrestricted	-	-

Liabilities:

	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
Waverley Dowsers key deposit	Restricted	30	

Independently Inspected by J J Teagle


15/04/2023