

Akwaaba Sanctuary Trust

Trustee Annual Report and Accounts 2023-4

Registered Charity number 119326

Akwaaba Sanctuary Trust

Charity number 119326

The Trustees present their report relating to the financial year ending 31st July 2024 and confirm that they comply with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011.

Reference and Administrative Information:

The principal address of the charity

c/o Trust Secretary, 8 Hotham Close, Swanley, Kent BR8 7UX

The charity trustees

Martin Smyth	Chair
Rev Douglas Bull	Treasurer
Colette Selwood	
Peter Gower	

All were trustees throughout 2023/2024 and on the date the report was approved.

The Charity bank

Cooperative Bank plc
P.O. Box 101
1 Balloon Street
Manchester
M60 4EP

The Independent Examiner

Not required in 2023/4 as income during the year was under £25,000

Structure Governance and Management

The Charity was formed in 2020 and registered as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation with the Charity Commission on 26th January 2021.

The charity is governed by a trustee committee of four trustees. Where the number of trustees is reduced to three or less, an appointment shall be made as soon as it is practicable to do so.

The charity does not have any employees but retains the services of a Trust Secretary (for which a stipend is paid) to oversee day to management and engages volunteers or contracted agents to oversee the delivery of retreats, quiet days and spiritual direction and to ensure that the charity operates in accordance with recommended practice.

Objectives and Activities:

The Charitable purposes of charity are to advance the Christian faith for the benefit of the public in accordance with the tradition of Christian Spirituality.

Our Vision: Is that all may sense the loving presence of God in their lives.

Our Mission: Is to facilitate space, for all who desire, to deepen their relationship with God; to explore Gods desire for them and to experience Gods consolation in their lives.

This is achieved by:

- Providing “Sanctuary”, space for individuals or groups to come and experience quiet time with God
- Supporting the ministry of those involved in spiritual direction, including through supervision, training and professional development
- Offering spiritual direction and accompaniment to support people in their spiritual growth
- Provision of formal times of prayer, reflection, meditation and retreats
- Providing pastoral support and a ‘listening ear’ to those in need
- Being open to all people, those whose faith journey is outside the Christian church as well as those within

Report on Activities:

The vision for the charity emerged during the pandemic in 2020. It became clear that there was a need for people to have space to ‘ask the bigger questions of life’ particularly within the context of a relationship with God. A number of informal activities were undertaken through the various lockdown periods and in 2021 formal charity registration was approved.

The charity is relatively young and small. In the year 2023 – 2024 in order to further the work of the charity, in accordance with its objects and for public benefit, we carried out the following activities:

- ongoing facilitation of weekly ‘lectio divina’ group enabling people to engage and grow their spiritual life through reflection on scripture
- delivery of seven in person ‘reflection days’ in August, September, November 2023 and January, June and July 2024 and planning for a series later in 2024/5
- access to an outdoor prayer space and a 9 ‘Open Garden events’ [part of the Quiet Garden movement] providing a place for people to come and enjoy peace away from the demands of their normal everyday activity.
- a retreat space for individual use
- facilitation of ‘days of refection’ for others involved in spirituality work
- one to one spiritual direction

Performance and Achievements:

This was the fourth year of operation of the charity and a key focus was the development of the regular activities and more in person events, together with promoting the space for others to use for their own retreats.

The charity delivered a number of activities as outlined above and was able to support a significant number of people directly and indirectly.

Based on active participation:

5 people engaged in regular spiritual direction throughout the year

Up to 18 people (with a weekly core attendance of about 9) have participated in the weekly scripture 'lectio divina' group during 2023/4

There have been 7 Quiet Days with facilitated input and reflection. A total of 64 attendees have participated in days of reflection at Sanctuary.

In summer 2023 a new 'First Friday Open Garden' day was introduced. People can 'drop in' at any point in the day for space and reflection and there is always someone on call to listen to then, guide them if required. This has developed slowly but at least one person and sometimes up to 3 people have taken the time 'to get away' and pray.

A Spiritual Director supported by the charity has also hosted and facilitated day retreats at the request of other groups engaged in spirituality work.

Many of those who have benefitted from the activities have experienced loss, bereavement or additional isolation due to personal ill health or disability.

Participants have expressed gratitude for the opportunity to be engaged in such activity with such feedback as:

"It was really valuable to consciously set time aside for QUIET contemplation and reflection. Life seems to have just sped up exponentially since Covid and sometimes it really feels like we're on one of those little hamster wheels in a cage".

"I liked your introduction with the guided meditation and breathing - a useful grounding mechanism to get everyone 'in the zone' so to speak".

"The printed handouts were inspiring with just the right amount of material so that you could read it all and still have time to focus"

"The space was amazing and very conducive to focussed reflection. Many aspects of God's creation were audible and visible - perfect for illustrating how appreciation of the natural world can improve spiritual wellbeing and personal JOY and work together to reinforce the overall theme of hope".

"The sharing session was sensitively handled with no obligation to speak - again putting all at ease. Thank you for providing a place of 'sanctuary' and being so welcoming. The need is huge".

"I find the place, the atmosphere and the input feeds me to try and be who God wants me to be at this moment in my life and to serve where he has placed me".

"It was just what I needed, a spiritual bolt hole. I found the space, freedom and flexibility so helpful. It was great to have a personal retreat - not be part of a group."

"It was very refreshing for the soul and I always come out of these days feeling reconnected to who I am and to God".

"I felt so uplifted – just what I needed".

"I found it to be a very positive experience – I want to come again!"

The Trustees are grateful that the charity has been able to continue to support the local community. Clearly, we have made a difference to the lives of those who have participated in prayers and retreats and we trust that in doing so there have also been wider benefits to society as a whole, because people have grown in their own faith journeys and been in a position to work for the 'common good' within their families, friendship groups and communities.

Public benefit:

The trustees have read the Commission's Public Benefit requirement statutory guidance, and have had regard to this when running the charity.

The charities events and activities are open to all people regardless of gender, age, ability, sexuality, ethnicity, personal background or belief.

There is no charge for engaging with any of the services provided. Donations are requested on the basis of an individual's ability to pay.

A review of the charity's financial position at the end of the year:

During the year up to July 31st, 2024, many of the charity's activities continued to be delivered at little or no cost to the charity because of volunteer assistance and pro-bono support from spiritual advisors, facilitators and IT provision. The trustees cannot quantify this contribution in financial terms but wish to acknowledge their grateful thanks to all who have given of their time and expertise.

Donations received from those who have participated in spiritual activities during the year amounted to £1132. Further donations of £2000 were received from St. John Fisher Church and £7,500 from Trudy Kilcullen during the year 2023/4 in order to develop prayer activities and resources.

The total income of the charity during the year was £10,632

The total expenditure of the charity to end of July 2023 was £6,975

Funds carried forward at the start of the year amounted to £34,207

Funds carried forward to 2024/5 amounted to £37,864

The purpose of these funds is to continue to grow the work of the charity in order that significantly more activity can be delivered, including use and development of the outdoor prayer space, development of prayer resources and increased in person activity. It will not be possible to achieve this through voluntary support alone.

Signature:

Martin Smyth
Chair and Trustee

Douglas Bull
Treasurer and Trustee

Date: October 16th 2024

	2024 Total £	2023 Total £
INCOME :		
<i>Donations:</i>		
Donated income	10,632	3,975
Investment income	0	0
Total Income	<u>10,632</u>	<u>3,975</u>
EXPENDITURE:		
Expenditure on Charitable Activities	<u>£6975</u>	<u>£2,204</u>
Total Expenditure	<u>£6,975</u>	<u>£2,204</u>

RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS:

Total funds brought forward	<u>£34,207</u>
Total funds carried forward at 31 July	<u>£37,864</u> =====

	£	2024	£
CURRENT ASSETS			
Cash at bank and in hand	£37,864		
Other Assets	0		
CREDITORS: Amounts due within one year	0		
NET CURRENT ASSETS			
LIABILITIES			0
NET ASSETS			£37,864
			=====
FUNDS :			
Unrestricted funds			£31,832
Designated Funds			£ 6,032
TOTAL FUNDS			£ 37,864
			=====
			=

The financial statements were approved and authorised for issue by the Trustees on November 9th 2024 and were signed below on its behalf by:

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 Martin Smyth
 Chair and Trustee

.....
 Fr Douglas Bull
 Treasurer and Trustee

November 9th 2024

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

The principal accounting policies adopted, judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty in the preparation of the financial statements are as follows:

a) Basis of Accounting

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) - (Charities SORP (FRS102)), the financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102).

Akwaaba Sanctuary Trust meets the definition of a public entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy notes.

b) Going concern

The Board of Trustees is of the opinion that the charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future and there are no material uncertainties regarding the Trust's ability to do so.

c) Tangible fixed Assets

No fixed assets are held.

d) Taxation

Akwaaba Sanctuary Trust is a registered charity and accordingly is not liable to United Kingdom taxation.

The charity is registered with HMRC for Gift Aid – no Gift Aid has been claimed up to July 2024.

e) Income

Income comprises of gifts, donations, and investment income. The income is recognised when it is probable to be received and can be measured reliably and the charity is entitled to it.

f) Expenditure

Charitable expenditure consists of all expenditure relating to the objects of the Charity. All costs are directly attributable to the activities under which they have been analysed.

Governance costs include expenditure on the governance of the charity and its assets and are primarily associated with constitutional and statutory requirements.

Irrecoverable VAT is included with the category of expense to which it relates.

g) Funds

Unrestricted funds are available for use by the charity in accordance with its objects. Designated funds are held and applied for the purposes agreed.

h) Cash and Cash Equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents includes cash held in a bank current account and/or deposit account.

i) Creditors and provisions

Creditors and provisions are recognised where the charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are normally recognised at their settlement amount after allowing for any trade discounts due.

j) Estimates and Judgements

Estimates and judgements are continually evaluated and are based on historical experience and other factors, including expectations of future events that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances. Although these estimates are based on the trustee's best knowledge of the amount, events or actions, actual results ultimately differ from these estimates. The trustees do not consider there to be any estimates and judgements.

k) Financial Instruments

The charity only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments, including trade and other debtors and creditors are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value.