

Solent Evangelical Church

Report and Accounts

Year ended 29 February 2024

Stewardship 
Active generosity

1 Lamb's Passage, London EC1Y 8AB
www.stewardship.org.uk

SOLENT EVANGELICAL CHURCH
LEGAL & ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 29 FEBRUARY 2024

ADDRESS FOR CORRESPONDENCE	365A Forton Road Gosport PO12 3HF
GOVERNING DOCUMENT	CIO Constitution Registered 18 December 2018
CHARITY REGISTRATION NUMBER	1181249
TRUSTEES RESPONSIBLE FOR MANAGING THE CHARITY	David Hugh Stanford (Pastor) Ronald Philip Bygrave Paul David Williams
BANKERS	Santander Business Banking Bridle Road Bootle Merseyside L30 4GB
INSURERS	Ansvar Insurance Ansvar House St Leonards Road Eastbourne BN21 3UR
AFFILIATIONS	Fellowship of Independent Evangelical Churches (FIEC) Solent Gospel Partnership (SGP)
INDEPENDENT EXAMINER	Sarah Crispin (ACA) Stewardship 1 Lamb's Passage LONDON EC1Y 8AB

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Solent Evangelical Church

Trustees' Annual Report and Financial Statement

Reporting Period: 1 March 2023 to 29 February 2024

Governance

The managing trustees of the charity are the elders, who are appointed by members in accordance with the Church Handbook. The current elders are listed above. Ron Bygrave and Paul Williams were re-elected for a 5 year term at a Church Members Meeting held on 6 November 2019. David Stanford as an employed elder / pastor is not appointed for a fixed term of office but his appointment as elder (managing trustee) would terminate with his employment were that to cease according to the proper processes.

Deacons are also appointed in support of the elders and to take responsibility for various roles in the life of the church which would otherwise distract the elders from the primary leadership role. Paul Bassett was appointed for a 3 year term in November 2022. His special responsibilities are for the tech equipment and for publicity. Rachel Bassett was appointed for a 3 year term in July 2023. She is particularly responsible for the finances and is the church treasurer. She also performs other administrative tasks. Her part time employment also involves other duties which are not tied to her role as deacon.

Charity Objectives

As set out in our Constitution, the objectives of Solent Evangelical Church are:

The advancement of the Christian faith in accordance with the Basis of Faith primarily but not exclusively within Gosport and the surrounding neighbourhood; and such other charitable purposes as shall, in the opinion of the charity trustees, put into practice the Christian faith in accordance with the Basis of Faith.

Activities in fulfilment of the Objectives

The church is committed to helping any who we can to come to know and follow Jesus and leading people to faith in Jesus is core to the advancement of the Christian faith. This is of huge benefit to those who come to trust in God in this way, and we believe it is therefore a great public benefit to give people the opportunity to hear about the Christian faith.

Over the period March 2023 – February 2024 we have sought to fulfil this mission and our objectives in the following ways.

- Regular Sunday morning services, including singing, prayer, Bible reading and preaching. These are our primary gathering of the week, and have been our consistent opportunity for regulars and members to meet together, and for outsiders to come and hear about the Christian faith.
- We continue to livestream our Sunday morning service, and some other occasional meetings. We see this as an excellent way for the Christian faith to be accessible to those unfamiliar with its message, and it also provides a way for members of the community who are not able to physically attend to have access to the service online. In order to do this in a way which we think it needs to be done requires a significant skill level in operators, and is a significant investment of people resources on Sunday mornings when our resources are stretched. But nonetheless we think this is important for the above reasons.
- Regular midweek Bible studies and monthly prayer meetings have been restarted, currently meeting in one group at the church, rather than in separate small groups in homes which

would be our preference. These have seen a fairly small but consistent core of individuals attending, a subset of our regular congregation.

- We also are now holding evening church roughly once a month, and at the end of this reporting year included a meal together as part of this. It is our intention to continue this each month. The meeting includes Bible teaching, sometimes more informal with discussion, and sometimes singing. The meal follows the Bible time.
- Over the spring and summer of this year, we lost 4 of our long time members who passed away from ill health and older age. This was a sad time for our church community, but also a time to mutually support one another, and an opportunity to draw strength from the incredible hope offered in the Christian message. The funeral thanksgiving services were held in the church and meant that we were also able to tell something of this hope to significant numbers of outsiders who had gathered in tribute to those lost. Although we would not have chosen this course of events, it was an important way in which we were able to fulfil our mission and objectives.
- Coffee Pot (a coffee shop) runs once every 2 weeks in term time, and has continued to run throughout the current year, with a good number of regular visitors from the community surrounding the church, providing a welcoming and friendly atmosphere for friends to gather and for the church to make contact with people and help where possible. This continues to be much appreciated by local people who attend.
- At Christmas we ran a number of Christmas related events including an informal all age church event, and a carol service in the lead up to Christmas. We met as we usually do on Christmas day. All these services are open to visitors to attend and we saw a number of new visitors at these meetings.
- Towards the end of the year, we held a baptism service for 2 individuals who had put their trust in Jesus and wanted to signal that through baptism. There were a significant number of visitors who came to this joyful occasion and were able to hear about the message of Jesus.
- We have supported two individuals from the church who have been undertaking theological training with a view to future full time Christian work. One of these completed their training part way through the year, and so their support from us was for part of the year only.
- We have continued to support financially outside organisations who share our ethos and desire to advance the Christian faith.

Leadership and Employment

We continued to employ an individual in the role of “Financial Administrator, Best Practice Administrator, Evangelism Worker and Events Coordinator”. Their work has contributed significantly to the improvement of our financial arrangements, with a change of bank account, and transferral over to a new accounting system which has brought significant benefits to our day to day financial operations. We have continued to benefit greatly from the additional input to church life through this appointment.

Achievements and Performance

We have successfully continued to tell people about the message of Jesus Christ, both locally and beyond, through our regular activities, and have been glad to see large numbers of people come through the doors of the church for a variety of reasons and we believe we have been able to offer hope and support through our activities in a positive way.

There have been real difficulties for our church community over this period, and we have mourned the loss of a number of significant individuals over this time. However, we believe that despite the sadness, what we believe, and our trust and commitment to the message of Jesus Christ has been a source of great strength for both our own community and those outside it who have also been touched by these losses. We consider this to be a significant part of our role and an area where we can offer a unique contribution through our specific charitable activities.

Our church community continues to be valued by members and regulars and is a help to people in a variety of life struggles.

The trustees have considered the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit and believe that we have fulfilled our objectives in this regard.

Financial Policies

It is our general policy to hold reserves in place equal to at least the running costs of the church for a three month period, considered in the scenario of a catastrophic loss of income.

This figure is currently estimated to be £10,000. At the end of the current year (end of February 2024) we held £16,037 in reserve which is above the required reserves level.

Financial Summary

We entered this year aware that we were drawing on our reserves at a significant rate. With this in mind we took steps early in the year to arrest this – firstly by taking care to reduce our outgoings on unnecessary expenditure as much as possible, and secondly by asking members and regulars to reassess their giving.

Both of these measures were successful to a degree. Our expenditure for the year stands at a slightly lower figure to the previous year of £54,497 (last year, £55,108), but there were expected increases in employment costs and expenses of £2,500 which in the event were £3,222. So, in the light of that, we have done well in keeping expenditure at a lower figure than the previous year.

Income last year was £43,503 and this year was £47,934 – an increase of £4,431, thanks largely to an increase in donations, which interestingly seems to be largely an increase in cash donations.

The resulting deficit for the year in the end was £6,563 compared to around £11k the previous year.

Although this means that we still have a reasonable level of reserves in hand above our agreed reserves minimum (a total amount of £16,037) and that we have delayed the point at which we would violate the policy, our current levels of expenditure and income would mean our reserves dipping to close to or below our reserves minimum by the end of the next year if everything stays the same.

However, there are additional costs which we have delayed which will need to be incurred on building repairs ideally in the first half of the next year. Other increases in outgoings are also anticipated, especially with regards to support of external workers. So, in the light of this, the trustees will need to consider making significant adjustments to other areas of expenditure in

order to arrest the current trend and allow us to perform required building and infrastructure repairs. It is likely that this will require changes to our employment commitments, even though we have benefited enormously from the current set up and would rather not reduce current workers employed hours.

Responsibilities of Trustees

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.

Approval

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

David Stanford: 
David Stanford (Oct 8, 2024 12:40 GMT+1)

Date: Oct 8, 2024

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT
TO THE TRUSTEES OF
SOLENT EVANGELICAL CHURCH

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of Solent Evangelical Church ('the charity') for the year ended 29 February 2024 on pages 8 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.

Sarah Crispin
Sarah Crispin (Oct 24, 2024 15:21 GMT+1)

Sarah Crispin (ACA)

Stewardship
1 Lamb's Passage
LONDON
EC1Y 8AB

Date: Oct 24, 2024

SOLENT EVANGELICAL CHURCH
RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 29 FEBRUARY 2024

		<u>Unrestricted Funds</u>		Restricted	2024	2023
		General	Designated	Funds		
	Notes	Funds	Funds	Funds	2024	2023
		£	£	£	£	£
<i>Income receipts</i>						
Donations		37,839	590	620	39,049	35,860
Gift aid receipts		5,734	-	-	5,734	6,045
Income from letting of facilities		3,050	-	-	3,050	1,563
Interest received		101	-	-	101	35
<i>Total receipts</i>		<u>46,725</u>	<u>590</u>	<u>620</u>	<u>47,934</u>	<u>43,503</u>
<i>Payments</i>						
Payments in relation to charitable activities undertaken directly	2	51,711	236	30	51,977	51,708
Grants paid in relation to charitable activities undertaken by others		2,520	-	-	2,520	3,400
		<u>54,231</u>	<u>236</u>	<u>30</u>	<u>54,497</u>	<u>55,108</u>
Purchase of fixed assets		-	-	-	-	-
		<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
<i>Total payments</i>		<u>54,231</u>	<u>236</u>	<u>30</u>	<u>54,497</u>	<u>55,108</u>
Net of receipts / (payments) before		(7,507)	354	590	(6,563)	(11,605)
Transfers between funds	4	1,055	(1,055)	-	-	-
Net movement in funds		<u>(6,452)</u>	<u>(701)</u>	<u>590</u>	<u>(6,563)</u>	<u>(11,605)</u>
Cash funds as at last year end		21,899	701	-	22,600	34,205
Cash funds at this year end	A	<u>15,447</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>590</u>	<u>16,037</u>	<u>22,600</u>

The notes on page 10 form part of these accounts.

SOLENT EVANGELICAL CHURCH
STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 29 FEBRUARY 2024

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds		Restricted funds	2024	2023
		General funds	Designated funds			
		£	£	£	£	£
A Cash funds						
Cash at bank with immediate access		15,447	-	590	16,037	22,509
Petty cash		-	-	-	-	91
		<u>15,447</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>590</u>	<u>16,037</u>	<u>22,600</u>
B Other monetary assets						
Gift aid due to charity		7,718	-	-	7,718	5,714
		<u>7,718</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>7,718</u>	<u>5,714</u>
C Liabilities						
Falling due within one year						
HMRC payroll taxes due		1,178	-	-	1,178	1,025
Fee for Independent Examination		930	-	-	930	930
Accrued expenses		219	-	-	219	952
		<u>2,327</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>2,327</u>	<u>2,907</u>
Total		<u>2,327</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>2,327</u>	<u>2,907</u>

D Assets retained for charity's own use

	Cost	Current value
	£	£
Freehold of church building	20,000	315,790
Computers and IT	2,599	932
Furniture	5,000	-
	<u>27,599</u>	<u>316,722</u>

The trustees have used insurance values for the church building as the trustees are unable to reliably estimate current values; insurance values may differ materially from current values.

E 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:

David Stanford
David Stanford (Oct 8, 2024 12:40 GMT+1)

David Stanford

Date: Oct 8, 2024

The notes on page 10 form part of these accounts.

SOLENT EVANGELICAL CHURCH
NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 29 FEBRUARY 2024

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.

	<u>Unrestricted Funds</u>		Restricted Funds	Total 2024	Total 2023
	General funds	Designated funds	Funds	2024	2023
	£	£	£	£	£
2 Payments in relation to charitable activities undertaken directly					
Employment costs (see note 3)	40,198	-	-	40,198	38,410
Ministry expenses	1,858	-	-	1,858	2,885
Coffee Pot expenses	-	236	-	236	511
Refurbishment costs	-	-	-	-	136
Building maintenance & repair	1,253	-	-	1,253	1,418
Utilities	2,094	-	-	2,094	1,812
Insurance	1,530	-	-	1,530	1,449
Legal & Professional fees	1,305	-	-	1,305	1,517
Office & IT costs	2,753	-	-	2,753	2,195
Other costs	-	-	30	30	655
Contribution to FIEC	720	-	-	720	720
	<u>51,711</u>	<u>236</u>	<u>30</u>	<u>51,977</u>	<u>51,708</u>

3 Transactions with related parties

David Stanford served as church leader and was paid £32,988 inclusive of pension (2023: £32,988) for serving in that capacity, not for serving as a trustee; these payments are permitted by the charity's governing document.

Rhiannon Stanford who is related to David Stanford, received £720 (2023: £720) towards her support at Bible College.

4 Movement of funds

	Balance at 28 February 2023	Receipts	Payments	Transfers	Balance at 29 February 2024
	£	£	£	£	£
General funds	21,899	46,725	(54,231)	1,055	15,447
Designated funds					
Coffee Pot	701	590	(236)	(1,055)	-
	<u>701</u>	<u>590</u>	<u>(236)</u>	<u>(1,055)</u>	<u>-</u>
Restricted funds					
Support for individuals	-	620	(30)	-	590
	<u>-</u>	<u>620</u>	<u>(30)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>590</u>
Total funds	<u>22,600</u>	<u>47,934</u>	<u>(54,497)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>16,037</u>

Designated Funds

Coffee Pot fund represented money held for this activity. It is no longer treated as a designated fund and maintained within general funds.

Restricted Funds

Support for individuals represent donations given specifically to support individuals for training and missions.