

# Countess Free Church, Ely

(A Charitable Incorporated Organisation)



## REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 30 JUNE 2024

Address: 10 Chapel Street, Ely CB6 1AD

Charity Number: 1166937

Bankers: Lloyds Bank PLC

Independent Examiner: Paul O'Brien

The Trustees present their annual report and financial statement of the trust for the period  
1 July 2023 - 30 June 2024.

### Status

The Charity was incorporated on 5 May 2016 and registered with the Charity Commission as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation with the charity number 1166937. The charity is one of the churches of the Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion.

### Trustees

The trustees are recognised by the membership, in roles of Minister, Elder or Deacon. The current trustees are:

Helen Atkinson	Elder	
Paula Gregory	Deacon	
Graham Jarrett	Deacon	(Started April 2023)
Dawn Maclure	Deacon	(Started April 2023)
Philip Murfitt	Deacon	
Emad Youssef	Deacon	

## Objectives

The objects of the CIO for the public benefit are to advance the Christian faith in accordance with the Statement of Beliefs appearing in the Schedule hereto in Ely, Cambridgeshire and in such other parts of the United Kingdom or the world as the charity trustees may from time to time think fit.

## Activities

Karl and Karen Relton moved to Leicestershire to pioneer new work in August 2023. Karl had led the church for 12 years and many people joined together to celebrate his ministry across Ely in July 2023. We were also able to support Karl and Karen's new ministry by setting up a monthly donation from the Pioneer fund as a 3 year commitment. The church then entered a period of pastoral vacancy, with Rev. John Smith appointed as Moderator to guide the church in seeking a new minister through the Baptists Together settlement process.

Church members and friends joined in a week of prayer in November culminating in a Saturday morning Vision Day where we listened to God, together, for the direction of the church in a new season of ministry. From the ideas shared, the Leadership team were able to frame a 'church profile' document which was sent to Baptists Together after discussion and approval by the Church Meeting. By the end of the year, we were delighted to be in a position to invite Rev. Sat Deodhar to join us as a new minister commencing mid-August 2024.

During the year the church has continued in its purpose of worshipping God and serving the local community. A new reflective space called 'Sanctuary' has been added for Sunday evening worship once a month. People are invited to spend time in God's presence through simple sung worship, meditation and creative reflection using art. Our Mission Activities of Two by Two, Rich Tea Community, and Dads n Kidz have continued with a particular highlight being a Christmas meal hosted by the men's group for Dads from 'Dads n Kidz'. The church has continued to support and host the wider activities of Ely Foodbank, Ely CAP Debt Centre and the Recovery Cafe. The church passed the leadership of Ely College Chaplaincy to another church.

The membership of the church has remained stable with three new members joining, balanced by others leaving as they moved away. Baptisms have included people journeying forward in their faith, and a young person who came into contact with us through our mission activities.

Across the year, Cate Allen continued with her Minister in Training placement through Rich Tea Community (RTC) and developed this further as RTC Xtra which brought mid-week discipleship opportunities to individuals with learning needs. Cate also pioneered ministry into care homes for adults with learning disabilities. This work was commended by the Mayor of Ely in the Civic Ceremony in Ely Cathedral in April where he commented on how Rich Tea Community demonstrated Jesus' love and compassion for all people. Cate completed her training and graduated during July 2024.

Regular free-will giving to our General Fund was maintained across the year, and the level of funds in the General Fund increased as the church was not paying a ministerial stipend at this time. Additional costs were budgeted for to allow manse refurbishment – interior decoration – and also external repairs of windows. Most of this expenditure will fall in the financial year 2024-2025 as refurbishment was ongoing through July 2024.

We maintain the same lettings level for the premises (£10,981), which helps us cover our expenses for maintaining the manse and the church building. Across the year operational costs were well controlled, with the church benefiting from pre-existing fixed rate energy contracts for both church and manse buildings. This, combined with a lack of ministerial costs, has led to an increase in the General Fund balance to a year end amount of over £62,000.

During the year, there were no significant building works, only minor repairs and modest improvements.

The JM – Pioneer Fund was used for the Minister in Training placement until the end of August 2024 and the Church has additionally made a monthly commitment of £200 from the fund until August 2026 for Karl and Karen's pioneer work.

The Communion Fund continues to support those in difficult times or circumstances, with over £1,700 having been spent on 'blessing people' throughout the year. Our support for CAP continued and together with individuals' gifts, the Church transferred over £3,500 to St Marys for use in the local CAP Debt Centre.

Our support of other UK and international charities continued, totalling over £7,720. This represents 12.3% of the regular General Fund giving & linked gift aid, and thus above our target of 11%.

## **Serious Incidents**

The Trustees confirm that there are no serious incidents to report regarding operations in the period 23-24.

## **Risk Analysis and Reserves Policy**

The Trustees confirm that major risks to which the Charity is exposed are reviewed regularly.

The Charity aims to hold unrestricted reserves sufficient to cover between 4 and 8 months of normal ministry expenditure, which at current estimates equates to between £13,000 (4 months) and £25,000 (8 months). This level of reserves also provides the Church with enough money to cover monthly giving and expenditure cash flow variations, and sufficient levels to cover unforeseen additional ministry expenditure. The lower amount would also cover obligations in the event of sudden unplanned closure. Currently, our General Fund amounts to approximately £62,000, comfortably in excess of the Charity's need.

Mr Stanislav Vetoshkin  
(Treasurer)

Dr Helen Atkinson  
(Elder)

# INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF THE COUNTRESS FREE CHURCH, ELY

I report on the accounts of the Charity for the period ended 30 June, 2024, which are set out on page 5 & 6

## Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 (the Charities Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the Charities Act,
- to follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 145(5)(b) of the Charities Act, and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

## Basis of independent examiner's statement

My examination was carried out in accordance with general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair' view and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

## Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention

1. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in, any material respect, the requirements:
  - to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; and
  - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Charities Act have not been met; or
2. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

*Paul O'Brien*

Paul O'Brien – Independent Examiner

**Countess Free Church Ely - 1166937**  
**Statement of Financial Activities**  
**For the period from 01 July 2023 to 30 June 2024**

	<b>Unrestricted funds</b>	<b>Restricted funds</b>	<b>Endowment funds</b>	<b>Total funds</b>	<b>Prior year total funds</b>
Income and endowments from:					
Donations and legacies	68317	3003	-	71321	84597
Other trading activities	10981	-	-	10981	10648
Investments	1689	-	-	1689	543
Income from charitable activities	2276	461	-	2737	2250
Other income	-	-	-	-	-
Total income	83264	3464	-	86728	98038
Expenditure on:					
Raising funds	-	-	-	-	-
Expenditure on charitable activities	40550	16834	-	57384	79588
Other expenditure	-	-	-	-	-
Total expenditure	40550	16834	-	57384	79588
Net income / (expenditure) resources before transfer	42713	(13370)	-	29343	18450
Transfers:					
Gross transfers between funds - in	14050	8400	-	22450	38142
Gross transfers between funds - out	(22450)	0	-	(22450)	(38142)
Other recognised gains / losses					
Gains/losses on investment assets	-	-	-	-	-
Gains on revaluation, fixed assets, charity's own use	-	-	-	-	-
Net movement in funds	34313	-4970	-	29343	18450
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward	43319	35439	-	78758	60307
<b>Total funds carried forward</b>	<b>77632</b>	<b>30469</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>108101</b>	<b>78758</b>

Notes

1. There were no special grants received by the Church during this year
2. *Expenditure on charitable activities* includes £3279 on stipend costs and £1,560 on manse utilities. These costs are for the employment of the Rev. Karl Relton as a paid trustee as per the provisions of the Charity constitution. And visiting speakers £706 John Smith as a moderator.
3. *Expenditure on charitable activities* includes £1,985.98 on material & labour supplied by different companies for small repairs across the year.

*There may be minor discrepancies in the totals if the pence are not being shown*

Countess Free Church Ely - 1166937

Balance sheet (Summary)

As at: 30 June 2024

	As at 30/06/2024	As at 30/06/2023
<b>Fixed assets</b>	-	-
<b>Current assets</b>		
Debtors	504	745
Cash At Bank And In Hand	107597	78012
	108101	78757
<b>Liabilities</b>	-	-
Net current assets less current liabilities	108101	78757
Total assets less current liabilities	108101	78757
<b>Liabilities</b>	-	-
Total net assets less liabilities	108101	78757
<b>Represented by</b>		
<b>Unrestricted</b>		
Unrestricted - General Funds	62090	33057
<b>Designated</b>		
Designated - Children and Young People	1013	(11)
Designated - Renovation	14033	10019
Designated - World Vision	497	252
<b>Restricted</b>		
Restricted - Christians against poverty	735	0
Restricted - Communion	(249)	348
Restricted - Ely College Chaplaincy	-	-
Restricted - JM Pioneer	29434	34678
Restricted - Rich Tea Community	549	411
<b>Fund Totals</b>	<b>108101</b>	<b>78757</b>

Notes

1. *Debtors* – represents three lettings invoices not yet paid from financial year (23-24).
2. *Cash at Bank and in hand* – there were no uncleared cheques as of 30<sup>th</sup> June.

*There may be minor discrepancies in the totals if the pence are not being shown*