

Report of the Octagon, Martineau Hall and Hapton Trustees to AGM 2024

Trustees: David Carter, Bruce Chilton (absent through illness since June, 2023), Nick Groves (died June, 2023), Mary Rae and Rod Voegeli. The Charity Commission advises that Congregational Officers should be ex-officio trustees but the Octagon Congregation currently has no Congregational Officers. The British and Foreign Unitarian Association is the Octagon Chapel's residual trustee.

The Covid national lockdown closed the Chapel and the Martineau Hall on 16.3.20 and suspended the Octagon's Constitution and Bye-laws. The Trustees took direct responsibility as well as legal and financial liability for the workings of the Chapel which are all covered by Trustee indemnity provisions of the Chapel's insurance.

The Trustees returned the Octagon's Constitution and By-laws at the AGM in 2023 under which the leadership and normal activities of the Octagon community are normally delegated to the Congregational Chair and Committee. Rod Voegeli, a trustee, who normally represents the Trustees on the Committee has acted as Committee and Congregational Chair during the past year.

The Trustees are grateful to the Committee for the efforts to return the Octagon to its normal activities. The Sunday services have developed in quality, the variety of subjects and the number of leaders, often younger members of the congregation. Thanks to Lynn Davies and the many others. Service attendances were an average of 28 per week during the year. New members have joined and we have 58 members and are among the biggest Unitarian communities in the country.

The Sunday Meditation and Poetry Group continues to draw interest and the Social Responsibility Group, which cares for pastoral care, safe-guarding and outreach including the Welcome Rucksack Project, has become firmly re-established. The Congregational Bring and Share lunch has become a well-attended monthly event. There were 4 weddings during the year which is rather less than in recent years. The Octagon Concert Series earned about £2800 for local and national charities with our thanks as ever to Mary Rae and we must also thank Helaina Checketts for again organising our donations to New Routes, St. Martins and the Food Bank.

The lettings of the Martineau Hall and the Chapel have strongly supported the Chapel's finances over the year. We are all sad to lose Rosie Rogers, our admin and booking officer, who is retiring and we welcome Vikki Nelson as the new officer.

Thanks to all who have helped the Octagon recover in the past year but illness has removed trustees and committee members and we need newer members to take these roles if the Octagon is to have a continuing history. Please volunteer, propose and support a new secretary, treasurer and chair of the congregation at the AGM. Do look at the Constitution and Bylaws for how to do it. We need you!

Bruce Chilton

Octagon Unitarian Chapel & Martineau Hall
Receipts and payments
Period: 01 January 2023 to 31 December 2023

	From	01 January 2023	01 January 2022
	To	31 December 2023	31 December 2022

M-Hall - Martineau Hall (Designated) Fund Incoming resources and Resources used

Receipts

Incoming resources from generated funds

Voluntary income

Membership & subscriptions

464

—

Donations

4

575

Total Voluntary income

469

575

Activities for generating funds

Hire of Chapel

217

—

Total Activities for generating funds

217

—

Investment income

Interest & dividends received

—

355

Total Investment income

—

355

Other incoming resources

Martineau Hall lettings

13,670

8,460

Martineau Hall rent (NORCA)

12,500

25,000

Total Other incoming resources

26,170

33,460

Total receipts

26,856

34,391

Payments

Governance costs

Admin, consumables, licenses

—

4

Insurance less NORCA share

254

229

Memberships, Legal & Professional fees

600

—

Total Governance costs

854

233

Other resources used

Water (less NORCA share)

197

238

Cleaning

1,652

1,653

Electricity

1,568

924

Equipment (purchase, repair & maint)

31

263

Building Maintenance & Repair

877

830

Organist

50

—

Telephone & Broadband

302

222

Total Other resources used

4,678

4,132

Total payments

5,533

4,365

Excess of Incoming resources over Resources used

21,323

30,026

Brought forward balance

59,329

29,303

There may be minor discrepancies in the totals if the pence are not being shown

OCTAGON CHAPEL & MARTINEAU HALL

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE COMMITTEE MEMBERS OF OCTAGON CHAPEL & MARTINEAU HALL

I report on the accounts of the Committee for the year ended 31st December 2023.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year, (under section 43(2) of the Charities Act 1993) (the Act as amended by S.28 of the Charities Act 2006) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to :

- examine the accounts (under section 43 of the Act, as amended);
- to follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 43(7)(b) of the Act as amended); and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's statement

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the accounts.

Independent examiner's statement

In the course of my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

- (1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the trustees have not met the requirements to ensure that:
- (i) proper accounting records are kept (in accordance with section 41 of the Act); and
 - (ii) accounts are prepared which agree with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Act; or
- (2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

C.H Phillips
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Dated: 14th March 2024
