

Wayfarers Fellowship Evangelical Church

Trustees' & Financial Report 1 October 2024 to 30 September 2025

This past year has been an encouraging year for the Trustees. We believe that Jesus builds his church and with the firm foundation of solid biblical teaching every Sunday we have seen the fruit. Although we've seen a decline in attendance this year due to health issues, we are pleased to be welcoming new people to Wayfarers. Our average weekly attendance dropped from 15 to 13 over twelve months but is again on the increase. We continue to have many speakers we can draw on from across the island and occasionally from the mainland. Our thanks and appreciation cannot be understated as without these men who freely serve, Wayfarers would not be the church it is. The trustees always welcome feedback on the life of the church, whether positive or negative. We are an independent church but whilst we are not affiliated to the Federation of Independent Evangelical Churches we continue to share the same beliefs and ethos.

As recorded in last year's report a number of policies needed to be put into place. In June our insurance provider added the condition that we must have a Safeguarding Policy. We have gone further and now have Safeguarding, Engaging External Speakers, Risk Management, and Complaints policies in place and these are recorded on the Charity Commission website. These policies need to be read alongside the church's Constitution. A Safeguarding Lead has been appointed and we thank Melinda Reed for taking on this role along with Maurice Fairall who is the Safeguarding Trustee. Initial training for the Safeguarding Lead and Trustees was completed in July. In December a Fire Risk Assessment was carried out by MRW Fire Safety Solutions to comply with the Building Safety Act 2022. We were advised to display fire safety notices and these are displayed in the lobby and fellowship room. The annual fire extinguisher checks were carried out in October.

The church building is in a good state of repair but there are always small tasks to be done and some are still outstanding from the last report but are in hand. Thanks must go to Nick and Sarah for helping out in the garden with hedge cutting and preparation for the small garden to be concreted over. We also thank Jean for her work on tending the planters at the entrance to the church. Maurice Fairall continues to represent the church with Carisbrooke Parish News. Thanks also go to Liz Day who has designed a new classified advertisement for the church which is published in each issue of the Carisbrooke Parish News.

On 26th January we held a service to commemorate Holocaust Memorial Day, the day Auschwitz concentration camp was liberated from the Nazis in 1945. The church was full to capacity with around 40 in attendance from churches across the island. In September we commenced a 10-week Kesher course on the connection between Judaism and Christianity, Israel and the Church. We have thirteen attending not just from Wayfarers but also from other island churches. We continue to make available the 8-week course, Christianity Explored, to anyone wanting to know more about the Christian faith. For anyone considering baptism we now offer a three-session informal study to ensure a Biblical understanding of what baptism means.

Terry Blunden's term as a trustee ended at the end of the year but with the support of the other trustees is happy to continue in this role for a further term. Even though health has prevented Terry from worshipping with us on Sundays he is still involved in an advisory role due to his accumulation of knowledge on church matters over the decades.

The trustees wish to thank everyone who helps in the practical every-day running of the church from cleaning, maintenance, gardening, opening up the church on Sundays, operating the P.A. desk and providing refreshments after the services. Every year we appeal for extra helpers to assist in these tasks and this year is no different. If you are able to serve in any way do please get in touch with one of the trustees.

Please pray that the Fellowship continues to maintain a Christian witness in Carisbrooke.

The Trustees / Elders at 30th September 2025 with end of term dates are: Andrew Attrill (Trustee / Elder 30.9.28), Maurice Fairall (Trustee / Elder 30.9.27), Terence Blunden (Trustee / Elder 30.9.25) and Roger Fruen (Trustee 30.9.26).

Financial Report

This past year has seen a decrease in the freewill offering. Through bank standing orders and cash in the freewill offering box £5054.80 has been given as opposed to last year £5900.95.

I would like to thank members of the congregation who continue to give to the church by standing order via Gift Aid. Giving in this way gives the trustees confidence that not only our future expenses can be considered well in advance but this allows us to reclaim income tax from money placed in the freewill offering box under the Gift Aid Small Donation Scheme.

Expenses totalled £2523.08, lower than usual due to no major work being needed on the property. However safeguarding training and Christian Safeguarding Services membership along with a fire risk assessment have been expenses we have not incurred previously. Church insurance is the recurring large expense. This year our broker refused to discount their fee by the 50% they have given us for many years. We have a long term undertaking with our current insurance company which gives us a good discount on our premium however when this undertaking expires we will make enquiries with alternative insurers.

Upcoming large expenditure will include a new flat roof over the kitchen, vestry and toilets and possibly the removal of the ash tree in the corner of the garden should it be affected by ash die-back. I.W. Council have already removed some limbs from ash trees in the public car park but as yet the disease hasn't affected our tree.

Electrical safety checks were not necessary this year as certification will not be due for another two years.

Our reserve fund has earned £286.67 in interest. In November we changed our energy supplier to E.On Next due to poor customer service from SSE when we became a Charitable

Incorporated Organisation. We secured an excellent rate and standing charge with E.On Next with a two year contract.

I would encourage anyone who is considering giving to the church through Gift Aid to do so. For every £1.00 given the church may be able to reclaim 25p. Through this HMRC scheme we reclaimed £1,319.14 in income tax.

We thank Robin Burnett for carrying out the financial audit this year. As with previous years he generously completed this task at no cost to the Fellowship. Robin has indicated he will be happy to carry out next year's audit.

Andrew Attrill
Hon. Treasurer

30/10/2025

