

HASTINGS UNITARIAN CHURCH
CHARITABLE INCORPORATED ORGANISATION (CIO)
TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE PERIOD
1 OCTOBER 2021 – 30 SEPTEMBER 2022

Reference and Administrative detail
Charity name and address:

Hastings Unitarian Church
South Terrace
Hastings
East Sussex
TN34 1SA

Registered charity number: 1166588

Names of Charity's Trustees:

1. Peter Sanders (Chair)
2. Francis Clark Loewes
3. Lesley Larcombe
4. Joanne Lemon
5. Campbell Purton
6. Ida Ward
7. Norman Williamson
8. Frances Williamson
9. Safar Wisby

The Trustees were appointed at the Annual General Meeting.

Names and addresses of advisers:

1. The General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches, Essex Hall, 1 – 6 Essex Street, London WC2R 3HY
2. London District & South Eastern Provincial Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches, Essex Hall, 1 – 6 Essex Street, London WC2R 3HY

Structure, Governance and Management

Description of the Charity's Trusts

Governing document: Constitution (Revised addition adopted 3 June 2018).

The Charity is constituted as a Charitable Incorporated Organization (CIO). Trustees are appointed at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) for a term of office of three years. By staggering the dates of office three trustees will resign each year but are eligible for re-election.

Following the formation of the CIO in April 2016 the first financial year was extended from April 2016 to September 2017 to fit with the Church's normal financial year of 1 October to 30 September. The first AGM was held in June 2018 however since then all further AGMs have usually taken place in March.

Summary of the main activities for the public benefit.

The Unitarian Church offers a place to meet and worship in an atmosphere of freedom. Our Unitarian movement has a long and proud history dating back to the mid-sixteenth century, however there are no dogmas or creeds to adhere to and freedom of thought and spiritual inquiry is encouraged with complete tolerance and respect for other faiths or none.

Membership is free and open to all who wish to join. Services are held every Sunday morning and subsidiary meetings may be held during the week for meditation, prayer and discussion. Other community groups and societies also hire the church eg, circle dancing and Narcotics Anonymous, for their meetings.

Much of the work of the church is undertaken on a voluntary basis by trustees and members of the congregation who receive no remuneration except for legitimate expenses.

SUMMARY OF MAIN EVENTS AND ACHIEVEMENTS OVER THE YEAR

The church continues to develop and deepen a spiritual path in community with each other; sharing our experiences and drawing inspiration from nature, art, literature, science and other faith traditions from around the world.

Towards the end of the year the church lost one of its key members. Alan Larcombe was a man whose energy and commitment helped the church enormously. Under his guidance the church embraced 'zoom' technology enabling members to see services remotely - including one from Thailand. Alan was a most popular service leader and supported many charities. He enhanced the Unitarian presence in Kent and Sussex. His loss is deeply felt.

The congregation has increased a little over the year with some younger members.

Maintenance work on the church included refurbishment of the kitchen and upper gallery, carpet cleaning. The church benefitted from a new stained glass window in memory of Mary Burbage, a much loved past member.

The church now has its own website thanks to the help of Unitarians in London & the South-East.

The church is fortunate in having as its Lay Pastor, Jennifer Sanders. She has made a significant

contribution to the Church and we are pleased that she continues her training for the ministry.

The Church is very fortunate in having among its congregation people who are willing to take on essential roles and duties, eg, lettings and treasury, without remuneration requiring much time and who work together in furtherance of the aims of the Church.

The Church is very grateful to Michael Stewart who advises the church on investments and also acts as the Church's bookkeeper. He gives his expertise and time without charge.

The Church would like to record its thanks to Pat Hitchman and Simon Edson for their good offices in maintaining the church.

The following documents, which form part of this report, are attached as annexes:

Lay Pastor's Report Annex 1

Lettings Report Annex 2

Pulpit Secretary Report Annex 3

Receipts & Payments - filed separately

Assets and Liabilities - filed separately

Independent Examiner's report -

<file:///C:/Users/Pete/Downloads/IER%20Report%20signed%20Sept%202022-1.pdf>

LAY PASTOR'S REPORT ANNEX 1

I am so incredibly blessed to have spent the last 2 ½ years leading the congregation at Hastings and there have been a few tears, especially on Sunday as I drove away. Sunday was a very special day to be

with you and I wanted to thank you so much for the flowers and the generous cheque. I will let you know in due course what I choose to spend it on.

So much has happened during this time, Covid, changing worship, hybrid services, a new website, an opening up of the gallery space, and maintenance to the building.

And through it all I have been fortunate to build relationships with you all and be part of the growth, tenacity and love between you all. You are a unique congregation, spiritually rich and have witnessed much change in the church over the years which is why I feel hopeful and confident that you will come through this next phase of the church to embrace a new chapter.

With financial security, my hope is that you will take these next few months to reassess where you are as a congregation and look at options to invest in an expanded ministry to help to grow the church.

There will always be challenges, both individually with health and family, work and relationships as well as continuing concern over the decaying beauty of our dear planet and yet this congregation is bound together by a deep spiritual love and through a commitment to continue to explore share and support each other It will remain part of the landscape on the Unitarian movement.

Change is always around the corner and the death of Alan Larcombe, Chair of the Congregational committee in August was a huge shock to all of us having welcomed him back only days before after post-op recovery.

Both the service at Hastings Crematorium and the memorial service at our church were packed, reflecting his wide variety of friendships and the respect and love we all had for him. In many ways, the church is still coming to terms with his death and the huge loss he leaves both in terms of personality and also service.

The chair of trustees is carrying a heavy load, yet the congregation is pulling together to try to fill the gaps where possible.

One may say that 2022 has been a year of 2 halves a gentle settling from the ravages of Covid and enjoyment of participatory worship to a time of loss, reflection and gratitude and with 2023 offering the potential for new ministry for Hastings Unitarian Church.

Jennifer Sanders
LETTINGS REPORT

ANNEX 2

Our church seems to be blessed with its own resilience, however that may have been achieved, it

is something we can all be grateful for, we lose members and soon after their departure new members join us. This can also be said regarding the number of people who are willing and happy to share this spiritual space with us.

Since the full impact of the pandemic seems to have passed our hirings have returned to a more normal routine, along with a few new members.

The first group to return were Narcotics Anonymous who meet every Saturday morning.

The Krishna group, who meet twice a month on Thursday evenings have also resumed their bookings.

The Class Choir have also returned on Wednesday evening.

Another regular group who appreciate our venue is the NFOP (post office pensioners), who meet most months on Thursday afternoons.

We are pleased to welcome the Hastings and Rother Interfaith Forum who rejoin us since the pandemic, on Tuesday evenings. We will also welcome Father Barry Carter for the first time on Thursday the 16th of March, he is the first hirer who has requested the use of our Zoom facilities. We have yet to fully discuss how that might be facilitated.

We have had to say goodbye to one group, the Townswomen's Guilds, who met once a month as they can no longer sustain their membership. They were the only group who required tables and chairs to be put out by our Caretaker, a service for which we didn't actually charge.

PULPIT SECRETARY'S REPORT

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ANNEX

During the last year we have had some interesting new service leaders, both live and on Zoom. Zoom has been both a benefit and a challenge, but those who have risen to the challenge have done really well coping with the technical issues Zoom brings. There have been a few hiccups but no disasters. We now have the challenge of managing without our part- time Lay Pastor, Jennifer Sanders, who did an excellent job filling the pulpit diary, bringing many new faces to our church. Unfortunately we have lost a few too.

The pulpit rota is, with one or two exceptions, full for this year. I will endeavour to follow in her footsteps and fill as many of the gaps as possible. We may have more congregational services than before but I am hoping this will lead to more members of the congregation wanting to be involved. We will be continuing with Zoom but I hope to attract pulpit leaders who will take the service live here in the church.

Alison, our new Administrator, is a real asset to all of us, especially me, sending reminder e-mails etc and I am personally very grateful to her. This is a learning curve for all of us but working together we can make zoom and the pulpit rota work.

Lesley Larcombe
DECLARATION

The Trustees declare that they have approved

The Trustees' report.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees:

Signatures: Peter Sanders

Full name: PETER CHARLES SANDERS

POSITION HELD: Chairman of Trustees

NORMAN WILLIAMSON

POSITION HELD: Trustee

Date: 16 JULY 2023

Hastings Unitarian Church CIO
Receipts and Payments Account
for the year ended 30th September 2022

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Endowment Funds	Total Funds	2021
	£	£	£	£	£
Receipts					
Collections	7,030			7,030	5,556
Gift Aid	-			-	-
Grants and other (LDPA & B&F-HF)	1,308			1,308	1,445
Use of Premises - Lettings	3,986			3,986	25
Investment Interest (M&G)	6,715			6,715	5,780
Building Fund	-			-	52
Legacy	-			-	66,477
Coffee donations for local charities	-			-	85
Sub total (gross income)	19,038	-	-	19,038	79,420
Asset and Investment Sales:					
Unit Trusts	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total Receipts	19,038	-	-	19,038	79,420
Payments					
Lay Pastor and other Pulpit Fees	9,991			9,991	8,177
Organist's fees and Organ Repairs	598			598	146
Caretaking and cleaning	1,379			1,379	753
Insurances	-			-	1,091
Lighting - Heating - Water	2,120			2,120	2,105
Repairs and Renewals	7,775	52		7,827	174
Presentation Equipment	5,241			5,241	-
Magazines and Newsletters	66			66	60
Legal Fees	105			105	-
Bank safe custody & bank fees	66			66	45
General Assembly Quota	420			420	420
Charitable donations	110			110	-
Coffee donations for local charities	-			-	182
Church Internet	317			317	286
Subscriptions	-			-	-
Music licences	172			172	165
Misc expenditure	1,010			1,010	139
Increase Petty Cash fund	40			40	-
Sub-total payments	29,409	52	-	29,461	13,743
Asset and Investment Purchases:					
TAM MB legacy fund (March 2022)	60,000			60,000	-
Total payments	89,409	52	-	89,461	13,743
Net of receipts/(payments)	(70,371)	(52)	0	(70,423)	65,677
Cash funds last period end	9,988	66,529	0	76,517	10,840
Reclassification per legacy	66,477	(66,477)			
Cash funds this year end	6,094	0	0	6,094	76,517

Hastings Unitarian Church CIO
Assets and Liabilities as at 30th September 2022

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Endowment Funds	Total	2021
Cash funds:					
Bank current account	6,094	-	-	6,094	76,517
Cash in hand	250	-	-	250	210
Total cash funds	6,344	-	-	6,344	76,727
Investment assets:					
M&G general fund	116,610			116,610	130,684
M&G AH legacy fund (February 2020) - Ministerial Support		21,075		21,075	22,444
TAM MB legacy fund (March 2022)	55,308			55,308	-
Total investment funds	171,918	21,075	-	192,993	153,128
Assets retained for the charity's own use:					
Church building	845,488	-	-	845,488	845,488
Pipe organ	319,216	-	-	319,216	319,216
Total assets retained	1,164,704	-	-	1,164,704	1,164,704
TOTAL ASSETS	1,342,966	21,075	-	1,364,041	1,394,559

Notes:

*The Church building and Organ are shown at insurance valuation.
Investment assets are shown at valuations received.*

Approved by the Trustees on the 16/7/2023, and signed on their behalf by



Chair and Trustee



Trustee