



# **Annual Report**

Incorporating Examined Financial Statements  
For the Year Ended

**31st December 2024**

Charity No. 1205038

# **MOUNTAIN AND MARSH MINISTRY AREA**

## **CHARITY INFORMATION**

Charity Name	The Mountain and Marsh Ministry Area
Registered Charity Number	1205038
Principal Address	St Mary's Church Church Lane Marshfield CARDIFF CF3 2UF
Contact Details	Tel: 01633 309691 Email: <a href="mailto:pa@mountainandmarshchurches.org.uk">pa@mountainandmarshchurches.org.uk</a> Website: <a href="http://mountainandmarshchurches.org.uk">mountainandmarshchurches.org.uk</a>

### **Charity Trustees**

#### *Ex-Officio*

The Revd Ross Maidment (Chair)  
The Revd Matthew Sellers (Team Vicar)  
Mrs Jan Sainsbury (Warden)  
Miss Esther Moody (Warden)

#### *Elected*

Mr Wayne Barnett  
Mr John West  
Miss Pauline Jenkins  
Mr Peter Whittaker  
Mr Neil Johnson  
Mrs Jennifer Richardson  
Mrs Janet Williams

#### *Co-Opted*

Mr David Simpson (Treasurer)  
Mrs Annette Parkes (Co-Chair)  
Miss Cheryl Chrisoffersen (Secretary)  
Mrs Claire Fitchie (Safeguarding Officer)

### **Independent Examiner**

Janet Philips ACCA  
Lewis and Co  
85 Commercial St  
Risca  
Newport  
NP11 6AW

## **REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES**

The trustees have pleasure in presenting their report and financial statements for the Charity for the year ending 31 December 2024.

### **Objectives and Activities**

The objectives of the Charity are achieved by promoting throughout the Ministry Area the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical within our parish. Simply put, we are a diverse bunch of people who love Jesus and want to walk closely with Him. We seek to do this in the following ways:

- the provision of regular Christian worship, including Holy Communion;
- the celebration of 'life events', including baptisms, funerals and marriages;
- the provision and maintenance of the fabric of churches, churchyards and associated buildings for which we are responsible;
- the maintenance of Christian burial places;
- promoting the study of Christian teaching, practices and Scripture;
- pastoral care and visiting the sick and dying;
- fostering ecumenical links between differing Christian denominations;
- the provision of means and engagement to promote fellowship within the membership of the churches and the wider community through projects such as the community choir;
- the engagement and support of local community organisations, such as local councils, schools, and other charities.

The Trustees confirm that they have had due regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit. Our worship, pastoral offices, community activities, heritage access, and educational work are open and accessible to the public and are delivered with a view to advancing the Christian faith and promoting community wellbeing.

### **Achievement and Performance**

The Mountain and Marsh Ministry Area, formally established by decree of the Bishop of Monmouth on 11th September 2022, brings together the historic parishes of Bedwas, Machen, Marshfield, Michaelston-y-Fedw, Rudry, St Brides, and Trethomas. Now in our second full year, we give thanks for continued signs of life and growth across our churches. Despite ongoing challenges, there is a tangible sense of momentum and vision. What follows is a summary of particular highlights and achievements from 2024, and an opportunity to recognise God's faithfulness and grace in our shared life together.

#### *Ministry Team*

- welcoming Revd Matthew Sellers as Team Vicar, initially licensed as a self-supporting minister in April 2024 and then to full-time ministry from September, with a focal ministry at St James Rudry and St Michael's Michaelston-y-Fedw.
- giving thanks for the faithful ministry of Revd John Humphries, who stepped down from active ministry during the year;
- appointing Izzy Bromilow as our first Ministry Area Administrator/Personal Assistant, supporting the Ministry Area Leader and improving coordination across the Area;
- continuing our pattern of focal ministries, ensuring that each church has a priest with a primary pastoral focus;
- investing in the development of lay leadership through training, encouragement, and shared opportunities across the churches.

### *Finance and Governance*

- making significant progress in the consolidation of finances across the Ministry Area—reducing almost 20 separate bank accounts to just two, with the transition due to complete in late 2025;
- agreeing that St John's Machen would, from 1st January 2025, manage its own local budget in line with other churches across the MA;
- continuing to centralise shared costs, including clergy expenses, and to work towards financial sustainability through fair and transparent systems;
- regular meetings of the Ministry Area Council and Standing Committee, with improved reporting and communication to Local Church Committees;
- giving thanks for a growing number of donors who support the Ministry Area through the Gift Direct scheme operated by the RB following a stewardship campaign during Lent.

### *Building Projects*

- completing the restoration of the 15th-century tower at St Michael and All Angels, Lower Machen, with grant funding of £149,212 from the National Lottery and £60,000 from CADW;
- progressing plans for a major reordering at St Mary's Marshfield, drawing on legacy gifts and historic investments to develop flexible, multi-use worship and community space;
- developing plans for the re-opening Trethomas Church Centre for worship and mission, and applying for further funding to support eco-installations and building upgrades;
- initiating consultation and planning for a potential building project at St James' Rudry, including gathering congregation feedback on future needs;
- the restoration of St John's, Machen, following successful grant applications, with plans developed to celebrate the church's 170th anniversary next year.

### *Liturgy and Worship*

- continuing our pattern of shared worship across the Ministry Area on 5th Sundays;
- launching "ALT" at St Mary's Marshfield, a new worshipping community supported by the Church in Wales Growth Fund (£10,000 grant) and welcoming over 200 people across three events;
- developing non-eucharistic worship opportunities, including a new café-style Discipleship Sunday, family services, and lay-led Matins services;
- maintaining our commitment to a mixed economy of worship, with traditional, contemporary, and ecumenical expressions across the Ministry Area;
- seeing increased engagement around the key festivals of the year, following a focus on developing a culture on invitation with over 500 people attended carol services across the Ministry Area.

### *Community and Schools*

- hosting regular visits and assemblies for schools across the MA, including Marshfield, Bedwas, Machen, Graig y Rhacca and Rhydri Primary;
- developing the Community Choir in Marshfield and launching a new Choristership Scheme, with 10 children aged 8–16 joining and receiving RSCM training and funding from Tesco and the Archbishop of Wales Fund for Children;
- growing the toddler group at St Barrwg's Bedwas, which continues to welcome up to 20 families each week;
- deepening community engagement in Lower Machen through the "Faith in Nature" programme, welcoming local schools, nature groups, conservation partners,
- maintaining a vital relationship with the Phoenix Club, whose annual donation of £3,500 continues to sustain the life of St Michael's, Michaelston-y-Fedw.
- leading remembrance and centenary events in partnership with the WI, the Royal British Legion, and local councils across the Area.

### *Church Attendance and Life Events*

- celebrating 7 baptisms following preparation and pastoral support;
- preparing and confirming 6 candidates at a joyful Ministry Area confirmation with Bishop Cherry;
- presiding at 2 weddings;
- offering comfort and pastoral care through 36 funeral services during the year;
- celebrating a continued increase in average weekly attendance across the Ministry Area, with an average of 138 worshippers each week and growth recorded in each local church.

### **Structure, Governance, and Management**

The Mountain and Marsh Ministry Area legally unites eight churches from southeast Caerphilly to west Newport: St Barrwg's, St Bridget's, St James', St John's, St Mary's, St Michael's, St Michael and All Angels, and St Thomas'. The Ministry Area Council (MAC), formed in 2023, continues to provide shared oversight, with elected representatives from each church. The MAC is registered with the Charity Commission and acts as the Parochial Church Council and Charity Trustees for the Area. Trustees of the Ministry Area are responsible for reviewing risks, managing assets, and ensuring robust systems are in place for the care of buildings, finances, and people.

#### *The Ministry Team in 2024 comprised:*

Revd Ross Maidment (Ministry Area Leader)

Revd Matthew Sellers (Team Vicar, from April 2024)

Revd Audrey Jenkins, Revd Glyn Jenkins, Revd Arthur Parkes, Revd David Kellen (Permission to Officiate)

Hilary Williams and Gay Holywell (Licensed Lay Ministers)

Jan Sainsbury (MA Rector's Warden)

Esther Moody (MA People's Warden)

Izzy Bromilow (Administrator/PA, appointed in 2024)

Each church continues to be served by local wardens, a treasurer, and committee. Worship, administration, and mission are supported by volunteers who offer their time and gifts in countless ways. The trustees are grateful to all who have contributed so faithfully to the flourishing of the Ministry Area in 2024.

### **Safeguarding Statement**

The Trustees are committed to the Church in Wales safeguarding policies and procedures. All relevant workers and volunteers undertake safer recruitment, training, and DBS checks as appropriate. Any safeguarding concerns are managed in line with national guidance and diocesan oversight.

### **Fundraising Statement**

The Charity does not employ professional fundraisers or commercial participators and received no fundraising complaints in the year. All fundraising activities comply with relevant Church in Wales and Charity Commission guidance.

### **Finance Review**

The Board of Trustees are grateful to Lewis and Co for examining the Charity Accounts for the year ended 31st December 2024.

Income for the year is £602,467, of which £335,072 is restricted and £267,396 is unrestricted. Within this year's income is £223,929 of exceptional income which is grant funding for the tower repair project at Lower Machen.

Income streams for 2024 are made up of:

Donations	19%
Grant Funding	61%
Other income	20%

Expenditure for the year is £630,324, of which £326,759 is restricted and £303,565 is unrestricted.

Excluding exceptional costs, the largest expenditure in 2024 was Ministry Share, which is our contribution to the Board of Finance towards the cost of ministry. Our contribution was paid on time and in full.

We are extremely grateful to all who support our work, particularly individual donors who account for the majority of our income.

Our accounts are prepared on a going concern basis. The policy of the Ministry Area Council is to make use of restricted funds wherever possible, particularly in relation to expenditure on the maintenance, repair and development of church buildings and other property. Over the long term, the trustees aim to return to a surplus budget and increase the charity's unrestricted reserves, which can be made available to deal with any unforeseen or unplanned events as and when they arise.

Historical legacies and bequests made to the churches are held in the form of shares in the Representative Body of the Church in Wales Common Investment Fund. According to the investment policy of the Representative Body of the Church in Wales, these are couched in a balanced range of investments, in order to achieve a healthy and secure return. These investments are held for the long term to use in accordance with the requirements of the original donations.

Key risks considered by the trustees include:

1. Financial sustainability (income volatility and inflationary costs);
2. Fabric risk (unexpected building failures and compliance);
3. People risk (volunteer capacity, recruitment, and wellbeing);
4. Safeguarding and reputational risk;
5. Governance systems (data protection, financial controls, and reporting).

Mitigations include consolidated banking and controls, phased capital planning, scheduled fabric inspections, safeguarding training, and regular MAC oversight.

Priorities for 2025 include:

1. Completing banking consolidation and embedding consistent financial reporting across all churches;
2. Progressing St Mary's, Marshfield reordering through the next stages (faculty, funding, delivery planning);
3. Re-opening Trethomas Church Centre and developing eco-installations as funding allows;
4. Marking St John's, Machen 170th anniversary with mission and heritage engagement;
5. Developing ALT and other invitational worship/discipleship pathways;
6. Continued schools and community partnerships, and growth of the Community Choir/ Choristership Scheme.

**Closing Remarks**

2024 has been a year of steady growth, deeper partnership, and faithful generosity. We have taken major steps to strengthen our governance and finances, invested in buildings for future mission, and welcomed many new faces into worship and community. None of this would be possible without the prayer, service, and giving of so many. Thank you. As we look ahead, we do so with confidence in God's grace and a clear commitment to sustainable ministry across every church in our Area.

The Revd Ross Maidment  
Area Dean and Chair of Trustees

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R6' followed by a stylized, cursive flourish that ends in a long horizontal stroke.

[illegible]



[illegible]



[illegible]

[illegible]



CHARITY COMMISSION  
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

## Independent examiner's report on the accounts

### Section A

### Independent Examiner's Report

#### Report to the trustees

Charity Name

MOUNTAIN AND MARSH MINISTRY A Ltd

#### On accounts for the year ended

31 December 2024

Charity no  
(if any)

1205038

#### Set out on pages

(remember to include the page numbers of additional sheets)

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31 December 2024.

#### Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity's trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust'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 Act.

#### Independent examiner's statement

[The charity's gross income exceeded £250,000 and I am qualified to undertake the examination by being a qualified member of [insert name of applicable listed body]]. *Delete [] if not applicable.*

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination (other than that disclosed below \*) which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

*\* Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply.*

Signed:

*Ms J. Phillips*

Date:

*21/10/25*

Name:

*Ms Janet Phillips*

Relevant professional qualification(s) or body

*ACCA*