

The Blackley Centre
Annual Report of the Trustees for the year ended 30th September 2024
for the Charity Commission

The Blackley Centre is a Registered Charity working for peace, transforming conflict and enabling good inter faith relations, providing quality hospitality at a centre in West Yorkshire. The Centre was founded by Blackley Baptist Church, with which it works in partnership from its shared site in the village of Blackley.

The Blackley Centre was registered as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (1184714) on 1st August 2019 (Yorkshire Day!) and officially launched on 12th October 2019 with 80 friends and supporters.

The Trustees 23/24

Hugh Donald	(resigned during the year)
Pam Smith	(resigned during the year)
Samina Ali	(resigned during the year)
Andrew Taylor	
Revd Mary Taylor	(Chair)
Karen Ainsworth	
Rob Quarton	(elected as a trustee and Treasurer March 2024)
Guy Hirst	(nominated by Blackley Baptist Church September 2024)

The objects of the Blackley Centre are

‘(1) To advance education for the benefit of the public in the promotion of reconciliation and peace, religious and racial harmony and equality and diversity, in particular by the provision of facilities and retreat opportunities for Christians and people of all religions and beliefs and to advance religion and in particular the Christian religion in such activity.’

‘(2) The provision of independent mediation services for individuals, organisations and groups experiencing or threatened by dispute or conflict, such as, but not limited to, neighbour nuisance, anti-social behaviour, harassment, bullying, family or community conflict with a view to the preservation of public order and for the preservation and protection of the well-being of such individuals, organisations and groups.’

Our vision ...

- is of a society where any person may live safely in any community; be welcomed, accepted, valued and understood; contributing to community life; finding ways of living that are for mutual flourishing; and where the potential transformational power of conflict is embraced and transformed.

Our Aim is ...

- To provide a Centre which is an inspiring, and welcoming meeting place offering respect and hospitality for people seeking to transform conflict and make peace, and for people of all religions and beliefs to develop understanding and friendship.

- To create and enable respectful spaces where people are enabled through encounter to share stories, explore vulnerabilities, and recognise common interests, releasing energy and creativity that ultimately leads to transformation.
- To seek to model in our relationships, within and without the organisation, attitudes of respect, generosity and hospitality, born of appropriate compassion for the other.
- To provide training in conflict awareness and transformation and inter faith relations

Our Values and initial formation ...

Our values are to relate to individuals and communities with openness, respect, honesty, integrity and transparency, valuing diversity. We seek to be welcoming, hospitable and compassionate and to learn creatively as we work together for transformation.

For many years, Baptist ministers Andy and Jo Williams had had a dream of bringing their particular specialisms within reconciliation and inter faith work together with ministry into one place or centre. Friends and colleagues encouraged them to pursue this, and Blackley Baptist Church and Centre was suggested as a place to consider. The church's history, since 1993, of providing quality hospitality through their centre with a focus on spirituality and retreat certainly created an interesting possibility, and at the time the church was about to enter a period of pastoral vacancy.

Meetings, further conversations, deliberations and prayers ensued, resulting in the church calling Andy and Jo to be Joint Ministers of the Church in October 2016, unanimously endorsing the vision for the centre for peace, reconciliation and dialogue/inter faith relations. The Yorkshire Baptist Association funded a six month scoping project which confirmed the need and the potential for such a place and made a three year grant of seed funding to enable the work to begin in July 2017 with Andy and Jo delivering reconciliation and inter faith work at Blackley alongside pastoral ministry. The combined resources of Church and Ministers creates this unique place, well-resourced buildings blessed by beautiful and peaceful surroundings, with experienced professionals bringing their heart for reconciliation and hope for peace. With a focus on personal conversation, enabling direct transformative encounters, stimulating curiosity and grace, the Centre seeks to affect change and build peace.

The Scoping Project Group oversaw the initial work with Andy and Jo, developing a constitution for The Blackley Centre to become a CIO with a membership in consultation with the Church and wider church structures. Seven trustees, including two from Blackley Baptist Church, with a broad range of skills and specialist knowledge of church, reconciliation and inter faith relations were recruited to form the Board. This replaced the scoping project group, meeting formally for the first time in October 2018.

Achievements during the fifth trading year ...

In this fifth trading year the Centre continued to offer its work through a mix of online, on site and hybrid meetings, gatherings, courses and retreats.

David Shutt Young Peace Ambassadors

Our greatest achievement for the second time is again the David Shutt Young Peace Ambassadors, enabling children in 5 primary schools to address and transform conflict among their peers. 48 year 4 and 5 children and 9 staff did the training and their peers now have the opportunity to deal with conflict in a positive way when YPAs invite them to peace talks. Thus, potentially all year 5 and 6 pupils across all five schools are seeing that there are non-violent ways of resolving conflicts. The schools are becoming more peaceful learning communities where the impact of destructive conflict is being reduced and transformed. We hope this approach to culture change will help to stop children, young people and adults becoming involved in violence, including knife crime now and in the future. We introduced the concept of Peace Ambassadors to the whole staff teams in two new schools. Out theatre artist delivered the special launch assembly with the children and staff and our Director for Reconciliation introduced Young Peace Ambassadors and invited the children from years 4 and 5 to apply. She also led assemblies in the pilot schools, drawing on the experiences of the existing YPAs and again invited the children from years 4 and 5 to apply. This led the children and staff coming to the Blackley Centre for two days to train to be Peace Ambassadors. After the summer, everyone met up for a refresher day, leaving excited and confident about being Peace Ambassadors in their schools, supported by their teachers. Finally, the children and their families were invited to the Centre Celebration for their commissioning as Peace Ambassadors and 90 came along! All this was only possible because of a grant from the West Yorkshire Mayor's Fund of £7970. YPAs is much needed in our increasingly divided world and it has huge potential.

Training

Through our Director for Reconciliation we delivered commissioned training days for 5 church colleges, Regional Associations and Dioceses. These days, or combination of days, focus on how we manage ourselves in conflict situations, and how we can address anxiety in churches caused by difference and division and general education work around conflict in churches, improving the culture. She also delivered a final Mediation Skills Training for Smile Mediation.

A key development this year was the creation of our own mediation skills and restorative practice training entitled 'Paths of Peace – Handling Conflict Well'. Initially, this is for ministers and church leaders. It is designed to help people within their own context, to handle conflict and disagreement well: learning processes and practices that promote restoration of relationship and reconciliation. We hope that this will be a significant resource for churches of all denominations, but primarily the Baptist denomination, to improve the culture in churches. This course was delivered for the first time in October 2024, outside the scope of this report, but at the close of our year in September 8 people had booked. In all, approximately 200 people have experienced training coming from (or in partnership with) the Blackley Centre.

Interpersonal Mediations and Group Facilitations.

Over the course of the year the Centre has offered several Group Facilitations to church congregations. These occasionally involved a single meeting, but more often have taken several months of careful and committed working to improve relationships. One additional significant conversation was between people of different faiths, including Jews and Muslims, as well as community leaders, living within the same city, exploring the impact of the war in Gaza with Israel. This involved facilitating about 50 people in listening deeply and carefully to one another. The CEO of the City Council

who commissioned the conversation said it was exemplary and the best 'conversation' of that kind that she had ever participated in. Our Director for Reconciliation has conducted 1:1 Handling Conflict Coaching Sessions with a variety of people, some connected with the group sessions above but others on unrelated issues. We are also indebted to associates of the Centre who have worked with us on several of these cases. In all, around 275 people have received mediation/facilitation from The Blackley Centre.

Inter Faith Work

The challenges of funding interfaith work have meant that this has been a smaller part of our work this year. However, due to the Hamas attack on Israel last October and the ensuing war in Gaza, we were asked, as mentioned earlier, to facilitate representatives of the faith communities in a city to have dialogue about the impact of the conflict on their interfaith relations here. We were also saddened by the closure of the Interfaith Network UK, but delighted to be asked by Calderdale Interfaith to work in partnership with them and the Peace Studies Department of the University of Bradford to plan a Peace Conference to be hosted at the Centre in Inter Faith Week 2024. Our Director for Reconciliation continued to support interfaith work in Calderdale as part of the steering group of Calderdale Interfaith.

Revd Nikki Jenkins

It's not so much of an achievement, but more the appreciation of a gift and certainly a major highlight of this year to have had the Revd Nikki Jenkins working with us. Nikki led on our Peace and Quiet Retreat Days, drawing participants into deeper reflection through her 'Out of the Box' storytelling with sand and figures and in the ideas to develop our Peace Garden. She also led us in a partnership event with the Church to host the Project Violet Exhibition on the experience of women in Baptist ministry. She did an interfaith course on 'Multiple Belonging' and supported our inter-faith work in Calderdale, Young Peace Ambassadors, the Centre's stall at the Baptist Assembly and our first Paths of Peace course.

Other achievements include:

- Provided Gilmore Fraleigh Friendly Style Profiling which is a personality profiling process that is helpful for managing ourselves in stressful and anxious times. It is routinely used in much of our training with groups as well as with individuals. Our Director for Reconciliation developed a simplified version which is part of the Young Peace Ambassador training.
- Continued to work with the Yorkshire Baptist Association exploring how the Centre could assist in handling conflict in churches and through this we have recognised the Blackley Centre as a national, as well as regional resource.
- Continued to work with Calderdale Inter Faith and their steering group
- Welcomed regular and guest organisations to use the Blackley Centre and provide hospitality.
- Continued as a partner of Reconcilers Together and ran a regional networking and support day for past participants of the Journey of Hope as well as partner organisations in the north.

In terms of organisational developments, the Centre has:

- Welcomed a new Trustee nominated by Blackley Baptist Church
- Elected our new Treasurer who had previously been co-opted
- Continued to extend the list of regular contacts;
- Continued to welcome new members
- Continued to support the development of the Blackley site.
- Continued to fund our half-time Directors, with a full shared Baptist minister's stipend;
- Strengthened the staff team with two small part-time roles with a Co-leader for Playing with Peace and a Graphic Design and Communications role.

Organisation

The Centre is run on a day-to-day basis by the Directors, Revd Andy Williams and Revd Jo Williams (one full time equivalent) assisted by Christine Allcock, the Centre Manager (voluntary), who oversees all use of the Centre, manages bookings by external groups and arranges volunteer teams from the Church and its friends to provide the catering. During the year the team has been strengthened with the addition of two small part-time roles with a Co-leader for Playing with Peace in Michelle Edwards and a Graphic Design and Communications role with Tim Ingram. The Centre's finances are coordinated by the Treasurer, with banking assistance by Pauline Barnard, a volunteer from the Church

The Centre is overseen by the trustees and we began the year with seven, but it was a year of change. In November, Hugh Donald resigned due to a change in personal circumstances and Pam Smith felt it was time to conclude her work as trustee nominated by the church. Desley Taylor concluded her time as the minute secretary to the trustees in February. Due to a new work role Samina Ali concluded her time as a trustee in August. We owe a huge debt of thanks to all of these for their work as all but Samina had been with us since the trustee body was established in 2019 and have seen the Centre through its early years, including the challenges of Covid 19.

We're very grateful to our Chair, Revd Mary Taylor for her leadership and to the remaining trustees for navigating this time of change. Rob Quarton had been co-opted as our Treasurer in 2023 and was elected as a trustee at our AGM in March 2024. Karen Ainsworth has continued to serve as has Andrew Taylor although he gave notice that he would conclude his last year of service in November 2024 as a trustee nominated by the church. We carried a vacancy for a trustee nominated by the church for much of this year, but we were delighted when Guy Hirst offered his services and was appointed as a nominated trustee by the church in September, thus concluding the year with five trustees.

The trustees have worked particularly hard this year with the Directors to find a sustainable way forward for the Centre which has included the development of our Paths of Peace Mediation Skills Training, Mediations, Young Peace Ambassadors, interfaith work and encouraging membership of organisations, as well as individuals, and applying for grant funding. All this takes time to develop and as an interim measure the Centre made an appeal for £20,000 in the summer of 2024. With the help of our funding consultant, Lisa Jagger, an application was also made to the Community Fund

of the National Lottery for core funding of £20,000 and in June we received the wonderful news that this had been successful, but the challenge of sustainability continues. It was good that we were able to share our funding consultant's expertise in making another Community Fund application for £20,000 for the Church for the refurbishment of the Prospect Suite entrance and toilets and we heard in March that this had been successful.

**As we enter a sixth year
of trading ...**

Hopeful indicators for
2024-2025 include:

- Further developing the 'David Shutt Young Peace Ambassadors Project' in partnership with primary schools and funders and extending it to a secondary school.
- Delivering our own Mediation Skills Course in the name of the Blackley Centre.
- Developing an ongoing partnership with a regional association of churches
- Developing closer working relationships with the regional associations that make up the Baptist Union of Great Britain
- Continuing the development of commissioned training and mediation work
- Continuing to develop 'Playing with Peace Parent and Toddlers' in partnership with the Church.
- Continuing successful searches for external funding to develop the work of the Centre in strategic areas.
- Increasing personal membership and financial support
- Developing organisational membership and financial support
- Continuing to work in partnership with Blackley Baptist Church to help in achieving its vision of Blackley Gatherings for Peace.

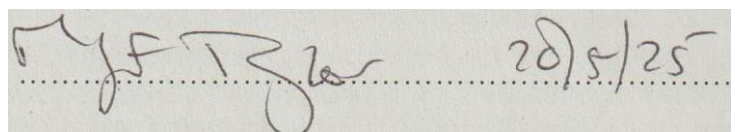
All of the above provide continuing evidence of the Blackley Centre's work and influence. As strategic planning continues, the Centre remains confident in its potential for growth in the coming years.

The trustees continue to put in place further structural provision, that will underpin further strategic planning and enable the Centre to develop ever more widely its ability to fulfil the original vision.

Signed by Revd

Mary Taylor Chair

of Trustees

A photograph of a piece of paper with a dotted line for a signature. The signature is handwritten in dark ink and appears to be 'Mary Taylor'. To the right of the signature, the date '28/5/25' is handwritten.



The Blackley Centre

Annual Financial Statements

For the year ending
30th September 2024

Charity Registration Number 1184714

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF THE BLACKLEY CENTRE

Basis for the Independent Examiner's Report

My examination was carried out in accordance with general directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes the review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts and seeking explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair' view, and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

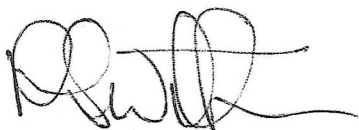
Independent Examiner's Statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention;

1. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the Blackley Centre has failed;
 - a. to keep accounting records in accordance with the Charities Act;
 - b. to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and to comply with the accounting requirements of the Charity Act
2. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Name **Robert Stephen Williams**

Signature



Date **28th January 2025**

Relevant Professional Qualification or Body **ACIB**

Address

**15 Ridge View Drive
Birkby
HUDDERSFIELD
HD2 2EX**

**DETAILED INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2024**

	<i>Notes</i>	Current Year 2023-24 £	2022-23 £
Income			
Service Provision	1	16,450	11,732
Donations and Grants	2	31,105	30,959
Other	3	3,373	2,463
Total		50,928	45,154
Expenditure			
Practitioner Costs	4	33,114	30,296
Delivery Costs	5	1,470	5,872
Operating Costs	6	5,526	4,989
Other	7	648	2,701
Total		40,758	43,858
Net income for the reporting period			
		10,170	1,296

BALANCE SHEET
AS AT 30 SEPTEMBER 2024

	<i>Notes</i>	Current Year (30/09/24)	2022-23 (30/09/23)
			£
Fixed assets			
<i>Tangible Assets</i>		0	1,075
<i>Total fixed assets</i>	8	0	1,075
Current assets			
Debtors	9	100	1,466
Cash at bank and in hand		36,640	26,470
Prepayments			
<i>Total current assets</i>		36,740	27,936
Less Current liabilities			
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year		0	0
<i>Net current assets</i>		36,740	27,936
<i>Total net assets</i>		36,740	29,011
Funds of the Charity			
Net income this reporting period		10,170	1,296
Retained income brought forward		26,470	25,174
Total funds		36,640	26,470

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2024**

For the year ended 30 September 2024 the company was entitled to exemption from audit under Section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

The members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its financial statements for the year ended 30 September 2024 in accordance with Section 476 of the Companies Act 2006.

The trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for:

(a) ensuring that the company keeps accounting records which comply with Sections 386 and 387 of the Companies Act 2006 and

(b) preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the company as at the end of each financial year and of its surplus or deficit for each financial year in accordance with the requirements of Sections 394 and 395 and which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 relating to financial statements, so far as applicable to the company.

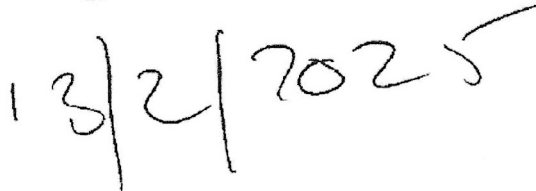
The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions relating to companies subject to the small companies' regime within Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006, and in accordance with FRS102 SORP

The financial statements were approved by the Trustees on 13th February 2025 and signed on their behalf by the Chair of Trustees:



Mary Taylor

Date



**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2024 (cont.)**

Accounting Policies

Accounting convention

These accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention with items recognised at cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant notes to these accounts. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective January 2015). The charity constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS 102. There has been no change in accounting policies since last year. No changes have been made to the accounts for previous years.

Going concern

The trustees are satisfied that there are no material uncertainties about the charity's ability to continue.

Incoming resources

All incoming resources are included in the Statement of Financial Activities (SoFA) when the charity becomes entitled to the resources, it is more likely than not that the trustees will receive the resources and the monetary value can be measured with sufficient reliability.

Grants and donations

Grants and donations are only included in the SoFA when the charity has unconditional entitlement to the resources.

Expenditure and liabilities

Expenditure is recognised on the accrual basis as the liability is accrued. Liabilities are recognised where it is more likely than not that there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to pay the resources and the resources and the amount of the obligation can be measured with reasonable certainty.

Taxation

As a charity the organisation is generally exempt from income tax but not from VAT. Irrecoverable VAT is included in the cost of those items to which it relates.

Exemption from preparing a cash flow statement

Exemption has been taken from preparing a cash flow statement on the grounds that the company qualifies as a small company.

Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the charity.

Restricted funds are subjected to restrictions on their expenditure imposed by the donor. There are currently no restricted funds to account for.

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2024 (cont.)**

1. Fee income from Service Provision

	2024	2023
Including teaching, training, mediation services and special events consistent with the objects of the charity		
	16,450	11,732

2. Grants and Donations

	2024 Unrestricted funds £	2024 Restricted funds £	2024 Total Funds £	2023 Total Funds £
Awards For All Yorkshire Baptist Association	20,000		20,000	
West Yorkshire Mayor – Safer Community Fund	0		0	6,000
Southall Trust	0		0	7,970
	0		0	3,000
Donations – Standing Orders	3,813	-	3,813	3,394
Donations - Other	7,292	-	7,292	10,595
	31,105	-	31,105	30,959

3. Other Income

	2024	2023
Gift Aid	3,231	682
Mansfield Baptist Church	0	1,456
Hope Church	0	325
Other	142	0
	3,373	2,463

4. Practitioner Costs

	2024	2023
Directors' Stipends	31,800	29,817
Other Employees	1,154	0
Professional Associates	0	479
Staff training and Supervision	160	0
	33,114	30,296

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2024 (cont.)**

5. Project Delivery Costs

	2024	2023
Interfaith	0	353
Reconciliation and Mediations	85	5,519
Commissioned Training	960	0
Retreats, Networks & Young Peace Ambassador	425	0
	1,470	5,872

6. Operating Costs

	2024	2023
Fundraising Consultancy	3,150	2,458
Publicity	49	272
Insurance	1,030	839
Telephone	606	906
Computer Software and Hardware	187	181
IT Support and Email	488	333
Stationery and Postage	16	0
	5,526	4,989

7. Other

	2024	2023
Contribution to Blackley Baptist Church	500	1,500
Hire and other costs to Blackley Baptist Church	0	1,201
Trustees' Strategy Event	148	0
	648	2,701

8. Tangible Assets

At 30th September 2024 there were no Tangible Assets held by the organisation

9. Debtors

Invoices issued before end of September 2024

	2024	2023
Lister Hill Baptist Church (Invoices 2024-010, and 2024-012)	100	0
Newcastle DBF (invoice 2023-037)	0	1,466
	100	1,466

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2024 (cont.)**

10. Trustee's expenses

None of the trustees have claimed expenses during the year for travel, subsistence, and accommodation costs.

11. Cash at bank and in hand

	2024	2023
Coop Current account	36,640	26,470
	<u>36,640</u>	<u>26,470</u>

12. Policy on Reserves

During the year 2023-2024 the Blackley Centre achieved its policy to hold a minimum of £15,000 as its reserve (*agreed at Meeting of Trustees, 25th November 2021*)

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Name **Robert Stephen Williams**

Signature



Date **28th January 2025**

Relevant Professional Qualification or Body **ACIB**

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