

**PAULSGROVE BAPTIST CHURCH**

**REPORT AND ACCOUNTS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023**

**Charitable Incorporated Organisation: Charity Registration 1200307**

**1 Woofferton Road**

**Paulsgrove**

**PORTSMOUTH**

**PO6 4DW**



**[www.paulsgrove.org.uk](http://www.paulsgrove.org.uk)**

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## LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Address	1 Woofferton Road Paulsgrove PORTSMOUTH PO6 4DW
Trustees	David John Aarons Robert Joseph Milliken Stephen John Mountain
Governing Document	Constitution dated 24 July 2022
Property Trustee	The Baptist Union Corporation Limited Baptist House 129 Broadway Didcot Oxfordshire OX11 8RT [Governed by the Fairbairn Trusts]
Bankers	CAF Bank 25 Kings Hill Avenue Kings Hill West Malling KENT ME19 4JQ

**PAULSGROVE BAPTIST CHURCH**  
**Trustees Report for the year ended 31 December 2023**

The Trustees have pleasure in submitting the Report and accounts for the year to 31 December 2023.

**Structure and Governance**

The process of transitioning to a new charity, a Charitable Incorporated Organisation, which began in 2021, took longer than expected, but was complete by the end of 2023, whereby the old charity (1130799) was closed. A new Constitution and Rules is now in place, and a new membership system called 'Partnership' is also in operation (see below).

Trustees oversee the governance of the charity and meet quarterly.

Elders have spiritual oversight and direction of the ministries of the church and meet monthly. They are assisted in the practical outworking of these ministries by deacons, with the combined Leadership Team (elders and deacons) meeting quarterly.

The expenditure of large sums of money, major policy decisions and the appointment of trustees, elders and deacons require the approval of the church membership. The members ('partners') meet quarterly, to discuss and pray through decisions and review church life together.

**Summary of the Charity's Main Activities and Achievements**

Paulsgrove Baptist Church is committed to helping people, particularly in its local community, to know and follow Jesus Christ, through our Vision: "Growing lifelong disciples of Jesus Christ, by being a Christian, Caring, Community." A leadership team of elders and deacons oversee the ministries of the church and seek to equip people in their various roles.

Our new membership system is called 'Partnership' as we seek to engage our members in actively partnering together to fulfil the aims of the church to grow disciples of Jesus. We met as a group for the first time under the new charity in early 2023, and for the remainder of the year, we have been asking our partners to prayerfully consider the specific ways in which each one will play their part in growing the church. Within their area of service, we asked each partner to seek God as to which people they could invest in over the next period of time. This could be within a formal group, such as children's and youth work, or it could be mentoring an individual who might be younger in the faith. The partners are encouraged not to see some activities as 'practical' and some as 'spiritual' – whilst leading a formal Bible study might require a teaching gift, getting alongside someone through serving in a practical task (such as serving tea and coffee) could build a relationship whereby spiritual conversation, prayer and encouragement could develop and meaningfully grow another person's faith. The elders intend to visit each partner in 2024 to discuss and pray together, and work out what support might be needed in equipping the partners in their discipling investment.

We began the year in the same way that we have for the past few years, with a prayer and fasting week. We encouraged our church to clear some time during the first full week of the year, to spend time with God, seeking His purpose and priority for them as individuals, but also to pray for the work of the church for the year ahead. Fasting can be a helpful way of depending on God, and many people take the opportunity to fast in appropriate ways for them. We also set up and a prayer room that was open for certain hours of the week, with various prayer activities available to help those of all ages engage with God and enjoy growing their reliance on their Heavenly Father.

In terms of our regular programme, our Sunday morning gatherings and Tuesday discipleship groups are at the heart of our activity as a Christian church.

On Sundays we started the year with a Spring Sunday series called “One in Christ.” We discovered from the Gospel stories how Jesus met people from all sorts of backgrounds and stages of life, bringing transformation to them as they turned to him in faith. As we discovered that Jesus favours no particular type of person but the good news is there for all, we can appreciate the value each of us has in Jesus eyes, which should lead to a unity between us as believers. A major prayer for us as a church in 2023 was for unity so that we can move forward together in our mission to make disciples for Jesus Christ.

Our midweek discipleship times continued to meet on Tuesdays, meeting centrally at the church in the morning and evening, and breaking into groups to further explore the Sunday teaching – discussing, applying to our lives, and praying for each other. This has been invaluable for relationship building and being able to support each other’s walk with Jesus. Some who are unable to meet on a Tuesday have met online on a different day of the week, and we encourage all from our church to be involved in a discipleship group as springboard to serving the church in other ways – Sundays and Tuesdays, with Bible and prayer, are the foundation on which we build everything else.

On most Sundays, we begin the service all together, but then our children and young people have age specific groups for targeted teaching and learning. We rebranded these groups in 2023 with the theme of a rocket taking off and its journey in space: Sparks (0-4s), Launchpad (4-10s), Explosion (11-16s). Our over 16s stay in the service with the adults, but then meet once a month on a Sunday evening – this group is called Impact (16-18+). We thank God for the committed group of leaders who prepare their sessions, teach faithfully, and care for the children and young people with godly love. The teams of leaders meet once per term for prayer and planning. Our Explosion group also enjoyed occasional social activities and an activity day to build friendship and spiritual investment.

On the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of each month, we continue to celebrate the Lord’s Supper as a whole church family – with all ages together. This is an interactive time, whereby we eat, sing, read the Bible and discuss and pray around tables, and take the bread and juice in remembrance of Jesus’ sacrifice on the cross. Our 2023 theme was “The Vision and Values of PBC” – each month we looked at a different value that we hold as a church

<http://www.paulsgrove.org.uk/2020-vision> and ask God to help us grow in these areas. The Lord’s Suppers are important times for us as a church family, as we continue to remember that all we have is because of the grace of God in Jesus Christ.

In mid-April we had the joy of celebrating with a baptism service of two young men from different backgrounds. One grew up in the church and came to an assurance of faith in Jesus, whilst the other had recently become a Christian and is in the early stages of faith. Baptism services are real encouragements as we hear the testimonies of Jesus’ transformation and remember that Jesus is at work in lives today!

From May to July, our Sunday series was called “God’s everlasting wisdom for an everchanging world”. Amongst all sorts of issues that we face in society today, including sexuality, social media interactions, and stewardship of money, we turned to God’s wisdom in the book of Proverbs to see that His ways have always been relevant and that He makes life work best.

In July and August, we studied the small Old Testament book of Jonah, learning how Jonah was transformed “From running to revival” and how we can never run too far away from God without the hope of Him bringing us back and setting us on His path again.

In the Autumn, we began a series which would be split into three seasons over the academic year. It is called “Seeking after God’s own heart” from the life of King David, as we delved into the stories of how God was shaping a

man whose heart was fixed on Him. Rather than compressing David's story into one term, we decided that to do it justice we would spend the best part of a year looking through it, to see how we might have hearts like David's. Ultimately, whilst David was a great king, he was also a flawed man, but we marvel in "David's greater son" Jesus, the everlasting king who sits on the throne forever (Luke 1:32-33).

At the special seasons of the year, we celebrate with particular services and events. At Easter we met on both Good Friday and Easter Sunday, with an extended time of lunch, games and friendship on the Friday. In the lead up to Christmas, our advent series looked at who Jesus is from John Chapter 1. On Christmas eve, we had two services – the first was an all-age service with contribution from our children and young people, and the evening was a carol service, in which various people came from the community. Our Christmas morning service was a celebration of Jesus' birth as a baby but remembering that he grew into the perfect man to die and rise to offer eternal life.

Two long-standing members of our church passed away in 2023. We praise God for their lives and service to Christ, and whilst grieving we have hope that they are now enjoying the presence of their Saviour, and we will be reunited with them in our heavenly home. We continue to support their spouses who remain, encouraging them that their church family is there for them as they need us.

Our men's and women's ministries seek to connect men and women to God and each other with specific foci. We held 2 men's evenings in 2023 – a fish and chip evening with a Christian movie, and a Chinese meal with quiz and testimonies of faith. These evenings were designed for men to enjoy time together and to invite friends along to be introduced to the hope we have in Jesus.

Our women's ministry is currently focusing on how women can slow down and find peace in building their relationship with Jesus. Termly prayer times with various prayer practices are designed to help women deepen their walk with Christ, and therefore have a greater impact in their relationships – in their families, in the church, and with those they are seeking to share the love of Jesus with.

In our families ministry, we ran a Light Party once again in October, for our church families and children to enjoy celebrating Jesus as the Light of the World and equip them to share the good news with their friends. At the beginning of the Christmas holidays, we also ran a Messy Church event, with crafts, activities, songs, food, and a message of hope in Jesus. This again proved popular, as a number of families from our community attended.

We remain committed to the community of Paulsgrove, seeking to serve people with the love of God.

Our Food Bank paused from April to September, as our coordinator had to step down and the team were becoming burdened with the heavy lifting of stock. We took a term to pray for God to guide us with a better way forward and are grateful for how He answered. Our partnership with local churches has developed, as a lady from a neighbouring church has taken on the role of Food Bank coordinator. And the Portsmouth Food Bank coordinating church has helped us by delivering pre-packaged food parcels ready for the Thursday sessions. We re-opened in the Autumn, and have been adjusting to the operational changes, as well as being adaptable as things often don't quite go to plan – with people sometimes turning up without knowing the food bank referral procedure as well as agencies getting up to speed with an e-referral system. But praise God that we are able to offer this ministry to a community in which there is much need. We are also mindful that we do want to be a listening ear, and so a couple of people are available each week to sit and talk with clients, share the love of God, and signpost them to where else they might receive help.

Our partnership with Frontline Debt Advice service continued through 2023, and it remained a busy service. At times, capacity was at maximum and there was a need to signpost new people to other debt advice agencies. But we

are grateful that being able to help people take steps to reduce their debt has been a real blessing to move their lives forward.

Our involvement with the charity Hope into Action continued in 2023. The charity exists to house those previously homeless, and provide pastoral support to help the tenants to move forward towards self-sufficiency. Some of our church volunteers help to befriend the tenants, look after the property, and raise funds for this important work.

We continue to pray for and support the work of our local schools. A new Community Schools Hub was being developed in 2023, to help and support families beyond the classroom, and a few parents from our church have been part of the discussions and planning towards the set-up. Our pastor remained on the Governing Body of one of our local primary schools, seeking to be a positive support in its education and standards.

We once again welcomed children, staff and parents from this school, to three carol services in December. This again proved popular, with around 600 people coming into our building for these services. Lots of interest and questions came from children and parents, with some attending our subsequent Christmas services.

Over the year, we have continued to walk through life with those in our church who have faced challenging situations, as well as members of the community known to us who have been in need. Various people moved on from our church, but we were able to welcome new people who joined us.

Various community groups hire our building at different times during the week.

- The Good Shepherd International Mission use the building on a Sunday afternoon.
- Tiny Turtles Preschool use our sports hall from Monday to Friday.
- Slimming World operate on Wednesday evenings.
- And from April, Follow Your Dreamz performing arts group began their hire on Monday and Friday teatimes.

As well as providing additional income to the church, we are pleased that our building is used by groups that build into the quality of life and provide opportunities for those in our community. Please refer to the 'Finance' section below for a discussion of how this funding has been allocated between the CUA and CIO versions of the church's charities during 2023.

### **Mission and Evangelism**

The church commits to donate a minimum of 10% of its income to overseas mission organisations and local charities. In addition to giving financial support, each organisation is highlighted for a month for specific prayer and promotion within the church via our monthly prayer diary. Within the church, our mission coordinator keeps in touch with our mission partners and promotes their work within the church, providing further opportunity for us to pray for and support the work they do for Jesus. Our mission partners serve Jesus in some challenging places, including countries where it is hard to be a Christian, and in places of conflict, including a long-standing ministry in Ukraine in which war has ravaged the country. However, it is been so encouraging to hear stories of God at work, and so we remain committed to support and pray for Gospel work around the globe.

### **Volunteers**

We would like to thank all volunteers who work so hard to make our church the lively vibrant community it is. A large percentage of the church membership donate significant time and resources to the work of the church.

## **Public Benefit**

The Trustees have applied the public benefit guidance published by the Charity Commission.

## **Finance**

This first full year of operation of the CIO charity (1200307) has resulted in very limited financial activity. The charity was first registered with the Commission on 8<sup>th</sup> September 2022, but has since operated in a 'shadow' capacity whilst the legal process proceeded to formally transfer and close the old CUA charity (1130799). The bank accounts for the CIO charity were set up only after final confirmation of establishment of all elements of the CIO charity had been received from our legal team (Edward Connor Solicitors) which was in late November 2023, at which point the transfer date between the CUA and the CIO was agreed as being midnight on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023.

As a result, for the year in question (2023) the financial activity of the CIO charity was for the majority carried out under the auspices of the CUA charity (1130799) as this continued to operate until 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023, the new CIO replacing it on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2024.

The only financial activity directly related to the CIO charity (1200307) was a series of funding transfers from the CUA to the CIO in December 2023, made once the new bank accounts had been established and so that there would be finance available to the new charity to meet its financial obligations to suppliers from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2024. Two voluntary offerings from members were also received in advance of the transfer date.

These financial transactions are listed in the Notes to the Accounts, section 2, page 11 below.

All other funding relating to the operation of the church was held by the CUA charity (1130799) during 2023, and was transferred to the CIO during 2024. This will therefore feature in the CIO's 2024 Report and Accounts. This transfer procedure includes the assets and liabilities of the CUA charity.

Because the financial activity of the CIO during 2023 was below £25,000, we have taken advice from Stewardship Services who advise that an Independent Examination is not required on this occasion. Because the church's CUA charity has been removed from the Commission's register upon transfer to the church's CIO charity, it is not possible to register a TAR for it for 2023; again, Stewardship Services advise that this situation is routine for transfers between CUA and CIO versions of charities.

## **Reserves Policy**

The Trustees have determined that the charity should adopt the Reserves Policy of the previous CUA charity, namely to hold unrestricted cash of no less than £30,000 so that the charity could continue to operate should income and/or expenditure vary adversely. At the year end, the CUA charity (1130799) held unrestricted funds of £97,806 and so was complying with its Reserves Policy. This unrestricted funding, plus £1,000 of restricted funding, transferred to the CIO in January 2024 and so the CIO has been also able to comply with the adopted Reserves Policy from a date early in 2024. This will be reported in full in the CIO's 2024 TAR.

## **Risk Statement**

The Trustees have reviewed the risks to which a small charity operating with few employees is exposed. Appropriate procedures are in place to identify, monitor and review these risks on a regular basis.

## **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.



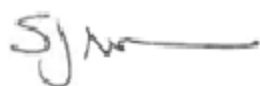
We are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable us to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011.

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

### **Approval**

This report was approved by the Trustees on 30<sup>th</sup> September 2024 and signed on their behalf by:

Stephen John Mountain

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'SJM', followed by a horizontal line.

**RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023**

		Notes	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £
<b>Receipts</b>				
	Voluntary receipts	2a	205.00	NIL
	Charitable activities		NIL	NIL
	Grants		NIL	NIL
	Other receipts	2b	1200.11	NIL
	Investments		NIL	NIL
	<b>TOTAL RECEIPTS</b>		<b>1405.11</b>	<b>NIL</b>
<b>Payments</b>				
	Payments in relation to charitable activities undertaken directly		NIL	NIL
	Governance costs		NIL	NIL
	Grants paid in relation to charitable activities undertaken by others		NIL	NIL
	Benevolent Payments to Individuals		NIL	NIL
	<b>TOTAL PAYMENTS</b>		<b>NIL</b>	<b>NIL</b>
<b>Net Receipts / (Payments)</b>			<b>1405.11</b>	<b>NIL</b>
	Funds at 1 <sup>st</sup> January 2023		NIL	NIL
	<b>Funds at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023</b>		<b>1405.11</b>	<b>NIL</b>

The notes on page 11 form part of these accounts.

**STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES  
AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2023**

**ASSETS**

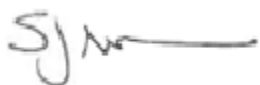
Cash funds (see Receipts and Payments account above) £1405.11

**LIABILITIES**

All liabilities were held by separate CUA charity £NIL

The notes on page 11 form part of these accounts.

These accounts were approved by the Trustees on 30th September 2024 and signed on their behalf by:-  
Stephen John Mountain



**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023**

**1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES**

**(a) Basis of Accounting**

As is permitted for charities with income of less than £250,000, the accounts have been prepared on a receipts and payments basis with a statement of assets and liabilities as prescribed by the Charity Commission.

**(b) Funds**

Unrestricted funds are donations and other income received for the objects of the charity without specified purpose that can be used for the general purposes of the church. Restricted funds are amounts received where the donor has specified the purpose for which they must be used.

**2. RECEIPTS**

Unrestricted funds £      Restricted funds £

**(a) Voluntary Income**

Offerings and other gifts	205.00	0.00
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**(b) Other Receipts**

Transfers from CUA to establish CIO	1200.00	0.00
Interest earned	0.11	0.00

**3. PAYMENTS**

As explained in the main report in the section titled 'Finance' (page 8), there are no payments made by the CIO charity in 2023. During 2023 the CIO was operating in a 'shadow' form to the earlier CUA charity and the majority of receipts, and all payments, were handled through that route.

The church employed a pastor and a cleaner for the whole of 2023. However this was under the auspices of the previous CUA charity and the two employees did not transfer to the CIO (under TUPE arrangements on their existing terms and conditions) until 1<sup>st</sup> January 2024. This will be reported in the 2024 TAR which will again be subject to Independent Examination. There are therefore no employee costs falling to the CIO in 2023.

**4. FUNDS**

All monies held by the CIO as at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023 were held in the General Fund. There were no monies held by the CIO in Restricted Funds.

During 2024, with the transfer of monies from the CUA to the CIO a review by the Trustees of the scope of Restricted Funds has been carried out, resulting in the closing of certain out-of-date Restricted Funds and the setting up of a new Restricted Fund; this was carried out in accordance with the CIO Constitution and will be reported in the 2024 TAR which will again be subject to Independent Examination.

**5. RELATED CHARITIES**

The custodian Trustee of the church is the Baptist Union Corporation Limited which is charity number 249635 and which is controlled by the Baptist Union Council. The church is also a member of the Fellowship of Independent Evangelical Churches (FIEC) which is charity number 1168037.