

# **Ursuline Sisters Brentwood CIO**

## **Annual Report and Accounts**

29 February 2024

Charity Registration Number  
1168579

## Contents

### Reports

Reference and administration details of the charity, its trustees and advisers	1
Report of the trustees	2
Independent auditor's report	10

### Accounts

Statement of financial activities	14
Balance sheet	15
Statement of cash flows	16
Principal accounting policies	17
Notes to the accounts	22

## Reference and administration details of the charity, its trustees and advisers

<b>Trustees</b>	Mrs Sue Cooper Sister Clare Kane Mr Michael L'Estrange Mrs Nicolina Lyon Sister Margaret Soper Sister Anne Spilberg
<b>Commissary</b>	Sister Margaret Soper
<b>General Bursar</b>	Ms Pauline Townsend
<b>Principal Address</b>	Ursuline Generalate 27 Eastfield Road Brentwood CM14 4HB
<b>Telephone</b>	01277 260156
<b>e-mail</b>	<a href="mailto:admin@ursulinesistersbrentwood.org">admin@ursulinesistersbrentwood.org</a>
<b>Charity Registration Number</b>	1168579
<b>Auditor</b>	Buzzacott LLP 130 Wood Street London EC2V 6DL
<b>Bankers</b>	National Westminster Bank plc 46 High Street Brentwood Essex CM14 4AL
<b>Investment Managers</b>	BlackRock Investment Management (UK) Limited 12 Throgmorton Avenue London EC2N 2DL
<b>Principal Solicitors</b>	IBB Law LLP Capital Court 30 Windsor Street Uxbridge Middlesex UB8 1AB

The trustees present their report together with the accounts of the Ursuline Sisters Brentwood CIO (the 'charity') for the year to 29 February 2024.

The accounts have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out on pages 17 to 21 and comply with applicable United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice). The principles set out in Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) have been followed in the preparation of this report and accounts.

## Activities, performance and future plans

### **Purpose and Impact**

The Brentwood Ursuline Sisters were founded from another Ursuline Community in Upton, Forest Gate, 124 years ago, at the request of the Parish Priest of Brentwood, to provide secondary education for girls in the area. The Ursuline Order has been renowned since its origins in the 16<sup>th</sup> century for its particular emphasis on the education and development of women, which throughout the centuries has taken many and varied forms and has been pioneered in every continent in the world. Ursuline education has been noted for the values of building community, respecting the individual, working for peace and Gospel justice, excellence in academics and 'cultivating the vine' of faith with dynamic formation programmes. Our original foundress Angela Merici (1475-1540) was noted both in her own time and since for setting up a group of consecrated women who elected a leader from among themselves and remained in society to work amongst fellow citizens rather than being withdrawn into a cloister. Over the years the Brentwood Ursulines have provided formal education through the foundation and support of schools in Brentwood, Dagenham and Harold Hill and in Kenya, and have been active in promoting informal education through parish sacramental programmes, through both Diocesan and parish Youth Work and through a wide network of personal contacts. Now we have mostly retired from active ministry and the schools have passed into lay management, we are proud that our values continue to be promoted in the



*"Act, move, believe, strive, hope, cry out to him with all your heart for without doubt you will see marvellous things."*

*St Angela, Prologue to the Counsels, 16-18*

**Activities, performance and future plans** (continued)

***Purpose and Impact*** (continued)

institutions we founded or to which we contributed. During the course of the year, we once again welcomed the annual Year 7 visits from the Brentwood Ursuline Convent High School, with two of the Sisters and one of our Associates giving them a taste of our history and the Ursuline ethos. We also attended the Annual Patronal Feast-day, Foundation Day and Academic Masses.

The School has continued to actively promote the Ursuline values of the Student Profile which is shared among all the Ursuline Schools in the UK taking a different theme each month across form-time and assemblies. During the year the school was Peer-Reviewed by the Ursuline Education Community – the joint collaborative project for the Ursuline Schools – and we were proud to note the following comment in the subsequent Report on the visit: “The team had an overwhelmingly positive experience during the review day, teachers and, importantly students, spoke with great authenticity about their school and they were excellent ambassadors to celebrate the school’s successes with future visitors to Brentwood Ursuline.” (United in Mission Visiting Team, November 2023)

Following the reduction in Sisters being cared for and corresponding reduction in Care staff last January, and with the gradually deteriorating condition of another of the remaining sisters, by the summer we came to the reluctant conclusion that continuing to provide 24 hour care in-house for 2 sisters was no longer sustainable nor adequate for the unique social needs of the sister with dementia. Consequently, we made the decision that we would find suitable care provision outside the Community for the two sisters needing care. We also decided that that since the ‘new’ accommodation was now already too large for our needs, we would start the process to move on into domestic situations, finding a buyer for the present convent accommodation and accepting that when any of the rest of us needed care we would seek it outside the Community setting. This inevitably meant a further redundancy process for the rest of the Care staff. We retained a housekeeper, cleaner, gardener and a Care Supervisor to oversee the Care of the Sisters in Care Homes, along with our office staff.

The Archives continue to be securely housed. We are in a process of negotiating with Durham University Library the transfer of those Archives we do not need to keep, but which need to be in a secure environment, before the sale of the property is achieved.

The transfer of the schools’ land to the Diocese of Brentwood (BRCDT) (thereby ensuring their continuance at the forefront of the provision of Catholic Education in our Diocese) has been completed; we are continuing to seek to dispose of land and buildings we no longer use in order to reduce our commitments and to ensure our reserve for the care of the Sisters is adequate.

Negotiations with the highest bidder for the sale of the large playing field, once used by the Brentwood Ursuline School but long since unused due to the distance from the school and now accepted into the Local Plan for housing development, are continuing.

As part of our legacy, the Trustees agreed to contribute to the building of a dedicated Sixth Form block for the Brentwood Ursuline Convent High School.

## Activities, performance and future plans (continued)

### *Purpose and Impact (continued)*

We will continue the process of identifying beneficiaries and allocating assets to appropriate objects of the Charity.

We have been able to offer hospitality to groups and individuals, though the size and layout of the present house places inevitable limits on how many we can accommodate. We continue to respond to requests for financial assistance from some people suffering hardship, including providing furniture for a refugee family. We started regular contributions to the local food bank and we have maintained contact via telephone, card or Zoom with many individuals and groups.



We continued to fund a young boy requiring extra literacy tuition and have begun funding for tutorials for another. We have funded a hairdressing course to help a young person find work and have continued to support families through difficult periods, also covering the needs of teenage children at school and college, e.g. by providing a weekly payment to one young man at University. We have paid for a course of counselling for someone in need.

I'd also like to thank you for all you and the Sisters have done in regards to education.

The Sister who worked as a Chaplain in a local prison retired during the year and has received many tributes for her long and dedicated commitment to both prisoners and staff there, especially for the Travellers' Forum which she initiated.

We contributed financially, mainly through the Catholic Agency for Overseas Development, to various emergencies which have occurred this year, including Ukraine, the Libyan flooding and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. We have also sent donations with a Priest we know to aid orphan projects in Africa.

### **Values and Ways of Working**

The objects of the CIO are such charitable purposes which advance the religious and other charitable work undertaken, both now and in the past by the Congregation as the Charity Trustees think fit, including in particular (but without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing) the advancement of education, the relief of poverty, the advancement of the Roman Catholic religion and care of the sick and elderly members of the Congregation.

The trustees of the charity support the religious and other charitable works carried out by members of the Congregation, and the care of those members throughout their lives within the Congregation. All of the Sisters are now retired from remunerative work, but even the oldest and frailest support the mission of the Congregation by their interest and their prayer. We employ staff with the necessary knowledge, experience and skills to enable the charity to continue to meet its objectives and maintain efficient and transparent organisation, both for the internal working of the charity and in its relations with the public. We pay salaries that are commensurate with those for similar roles in other organisations and are attentive to ensuring that employees receive a just and living wage and that their conditions of employment meet the highest standards.

Safeguarding: The Leadership Team of the Congregation and the Safeguarding Lead have kept abreast of the changes to CSSA and RLSS and are preparing in anticipation of a safeguarding audit.

### **Governance, structure and management**

Originally our work was funded by grants, salaries and fees. Now our income is mainly from pensions, dividends from our investment portfolio and sale of properties. Our main costs are Care Home fees, staff salaries, regular property maintenance (now significantly reduced due to our move) and the ongoing costs of administering the charity. Each year we revise an actuarial projection in order to ensure that we keep a reserve intact to care for the Sisters to the end of their lives.

The trustees acknowledge that there is a risk that investments lose value. We attend regularly to updates from our investment managers to ensure that they act within a sustainable policy that diversifies investments and aims to achieve a total return from capital growth while providing regular income on a quarterly basis.

### ***Risk management***

The Trustees regularly review the principal risks and uncertainties that the charity faces categorising the risks between those affecting the governance and management of the charity and those which occur because of circumstances outside the charity's control such as changes in government policy, laws and regulations. They regularly evaluate the measures already in place, or needing to be put in place, to establish policies, systems and procedures to mitigate those risks identified. They also ensure that action is taken to implement changes to those policies, systems and procedures should they be needed to minimise or manage any potential impact on the charity should those risks materialise. Having assessed the major risks to which the charity is exposed, the trustees believe that by monitoring reserve levels, by ensuring controls exist over key financial systems, and by examining the operational and business risks faced by the charity, they have established effective systems to mitigate those risks.

The key risks for the charity, as identified by the trustees, are described below together with the principal ways in which they are mitigated:

- ◆ An analysis of the age profile of the members of the Congregation shows that the average age of the Sisters at 29<sup>th</sup> February 2024 was 86 years. The trustees are aware that there is a both a moral and a legal obligation to care for the older members. None of these sisters have resources of their own as all earnings, pensions and other income have been donated to the charity under a Gift Aid compliant Deed of Covenant. As the age profile increases, so too does the need to provide care for the Sisters. Key elements of the management of this risk are: (a) ensuring that the charity has the available financial resources to finance this care both now and in the years ahead by setting aside assets in a designated fund, the value of which has been based on actuarial principles; and (b) ensuring that processes are in place to review regularly the ministries and needs of individual Sisters, encouraging those who need it to take on less demanding ministries and identifying those who need extra help and care.

## **Governance, structure and management (continued)**

### ***Risk management (continued)***

- ◆ Operationally the charity works with children and vulnerable adults including older people. The trustees recognise the absolute necessity of ensuring the protection and safety of all those that the charity serves. This means that Sisters engaged in any ministry in the United Kingdom and all those who volunteer for the charity and work with children or vulnerable adults obtain clearance from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). The trustees are committed to fully implementing the policies of the Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency (CSSA). One of the sister trustees is responsible for ensuring this policy is adhered to in respect of all sisters, employees and volunteers. In addition, the trustees take part in on-going safeguarding training, update internal policies and ensure that sisters, staff and volunteers are kept informed about good practice in work and ministry.
- ◆ The Charity's principal assets comprise land and listed investments, the value of which is dependent on movements in UK and worldwide stock markets. The investments are managed by reputable investment managers who adhere to a policy agreed by the trustees. The trustees are invited to attend twice-yearly updates from the managers, and the manager's performance and that of the portfolio are monitored. The investment strategy is assessed regularly to ensure it remains appropriate to the charity's needs – both now and in the future. The trustee with financial expertise was asked and agreed to monitor the state of our investments on behalf of the CIO. The Trustees are presently considering employing investment oversight to ensure adequate diversification of the portfolio.
- ◆ We have continued to keep open the short-term cash management account with the same investment company to enable our long-term investments to remain mostly undisturbed.

### ***Canon Law***

Following a unanimous decision on the part of the Congregation in 2017 the ordinary governance of the institute has been suspended due to the age of the members and a Commissary (Delegate) currently one of the Sisters, was appointed by the Bishop of Brentwood. The governance of the institute continues to be based in Brentwood and the Commissary assumes all the rights and obligations of the universal law of the Church and the proper law of the institute attributed to the Supreme Moderator and her Council.

### ***Civil law***

The CIO is governed by a Constitution dated 3 August 2016 and revised in December 2022. The trustees of the charity include the Commissary (Bishop's delegate), two other Sisters and three lay trustees. The Sister trustees are long-standing members of the Congregation and have intimate knowledge of the work of the charity. All the lay trustees have known the members of the Congregation for a number of years and each brings a specialised expertise to the trustee body, namely legal, financial and educational respectively.

The trustees make every effort to be conscientious in reading and assimilating the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit with regard to setting objectives and planning the work of individual sisters.



## **Governance, structure and management** (continued)

### ***Civil law*** (continued)

Training and updating are maintained.

The trustees normally meet at least four times a year and with the Congregation's legal, accounting and property advisers as necessary either in person or via phone or video.

### ***Trustees' Responsibilities Statement***

The trustees are responsible for preparing the Trustees Report and Accounts in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

The law applicable to charities in England and Wales requires the trustees to prepare accounts for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the income and expenditure of the charity for that period. In preparing these accounts the trustees are required to:

- ◆ Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- ◆ Observe the methods and principles in Accounting and Reporting by Charities Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable to the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102);
- ◆ Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- ◆ State whether applicable United Kingdom Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the accounts and
- ◆ Prepare the accounts on the on-going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the accounts comply with the Charities Act 2011, applicable Charity (accounts and Reports) Regulations and the provisions of the governing document. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The present report is evidence that the trustees understand their responsibilities and have prepared accounts for this financial period which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity.

### ***Structure and Management***

The trustees are ultimately responsible for the policies, activities and assets of the charity. They meet regularly to review developments with regard to the charity or its activities and make any important decisions. When necessary the trustees seek advice and support from the charity's professional advisers including investment managers, solicitors, property advisers and accountants.

## **Governance, structure and management (continued)**

### ***Key management personnel***

The trustees consider that they comprise the key management personnel of the charity in charge of directing and controlling, running and operating the charity on a day-to-day basis. They receive no remuneration in respect of their duties.

### **Fundraising**

The charity is not actively involved in fundraising activities. However, it aims to achieve best practice in the way in which it communicates with donors and other supporters. It applies best practice to protect supporters' data and never sells data, it never swaps data, and ensures that supporters' and donors' communication preferences can be changed at any time. The charity does not employ the services of Professional Fundraisers. During the year to 29 February 2024, the charity received no complaints about fundraising activities.

## **Financial review**

### ***Income and expenditure***

A summary of the year's results can be found on page 14 of the attached accounts.

Total income for the year was £333,374 (2023 – £1,564,676). Investment income of £144,427 has decreased compared to the prior year (2023 - £155,802). Income from other sources for the year ended 29 February 2024 includes a surplus on disposal of fixed assets £Nil (2023 – £1,150,486) from the disposal of property.

Total expenditure of £1,022,630 was higher than the prior year (2023 – £891,721). This is due to increased care costs in the year as a result of more Sister's going into care home's.

Losses from the revaluation and disposal of listed investments of £40,757 were less than the prior year (2023 – loss of £108,700).

### ***Financial position and reserves policy***

The balance sheet shows total net assets of £8,289,208 (2023 – £9,019,221).

The trustees have set aside an amount equivalent to the book value of the tangible fixed assets as a separate fund in recognition of the fact that such assets are required to enable the Congregation to carry out its charitable work and are not available to fund activities or meet future contingencies.

£3,300,000 has been designated to meet the costs of the care and welfare of the Sisters in their retirement (2023 – £3,000,000). The Sisters are wholly dependent on the charity for their maintenance and care; all are of pensionable age; some need constant, skilled care.

The Dr N Hunt fund was set up in 2012 using a legacy of £324,561 received from the estate of Dr Noreen Hunt. The intention is to use the money to make donations to those in need. As at 29 February 2024, £253,507 remains to be spent (2023 – £275,208).

**Financial review** (continued)

***Financial position and reserves policy (continued)***

The trustees' reserves policy has been to maintain a level of free reserves approximately equal to six months' operating expenditure in order to provide for contingencies, equating to approximately £300,000 - £350,000. The free reserves available at the balance sheet date were higher than this range, being £582,746 (2023 – £2,045,579). The trustees deem the level of free reserves to be adequate but not excessive given the inherent uncertainty in the stock markets and the continuing uncertainties in the economy.

Signed on behalf of the trustees

Margaret Soper

Trustee

Approved by the trustees on: 10<sup>th</sup> June 2024

**Independent auditor's report to the trustees of Ursuline Sisters Brentwood CIO**

**Opinion**

We have audited the accounts of Ursuline Sisters Brentwood CIO (the 'charity') for the year ended 29 February 2024 which comprise the statement of financial activities, the balance sheet, the statement of cash flows, the principal accounting policies and the notes to the accounts. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the accounts:

- ◆ give a true and fair view of the state of the charity's affairs as at 29 February 2024 and of its income and expenditure for the year then ended;
- ◆ have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- ◆ have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011.

**Basis for opinion**

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the accounts section of our report. We are independent of the charity in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the accounts in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

**Conclusions relating to going concern**

In auditing the accounts, we have concluded that the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the accounts is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charity's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the accounts are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

**Other information**

The trustees are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the Annual Report and Accounts, other than the accounts and our auditor's report thereon. Our opinion on the accounts does not cover the other information and we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

**Other information** (continued)

In connection with our audit of the accounts, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the accounts or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the accounts or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

**Matters on which we are required to report by exception**

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Charities Act 2011 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- ◆ the information given in the trustees' report is inconsistent in any material respect with the accounts; or
- ◆ sufficient accounting records have not been kept; or
- ◆ the accounts are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- ◆ we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

**Responsibilities of trustees**

As explained more fully in the trustees' responsibilities statement, the trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of accounts that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the accounts, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charity's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charity or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

**Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements**

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the accounts as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these accounts.

**Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements** (continued)

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below.

Our approach to identifying and assessing the risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations, was as follows:

- ◆ The engagement partner ensured that the engagement team collectively had the appropriate competence, capabilities and skills to identify or recognise non-compliance with applicable laws and regulations;
- ◆ We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory frameworks applicable to the group and charitable parent company and the sector in which it operates. We focused on specific laws and regulations which we considered may have a direct material effect on the financial statements or the operations of the charity. We determined that the following laws and regulations were most significant: Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102), the Charities Act 2011 and safeguarding regulations;
- ◆ We understood how the charity is complying with those legal and regulatory frameworks by making enquiries of management and those responsible for legal and compliance procedures. We corroborated our enquiries through our review of the relevant minutes and correspondence from regulatory bodies; and
- ◆ We identified laws and regulations were communicated within the audit team regularly and the team remained alert to instances of non-compliance throughout the audit.

We assessed the susceptibility of the charitable company's financial statements to material misstatement, including obtaining an understanding of how fraud might occur, by:

- ◆ Making enquiries of management and those charged with governance as to where they considered there was susceptibility to fraud, their knowledge of actual, suspected and alleged fraud; and
- ◆ Considering the internal controls in place to mitigate risks of fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations.

To address the risk of fraud through management bias and override of controls, we:

- ◆ performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships;
- ◆ tested journal entries to identify unusual transactions;
- ◆ assessed whether judgements and assumptions made in determining the accounting estimates set out in the accounting policies were indicative of potential bias;
- ◆ performed substantive testing on expenditure; and
- ◆ investigated the rationale behind significant or unusual transactions.

**Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements** (continued)

In response to the risk of irregularities and non-compliance with laws and regulations, we designed procedures which included, but were not limited to:

- ◆ agreeing financial statement disclosures to underlying supporting documentation;
- ◆ reading the minutes of meetings of those charged with governance and other relevant reports prepared by management for the trustees;
- ◆ enquiring of management as to actual and potential litigation and claims; and
- ◆ reviewing correspondence with the company's legal advisors.

There are inherent limitations in our audit procedures described above. The more removed that laws and regulations are from financial transactions, the less likely it is that we would become aware of non-compliance. Auditing standards also limit the audit procedures required to identify non-compliance with laws and regulations to enquiry of those charged with governance and management and the inspection of regulatory and legal correspondence, if any.

Material misstatements that arise due to fraud can be harder to detect than those that arise from error as they may involve deliberate concealment or collusion.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the accounts is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at [www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities](http://www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities). This description forms part of our auditor's report.

**Use of our report**

This report is made solely to the charity's trustees, as a body, in accordance with section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 and with regulations made under section 154 of that Act. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charity's trustees those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charity and the charity's trustees as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

2 July 2024

Buzzacott LLP  
Statutory Auditor  
130 Wood Street  
London  
EC2V 6DL

Buzzacott LLP is eligible to act as an auditor in terms of section 1212 of the Companies Act 2006

# Statement of financial activities Year to 29 February 2024

	Notes	Unrestricted funds	
		2024 £	2023 £
<b>Income from:</b>			
Donations and legacies	1	<b>188,947</b>	258,378
Investments and interest receivable	2	<b>144,427</b>	155,802
Other sources			
. Surplus on disposal of tangible fixed assets		—	1,150,486
. Miscellaneous income		—	10
<b>Total income</b>		<b>333,374</b>	1,564,676
<b>Expenditure on:</b>			
Charitable activities			
. Support of the members of the Congregation and their ministry	3	<b>955,734</b>	871,060
. Donations in support of miscellaneous charitable activities		<b>35,490</b>	20,661
Loss from disposal of tangible fixed assets		<b>31,406</b>	—
<b>Total expenditure</b>		<b>1,022,630</b>	891,721
<b>Net (expenditure)/income before investment (losses)</b>		<b>(689,256)</b>	672,955
Net (losses) on investments	10	<b>(40,757)</b>	(108,700)
<b>Net (expenditure)/income for the year and net movement in funds</b>		<b>(730,013)</b>	564,255
<b>Reconciliation of funds</b>			
Fund balances at 1 March 2023		<b>9,019,221</b>	8,454,966
Fund balances at 29 February 2024		<b>8,289,208</b>	9,019,221

All recognised gains and losses are included in the above statement of financial activities and are derived from continuing activities.



**Balance sheet** 29 February 2024

	Notes	2024 £	2024 £	2023 £	2023 £
<b>Fixed assets</b>					
Tangible assets	9		<b>4,152,955</b>		3,698,434
Investments	10		<b>4,020,410</b>		5,261,167
			<b>8,173,365</b>		8,959,601
<b>Current assets</b>					
Debtors	11	<b>133,329</b>		37,184	
Short term deposits		<b>6,173</b>		105,381	
Cash at bank and in hand		<b>91,014</b>		97,037	
		<b>230,516</b>		239,602	
<b>Liabilities</b>					
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	12	<b>(114,673)</b>		(179,982)	
<b>Net current assets (liabilities)</b>			<b>115,843</b>		59,620
<b>Total net assets</b>			<b>8,289,208</b>		9,019,221
<b>The funds of the charity:</b>					
Unrestricted funds					
. Tangible fixed assets fund	13		<b>4,152,955</b>		3,698,434
. Designated funds	14		<b>3,553,507</b>		3,275,208
. General funds			<b>582,746</b>		2,045,579
			<b>8,289,208</b>		9,019,221

Approved by the trustees  
and signed on their behalf by:

Margaret Soper  
Trustee  
Approved on: 10<sup>th</sup> June 2024

Charity Registration Number: 1168579

## Statement of cash flows Year to 29 February 2024

	Notes	2024 £	2023 £
<b>Cash flows from operating activities:</b>			
Net cash used in operating activities	A	(929,004)	(625,808)
<b>Cash flows from investing activities:</b>			
Income received from listed investment and interest received		127,627	139,002
Rents received from investment properties		16,800	16,800
Proceeds from the disposal of tangible fixed assets		—	1,806,341
Purchase of tangible fixed assets		(520,654)	(10,500)
Purchase of listed investments		—	(1,400,000)
Proceeds from the disposal of listed investments		1,200,000	—
<b>Net cash provided by investing activities</b>		<b>823,773</b>	<b>551,643</b>
<b>Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year</b>		<b>(105,231)</b>	<b>(74,165)</b>
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at 1 March 2023</b>	B	<b>202,418</b>	<b>276,583</b>
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at 29 February 2024</b>	B	<b>97,187</b>	<b>202,418</b>

### Notes to the statement of cash flows for the year to 29 February 2024.

#### A Reconciliation of net movement in funds to net cash used in operating activities

	2024 £	2023 £
<b>Net movement in funds (as per the statement of financial activities)</b>	<b>(730,013)</b>	<b>564,255</b>
<b>Adjustments for:</b>		
Depreciation charge	34,727	54,438
Losses on listed investments and investment property	40,757	108,700
Investment income and interest receivable	(144,427)	(155,802)
Surplus on disposal of tangible fixed assets	31,406	(1,150,486)
(Increase) Decrease in debtors	(96,145)	28,398
Decrease in creditors	(65,309)	(75,311)
<b>Net cash used in operating activities</b>	<b>(929,004)</b>	<b>(625,808)</b>

#### B Analysis of cash and cash equivalents

	2024 £	2023 £
Cash at bank and in hand	91,014	105,381
Short term deposits	6,173	97,037
<b>Total cash and cash equivalents:</b>	<b>97,187</b>	<b>202,418</b>

No separate reconciliation has been prepared between the movements in net debt of the charity as there is no difference between the movements in cash and cash equivalents and the net cash (debt) of the charity.

## **Principal accounting policies** Year to 29 February 2024

The principal accounting policies adopted, judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty in the preparation of the accounts are laid out below.

### **Basis of preparation**

These accounts have been prepared for the year ended 29 February 2024 with comparative information provided in respect to the year ended 28 February 2023.

The accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention with items recognised at cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policies below or the notes to these accounts.

The accounts have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Charities SORP FRS 102, Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland and the Charities Act 2011.

The charity constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS 102.

The accounts are presented in sterling and are rounded to the nearest pound.

### **Critical accounting estimates and areas of judgement**

Preparation of the accounts requires the trustees to make significant judgements and estimates. The items in the accounts where these judgements and estimates have been made include:

- ◆ estimating the useful economic life of tangible fixed assets for the purpose of determining the depreciation charge;
- ◆ the assumptions applied in determining the valuation of investment properties;
- ◆ the assumptions applied in determining the amounts to be designated, in particular the size of the Sisters' retirement reserve; and
- ◆ estimating future income and expenditure flows for the purpose of assessing going concern.

### **Assessment of going concern**

The trustees have assessed whether the use of the going concern assumption is appropriate in preparing these accounts. The trustees have made this assessment in respect to a period of at least one year from the date of approval of these accounts.

There will undoubtedly be challenges ahead due to the aftermath of the Covid pandemic, and wider macroeconomic and geopolitical uncertainties. However, the trustees do not expect concerns to arise over the charity's financial position.

**Assessment of going concern** (continued)

Therefore, the trustees have concluded that there are no material uncertainties related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the ability of the charity to continue as a going concern. The trustees are of the opinion that the charity will have sufficient resources to meet its liabilities as they fall due.

The most significant areas of judgement that affect items in the accounts are detailed above. With regard to the next accounting period, the year ending 28 February 2025 the most significant areas that affect the carrying value of the assets held by the charity are the level of investment returns and the performance of the investment markets.

**Income**

Income is recognised in the period in which the charity has entitlement to the income, the amount of income can be measured reliably and it is probable that the income will be received.

Donations, including salaries and pensions of individual religious received under Gift Aid or deed of covenant, are recognised when the charity has confirmation of both the amount and settlement date. In the event of donations pledged but not received, the amount is accrued for where the receipt is considered probable. In the event that a donation is subject to conditions that require a level of performance before the charity is entitled to the funds, the income is deferred and not recognised until either those conditions are fully met, or the fulfilment of those conditions is wholly within the control of the charity and it is probable that those conditions will be fulfilled in the reporting period.

In accordance with the Charities SORP FRS 102 volunteer time is not recognised.

Investment income is recognised once the dividend has been declared and notification has been received of the dividend due.

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the charity; this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the bank.

Any surplus on the disposal of tangible fixed assets is calculated as the difference between the sale proceeds net of sale costs and the net book value of the asset immediately prior to disposal. It is accounted for once legal completion of the disposal has taken place.

All other income is recognised to the extent that it is probable that the economic benefits will flow to the charity and the revenue can be measured reliably. It is measured at fair value and accounted for on an accruals basis.

**Expenditure**

Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to make a payment to a third party, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably.

**Expenditure** (continued)

All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis. Expenditure comprises direct costs and support costs. All expenses, including support costs, are allocated or apportioned to the applicable expenditure headings.

Expenditure on charitable activities includes all costs associated with furthering the charitable purposes of the charity through the provision of its charitable activities. Such costs include costs in respect to the support of members of the Congregation and enabling their ministry including governance costs.

Charitable grants and donations in support of miscellaneous charitable activities are made where the trustees consider there is real need following a review of the details of each particular case and comprise single year payments rather than multi-year grants. Grants and donations payable are included in the statement of financial activities when approved and when the intended recipient has either received the funds or been informed of the decision to make the grant and has satisfied all performance conditions.

All expenditure is stated inclusive of irrecoverable VAT.

**Support and governance costs**

Support costs represent indirect charitable expenditure. In order to carry out the primary purposes of the charity it is necessary to provide support in the form of personnel development, financial procedures, provision of office services and equipment and a suitable working environment.

Governance costs comprise the costs involving the public accountability of the charity (including audit costs) and costs in respect to its compliance with regulation and good practice.

All expenditure on support and governance is attributed directly to the charitable activities of supporting members of the Congregation and enabling their ministry and hence has there has been no apportionment between the headings.

**Tangible fixed assets**

All assets costing more than £1,500 and with an expected useful life exceeding one year are capitalised.

♦ *Freehold land and buildings*

The charity leased land and buildings of two Catholic voluntary aided schools to the Trustees of the Diocese of Brentwood which is a separate charity.

During the year, the land and buildings which were leased to the Diocese of Brentwood have been transferred to Diocesan ownership.

The trustees consider that no meaningful value can be attributed to these assets since they were not used directly by the charity, do not generate income and cannot be disposed of in the open market value or put to alternative use while such occupation, which may be indefinite, continues. They were therefore valued at £nil in the accounts.

**Tangible fixed assets** (continued)

♦ ***Freehold land and buildings*** (continued)

Non-specialised buildings are those designed as, and used wholly or mainly for, private residential accommodation. As permitted under Financial Reporting Standard 102 (FRS 102) the charity adopts a policy of not revaluing its tangible fixed assets. The charity has adopted the value of land and buildings as transferred from The Congregation of the Sisters of the Order of St Ursula of the Diocese of Brentwood Charitable Trust on 1 March 2017 as their deemed cost. Additions since 1 March 2017 are stated at cost.

♦ ***Property improvements***

Expenditure on property refurbishment and plant is capitalised and depreciated over a ten year period on a straight line basis.

♦ ***Plant, furniture, equipment and motor vehicles***

Expenditure on the purchase of furniture, equipment and motor vehicles is capitalised and depreciated over a four year period on a straight line basis.

Items of plant are depreciated over 5-15 years based on the specific asset.

**Fixed asset investments**

Fixed asset investments comprise:

♦ ***Listed investments***

Listed investments are a form of basic financial instrument and are initially recognised at their transaction value and subsequently measured at their fair value as at the balance sheet date using the closing quoted market price.

The charity does not acquire put options, derivatives or other complex financial instruments.

As noted above, the main form of financial risk faced by the charity is that of volatility in equity markets and investment markets due to wider economic conditions, the attitude of investors to investment risk, and changes in sentiment concerning equities and within particular sectors or sub sectors.

♦ ***Investment properties***

These are included on the balance sheet at fair value estimated as their open market value based on a trustees' valuation determined with professional assistance.

Realised gains (or losses) on investment assets are calculated as the difference between disposal proceeds and their opening carrying value or their purchase value is acquired subsequent to the first day of the financial period. Unrealised gains and losses are calculated as the difference between the fair value at the period end and their carrying value at that date. Realised and unrealised investment gains (or losses) are combined in the statement of financial activities and are credited (or debited) in the period in which they arise.

**Debtors**

Debtors are recognised at their settlement amount, less any provision for non-recoverability. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid. They have been discounted to the present value of the future cash receipt where such discounting is material.

**Cash at bank and in hand**

Cash at bank and in hand represents such accounts and instruments that are available on demand or have a maturity of less than three months from the date of acquisition.

**Creditors and provisions**

Creditors and provisions are recognised when there is an obligation at the balance sheet date as a result of a past event, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefit will be required in settlement, and the amount of the settlement can be estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are recognised at the amount the charity anticipates it will pay to settle the debt. They have been discounted to the present value of the future cash payment where such discounting is material.

**Funds structure**

The funds of the charity are unrestricted and available for use in furtherance of the charity's objectives at the discretion of the trustees. Within the total unrestricted funds of the charity, the trustees have identified funds represented by tangible fixed assets and designated amounts for specific purposes. Details are provided in notes 13 and 14.

**Services provided by members of the Congregation**

For the purposes of these accounts, no monetary value has been placed on administrative and other services provided by the members of the Congregation.

**1 Income from: Donations and legacies**

	2024 £	2023 £
Salaries, pensions and other income of individual religious received under a Gift Aid compliant deed of covenant	187,822	214,412
Other donations	1,125	2,560
Legacies	—	41,406
	<b>188,947</b>	<b>258,378</b>

**2 Income from: Investments and interest receivable**

	2024 £	2023 £
Income from listed investments		
UK Charity Authorised Investment Funds	123,046	135,510
Bank interest receivable	4,581	3,492
Rental income from investment properties	16,800	16,800
	<b>144,427</b>	<b>155,802</b>

**3 Expenditure on: Support of members of the Congregation and their ministry**

	2024 £	2023 £
Staff costs (note 6)	374,953	405,101
Premises	142,486	195,485
Sisters' living expenses	359,502	207,829
Education, training and spiritual renewal	2,048	1,631
Legal expenses	6,349	20,099
Management, computer development and office expenses	51,402	23,648
Governance costs (note 4)	18,994	17,267
	<b>955,734</b>	<b>871,060</b>

**4 Governance costs**

Included within expenditure on supporting members of the Congregation and their ministry are governance costs as detailed below:

	2024 £	2023 £
Audit and accountancy	18,994	17,267



## 5 Net income (expenditure) for the year and net movement in funds

This is stated after charging:

	2024 £	2023 £
Staff and related costs (note 6)	374,953	405,101
Auditor's remuneration (including VAT)		
. Statutory audit services	18,994	17,267
Depreciation	34,727	54,438
Loss on disposal of tangible fixed assets	31,406	—
Surplus on disposal of tangible fixed assets	—	1,150,486

## 6 Staff costs

Staff and related costs during the year were as follows:

	2024 £	2023 £
Wages and salaries	340,667	369,243
Social security costs	28,100	28,325
Pension costs	6,186	7,533
	374,953	405,101

Included within wages and salaries are redundancy payments of £70,044, (2023 – £22,495) made to 9 employees. Of this amount, £6,825 was non-statutory.

One employee earned between £60,000-£70,000 (including taxable benefits) during the year (2023 – one).

The average monthly number of employees (based on headcount) during the year, analysed by function, was:

	2024	2023
Support of members of the Congregation	14	23

A significant number of employees work part-time. The full-time equivalent number of employees during the year was 7.4 (2023 – 9.56).

## 7 Key management personnel and transactions with trustees

The trustees consider that they comprise the key management personnel in charge of directing, controlling, running and operating the charity on a day to day basis. None of the trustees received any remuneration during the year (2023 – none). One trustee was reimbursed travel expenses totalling £219 in the year in connection with their duties as a trustee (2023 – £44). A number of trustees are also members of the Congregation and their living and personal expenses were borne by the charity during the year.

## 7 Key management personnel and transactions with trustees (continued)

The trustees who are members of the Congregation have no resources of their own as all earnings, pensions and other income are donated to the charity under a Gift Aid compliant Deed of Covenant. During the year, the total amount donated to the charity by these trustees was £54,003 (2023 – £48,713).

## 8 Taxation

The Ursuline Sisters Brentwood CIO is a registered charity and, therefore, is not liable to income tax or corporation tax on income derived from its charitable activities, as it falls within the various exemptions available to registered charities.

## 9 Tangible fixed assets

	Non-specialised Freehold Land and Property £	Property improvements £	Plant and machinery £	Furniture and equipment £	Motor vehicles £	Total £
<b>Cost</b>						
At 1 March 2023	3,559,917	204,684	107,237	81,835	23,250	<b>3,976,923</b>
Additions	520,654	—	—	—	—	<b>520,654</b>
Disposals	—	(182,964)	(44,696)	—	—	<b>(227,660)</b>
At 29 February 2024	<u>4,080,571</u>	<u>21,720</u>	<u>62,541</u>	<u>81,835</u>	<u>23,250</u>	<b><u>4,269,917</u></b>
<b>Depreciation</b>						
At 1 March 2023	—	160,886	87,305	20,459	9,839	<b>278,489</b>
Depreciation	—	2,172	6,690	20,459	5,406	<b>34,727</b>
Removed on disposal	—	(152,141)	(44,113)	—	—	<b>(196,254)</b>
At 29 February 2024	<u>—</u>	<u>10,917</u>	<u>49,882</u>	<u>40,918</u>	<u>15,245</u>	<b><u>116,962</u></b>
<b>Net book values</b>						
At 29 February 2024	<u>4,080,571</u>	<u>10,803</u>	<u>12,659</u>	<u>40,917</u>	<u>8,005</u>	<b><u>4,152,955</u></b>
At 28 February 2023	<u>3,559,917</u>	<u>43,798</u>	<u>19,932</u>	<u>61,376</u>	<u>13,411</u>	<b><u>3,698,434</u></b>

It is likely that there are material differences between the open market values of the charity's land and buildings and their book values, as is demonstrated by the above transaction. These arise from the specialised nature of some properties and the effects of inflation. The amount of such differences cannot be ascertained without incurring significant cost, which, in the opinion of the trustees, is not justified in terms of the benefit to the users of the accounts.

## 10 Investments

Fixed asset investments comprised:

	2024 £	2023 £
Freehold investment properties (a)	<b>640,000</b>	640,000
Listed investments and cash held for re-investment (b)	<b>3,380,410</b>	4,621,167
<b>Total cost and market value of investments at 29 February 2024</b>	<b><u>4,020,410</u></b>	<u>5,261,167</u>

## 10 Investments (continued)

Movements on each category of investment are summarised below:

### (a) Freehold investment properties

	2024 £	2023 £
Fair value at 28 February 2023	640,000	500,000
Revaluation	—	140,000
Fair value at 29 February 2024	640,000	640,000

The freehold investment property has been valued in these accounts at its fair value estimated as its open market value which has been determined by the trustees with assistance provided by estate agents local to the property concerned.

### (b) Listed investments

	2024 £	2023 £
Market value at 28 February 2023	4,621,167	3,469,867
Additions	—	1,400,000
Disposals at book value ( Proceeds £1,200,000, loss: £14,034)	(1,214,034)	—
Net unrealised investment (losses)	(26,723)	(248,700)
Market value at 29 February 2024	3,380,410	4,621,167
Cost of listed investments at 29 February 2024	3,351,809	4,546,131

At 29 February 2024 and 28 February 2023, the charitable company's listed investments consisted entirely of units in the BlackRock Catholic Charities Growth and Income Fund managed by BlackRock Investment Management (UK) Limited.

All investments within the above Fund were dealt in on a recognised stock exchange.

## 11 Debtors

	2024 £	2023 £
Accrued investment income	17,767	23,188
Other debtors	7,000	2,431
Prepayments	108,562	11,565
	133,329	37,184

## 12 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2024 £	2023 £
Monies held on behalf of individual members of the Congregation	69,996	69,996
Additions to tangible fixed assets	—	50,349
Accruals	41,943	44,110
Social security and other taxes	2,734	15,528
	114,673	179,982

### 13 Tangible fixed assets fund

The tangible fixed asset fund represents the net book value of the charity's tangible fixed assets. This value has been set aside to highlight the fact that the tangible fixed assets are required for the charity's activities and are not available as a reserve to fund expenditure or meet future contingencies.

	2024 £	2023 £
At 1 March 2023	3,698,434	4,398,226
Additions	520,654	10,500
Depreciation and disposal adjustments	(66,133)	(710,292)
At 29 February 2024	4,152,955	3,698,434

### 14 Designated funds

The income funds of the charity include the following designated funds, which have been set aside out of unrestricted funds by the trustees for specific purposes:

	At 1 March 2023 £	Utilised/ released £	At 29 February 2024 £
Retirement reserve	3,000,000	300,000	3,300,000
Dr N Hunt fund	275,208	(21,701)	253,507
	3,275,208	278,299	3,553,507

	At 1 March 2022 £	Utilised/ released £	At 28 February 2023 £
Retirement reserve	3,000,000	—	3,000,000
Dr N Hunt fund	285,903	(10,695)	275,208
	3,285,903	(10,695)	3,275,208

#### ♦ Retirement reserve

The retirement reserve had been calculated using actuarial principles and consists of monies set aside by the trustees to assist in providing for the sisters in their retirement.

#### ♦ Dr N Hunt fund

The Dr N Hunt fund represented money received from the estate of the late Dr Noreen Hunt and will be used to make donations to those in need.

## 15 Analysis of net assets between funds

	General fund £	Tangible fixed assets fund £	Designated funds £	Total 2024 £
<b>Fund balances at 29 February 2024 are represented by:</b>				
Tangible fixed assets	—	4,152,955	—	4,152,955
Fixed asset investments	466,903	—	3,553,507	4,020,410
Net current assets	115,843	—	—	115,843
<b>Total net assets</b>	<b>582,746</b>	<b>4,152,955</b>	<b>3,553,507</b>	<b>8,289,208</b>

	General fund £	Tangible fixed assets fund £	Designated funds £	Total 2023 £
<b>Fund balances at 28 February 2023 are represented by:</b>				
Tangible fixed assets	—	3,698,434	—	3,698,434
Fixed asset investments	1,985,959	—	3,275,208	5,261,167
Net current assets	59,620	—	—	59,620
<b>Total net assets</b>	<b>2,045,579</b>	<b>3,698,434</b>	<b>3,275,208</b>	<b>9,019,221</b>

The total unrealised gains as at 28 February 2024 constitute movements on revaluation and are as follows:

	2024 £	2023 £
<b>Unrealised gains (losses) included above:</b>		
On listed investments	48,313	75,036
On investment properties	640,000	640,000
<b>Total unrealised gains at 29 February 2024</b>	<b>688,313</b>	<b>715,036</b>
<b>Reconciliation of movements in unrealised gains</b>		
Unrealised gains at 1 March 2023	715,036	823,736
In respect to disposals in the year	—	—
Net gains arising on revaluation in the year	(26,723)	(108,700)
<b>Total unrealised gains at 29 February 2024</b>	<b>688,313</b>	<b>715,036</b>

## 16 Ultimate control and member's liability

The trustees of the charity are also its members.

If the CIO is wound up, the members of the CIO have no liability to contribute to its assets and no personal responsibility for settling its debts and liabilities.

**17 Related party transactions**

Other than the transactions with trustees described in note 7 to these accounts, there are no related party transactions requiring disclosure (2023 – none).

**18 Lease commitments**

At 29 February 2024, the charity had no commitments under non-cancellable operating leases or finance leases.

**19 Post balance sheet events**

Negotiations to complete the sale of the Priests Lane playing field are concluded and the contracts are ready to exchange, pending approval from Rome. The purchase price is subject to a number of deductions which, due to their nature, are currently uncertain in their value. Payment is expected in instalments. Based on current estimates, we anticipate receiving the first instalment, which is estimated to be in the region of £4m, in Autumn 2024. Further instalments are due to be received over a three year period. The land being sold has a net book value in these accounts of £80,000.