



TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2023

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The Trustees present their annual report and the financial statements of the charity for the period ended 31st December 2023

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Registered charity name:	Sandwell Churches Link
Charity registration number:	1167003
Registered address:	Wesley Methodist Church 291 High Street West Bromwich B70 8ND
Trustees:	Mrs. Hazel Bloxham Rev. Bev Thomas Mrs. Esther Spence Rev. Jon Grant Ms. Elizabeth Farley Mr. Trevor Palfreyman Pastor. Niyi Oludayomi Dr. David Jarrett
Chief Executive Officer:	Mr. James Lynch
Independent Examiner:	Mr. Eric Moore 2, Orchard Way Great Barr Birmingham B43 8PN
Principal Bankers:	Lloyds Bank Ltd.

CHARITY STATUS

The charity is a charitable incorporated organisation (CIO) registered in 2016

AIMS AND PURPOSE

The objects of Sandwell Churches Link are to:

- *Play a key strategic role in reducing poverty in all its forms in Sandwell, including homelessness, food poverty, financial exclusion, and loneliness.*
- *Help local churches rooted in neighbourhoods to connect with the wider community including other faiths, businesses, voluntary and community groups and public sector organisations*
- *Help local churches to connect with each other in collaborative learning, shared resources and combined social action*
- *Support churches by offering training, to enable them to use an asset-based approach to working with their local communities.*

REVIEW OF ACTIVITIES

Sandwell Churches Link is a small charity, with a bold mission to work together to help end poverty in Sandwell. The charity operates with an extensive network of partners all of whom share this mission. Our partnerships start with churches of all denominations, but also extends to other-faith groups and community organisations with no particular faith connection.

During 2023, the core activities of Sandwell Churches' Link were continuing to:

- Develop the Sandwell Church Network, in each of the 6 towns
- Develop of the Sandwell Clothing Bank Project
- Support 'Places of Welcome' initiative
- Support the 'Warm Spaces' initiative with church and community partners
- Provide support and innovation to the Sandwell Food Power Network
- Work with 45 churches on effective community engagement through the 'Opening New Doors' project.
- Tackle financial exclusion, through the expansion of CAP Debt provision
- Pioneer the development of Community Hubs across the borough

Throughout 2023 Sandwell Churches Link continued to work closely in partnership with 'Strengthening Communities' (Lichfield Diocese) and Thrive Together (Birmingham Diocese)

During 2023 the need for food banks and food pantries has continued to grow, along with the increasing necessity for clothing and uniform provision. This demonstrates both the continuing needs across the communities, and the preparedness of churches and other community organisations to step into the gap, to help those on the margins of society. Sandwell Churches Link has continued to play an important role in helping coordinate these projects, including playing the lead role in the establishment of the Sandwell Clothing Bank. Sandwell Churches Link also plays a key role in sharing key information, resources and learning across the borough, working closely with Sandwell Council for Voluntary Service (SCVO). We also work alongside Sandwell Council and all the main food networks, such as Trussell Trust, Your Local Pantry and Black Country Food Bank who continue to lead on the provision of food in Sandwell.

During 2023, Sandwell Churches Link began a new venture to aid in the provision of Debt Advice throughout Sandwell, in partnership with Christians Against Poverty (CAP) and Kings Community Church in Oldbury. The project now offers support to West Bromwich residents as well as Oldbury and Smethwick.

Sandwell Churches Link is very grateful for the privilege to work with so many great churches and community partners, and to its sponsors who enable us to operate the charity.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Income generation

The total income for the year was £128,330 (2022: £69,702) which was generated through voluntary donations, grants, consultancy, and training courses.

Expenditure

Total expenditures were £74,972 (2021: £68,692)

Funds

Overall funds are £71,281 (2022: £17,923) of which £41,681 are restricted funds (2022: £7,923)

Reserves policy

The charity holds unrestricted and restricted funds. Transfers are made from unrestricted to restricted funds to prevent restricted funds from going into deficit. Our overall policy is to hold reserves at a minimum threshold necessary to operate the organisation (not more than 3 months expenditure) or higher when specific projects are being planned for subsequent years. (The charity currently holds £20,000 in reserve, specifically allocated for this purpose.)

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jon Grant'.

Rev. Jon Grant as Chair of Trustees

ON BEHALF OF THE TRUSTEES

Date: 10th June 2024

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES



**CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES**

**Independent examiner's
report on the accounts**

Section A

Independent ESandwell Churches Linkexaminer's Report

**Report to the trustees/
members of**

Charity Name

Sandwell Churches Link

**On accounts for the year
ended**

31 December 2023

**Charity no
(if any)**

1167003

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 DD / MM / YYYY.

**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").

**Independent
examiner's statement**

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.

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:

Eric Moore

Date:

21.2.24

Name:

Eric Moore

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

FCA

Address:

2, Orchard Way, Great Barr

BIRMINGHAM

B43 6PN

STATEMENT of FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

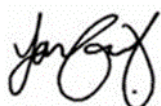
For the accounting period 1st January 2023 to 31st December 2023

	Notes	Unrestricted Fund	Restricted Fund	Total Funds 2023	Total Funds 2022
Income	1	£	£	£	£
Voluntary income		29,600	96,914	126,514	69,381
Charitable activities		-	1,816	1,816	321
Total Income		29,600	98,730	128,330	69,702
Expenditure	2				
Raising funds				2,838	100
Charitable activities				72,019	68,592
Total Expenses				74,972	75,091
Net Income/Expenditure				53,358	(5,389)
Funds brought forward				17,923	23,312
Balance				71,281	17,923

ON BEHALF OF THE TRUSTEES

Rev. Jon Grant as Chair of Trustees

Signed:



Date: May 2024

1. ANALYSIS of INCOME for 2022/2023

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds (2023)	Total Funds (2022)
	£	£	£	£
Voluntary Income				
Church Support	2,500	-	2,500	-
Charity Donations	-	4,099	4,099	113
Grants	27,100	92,815	119,415	69,268
Total Voluntary Income	29,600	96,914	126,514	69,381
Charitable Activities				
Consultancy	-	1,535	1,535	-
Training Courses	-	281	281	321
TOTAL INCOME	29,600	98,730	128,330	69,702

2. ANALYSIS of EXPENDITURE for 2022/2023

	Total Expenses (2023)	Total Expenses (2022)
	£	£
Expenditure on raising funds	2,838	-
Website and Promotion	115	100
Total expenditure on raising funds	2,953	100
Charitable Activities		
Employee Salaries	46,746	32,736
Sessional Workers Costs	-	12,206
Office Rental	1,275	975
Training Courses	679	3,600
Events		120
Promotional Filming	433	1,467
IT and Comms	252	1,233
Legal and Insurance	527	544
Travel and other Expenses	2,930	3,049
Partner Project Support	19,177	19,061
Total Charitable Activities	72,019	75,091
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	74,972	75,091