

# Swindon Youth for Christ

# **ANNUAL REPORT**

# **2024-25**

Year End 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025

Charity Number: 274402

## ORGANISATION DETAILS

**Council of Reference** The Council was suspended in 2017-18  
Church leaders are now being included as trustees  
and the Director, Chair and Trustees regularly  
interact with church leaders within the borough.

**Executive Committee:** Chair - Steve Robinson (Appointed 18<sup>th</sup> February 2021)

**(Trustees)** Treasurer - Gavin Mapstone (Appointed 1<sup>st</sup> March 2014)

Elizabeth Martin (Appointed 14<sup>th</sup> September 2017)  
David Ahern (16<sup>th</sup> September 2015, Reappointed February 2019)

Ruth Barrett (Appointed 1<sup>st</sup> October 2021)  
Olugbenga Sonoiki (Appointed 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2023)

**Part-Time Staff:** Naomi Ackland – Interim Centre Director  
Chris Priddy – Finance Officer  
Kirsten Davidson – Fund Raiser

**Independent Examiners:** Keith Tredget & Keith Saunders

**Bankers:** Lloyds, CAF Bank

**Office Address:**  
St. John's Church,  
Whitbourne Ave,  
Swindon,  
SN3 2LG

**Contacts**  
Tel: 01793 977676  
Email:  
[office@syfc.org.uk](mailto:office@syfc.org.uk)  
Website:  
<https://syfc.org.uk>

## CONTENTS

Organisation Details	Page 2
Objectives of the Organisation	Page 3
Chair of Trustees Report	Pages 4 to 5
Achievements and Performance	Pages 6 to 7
Governance	Pages 8 to 9
Financial Matters	Pages 10 to 11
Independent Examiners Report	
Page 12	
Financial Statements	
Pages 13 to 17	

## OBJECTIVES OF THE ORGANISATION:

*From the **Constitution of SWINDON YOUTH FOR CHRIST**  
Adopted 15th October 2007*

- To advance the Christian faith for the benefit of young people, in accordance with the statement of faith, throughout the world and in particular (but without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing) in Swindon and its environs;
- The advancement of the Christian faith mainly, but not exclusively by means of proclaiming Christian messages of an evangelistic and teaching nature throughout the world and in particular (but without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing) in Swindon and its environs;
- To demonstrate, promote and encourage Christian values, including dignity, empowerment and partnership to all young people throughout Swindon and its environs;
- The advancement of the education of children and young people through support and mentoring in schools, colleges and other educational establishments. Through lunchtime and after school clubs, street-based youth work and other youth provision to develop their physical, mental and spiritual capacities, that they may grow to full maturity as individuals, and that their condition of life may be improved;
- To relieve poverty and sickness thereby demonstrating the Christian faith by promoting overseas service, education, practical action and working with those affected, either directly or through relevant relief agencies.

## **REPORT FROM THE CHAIR OF TRUSTEES**

Whatever our individual focus might be for 2025 and beyond, there is a very real sense in which our goals as an organisation don't change from year to year. The main thing – preaching the gospel, caring for others, building the Kingdom – remains the **only** thing.

The full extent of God's Kingdom can only be realized when we take intentional steps to commit to God's agenda and to adopt Christ's character. These complementary activities reflect God's call to us in Jesus' words found in Matthew 6: 33

*But seek first His kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.*

SYFC's priorities might remain the same, but the way we express our faith and the emphasis we put on specific areas and activities to express those goals reflect the evolving context within which we find ourselves. SYFC is rightly flexible in its approach – yet resolute in its foundation – being open to God's leading and light on our feet, continuing to react effectively to changing conditions and expectations in our missional activity.

### **The year in focus**

The impact of COVID on young people has been recognised through national initiatives designed to address mental health and other related issues.

Local schools have welcomed SYFC's willingness to share in this much needed work: this has been a significant focus through the year, working with small groups and individuals. Naomi, our Centre Director, has very ably led this work through the Healthy Minds Project alongside one-to-one work in local schools.

SYFC is not content to remain "as is". Swindon is a growing town with a high percentage of young people, many of whom have no contact with any church. Parts of the town are recognized as having significant additional needs (areas classified by the Government as being "deprived"). SYFC is committed to working across the town, recognizing the particular approaches which work best in very diverse communities: we have built strong partnerships with schools in those areas identified as having the greatest needs.

With need comes opportunity and the person-centered approach across our work builds bridges in some of the most challenging of circumstances. Allowing – and listening to – young people telling their story brings real affirmation and leads to positive outcomes.

We continue to enjoy excellent relationships with local churches and other community groups. We are thankful, as ever, for the continued (and often

sacrificial) support we receive from so many people alongside the regular gifts from local churches. Without that support, SYFC would not have been able to offer its 75 years of service to the young people of Swindon.

As ever, we have to continue to give careful consideration to the kind of work we would like to undertake given our own financial constraints. We recognize the pressure on finances for churches and individuals alike and it is important that we remain good stewards as reflects our commitment to use God's resources wisely. We do not hold large balances in reserve but seek, with God's help and using the talents of our gifted team of staff and volunteers, to share the Good News of Jesus with the young people of Swindon.

### **Our people**

Naomi Ackland took over the role of Centre Director in 2024. During the year Naomi has led the office team and the schools' work with great enthusiasm and real vision. She has thoughtfully reflected on SYFC's work and shared her vision of how SYFC may develop and grow to continue to support the needs of young people across the town.

It has been a settled year for the Trustees who have met on 6 occasions, including our AGM. We aim to meet at least twice a year in person – which builds a greater sense of fellowship – alongside our other meetings via the online TEAMS platform. We continue to look for others to join our board, to bring a wider perspective on the community and work with young people.

As ever my fellow trustees who have given sacrificially of their time, talents and prayer to support the work of the organisation: I thank you all, on behalf of SYFC, not just for your continuing work but also for your partnership and support for Naomi and the Team. We attend different fellowships but together bring a unity of purpose in serving Christ and seeking to make Him known.

### **Looking to the future**

We have built an exciting new partnership with YFC Wiltshire – sharing a full-time schools' worker – and are talking with an active local church with a view to sharing another part time role. This reflects the vision Naomi has shared with us and which the Trustees have wholeheartedly embraced.

This year will bring its challenges: we will have to pray, work and discern very hard to ensure that we keep in step with God through them. At the same time, there will undoubtedly be opportunities to express our faith and be the transforming community God wants us to be. We know we can rely on a God who promises "I have" and "I will." His is the gifting and provision, His is the will and the Vision. Let us take this opportunity– and continue to embrace every means – of sharing and being Good News in this community and beyond.

In the service of Christ

Peace and blessings

The Revd. Steve Robinson  
Chair of Trustees, Swindon Youth for Christ

## **1. REPORT ON ACTIVITY**

This financial year has been a period of impactful delivery for our charity, as we have remained committed to supporting the mental, emotional, and spiritual wellbeing of young people in Swindon. Through a wide range of projects, partnerships, and community engagement initiatives, we have reached and positively influenced the lives of many local young people.

### **Old Town Partnership Fundraising for SYFC**

One of the highlights of the year has been our partnership with the Old Town Partnership, who generously dedicated a full year of fundraising efforts to support Swindon Youth for Christ (SYFC). Their focus was on enabling us to purchase equipment for a silent disco, which will be used as a tool for youth engagement in schools, churches, and community settings. This creative initiative aims to break down barriers, build community, and create safe spaces for young people to connect and have fun in a positive environment.

### **Healthy Minds Project in Secondary Schools**

Our Healthy Minds project was delivered in two secondary schools in Swindon, focusing on Year 8 students. The programme consisted of small-group sessions designed to help young people better understand anxiety, develop coping strategies, and build resilience. Feedback from schools and students highlighted the value of these sessions in helping pupils feel more confident and equipped to manage emotional challenges.

### **One-to-One Support at Nova Hreod Academy**

Alongside our group work, we continued to provide vital one-to-one sessions with students at Nova Hreod Academy. These confidential sessions offer tailored emotional and practical support, often for those facing more complex or ongoing issues. This strand of our work remains a crucial part of our early intervention and wellbeing strategy.



### **Youth Alpha and Weston-super-Mare Day Trip**

In January, we launched a Youth Alpha course with 15 young people, exploring questions of life, faith, and meaning in a supportive and open

environment. A highlight of this programme was a day trip to Weston-super-Mare, giving participants a chance to deepen relationships, reflect, and enjoy a fun shared experience outside their usual setting.

### **Community Engagement and Fundraising Support**

In February, we were invited to speak at Holy Rood Church, who generously chose to support our Healthy Minds project through their own fundraising activities. Their encouragement and partnership have helped us sustain this essential work and extend our reach to more young people in need.

### **Weekly Youth Club with South Swindon Parish Council**

We have also supported the South Swindon Parish Council in the delivery of a weekly youth club for young people aged 10 to 16 years. This initiative provides a consistent, safe, and engaging space where young people can build friendships, take part in structured activities, and access informal support from youth workers.

### **Looking Ahead**

As we look forward to the next financial year, we are grateful for the continued support of our partners, funders, schools, and churches. Together, we remain committed to seeing young people thrive in every aspect of life.

Thank you to everyone who has contributed their time, resources, and care to help us make a difference.

Every blessing



Naomi Ackland

Interim Director for Swindon Youth for Christ

## **2. STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Swindon Youth for Christ is a charitable organisation established in 1950. The charity is organised and governed under its constitution dated 15<sup>th</sup> October 2007 which sets out the objects and powers of the charity. Members (partners) support the aims of the organisation and are invited to the Annual General Meeting. Members elect the Trustees, these individuals making up the Executive Committee who direct the overall strategy and policies of SYFC and oversee the day-to-day activity in conjunction with the Centre Director.

## **3. RECRUITMENT AND APPOINTMENT OF TRUSTEES**

The trustees give their time freely and receive no remuneration or other financial benefits. The trustees seek to ensure that the needs of the work are appropriately reflected through the diversity of the trustee body and seek to identify potential new trustees through the work they are doing.

## **4. INDUCTION AND TRAINING OF TRUSTEES**

Potential new trustees meet with the Chair of Trustees. An overview of the charity's work and the rights and responsibilities of being a trustee are provided at this meeting. The potential trustee is then invited to attend three Trustees' meetings as an observer. After this the existing trustees formally vote on the suitability of each candidate as a trustee and once accepted can thereafter function on the committee as co-opted members. At the first Annual General Meeting following this, the members of the charity vote on whether to accept the co-opted as full trustees.

## **5. RISK MANAGEMENT**

The trustees regularly oversee and review the major risks to which the charity is exposed. At the end of the year in question the trustees have assessed the charity's main risk as failure to fully deliver its objectives. This arises due to the challenging financial circumstances facing the charity that limit the amount that can be spent on youth ministry. We are only able to help a fraction of the young people in Swindon that would benefit from mentoring, activities and the knowledge that someone cares for them.

All other risks are reviewed regularly, and policies and procedures put in place to mitigate the risk to the charity. In addition to the above all prospective employees and volunteers undertake a Disclosure Barring Service check as per our Safer Recruitment Safeguarding Policies.



## **6. ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE**

The trustees met together regularly and are responsible for the strategic direction of SYFC and the activities undertaken by the charity. The trustees call special meetings if required. The day-to-day management of SYFC is the responsibility of the Director, who ensures that the team continue to develop skills and working practices in line with 'best practice'. This is monitored through regular supervision meetings and annual appraisals which are carried out for staff at every level in the organisation. Swindon Youth for Christ consists of a vast array of people who are involved in many contrasting ways. We are almost completely dependent on our many partners and partner churches for funding and prayer support. Many volunteers and associates work with our dedicated staff to organise some fantastic youth events, and to maintain a high level of input into many of the local secondary schools. Others work tirelessly in administration and resourcing the team.

We are very thankful to everyone who has contributed time, prayers and money to the work of SYFC over the past year; in doing so you have enabled many thousands of young people to become more aware of the Good News of Jesus Christ and the power it can have in their lives.

## **7. STATEMENT OF BENEFIT TO THE COMMUNITY**

As a registered charity, and in line with the requirements of Section 4 of the Charities Act 2006, the staff and trustees of Swindon Youth for Christ acknowledge that:

- Our work does have an identifiable benefit to those we work with.
- These benefits are related to our aims.
- These benefits are clear.
- These benefits are not the cause of any detriment or harm.
- The aims are appropriate to the beneficiaries and vice-versa.
- The opportunity to benefit from our work is not unreasonably restricted to geographical restrictions, or by the ability to pay any fees charged.
- People in poverty are not excluded from benefiting from our work.

## **8. PLANS FOR FUTURE PERIODS**

The charity plans to continue the activities outlined in this document in the forthcoming years subject to satisfactory funding arrangements. The Trustees intend to continue focussing on developing additional sources of

funding and maintaining the charity's links with its partners and major grant donors, ensuring that the charity's standard of service is maintained and improved to meet its beneficiaries and its donor's requirements.

## **9. FINANCIAL REVIEW**

The charity operates a simple business model with income from donations and grants used to fund a small team focussed on youth ministry and the administration of the organisation.

Trustees review forecasts for the current and future financial year bi-monthly. This providing sufficient lead-time to implement any decisions required to adjust its cost base in line with income predictions. In line with charity commission guidance, Trustees aim to maintain reserves deemed sufficient to cover three months' running costs plus any costs required to close the charity.

The charity ended the financial year with total funds of £41,862 (2023-24 £25,154). Sufficient to meet its reserves policy (see section 11).

During the year the charity reported a surplus of £16,708 (2023-24, loss of £2,718). Predominantly due to vacancies within its structure not being recruited.

Total expenditure was £60,171 (2023-24, £74,425). The majority of this was used to pay our staff who deliver our charitable activities. Total staffing costs were £38,826 (2023-24 £53,010). The reduction in cost from the prior-year arising due to time taken to appoint an interim Centre Director and not-backfilling the Office Manager post that was promoted to that role. No youth-workers were employed during the year.

Other spend on charitable activities included £3,744 leasing of office space and £3,797 spent on youth programmes (including our annual residential for which donations are received from churches).

£6,655 was spent on raising funds. This included £4,640 spent on purchasing Resource Bank equipment. The majority of this related to a silent disco which we were able to purchase through donations. This will be rented to churches and charities within Swindon to support their youthwork provision. £1,200 was spent on professional fundraising advice which will be used to inform grant applications planned to be submitted during the coming and future years.

Total income was £76,878 (2023-24 £71,707). The charity continues to benefit from diversified income streams which provide a measure of financial resilience. Donations from churches and individuals were £68,529 which included gift aid of £8,278 (2023-24 £56,365 – which included gift aid of £5,885). The increase in donations due to several large one-off receipts that had not been made in the previous year, these included a donation from the Old Town Partnership to purchase the silent disco, a one-off receipt following the winding-up of a church and a large donation from a trust.

Event income of £2,496 relates to donations received from churches to support our residential.

Income from Miscellaneous Trading reduced significantly from the prior-year as no major-fundraising activity was undertaken during the year.

We remain tremendously grateful for the support provided by local churches and individuals without which we would struggle to operate and acknowledge their generosity at a time when many face their own financial challenges.

## **10. PRINCIPAL FUNDING SOURCES**

Our main source of funding for general charitable purposes is receipt of donations from individuals and churches. We also receive grants for specific projects, and this money is held in restricted funds.

**Our thanks go to:** all those churches and individuals who donated to support our work this year without which Swindon Youth for Christ wouldn't exist.

## **11. INVESTMENT POLICY**

The charity has no long-term investments. All our money including any reserves is kept in current bank accounts, which includes a higher interest charity deposit account.

## **12. RESERVES POLICY**

The charity has established a policy whereby the unrestricted funds not committed or invested in tangible fixed assets held by the charity should be equal to or greater than three months running costs plus any costs required to close the charity.

## **Independent Examiners Report**

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of Swindon Youth for Christ ('the charity') for the year ended 31/03/2025.

### **Responsibilities and Basis of Report**

As the trustees of the charity, 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 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 accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with the accounting records.

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

### Independent Examiner's Details

Name: Keith Tredget

Address 4 Pythouse Close, Swindon,  
: SN3 6EQ

Name: Keith Saunders

Address 1 Kenilworth Lawns, Swindon,  
: SN3 1LF

<p>Signatures:</p> <p><i>Keith Tredget</i></p> <p><i>Keith Saunders</i></p>
<p>Date: 5th November 2025</p>

## Receipts & Payments Statement<sup>1</sup>

	Notes	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Prior Year
<b>Receipts</b>					
<b>Donations &amp; Legacies</b>					
Donations	1	60,252	0	60,252	50,480
Gift Aid Tax Refund	1	8,278	0	8,278	5,885
Grants		0	0	0	0
<b>Charitable Activities</b>					
Event Income		2,496	0	2,496	0
<b>Investments</b>					
Bank Interest		812	0	812	0
Investment Income		0	0	0	400
<b>Trading Activities</b>					
Miscellaneous Trading		560	0	560	10,585
Resource Bank		1,714	0	1,714	0
Sales		0	0	0	0
<b>Other</b>					
Commissioned School Work		0	0	0	0
Loans Received		0	0	0	0
Other Income		2,767	0	2,767	4,357
Sale of Fixed Assets		0	0	0	0
Sale of Investments		0	0	0	0
<b>Total receipts</b>		<b>76,878</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>76,878</b>	<b>71,707</b>
<b>Payments</b>					
<b>Charitable Activities</b>					
Motor Expenses	2	30	0	30	836
Operating Leases		3,744	0	3,744	3,744
Pensions		0	0	0	0
Schools Work		129	0	129	63
Social Security		0	0	0	0
Staffing	3	38,825	0	38,825	53,011
Sundries	2	388	0	388	927
Support Events		0	0	0	35
Team Building		0	0	0	717
Volunteer Expenses	4	42	0	42	1,158
Youth Programmes		3,797	0	3,797	6,234
<b>Raising Funds</b>					
Fundraising Costs		1,200	0	1,200	575
Miscellaneous Trading Costs		815	0	815	0
Resource Bank		4,640	0	4,640	0
<b>Governance Costs</b>					
Governance Costs		0	0	0	0
<b>Support</b>					

<sup>1</sup> On 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024 the charity migrated its accounting system into Expense Plus. This has resulted in some small changes to the charities chart of accounts and restatement of some prior-year figures. Where this has occurred, a note has been provided.

## Swindon Youth for Christ ANNUAL REPORT 2024-25

Bank Charges		186	0	186	128
Information Technology		892	0	892	948
Insurance		1,616	0	1,616	1,280
Office Costs		3,240	0	3,240	4,204
Professional Fees		627	0	627	565
<b>Other</b>					
Fixed Asset Purchases		0	0	0	0
Loans Repaid		0	0	0	0
Money Invested		0	0	0	0
<b>Total payments</b>		<b>60,171</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>60,171</b>	<b>74,425</b>
Net Receipts / Payments (before transfers)		16,708	0	16,708	-2,718
Fund Transfers In		0	0	0	0
Fund Transfers Out		0	0	0	0
Net Movement of Cash Funds		16,708	0	16,708	-2,718
Total Cash Funds Brought Forward		25,155	0	25,155	27,873
Total Cash Funds Carried Forward		41,862	0	41,862	25,155
<b>Represented By</b>					
General (Unrestricted)		41,862	0	41,862	25,155

## Asset & Liability Statement

### Cash Assets

	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Prior Year
General (Unrestricted)	41,862	0	41,862	25,155

### Other Monetary Assets

	Notes	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Prior Year
Gift Aid	Gift Aid up to 31/3/2025. Claim submitted 3/4/2025	1,557	0	1,557	0
Stock		0	0	0	0
Other	2024/25 Invoices awaiting payment at year end	383	0	383	0

### Investment Assets

	Notes	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Prior Year
Property		0	0	0	0
Investment Accounts		0	0	0	0
Other		0	0	0	0

### Fixed Assets

	Notes	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Prior Year
Land & Buildings		0	0	0	0
Music & PA Equipment		0	0	0	0
Computers & IT		0	0	0	0
Furniture		0	0	0	0
Motor Vehicles		0	0	0	0

### Liabilities

	Notes	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Prior Year
Loans Outstanding		0	0	0	0
Pension Payment Owed	Nil	0	0	0	0



## Swindon Youth for Christ ANNUAL REPORT 2024-25

HMRC Payments Owed	PAYE Owing	767	0	767	0
Independent Examination Fee Due		0	0	0	0
Other	Business Card transaction pending at year end	155	0	155	0

### Signature

These accounts have been approved by the trustees, and are signed on their behalf by:

Name:

Signature:

Date:

### Notes to the Accounts

1. Donations and Gift Aid Tax Refund were reported as a single amount of £56,365 within the 2023/24 accounts. We are now reporting these elements separately. The amount recognised in each year is dependent on the timing of claims.
2. Staff travel expenses are now consolidated within sundries. This has seen a reduction of £97 in the 2023/24 figure for motor expenses from £933 to £836 and a corresponding increase to the 2023/24 figure for sundries from £830 to £927.
3. Salary costs are now consolidated under the heading of staffing. In 2023/24 these were reported as wages (£48,237), social security (£976); and employer pension contributions (£3,798).
4. Costs incurred by volunteers and trustees are now consolidated under the heading of volunteer expenses. In 2023/24 these were reported as trustee expenses (£56) and volunteer expenses (£1,102).

### Accounting Policies

The accounts have been prepared on a receipts and payments basis and comprise a statement that shows the charity's receipts and payments, a statement that summarises the charity's assets and liabilities and related notes. The accountancy profession has determined that only accounts prepared in accordance with applicable accounting standards present a 'true and fair' view and, as these receipts and payments accounts have not (and cannot) be prepared in accordance with accounting standards, these

## Swindon Youth for Christ ANNUAL REPORT 2024-25

accounts do not present (and are not intended to present) a 'true and fair' view of the charity's financial activities and state of affairs.

General funds are unrestricted funds which are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the charity. Designated funds comprise unrestricted funds that have been set aside by the trustees for particular purposes. Restricted funds are donations which are to be used in accordance with specific restrictions imposed by donors; they include donations received from appeals for specific activities or projects.

### Movement of Funds

Fund Name	Opening Balance	Income	Expenditure	Fund Transfers	Closing Balance
<b>Unrestricted</b>					
General (Unrestricted)	25,155	76,878	60,171	0	41,862
<b>Total</b>	<b>25,155</b>	<b>76,878</b>	<b>60,171</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>41,862</b>
Unrestricted Total	25,155	76,878	60,171	0	41,862
Restricted Total	0	0	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>25,155</b>	<b>76,878</b>	<b>60,171</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>41,862</b>

### Transactions with Related Parties

There were no reportable transactions with related parties under the Charities SORP (FRS102) during the accounting period.