

Ebenezer Reformed Chapel, Luton

Report and Accounts
Year ended 26 March 2024

EBENEZER REFORMED CHAPEL, LUTON
LEGAL & ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 26 MARCH 2024

ADDRESS FOR CORRESPONDENCE	125 Farley Hill Luton LU1 5EQ
GOVERNING DOCUMENT	Constitution dated 20 May 2021
CHARITY REGISTRATION NUMBER	1194544
TRUSTEES RESPONSIBLE FOR MANAGING THE CHARITY	Dr Garry John Williams (chair) Paul James McEachran James Geoffrey Thomas Rhodes Benedict Bird James Francesco Comboni (appointed 22 January 2024)
INDEPENDENT EXAMINER	Ajay Rajani FCIE Stewardship 1 Lamb's Passage LONDON EC1Y 8AB
BANKERS	National Westminster Bank plc

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EBENEZER REFORMED CHAPEL, LUTON
REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 26 MARCH 2024

Objects of the charity

The objects of the CIO are:

(a) To advance the Christian religion in accordance with the Statement of Beliefs of Ebenezer Reformed Chapel in Luton and in other parts of the United Kingdom or the world as the trustees from time to time think fit and to fulfil such other purposes which are exclusively charitable according to the law of England and Wales and are connected with the charitable work of the Trust.

(b) To relieve persons who are in conditions of need or hardship or who are aged or sick and to relieve the distress caused thereby in Luton and in such other parts of the United Kingdom or the world as the trustees may from time to time think fit.

Activities

The CIO was incorporated and registered as a charity on 20th May 2021.

The financial year ending on 26th March 2024 saw the beginning of the normal operation of the CIO after a period of preparation. Regular meetings on the Lord's day for morning worship began on Easter Sunday 2023, initially in a local primary school.

The period also saw the final stages and completion of the purchase of the Ebenezer Chapel buildings in Chapel Langley, Luton, the speedy renovation of the 'Schoolroom' at the back of the Chapel as a place of worship, and the move of regular services there in September 2023. On 23rd September 2023, Mr Paul McEachran was ordained as a Ruling Elder, Revd Dr Garry Williams was inducted as Minister (Teaching Elder), and the church formally became a Mission Church of the International Presbyterian Church.

Initial efforts for the first few months focused on establishing a regular pattern of Sunday and midweek activity. 2000 homes around the Chapel were given flyers inviting them to services. As Christmas 2023 approached we embarked on further flyering to advertise a Carol Service. We were encouraged by a positive response with a dozen local residents attending who had no prior contact with the Chapel. Throughout the reporting period our services have been visited by a small but steady stream of local people, increasingly so since we moved from the school into the more prominent Chapel. Some have settled with us permanently and now attend regularly; others come and go less regularly. On 24th March 2024, after a period spent meeting individually and in households with potential members, the Chapel received its first members, numbering 26 adults and 7 children.

In all this the trustees have had regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit. They consider that the commencing of the normal operation of the CIO in the community in Luton provides significant public benefit, both through the public proclamation of the hope of the gospel, and through the help that we have been able to offer to individuals who have come to the Chapel with various material, emotional, and spiritual needs.

Achievements and Performance

Significant progress was made during this period, in four main areas: establishing a regular pattern of meetings; growing the congregation; purchasing, working on, and moving into the Chapel buildings, and beginning outreach.

Financial review

The CIO had £405k (£391k restricted / £14k unrestricted) in its bank accounts at the start of the period, having previously raised money to purchase and renovate the building.

During the period £58k was received by the charity (£17k restricted / £41k unrestricted), which excludes any gift aid recoverable on this year's donations (not all donations are eligible).

£331k of restricted funds was spent in the year on the Chapel, which comprises the purchase price (including conveyancing fees) of £303k, and renovation costs/other associated costs of £28k.

During the last 3 months of the financial year i.e. 27th Dec – 26th March, £10,592 was given for general expenditure which after adjusting for GA was £11,834 i.e. £3,945 per month on average.

The general expenditure costs during the same period were £10,967 so costs are well matched with income and running a very marginal surplus.

The CIO ended the period with cash of £92k (£77k restricted / £15k unrestricted). The trustees are comfortable with the level of unrestricted funds in reserve, and are discussing the next round of fundraising to continue the next phase of the building project.

Reserves policy

The trustees have determined that the CIO should aim to hold free reserves (which the trustees define to be unrestricted cash) of no less than £10,000 so that the charity could continue to operate smoothly should income and / or expenditure vary unexpectedly. At the year end, the CIO held unrestricted cash of £15,000 and the CIO is complying with its reserves policy. The policy for holding reserves will be revisited once the CIO is more established.

Structure, Governance and Management

The charity is a CIO governed by its Constitution.

Mr James Comboni began as a trustee in January 2024 and was appointed Treasurer. Other trustees and offices remain the same. Subsequent appointments will include such people as may from time to time be appointed as Elders of the Chapel in accordance with the provisions of the Ebenezer Reformed Chapel Book of Church Order. Charity trustees who are not Elders of Ebenezer Reformed Chapel but are Elders of another church and who uphold the Statement of Beliefs of Ebenezer Reformed Chapel may be appointed. Charity trustees who are not Elders but who uphold the Statement of Beliefs of Ebenezer Reformed Chapel may be appointed, provided that such appointment does not result in non-Elder trustees constituting 50% or more of the trustees. The Minister of Ebenezer Reformed Chapel for the time being shall automatically be a charity trustee.

Responsibilities of trustees under charity law

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:

Garry Williams
Garry Williams (Jan 22, 2025 12:53 GMT)

.....
Garry John Williams (Chair)

Date: Jan 22, 2025

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT
TO THE TRUSTEES OF
EBENEZER REFORMED CHAPEL, LUTON

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of Ebenezer Reformed Chapel, Luton ('the charity') for the year ended 26 March 2024 on pages 5 to 8 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.

Ajay Rajani
Ajay Rajani (Jan 23, 2025 06:57 GMT)

Ajay Rajani FCIE
Stewardship
1 Lamb's Passage
LONDON
EC1Y 8AB

Date: Jan 23, 2025

EBENEZER REFORMED CHAPEL, LUTON
RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 26 MARCH 2024

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	2024 £	2023 £
<i>Income receipts</i>					
Donations		38,648	13,758	52,406	393,444
Gift aid receipts		2,377	1,175	3,552	27,525
Bank interest		99	1,618	1,717	125
Proceeds from sale of equipment		62	-	62	-
<i>Total receipts</i>		<u>41,186</u>	<u>16,551</u>	<u>57,737</u>	<u>421,094</u>
<i>Payments</i>					
Payments in relation to charitable activities undertaken directly	2	39,560	757	40,316	6,867
Purchase and renovation of Chapel		105	330,439	330,544	9,656
<i>Total payments</i>		<u>39,665</u>	<u>331,196</u>	<u>370,860</u>	<u>16,523</u>
Net of receipts / (payments) before transfers		1,522	(314,645)	(313,123)	404,571
Transfers between funds		-	-	-	-
Net movement in funds		<u>1,522</u>	<u>(314,645)</u>	<u>(313,123)</u>	<u>404,571</u>
Cash funds as at last year end		13,553	391,227	404,780	209
Cash funds at this year end	A	<u>15,075</u>	<u>76,582</u>	<u>91,657</u>	<u>404,780</u>

The notes on pages 7 and 8 form part of these accounts.

EBENEZER REFORMED CHAPEL, LUTON
STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 26 MARCH 2024

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2024 £	2023 £
A Cash funds				
Cash at bank with immediate access	15,075	76,582	91,657	404,780
	15,075	76,582	91,657	404,780
B Other monetary assets				
Gift aid recoverable	2,953	9,762	12,715	10,550
	2,953	9,762	12,715	10,550
C Liabilities				
Hire of venue	-	-	-	240
Fee for Independent Examination	660	-	660	2,040
Professional fees re refurbishment of Chapel	-	3,600	3,600	-
	660	3,600	4,260	2,280

D Assets retained for charity's own use

	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost £
Chapel on Dumfries Street	Restricted	335,192
Fixtures, fittings and furnishings	Restricted	3,140
Music and PA equipment	Unrestricted	2,623
		340,955

The cost of improvements to the Chapel includes some professional fees incurred in the previous year.

F 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:

Garry Williams
Garry Williams (Jan 22, 2025 12:53 GMT)

Dr Garry John Williams - chair

Jan 22, 2025

Date

The notes on pages 7 and 8 form part of these accounts.

EBENEZER REFORMED CHAPEL, LUTON

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 26 MARCH 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.

In the previous year, the charity's income exceeded £250,000 and the charity was obliged to prepare its accounts on an accruals basis using the Charities SORP. As the charity's income is now less than £250,000, it has taken advantage of the option to prepare its accounts on a receipts and payments basis and the results reported previously have been restated.

Unrestricted funds which are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the charity. 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 funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
2 Payments in relation to charitable activities undertaken directly				
Salaries and pensions (see note 3)	20,389	-	20,389	5,039
Venue hire	4,290	-	4,290	720
Building maintenance and utilities	1,329	746	2,074	-
Meeting expenses	8,011	11	8,022	141
Insurance	1,857	-	1,857	195
Presbytery	975	-	975	172
Bank charges	101	-	101	(24)
Miscellaneous expenses	568	-	568	624
Independent examiner's fee	2,040	-	2,040	-
	<u>39,560</u>	<u>757</u>	<u>40,316</u>	<u>6,867</u>

3 Transactions with related parties

Garry Williams served as church Minister and was paid £19,721 (2023: £4,873) for serving in that capacity, not for serving as a trustee; these payments are permitted by the charity's governing document. This amount includes a reduction of £668 relating to payroll fees and post-tax additions.

4 Movement of funds

	Opening balance £	Receipts £	Payments £	Transfers £	Closing balance £
<i>Unrestricted funds</i>	13,553	41,186	(39,665)	-	15,075
<i>Restricted funds</i>					
Building fund	391,227	16,551	(331,196)	-	76,582
Total funds	<u>404,780</u>	<u>57,737</u>	<u>(370,860)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>91,657</u>

Restricted funds have to be spent in line with a particular purpose or project, usually specified by the donor or a fundraising campaign for a specific project or activity. In this respect, the restricted Building fund can only be used for the purchase and renovation of Ebenezer Chapel and the School Room that forms part of the property.

EBENEZER REFORMED CHAPEL, LUTON

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 26 MARCH 2024

5 Reconciliation with previously reported funds

As explained in note 1 'Accounting Policies', in the previous year the charity prepared its accounts using the accruals basis; in the current year the charity has taken advantage of the option to prepare its accounts on a receipts and payments basis. The comparatives presented in these accounts have been re-stated using the receipts and payments basis and a reconciliation with the reserves and results reported previously follows:

Reconciliation of reserves

	2023	2022
	£	£
Previously reported reserves, at 26 March	413,092	209
Adjustments arising from use of receipts and payments basis:		
Exclusion of previously included debtors	(10,592)	-
Exclusion of previously included creditors	2,280	-
Re-stated reserves, at 26 March	<u>404,780</u>	<u>209</u>

Reconciliation of results

	2023
	£
Previously reported results	412,883
Adjustments arising from use of receipts and payments basis:	
Excluded movements in debtors resulting in the recognition of more / (less) income	(10,592)
Excluded movements in creditors resulting in the recognition of less / (more) expenditure	2,280
Re-stated results	<u>404,571</u>