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SEER GREEN BAPTIST CHURCH

Trustees Annual Report and Accounts, 2023

Seer Green Baptist Church

Our Vision

'To become a church that is a blessing and spiritual home for many in our village by sharing through action and words the life-changing good news of Jesus Christ with all'.

Charity number 1174411

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1. Trustees annual report for 2023

Purpose

The Church is governed by a constitution which was approved by the Church members in 2009 and updated in 2022 which states the principal purpose is the advancement of the Christian faith according to the Biblical principles of the Baptist denomination. The Church may also advance education and carry out other charitable purposes in the United Kingdom and/or other parts of the world. The Church became a registered charity in August 2017.

Structure, Governance and Management

Members of the Church are accepted in accordance with the Constitution which requires them to have been publicly baptised on the profession of faith in Jesus Christ, or, following other modes of baptism, to have made a public profession of faith in Jesus Christ.

In 2023 six Church members' meetings were held. These meetings have responsibility for the overall policy of the Church.

In accordance with the Constitution, the members appointed five Trustees for 2023. The Trustees, together with the Minister (who was also appointed by the Members and is the sixth Trustee), are responsible for the day to day running of the Church's work and witness, and the financial and legal aspects of the charity. Four of those Trustees continue to serve, but 1 has stepped down having relocated away from the area.

All members are encouraged to take an appropriate part in the spiritual and practical tasks involved in the furtherance of the Church's purpose.

Relevant matters may be submitted to the Church members' meeting by the Trustees for guidance and decision or may be raised by members in Church meeting for further consideration by the Trustees. Though the Constitution permits decisions to be made at Church meetings by appropriate majorities, the Church seeks to work by consensus wherever possible.

Objectives and Activities

To achieve the principal purpose, which is set out above, the Church provides a variety of activities both to its membership and to the community generally. The aim is to show the love of Jesus Christ through our relationships, our words and our actions.

In 2022 we started to regroup after the pandemic and lockdowns. We started to follow a new model for gathering together, based on our Vision 2020, and also based on our learnings during the pandemic when we were forced to consider what church really means. We now meet on Sunday as a gathered church twice a month for prayer, worship, celebration, and teaching. Once a month we meet in small groups for fellowship, discipleship and sharing. And once a month we hold a Community Sunday where different small groups engage with the community around our church, seeking to bless and serve our neighbours. On these Sundays we have also started to run an early service called Fun & Faith for families with young children. The fifth Sunday, when it occurs, generally coincides with a special celebration like Christmas or Easter. We continue with this pattern of meeting.

The Church seeks to be a friendly and welcoming community, and anybody is free to attend any of these meetings.

The community activities we support have continued. These continue to include meetings for parents and carers with Little Blessings (formerly Toddlers), a Baby Group, and weekly coffee mornings. The Church also maintains close links with the village school.

We have embarked on a new initiative as we explore ways to help carers within the community. The church has organised meetings for carers to share common experiences, and we aim to develop this ministry during the coming year.

In line with our wish to be inclusive we are also developing ways of facilitating some of our older and increasingly infirm church members being able to attend whole church gatherings. There is some cost to the church, but we feel that this is an important and worthwhile initiative.

An important role for the whole church is to reach out to the community and the wider world in social action to show God's generous heart. The Church supports several local and international Christian charities through prayer, financial support, and other means.

As part of our commitment to serve the village in social action and support, we continued to make our premises available for a mobile Post Office service. We also host a village lunch club once a month, also available to the wider community.

The activities of the Church are advertised on the Church website: lifeinseergreen.org

The Church operates systems to ensure that all people working with children and vulnerable adults are appropriately vetted regarding the Disclosure and Barring Service. One of the trustees is the designated Safeguarding Trustee.

The Church has read the Charity Commission guidance on public benefit and is satisfied that the activities outlined above clearly demonstrate that the charity is providing a benefit to the public.

Achievements and Performance

The Church does not measure the success of its activity in numbers but rather in less tangible areas like fellowship, encouragement, spiritual growth and generally providing a positive, beneficial impact in the community.

The Charity Trustees recognise that these are not easy to measure but believe that 2023 was another very positive year in the life of the Church. We look forward to pursuing our vision in 2024 with renewed enthusiasm.

Involvement in SGBC

Children (Under 11)	5
Adults in Regular Contact	170
Dedications	0
Baptisms	0
Baptist Members	41

Financial Review

The financial results for 2023 together with a summary of the accounting policies adopted are set out in the accompanying financial statements.

The Church received total income of ££98,953 and incurred expenditure of £98,477 resulting in a surplus of £476. The year ended with current assets of £55,996. The deficit on the unrestricted fund of £3,795 is entirely due to the decision to undertake repairs to the church roof at a total cost of £10,200. Without this, the underlying position was positive.

The Church raises the funds which it needs to carry on its activities from within its own membership and congregation. Funds are also raised from donations received for the use of the premises. No wider public appeal for funds was made during the year. We introduced a cashless payment system to make payments easier and this seems to be positive.

A Minister was employed for the full year. The associated costs are set out in Note 8.

The Church is an employer participating in a pension scheme known as the Baptist Pension Scheme ("the Scheme"). The Scheme is a separate legal entity which is managed by the Pension Trustee (Baptist Pension Trust Limited). See Note 9 for further details.

The Church is heavily dependent on its membership working as volunteers in all aspects of the Church's activities, many of which run with little or no impact on the Church's expenditure, but nevertheless contribute substantially to the achievement of the Church's objectives.

Donations were made to national and international organisations with Christian aims and objectives compatible with the Church's Purpose. The main details of these grants are set out in notes 11 and 13.

The Charity Trustees have established a Reserves Policy and are satisfied that there are enough reserves at the balance sheet date, together with ongoing income anticipated, to enable the Church to function effectively in the coming year. The Charity Trustees have assessed major risks facing the Church and are satisfied that there are measures in place to minimise these risks.

Looking ahead to 2024

The trustees are committed to expanding the life of the Church in line with our new vision. We continue to seek the will of God and to be guided by the Holy Spirit. We regularly review the effectiveness of our activities and make appropriate changes. We believe in 2024 we will:

- continue to seek ways to make church relevant;
- anticipate further exciting developments as we listen to God, each other and the community and develop our vision;
- seek to serve the village in social action and support;
- above all, continue to seek to follow Jesus.

The Trustees Report was approved by the Trustees at their meeting on 5th March 2024 and signed by the chair of the meeting, Reverend Louise Gilbertson

L. C. Gilbertson

Reverend Louise Gilbertson

2. Charity information

Trustees:

Reverend Louise Gilbertson (Minister and Missional Leader)
Tim Cox (Secretary)
Barry Richardson (Treasurer)
David Horncastle (Retired October 1st 2023)
Ian Woodley
Hilary O'Flanagan

Registered Address:

Seer Green Baptist Church
Woodpond Close
Seer Green
Buckinghamshire
HP9 2XG

Bankers:

CAF Bank Ltd
25 Kings Hill Avenue
Kings Hill
West Malling
Kent
ME19 4JQ

National Westminster Bank plc.
250 Bishopsgate
London
EC2M 4AA

Contact details:

Telephone: 01494 677266
Web: lifeinseergreen.org
Email: treasurer@lifeinseergreen.org

3. Independent examiner's report on the accounts


CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees/
members of

Seer Green Baptist Church

On accounts for the year
ended31st December 2023Charity no
(if any)

1174411

Set out on pages

8 to 14

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended **31/12/2023**.

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").

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.

Independent
examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention 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.

Signed:

Date:

6th March 2024

Name:

David S Jordan

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

FCCA

Address:

Dell Lees, Seer Green

Beaconsfield

Buckinghamshire

4. Statement of financial activities for the year to 31st December 2023

	2023				2022	Notes
	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds Note 13	Designated Funds Note 12	TOTAL Funds	TOTAL Funds	
Income						
Gifts and donations	£61,731.84			£61,731.84	£60,883.58	3
Use of premises	£18,887.50			£18,887.50	£18,954.75	
Income from events	£3,385.15			£3,385.15	£1,366.66	
Utilities Refunds	£218.58			£218.58	£0.00	
Restricted giving		£4,895.27		£4,895.27	£7,001.79	13
Designated income			£9,835.02	£9,835.02	£739.65	12
TOTAL INCOME	£84,223.07	£4,895.27	£9,835.02	£98,953.36	£88,946.43	
Running costs of the church						
Caretaker	£2,664.00			£2,664.00	£1,898.81	
Church maintenance and cleaning	£7,963.04			£7,963.04	£7,789.85	
Special project - electric board	£0.00			£0.00	£2,694.00	5
Special project - manse kitchen	£0.00			£0.00	£15,900.00	5
Special project - church roof	£10,200.00			£10,200.00	£3,000.00	5
Church management	£3,498.65			£3,498.65	£3,166.53	5
Church utilities	£6,607.39			£6,607.39	£5,412.74	
Other costs	£7,862.98			£7,862.98	£5,713.01	6
Manse costs (excl. special projects)	£120.00			£120.00	£2,456.80	7
Minister and mission leader						
Employment costs	£18,143.40			£18,143.40	£16,696.57	8,9
Mission						
Regular outreach, children & families	£9,024.24			£9,024.24	£8,533.89	
Equipping ourselves & specific events	£5,867.98			£5,867.98	£2,866.63	10
Support of missionary societies	£16,000.00			£16,000.00	£13,976.65	11
Restricted Expenditure		£5,536.75		£5,536.75	£5,838.08	13
Designated expenditure			£4,989.19	£4,989.19	£1,041.86	12
Transfer Unrest. to Rest.	£66.67	-£66.67		£0.00	£0.00	
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	£88,018.35	£5,470.08	£4,989.19	£98,477.62	£96,985.42	
Surplus/Deficit	-£3,795.28	-£574.81	£4,845.83	£475.74	-£8,038.99	

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Designated Funds	TOTAL
Total funds on 1st Jan 2023	£51,893.31	£3,249.66	£377.98	£55,520.95
Income	£84,223.07	£4,895.27	£9,835.02	£98,953.36
Expenditure	£88,018.35	£5,470.08	£4,989.10	£98,477.62
Total funds on 31st Dec 2023	£48,098.03	£2,674.85	£5,223.81	£55,996.69

5. Statement of assets and liabilities as at 31st December 2023

	Note	31 December 2023 £	31 December 2022 £
Fixed assets	14	0	0
Current assets			
Cash at bank		55,996.69	55,520.95
Total assets		55,996.69	55,520.95
Liabilities	4	0	0
Represented by			
Unrestricted funds		48,098.03	51,893.31
Designated funds	12	5,223.81	377.98
Restricted funds	13	2,674.85	3,249.66
Total funds		55,996.69	55,520.95

The above statement of assets and liabilities, the statement of financial activities and the accompanying notes to the accounts were approved by the Trustees at their meeting on 5th March 2024 and signed by:

L. C. Gilbertson

Reverend Louise Gilbertson

Minister, Missional Leader and trustee

Barry Richardson

Treasurer and trustee

6. Notes to the accounts for the year to 31st December 2023

1. Basis of financial statements.

The accounts have been prepared on a cash receipts and payments basis.

2. Accounting policies.

- a) Income – Donations, tax rebates and payments for the use of premises are accounted for gross when received.
- b) Expenditure is included on a cash basis, inclusive of VAT which cannot be recovered. Where expenditure relates to more than one cost category, it is apportioned on an appropriate basis. Most of the management is carried out without charge by volunteers. This intangible cost is not included in the Statement of Financial Activities since there is no measurable cost attributed to the volunteers for their service.
- c) Grants – The Church makes grants to other organisations whose charitable objectives complement its own. They are accounted for in the year in which they are paid.
- d) Stock – The value of stock held at the year-end has not been included in these financial statements as it is not considered to be material.
- e) Unrestricted Funds are available for use at the discretion of the Trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the Church and which have not been designated for other purposes.
- f) Designated funds are funds set aside and used for designated purposes but are available for use at the discretion of the trustees.
- g) Restricted funds are funds that can only be used for specific purposes within the objectives of the Church. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular restricted purposes.
- h) Tax Status – The Church is a Registered charity within the definitions of section 506(1) Income and Corporation Taxes Act 1988 and is therefore able to take advantage of the exemptions given by Section 505 of that Act.
- i) Pension costs - The Church is an employer participating in the pension scheme described in Note 9. The costs of employer contributions are accounted for in the year they are payable.

3. Income and amounts due to the church

Seer Green Baptist Church is a charity and is registered for Gift Aid. Tax is reclaimed on Gift Aided donations and on small anonymous offerings of less than £30 under the Gift Aided Small Donations Scheme (GASDS). During the year amounts totalling £13,477.04 were claimed from H M Revenue & Customs in respect of Gift Aid and GADS.

At 31st December 2023 there were amounts receivable as follows:

- HMRC Gift Aid claims of £1,794.67 received on 4th January 2024 in respect of 2023 donations received.
- Payment for use of premises of £573.75 which has now been received.

The total unrestricted income from Gifts and Donations of £61,734.84 includes bank interest earned of £227.62 (2022 - £58.39).

4. Expenditure and amounts due from the church

As permitted and as stated above, these accounts are prepared on a cash receipts and payments basis. At the year end amounts totalling £1,135 were due to be paid to suppliers of goods and services received during the 2023 year. All amounts were settled within the first two weeks of 2024.

5. Church management and special projects

The Church Management category includes administration, preaching fees, insurance, governance costs, and running the photocopier.

During the 2023 significant repairs were carried out to the church roof at a cost of £10,200.

6. Other costs

This category includes technology, catering, general supplies, minister's expenses, licences, small repairs and replacements and other incidental costs.

7. Manse costs

This category refers to essential maintenance and running costs for the Stable Lane property to the extent that these are not paid for by the Minister.

8. Staff costs and trustee expenses.

	£
Salaries - net	13,663.84
Tax and national Insurance	612.36
Pension costs	3,644.40
Salary adjustment – repaid 2024	222.80
Total	18,143.40

One member of staff was employed for the full year.

No employee received remuneration in excess of £60,000.

No sums were reimbursed to the Trustees for their work as Trustees.

Direct payments to employees: Rev. Louise Gilbertson, Minister: £18,131.40 (includes employer NIC and pension contributions). The Minister acts as one of SGBC's Trustees and receives remuneration (as shown above) and other benefits in respect of her service as Minister, including the provision of manse accommodation by the church. The balance between £18,131.40 and £18,143.40 represents pension deficit payments – see note 9.

9. Pension costs.

The Church is an employer participating in a pension scheme known as the Baptist Pension Scheme ("the Scheme"). The Scheme is a separate legal entity which is managed by the Pension Trustee (Baptist Pension Trust Limited). The Minister is eligible to join the Scheme.

From January 2012, pension provision is being made through the Defined Contribution (DC) Plan within the Scheme. In general, members pay 8% of their Pensionable Income and employers pay 6% of members' Pensionable Income into individual pension accounts, which are operated and managed on behalf of the Pension Trustee by Legal and General Life Assurance Society Limited. In addition, the employer pays a further 4% of Pensionable Income (or 3% if the employer is in the segregated DC section) to cover Death in Service Benefits, administration costs, and an associated insurance policy which provides income protection for Scheme members in the event that they are unable to work due to long-term incapacity. This income protection policy has been insured by the Baptist Union of Great Britain with Aviva. Members of the Basic Section pay reduced contributions of 5% of Pensionable Income, and their employers also pay a total of 5%.

Benefits in respect of service prior to 1 January 2012 are provided through the Defined Benefit (DB) Plan within the Scheme. The main benefits for pre-2012 service were a defined benefit pension of one eightieth of Final Minimum Pensionable Income for each year of Pensionable Service, together with additional pension in respect of premiums paid on Pensionable Income in excess of Minimum Pensionable Income. The Scheme, previously known as the Baptist Ministers' Pension Fund, started in 1925, but was closed to future accrual of defined benefits on 31 December 2011.

In addition to the payments in respect of the current Minister's pension, the church has also been making mandatory contributions (known as Deficit Recovery Contributions – DRCs) in respect of the deficit in the Defined Benefit Scheme.

On 29th July 2022 the Church was informed by the Baptist Pension Scheme that "The Trustee and the Baptist Union had agreed that DRCs will reduce to £1 per month (previously £312.48 per month) for each employer from the August 2022 payment until June 2026. Currently, we do not anticipate reinstating the requirement to pay full DRCs in the future but we cannot rule that out at this stage."

As there are a large number of contributing employers participating in the Scheme, the Church is unable to identify its share of the underlying assets and liabilities of the scheme. Accordingly, due to the nature of the Scheme, the profit and loss charge for the period represents the employer contributions payable. The total pension payments made by the Church was £3,644.40 in 2023. (2022 £5,132).

10. Equipping ourselves, and specific events

During 2023 we continued with the provision of welcome packs for newcomers to the village, an Alpha course, attended training courses, organised a number of outreach events and supported various events taking place in the village of Seer Green.

11. Grants to missionary societies

During 2023 the Church's policy was to give 20% of the previous year's underlying, unrestricted income to missionary societies and other causes in line with the Churches governance document. The actual amounts donated from unrestricted giving were:

SEER GREEN BAPTIST CHURCH

Grants to missionary societies and other causes made during the year:

	Amount
BMS World Mission	£1,214.40
Interserve (for Simon and Ursula Standen)	£2,853.50
Central Baptist Home Mission	£1,214.40
Stewardship (for Mandy and Noel Taylor)	£1,745.62
Seer Ministries	£2,235.24
Dave McGuire	£500.00
Hanga Translators	£789.80
HGC Pastors	£660.00
One Can	£1,100.00
Wycombe Homeless	£1,200.00
CAP (Christians Against Poverty)	£1,200.00
Open Doors	£787.04
Reverend J Carr	£500.00
Total	<u>£16,000.00</u>

One of the recipients of this missionary giving is the Baptist Union Corporation Limited which is also a charity number 249635, and which is controlled by the Baptist Union Council. The Church is a member of the Baptist Union of Great Britain, and the Central Baptist Association. The Church also donated to the Baptist Union Home Mission Scheme.

Barry Richardson is a Trustee of Seer Ministries, as well as a Trustee of the Church, but he played no part in the decision to give to those two charities.

12. Designated funds for Torchlight and Little Blessings.

Torchlight, a children's activity run by the Church and Little Blessing, an activity for parents, carers and the young children in their care, also run by the Church, keep their funds in the main church bank account, represented by these designated fund movements. The movement on these designated funds was as follows:

Designated Fund	Balance at 1st January 2023 £ p	Income for the Year £ p	Expenditure for the Year £ p	Balance at 31st December 2023 £ p
Torchlight	377.98	2,977.50	-2,475.34	880.14
Little Blessings	0	6,857.52	-2,513.85	4,343.67
Total	377.98	9,835.02	-4,989.19	<u>5,223.81</u>

At the beginning of 2023, it was decided by the Church and those involved in running Little Blessings that donations received and expenses incurred in respect of this activity should be brought within the financial

control of Seer Green Baptist Church. Previously, it had been run independently and in May 2023 an amount of £3,336 was paid into the church accounts representing the net accumulated funds to that date. This one-off amount is included in the total receipts of £6,857 shown as income in these accounts.

13. Restricted funds.

Restricted funds are used when a donor specifies the purpose to which the donation is to be used.

The movement on the restricted funds during the year and balances at the year-end are as follows:

Restricted fund	Balance at		Income		Expenditure		Balance at	
	1st January		for the		for the		31st December	
	2023		Year		Year		2023	
	£	p	£	p	£	p	£	p
Childrens work		250.00						250.00
Fellowship fund		562.50				100.00		462.50
Music		608.67						608.67
Graft		442.00						442.00
Defibrillator		510.25				73.59		436.66
EcoChurch		77.31				50.00		27.31
David McGuire		150.67	3,324.08		3,401.79			72.96
Tear Child		11.25	213.50		210.00			14.75
Hanga translators		0.00	720.00		360.00			360.00
Baptist Missionary Society		390.00	97.50		487.50			0.00
Healthy Living Project		0.00	266.89		266.89			0.00
One Can		247.01	0.00		247.01			0.00
W Hirlihy funeral (Macular Society)		0.00	273.30		273.30			0.00
Total		3,249.66	4,895.27		5,470.08			2,674.85

The Fellowship fund is used at the discretion of the Minister (and during the period between Ministers, the discretion of the Deacons), specifically for use amongst the members of the church and Seer Green community, in situations where it is discerned there is need for financial support.

14. Ownership of property.

The church premises and the church manse are included in the financial statements at zero asset value. The value of the church premises cannot easily be ascertained and there are significant restrictions on the use of the building for anything other than a church. The legal titles to these properties are held by the church's custodian trustee (The Baptist Union Corporation Limited) for the church as the beneficial owner (subject to the relevant trusts). The church premises have an insured value of £1,136,493 and The Manse has an insured value of £325,473.