

**BIRMINGHAM CHURCHES TOGETHER**

**31 DECEMBER 2024**

**TRUSTEES REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

**Registered Charity No: 243931**

## **BIRMINGHAM CHURCHES TOGETHER**

### **INDEX**

1. Trustees' Annual Report
11. Trustees Responsibilities statement
12. Independent Examiner's Report
13. Statement of Financial Activities
14. Balance sheet
15. Accounting Policies and Notes to the Accounts

**The following pages do not form part of the Statutory Financial Statements:**

24. Detailed Statement of Financial Activity - Ecumenical Development
25. Detailed Statement of Financial Activity - Restore

## BIRMINGHAM CHURCHES TOGETHER

CHARITY NO. 243931

### TRUSTEES' REPORT

31 DECEMBER 2024

The Trustees present their annual report and financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2024. The financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Constitution and Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102) (updated 1 January 2019).

### Objectives, activities, achievements and performance

The object of Birmingham Churches Together is to promote mutual understanding and fellowship among the Churches which accept Jesus Christ as God and Saviour for the wellbeing of all the citizens of Birmingham and surrounding areas.

The objectives are achieved through its Ecumenical Development work and its Restore project detailed below. Public benefit is met by actively encouraging members of different denominations to work and worship together and collectively to support those who are disadvantaged, regardless of their beliefs, thereby enabling them to join in and partake in the benefits of the community.

The Trustees' have reviewed the guidance on public benefit issued by the Charity Commission and consider that our aims and activities as set out below fulfil the criteria. The trustees consider the guidance on public benefit each year.

#### Ecumenical Development

Birmingham Churches Together (BCT) encourages greater cooperation between Christian churches in order that together they may better serve the people of Birmingham and Solihull. There is increased public benefit when Churches are enabled to partner together to serve the whole community, regardless of status, class or ethnicity. Throughout 2024, Robert Mountford worked as BCT Ecumenical Development Enabler, supported by Maud Grainger in the role of BCT Development and Support Worker. Both Robert and Maud were employed on a part-time basis.

In order to be an effective hub for Birmingham's and Solihull's Christian community, BCT's Ecumenical Development workers continued to strengthen existing connections with a wide variety of organisations and congregations and to build new relationships. BCT frequently receives enquiries as a first port-of-call from a range of churches and organisations seeking to make connections with people of faith in the city. Wherever possible, enquirers are offered points of contact and, when appropriate, information is shared across BCT's media outlets.

During 2024, BCT liaised with the following Churches (listed in alphabetical order): The Apostolic Pastoral Congress, Assemblies of God, Church of England Birmingham, Central England Quakers, the Church of God of Prophecy, the Fellowship of Churches of Christ, the Elim Pentecostal Church, the Heart of England Baptist Association, the New Testament Church of God, the Methodist Church (at both Circuit and District level), the Redeemed Christian Church of God, the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Birmingham, the Romanian Orthodox Church, the Salvation Army West Midlands Division, the Serbian Orthodox Church, the United Reformed Church West Midlands Synod and the Wesleyan Holiness Church. In addition to these Churches, local independent congregations were not excluded from the conversation.

## BIRMINGHAM CHURCHES TOGETHER

CHARITY NO. 243931

### TRUSTEES' REPORT (continued)

31 DECEMBER 2024

BCT liaised with the following Christian organisations (listed in alphabetical order): the Adavu Project, Agapé, the As-One campaign, Betel UK, the Bethel Health and Healing Network, the Birmingham Christian Homelessness Forum, the Birmingham City Leaders' Prayer network, Birmingham City Mission, Birmingham Taize, the Breathe Collective Choir, CAFOD, Christian Aid, Christians Against Poverty, the Cinnamon Network, the City Centre Churches' group, ChaplaincyPlus, Church of Sanctuary, Churches Together in Britain and Ireland, Churches Together in England, Compassion UK, Engage UK, Erdington Churches Together, Eternal Wall of Answered Prayer, The Feast, Forge Missional Training, Friends/Neighbours/Changemakers, the Gather network, GOOD NEWS for Everyone! (formerly Gideon's), the Greenhouse at Barnes Close, Healing on the Streets, HOPE Together, Home for Good, Jericho Foundation, KICK, Manresa Link, the Maryvale Institute, the Mission:Mercia network, Near Neighbours, Network Four, Pause for Hope, Places of Welcome, the Queen's Foundation for Ecumenical Theological Education, Safe Families for Children, the Saltmine Theatre Company, the SEND, Sports Chaplaincy UK, the St Peter's Saltley Trust, Thrive Together Birmingham, Thy Kingdom Come, Time4Brum, Unity Prayer East Birmingham, Urban Devotion Birmingham, the West Midlands Combined Authority, West Midlands Faith in Action, Westminster Theological College, WorkCare West Midlands and the World Prayer Centre.

An ecumenical e-newsletter was issued every six to eight weeks, reaching around 1,100 people on each occasion. Articles, events and job adverts were published on the BCT website on a regular basis. The website was viewed on average by 5,000 users per month. BCT's profile on social media averaged 1,200 followers on Facebook, 200 on Instagram and 1,000 on the X platform (formerly Twitter). The information shared through these media informed local congregations of the wider Christian context and resourced them to engage more effectively in their local neighbourhoods.

During the annual Week of Prayer for Christian Unity (18 to 25 January inclusive), 'Pray24Brum' brought together churches from across the Christian traditions to pray for the city. BCT played a leading role among the partners who facilitate the 24-hour prayer relay which took place at Birmingham St Philip's Cathedral on Friday 19/Saturday 20 January 2024. The two-day event also included a well-attended leaders' breakfast on Saturday 20 January.

Throughout 2024, BCT sat alongside other partners in the 'Time4Brum' anti-racism/church-unity group that brings Christian leaders from historic-, new- and Black-majority Churches together. Regular online planning meetings took place through the year, together with monthly online and in-person prayer gatherings. A Time4Brum leaders' gathering took place in Aston on Saturday 13 July and the Annual Celebration service was held at Trinity Birmingham on Sunday 20 October 24.

Throughout 2024, Robert Mountford sat on the board of 'Churches and Industry Group Birmingham/Solihull,' which during the year, merged with 'Coventry & Warwickshire WorkCare' to form the 'WorkCare West Midlands' CIO. The new CIO continued the ministry of promoting, resourcing and supporting workplace chaplaincy through its 40 paid and voluntary chaplains.

The Anglican Bishop of Birmingham and the BCT Ecumenical Development Enabler are the two Members of the 'Friends/Neighbours/Changemakers' (FNC) charity, which enables interfaith conversation and understanding in Birmingham and the Black Country Borough of Sandwell. Robert Mountford supported the work of FNC, which is led by Revd Andrew Smith, in league with a small group of Church of England vicars.

## BIRMINGHAM CHURCHES TOGETHER

CHARITY NO. 243931

## TRUSTEES' REPORT (continued)

31 DECEMBER 2024

BCT facilitated two celebratory pilgrimages in Birmingham in 2024. A short walk and several short services were held in North Birmingham to mark the 100th anniversary of the formation of Assemblies of God at a meeting held in Aston on 1 February 1924. A short pilgrimage walk, plus activities at Selly Oak and Bournville Quaker Meeting Houses, took place in July 2024 to mark the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of Quaker founder George Fox.

BCT was one of the supporting partners to put together and stage a Carol Service at Aston Villa Football Club on 5 December 2024. Hundreds of people attend the event, including representatives of Aston Villa FC, which was held both indoors and at the Holte End of Villa Park.

At the regional level, BCT organised and facilitated the 24-hour summit of senior West Midlands Church Leaders at Holland House in Worcestershire on 29/30 September 2024. The summit brought together 25 senior West Midlands Church Leaders from across the spectrum of Churches for prayer and conversation.

BCT was a key partner in organising and staging the national 'Church of Sanctuary' conference that was held at The Church at Carrs Lane in Birmingham on Saturday 8 June 2024. Around 150 people from all corners of England gathered to celebrate, encourage and learn more about the work that local churches are doing to support asylum-seekers and refugees.

BCT connected to Churches Together in England (CTE), the overarching national ecumenical network that had 54 member-Churches and 95 member-organisations. Robert and Maud attended the CTE Ecumenical Officers' conference in September 2024 and are in ongoing contact with CTE's staff members, as well as the National Ecumenical Officers of the historic Churches.

2024 proved to be another busy and fruitful year for BCT's Ecumenical Development arm.

**Restore**

Restore's vision is **for a society into which all refugees and asylum seekers are welcomed, valued, and integrated**. Restore's befriending team of staff and over 100 volunteers worked towards the following outcomes:

- Reduced loneliness and social isolation.
- Increased friendships and social connections with people from Birmingham.
- Improved communication skills in English, particularly conversational English.
- Increased understanding of and adaptation to life in Birmingham and the UK.
- Improved mental health and wellbeing.
- Increased confidence

**Befriending** is a 3-way relationship between Restore, the trained and DBS-checked volunteer and the refugee or asylum seeker. In 2024, we received 156 new referrals. Those referrals came from 27 agencies, current or former service users and self-referrals. In 2024, **we made 50 new befriending matches**, hitting our annual target of 50 new matches in mid-December despite fewer new volunteers joining the befriending team. At the year-end, there were **100 ongoing befriending matches** of refugees or asylum seekers from 26 countries including Afghanistan, Syria, Iran, Sudan, Iraq and Eritrea. This was in-line with our target of having at least 100 ongoing befriending matches.

## BIRMINGHAM CHURCHES TOGETHER

CHARITY NO. 243931

## TRUSTEES' REPORT (continued)

31 DECEMBER 2024

**What is the impact of befriending?**

Qualitative feedback shows how befriending has impacted the lives of refugees and asylum seekers and moved them towards our hoped-for outcomes.

*"Having a befriender is good as I have got someone to talk to when I feel lonely. We meet up and explore the world together, leaving me feeling good and blessed."*

*"It's good to have someone to talk to and feel welcome in this country. I'm grateful to Restore and my befriender."*

*"She has helped me speak English confidently. We walk together and I speak about my feelings. She helps to improve my English accent. She shows me different places. She helped me register at the library and I borrow books."*

*"I learnt that I can see my MP during her surgery time and I can talk to her. My befriender showed me tremendous empathy when I had issues of accommodation, and signposted me to where I can get charity accommodation and also signposted me to where I can practise my faith. "*

*"Thanks to Restore I was able to feel welcome in a country totally foreign to my family and me. I don't feel alone and lonely anymore because of the companionship and compassion of another human being. It was good for me in terms of my mood, I feel better."*

*"I am writing to express my heartfelt gratitude for the wonderful befriender you introduced me to. As an Arab refugee in the UK who initially struggled with the English language, having her support and friendship has made a significant difference in my life. Her kindness, patience, and guidance have helped me navigate this new environment and feel more at home. I have made progress in learning English and feel more confident thanks to her encouragement. Your work is truly making a positive impact."*

*"Having a befriender has been an incredibly positive experience. It's comforting to have someone to talk to and share thoughts with, especially when feeling isolated or in need of support. I've enjoyed the genuine connection and the feeling of being listened to without judgment. It has been a great opportunity to build trust and create meaningful conversations. If I could change anything, it would be to have more frequent meetings, as they've been so uplifting and valuable to me."*

We also seek quantitative feedback. The annual survey of befriended refugees and asylum seekers, gives a broadbrush approach to the impact of befriending against the 6 aimed for outcomes.

100% of those who replied stated that meeting their befriender had helped them feel more welcomed.

100% of those who replied stated that meeting their befriender had helped them feel more confident.

94% of replies stated that meeting their befriender had helped them learn about Birmingham and life in the UK.

94% of replies stated that meeting their befriender had helped their mental health and wellbeing.



## BIRMINGHAM CHURCHES TOGETHER

CHARITY NO. 243931

## TRUSTEES' REPORT (continued)

31 DECEMBER 2024

89% of replies stated that meeting their befriender had helped them feel less lonely.

89% of replies stated that meeting their befriender had helped them improve their English.

89% replied that having a befriender *would help* other refugees and asylum seekers and 11% replied that having a befriender *may help* other refugees and asylum seekers.

We use a spidergram tool with individual asylum seekers as part of their initial meeting with a befriending staff member. They self-assess against 4 key measures: Measure 1 - English confidence; Measure 2 - Well-being and mental health; Measure 3 - Friendship and community; and Measure 4 - Understanding of the UK.

When a refugee or asylum seeker has been matched to a befriender for at least 6 months, we ask the refugee or asylum seeker to complete a further self-assessment, to discover their progress. The latest spidergram results for those befriended for at least 6 months show the following:

91% of befriendees self-assessed that befriending had helped improve their level of English.

87% of befriendees self-assessed that befriending had helped improve their friendships with local people.

75% of befriendees self-assessed that befriending had helped improve their mental health and wellbeing.

75% of befriendees self-assessed that befriending had helped improve their cultural understanding.

From formal feedback and informal conversations with volunteers we know that many volunteers discover that befriending is rewarding and mutually beneficial. Some quotes from volunteers:

*"I am conscious how important my role is in providing a bridge to Birmingham life. Arriving here is a traumatic process for all asylum seekers, even for those who seem well-adjusted, and Restore's befriending provides an invaluable source of support during this very difficult time."*

*"I joined Restore because I was saddened by the overwhelming circumstances that faced the asylum seekers arriving in this country. It has been a blessing to help someone who comes from such a difficult background and wants to settle and become part of the British community. Both my befriendees have earned my respect for their perseverance and determination to succeed against all the odds. It is so rewarding to see them develop increasing confidence and independence. Often you can do little more than offer a listening ear but then you get a message expressing appreciation and thanks for what seemed such a small gesture and you feel so grateful to play a part in their journey."*

*"After many coffees, I got to know her story about escaping war and arriving here. She shared lots of heartache and worry about her family. I text to encourage her when she's studying as she is working hard at improving her English. She told me that my friendship means a lot to her, and she feels very cared for. It has been hugely beneficial for both of us, as I also feel uplifted after spending time with her. It has been sobering to understand what she has endured because of war, and she is deeply grateful to people in the UK for giving her a peaceful home."*

## BIRMINGHAM CHURCHES TOGETHER

CHARITY NO. 243931

## TRUSTEES' REPORT (continued)

31 DECEMBER 2024

The far-right racist, xenophobic and Islamophobic riots in the summer of 2024 were horrendous, particularly for asylum seekers and added to their mental health challenges. The riots highlighted the need to continue befriending to show solidarity with refugees, to rebuild trust and work towards greater community cohesion. We concur with these comments from a volunteer befriender, *"With all the negative rhetoric about refugees and asylum seekers, particularly at the moment, I think that it is so important to be able to provide a welcoming environment to them. It is also important to be able to present an accurate picture to our friends and family, in contrast to what is portrayed in a lot of the media."*

Moving on to **group social activities**, during 2024, 98 men, 74 women and 105 people from families (45 adults and 60 children from 15 countries) attended at least one event. There was a wide range of activities: 27 for men, 26 for women and 7 for families.

The aims of all our group activities are similar to those for befriending:

- Reduced isolation and loneliness.
- Building relationships with other refugees and asylum seekers and with people from Birmingham.
- Improved English language skills, especially conversational English, through providing informal opportunities to develop and practise English language skills.
- Increased understanding of life in Birmingham and the UK through providing opportunities to learn about Birmingham, its history, cultures, and recreational opportunities.
- Improved well-being and mental health.

Both the men's and women's groups enjoyed a broad range of activities including visits to Walsall New Art Gallery, The Lapworth Museum of Geology, Aston Hall, singing workshops with Birmingham Opera Company, Think Tank, music concerts, crafts sessions, walks along the canals and in the Lickey Hills. The men also explored Stratford-upon-Avon.

The programme of occasional group social activities for families, mainly in the school holidays, included trips to Birmingham Botanical Gardens, Beaudesert Outdoor Activity Centre, Think Tank and Birmingham Wildlife Conservation Park.

#### What is the impact of group social activities?

Feedback from participants includes comments on the relational, community, well-being and learning outcomes that we hope for. One participant commented, *"With the women's, men's and family events we were able to see and explore many places in wonderful Birmingham, which helped us to get to know the culture, history and wonderful people of this beautiful city."*

Another wrote, *"I joined the women's group and went so many places with them. They were very friendly and helped me to open up and get more involved in the society. It was such a great experience and I am so thankful."*



## BIRMINGHAM CHURCHES TOGETHER

CHARITY NO. 243931

### TRUSTEES' REPORT (continued)

31 DECEMBER 2024

One man wrote enthusiastically about the trip to Stratford-upon-Avon, *"I learned a lot of things about the city where William Shakespeare was born. We saw William Shakespeare's house. There were many tourists there, coming from all over the world. We went to the butterfly garden. It was very beautiful. For the first time I saw something like it. We learned about many things."*

We are also grateful to all the organisations who have supported our group activities by providing venues, activities, tours, at reduced costs or free of charge including: Birmingham Museums Trust, The Rep Theatre, The University of Birmingham Exchange, Birmingham Anglican Cathedral, Selly Manor, The Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham Opera Company, Celebrating Sanctuary, Birmingham Botanical Gardens, and Fatima House.

Restore ran three **training and awareness raising** courses in February, June and October which were attended by 76 participants, an increase on 64 participants the previous year. Some participants applied to befriend but not as many as in previous years. Volunteer retention and existing volunteers taking on new or additional matches has helped us reach our new matches target.

Even so, feedback was positive and included, *"I thoroughly enjoyed the overview of the differences between asylum seekers and refugees and the process that they have to go through."* Another participant wrote, *"I found it helpful listening to asylum seekers experiences."* And another wrote, *"It was extremely beneficial and I learned so much about the different groups of people who come into the country and their needs."*

Restore also raised awareness of refugee and asylum issues through speaking engagements, social media posts, the Refugees Welcome March in Refugee Week, and Churches Together in Britain and Ireland's Church of Sanctuary Conference (held in Birmingham) and mailings to supporters. Restore's 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration, in July, was attended by over 100 refugees, asylum seekers, befrienders and supporters.

Restore engaged in **working for change** through active participation in meetings including: Birmingham City Council's City of Sanctuary Partnership Board; Migration Policy and Practice's Communities Thematic Group; and the Birmingham City of Sanctuary (voluntary) Committee. Restore helped to organise the Refugees Welcome March in Refugee Week. Restore was a partner in Birmingham's response to destitution through the Hope Projects.

Restore believes that the global refugee challenge requires all nations, including the UK, to play their part in providing solutions and that an 'offshoring policy' for some asylum seekers reneges on our responsibilities under the UN Refugee Convention 1951 which the UK helped to write. Therefore, as part of the Together with Refugees Coalition, we joined a campaign to seek changes in the Government's Safety of Rwanda Bill.

Catherine Bridgwood moved on from Restore in March 2024 and Jasmine Cullen was appointed as Befriending Co-ordinator and started in mid-April. Sundus Abdi and Nicole Gilmore also moved on and the decision was made to create a combined, new, part-time post of Befriending Women's Worker and Communications Officer with a recruitment process planned for January 2025. We are grateful for all that Catherine, Nicole and Sundus gave to Restore and wish them all well in their studies and future career paths.

## BIRMINGHAM CHURCHES TOGETHER

CHARITY NO. 243931

### TRUSTEES' REPORT (continued)

31 DECEMBER 2024

We are extremely grateful for the commitment of befrienders and supporters to Restore's work through monthly standing orders and one-off donations and to several churches who also generously donate to Restore.

During the year, we were hugely grateful to receive financial support from several grant-making trusts and organisations including: National Lottery Community Fund, Inclusive Communities Fund, Barrow Cadbury Trust, Birmingham City Council Sanctuary grants, Roughley Trust, Cole Charitable Trust, South Birmingham Friends Institute Trust, Hilden Charitable Trust, Bishop Radford Trust, George Henry Collins Charity, Richard Kilcuppe's Charity, Grimmitt Trust, Henry James Sayer Trust, John Avins Trust, GJW Turner Trust and Refugee Action.

During 2024, we worked towards increasing the involvement of refugees and asylum seekers in Restore's planning, evaluation, and decision-making processes.

The Management Committee and staff team had worked together on a new Strategic Plan in 2023 which set out strategic aims in the areas of governance, operational development, and services, to be implemented from 1 January 2024 to 31 December 2026. We started implementation during 2024.

### Financial review

The costs of Birmingham Churches Together Ecumenical Development work have been met from income of the constituent Groups as stated in the Statement of Financial Activity. The overall activities of Birmingham Churches Together, including Restore, show a deficit for the year of £17,500 (Ecumenical Development £7,889, Restore £9,611). Total funds are now £155,812 (Ecumenical Development £35,684, Restore £120,128).

### Reserves Policy

The level of reserves held by Birmingham Churches Together for its Ecumenical Development work and for Restore should be sufficient to cover six months operating costs in addition to sums set aside for proposed specific initiatives. The unrestricted general reserves for both projects amount to £35,684. Six months operating costs are estimated at £118,459 based on the 2025 budget.

### Investments

Where investments are held, the Trustees' policy is to hold them as ethically as is possible to bring in Growth and Income without undue risk. Currently no investments are held. Surplus cash funds are being held in interest bearing bank accounts.

### Remuneration and expenses of Trustees

It is not the policy of Birmingham Churches Together to remunerate its Trustees. No expenses or remuneration have been paid in either the current year or in 2023.

### Risk

Trustees have given consideration to the major risks to which the charity is exposed and satisfied themselves that systems or procedures are established in order to manage those risks. These risks are monitored and regularly reviewed.

## BIRMINGHAM CHURCHES TOGETHER

CHARITY NO. 243931

### TRUSTEES' REPORT (continued)

31 DECEMBER 2024

## Structure, Governance & management

Birmingham Churches Together (BCT) is a charity governed by a constitution. Trustees are appointed at the Annual General Meeting by nominated representatives of the Churches who are full members of BCT. The Presidents of BCT are ex-officio members of the Trustees body. A small group of Trustees are appointed to a Co-ordinating Group who oversee the day to day governance of the charity and scrutinise documents in preparation for Trustee meetings. The Trustees directly oversee and manage the strategic development of its Ecumenical work and the Restore project, which is also supported by separate management group. This group nominates a member to serve as a Trustee.

## Reference & administrative details

Registered charity name: Birmingham Churches Together

Registered charity number: 243931

Registered address:  
The Jericho Building  
196-198 Edward Road  
Balsall Heath  
Birmingham  
B12 9LX

The Trustees who served during the year were:

### Presidents

Most Revd. Bernard Longley, Roman Catholic Archbishop of Birmingham  
Rev David Emanuel Ellis, Free Churches Moderator

### Appointed by members through the Annual General Meeting

Rev Steve Faber, URC Moderator  
Venerable Jennifer Tomlinson  
Mgr Timothy Francis Menezes (resigned July 2024)  
Rev Deverton Antony Douglas  
Bishop Boris Paul McCalla  
Rev Novette S Headley  
James Owen Ashley (appointed January 2024)  
Right Revd Dr Michael John Volland (appointed July 2024)

The Membership of Birmingham Churches Together is made up of representatives from:

Anglican Diocese of Birmingham  
Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Birmingham  
Birmingham Methodist District

**BIRMINGHAM CHURCHES TOGETHER****CHARITY NO. 243931****TRUSTEES' REPORT (continued)****31 DECEMBER 2024**

Heart of England Baptist Association  
West Midlands Synod of the United Reformed Church  
West Midlands Division of the Salvation Army  
The Society of Friends Central England Area Meeting  
Fellowship of Churches of Christ

**The principal staff:**

Ecumenical Development Officer, Robert Mountford  
Restore Manager, Jeremy Thompson

**The Principal Bankers:**

CAF Bank Ltd  
West Mallings  
Kent ME19 4JQ

**Independent Examiner:**

Karen Hanlan, ACA  
1 Saracen Close  
Ettington  
CV37 7SZ



Trustee and Chair of the Annual General Meeting  
Date

12/6/2025

**BIRMINGHAM CHURCHES TOGETHER****CHARITY NO. 243931****TRUSTEES' REPORT (continued)****31 DECEMBER 2024****Trustees' responsibilities statement**

The trustees are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Annual Report and financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

The law applicable to charities in England & Wales requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of its income and expenditure for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principals in the Charities SORP 2015;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- State whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- Prepare the financial statements on a going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011 and the provisions of the Constitution. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

## **Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of Birmingham Churches Together**

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of Birmingham Churches Together ('the Charity') for the year ended 31 December 2024 which are set out on pages 13 to 23.

### **Responsibilities and basis of report**

As the charity trustees 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 can 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 respect of the Charity as required by section 130 of the 2011 Act; or
- 2) the accounts do not accord with those records; or
- 3) the accounts do 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.



Karen Hanlan, Institute of Chartered Accountants, England & Wales  
Karen Hanlan Independent Examiner Limited  
1 Saracen Close, Ettington, CV37 7SZ

Date 12/6/25



## BIRMINGHAM CHURCHES TOGETHER

## STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED

31 DECEMBER 2024

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
<b>Income from:</b>				
Donations and legacies (Note 4)	49,546	159,188	208,734	183,548
Charitable Activities	-	178	178	677
Investments - Bank interest	231	2,812	3,043	2,681
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>49,777</b>	<b>162,178</b>	<b>211,955</b>	<b>186,906</b>
<b>Expenditure on:</b>				
Raising funds	1,611	17,395	19,006	20,279
Charitable activities	56,055	154,394	210,449	196,488
<b>Total Expenditure (Note 5)</b>	<b>57,666</b>	<b>171,789</b>	<b>229,455</b>	<b>216,767</b>
<b>Net expenditure and net movement in funds</b>	<b>(7,889)</b>	<b>(9,611)</b>	<b>(17,500)</b>	<b>(29,861)</b>
<b>Reconciliation of funds</b>				
Total funds brought forward	43,573	129,739	173,312	203,173
Transfer of funds	-	-	-	-
<b>Total funds carried forward</b>	<b>35,684</b>	<b>120,128</b>	<b>155,812</b>	<b>173,312</b>

**BIRMINGHAM CHURCHES TOGETHER**  
**BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2024**

	Notes	2024 £	2023 £
<b>Fixed Assets</b>			
Tangible assets	7	-	-
<b>Current Assets</b>			
Debtors	8	4,362	2,970
Cash at bank and in hand	9	156,682	175,348
		<u>161,044</u>	<u>178,318</u>
<b>Current Liabilities</b>			
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	10	(5,232)	(5,006)
		<u>155,812</u>	<u>173,312</u>
<b>Net current assets</b>			
		<u>155,812</u>	<u>173,312</u>
<b>Net assets</b>			
		<u>155,812</u>	<u>173,312</u>
<b>Funds of the charity</b>			
Restricted funds	14	120,128	129,739
Unrestricted funds		35,684	43,573
		<u>155,812</u>	<u>173,312</u>
<b>Total charity funds</b>		<u>155,812</u>	<u>173,312</u>

Approved on behalf of the  
Birmingham Churches Together  
on TBC

+ *Bernard Lacey*

.....

Trustee and Chair of the Annual General Meeting

Honorary Treasurer

## BIRMINGHAM CHURCHES TOGETHER

### NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

#### 1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

##### **Basis of accounting**

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102) (updated 1 January 2019) - (Charities SORP (FRS102)) and the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102).

In preparing these financial statements Update Bulletin 1 to the Charities SORP (FRS102) has been adopted and consequently a Statement of Cash flows has not been prepared.

Churches Together Birmingham meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historic cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy note

##### ***Going Concern statement***

The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis which assumes that the charity will continue to operate. The validity of this assumption is dependent upon the continuance of support from the charity's key funders and stakeholders and in response to the progress made by the charity in pursuing a viable budget including the obtaining of further grants and donations. The charity's business plan shows that the charity will be able to operate in the foreseeable future. Based on this understanding the trustees believe that it remains appropriate to prepare the financial statements on a going concern basis. The financial statements do not include any adjustments, which would result from the basis of preparation being inappropriate.

##### **Fund accounting**

General funds are unrestricted funds which are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of the general objects of the charity and which have not been designated for other purposes.

Restricted funds are restricted to the use that the monies were received for.

The Designated Fund is a Special Purposes Fund for Ecumenical Development work and is currently used to set aside monies for further Promotions and the Ecumenical Development Officers Sabbatical.

##### **Relationship between Ecumenical Development work and the charity's projects**

In preparing these accounts, the Trustees require that the Restore project be self-funding and is not to be supported from the Charity's Ecumenical Development work.

## BIRMINGHAM CHURCHES TOGETHER

### NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

#### 1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES (continued)

Within the Statement of Financial Activity all funds received for the projects of Restore are accounted for as Restricted Funds. Within each of the projects some funding may be for specific purposes or for general use, this breakdown is identified in note 14.

**Unrestricted Funds:** Donations and Other Income received which is available for use on any project or activity, as the Trustees shall agree. It is the policy of the Trustees to allocate all unrestricted funds to its Ecumenical Development work, since each project is required to be self-funded.

**Designated Funds:** The allocation of Unrestricted Funds to a specific activity within its Ecumenical Development work. Such funds which remain after the project has been completed or which have been replaced by Restricted Funds form part of the Unrestricted Funds and may be credited back to that fund.

**Restricted Funds:** Donations and Other Income, including Grants, which may be used only for the specific project for which they were made available. Any surplus, except where immaterial, is returned to the Donor.

#### **Income**

Income represents the amount derived from subscriptions, fundraising, donations and grants and is recognised where the charity is legally entitled to the income, ultimate receipt is probable and the amount can be quantified with reasonable accuracy. Donations are recognised when received.

Income relating to future periods, as a result of donor imposed conditions specifying the time period, has been treated as deferred income.

Income dependent on certain conditions, amounting to more than mere administrative requirements, is recognised when the conditions have been fulfilled.

#### **Expenditure**

Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to the expenditure. All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis. Expenditure is classified under the following activity headings:

- Costs of raising funds comprises the costs of publicity and fundraising activity.
- Expenditure on charitable activity includes the costs of the project delivery undertaken to further the purposes of the charity and their associated support costs.

Irrecoverable VAT is charged as a cost against the activity for which the expenditure was incurred.

**BIRMINGHAM CHURCHES TOGETHER****NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024****1 ACCOUNTING POLICIES (continued)****Fixed assets**

Depreciation is provided on Office Furniture, Fittings and Equipment at rates calculated to write off the cost of items of £1,000 or more over the expected life of the asset, usually 3 years. Assets costing Less than £1,000 are written off in the year of purchase.

**Taxation**

As a registered charity no provision is considered necessary for taxation.

**Cash and cash equivalents**

Cash and cash equivalents include cash at bank and in hand and short term deposits repayable on or within a three month notice period.

**Debtors**

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due.

**Creditors**

Creditors are recognised where the charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably.

**2. GENERAL ACCUMULATED FUND**

The General Accumulated Fund represent the unrestricted funds of Ecumenical Development only.

**3. DESIGNATED FUNDS**

There are currently no funds designated for a particular purpose.

## BIRMINGHAM CHURCHES TOGETHER

## NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

## 4. DONATIONS AND LEGACIES

	Unrestricted	Restricted Total	2024
	£	£	£
Donations - individuals	-	34,704	34,704
Donations - Churches	-	12,606	12,606
Legacies		-	-
Membership subscriptions	46,516	-	46,516
Grants:			
Birmingham City Council		11,293	11,293
Barrow Cadbury	-	20,000	20,000
Inclusive Communities Fund	-	15,000	15,000
National Lottery Community Fund	-	20,000	20,000
Other Grants	-	36,920	36,920
Other	3,030	8,665	11,695
	<u>49,546</u>	<u>159,188</u>	<u>208,734</u>

Previous year	Unrestricted	Restricted Total	2023
	£	£	£
Donations - individuals	-	36,120	36,120
Donations - Churches	-	15,772	15,772
Legacies		24,786	24,786
Membership subscriptions	29,402	-	29,402
Grants:			
Barrow Cadbury	-	27,200	27,200
Other Grants	-	33,550	33,550
Other	3,037	13,681	16,718
	<u>32,439</u>	<u>151,109</u>	<u>183,548</u>



## BIRMINGHAM CHURCHES TOGETHER

## NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

## 5. EXPENDITURE

	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total 2024	Total 2023
	£	£	£	£
<b>Cost of raising funds:</b>				
Staff costs	0	6,338	6,338	7,471
Allocation of support costs	1,611	11,057	12,668	12,808
	1,611	17,395	19,006	20,279
<b>Cost of charitable activities:</b>				
Staff costs	38,536	143,337	181,873	169,350
Programme activity costs	-	9,029	9,029	9,568
Travel expenses	2,339	-	2,339	1,832
Rent & insurance	5,411	11,167	16,578	16,389
Meetings/conferences	3,715	-	3,715	3,466
Telephone, print, stationery	425	936	1,361	1,054
Website development	2,294	-	2,294	2,114
Subscriptions	1,110	-	1,110	1,025
Sundry expenses	60	482	542	541
Governance costs - professional fees	676	-	676	457
<sup>1</sup> Accountancy charges	3,100	500	3,600	3,500
Less support costs allocated to raising funds	(1,611)	(11,057)	(12,668)	(12,808)
	56,055	154,394	210,449	196,488
<b>Total expenditure</b>	57,666	171,789	229,455	216,767

<sup>1</sup> Includes fee for Independent Examination of £650 and Finance Support charge of £400

## 6. STAFF COSTS, TRUSTEE REMUNERATION AND EXPENSES

	Total 2024	Total 2023
	£	£
Salaries	168,591	158,064
National Insurance	9,989	8,823
Pension costs	9,631	9,934
Freelance staff	0	0
Other	0	0
	188,211	176,821

## Staff Numbers

Full-time equivalent excluding trustees:

	2024 Number	2023 Number
Management, fundraising and admin	1.00	1.00
Project Management	4.06	4.03
	5.06	5.03

## BIRMINGHAM CHURCHES TOGETHER

## NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

No employee had emoluments in excess of £60,000 (2023: £nil).

The charity trustees were not paid or received any benefits from employment with the charity in the year (2023: £nil). No expenses relating to travel or subsistence were reimbursed to any trustee during the year (2023: £nil). No charity trustee received payment for professional or other services supplied to the charity (2023: £nil).

The charity contributes into Group Personal Pension Plans for most employees. These pension plans are defined contribution in nature and as required under FRS102 the annual cost is recognised as incurred and included in the Statement of Financial Activities.

## 7. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Office Equipment £
<b>Cost</b>	
At beginning and end of year	<u>5,288</u>
<b>Depreciation</b>	
At beginning of year	5,288
Charge for the year	-
At end of year	<u>5,288</u>
<b>Net Book Value</b>	
At 31 December 2023 & 2024	<u>-</u>

## 8. DEBTORS

	General £	Restricted £	2024 Total £	2023 Total £
Income receivable	554	1,100	1,654	724
Prepayments	1,697	1,011	2,708	2,246
	<u>2,251</u>	<u>2,111</u>	<u>4,362</u>	<u>2,970</u>

## 9. BANK BALANCES

	General £	Restricted £	2024 Total £	2023 Total £
Cash in Interest Bearing Accounts	7,516	119,004	126,520	144,024
Cash in non-interest Bearing Accounts	29,126	1,036	30,162	31,324
	<u>36,642</u>	<u>120,040</u>	<u>156,682</u>	<u>175,348</u>

## BIRMINGHAM CHURCHES TOGETHER

## NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

## 10. CREDITORS

	2024	2023
	£	£
Creditors and Accruals	3,508	3,439
Deferred income	1,724	1,567
	<u>5,232</u>	<u>5,006</u>

## 11. CONTROLLING INTERESTS

The charity is controlled by the trustees.

## 12. RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS

There have been no transactions with related parties during the year which require disclosure in these financial statements.

## 13. NET ASSETS BY FUND

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	2024 Total funds
	£	£	£
Fixed assets	-	-	-
Debtors	2,251	2,111	4,362
Cash	36,642	120,040	156,682
Creditors less than 1 year	(3,209)	(2,023)	(5,232)
	<u>35,684</u>	<u>120,128</u>	<u>155,812</u>

Previous year	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	2023 Total funds
	£	£	£
Fixed assets	-	-	-
Debtors	1,384	1,586	2,970
Cash	46,695	128,653	175,348
Creditors less than 1 year	(4,506)	(500)	(5,006)
	<u>43,573</u>	<u>129,739</u>	<u>173,312</u>

## BIRMINGHAM CHURCHES TOGETHER

## NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

## 14 MOVEMENT IN RESTRICTED FUNDS

	Balance 1 January 2024 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	Balance 31 December 2024 £
<b>Restore</b>					
Restricted: Barrow Cadbury	6,666	20,000	20,000	-	6,666
Birmingham City Council	-	11,293	10,481	-	812
National Lottery	-	20,000	6,667	-	13,333
Inclusive Communities	-	15,000	15,000	-	-
Other work	-	320	320	-	-
Part-time befriender	1,895	-	1,895	-	-
Befriending	22,451	23,800	35,450	-	10,801
Farmer Development Project	1,882	0	114	-	1,768
St Johns	120	5,676	5,796	-	-
	<u>33,014</u>	<u>96,089</u>	<u>95,723</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>33,380</u>
General Restore Funds	<u>96,725</u>	<u>66,089</u>	<u>76,066</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>86,748</u>
<b>Total Funds Restore</b>	<b><u>129,739</u></b>	<b><u>162,178</u></b>	<b><u>171,789</u></b>	<b><u>-</u></b>	<b><u>120,128</u></b>

Note, the General Funds within Restore are unrestricted within that project.

The purpose of the above funds are to support various projects within Restore activity including a befriending scheme and social activities for refugees and asylum seekers and training of volunteers.

Remaining funds from St Johns relates to funds raised to provide emergency food supplies for refugees.

## BIRMINGHAM CHURCHES TOGETHER

## NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

## 15. Comparative Statement of Financial Activities for 2023

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total £
<b>Income from:</b>			
Donations and legacies	32,439	151,109	183,548
Charitable activities	-	677	677
Investments - Bank interest	395	2,286	2,681
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>32,834</b>	<b>154,072</b>	<b>186,906</b>
<b>Expenditure on:</b>			
Raising funds	1,505	18,774	20,279
Charitable activities	53,097	143,391	196,488
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>54,602</b>	<b>162,165</b>	<b>216,767</b>
<b>Net expenditure and net movement in funds</b>	<b>(21,768)</b>	<b>(8,093)</b>	<b>(29,861)</b>
<b>Reconciliation of funds</b>			
Total funds brought forward	65,341	137,832	203,173
<b>Total funds carried forward</b>	<b>43,573</b>	<b>129,739</b>	<b>173,312</b>

**BIRMINGHAM CHURCHES TOGETHER**  
**ECUMENICAL DEVELOPMENT**  
**DETAILED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024**

	2024	2023
	<u>£</u>	<u>£</u>
<b>INCOME</b>		
Subscriptions - Ecumenical Development	40,853	25,744
Subscriptions WMRCF	5,663	3,658
Other income - Summit	3,030	3,037
Bank Interest	231	395
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	49,777	32,834
 <b>EXPENDITURE</b>		
<b>Ecumenical Development Officer:</b>		
Salary, National Insurance & Pension	38,536	37,261
Traveling expenses	2,339	1,832
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	40,875	39,093
 Office Salary, National Insurance & Pension	-	-
Rent, Insurance including Heating	5,411	5,369
Meeting and Conference Expenses	3,715	3,466
Printing and Stationery	425	18
Website development and maintenance	2,294	2,114
Churches Together in England	1,110	1,025
Sundry Expenses	60	60
Governance costs - professional fees	676	457
Accountancy Charges	3,100	3,000
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total expenditure	57,666	54,602
 <b>Net Expenditure</b>	 <b>(7,889)</b>	 <b>(21,768)</b>
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Fund Balance at 1 January 2024	43,573	65,341
	<hr/>	<hr/>
<b>Fund Balance at 31 December 2024</b>	<b>35,684</b>	<b>43,573</b>
	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>

This statement is for information only and does not form part of the Statutory Financial Statements.



## BIRMINGHAM CHURCHES TOGETHER

## RESTORE

## DETAILED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

	General Fund	Restricted/d esignated Funds	2024 Total	2023 Total
	£	£	£	£
<b>INCOME</b>				
Grants other	13,120	23,800	36,920	33,550
Grants - Barrow Cadbury Trust	-	20,000	20,000	27,200
Grants - Partner Development Trust	-	-	-	4,840
Grants - Birmingham City Council	-	11,293	11,293	-
Grants - Inclusive Communities Fund	-	15,000	15,000	-
Grants - National Lottery Community Fund	-	20,000	20,000	-
Donations - Individuals	34,704	-	34,704	36,120
Donations - Churches	6,930	5,676	12,606	15,772
Gift aid on donations	6,354	-	6,354	5,658
Legacies	-	-	0	24,786
Befriending services	-	320	320	960
Fundraising	1,991	-	1,991	2,223
Bank Interest	2,812	-	2,812	2,286
Other	178	0	178	677
	<u>66,089</u>	<u>96,089</u>	<u>162,178</u>	<u>154,072</u>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>				
<b>Salaries &amp; wages</b>				
Befrienders	37,267	60,437	97,704	90,168
Co-ordinator	20,827	25,353	46,180	40,916
Administration	8,754	1,118	9,872	12,137
Employment allowance	(4,081)	-	(4,081)	(3,661)
Office Expenses	6,027	5,140	11,167	11,020
Information and Publicity	736	200	936	1,036
Accountancy Charges	500	-	500	500
Programme Activities	5,554	3,475	9,029	9,568
Training - Staff and Volunteer	482	-	482	481
	<u>76,066</u>	<u>95,723</u>	<u>171,789</u>	<u>162,165</u>
Net (expenditure)/income	<u>(9,977)</u>	<u>366</u>	<u>(9,611)</u>	<u>(8,093)</u>
Fund Balance at 1 January 2024	96,725	33,014	129,739	137,832
Fund Balance at 31 December 2024	<u>86,748</u>	<u>33,380</u>	<u>120,128</u>	<u>129,739</u>

This statement is for information only and does not form part of the Statutory Financial Statements.