

St Mark's Milton Keynes

Report and Accounts

Year ended 31 March 2023

ST MARK'S MILTON KEYNES
LEGAL & ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

ADDRESS FOR CORRESPONDENCE	29 Bradwell Road Bradville Milton Keynes MK13 7AX
GOVERNING DOCUMENT	Constitution dated 13 August 2018 Registered 26 September 2018
CHARITY REGISTRATION NUMBER	1180087
TRUSTEES RESPONSIBLE FOR MANAGING THE CHARITY	A M Rosier (resigned 31 March 2023) P Oxley J Hyde A Jones H Bunce (resigned 31 March 2023)
KEY MANAGEMENT	R Lawrence P Oxley
BANKERS	HSBC UK Bank plc
INDEPENDENT EXAMINER	Lisa Darby FCA Stewardship 1 Lamb's Passage LONDON EC1Y 8AB

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ST MARK'S MILTON KEYNES
REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

Formation

St Mark's Milton Keynes was established as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation by a Constitution dated 13th August 2018 and has the Registered Charity Number 1180087.

Trustees

The trustees are the only voting members of the charity. They are not remunerated in any form for their services as trustees.

The existing trustees have the power to appoint new or additional trustees.

Under the terms of the Constitution, the trustees have the power to do anything which is calculated to further the objects of the charity or is conducive or incidental to doing so. The income and property of the charity must be applied solely towards the promotion of its objects.

Objects of the charity

The objects of the charity are, for the public benefit:

1. The advancement of the Christian faith, in accordance with the Statement of Faith, in Milton Keynes and such other parts of the United Kingdom and the world as the Charity Trustees may from time to time decide; and
2. The prevention and/or relief of poverty in particular, but not exclusively, by providing financial support to individuals in need, and charities or organisations working to prevent or relieve poverty.

Summary of the charity's main activities and achievements

Throughout the period on which this report reflects, the country went through several seismic changes and events. All church ministry is done best when done with full awareness of the contexts and the times in which it is done. Those who read this report will quickly see that the activity of St Marks continued to be informed and inspired by the context and times about which we write.

There were events which affected us all, over which we of course had neither control nor influence. The death of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth immediately springs to mind as an example of a single event which effected each community across the UK. So too did the invasion of Ukraine and the immediate arrival of many Ukrainian refugees to the city. And of course the worsening economic situation of the country continued to take its toll on people throughout Milton Keynes as the political decisions taken in Westminster, the invasive actions taken in Moscow and numerous other factors combined to create a Cost of Living Crisis of huge proportion which pushed us and many other charities to new levels of response, ingenuity and need.

While all this is change, none of which we hope will be permanent, there remains three foundations stones on which we hope to consistently build as a church. Faith, Hope and Love. As in previous years, the remainder of this report will be grouped around these themes.

And while Faith, Hope and Love remain a consistent theme each year, so also remains our gratitude to the people who make St Marks.

St Marks is not primarily an organisation or legal entity. It is foremost a group of individual disciples of Jesus who dedicate their time, energy, creativity and resources to the work of the Church. As trustees we know that nothing would happen were it not for their commitment and effort. We are thankful for them and keen that they take credit for all that is commended in this report.

In particular we would like to thank both Hannah Bunch and Alice Rosier for their service as trustees. Alice in particular, having served for ten years, deserves special thanks. Both however gave freely of immense wisdom and reflective leadership. As they step down from the board at the end of this financial year we await for replacements who might be their equal.

Faith

St Marks celebrated its 10th anniversary in summer 2022. The survival of any start-up organisation for a decade is statistically unlikely, and the arrival of this anniversary, especially following a pandemic and several periods of lockdown, is no mean feat! It was a joy to celebrate this milestone, and to be able to do so together in person.

Gathering has remained tricky throughout this year. We began this reporting period meeting publicly, though Covid remained a live issue for people, with many struggling still to meet indoors.

A combination of financial pressures and organisational pragmatism led us to spend the second half of 2022 and first half of 2023 meeting weekly for church in the homes of St Marks members. Despite this being problematic for growth and the ability of new people to seek out the church gatherings, this pattern of meeting was wonderful for relationship, discipleship, developing deep friendships and replenishing much of what was lost throughout the pandemic lockdowns.

Throughout this time we also continued to produce resources for both our church and the wider church in Milton Keynes, funded largely through a Diocese of Oxford grant. We produced and published a book of prayers and poems, created a “pop-up prayer space” for any local church group to use, and a series of “Prayer Boxes” for families and small groups in collaboration with an acclaimed illustrator. These resources will continue to be available and to assist disciples long after the ending of this grant.

Our partnership with Open Doors continued to grow, with Rev Oxley being invited to their Head Office to speak to a full staff meeting, as well as becoming a national ambassador for the organisation, speaking on behalf of persecuted Christians around the world.

This level of partnership continued also more locally with Toybox, again, with Rev Oxley invited to lead a staff day of Prayer and team training.

Both these partnerships remain important to us as a church as expressions of care for those beyond our immediate reach.

Hope

One of our strategic aims is to combat the causes and effects of child poverty within the City of Milton Keynes. St Marks Meals has continued to do this through the provision of Meals Boxes in over 100 local schools, while the establishment and growth of the Milton Keynes Child Poverty Partnership (MKCPP) has helped to advocate for children at a more strategic and preventative level.

St Mark's Meals

There have been many highlights in our work this year. The Winter Fuel Crisis, the Cost of Living Crisis and other factors have resulted in an increasing level of need. We continue to partner with more schools who do a wonderful job in ensuring that local children are assured of dinner each evening.

This year we have seen the growth of a number of local partnerships with organisations other than schools. Four local businesses have made St Marks Meals their 'charity of the year' resulting in fundraising, awareness and practical support as well as expertise sharing. We have also had some incredible fund-raisers who have run marathons, held coral events, hosted concerts and much more in support of us for which we are incredibly grateful.

We have also hosted visiting dignitaries, including King Charles at the warehouse, which has been an honour.

The year culminated in the appointment of an operations assistant to help us cope with increased demand. This new position, made possible by our wonderful supporters, has enabled us to continue delivering meals boxes to those who need them.

MKCPP

Our hope was always that we would be able to tackle child poverty in a preventative way as well as direct emergency support. The MKCPP was established by Rev Oxley in response to several national and local studies and consultations. This year the MKCPP hosted two learning and collaboration events attended by over 50 different organisations from multiple sectors, all seeking to help eradicate child poverty in the City.

As well as this, a Winter Fuel emergency group was convened to advocate for children and petition for emergency support during the crisis period.

These events, and our advocacy work has led to multiple media appearances on local and regional TV & radio for Rev Oxley, speaking on behalf of children in MK.

These efforts have begun to effect policy decisions taken in MK and we hope will continue as we develop the "One Gen" initiative, seeing to eradicate child poverty within a generation.

Sanctuary

The second area in which we seek to bring hope to others is in the area of Domestic Abuse. As well as our continued support of MK-Act, we have developed, with the help of a diocesan grant, the Sanctuary Learning Communities. This year we were able to hold three communities: learning events for leaders of churches to discover together how to grow as safe leaders, leading safe churches for survivors.

Although the grant has now concluded, we hope to be able to continue these learning communities and know that the web-based resources and videoed seminars will be of use to local churches long after the ending of the financial support.

Love

Our final foundation value is Love, which is perhaps the more tricky to measure and on which to report.

However, while the work of St Marks is wide and varied, it is only ever able to be as strong, as deep or as effective as it is, because of the foundation on which it is built. The community of St Marks, rooted and established in love remains committed to providing care and showing love to each other in countless ways, both large and small and many of which remain unseen.

From providing meals to mothers of new-borns, continued care of refugee families, hospital visits, care of children, sharing of resources and many other tiny acts of sharing and community building, St Marks continues to grow as a community who know and care for one another deeply. This is a church not based on attendance but on participation, where acts of love are more important than statements of theology and relationship remains at the core of what we do, for it is who we are.

Financial review

A closing remark must be given as always to the finances and sustainability of the charity. These are, it is clear, testing times. Like other churches and charities we have faced the twin challenge of increased costs and decreased income. This has been a real challenge and at times has demanded high levels of faith, work and planning. This reality of course was built on the foundation of the challenging years of the Covid pandemic. Much work, analysis, planning and preparation has been done: the church has increased their generous financial support and the staff & trustees have worked diligently to ensure that we end the year financially stable with plans to build reserves again and continue well into the future.

Reserves policy

We look to always hold approx £20,000 or 3 months unrestricted expenditure in reserve. As will be clear in this report, and has been clear in our communication as a charity throughout the year, we have not always been able to achieve this, but end the year in a much more positive position than we have been. Deep analysis of giving trends and spending patterns by the trustees has led to new insights and the ability to plan our activity within a 'rebuilding budget' has emerged.

Risk Statement

The trustees continue to review and monitor the risks to which they consider the charity to be exposed currently or in potential future scenarios. Appropriate procedures and plans are in place to continue this identification and monitoring, with reviews taking place regularly.

Trustees' Responsibilities

Charity law requires us as trustees to prepare financial statements for each accounting year which record the receipts and payments of the charity for the year.

We are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable us to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011.

We also have a responsibility to safeguard the assets of the charity and to take reasonable steps to prevent fraud or any other irregularities.

What follows are a few snapshot highlights, they could never convey a full sense of all that has taken place in the past 12 months, nor, we suspect, that which might follow in the next!

Approval

This report was approved by the trustees and signed on their behalf by:

Paul Oxley

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Rev Paul Oxley
Chair of Trustees

Date: 21 January 2024

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT

TO THE TRUSTEES OF

ST MARK'S MILTON KEYNES

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of St Mark's Milton Keynes ('the charity') for the year ended 31 March 2023 on pages 9 to 10 following.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the trustees of the charity you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the 2011 Act').

I report in respect of my examination of the charity's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 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 giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act; or
2. 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.

Lisa Darby

Lisa Darby FCA

Stewardship
1 Lamb's Passage
LONDON
EC1Y 8AB

Date: 22nd January 2024

ST MARK'S MILTON KEYNES
RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

		Unrestricted General Funds	Restricted Funds	2023	2022
Notes	£	£	£	£	£
<i>Income receipts</i>					
Donations and grants		46,049	86,369	132,418	138,702
Gift aid receipts		861	3,739	4,600	3,376
Other		592	-	592	-
		<u>47,502</u>	<u>90,108</u>	<u>137,610</u>	<u>142,078</u>
<i>Total receipts</i>		<u>47,502</u>	<u>90,108</u>	<u>137,610</u>	<u>142,078</u>
<i>Payments</i>					
Payments in relation to charitable activities undertaken directly	2	48,932	70,428	119,360	115,206
Grants paid in relation to charitable activities undertaken by others	3	4,320	4,332	8,652	19,304
		<u>53,252</u>	<u>74,760</u>	<u>128,012</u>	<u>134,510</u>
<i>Total payments</i>		<u>53,252</u>	<u>74,760</u>	<u>128,012</u>	<u>134,510</u>
Net of receipts / (payments) before transfers		(5,750)	15,348	9,598	7,568
Transfers between funds		(1,996)	1,996	-	-
Net movement in funds		<u>(7,746)</u>	<u>17,344</u>	<u>9,598</u>	<u>7,568</u>
Cash funds as at last year end		13,595	60,945	74,540	66,972
Cash funds at this year end	A	<u>5,849</u>	<u>78,289</u>	<u>84,138</u>	<u>74,540</u>

The notes on pages 9-10 form part of these accounts.

ST MARK'S MILTON KEYNES
STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

	Unrestricted General funds £	Restricted funds £	2023 £	2022 £
A Cash funds				
Cash at bank with immediate access - Co-Op Bank	5,849	76,921	82,770	73,507
Cash at bank with immediate access - Soldo	-	1,368	1,368	1,033
	5,849	78,289	84,138	74,540
B Debtors & Liabilities				
HMRC payroll debtor	1,089	223	1,312	-
Gift aid debtor	116	502	618	1,200
Fee for Independent Examination (liability)	1,000	-	1,000	1,200
Accrued expenses (liability)	-	-	-	702
	2,205	725	2,930	3,102
C Guarantees and secured debts				

The charity has not given any guarantees and has not provided its assets as security for any liabilities.

The accounts were approved by the trustees and signed on their behalf

by *Paul Oxley* date: 21 January 2024

Rev Paul Oxley

Chair

The notes on pages 9-10 form part of these accounts.

ST MARK'S MILTON KEYNES

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

1 Accounting policies

The accounts have been prepared on a receipts and payments basis and comprise a statement that shows the charity's receipts and payments, a statement that summarises the charity's assets and liabilities and related notes. The accountancy profession have determined that only accounts prepared in accordance with applicable accounting standards present a 'true and fair' view and, as these receipts and payments accounts have not (and cannot) be prepared in accordance with accounting standards, these accounts do not present (and are not intended to present) a 'true and fair' view of the charity's financial activities and state of affairs.

General funds are unrestricted funds which are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the charity. Designated funds comprise unrestricted funds that have been set aside by the trustees for particular purposes. Restricted funds are donations which are to be used in accordance with specific restrictions imposed by donors; they include donations received from appeals for specific activities or projects.

	Unrestricted General funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2023 £	Total 2022 £
2 Payments in relation to charitable activities undertaken directly				
Employment costs (Note 4)	29,404	32,098	61,503	72,623
St Marks Meals food & packaging expenses	-	22,870	22,870	12,062
St Marks Meals fundraising expenses		1,720	1,720	907
St Marks Meals rent expenses		2,183	2,183	1,151
St Marks Meals other expenses		5,857	5,857	3,089
Pray-MK expenses	-	2,655	2,655	5,999
Sanctuary expenses	141	46	187	-
Property costs (Note 2a and 4)	9,992	-	9,992	9,084
Minor equipment	831	-	831	416
Pastoral care	1,585	-	1,585	1,002
Administration expenses	2,032	2,331	4,363	3,178
Events and outreach activities	4,315	-	4,315	4,347
Conferences and training	-	-	-	-
Work among the young	120	158	278	357
Accounts & independent examination	511	510	1,021	990
	<u>48,932</u>	<u>70,428</u>	<u>119,360</u>	<u>115,205</u>
2 (a) Property costs comprise:				
Church of England Parish share Manse	9,992	-	9,992	9,084
	<u>9,992</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>9,992</u>	<u>9,084</u>
3 Grants paid in relation to charitable activities undertaken by others				
Grants for:				
Mission	4,200	3,812	8,012	18,321
Relief of poverty	-	520	520	743
Education and training	120	-	120	240
	<u>4,320</u>	<u>4,332</u>	<u>8,652</u>	<u>19,304</u>

4 Transactions with related parties

Paul Oxley, a trustee, was paid a salary of £27,548 (2022: £22,209) and pension contributions of £1,377 (2022: £1,263). These payments were made in the capacity of serving as a member of the charity's staff and not for serving as a trustee; these payments are permitted by the charity's governing document.

In addition the charity incurred expenditure totalling £9,992 (2022: £9,084) in respect of the provision of accommodation (which is customary for ministers) to Paul Oxley, who is a trustee so that they could better perform their duties.

5 Movement on restricted funds

	Balance at 31.03.22	Receipts	Payments	Transfers	Balance at 31.03.23
	£	£	£	£	£
General funds	13,596	47,501	(53,252)	(1,996)	5,849
	<u>13,596</u>	<u>47,501</u>	<u>(53,252)</u>	<u>(1,996)</u>	<u>5,849</u>
Restricted funds					
St Marks Meals	57,817	84,763	(64,508)	-	78,071
Work to help Syrian Refugees	48	284	(1,061)	729	-
Acts of Kindness	39	-	-	-	39
Youthwork+	-	2,909	(2,909)	(0)	-
Hardship	666	-	(520)	-	146
Pray-MK	1,256	179	(2,655)	1,221	-
MKCPP	-	-	(46)	46	-
Sanctuary	1,119	1,245	(2,331)	-	33
Chief Operations Officer Salary	-	729	(729)	-	-
	<u>60,944</u>	<u>90,109</u>	<u>(74,760)</u>	<u>1,996</u>	<u>78,289</u>
Total funds	<u>74,540</u>	<u>137,610</u>	<u>(128,012)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>84,138</u>

St Marks Meals' provides meals for children and families in schools and children's centres across Milton Keynes who are in need.

Hardship Fund and 'Acts of Kindness' provides those in need with gifts.

Youthwork+ is a project with young people

Pray-MK is a gathering of churches from across Milton Keynes who meet to worship and pray for the city.

The Milton Keynes Child Poverty Partnership (MKCPP) brings together many different charities from across Milton Keynes to ensure good working, sharing of resources and to advocate with a united voice on behalf of the children of MK.

Sanctuary is a local network of churches seeking to become safe spaces led by safe leaders who respond well to survivors of domestic abuse.