

THE CONFERENCE OF RELIGIOUS OF ENGLAND AND WALES

England & Wales · Charity number 277024

Details

Other names	CONFERENCE OF MAJOR RELIGIOUS SUPERIORS TRUST
Status	Registered
Legal form	Trust
Registered	1979-05-15
Register	View on the Charity Commission register

Contact

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Activities

Objects: FOR THE ADVANCEMENT IN ENGLAND AND WALES OF THE CATHOLIC RELIGION.

Activities: The charity promotes the welfare of Religious Institutes and Societies of Apostolic Life in England and Wales. It does this by: (1) Promoting closer co-operation with religious bodies, each other, and with individual bishops. (2) Providing representation with civil and ecclesiastical authorities.

Classification

- **How:** Acts As An Umbrella Or Resource Body
- **What:** Religious Activities
- **Who:** Other Defined Groups

Geography

- Throughout England And Wales

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-09-30	£264,638	£256,499	-	-
2024-09-30	£174,012	£216,726	-	-
2023-09-30	£149,283	£258,428	-	-
2022-09-30	£177,402	£235,093	-	-
2021-09-30	£262,729	£250,819	-	-

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
Fr James Gerard Briody SDB		2025-05-21
Rev Gladson Dabre OSA		2025-05-21
Sister Ann Sullivan SP		2024-05-14
Sister Anne Morris DHS		2021-10-26
Sister Ellen Teresa Flynn DC		2025-05-21
Sister Jane Maltby RSCJ		2023-11-22
Sister Jen Bromham IBVM		2023-11-22
Sister Margaret Mary Donovan HC		2019-05-21
Sister Mary Deane PBVM		2024-05-14
Sister Sarah Dobson CJ		2021-10-26
Very Rev Fr Richard Reid CSsR		2021-10-26

THE CONFERENCE OF RELIGIOUS OF ENGLAND AND WALES

England & Wales - Charity number 277024

Accounts



CONFERENCE *of* RELIGIOUS

England & Wales

ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS

30 SEPTEMBER 2025

THE CONFERENCE OF RELIGIOUS IN ENGLAND AND WALES

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Reference and administrative information Year to 30 September 2025

Executive Committee	<p>Sr Sarah Dobson CJ elected Oct 2021 – elected joint leader in May 2024</p> <p>Sr Monica Matthews SHJC appointed Oct 2019 – elected joint leader in May 2024</p> <p>Sr Anne Morris DHS elected Oct 2021– elected joint leader in May 2024</p> <p>Sr Margaret Donovan HC elected May 2019</p> <p>Fr Richard Reid CSsR elected Oct 2021</p> <p>Sr Jen Bromham IBVM elected November 2023</p> <p>Sr Jane Maltby RSCJ elected Nov 2023</p> <p>Sr Mary Deane PBVM elected May 2024 for initial 1 yr term – re-elected May 25</p> <p>Sr Ann Sullivan SP elected May 2024 for initial 1 yr term – re-elected May 25</p> <p>Sr Ellen Flynn DC elected May 2025</p> <p>Fr Gerry Briody SDB elected May 2025</p> <p>Fr Gladson Dabre OSA elected May 2025</p> <p>Fr Colin Hope CSWG (Interim Anglican Representative) Apr 25</p> <p>Sr Sue Berry CSF (Anglican Representative) elected Sept 2017 – stepped down from the Board in Feb 2025</p>
Registered Office	<p>St Philomena's</p> <p>70-71 Euston Square</p> <p>London</p> <p>NW1 1DJ</p>
Auditor	<p>Buzzacott Audit LLP</p> <p>130 Wood Street</p> <p>London</p> <p>EC2V 6DL</p>
Investment manager	<p>CCLA Investment Management Limited</p> <p>Senator House</p> <p>85 Queen Victoria Street</p> <p>London</p> <p>EC4V 4ET</p>
Banker	<p>The Royal Bank of Scotland plc</p> <p>48 Haymarket</p> <p>London</p> <p>SW1Y 4SE</p>
Solicitors	<p>Stone King LLP</p> <p>Upper Borough Court (UBC)</p> <p>Upper Borough Walls</p> <p>Bath</p> <p>BA1 1RG</p>

Report of the Executive Committee Year to 30 September 2025

The members of the Executive Committee (ie the trustees) of the Conference of Religious (CoR) present their report together with the audited financial statements of the charity for the year ended 30 September 2025.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out on pages 32 to 44 of the attached accounts and comply with the charity's trust deed, the Charities Act 2011 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 (FRS 102).

INTRODUCTION

The Conference of Religious (CoR) is a small charity, with around 227 members. Its formal membership consists of both the female and male Major Superiors of each institute and Superiors General in the Catholic Church (or their nominees) who work in England or Wales. Associate membership is offered to the superiors of Anglican Communities (since 1992) and to all Contemplative Superiors in England and Wales (since 2000).

Vision Statement of the Conference of Religious

The Conference of Religious seeks to be a dynamic and proactive presence in the Church and the world today.

Mission statement of the Conference of Religious

The Mission of CoR is to:

- ❖ enable the prophetic voice of Religious Congregations to be heard making Religious Life better known;
- ❖ unite its membership in collaborative initiatives translating Gospel vision into reality; and
- ❖ offer support to its membership, and particularly those in positions of leadership.

Our Values

All our activities are inspired by Gospel Values. The hallmarks of CoR are:

- ❖ unity in diversity
- ❖ justice
- ❖ integrity
- ❖ hope

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Our Aims and Objectives

The object of the charity is to promote the welfare of apostolic institutes of religious in the Catholic Church in England and Wales, while respecting the autonomy, nature and spirit of each other. This includes:

- ❖ effecting closer co-operation with each other, including various other religious bodies and individual bishops;
- ❖ providing representation with constituted authorities, both ecclesial and civil.

To create a Prophetic Voice that gives witness to the values of the Gospel

- ❖ to be a prophetic, corporate, pro-active voice in the Church and in Society;
- ❖ in particular, to speak on behalf of people who live on the margins, promoting justice;
- ❖ to promote visible witness of the Good News of Jesus Christ, and Gospel values in today's world;
- ❖ to witness to the gift of community living; and
- ❖ to witness to unity in diversity.

To generate and participate in Networks that promote Collaboration

- ❖ to actively promote collaboration amongst members;
- ❖ to find ways of improving communication between members;
- ❖ to promote greater links with Vicars for Religious;
- ❖ to seek greater dialogue with the Church and its agencies at national and local level;
- ❖ to foster coordinated liaison with the Bishops, at both national and diocesan level;
- ❖ to build deeper ecumenical relationships; and

To serve and support Religious in England and Wales

- ❖ to answer enquiries and to respond to members' needs;
- ❖ to develop structures of mutual support;
- ❖ to set up a professional database and informal group mailing systems;
- ❖ to find ways of sharing gifts, skills and resources, ideas, etc;
- ❖ to be active participants in Safeguarding initiatives in the Church in England and Wales;
- ❖ to participate in the work of Vocations and to support the National Office; and

Report of the Executive Committee Year to 30 September 2025

- ❖ to encourage and support the formation of new Religious Life initiatives.

The charity pursues these objectives by operating through its Executive Committee and other committees, drawn from the expertise of its membership and professionals, coordinated through the Secretariat. The Secretariat disseminates information, organises conferences and meetings, provides advice and support to and maintains links with religious and other bodies that have similar interests.

Public benefit

CoR exists to support and promote the work of Religious in England and Wales. The members of CoR are involved through their ministry in a wide range of activities including: education, pastoral support, healthcare, working with refugees and victims of modern-day slavery, chaplaincy and counselling, which are all of direct benefit to the public.

By providing increasing opportunities for collaboration and undertaking a range of other activities on behalf of its members that are outlined in this report, CoR assists in the provision of the public benefit, by our member congregations.

When setting the objectives and planning the work for the year and future activities, members of the Executive Committee have given careful consideration to the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit.

ACTIVITIES AND PERFORMANCE

Message from the Leadership

Welcome to our Trustees report for the year ending September 30th 2025. It has generally been a good year for CoR, as we hope it has for you all, despite many of the challenges which face most religious life groups at present. And, of course, it has been a significant year during which we mourned the death of Pope Francis and welcomed our new Pope, Leo XIV, noting that he too is a member of a religious order, with a very wide experience of ministry in the Church before he agreed to take on this new ministry. We keep him in our prayers.

With the approval of members at the AGM in May, we have continued to have a model of shared leadership between the three of us. Generally, it is satisfactory, but we are aware that we need to be sensitive to the needs of our small secretariat and the challenges this sometimes poses for them. Even finding dates for Zoom meetings with the General Secretary can prove difficult, since we all have busy diaries. But we trust that between us, and with our very competent secretariat, we are serving our membership well. Also as a result of the AGM, we have been very pleased to welcome additional members to the Executive, which has widened our skills base and helped to share the load.

The AGM, with excellent input on the Synod from a Sacred Heart Sister who had been present at the Synod, was very well received, and competently facilitated by Jo Kennedy. Among other things, it enabled us to put into practice conversations in the Spirit, which hopefully members can increasingly use with their leadership teams and members. Being together, with opportunities for meeting old friends and new, continues to be appreciated.

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Our Collaboration Workshops have continued to attract many attendees, both religious and others who work with them. It is hoped that during the coming year we will move closer towards providing a structure which will be of help to those groups who are particularly challenged by diminishment. Our monthly Care Forum is also popular as we all strive to care for and support our more frail members.

Work to improve our website and to use it as our main means of communication, replacing our monthly newsletter, seems to have been welcomed, judging by the number of visits that are recorded. The secretariat also continues to be busy answering requests by email or phone. We are very grateful to them for their support of the Executive and of the members.

With the background of a world in turmoil, we pray that the coming year will see less conflict in at least some parts of the globe. And may we all receive many blessings as we strive to live out our commitment.

Monica Matthews SHCJ

On behalf of Sarah Dobson CJ and Anne Morris DHS, the COREW leadership team.

The Secretariat

The Secretariat is now in a strong and stable position, working effectively as a small, but experienced team, to meet the needs of members. Led by Susan Thomas, General Secretary, with Irene Henderson (Administration & Governance) and Charlotte Vassallo (Finance & Communications), the Secretariat makes the most of limited resources through a flexible structure equivalent to 1.5 full-time posts. Each member of the team brings valuable expertise, ensuring that members and the Executive receive robust and professional support.

Working primarily from home continues to deliver significant savings on overheads, while also allowing the team to use their time more productively. Members have reported that the transition has been seamless, with regular opportunities for face-to-face contact maintained through Executive meetings, collaboration workshops, health care workshops, and other meetings held throughout the year.

The Secretariat's priorities remain consistent: to provide stability, continuity, and support for members. Regular contact has been re-established and strengthened, reflected in the positive feedback and active participation of members at workshops, forums, and other events. The Secretariat has been particularly busy providing support to the Executive Committee and the Finance Committee, as well as supporting the Collaboration Committee. They run a programme of workshops, facilitating the regular online Care Forums, ensuring effective governance processes, responding to the needs and requests of members.

Alongside these core functions, the Secretariat has also led the Porticus Project, a joint initiative with the RLSS on safeguarding elderly religious. In addition, the team has focused on wider organisational development, with particular attention to ongoing strategic planning, as well as updating policies and maintaining and developing the CoR website, and overseeing archive management.

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Throughout this period, the Secretariat has remained committed to maximising resources, ensuring value for money, and above all being approachable, supportive, and effective for members.

CoR continues to retain a single archive room at Euston Square, which also remains the registered charity address. We are grateful to the PSMG sisters for their generosity and ongoing support in making this possible.

Meetings

Throughout the year, CoR has organised and conducted an increasingly large range of meetings, online and face to face, encompassing various topics and initiatives aimed at supporting its mission and Members; many of these meetings are detailed below:

Annual General Meeting May 2025 – “Synodal Leadership - Forward Thinking - Outward Facing”

The Annual General Meeting of the Conference of Religious took place on 20–21 May 2025 at Highgate House Conference Centre, Northamptonshire, with the theme “*Synodal Leadership – Forward Thinking – Outward Facing*.” The gathering was facilitated by Jo Kennedy, with keynote input from Sr Maria Cimperman RSCJ. Members were warmly welcomed by the shared leadership team — Sr Sarah Dobson CJ, Sr Monica Matthews SHCJ, and Sr Anne Morris DHS — with particular acknowledgement of Fr Colin Hope CSWG, Anglican representative on the CoR Board, Sr Theresa Tighe DC, representing CRS, and Gerrard Gallagher, Secretary General of AMRI.

The programme opened with a reflective exercise, encouraging members to introduce themselves, share their context, name and how they were arriving into the gathering. This created a sense of connection and presence that set the tone for the days ahead. Sr Maria Cimperman’s keynote address on synodal leadership invited members to consider it, not only as a way of structuring governance, but as a way of being. Drawing on global synodal insights, she encouraged deep listening, attentiveness, and the courage to foster intercultural and intergenerational participation. Her address was followed by group “Conversations in the Spirit” and quiet reflection, allowing participants to surface questions and reflections.

In the afternoon, Sr Maria responded to these reflections by guiding members to consider synodality within their own congregations and within CoR itself. Insights emerging included the call to vulnerability, mutual respect, and honouring diversity, as well as the need for courageous and compassionate change, rooted in trust and collective discernment. Members affirmed that religious communities have the potential to model synodal practice for the wider Church, embodying Gospel-rooted witness attentive to the Spirit.

The current shared leadership team then outlined their respective responsibilities and confirmed their wish to continue this model, first adopted in 2024 after no single individual came forward to serve as President. The collegiate approach was recognised as effective, offering continuity, stronger communication, and engagement across the membership. Members unanimously endorsed the continuation of the shared leadership structure.

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The day concluded with thoughtful feedback and a closing session in which members expressed gratitude for the opportunity to connect and reflect together. Many valued the chance for deeper dialogue on CoR's purpose and prophetic voice, raising issues such as the treatment of migrants, workers, and responses to the Assisted Dying Bill. There was also strong appreciation for the Collaboration Workshops on areas such as change management and healthcare in local communities. Mass was celebrated by Fr Richard Reid CSsR, followed by a Gala Dinner, which offered relaxed space for social connection.

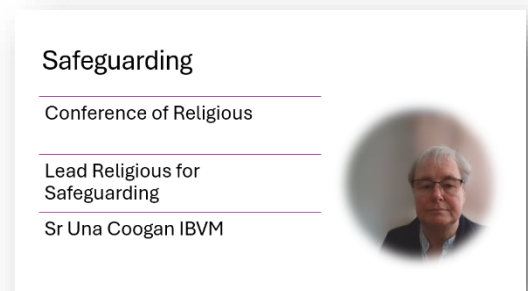


On the second day, Sr Maria led morning prayer, inviting members to make a personal commitment to synodality and to share reflections on what they most needed from the Church. Themes emerging included vulnerability, transparency, inclusivity, and the prophetic role of women, as well as the need for intercultural living, honest dialogue, and a readiness to be witnesses attentive to the Spirit.

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The AGM also considered formal business. Peter Mackereth of Buzzacott presented the Annual Report and Financial Accounts for the year ending September 2024 via Zoom, before members unanimously accepted the accounts. Susan Thomas, General Secretary, then offered a Secretariat update, introducing staff members Irene Henderson and Charlotte Vassallo and outlining the Secretariat's work over the past year. With only the equivalent of 1.5 full-time posts, the team continues to maximise resources through home-based working, delivering robust support to members and the Executive. Projects have included website development, archive management, strategic planning, and the Porticus Project, a joint initiative with RLSS on safeguarding elderly religious.

A safeguarding update was provided by Sr Dr Una Coogan IBVM via a recorded presentation. She outlined the work of the Strategic Council for Catholic Safeguarding, including CoR's representation and ongoing discussions around training, funding models, and the use of the National Tribunal Service. The update reaffirmed safeguarding as a shared responsibility and central to religious life today.



The formal process of Executive Board elections and ratification was led by Sr Margaret Donovan HC. In accordance with CoR's Statutes, the Executive Board is ordinarily composed of up to twelve members. However, with five individuals standing for election, acceptance of all candidates would bring the total to thirteen members. Members were therefore asked to indicate, by a show of hands, whether they were content to accept all five candidates, thereby temporarily increasing the Board to thirteen. The majority agreed to this proposal. It was also noted that Sr Ann Sullivan SP and Sr Mary Deane PBVM had previously committed at the last AGM to serve for one year and were now standing for re-election. Those elected were: Sr Ellen Flynn DC, Fr Gerry Briody SDB, Sr Ann Sullivan SP, Fr Gladson Francesco Dabre OSA, and Sr Mary Deane PBVM.

The afternoon was dedicated to forward planning for 2026, with members working in themed groups on vision, inclusivity, prophetic voice, the Assisted Dying Bill, workshops and formation, and synodality. Suggestions ranged from greater collaboration and resource-sharing to promoting inclusivity across cultures and generations, enabling CoR to speak out more effectively on public issues, and preparing coordinated responses to the Assisted Dying Bill. Members also highlighted the need for formation opportunities, youth engagement, and mission-focused workshops, with insights feeding directly into CoR's strategic planning.

The AGM concluded with words of thanks from the leadership team, who expressed deep appreciation to members for their engagement, to the Secretariat for their efficient organisation, to Jo Kennedy for her facilitation, and to Sr Maria Cimperman for her inspiring contribution. The two-day gathering left members with a renewed sense of purpose, strengthened bonds of collaboration, and a shared commitment to walking together in synodal leadership.

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Collaboration Committee Workshops

Following the success of the 2024 programme, the Collaboration Committee continued its work throughout 2025, building on the strong foundations laid in its first year. The Committee, originally established in response to requests from member Congregations facing the challenges of diminishment, ageing, and closure, remained under the leadership of Sr Jane Maltby RSCJ with members Sr Monica Matthews SHCJ, Sr Margaret Donovan HC, Sr Kathleen Colmer OSU, Sr Ann Sullivan RC, Sr Jen Bromham IBVM and Sr Julie Rose SSHJM.

The guiding principles and objectives of the workshops remained unchanged: to respond to members' needs in light of their charisms and spirituality, to ground discussions in gospel values and the vision of religious life, to foster mission and community, and to embed synodality in practice. Each workshop again offered participants the opportunity to share concerns, raise issues, and reflect on achievements, while receiving professional input on the chosen topics. Evaluation and follow-up collaboration were built into the process, ensuring ongoing learning and support.



The Committee met regularly to plan and oversee the programme and, as in 2024, remained committed to holding the workshops in person. This was valued by members not only for the content but also for the space it provided for dialogue, sharing of expertise, networking, and meeting face to face.



Up to two members from each Congregation were invited to attend any or all of the workshops, with flexibility for different representatives to attend on different occasions. Lay colleagues, who are increasingly involved in the administration of Congregational life, were again welcomed and actively participated.

The 2025 workshops were as follows:

- *New Ways of Working & Organising Ourselves* – 14 February 2025 at the London Jesuit Centre, Mount Street, London. A panel of Congregation representatives shared innovative approaches to leadership, involvement of lay colleagues in decision-making and management, followed by group sharing and discussion of next steps.
- *Health Care in Local Communities* – 8 April 2025 at Little Sisters of the Poor, Meadow Road, London. This follow-up to the 2024 Eldercare workshop responded to requests for help in understanding and managing health needs in local settings.

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- *Legacy Planning and Archives* – 4 June 2025 at St Paul's Convent Conference Centre, Selly Park, Birmingham. Details were circulated after Easter, with a focus on planning for legacy and managing congregational archives.
- *Possible Ways of Inter-Congregational Support* – 17 July 2025 at St Paul's Convent Conference Centre, Selly Park, Birmingham. This workshop explored possible models of support and collaboration across congregations.
- *Ecology and the Church: Our Vocation for Prophetic Action and Investment for our Common Home* – 4 September 2025 at the London Jesuit Centre, Mount Street, London. Organised in collaboration with the Laudato Si' Movement, Operation Noah, JustMoney Movement and the Association of Provincial Bursars. The workshop concluded with Mass for the Care of Creation.

The workshops of 2025 were once again well attended and highly valued by members, who appreciated the professional input, opportunities for shared reflection, and the chance to connect with one another. Feedback confirmed the importance of this initiative and the desire for the Collaboration Committee to continue offering a programme of in-person workshops in the year ahead.



The range of experienced presenters for the workshops was extremely impressive, providing both informative and interactive content. Their contribution and commitment greatly enriched these collaborative events, and included all those listed below:

- ◆ Sr Cath Lloyd, Society of the Sacred Heart
- ◆ Catherine Hennessy, Executive Director of Society of the Sacred Heart
- ◆ Sr Anne Redmond, Daughters of Charity of St Vincent de Paul
- ◆ Mike Anderson, Deputy CEO of Nazareth Care
- ◆ Susan Thomas, CoR General Secretary
- ◆ Dr Jonathan Bush Durham University
- ◆ Dr Simon Johnson, Downside Abbey
- ◆ Amanda Francis
- ◆ Sr Ellen Flynn, Daughters of Charity of St Vincent de Paul & CoREW
- ◆ Fr Seamus O'Neill SPS – St Patrick's Missionary Society
- ◆ Sr Susan Francois CSJP – Sisters of St Joseph of Peace
- ◆ Mark Campanale – Carbon Tracker
- ◆ Rosie Venner – JustMoney Movement

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- ◆ Bokani Tshidzu – Operation Noah
- ◆ James Buchanan – Laudato Si' Movement

There was no charge for those attending the sessions, as costs were covered by the annual membership fees. CoR provided lunch and refreshments at each event, which was much appreciated by participants. The workshops attracted strong attendance throughout the year, with an average of around 40 people at each session. Presentations and slides were shared with all attendees afterwards, enabling onward sharing within congregations and serving as a helpful reminder of the content.



In planning the 2025 programme, the Committee continued to respond to Members' feedback on accessibility and location. Workshops were held at a variety of venues, including the London Jesuit Centre, Mount Street, London; the Little Sisters of the Poor, Meadow Road, London; and St Paul's Convent Conference Centre, Selly Park, Birmingham. This spread of venues provided options for members in different parts of the country and helped make the workshops more widely accessible.

Feedback from the 2025 programme is currently being collected and will be reviewed by the Committee in due course. Early indications suggest that members greatly valued the opportunity for in-person learning and exchange. A full evaluation of the workshops will be undertaken, and the results will inform the development of future sessions and the planning of the 2026 programme.

Trustee Training and End-of-Year Gathering

In addition to the AGM and workshop programme, the Executive Committee held its annual trustee training day in December 2024. The session focused on governance responsibilities



and effective charity management. The day concluded with mince pies and a Christmas celebration, providing a joyful opportunity for trustees and Secretariat staff to mark the end of a productive year together.

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Connections with the Wider Church

Representatives of the Executive continue to attend the Mixed Commission meetings alongside several Bishops of England and Wales. CoR's representatives remain Sr Anne Morris DHS and Sr Margaret Donovan HC, with Sr Anne chairing whenever it is CoR's turn to host. Hosting responsibilities alternate, and the Commission meets twice a year. These meetings provide a valuable opportunity for religious and Bishops to share developments in their lives and ministries, to reflect together on the life of the Church, and to explore ways of working more closely in unity as One Church.



The current members of the Mixed Commission are: Archbishop Bernard Longley (Archbishop of Birmingham), Bishop Alan Williams (Bishop of Brentwood), Bishop Richard Moth (Bishop of Arundel and Brighton), Abbot Mark Barrett (Union of Monastic Superiors), Dame Andrea Savage (Association of British

Contemplatives), Sr Anne Morris DHS (CoR Executive, Chair), Sr Margaret Donovan HC (CoR Executive), Sr Una Coogan IBVM (Lead Religious for Safeguarding), and Bishop Paul Mason (Lead Bishop for Safeguarding).

Sr Una Coogan IBVM and Bishop Paul Mason have recently joined the Commission in their roles as safeguarding leads, and their participation is expected to further strengthen the Commission's shared focus on safeguarding as a vital dimension of the Church's life.

In addition to its participation in the Mixed Commission, CoR continues to receive updates from the Nunciature in England, which are shared with members to ensure they remain informed of wider Church developments.

Safeguarding

Report from Sr Dr Una Coogan IBVM, Lead Religious for Safeguarding

Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors

At the start of the year there was a request from the offices of the Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors, in conjunction with the member Conferences of Religious of the Union of the European Conferences of Major Superiors (UCESM) following the conference on 'Protection of Minors in the Church in Europe' the conclusion was drawn that it is crucial for bishops and religious to work together more intensively to improve safeguarding in the Church. To give the religious a clearer voice, Sr. Marjolein Bruinen, OP, suggested inviting the presidents of the national Conferences to appoint a contact person from UCESM in their country. It was proposed that I, as the Religious Safeguarding Lead, would be the contact

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person, and I gladly accepted the invitation. I have attended a couple of online conversations and provide written feedback on the Universal Guidelines Framework (UGF) which can be found at, <https://www.tutelaminorum.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/EN-Guidelines-book-01Abr24.pdf>. The annual report of the Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors is available at https://www.tutelaminorum.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/Inglese_web.pdf

Safeguarding Briefing to the Bishops' Conference – 2025

As part of my ongoing responsibilities, I attended the Bishops' Conference in April and November alongside representatives from the RLSS, CSSA, and the Lead Bishop for Safeguarding. These sessions provide an opportunity to brief the Bishops on current safeguarding developments and strategic priorities.

In 2025, I delivered a short presentation outlining the evolving reality of religious life, highlighting three key challenges:

- Declining membership across Religious Life Groups (RLGs)
- Reduced numbers entering religious life
- Diminishing income streams for RLGs

This context was instrumental in supporting the CSSA's financial plan for 2025-26, which proposed a rebalancing of contributions:

- Increasing the Diocesan contribution to CSSA from 65% to 75%
- Reducing the RLG contribution from 35% to 25%

The Bishops expressed their full support for this adjustment. Following the conference, I formally wrote to the RLGs requesting their endorsement of the proposed change. All responses received affirmed their support.

Religious Life Safeguarding Service (RLSS)

I am grateful to the RLSS for their support and help in fulfilling this role. This year they have encouraged me to attend their Board meetings as an observer, which helps me keep in touch with the needs of the different RLGs and issues that occur.

Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency (CSSA)

As part of my role with the CSSA, I continue to work on two of the CSSA's subcommittees, the Finance and General-Purpose committee and the Quality Assurance Committee. Work on the Quality Assurance Committee, has led to useful insights to the audit results from the RLGs. There is a wide range of results from Basic to Exemplary.

At present I am working with a small working party to look at the financial contribution paid by religious life groups to help finance the CSSA. This working party is only starting its work, but it is hoped that by the end of 2025 we will come up with a scheme that is acceptable both to the religious life groups and to the CSSA.

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Strategic Council for Catholic Safeguarding (SCCS)

A new strategic body for the Church in England and Wales; the Strategic Council for Catholic Safeguarding has started. This body has co-chairs: Bishop Paul Mason and me, as Lead Religious. The other members have been appointed, with four representing religious and four representing dioceses. The four religious representatives were chosen from a list of names gathered from religious when I asked for a mandated group to represent religious on safeguarding matters. They are Fr. Mervyn Williams SDB, Sr. Jane Bertelsen FMDM, Fr. David Smolira SJ, and Anne O'Brien (Chair of RLSS). The diocesan representatives are Bishop David Oakley (Northampton Diocese), Mary-Jane Crowley (Southwark Diocese Safeguarding Coordinator), Ruth Atfield (Portsmouth Diocese Safeguarding Coordinator), and Ed Whittaker (Finance Director, Hallam Diocese). Stephen Ashley, CEO of CSSA, and Melissa Andrews (CEO of RLSS) will also attend the meetings of the body but do not have a vote. We have met in person and online discussing various topics

Working Parties

This year we have worked on an MoU with religious who 'own' parishes and run the parish on behalf of the Diocese. After various meetings, a Memorandum of Understanding has been drafted and was sent to religious groups for their comments. It is now being checked to ensure that there are no legal gaps in the safeguarding provision in the MoU. The final draft of the MoU has been sent out and commented on and amended by religious. Hopefully it will act as a guide to both religious and dioceses on who to contact if there are any safeguarding issues regarding training, DBS, consultation and case management when involving religious who work or have an agreement with a diocese.

Conferences

I have attended several conferences this year, meeting various members of the safeguarding community. Firstly, the Religious Life Safeguarding Service (RLSS) Conference was held at Highgate House, Northampton, from 13th-14th March 2025. There were 120 delegates and it was wonderful to reconnect with old friends and make new ones.

This year's conference differed from previous years. While past events were open to all, this year it was exclusive to religious members and invited guests. Bishop Paul Mason, Lead Bishop for Safeguarding, was one of the guests present at the conference.

The first day involved delegates arriving, settling in, and attending the RLSS's AGM. In the evening, we gathered for the Conference Dinner, where we were serenaded by a guitarist, a singer, and a fiddle player in anticipation of St. Patrick's Day. Each table was entertained by a very accomplished magician who amazed us and filled us with wonder.

The second day featured a mix of talks and workshops. The talks covered topics such as supporting members who find themselves accused, and data protection. The workshops included "Caring with Confidence: Communicating and Supporting Those with Dementia," "Social Media and Safeguarding," and a CSSA Audit workshop. The feedback from delegates was very positive and appreciative of the conference, its content, and the efforts of the RLSS staff in organising it.

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International Safeguarding Conference 2025 – Rome

I attended the International Safeguarding Conference 2025 at the Gregorian University in Rome, entitled “Women of Faith, Women of Strength” from 17–20 June 2025. This annual gathering, organised by the Centre for Child Protection/Institute of Anthropology (IADC), brings together church leaders, safeguarding professionals, trauma specialists, academics, and researchers dedicated to protecting children and vulnerable adults.

The conference examined gender-related dimensions of safeguarding, focusing on:

- Abuse of women within society and the church.
- Women’s roles as perpetrators or bystanders in institutional abuse.
- Women’s leadership in shaping safeguarding policies.
- Integration of gender perspectives into safeguarding frameworks.

Attendees engaged in workshops, presentations, and panel discussions designed to exchange expertise, promote best practices, and strengthen gender-informed approaches in safeguarding.

Vicars for Religious Conference

I raised the important point that some religious groups are not joining the CSSA and not contributing to the finances needed to support it. This has become a serious problem, leading to an annual deficit which has so far been bridged by the CaTEW. The Vicars were encouraged to ask RLGs in their dioceses whether they are enrolled with CSSA/RLSS as a matter of urgency and to stress the importance of safeguarding and safeguarding training.

I also raised the topic of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for religious groups who own buildings or the parish and run the parish on behalf of the dioceses, which had been agreed between the diocese and representatives of religious life groups. The MoU offered broad guidelines for the discussions between individual RLGs and the respective diocese. It does highlight the reality that civil law will hold the RLG responsible for any activities for buildings that they own.

Unfortunately, I was unable to attend the CoR Conference due to prior appointments, but I was able to send a short PowerPoint presentation.

Mixed Commission

This year the Lead Bishop and the Lead Religious for Safeguarding were added to the mixed commission. So far, we attended our first meeting in June. The next meeting is on 12th December, hosted by CoR.

Canon Law

I have been asked by several religious to lend support with Canon law issues and I'm happy to assist where I can. The RLSS and CSSA will often ask for help on strategic canon law advice and I try to help.

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I have recently attended an online course run by the Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors on Penal Law and the investigation of cases.

CaTEW Board Meeting

I have attended a meeting of the CaTEW Board with the CSSA Chair to explain the budget of the CSSA over the next five years. I was able to speak to the Board addressing the reality of RLGs in their decreasing numbers both as individuals and communities and how this will affect the amount of money they can pay towards the cost of the CSSA.

Identified Need: Centralised Religious Database for Streamlined Messaging

To enhance communication consistency and reduce duplication, there is a pressing need for an accessible, centralised database of religious. This database would:

- Enable unified messaging: Allow messages to be sent once to all relevant RLGs, ensuring simultaneous and consistent delivery.
- Prevent redundancy and omission: Eliminate the current issue where RLGs may receive the same email multiple times—or not at all—due to fragmented contact lists or manual distribution.
- Support safeguarding coordination: Facilitate timely dissemination of safeguarding updates, invitations, and documentation to all religious stakeholders.
- Improve auditability and accountability: Provide a clear record of communications sent, recipients reached, and delivery status.

After two years in the job, I can say that I am enjoying it. There is so much work to be done to ensure that we do act as one church, that the views of RLGs are heard and that we can create a safe church for all. In the year ahead I look forward to working more closely with CoR, with the CSSA, RLSS and the religious.

Sr Dr Una Coogan IBVM, Lead Religious for Safeguarding

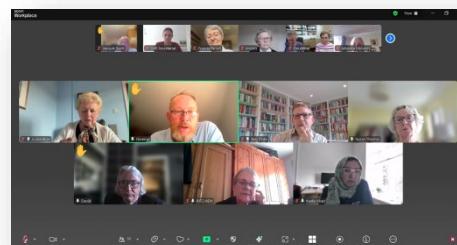
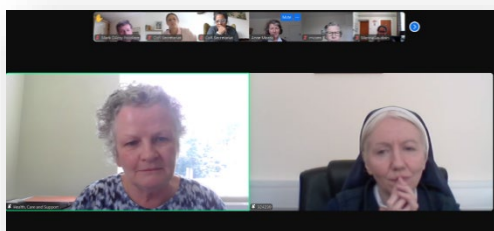
Safeguarding Elderly Religious Project

The Safeguarding Elderly Religious Project continues to be a collaborative initiative between the Conference of Religious (CoR) and the Religious Life Safeguarding Service (RLSS), focused on enhancing the safety and well-being of elderly religious across England and Wales. Endorsed by the Executive in April and supported by funding from Porticus, the project remains committed to addressing practical and operational safeguarding concerns within religious communities, particularly regarding the care and support of elderly members. With an average age of 82 among those in religious communities, this work continues to be both timely and essential.

Report of the Executive Committee Year to 30 September 2025

The Working Group, chaired by Susan Thomas, General Secretary of CoR, and including representatives from RLSS and religious leaders such as Jane Bertelsen FMDM, continues to meet regularly to drive the project forward. Their collaborative efforts focus on supporting members in embedding safeguarding within the daily life, care, and governance of religious communities.

The monthly online Care Forum has continued to be extremely well attended and provides an invaluable space for shared learning, reflection, and the exchange of good practice. Attendance at the forums is open to both members and their lay colleagues who are responsible for care within registered and unregistered care homes, as well as those providing care and support in community houses. This inclusive approach

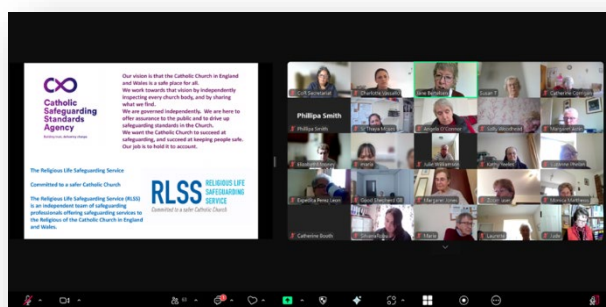


ensures that the initiative reaches all those involved in the care of elderly religious, including those on the frontline of safeguarding practice. Each forum is shaped by the interests and needs of attendees, with guest speakers offering professional and pastoral expertise on a range of topics. Recent sessions have included:

- October 2024 – First Forum: Launch and introductory session
- November 2024 – Second Forum: Emerging themes in elderly care
- January 2025 – Medication Management
- February 2025 – Care Planning (Regulated and Informal)
- March 2025 – CSSA Audit Preparation
- May 2025 – Statement of Wishes, Advance Decisions, and Power of Attorney
- June 2025 – The Assisted Dying Bill
- July 2025 – Follow-up on The Assisted Dying Bill
- September 2025 – Caring with Confidence: Communicating & Supporting those with Dementia

Feedback from participants has been consistently positive, with religious and lay staff alike reporting that the forums have enhanced their understanding and confidence in managing complex care and safeguarding issues within community settings.

Report of the Executive Committee Year to 30 September 2025



Work has also continued on developing a set of core standards for care and safeguarding within religious communities. These standards aim to provide a clear, practical framework for ensuring quality, consistency, and accountability across both registered and unregistered care settings. Alongside this, the project is progressing the creation of a

comprehensive map of religious care provisions across England and Wales. Drawing on information shared by members, this mapping exercise will build a clearer understanding of the range and distribution of care provision within religious communities. Following a period of RLSS site visits to religious community houses and care settings, the scoping phase of the project has now been completed. These visits provided invaluable insight into the diversity of care arrangements across Congregations and identified several priority areas for training and development, including dementia support, care planning, and leadership accountability.

In response to these findings, the Religious Life Safeguarding Service (RLSS) has developed a suite of new safeguarding training modules for those involved in the care and protection of elderly members of Religious Life Groups (RLGs). These tailored courses — *Communicating and Supporting those with Dementia*, *Safe Recruitment*, *Safeguarding the Elderly Needing Care*, and *Understanding Care Needs Assessments* — are designed to ensure that elderly religious are safeguarded with dignity, compassion, and best practice. Uptake has been very positive, reflecting the strong interest and commitment among religious and their lay colleagues to strengthening safeguarding practice in the care of elderly members.

These tailored sessions provide practical skills and awareness for religious members, lay staff, and volunteers, equipping them to recognise risks, respond appropriately, and ensure that safety and well-being remain central to community life.

The partnership between CoR and RLSS continues to strengthen safeguarding provision for elderly religious through training, engagement, and the development of best practice frameworks. Together, both organisations remain committed to promoting environments where the care of elderly religious is underpinned by respect, accountability, and compassion.

The project continues to develop positively, with the final report to Porticus due for completion in summer 2026.

Health and Care Group

Led by Sr Monica Matthews SHCJ, the Health and Care Group has continued to provide advice and support to members in relation to all aspects of healthcare and community living. Supported by religious with professional backgrounds in healthcare, working in partnership with experienced lay colleagues, the group offers a valuable range of practical guidance and peer support.

Report of the Executive Committee Year to 30 September 2025

During the year, the Group's work extended to encompass both the monthly online Care Forum and two Collaboration Committee workshops, which it led in collaboration with other contributors.

The first of these, the Eldercare Workshop held in October 2024, provided a comprehensive exploration of issues relating to ageing and care within religious communities. Presentations included *The Journey into Care* (Sr Anne Redmond DC), *Models of Care* (Sr Doreen Cunningham CSN), *Managing Health Care Needs* (Susan Thomas), and *Closing a Care Home* (Michelle O'Reilly OSM), alongside discussion of CQC policy and registration guidance for Religious communities, and national variations in advance and anticipatory care planning documentation.

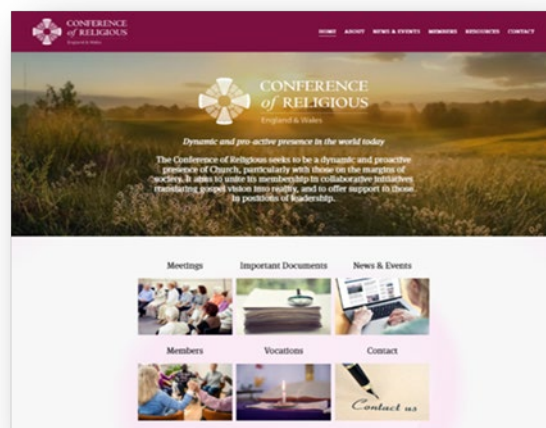
The second workshop, Care in Communities, took place in April 2025 and focused on supporting religious congregations providing care in non-registered community settings. Sessions included *Care in Community Settings* (Sr Anne Redmond DC), *Accessing Adult Social Care* (Mike Anderson), and *Employment of Lay Staff in Community Settings* (Susan Thomas). Feedback from both workshops was extremely positive, with participants valuing the practical insights, professional expertise, and opportunities for shared learning that these sessions provided.

Looking ahead, further initiatives and events are planned, including guidance on mental health and capacity, supporting those living with dementia and employment of lay staff. The Group continues to serve as an important point of contact for members seeking advice and information, ensuring that good practice and shared learning remain at the heart of CoR's approach to health and care.

Online Media and Communications

The transition from a monthly newsletter to sharing updates directly via the redeveloped website has continued to be a great success. Members and professional colleagues have fully embraced the new format, making regular use of the *News & Events* page to share information and stay informed about current developments. The secure *Members' Section* is also being used effectively to distribute more sensitive material intended for internal circulation only, ensuring that important updates are communicated effectively across the CoR membership.

This shift has also enabled CoR to monitor website traffic and gain valuable insights into engagement trends. The ability to track which pages are most frequently visited has been very positive, helping to inform content planning and guide future improvements. Further updates are planned to ensure that the website remains current, relevant, and a reliable resource for members and the wider religious community.

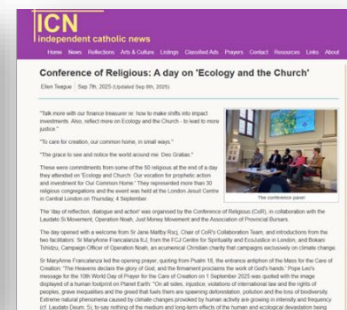


Report of the Executive Committee Year to 30 September 2025

In addition to online communications, CoR's work has continued to gain visibility through external media coverage. Several articles have been published in The Tablet and Independent Catholic News (ICN), highlighting CoR's active role in both *advocacy and formation*.

These include coverage of CoR's membership in opposing the Assisted Dying Bill through forums, discussions at the AGM, and member advocacy initiatives, as well as features on the Ecology Workshop which explored the links between faith, sustainability, and care for creation.

- [Leaders of Religious Congregations Unite in Opposition to Assisted Dying — The Tablet](#)
- [Religious Leaders Unite in Opposition to Assisted Dying — Independent Catholic News](#)
- [Conference of Religious: Ecology Workshop — Independent Catholic News](#)



Collaboration with others

CoR continues to work to represent religious, share information and develop relationships with others in the Church and the wider community through varied means. Sometimes this is done by the Executive, for example via the previously mentioned, Mixed Commission Meetings, to represent the views of religious to the Bishops.

We also collaborate with organisations such as the Union of the Catholic European Superiors Major, Union of International Superiors General, Association of Leaders of Missionaries and Religious of Ireland, and the Association of Provincial Bursars. Those who sit on the committees and groups ensure that CoR is kept abreast of activities and developments elsewhere including:

- ◆ CBCEW Department of Social Justice – A member of the Executive regularly attends the Department of Social Justice meetings, which take place approximately three times a year. These meetings bring together Bishops responsible for various areas, assisted by laypeople who support them in preparing papers on key issues such as Life Issues, Marriage and Family Life, CSAN, Environment, and Human Rights. The meetings are

Report of the Executive Committee Year to 30 September 2025

always held in person, allowing for meaningful discussions and the opportunity to engage directly with others in attendance. This setting fosters collaboration and the sharing of information where possible. Attending these meetings has proven to be an enlightening experience, offering deeper insight into the Church's work behind the scenes and the significant efforts being made in the realm of social justice. We support and share information where possible.

- ◆ Anglican Committees – Sister Margaret Shepherd NDS sits on the Anglican Committees and Fr Colin Hope CSWG is the interim Anglican representative on the CoR Executive Committee.
- ◆ The National Office of Vocations – through which we support Vocations work by funding the role of Religious Life Promoter.

FUTURE PLANS

We are currently in the process of developing an updated strategic plan to guide our work in the coming years. This plan will outline the key priorities, objectives, and the steps needed to strengthen our mission and impact. One of the main focuses will be planning sustainable ways to stay both responsive and supportive to our membership. This will ensure that the plan aligns with the needs of religious communities and reflects our shared commitment to safeguarding, social justice, and effective governance

The new strategic plan will provide a clear framework for decision-making and resource allocation, ensuring that our initiatives remain focused and effective. As we work through this process, we will continue to engage with members to refine our vision and goals. Updates on the plan's progress will be shared in due course, with consultation and implementation expected to begin in the near future.

The work of the Collaboration Committee will take up much of the coming year and this work will provide an opportunity for exploring how religious might collaborate with respect to the challenges they are facing.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Results for the year

The statement of financial activities shows that net income for the year before gains on investments was £8,139 (2024: net expenditure of £42,714 before gains on investments). Net losses on the revaluation of investments were £33,362 (2024: net gains of £117,749) leading to an overall decrease in funds of £25,223 (2024: increase in funds of £74,765).

Income comprised mainly of membership fees, income from meetings and investment income. Some members continued to subscribe amounts in excess of their actual fees so that those members whose resources are more limited are not prevented from participating in conferences and other activities. Expenditure reflects the work of CoR.

Report of the Executive Committee Year to 30 September 2025

Investment policy and performance

The charity's investments, managed by CCLA Investment Management Limited, were valued at £1,046,463 (2024: £1,079,824) at the year-end date.

The investment managers operate within specific ethical guidelines which are set out and reviewed periodically by the Executive Committee. The ethical guidelines mean that the charity cannot invest in any company connected with armaments, gambling, tobacco, alcohol, contraception and known social injustice in the third world. The charity's investment policy is to maintain a balance between capital growth and income, so that, over the long term, the real value of assets will be maintained.

In accordance with the above policy, investments were held in COIF Charities Ethical Investment Fund Income Units and COIF Charities Ethical Investment Fund Accumulation Units during the year. The holding returned a total negative yield (income and capital) of 2% for the year (2024 positive yield of : 14%).

Raising funds

The charity aims to achieve best practice in the way in which it communicates with members and other supporters. It takes care with both the tone of its communications and the accuracy of its data to minimise the pressures on members and supporters. It applies best practice to protect members' and supporters' data and never sells data, it never swaps data and ensures that communication preferences can be changed at any time. The charity manages its own activities in respect to raising funds and does not employ the services of professional fundraisers. The charity undertakes to react to and investigate any complaints regarding its activities for raising funds and to learn from them and improve its service. During the year, the charity received no complaints about such activities.

Reserves policy

The members of the Executive Committee consider that it is essential to have in place an appropriate amount of working capital so that the charity may meet its liabilities as and when they fall due. To meet this objective, the members of the Executive Committee consider that funds available for working capital and held as free reserves should be equivalent to at least six months' operating expenses.

Financial position

At 30 September 2024, the charity had total net assets of £1,165,337 (2024: £1,190,560).

Included within these total funds are restricted funds amounting to £50,711 to fund safeguarding advisory and associated activities in the future (2024: £53,624).

£1,046,463 (2024: £1,079,824) of these net assets comprise the charity's investment portfolio and represent a designated fund called the capital reserve fund. Demographic data relating to membership of religious congregations, together with the lower number of current vocations, continue to indicate that further reductions in income may be expected in future years.

Report of the Executive Committee Year to 30 September 2025

The charity will rely more and more on investment income in order to fund its charitable work. Consequently, the members of the Executive Committee have set aside, or designated, the value tied up in the charity's investment portfolio as a capital reserve in order to provide a level of assurance that investment income will continue to be generated in future years and thereby 'finance' the charity's work in the long term.

Free reserves at 30 September 2025 stood at £67,048 (2024: £56,397). Comparing this to the charity's reserves policy set out above, the charity's free reserves are slightly below the level required. However, the Executive Committee believes that the reserves will be sufficient to enable CoR to continue to operate and do not expect material concerns to arise over the charity's financial position. The Executive Committee, therefore, is content with the level of free reserves which will be reviewed again in the light of the Strategic Plan that will take shape during 2026.

PRINCIPAL RISKS AND UNCERTAINTIES

The Executive is continuing to work on assessing the main risks to which the charity is exposed, in particular those relating to the specific operational areas of the charity, its investments, and its finances. A Risk Register is prepared and updated for each Executive Committee meeting. The Executive believes that by monitoring reserve levels, by ensuring controls exist over key financial systems, and by examining the operational and business risks faced by the charity, it has established effective systems to mitigate those risks. These systems are also frequently reviewed with a view to possible updates and improvements.

Loss of key personnel

The Executive notes the importance of consistency in staff and key personnel within the organisation. It recognises, from past experience, the challenges that the loss of personnel places on an organisation that relies on a relatively small team of people. To assist in mitigating this risk, a number of strategies are in place. Some of the Executive Committee hold positions on external bodies, which are important to the effective functioning of CoR. There are also religious and lay people who participate in aspects of CoR such as its Finance Committee and in respect of safeguarding.

Reliance on limited income sources

The reliance on one single source of income continues to be a significant risk to the future ability of CoR to provide the service that the members require. The main source of income is the membership fees. As the number of members decreases, mostly as a result of ageing, the income derived from congregations also diminishes. This is reflected once again in the budget for 2025/2026.

The Executive also recognises that it receives professional support from its professional advisors. The charity is indebted to these firms for their advice and guidance.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Constitution

The Conference is governed by its own statutes and is registered with the Charity Commission (Charity Registration No. 277024). The property of the Conference is vested in a Trust, regulated by a trust deed dated 20 November 1978, as amended by deeds of variation dated 4 March 1992 and 20 September 2001.

CoR is administered by an Executive Committee, members of which constitute the trustees of the charity. At 30 September 2025, the Executive Committee comprises of a joint leadership team, and ten other members, as listed on page 1.

The responsibility for representing the charity at meetings of other ecclesial and civil bodies falls mainly on members of the Executive Committee. However, the day-to-day management of the charity has been delegated to the General Secretary. The Executive Committee monitors progress by meeting quarterly and more often when deemed necessary.

The Executive Committee also maintains financial control by approving the annual budget and receiving management accounts which are prepared on a quarterly basis by their accountant.

After careful consideration, and following more than ten years without change, the Executive Committee took the decision to increase the annual membership fees for 2025. This was not a decision taken lightly. However, in light of rising costs and the need to continue offering the services provided to members, it was considered necessary to update the fee structure. The annual fee was therefore increased by 10%, raising it to £50.00 per professed/temporary professed member resident in England and Wales. From 2026 onwards, the annual fee will be reviewed each year and adjusted in line with inflation.

The Executive Committee also ensures compliance with the UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and Data Protection Act 2018, maintaining appropriate procedures for the secure handling and storage of personal data.

Executive Committee

As stated above, members of the Executive Committee constitute the trustees of the charity.

They are incorporated under the provisions of section 251 of the Charities Act 2011 as “The trustees of the Conference of Religious of England and Wales”.

Members of the Executive Committee, who served during the year or who were in office at the date on which this report was signed, are set out on page 1.

They are appointed by means of nomination and election procedures at the charity’s Annual General Meeting. Each member is elected for a period of three years and is eligible to serve for a maximum of two terms.

Report of the Executive Committee Year to 30 September 2025

Key management personnel

The members of the Executive Committee consider that they, together with the General Secretary, comprise the key management of the charity in charge of directing and controlling, running and operating the charity on a day-to-day basis.

None of the members of the Executive Committee are remunerated for their services to the charity. The remuneration of the General Secretary and other staff members is considered annually by the Executive Committee and any increments to the salary are agreed and ratified.

STATEMENT OF RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The Executive Committee is responsible for preparing the report of the Executive Committee and accounts in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

The law applicable to charities in England and Wales requires the Executive Committee to prepare accounts for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the income and expenditure of the charity for that period.

In preparing these accounts, the Executive Committee is required to:

- ◆ select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- ◆ observe the methods and principles in 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 (FRS 102);
- ◆ make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- ◆ state whether applicable United Kingdom Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the accounts; and
- ◆ prepare the accounts on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The Executive Committee is responsible for keeping proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable it to ensure that the accounts comply with the Charities Act 2011, applicable Charity (Accounts and Reports) Regulations and the provisions of the trust deed. The Executive Committee is 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.

Report of the Executive Committee Year to 30 September 2025

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Executive would like to thank the members of the current Secretariat for their support and commitment to CoR throughout this difficult year.

Approved by the members of the Executive Committee and signed on their behalf by:



SARAH DOBSON CJ

Member of the Executive Committee

Approved on:

25-2-26



CONFERENCE *of* RELIGIOUS

England & Wales

Independent auditor's report Year to 30 September 2025

Independent auditor's report to the members of the Executive Committee of The Conference of Religious in England and Wales

Opinion

We have audited the accounts of The Conference of Religious in England and Wales (the 'charity') for the year ended 30 September 2025 which comprise the statement of financial activities, the balance sheet, the principal accounting policies and the notes to the accounts. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the accounts:

- ◆ give a true and fair view of the state of the charity's affairs as at 30 September 2025 and of its income and expenditure for the year then ended;
- ◆ have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- ◆ have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the accounts section of our report. We are independent of the charity in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the accounts in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the accounts, we have concluded that the Executive Committee's use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the accounts is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charity's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the accounts are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the Executive Committee with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Independent auditor's report Year to 30 September 2025

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the annual report, including the report of the Executive Committee, other than the accounts and our auditor's report thereon. The members of the Executive Committee are responsible for the other information contained within the annual report. Our opinion on the accounts does not cover the other information and we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the accounts or our knowledge obtained in the course of the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the accounts themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charity and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the trustees' report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- ◆ the information given in the Report of the Executive Committee is inconsistent in any material respect with the accounts; or
- ◆ sufficient accounting records have not been kept; or
- ◆ the accounts are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- ◆ we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

Responsibilities of the members of the Executive Committee

As explained more fully in the statement of responsibilities of the Executive Committee, the members of the Executive Committee (who are the charity's trustees) are responsible for the preparation of the accounts and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the Executive Committee determines is necessary to enable the preparation of accounts that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the accounts, the Executive Committee is responsible for assessing the charity's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the Executive Committee either intends to liquidate the charity or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Independent auditor's report Year to 30 September 2025

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the accounts

We have been appointed as auditor under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 and report in accordance with the Act and relevant regulations made or having effect thereunder.

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the accounts as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists.

Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these accounts.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud, is detailed below.

How the audit was considered capable of detecting irregularities including fraud

Our approach to identifying and assessing the risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations, was as follows:

- ◆ The engagement partner ensured that the engagement team collectively had the appropriate competence, capabilities and skills to identify or recognise non-compliance with applicable laws and regulations;
- ◆ We identified the laws and regulations applicable to the charity through discussions with management and members of the Executive Committee and from our knowledge and experience of the charity sector;
- ◆ We focused on specific laws and regulations which we considered may have a direct material effect on the accounts or the activities of the charity. These included but were not limited to the Charities Act 2011; Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable to the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102); and
- ◆ We assessed the extent of compliance with the laws and regulations identified above through making enquiries of management and those charged with governance and review of minutes of Executive Committee meetings.

We assessed the susceptibility of the charity's financial statements to material misstatement, including obtaining an understanding of how fraud might occur, by:

- ◆ Making enquiries of management and representatives from the Executive Committee as to where they considered there was susceptibility to fraud, their knowledge of actual, suspected and alleged fraud; and

Independent auditor's report Year to 30 September 2025

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the accounts (continued)

How the audit was considered capable of detecting irregularities including fraud (continued)

- ◆ Considering the internal controls in place to mitigate risks of fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations.

To address the risk of fraud through management bias and override of controls, we:

- ◆ Performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships;
- ◆ Tested and reviewed journal entries to identify unusual transactions;
- ◆ Carried out substantive testing of expenditure including the authorisation thereof;
- ◆ Assessed whether judgements and assumptions made in determining the accounting estimates were indicative of potential bias; and
- ◆ Investigated the rationale behind significant or unusual transactions.

In response to the risk of irregularities and non-compliance with laws and regulations, we designed procedures which included, but were not limited to:

- ◆ Agreeing financial statement disclosures to underlying supporting documentation;
- ◆ Reading the minutes of meetings of the Executive Committee; and
- ◆ Enquiring of us as to actual and potential litigation and claims.

There are inherent limitations in our audit procedures described above. The more removed that laws and regulations are from financial transactions, the less likely it is that we would become aware of non-compliance. Auditing standards also limit the audit procedures required to identify non-compliance with laws and regulations to enquiry of the trustees and other management and the inspection of regulatory and legal correspondence, if any.

Material misstatements that arise due to fraud can be harder to detect than those that arise from error as they may involve deliberate concealment or collusion.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the accounts is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

Independent auditor's report Year to 30 September 2025

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the members of the Executive Committee, (who are the charity's trustees), as a body, in accordance with Part 4 of the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the members of the Executive Committee those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charity and the members of the Executive Committee, as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.



Buzzacott Audit LLP
Statutory Auditor
130 Wood Street
London
EC2V 6DL

Date: 25 February 2026

Buzzacott Audit LLP is eligible to act as an auditor in terms of section 1212 of the Companies Act 2006

Statement of financial activities Year to 30 September 2025

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds 2025 £	Total funds 2024 £
Income from:					
Investments and interest receivable	1	18,727	—	18,727	21,604
Charitable activities	2	181,911	64,000	245,911	152,408
Total income		200,638	64,000	264,638	174,012
Expenditure on:					
Charitable activities					
. Promotion of the welfare of Apostolic Institutes of Religious in England and Wales	3	189,586	66,913	256,499	216,726
Total expenditure		189,586	66,913	256,499	216,726
Net income/(expenditure) before investment gains (losses)	4	11,052	(2,913)	8,139	(42,714)
Net investment losses gains (losses)	8	(33,362)	—	(33,362)	117,479
Net expenditure and net movement in funds		(22,310)	(2,913)	(25,223)	74,765
Reconciliation of funds:					
Fund balances brought forward at 1 October 2024		1,136,936	53,624	1,190,560	1,115,795
Fund balances carried forward at 30 September 2025		1,114,626	50,711	1,165,337	1,190,560

All of the charity's activities derived from continuing operations during the above two financial periods.

All recognised gains and losses are included in the above statement of financial activities.

Balance sheet 30 September 2025

	Notes	2025 £	2025 £	2024 £	2024 £
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	7		1,115		715
Investments	8		1,046,463		1,079,824
			<u>1,047,578</u>		<u>1,080,539</u>
Current assets					
Debtors	9	5,096		12,963	
Short term deposits		—		—	
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>189,496</u>		<u>171,169</u>	
		<u>194,592</u>		<u>184,132</u>	
Liabilities					
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	10	<u>(76,833)</u>		<u>(74,111)</u>	
Net current assets			117,759		110,021
Total net assets			<u>1,165,337</u>		<u>1,190,560</u>
The funds of the charity:					
Unrestricted funds					
. General funds			67,048		56,397
. Tangible fixed assets fund	11		1,115		715
. Designated funds	12		1,046,463		1,079,824
			<u>1,114,626</u>		<u>1,136,936</u>
Restricted funds	13		50,711		53,624
			<u>1,165,337</u>		<u>1,190,560</u>

Approved by the members of the Executive Committee and signed on their behalf by:


SARAH DOBSON CJ

Member of the Executive Committee

Approved on: 25-2-26

Principal accounting policies Year to 30 September 2025

The principal accounting policies adopted, judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty in the preparation of the accounts are laid out below.

Basis of preparation

These accounts have been prepared for the year to 30 September 2025 with comparative information provided for the year to 30 September 2024.

The accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention with items recognised at cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policies below or the notes to these accounts.

The accounts 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 United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (Charities SORP FRS 102), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Charities Act 2011.

The charity constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS 102.

The accounts are presented in sterling and are rounded to the nearest pound.

Critical accounting estimates and areas of judgement

Preparation of the accounts requires the Executive Committee and management to make significant judgements and estimates. No significant judgements or estimates have been made in the preparation of these financial statements.

Assessment of going concern

The Executive Committee has assessed whether the use of the going concern assumption is appropriate in preparing these accounts. It has made this assessment in respect to a period of one year from the date of approval of these accounts.

Free reserves at 30 September 2025 stood at £67,048 (2024 £56,397). Comparing this to the charity's reserves policy set out above, the charity's free reserves are slightly below the level required. However, the Executive Committee believes that the reserves will be sufficient to enable CoR to continue to operate and do not expect material concerns to arise over the charity's financial position. The Executive Committee, therefore, is content with the level of free reserves.

The Executive Committee believes that the reserves will be sufficient to enable CoR to operate and does not expect material concerns to arise over the charity's financial position.

The Executive Committee is of the opinion that the charity will have sufficient resources to meet its liabilities as they fall due.

Principal accounting policies Year to 30 September 2025

Statement of cash flows

The accounts do not include a statement of cash flows because the charity is considered a small charity and is therefore exempt from the requirement to prepare such a statement under the Charities SORP FRS 102.

Income recognition

Income is recognised in the period in which the charity has entitlement to the income, the amount of income can be measured reliably and it is probable that the income will be received.

Income comprises investment income and interest receivable and income from charitable activities, principally the income derived from membership subscriptions and financial contributions towards meetings.

Investment income is recognised once the dividend or equivalent has been declared and notification has been received of the amount due.

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the charity; this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the bank.

Income comprising annual membership subscriptions is credited to the statement of financial activities on an accruals basis with reference to the period covered by the subscription. Income in respect to meetings and other events is credited to the statement of financial activities when invoiced and is accounted for net of any discounts and/or rebates.

Expenditure recognition

Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to make a payment to a third party, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. All expenditure is stated inclusive of irrecoverable VAT.

All expenditure incurred by the charity relates directly or indirectly to the principal charitable objective of the charity i.e. promoting the welfare of Apostolic Institutes of Religious in England and Wales. Within this heading, expenditure is categorised between the key areas of activity and is analysed in note 3 to these accounts. Indirect expenditure comprises support costs and governance costs. Support costs include all expenditure on financial procedures, the provision of office services and general administration. Governance costs comprise the costs of public accountability (including audit costs). All support and governance costs are allocated to activities in the ratio of the direct expenditure on each activity.

Principal accounting policies Year to 30 September 2025

Tangible fixed assets

All assets costing more than £1,000 and with an expected useful life exceeding one year are capitalised.

Depreciation is provided on office furniture and equipment purchased outright on a straight-line basis at rates of 20% and 25% per annum respectively.

Investments

Listed investments are a form of basic financial instrument and are initially recognised at their transaction value and subsequently measured at their fair value as at the balance sheet date using the closing quoted market price.

The charity does not acquire put options, derivatives or other complex financial instruments.

Realised gains (or losses) on investment assets are calculated as the difference between disposal proceeds and their opening carrying value or their purchase value is acquired subsequent to the first day of the financial year. Unrealised gains and losses are calculated as the difference between the fair value at the year end and their carrying value at that date. Realised and unrealised investment gains (or losses) are combined in the statement of financial activities and are credited (or debited) in the year in which they arise.

Debtors

Debtors are recognised at their settlement amount, less any provision for non-recoverability. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid. They have been discounted to the present value of the future cash receipt where such discounting is material.

Cash at bank and in hand and short term deposits

Cash at bank and in hand represents such accounts and instruments that are available on demand or have a maturity of less than three months from the date of acquisition. Deposits for three or more months but less than one year have been disclosed as short term deposits. Cash placed on deposit for more than one year is disclosed as a fixed asset investment.

Creditors and provisions

Creditors and provisions are recognised when there is an obligation at the balance sheet date as a result of a past event, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefit will be required in settlement, and the amount of the settlement can be estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are recognised at the amount the charity anticipates it will pay to settle the debt. They have been discounted to the present value of the future cash payment where such discounting is material.

Principal accounting policies Year to 30 September 2025

Funds structure

The unrestricted funds of the charity represent those funds which are freely available for use in furtherance of the charity's objectives at the discretion of the members of the Executive Committee. Within the total unrestricted funds of the charity, the members of the Executive Committee have designated amounts for specific purposes and have identified those non-liquid funds represented by the tangible fixed assets and fixed asset investments. Those funds not designated or represented by tangible fixed assets or fixed asset investments are classified as general funds.

Pension costs

Contributions payable to defined contribution pension schemes and/or personal pension plans are accounted for in the year in which they are payable.

Notes to the accounts Year to 30 September 2025

1 Income from investments and interest receivable

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2025 £	Unrestricted funds 2024 £
Investment income				
. Unit trusts and common investment funds	16,466	—	16,466	16,372
Bank interest	2,261	—	2,261	5,232
	<u>18,727</u>	<u>—</u>	<u>18,727</u>	<u>21,604</u>

2 Income from charitable activities

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2025 £	Unrestricted funds 2024 £
Membership subscriptions	144,468	—	144,468	121,232
Meetings	18,350	—	18,350	30,403
Other income	65	—	65	48
Grants receivable	19,028	64,000	83,028	725
	<u>181,911</u>	<u>64,000</u>	<u>245,911</u>	<u>152,408</u>

3 Expenditure on charitable activities:

Promotion of the welfare of Apostolic Institutes of Religious in England and Wales

	Direct staff costs £	Other direct costs £	Total Direct costs £	Support staff £	Other support costs £	Total support costs £	Total 2025 £
Unrestricted							
Safeguarding	3,652	1,711	5,363	14,537	16,193	30,730	36,093
Members Meetings	4,270	19,501	23,771	2,611	2,909	5,520	29,291
Advocacy	14,330	—	14,330	8,763	9,761	18,524	32,854
Vocations	2,135	13,000	15,135	1,306	1,454	2,760	17,895
Development	15,666	—	15,666	9,580	10,671	20,251	35,917
Communications	16,372	—	16,372	10,012	11,152	21,164	37,536
	<u>56,425</u>	<u>34,212</u>	<u>90,637</u>	<u>46,809</u>	<u>52,140</u>	<u>98,949</u>	<u>189,586</u>
Restricted							
Safeguarding	20,120	46,793	66,913	—	—	—	66,913
	<u>76,545</u>	<u>81,005</u>	<u>157,550</u>	<u>46,809</u>	<u>52,140</u>	<u>98,949</u>	<u>256,499</u>

	Direct staff costs £	Other direct costs £	Total Direct costs £	Support staff £	Other support costs £	Total support costs £	Total 2024 £
<i>Safeguarding</i>	8,539	5,630	14,169	6,124	25,660	31,784	45,953
<i>Members Meetings</i>	—	44,559	44,559	—	—	—	44,559
<i>Advocacy</i>	8,954	—	8,954	6,422	26,908	33,330	42,284
<i>Vocations</i>	—	9,589	9,589	—	—	—	9,589
<i>Development</i>	6,179	4,559	10,738	4,431	18,568	22,999	33,737
<i>Communications</i>	6,790	8,539	15,329	4,870	20,405	25,275	40,604
	<u>30,462</u>	<u>72,876</u>	<u>103,338</u>	<u>21,847</u>	<u>91,541</u>	<u>113,388</u>	<u>216,726</u>

Notes to the accounts Year to 30 September 2025

4 Net expenditure before investment gains (losses)

This is stated after charging:

	2025 £	2024 £
Staff costs (note 5)	123,354	95,968
Audit costs including VAT		
· Statutory audit services	10,320	10,600
Depreciation	799	1,593

5 Staff costs

	2025 £	2024 £
Staff costs during the year were as follows:		
Wages and salaries	77,813	49,243
Social security costs	1,108	2,059
Pension costs	1,733	1,007
	80,653	52,309
Consultancy	42,700	43,659
	123,354	95,968
Staff costs per function were as follows:		
Safeguarding	23,772	13,093
Vocation	2,135	1,589
Leaders' meetings	18,600	14,467
Advice and information	20,540	19,234
Development	15,666	14,613
Communications	16,372	11,481
Governance	19,200	15,846
Support	7,069	5,645
	123,353	95,968

No employee was paid £60,000 or more (including benefits) during the year (2024 – none).

The average number of employees during the year, including consultants, (by head count), analysed by function, was as follows:

	2025 No.	2024 No.
Secretariat (safeguarding, advice and information, members' meetings, advocacy, vocations, formation)	3.7	3.6
Support	0.3	0.2
	4.0	3.8

Notes to the accounts Year to 30 September 2025

5 Staff costs (continued)

Remuneration of key management personnel

The members of the Executive Committee, together with the General Secretary, comprise the key management of the charity. The remuneration paid to key management personnel during the year ended 30 September 2025 was £42,700 (2024 – £31,779). No member of the Executive Committee received any remuneration in connection with his or her services during the year (2024 – £nil).

Four members of the Executive Committee were reimbursed expenses during the year of £658 (2024: £384) in respect to travel and meeting expenses in connection with their duties as members of the Executive Committee.

6 Taxation

The Conference of Religious in England and Wales is a registered charity and, therefore, is not liable to income tax or corporation tax on income derived from its charitable activities, as it falls within the various exemptions available to registered charities.

7 Tangible fixed assets

	Office furniture and equipment £
<hr/>	
Cost	
At 1 October 2024	7,663
Disposals	1,199
At 30 September 2025	<u>8,862</u>
Depreciation	
At 1 October 2024	6,948
Charge for year	799
Disposals	—
At 30 September 2025	<u>7,747</u>
Net book values	
At 30 September 2025	<u>1,115</u>
At 30 September 2024	<u>715</u>

Notes to the accounts Year to 30 September 2025

8 Investments

	2025 £	2024 £
Listed investments		
Market value at 1 October 2024	1,079,824	962,345
Disposal proceeds	(560,974)	—
Additions	560,974	—
Realised losses on disposal	(17,738)	—
Unrealised investment gains	(15,624)	117,479
Market value at 30 September 2025	1,046,463	1,079,824
Cost of listed investments at 30 September 2025	826,235	642,324

At 30 September 2025, the listed investments comprised holdings in the following two Common Investment Funds managed by CCLA Investment Management Limited:

Holding	Market value at 30 September 2025 £	Percentage of portfolio %
COIF Charities Ethical Investment Fund Income Units	—	—
COIF Charities Ethical Investment Fund Accumulation Units	1,046,463	100.0
	1,046,463	100.0

Holding	Market value at 30 September 2024 £	Percentage of portfolio %
COIF Charities Ethical Investment Fund Income Units	578,712	53.6
COIF Charities Ethical Investment Fund Accumulation Units	501,112	46.4
	1,079,824	100.0

9 Debtors

	2025 £	2024 £
Prepayments and accrued income	5,096	12,963

10 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2025 £	2024 £
Membership subscriptions received in advance	45,899	29,470
Accruals	29,388	22,558
Other creditors	1,546	22,083
	76,833	74,111

Notes to the accounts Year to 30 September 2025

10 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year (continued)

The movement in membership subscriptions received in advance is reconciled below.

	2025 £	2024 £
Deferred income brought forward	29,470	80,325
Released in year	(29,470)	(80,325)
Deferred in year	45,899	29,470
Deferred income carried forward	45,899	29,470

11 Tangible fixed asset fund

	2025 £	2024 £
At 1 October 2024	715	3,130
Movement in year	400	(2,415)
At 30 September 2025	1,115	715

The tangible fixed assets fund represents the net book value of the charity's tangible fixed assets. A decision was made to separate this fund from the general fund and other designated funds of the charity in recognition of the fact that the tangible fixed assets are essential to the day-to-day work of the charity and as such their value should not be regarded as funds that would be realisable with ease, in order to meet future contingencies.

12 Designated funds

The income funds of the charity include the following designated fund which has been set aside out of unrestricted funds by the members of the Executive Committee for specific purposes:

	At 1 October 2024 £	New designations £	Utilised/ released £	At 30 September 2025 £
Capital reserve fund	1,079,824	1	(33,362)	1,046,463

	At 1 October 2023 £	New designations £	Utilised/ released £	At 30 September 2024 £
Capital reserve fund	962,345	117,479	—	1,079,824

Notes to the accounts Year to 30 September 2025

12 Designated funds (continued)

The charity will rely more and more on investment income in order to fund its charitable work. Consequently, the members of the Executive Committee believe it prudent to set aside, or designate, the value tied up in the charity's investment portfolio as a capital reserve in order to provide a level of assurance that investment income will continue to be generated in future years and thereby 'finance' the charity's work in the long term.

13 Restricted funds

The income funds of the charity include the following restricted funds to be applied for specific purposes:

	At 1 October 2024 £	Income £	Expenditure £	At 30 September 2025 £
Safeguarding project	53,624	64,000	(66,913)	50,711

	At 1 October 2023 £	Income £	Expenditure £	At 30 September 2024 £
Safeguarding project	53,624	—	—	53,624

The safeguarding project fund is to be applied towards the cost of specific safeguarding advisory and associated activities.

14 Analysis of net assets between funds

	Restricted funds £	General funds £	Tangible fixed assets funds £	Designated funds £	Total 2025 £
Fund balances at 30 September 2025 are represented by:					
Tangible fixed assets	—	—	1,115	—	1,115
Investments	—	—	—	1,046,463	1,046,463
Net current assets	50,711	67,048	—	—	117,759
Total net assets	50,711	67,048	1,115	1,046,463	1,165,337

Notes to the accounts Year to 30 September 2025

14 Analysis of net assets between funds (continued)

	<i>Restricted funds</i>	<i>General funds</i>	<i>Tangible fixed assets funds</i>	<i>Designated funds</i>	<i>Total 2024</i>
	£	£	£	£	£
<i>Fund balances at 30 September 2024 are represented by:</i>					
<i>Tangible fixed assets</i>	—	—	715	—	715
<i>Investments</i>	—	—	—	1,079,824	1,079,824
<i>Net current assets</i>	53,624	56,397	—	—	110,021
<i>Total net assets</i>	53,624	56,397	715	1,079,824	1,190,560

	Total 2025	Total 2024
	£	£
Reconciliation of movements in unrealised gains on investment assets:		
Unrealised gains at 1 October 2024	437,500	320,021
Unrealised gains (losses) released on disposal	(201,648)	
Unrealised gains (losses) arising in the year	(15,624)	117,479
Unrealised gains at 30 September 2025	220,228	437,500

15 Financial commitments

At 30 September 2025 the charity was committed to pay £nil in respect to rent and service charges payable (2024: £nil).

16 Transactions with related parties

The religious congregations to which the members of the Executive Committee belong are all members of the charity and pay membership subscriptions to the charity. All such payments are made to the charity on an arm's length basis.

During the year, the congregations to which the members of the Executive Committee belong made contributions to the charity totalling £20,455 (2024 – £30,905). These contributions consist of membership fees and donations.

During the year, the charity incurred rent and service charges totalling £2,000 (2024 - £18,000) payable to the Poor Servants of the Mother of God (PSMG). PSMG, are members of the Conference of Religious in England and Wales.

During the year, the charity incurred costs of £46,793 to Religious Life Safeguarding Services (RLSS) for services, of which £7,182 is included in accruals. Sr Ellen Fynn DC is a Director of RLSS.

THE CONFERENCE OF RELIGIOUS OF ENGLAND AND WALES

England & Wales - Charity number 277024

Accounts



CONFERENCE *of* RELIGIOUS

England & Wales

ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS

30 SEPTEMBER 2024

THE CONFERENCE OF RELIGIOUS IN ENGLAND AND WALES

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Reference and administrative information Year to 30 September 2024

Executive Committee	<p>Sr Sarah Dobson CJ <i>elected Oct 2021 – elected joint leader in May 2024</i></p> <p>Sr Monica Matthews SHJC <i>appointed Oct 2019 – elected joint leader in May 2024</i></p> <p>Sr Anne Morris DHS <i>elected Oct 2021– elected joint leader in May 2024</i></p> <p>Sr Sue Berry CSF (Anglican Associate Member) <i>elected Sept 2017</i></p> <p>Sr Margaret Donovan HC <i>elected May 2019</i></p> <p>Fr Richard Reid CSsR <i>elected Oct 2021</i></p> <p>Sr Jen Bromham <i>elected November 2023</i></p> <p>Sr Jane Maltby RSCJ <i>elected Nov 2023</i></p> <p>Sr Mary Deane PBVM <i>elected May 2024</i></p> <p>Sr Ann Sullivan SP <i>elected May 2024</i></p> <p>Sr Catherine Lloyd RSCJ <i>elected Oct 2021 – stepped down from the Board in May 2024</i></p> <p>Sr Margo Murphy RNDM <i>elected May 2024 – stepped down from the Board in Sep 2024</i></p>
Principal office	<p>St Philomena's 70-71 Euston Square London NW1 1DJ</p>
Auditor	<p>Buzzacott Audit LLP 130 Wood Street London EC2V 6DL</p>
Investment manager	<p>CCLA Investment Management Limited Senator House 85 Queen Victoria Street London EC4V 4ET</p>
Banker	<p>The Royal Bank of Scotland plc 48 Haymarket London SW1Y 4SE</p>
Solicitors	<p>Stone King LLP Upper Borough Court (UBC) Upper Borough Walls Bath BA1 1RG</p>

Report of the Executive Committee Year to 30 September 2024

The members of the Executive Committee (ie the trustees) of the Conference of Religious (CoR) present their report together with the audited financial statements of the charity for the year ended 30 September 2024.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out on pages 31 to 34 of the attached accounts and comply with the charity's trust deed, the Charities Act 2011 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 (FRS 102).

INTRODUCTION

The Conference of Religious (CoR) is a small charity, with around 243 members. Its formal membership consists of both the female and male Major Superiors of each institute and Superiors General in the Catholic Church (or their nominees) who work in England or Wales. Associate membership is offered to the superiors of Anglican Communities (since 1992) and to all Contemplative Superiors in England and Wales (since 2000).

Vision Statement of the Conference of Religious

The Conference of Religious seeks to be a dynamic and proactive presence in the Church and the world today.

Mission statement of the Conference of Religious

The Mission of CoR is to:

- ❖ enable the prophetic voice of Religious Congregations to be heard making Religious Life better known;
- ❖ unite its membership in collaborative initiatives translating Gospel vision into reality; and
- ❖ offer support to its membership and particularly those in positions of leadership.

Our Values

All our activities are inspired by Gospel Values. The hallmarks of CoR are:

- ❖ unity in diversity
- ❖ justice
- ❖ integrity
- ❖ hope

INTRODUCTION (continued)

Our Aims and Objectives

The object of the charity is to promote the welfare of apostolic institutes of Religious in the Catholic Church in England and Wales, while respecting the autonomy, nature and spirit of each other. This includes:

- ❖ effecting closer co-operation with each other and with various other religious bodies and individual bishops;
- ❖ providing representation with constituted authorities, both ecclesiastical and civil.

To create a Prophetic Voice that gives witness to the values of the Gospel

- ❖ to be a prophetic, corporate, pro-active voice in the Church and in Society;
- ❖ in particular, to speak on behalf of people who live on the margins, promoting justice;
- ❖ to promote visible witness of the Good News of Jesus Christ, and Gospel values in reality today;
- ❖ to witness to the gift of community living; and
- ❖ to witness to unity in diversity.

To generate and participate in Networks that promote Collaboration

- ❖ to actively promote collaboration amongst members;
- ❖ to find ways of improving communication between members;
- ❖ to promote greater links with Vicars for Religious;
- ❖ to seek greater dialogue with the Church and its agencies at national and local level;
- ❖ to foster coordinated liaison with the Bishops, nationally and in local dioceses;
- ❖ to build deeper ecumenical relationships; and

To serve and support Religious in England and Wales

- ❖ to answer enquiries and to respond to members' needs;
- ❖ to develop structures of mutual support;
- ❖ to set up a professional database and informal group mailing systems;
- ❖ to find ways of sharing gifts, skills and resources, ideas, etc;
- ❖ to be active participants in Safeguarding initiatives in the Church in England and Wales;
- ❖ to participate in the work of Vocations and to support the National Office; and
- ❖ to encourage and support the formation of new Religious Life initiatives.

INTRODUCTION (continued)

Our Aims and Objectives (continued)

To serve and support Religious in England and Wales (continued)

The charity pursues these objectives by operating through its Executive Committee and other committees and groups drawn from the expertise of the membership and professionals and coordinated through the Secretariat. The Secretariat disseminates information, organises conferences and meetings, provides advice and support to and maintains links with Religious and other bodies that have similar interests.

Public benefit

CoR exists to support and promote the work of Religious in England and Wales. The members of CoR are involved through their ministry in a wide range of activities including: education, pastoral support, healthcare, working with refugees and victims of modern-day slavery, chaplaincy and counselling, which are all of direct benefit to the public.

By providing increasing opportunities for collaboration and undertaking a range of other activities on behalf of its members that are outlined in this report, CoR assists in the provision of the public benefit, by our member congregations.

When setting the objectives and planning the work for the year and future activities, the members of the Executive Committee have given careful consideration to the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit.

ACTIVITIES AND PERFORMANCE

Message from the Leadership

I am writing in an active year for CoR as we find our feet again after a period of staff changes. All of us religious have been facing changes and challenges within our communities which perhaps seem small when we look around at the turmoil in the world around us. However, we have all been called into the leadership that we exercise – I doubt many of us would have chosen it ourselves – and we trust that by the faithful and creative exercising of our responsibilities we are playing our part in fulfilling this call.

Our foundress Mary Ward at the end of her life said to those with her, 'Cherish God's vocation in you ... may it be constant, efficacious and loving'. A recent gathering of UK Mary Ward sisters met under the title 'Cherish God's vocation in each other'. We hope that CoR will be an ongoing support and encouragement to cherish and support us all in our various vocations to work for the Reign of God.

Cath Lloyd rscj and I shared the leadership of the CoR executive during the time in which we were re-connecting with members and picking up some of the hopes and plans that had been temporarily laid aside.

ACTIVITIES AND PERFORMANCE (continued)

Message from the Leadership (continued)

Cath has now left the executive due to commitments in her own congregation and we have once again formed a shared team to lead the executive board. Anne Morris dhs and Monica Matthews shcj have joined to carry this responsibility together. We also have new members on the executive board – Jane Maltby rscj whom you will know from her role in the collaboration events that have been taking place over the year, with Mary Deane pbvm and Ann Sullivan sp who are our new members. We are actively encouraging more leaders from mens' congregations to step forward and join the executive board.

We have been pleased at the enthusiasm with which the workshops around the country have been greeted, and the positive feedback from members. The planning group has already organised workshops for this coming year, but are still open to suggestion and requests.

We are holding the 2025 AGM meeting at Highgate House near Northampton, a new venue for us where we will have sole use of the house. We have refined the programme so that it will run as a two-day, one-night event. People were very keen to retain the social residential element, but at the same time, we wanted to keep costs down. We hope that this midlands venue may help reduce travel for some ... although inevitably not everyone! Our theme "Synodal Leadership - Forward Thinking – Outward Facing" expresses the hope that CoR is now in a place where we can face outward and forward with some confidence.

Sarah Dobson cj Monica Matthews SCHJ Anne Morris dhs

Sarah Dobson cj on behalf of the leadership group Monica Matthews shcj and Anne Morris dhs

The Secretariat

Following the significant staff transitions in 2023, the small but experienced Secretariat, led by Susan Thomas as part time General Secretary, has actively listened and responded to the wishes of members and has worked to answer those requirements. Throughout the year, they have worked diligently to reestablish and introduce improved systems and practices, rebuild continuity and stability for members, and restore regular contact and build confidence in CoR.

The Secretariat's priorities have been entirely focused on meeting the needs of members and significantly enhancing operations and member services through the development of a robust support structure. While critically evaluating and embedding new ways of working, they have ensured these align with CoR's commitment to effective and timely communication, professional support, and best use of financial resources.

The Secretariat is now efficiently operating entirely remotely, a strategic move that has significantly reduced the overhead costs associated with maintaining a physical premises. Members have responded positively to this initiative.

ACTIVITIES AND PERFORMANCE (continued)

Vacating the offices at Euston Square

In May 2024 the Executive Committee took the decision to vacate the offices rented from PSMG in Euston Square, London, having worked from those offices for many years. With the significant reduction in numbers in office staff, and small number of visitors to the site, it was agreed that CoR no longer required such a large space and therefore we tended notice to vacate. Conscious of expenditure and to ensure best use of CoR funds, this move has enabled us to make a significant saving on rent and overheads and redirect those funds to enhance Membership support. Over the years CoR have enjoyed the friendship and kindness offered by the PSMG sisters, so it was with some sadness that this decision was made and we thank them for their generosity and support.

Arrangements were made to move the equipment we were retaining to staff's home addresses, and also donated much of the unwanted office furniture to a local homeless charity and unwanted stationery to a local play school and sisters also shared some items with the overseas communities they visited in the summer. There were many sacred artifacts, some of which were retained, but those not required were given to Bruno Ormsby, specialists in sacred artifacts for onward sale. A total of £850 worth of artifacts were sold and the proceeds given to CoR. The remaining items are in their shop and also on their website, with the agreement to confirm to us once they are sold.

The IT support consultants attended Euston Square offices and removed the IT infrastructure and equipment and it is now housed in their offices, until it is required by us or sold on, with all proceeds returning to CoR.

Keeping a presence in Euston Square

The secretariat conducted an important project in terms of reviewing and reducing the Archives. This work is vital to ensure we adhere to financial and regulatory rules in terms of retaining documentation, but equally as important to ensure we retain elements of CoR's past work. To this end CoR employed a qualified archivist with specific Religious archive experience to work alongside the secretariate on this task.

On completion of the archiving all material outside the retention period was confidentially shredded by a company who provided a confidential destruction certificate.

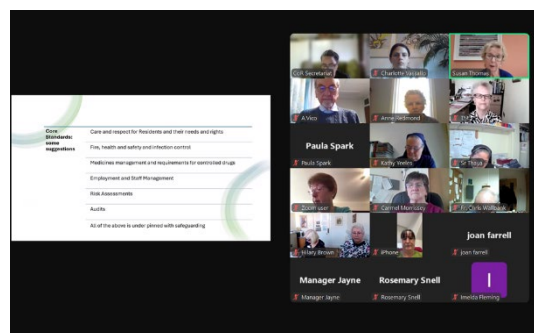
With the archives reduced, CoR agreed with PSMG that they retain a single archive room until March 2025 and possibly longer. CoR also retains Euston Square as the registered charity address. This has been extremely beneficial in terms of easy access to the archives etc.

Report of the Executive Committee Year to 30 September 2024

ACTIVITIES AND PERFORMANCE (continued)

Meetings

Throughout the year, CoR has organised and conducted an increasingly large range of meetings, online and face to face, encompassing various topics and initiatives aimed at supporting its mission and Member s; many of these meetings are detailed below:



Annual General Meeting May 2024 – CoR The Way Forward

The Annual General Meeting of the Conference of Religious was held from 13th to 15th May 2024 at Kents Hill Park, Milton Keynes. The theme, "CoR – The Way Forward," was expertly steered by facilitator Sarah Broscombe. Sarah worked closely with the AGM planning committee to organise the conference. Having previously facilitated CoR's 2023 AGM, she was very aware of the recent history and key topics to address, ensuring greater continuity for attendees and supporting CoR's intention to move forward.

The AGM began with a morning session for new leaders and members of CoR's leadership team. This meeting provided valuable insights into the responsibilities and challenges of leadership, ensuring they were aware of the support and assistance available from CoR on their journey through the often-difficult area of leadership.

On Monday afternoon, Sarah Broscombe and the CoR leadership team reflected on the organisation's performance over the past year, addressing staff changes, communication challenges with Members, and the need to rebuild trust and engagement. They highlighted the organisation's renewed vision and its commitment to moving forward with a stronger, more unified approach.

The second day focused on leadership for the future, including discussions on leadership models tailored to Congregations and the importance of safeguarding. Members explored how to maintain their core purpose in very challenging circumstances. Sarah facilitated small group discussions, encouraging participants to share experiences and common challenges. These sessions fostered meaningful discussions, and despite the differences faced by each congregation, many similarities emerged. Participants enjoyed analysing these shared experiences and exchanging thoughts on good practices, including what has worked well and what could be improved.

Sarah Dobson CJ presented information on CoR's current leadership structure consisting of a shared leadership with Cath Lloyd RSCJ. Members were informed that Cath Lloyd would be stepping down from the Executive due to other commitments. As no individual had come forward to take the role of President, it was therefore proposed that the role of President would now be shared by three Members: Sarah Dobson CJ, Anne Morris DHS, and Monica Matthews SHCJ. The Members debated this and unanimously approved CoR's shared leadership model for another year. This new model, with Executive Members sharing roles, reduces the workload on individuals while ensuring that Members' needs are appropriately met. It also allows the Executive to focus on specific areas of CoR's work, such as the Finance Committee and Health Care Sub-Group, both of which are now fully operational again.

Report of the Executive Committee Year to 30 September 2024

ACTIVITIES AND PERFORMANCE (continued)

Annual General Meeting May 2024 – CoR The Way Forward (continued)



Safeguarding was another key focus. Una Coogan CoR Safeguarding Lead, provided a detailed update on current safeguarding issues and processes, answering Member questions and directing further inquiries to the RLSS. Representatives from RLSS introduced their incoming CEO, Melissa Andrews and outlined future plans for safeguarding support.

Spiritual reflection was central to the AGM, with daily prayers and Mass offering space for quiet contemplation. The Papal Nuncio celebrated Mass on the second day, bringing a sense of unity and renewal to the gathering. That evening, a celebratory dinner provided an opportunity for Members to socialise and connect. During the dinner, Amanda Francis of Buzzacott was honoured for her years of service to CoR and many of its Members, receiving a heartfelt tribute and a floral arrangement in gratitude.

Report of the Executive Committee Year to 30 September 2024

ACTIVITIES AND PERFORMANCE (continued)

Annual General Meeting May 2024 – CoR The Way Forward (continued)

The final day included the adoption of CoR's annual accounts, presented by Amanda Francis, with updates from the Collaboration Group workshops and the Secretariat. The AGM concluded with a renewed sense of purpose and commitment to CoR's mission, as well as strengthened connections among Members. This gathering successfully addressed key challenges while charting a clear path forward for the organisation.

Collaboration Committee Workshops

This group was set up following requests first raised by member Congregations in 2023, asking for help and support as they increasingly experience the challenges of diminishment, aging and even closure. Led by Sr Jane Maltby RSCJ, the Committee was made up of Sr Monica Matthews SHJC, Sr Margaret Donovan HC, Sr Kathleen Colmer OSU, Sr Ann Turner RC, Sr Jen Bromham IBVM and Sr Julie Rose SSHJM.

During 2024 six Collaboration Workshops on a variety of topics including change, healthcare in care homes, and Vias's, organised and delivered. The guiding principles for all the workshops were responding to member's needs, Charisms and spirituality; gospel values, vision of Religious life; fostering mission and life, and synodality.

The objectives were that participants would have the opportunity to share their concerns, their issues, and something of what they have already achieved, as well as receive professional input on the specific topics. It was agreed that each workshop would be evaluated, and follow-up collaboration/input discussed and proposed.

The Committee held regular planning meetings and worked to ensure all elements of the workshop programme were appropriately managed and delivered as smoothly as possible. It was agreed very early on, that the Committee wanted to have these workshops in person rather than online and this was also felt to be important to Members; not only to provide attendees with the option to learn more about the chosen topics, but also an opportunity for sharing of experiences, and expertise, to dialogue, to meet each other in person and to work in small networking groups.



Workshop Overview

Each of the topics were selected in relation to the needs of Membership and in response to Members' frequently asked questions. Up to two members from each Congregation were invited to attend any, or all of the sessions. It was also agreed that attendees did not need to be the same person for each session and might well include lay colleagues, who are often increasingly more involved in Congregational life at the administrative level.

Report of the Executive Committee Year to 30 September 2024

ACTIVITIES AND PERFORMANCE (continued)

Collaboration Committee Workshops (continued)

The six collaboration workshops during 2024 were:

- ◆ New/innovative leadership & ways of organising ourselves on 7th March 2024
- ◆ Change management on 12th April 2024
- ◆ Charity governance, civil law, and Canon law on 6th June 2024
- ◆ Financial and property management and planning on 27th June 2024
- ◆ Eldercare on 19th September 2024
- ◆ Visas on 23rd October 2024

Presenters

The range of experienced presenters for the workshops was extremely impressive in providing both informative and interactive content. The presenters were also most generous in giving their time and energy on these collaborative events for free, which included all those below:

- ◆ Sr Jane Maltby from Society of the Sacred Heart & CoREW
- ◆ Sr Monica Matthews from Society of the Holy Child Jesus & CoREW
- ◆ Sr Margaret Donovan from Sisters of the Holy Cross & CoREW
- ◆ Fr Paul Smyth from Claretian Missionaries
- ◆ Sr Cath Lloyd from Society of the Sacred Heart
- ◆ Susan Thomas from CoREW Secretariat
- ◆ Sr Anne Redmond from Sisters of Charity
- ◆ Sr Doreen Cunningham from Sisters of Nazareth Charitable Trust
- ◆ Sr Michelle Reily from Servite Sisters, Servants of Mary
- ◆ Amanda Francis from Buzzacott Accountants
- ◆ Tim Rutherford from Stone King Solicitors
- ◆ Julie Moktadir from Stone King Solicitors

Report of the Executive Committee Year to 30 September 2024

ACTIVITIES AND PERFORMANCE (continued)

Collaboration Committee Workshops (continued)

Workshop Attendance

There was no charge for those attending the sessions as this was covered by the annual membership fees. For those who were not members of CoR, including members of the APB, who wanted to attend, they were invited to attend at a cost of £10 per person, but places were limited due to the popularity of the workshops. With financial considerations always in mind, it was agreed that CoREW would provide refreshments and asked attendees to bring their own lunch.



There was excellent attendance for each of the Workshops with an average attendance rate of 60+ per event. Presentations and slides were shared with all workshop attendees for onward sharing and a reminder of content and information.

Workshop Venues

We listened to Members previous comments in relation to trainings and events provided which often included the feeling that events were somewhat London centric with venues often being in central London. The Committee therefore responded to this by ensuring that two of these workshops were delivered in Birmingham and one in Manchester, to provide those living further North with the option for less travel.

Collaboration Workshop Feedback

The workshops have received excellent feedback from attendees in terms of:

- ◆ the topics covered
- ◆ the presenters
- ◆ the presentations
- ◆ the opportunity for interaction and sharing experiences
- ◆ the venues
- ◆ the learning opportunities from working in small groups.

Report of the Executive Committee Year to 30 September 2024

ACTIVITIES AND PERFORMANCE (continued)

Collaboration Committee Workshops (continued)

Collaboration Workshop Feedback (continued)

Many Members have requested other topics or a repeat of specific workshops, and this, together with other more formal sources of feedback, will be the subject of a special Evaluation meeting of the Committee, together with the members of the secretariat in the coming weeks. It is therefore expected that, where possible, further workshops and seminars will be developed for a similar programme in 2025.



Connections with the Wider Church

Representatives of the Executive attend in the Mixed Commission meetings alongside several Bishops of England and Wales. Currently, these meetings are attended by Sr. Margaret Donovan HC and Sr. Anne Morris DHS, with Sr. Anne chairing the meetings whenever it is CoR's turn to host. Hosting responsibilities alternate, and the Commission meets twice a year. The meetings provide an opportunity for the Religious and Bishops to share what is happening in their lives and in the Church, and where we can work together and so become 'One Church'.

In addition to participating in the Mixed Commission meetings, CoR had the honour of welcoming the Papal Nuncio, Archbishop Miguel Maury Buendía, at the AGM in May 2024. The Archbishop celebrated Mass with CoR and its members, later joining the Gala Dinner where he engaged in conversations with several members of the Executive and meeting delegates.

Safeguarding

Report from Sr Dr Una Coogan IBVM, Lead Religious for Safeguarding

This year started marks the final year in our contracts signed with the CSSA. So, as we entered 2024, the plan was for Stephen Ashley, CEO of CSSA to meet with religious via zoom to discuss with them the new proposed structure of the CSSA and the new contracts. The meeting was not without its difficulties, but has led to the CSSA wanting to improve their relationship with religious Life Groups. The CSSA is moving the training and case management/consultation functions over to CaTEW and will operate with its main function as the regulator.

As part of my responsibilities, I am expected to go to the Bishops' conference in April and November along with the RLSS, CSSA. Lead Bishop for Safeguarding to brief the Bishops on the latest news/issues in safeguarding.

ACTIVITIES AND PERFORMANCE (continued)

Safeguarding (continued)

CSSA

As part of my role with the CSSA, I continue to work on two of the CSSA's subcommittees, the Finance and General-Purpose committee and the Quality Assurance Committee. Work on the Quality Assurance Committee, has led to some work with Paul Threlfall, the CSSA's Safeguarding Quality Assurance Manager to change the wording on the Audit forms used for Religious. The copies of the draft were passed onto three RLG's for their feedback on the wording. Hopefully, these efforts have succeeded in making the audit process more applicable and accessible to RLGs. My thanks to those RLGs who agreed to help with this.

Working Parties

This year I have also worked on several working groups firstly with Religious who 'own' parishes and the Religious Groups who work in parishes. After various meetings, a Memorandum of Understanding has been drafted and was sent to religious groups for their comments. It is now being checked to ensure that there are no legal gaps in the safeguarding provision in the MoU. The final draft of the MoU is in the final stages of review and will be circulated once all necessary checks have been completed. Hopefully it will act as a guide to both religious and dioceses on who to contact if there are any safeguarding issues re training, DBS, consultation and case management when involving religious who work or have an agreement with a diocese. At present I am working with a small working party to look at the financial contribution paid by religious life groups to help finance the CSSA. This working party is only starting its work, but it is hoped that by the middle of 2025 we will come up with a scheme that is acceptable both to the religious life groups and to the CSSA.

Conferences

I have attended several conferences this year, meeting various members of the safeguarding community. Firstly, the RLSS conference at the end of February where I had the opportunity to introduce myself to many of the religious there.

In May I was glad to be able to attend part of the CoR AGM to speak about the current issues in Safeguarding. One of the issues raised was the need for Religious to give a mandate to a small group of people to represent all the Religious in safeguarding. A questionnaire was sent out to ask for the mandate and asking for names to be nominated for this group. From the completed questionnaires, the overwhelming majority were in favour of the mandate and names of people to join the group have been raised. We will have a small group of three religious, a representative from RLSS and myself to represent the Religious in safeguarding matters. Confirming participation from the religious to join this group has been challenging but hopefully we will manage to get there. We still need one more religious preferable male to join the group. This group of five representatives of the Religious Life groups will join five representatives of the dioceses to work together as a new strategic board for the Catholic Church in England and Wales. This new body will be called the Strategic Council for Catholic Safeguarding- SCCS. We have had our first meeting where we considered how this will fit within the existing structures and its overall function within the Church. There are joint chairs for this new body – Bishop Paul Mason as Lead Bishop for Safeguarding and myself as Lead Religious for Safeguarding.

ACTIVITIES AND PERFORMANCE (continued)

Safeguarding (continued)

Conferences (continued)

I also attended one of the Safeguarding Co-Ordinator's Conferences which was useful in understanding the Dioceses plans and issues regarding safeguarding, one of which is how to plan for religious coming to work in diocese from abroad.

In June, I went to the International Safeguarding Conference 2024 in Rome. This year's theme was Safeguarding and Disability, which was held from 18-21 June at the Pontifical Gregorian University. It was an interesting conference and it was good too network with others involved in safeguarding from around the world. In 2025 the conference which will be on 'Women in the Church'. I hope it will be well attended by religious from the UK. I have been able to advertise it well in advance to encourage others to join it, particularly given the year's conference topic. It would be beneficial, if religious groups in the UK with members in Africa or Asia could facilitate the attendance of someone from their own religious group at the conference.

The most recently attended conference was the Vicars for Religious conference in Hinsley Hall. It was also attended by Bishop Paul Mason, the lead Bishop for safeguarding. Together, we provided an update on safeguarding and its structure in the church and answered questions on how vicars for religious could help to create a network to allow safeguarding information to pass more freely between religious groups and the diocese in which they are situated, and the group mandated for safeguarding.

Canon Law

I have been asked by several religious to lend support with Canon law issues and I'm happy to assist where I can. Following this, the RLSS arranged an online seminar with Father Christopher Hancock and myself, and several survivors of sexual abuse to address questions posed by the survivors about canon law and its use in abuse cases. This proved to be a difficult online seminar for us as canonists, as the survivors are firm in their view that canon law is used to protect the offender rather than the survivor. To say that the canonists disagreed with this view would be an understatement!

The RLSS and CSSA will often ask for help on strategic canon law advise and I try to help.

I have recently attended an online course run by St Paul's University, Ottawa on Penal Law and the investigation of cases. The course was excellent and I hope eventually to be able to write a simple guide for safeguarding leads on good canon law practice when an accusation is made. When finished I am happy to make it available to others.

Interviews

This year I was invited to take part in the interviews to find the new CEO of the RLSS when Melissa Andrews was appointed. I was also asked to seek the views of a small group of religious on the work Anne O'Brien has achieved over the past three years as Chair of the RLSS. She was open to being reappointed as the chair of the RLSS for another three years.

ACTIVITIES AND PERFORMANCE (continued)

Safeguarding (continued)

Interviews (continued)

The religious responded very positively to Anne and her role. So I have written a letter in support of Anne's reappointment for another three years. She was successfully re appointed.

As a board member I was involved in interviewing the new chair for the CSSA in December as Nazir Afzal has stepped down after three years. Mike Cunningham was successful and has been appointed by CaTEW for a three year term.

After one year in the job I can say that I am enjoying it. There is so much work to be done to ensure that we do act as one church that the views of RLG'S are heard and that we can create a safe church for all. In the year ahead I look forward to working more closely with CoR, with the CSSA, RLSS and the religious. One hope for next year to be able to create with the help of the RLSS an accessible database of Religious.

Safeguarding Elderly Religious Project

The Safeguarding Elderly Religious Project is a collaborative initiative between the Conference of Religious (CoR) and the Religious Life Safeguarding Service (RLSS), focused on enhancing the safety and well-being of elderly Religious across England and Wales. Endorsed by the Executive in April and supported by funding from Porticus, this project seeks to address practical and operational safeguarding concerns within Religious communities, particularly regarding the care and support of elderly members. With an average age of 82 among those in Religious communities, many require some form of care, making this initiative both timely and essential.

Both CoR and RLSS bring extensive experience in safeguarding, training, governance, and human resources within community and health care settings. This expertise is instrumental in developing and implementing best practices for the care of older Religious members. The project aims to foster a collaborative approach by engaging directly with Congregations and their lay staff, creating tailored training materials, information forums, and safeguarding resources.

Significant progress has been made in achieving the project's objectives. A dedicated working group, chaired by Susan Thomas, General Secretary of CoR, has been established. This group, which includes RLSS representatives and experienced Religious leaders such as Jane Bertelsen FMDM, meets monthly to drive the initiative forward. Additionally, CoR has launched a monthly online care forum designed to support those overseeing both registered and unregistered care homes, as well as those providing care within community houses has been established. The forum has generated strong interest from Religious and their lay staff, with the first session attracting over 60 participants.

ACTIVITIES AND PERFORMANCE (continued)

Safeguarding Elderly Religious Project (continued)

Recognising the number of unregistered care facilities, work has commenced on developing a set of core standards to ensure that all care settings operate within a framework based on current best practices. These standards aim to provide clear guidelines and benchmarks for safeguarding and care, particularly in settings outside formal regulatory frameworks such as the Care Quality Commission (CQC) and Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW). Additionally, CoR has initiated the development of a geographical map of Religious care provisions, encouraging members to share information about their facilities and locations. This initiative ensures that previously unidentified care facilities receive the necessary support and recognition.

Engagement with Religious care facilities has been a key component of this project. Two RLSS staff members have been actively visiting care homes and community houses following responses to a distributed questionnaire on elderly care. Insights gathered have highlighted a critical need for targeted training on memory loss, mental health, and personal care procedures. Furthermore, discussions have revealed the importance of addressing leadership accountability and care planning. These themes are shaping the agenda for CoR's monthly care forums.

The collaboration between CoR and RLSS has been pivotal in leveraging their shared expertise to develop best practices and address gaps in elderly care provision. CoR will also oversee joint reporting to Porticus, manage the project budget, and provide strategic direction. Susan Thomas and Jane Bertelsen will offer essential guidance on Religious healthcare provision and community care.

This initiative represents a significant step forward in safeguarding and improving the care and support provided to elderly Religious members. The commitment of CoR and RLSS to this vital work ensures that the well-being and dignity of elderly Religious remain a priority, fostering a culture of safety and best practice across all care settings.

Health and Care Group

Led by Sr Monica Matthews SHCJ, the Healthcare Group has continued to provide advice and support to Members in relation to issues of healthcare. Supported by Religious who have a background in healthcare working in partnership with experienced lay staff, a range of advice and support is provided.

This year the work of this group has extended to encompass the monthly online care forum and the face to face healthcare workshops being held as part of the collaboration committee's work.

Further initiatives and events are planned and will include advice on mental health, CQC registration, employment of staff and care in non registered community settings.

Report of the Executive Committee Year to 30 September 2024

ACTIVITIES AND PERFORMANCE (continued)

Online Media and the CoRespondent

As part of CoR's commitment to improving communication and streamlining processes, we have transitioned from a monthly newsletter to providing updates directly on the redeveloped website. This significant change includes the launch of an "Upcoming News & Events" page and a secure members' section, accessible via a unique password. This shift allows members to access regular updates at their convenience, from any device, offering greater flexibility compared to the fixed schedules of a traditional newsletter.

While this change was a substantial adjustment for many members, it has already proven to be a positive step forward. To support members through the transition, the secretariat offered assistance with navigating the updated site and resolving any technical issues. The website's new user-friendly design, with a built-in search function and organised content tags such as 'AGM' and 'Safeguarding,' ensures quick and easy access to relevant information.

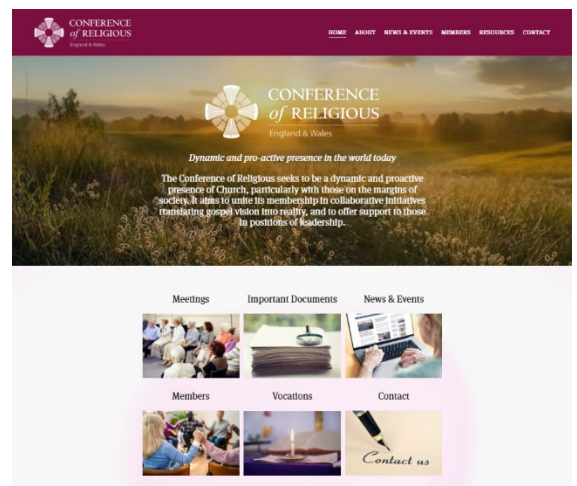
A key benefit of this new approach is our ability to monitor website traffic, providing valuable insights into member engagement—something we couldn't track with the newsletter. This information allows us to better understand how members interact with the site and informs future improvements.

As we continue to develop the website, additional features including a "Useful Contacts" and "Useful Documents" page are being implemented to further enhance the site. The transition has also allowed CoR to reallocate resources more effectively, reducing the time and costs associated with producing a monthly newsletter. Email communication is still be used for urgent updates, ensuring that crucial information is communicated promptly.

We remain committed to maintaining and continually improving the website to keep it relevant, up-to-date, and a valuable resource for all our members.

Collaboration with others

CoR continues to work to represent Religious, share information and develop relationships with others in the Church and the wider community through a variety of means. Sometimes this is done by the Executive, for example via the previously mentioned, Mixed Commission Meetings, to represent the views of Religious to the Bishops.



ACTIVITIES AND PERFORMANCE (continued)

Collaboration with others (continued)

We also collaborate with organisations such the Union of the Catholic European Superiors Major, Union of International Superiors General, Association of Major Religious Superiors in Ireland, and the Association of Provincial Bursars. Those who sit on the committees and groups ensure that CoR is kept abreast of activities and developments elsewhere including:

- ◆ CBCEW Department of Social Justice – A member of the Executive regularly attends the Department of Social Justice meetings, which take place approximately three times a year. These meetings bring together Bishops responsible for various areas, assisted by laypeople who support them in preparing papers on key issues such as Life Issues, Marriage and Family Life, CSAN, Environment, and Human Rights. The meetings are always held in person, allowing for meaningful discussions and the opportunity to engage directly with others in attendance. This setting fosters collaboration and the sharing of information where possible. Attending these meetings has proven to be an enlightening experience, offering deeper insight into the Church's work behind the scenes and the significant efforts being made in the realm of social justice. We support and share information where possible.
- ◆ Anglican Committees – Sister Margaret Shepard NDS sits on the Anglican Committees and Sister Sue Berry CSF is the Anglican representative on the CoR Executive.
- ◆ The National Office of Vocations – through which we support Vocations work by funding the role of Religious Life Promoter.

FUTURE PLANS

We are currently in the process of developing an updated strategic plan to guide our work in the coming years. This plan will outline the key priorities, objectives, and the steps needed to strengthen our mission and impact. One of the main focuses will be planning sustainable ways to stay both responsive and supportive to our membership. This will ensure that the plan aligns with the needs of religious communities and reflects our shared commitment to safeguarding, social justice, and effective governance

The new strategic plan will provide a clear framework for decision-making and resource allocation, ensuring that our initiatives remain focused and effective. As we work through this process, we will continue to engage with members to refine our vision and goals. Updates on the plan's progress will be shared in due course, with consultation and implementation expected to begin in the near future.

The work of the Collaboration Committee will take up much of the coming year and this work will provide an opportunity for exploring how Religious might collaborate with respect to the challenges they are facing.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Results for the year

The statement of financial activities shows that net expenditure for the year before gains on investments was £42,714 (2023: net expenditure of £109,145 before gains on investments). Net gains on the revaluation of investments were £117,749 (2023: net gains of £27,517) leading to an overall increase in funds of £74,765 (2023: decrease in funds of £81,628).

Income comprised mainly of membership fees, income from meetings and investment income. Some members continued to subscribe amounts in excess of their actual fees so that those members whose resources are more limited are not prevented from participating in conferences and other activities. Expenditure reflects the work of CoR.

Investment policy and performance

The charity's investments, managed by CCLA Investment Management Limited, were valued at £1,079,824 (2023: £962,345) at the year-end date.

The investment managers operate within specific ethical guidelines which are set out and reviewed periodically by the Executive Committee. The ethical guidelines mean that the charity cannot invest in any company connected with armaments, gambling, tobacco, alcohol, contraception and known social injustice in the third world. The charity's investment policy is to maintain a balance between capital growth and income, so that, over the long term, the real value of assets will be maintained.

In accordance with the above policy, investments were held in COIF Charities Ethical Investment Fund Income Units and COIF Charities Ethical Investment Fund Accumulation Units during the year. The holding returned a total yield (income and capital) of 14% for the year (2023: 4%).

Raising funds

The charity aims to achieve best practice in the way in which it communicates with members and other supporters. It takes care with both the tone of its communications and the accuracy of its data to minimise the pressures on members and supporters. It applies best practice to protect members' and supporters' data and never sells data, it never swaps data and ensures that communication preferences can be changed at any time. The charity manages its own activities in respect to raising funds and does not employ the services of professional fundraisers. The charity undertakes to react to and investigate any complaints regarding its activities for raising funds and to learn from them and improve its service. During the year, the charity received no complaints about such activities.

Reserves policy

The members of the Executive Committee consider that it is essential to have in place an appropriate amount of working capital so that the charity may meet its liabilities as and when they fall due. To meet this objective, the members of the Executive Committee consider that funds available for working capital and held as free reserves should be equivalent to at least six months' operating expenses.

Report of the Executive Committee Year to 30 September 2024

FINANCIAL REVIEW (continued)

Results for the year (continued)

Financial position

At 30 September 2024, the charity had total net assets of £1,190,560 (2023: £1,115,795).

Included within these total funds are restricted funds amounting to £53,624 to fund safeguarding advisory and associated activities in the future (2023: £53,624).

£1,079,824 (2023: £962,345) of these net assets comprise the charity's investment portfolio and represent a designated fund called the capital reserve fund. Demographic data relating to membership of religious congregations, together with the lower number of current vocations, continue to indicate that further reductions in income may be expected in future years.

The charity will rely more and more on investment income in order to fund its charitable work. Consequently, the members of the Executive Committee have set aside, or designated, the value tied up in the charity's investment portfolio as a capital reserve in order to provide a level of assurance that investment income will continue to be generated in future years and thereby 'finance' the charity's work in the long term.

Free reserves at 30 September 2024 stood at £56,397 (2023: £96,696). Comparing this to the charity's reserves policy set out above, the charity's free reserves are slightly below the level required. However, the Executive Committee believes that the reserves will be sufficient to enable CoR to continue to operate and do not expect material concerns to arise over the charity's financial position. The Executive Committee, therefore, is content with the level of free reserves which will be reviewed again in the light of the Strategic Plan that will take shape during 2025.

PRINCIPAL RISKS AND UNCERTAINTIES

The Executive is continuing to work on assessing the main risks to which the charity is exposed, in particular those relating to the specific operational areas of the charity, its investments, and its finances. A Risk Register is prepared and updated for each Executive Committee meeting. The Executive believes that by monitoring reserve levels, by ensuring controls exist over key financial systems, and by examining the operational and business risks faced by the charity, it has established effective systems to mitigate those risks. These systems are also frequently reviewed with a view to possible updates and improvements.

Loss of key personnel

The Executive notes the importance of consistency in staff and key personnel within the organisation. It recognises the challenges that the loss of personnel can have on an organisation that relies on a relatively small team of people. To assist in mitigating this risk, a number of strategies are in place. Some of the Executive Trustees hold positions on external bodies, which are important to the effective functioning of CoR. There are also Religious and lay people who participate in aspects of CoR such as its Finance Committee and in respect of safeguarding.

PRINCIPAL RISKS AND UNCERTAINTIES (continued)

Reliance on limited income sources

The reliance on one single source of income continues to be a significant risk to the future ability of CoR to provide the service that the members require. The main source of income is the membership fees which are decreasing as numbers of those in Religious life diminish. The number of members is decreasing, resulting in a decrease in the income derived from congregations. This is reflected once again in the budget for 2024/2025.

The Executive also recognises that it receives professional support from its professional advisors. The charity is indebted to these firms for their advice and guidance.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Constitution

The Conference is governed by its own statutes and is registered with the Charity Commission (Charity Registration No. 277024). The property of the Conference is vested in a Trust, regulated by a trust deed dated 20 November 1978, as amended by deeds of variation dated 4 March 1992 and 20 September 2001.

CoR is administered by an Executive Committee, members of which constitute the trustees of the charity. At 30 September 2024, the Executive Committee comprises of a joint leadership team, and seven other members, as listed on page 1.

The responsibility for representing the charity at meetings of other ecclesiastical and civil bodies falls mainly on members of the Executive Committee. However, the day-to-day management of the charity has been delegated to the General Secretary. The Executive Committee monitors progress by meeting bi-monthly.

The Executive Committee also maintains financial control by approving the annual budget and receiving management accounts which are prepared on a quarterly basis by their accountants.

Executive Committee

As stated above, members of the Executive Committee constitute the trustees of the charity.

They are incorporated under the provisions of section 251 of the Charities Act 2011 as “The trustees of the Conference of Religious of England and Wales”.

Members of the Executive Committee, who served during the year or who were in office at the date on which this report was signed, are set out on page 1.

They are appointed by means of nomination and election procedures at the charity’s Annual General Meeting. Each member is elected for a period of three years and is eligible to serve for a maximum of two terms.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT (continued)

Constitution (continued)

Key management personnel

The members of the Executive Committee consider that they, together with the General Secretary, comprise the key management of the charity in charge of directing and controlling, running and operating the charity on a day-to-day basis.

None of the members of the Executive Committee are remunerated for their services to the charity. The remuneration of the General Secretary and other staff members is considered annually by the Executive Committee and any increments to the salary are agreed and ratified.

STATEMENT OF RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The Executive Committee is responsible for preparing the report of the Executive Committee and accounts in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

The law applicable to charities in England and Wales requires the Executive Committee to prepare accounts for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the income and expenditure of the charity for that period.

In preparing these accounts, the Executive Committee is required to:

- ◆ select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- ◆ observe the methods and principles in 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 (FRS 102);
- ◆ make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- ◆ state whether applicable United Kingdom Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the accounts; and
- ◆ prepare the accounts on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The Executive Committee is responsible for keeping proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable it to ensure that the accounts comply with the Charities Act 2011, applicable Charity (Accounts and Reports) Regulations and the provisions of the trust deed. The Executive Committee is 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.

Report of the Executive Committee Year to 30 September 2024

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Executive would like to thank the members of the current Secretariat for their support and commitment to CoR throughout this difficult year.

Signed on behalf of the Executive Committee:



Sarah Dobson CJ

Member of the Executive Committee

Approved on: 16th April 2025



CONFERENCE *of* RELIGIOUS
England & Wales

Independent auditor's report Year to 30 September 2024

Independent auditor's report to the members of the Executive Committee of The Conference of Religious in England and Wales

Opinion

We have audited the accounts of The Conference of Religious in England and Wales (the 'charity') for the year ended 30 September 2024 which comprise the statement of financial activities, the balance sheet, the principal accounting policies and the notes to the accounts. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the accounts:

- ◆ give a true and fair view of the state of the charity's affairs as at 30 September 2024 and of its income and expenditure for the year then ended;
- ◆ have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- ◆ have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the accounts section of our report. We are independent of the charity in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the accounts in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the accounts, we have concluded that the Executive Committee's use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the accounts is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charity's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the accounts are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the Executive Committee with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Independent auditor's report Year to 30 September 2024

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the annual report, including the report of the Executive Committee, other than the accounts and our auditor's report thereon. The members of the Executive Committee are responsible for the other information contained within the annual report. Our opinion on the accounts does not cover the other information and we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the accounts or our knowledge obtained in the course of the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the accounts themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charity and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the trustees' report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- ◆ the information given in the Report of the Executive Committee is inconsistent in any material respect with the accounts; or
- ◆ sufficient accounting records have not been kept; or
- ◆ the accounts are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- ◆ we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

Responsibilities of the members of the Executive Committee

As explained more fully in the statement of responsibilities of the Executive Committee, the members of the Executive Committee (who are the charity's trustees) are responsible for the preparation of the accounts and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the Executive Committee determines is necessary to enable the preparation of accounts that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the accounts, the Executive Committee is responsible for assessing the charity's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the Executive Committee either intends to liquidate the charity or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Independent auditor's report Year to 30 September 2024

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the accounts

We have been appointed as auditor under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 and report in accordance with the Act and relevant regulations made or having effect thereunder.

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the accounts as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists.

Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these accounts.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud, is detailed below.

How the audit was considered capable of detecting irregularities including fraud

Our approach to identifying and assessing the risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations, was as follows:

- ◆ The engagement partner ensured that the engagement team collectively had the appropriate competence, capabilities and skills to identify or recognise non-compliance with applicable laws and regulations;
- ◆ We identified the laws and regulations applicable to the charity through discussions with management and members of the Executive Committee and from our knowledge and experience of the charity sector;
- ◆ We focused on specific laws and regulations which we considered may have a direct material effect on the accounts or the activities of the charity. These included but were not limited to the Charities Act 2011; Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable to the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102); and
- ◆ We assessed the extent of compliance with the laws and regulations identified above through making enquiries of management and those charged with governance and review of minutes of Executive Committee meetings.

We assessed the susceptibility of the charity's financial statements to material misstatement, including obtaining an understanding of how fraud might occur, by:

- ◆ Making enquiries of management and representatives from the Executive Committee as to where they considered there was susceptibility to fraud, their knowledge of actual, suspected and alleged fraud; and

Independent auditor's report Year to 30 September 2024

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the accounts (continued)

How the audit was considered capable of detecting irregularities including fraud (continued)

- ◆ Considering the internal controls in place to mitigate risks of fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations.

To address the risk of fraud through management bias and override of controls, we:

- ◆ Performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships;
- ◆ Tested and reviewed journal entries to identify unusual transactions;
- ◆ Carried out substantive testing of expenditure including the authorisation thereof;
- ◆ Assessed whether judgements and assumptions made in determining the accounting estimates were indicative of potential bias; and
- ◆ Investigated the rationale behind significant or unusual transactions.

In response to the risk of irregularities and non-compliance with laws and regulations, we designed procedures which included, but were not limited to:

- ◆ Agreeing financial statement disclosures to underlying supporting documentation;
- ◆ Reading the minutes of meetings of the Executive Committee; and
- ◆ Enquiring of us as to actual and potential litigation and claims.

There are inherent limitations in our audit procedures described above. The more removed that laws and regulations are from financial transactions, the less likely it is that we would become aware of non-compliance. Auditing standards also limit the audit procedures required to identify non-compliance with laws and regulations to enquiry of the trustees and other management and the inspection of regulatory and legal correspondence, if any.

Material misstatements that arise due to fraud can be harder to detect than those that arise from error as they may involve deliberate concealment or collusion.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the accounts is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

Independent auditor's report Year to 30 September 2024

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the members of the Executive Committee, (who are the charity's trustees), as a body, in accordance with Part 4 of the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the members of the Executive Committee those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charity and the members of the Executive Committee, as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.



1 May 2025

Buzzacott Audit LLP
Statutory Auditor
130 Wood Street
London
EC2V 6DL

Buzzacott Audit LLP is eligible to act as an auditor in terms of section 1212 of the Companies Act 2006

Statement of financial activities Year to 30 September 2024

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds 2024 £	Total funds 2023 £
Income from:					
Investments and interest receivable	1	21,604	—	21,604	19,088
Charitable activities	2	152,408	—	152,408	130,195
Total income		174,012	—	174,012	149,283
Expenditure on:					
Charitable activities					
. Promotion of the welfare of Apostolic Institutes of Religious in England and Wales	3	216,726	—	216,726	258,428
Total expenditure		216,726	—	216,726	258,428
Net expenditure before investment gains (losses)	4	(42,714)	—	(42,714)	(109,145)
Net investment losses gains (losses)	8	117,479	—	117,479	27,517
Net expenditure and net movement in funds		74,765	—	74,765	(81,628)
Reconciliation of funds:					
Fund balances brought forward at 1 October 2023		1,062,171	53,624	1,115,795	1,197,423
Fund balances carried forward at 30 September 2024		1,136,936	53,624	1,190,560	1,115,795

All income and expenditure in the year to 30 September 2024 related to unrestricted funds.

All of the charity's activities derived from continuing operations during the above two financial periods.

All recognised gains and losses are included in the above statement of financial activities.

Balance sheet 30 September 2024

	Notes	2024 £	2024 £	2023 £	2023 £
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	7		715		3,130
Investments	8		1,079,824		962,345
			<u>1,080,539</u>		<u>965,475</u>
Current assets					
Debtors	9	12,963		5,324	
Short term deposits		—		150,000	
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>171,169</u>		<u>116,455</u>	
		184,132		271,779	
Liabilities					
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	10	<u>(74,111)</u>		<u>(121,459)</u>	
Net current assets			110,021		150,320
Total net assets			<u>1,190,560</u>		<u>1,115,795</u>
The funds of the charity:					
Unrestricted funds					
. General funds			56,397		96,696
. Tangible fixed assets fund	11		715		3,130
. Designated funds	12		1,079,824		962,345
			<u>1,136,936</u>		<u>1,062,171</u>
Restricted funds	13		53,624		53,624
			<u>1,190,560</u>		<u>1,115,795</u>

Approved by the members of the Executive Committee and signed on their behalf by:



Sarah Dobson CJ

Member of the Executive Committee

Approved on: 16th April 2025

Principal accounting policies Year to 30 September 2024

The principal accounting policies adopted, judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty in the preparation of the accounts are laid out below.

Basis of preparation

These accounts have been prepared for the year to 30 September 2024 with comparative information provided for the year to 30 September 2023.

The accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention with items recognised at cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policies below or the notes to these accounts.

The accounts 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 United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (Charities SORP FRS 102), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Charities Act 2011.

The charity constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS 102.

The accounts are presented in sterling and are rounded to the nearest pound.

Critical accounting estimates and areas of judgement

Preparation of the accounts requires the Executive Committee and management to make significant judgements and estimates. No significant judgements or estimates have been made in the preparation of these financial statements.

Assessment of going concern

The Executive Committee has assessed whether the use of the going concern assumption is appropriate in preparing these accounts. It has made this assessment in respect to a period of one year from the date of approval of these accounts.

Free reserves at 30 September 2024 stood at £56,397 (2023 £96,696). Comparing this to the charity's reserves policy set out above, the charity's free reserves are slightly below the level required. However, the Executive Committee believes that the reserves will be sufficient to enable CoR to continue to operate and do not expect material concerns to arise over the charity's financial position. The Executive Committee, therefore, is content with the level of free reserves which will be reviewed again in the light of the Strategic Plan that will take shape during 2024.

The Executive Committee believes that the reserves will be sufficient to enable CoR to operate and does not expect material concerns to arise over the charity's financial position.

The Executive Committee is of the opinion that the charity will have sufficient resources to meet its liabilities as they fall due.

Principal accounting policies Year to 30 September 2024

Statement of cash flows

The accounts do not include a statement of cash flows because the charity is considered a small charity and is therefore exempt from the requirement to prepare such a statement under the Charities SORP FRS 102.

Income recognition

Income is recognised in the period in which the charity has entitlement to the income, the amount of income can be measured reliably and it is probable that the income will be received.

Income comprises investment income and interest receivable and income from charitable activities, principally the income derived from membership subscriptions and financial contributions towards meetings.

Investment income is recognised once the dividend or equivalent has been declared and notification has been received of the amount due.

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the charity; this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the bank.

Income comprising annual membership subscriptions is credited to the statement of financial activities on an accruals basis with reference to the period covered by the subscription. Income in respect to meetings and other events is credited to the statement of financial activities when invoiced and is accounted for net of any discounts and/or rebates.

Expenditure recognition

Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to make a payment to a third party, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. All expenditure is stated inclusive of irrecoverable VAT.

All expenditure incurred by the charity relates directly or indirectly to the principal charitable objective of the charity i.e. promoting the welfare of Apostolic Institutes of Religious in England and Wales. Within this heading, expenditure is categorised between the key areas of activity and is analysed in note 3 to these accounts. Indirect expenditure comprises support costs and governance costs. Support costs include all expenditure on financial procedures, the provision of office services and general administration. Governance costs comprise the costs of public accountability (including audit costs). All support and governance costs are allocated to activities in the ratio of the direct expenditure on each activity.

Principal accounting policies Year to 30 September 2024

Tangible fixed assets

All assets costing more than £1,000 and with an expected useful life exceeding one year are capitalised.

Depreciation is provided on office furniture and equipment purchased outright on a straight-line basis at rates of 20% and 25% per annum respectively.

Investments

Listed investments are a form of basic financial instrument and are initially recognised at their transaction value and subsequently measured at their fair value as at the balance sheet date using the closing quoted market price.

The charity does not acquire put options, derivatives or other complex financial instruments.

Realised gains (or losses) on investment assets are calculated as the difference between disposal proceeds and their opening carrying value or their purchase value if acquired subsequent to the first day of the financial year. Unrealised gains and losses are calculated as the difference between the fair value at the year end and their carrying value at that date. Realised and unrealised investment gains (or losses) are combined in the statement of financial activities and are credited (or debited) in the year in which they arise.

Debtors

Debtors are recognised at their settlement amount, less any provision for non-recoverability. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid. They have been discounted to the present value of the future cash receipt where such discounting is material.

Cash at bank and in hand and short term deposits

Cash at bank and in hand represents such accounts and instruments that are available on demand or have a maturity of less than three months from the date of acquisition. Deposits for three or more months but less than one year have been disclosed as short term deposits. Cash placed on deposit for more than one year is disclosed as a fixed asset investment.

Creditors and provisions

Creditors and provisions are recognised when there is an obligation at the balance sheet date as a result of a past event, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefit will be required in settlement, and the amount of the settlement can be estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are recognised at the amount the charity anticipates it will pay to settle the debt. They have been discounted to the present value of the future cash payment where such discounting is material.

Principal accounting policies Year to 30 September 2024

Funds structure

The unrestricted funds of the charity represent those funds which are freely available for use in furtherance of the charity's objectives at the discretion of the members of the Executive Committee. Within the total unrestricted funds of the charity, the members of the Executive Committee have designated amounts for specific purposes and have identified those non-liquid funds represented by the tangible fixed assets and fixed asset investments. Those funds not designated or represented by tangible fixed assets or fixed asset investments are classified as general funds.

Pension costs

Contributions payable to defined contribution pension schemes and/or personal pension plans are accounted for in the year in which they are payable.

Notes to the accounts Year to 30 September 2024

1 Income from investments and interest receivable

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2024 £	Unrestricted funds 2023 £
Investment income				
. Unit trusts and common investment funds	16,372	—	16,372	16,110
Bank interest	5,232	—	5,232	2,978
	<u>21,604</u>	<u>—</u>	<u>21,604</u>	<u>19,088</u>

2 Income from charitable activities

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2024 £	Unrestricted funds 2023 £
Membership subscriptions	121,232	—	121,232	98,920
Meetings	30,403	—	30,403	20,383
Other income	48	—	48	215
Grants receivable	725	—	725	10,677
	<u>152,408</u>	<u>—</u>	<u>152,408</u>	<u>130,195</u>

3 Expenditure on charitable activities:

Promotion of the welfare of Apostolic Institutes of Religious in England and Wales

	Direct staff costs £	Other direct costs £	Total Direct costs £	Support staff £	Other support costs £	Total support costs £	Total 2024 £
Safeguarding	8,539	5,630	14,169	6,124	25,660	31,784	45,953
Members Meetings	—	44,559	44,559	—	—	—	44,559
Advocacy	8,954	—	8,954	6,422	26,908	33,330	42,284
Vocations	—	9,589	9,589	—	—	—	9,589
Development	6,179	4,559	10,738	4,431	18,568	22,999	33,737
Communications	6,790	8,539	15,329	4,870	20,405	25,275	40,604
	<u>30,462</u>	<u>72,876</u>	<u>103,338</u>	<u>21,847</u>	<u>91,541</u>	<u>113,388</u>	<u>216,726</u>

	Direct staff costs £	Other direct costs £	Total Direct costs £	Support staff £	Other support costs £	Total support costs £	Total 2023 £
Safeguarding	4,886	—	4,886	5,863	12,086	17,949	22,835
Members Meetings	16,593	13,834	30,427	19,909	41,042	60,951	91,378
Advocacy	11,706	—	11,706	14,046	28,956	43,002	54,708
Vocations	—	14,000	14,000	—	—	—	14,000
Development	7,679	—	7,679	9,214	18,995	28,209	35,888
Communications	8,477	—	8,477	10,172	20,970	31,142	39,619
	<u>49,341</u>	<u>27,834</u>	<u>77,175</u>	<u>59,204</u>	<u>122,049</u>	<u>181,253</u>	<u>258,428</u>

Notes to the accounts Year to 30 September 2024

4 Net expenditure before investment gains (losses)

This is stated after charging:

	2024 £	2023 £
Staff costs (note 5)	95,968	108,545
Audit costs including VAT		
· Statutory audit services	10,600	9,701
Depreciation	1,593	2,280

5 Staff costs

	2024 £	2023 £
Staff costs during the year were as follows:		
Wages and salaries	49,243	65,192
Severance costs	—	40,000
Social security costs	2,059	3,044
Pension costs	1,007	309
	52,309	108,545
Consultancy	43,659	—
	95,968	108,545
Staff costs per function were as follows:		
Safeguarding	13,093	4,886
Vocation	1,589	—
Leaders' meetings	14,467	16,593
Advice and information	19,234	11,706
Development	14,613	7,679
Communications	11,481	8,477
Governance	15,846	43,978
Support	5,645	15,226
	95,968	108,545

No employee was paid £60,000 or more (including benefits) during the year (2023 – one employee was paid between £90,000 and £100,000, including benefits). During the year the charity paid severance pay totalling £Nil (2023: £40,000 to one employee).

The average number of employees during the year, including consultants, (by head count), analysed by function, was as follows:

	2024 No.	2023 No.
Secretariat (safeguarding, advice and information, members' meetings, advocacy, vocations, formation)	3.6	1.2
Support	0.2	0.2
	3.8	1.4

Notes to the accounts Year to 30 September 2024

5 Staff costs (continued)

Remuneration of key management personnel

The members of the Executive Committee, together with the General Secretary, comprise the key management of the charity. The remuneration paid to key management personnel during the year ended 30 September 2024 was £31,779 (2023 – £93,365). No member of the Executive Committee received any remuneration in connection with his or her services during the year (2023 – £nil).

Two members of the Executive Committee were reimbursed expenses during the year of £384 (2023: £1,254 to two members) in respect to travel and meeting expenses in connection with their duties as members of the Executive Committee.

6 Taxation

The Conference of Religious in England and Wales is a registered charity and, therefore, is not liable to income tax or corporation tax on income derived from its charitable activities, as it falls within the various exemptions available to registered charities.

7 Tangible fixed assets

	Office furniture and equipment £
Cost	
At 1 October 2023	9,123
Disposals	(1,460)
At 30 September 2024	<u>7,663</u>
Depreciation	
At 1 October 2023	5,993
Charge for year	1,593
Disposals	(638)
At 30 September 2024	<u>6,948</u>
Net book values	
At 30 September 2023	3,130
At 30 September 2024	<u>715</u>

Notes to the accounts Year to 30 September 2024

8 Investments

	2024 £	2023 £
Listed investments		
Market value at 1 October 2023	962,345	984,828
Disposal proceeds	—	(50,000)
Realised gains on disposal	—	1,838
Unrealised investment gains	117,479	25,679
Market value at 30 September 2024	1,079,824	962,345
Cost of listed investments at 30 September 2024	642,324	642,324

At 30 September 2024, the listed investments comprised holdings in the following two Common Investment Funds managed by CCLA Investment Management Limited:

Holding	Market value at 30 September 2024 £	Percentage of portfolio %
COIF Charities Ethical Investment Fund Income Units	578,712	53.6
COIF Charities Ethical Investment Fund Accumulation Units	501,112	46.4
	1,079,824	100.0

Holding	Market value at 30 September 2023 £	Percentage of portfolio %
COIF Charities Ethical Investment Fund Income Units	522,560	54.3
COIF Charities Ethical Investment Fund Accumulation Units	439,785	45.7
	962,345	100.0

9 Debtors

	2024 £	2023 £
Prepayments and accrued income	12,963	5,324

10 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2024 £	2023 £
Membership subscriptions received in advance	29,470	80,325
Accruals	22,558	21,580
Other creditors	22,083	19,554
	74,111	121,459

Notes to the accounts Year to 30 September 2024

10 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year (continued)

The movement in membership subscriptions received in advance is reconciled below.

	2024 £	2023 £
Deferred income brought forward	80,325	33,818
Released in year	(80,325)	(33,818)
Deferred in year	29,470	80,325
Deferred income carried forward	29,470	80,325

11 Tangible fixed asset fund

	2024 £	2023 £
At 1 October 2023	3,130	5,410
Movement in year	(2,415)	(2,280)
At 30 September 2024	715	3,130

The tangible fixed assets fund represents the net book value of the charity's tangible fixed assets. A decision was made to separate this fund from the general fund and other designated funds of the charity in recognition of the fact that the tangible fixed assets are essential to the day-to-day work of the charity and as such their value should not be regarded as funds that would be realisable with ease, in order to meet future contingencies.

12 Designated funds

The income funds of the charity include the following designated fund which has been set aside out of unrestricted funds by the members of the Executive Committee for specific purposes:

	At 1 October 2023 £	New designations £	Utilised/ released £	At 30 September 2024 £
Capital reserve fund	962,345	117,479	—	1,079,824

	At 1 October 2022 £	New designations £	Utilised/ released £	At 30 September 2023 £
Capital reserve fund	984,829	(22,484)	—	962,345

Notes to the accounts Year to 30 September 2024

12 Designated funds (continued)

The charity will rely more and more on investment income in order to fund its charitable work. Consequently, the members of the Executive Committee believe it prudent to set aside, or designate, the value tied up in the charity's investment portfolio as a capital reserve in order to provide a level of assurance that investment income will continue to be generated in future years and thereby 'finance' the charity's work in the long term.

13 Restricted funds

The income funds of the charity include the following restricted funds to be applied for specific purposes:

	At 1 October 2023 £	Income £	Expenditure £	At 30 September 2024 £
Safeguarding project	53,624	—	—	53,624

	At 1 October 2022 £	Income £	Expenditure £	At 30 September 2023 £
Safeguarding project	53,624	—	—	53,624

The safeguarding project fund is to be applied towards the cost of specific safeguarding advisory and associated activities.

14 Analysis of net assets between funds

	Restricted funds £	General funds £	Tangible fixed assets funds £	Designated funds £	Total 2024 £
Fund balances at 30 September 2024 are represented by:					
Tangible fixed assets	—	—	715	—	715
Investments	—	—	—	1,079,824	1,079,824
Net current assets	53,624	56,397	—	—	110,021
Total net assets	53,624	56,397	715	1,079,824	1,190,560

Notes to the accounts Year to 30 September 2024

14 Analysis of net assets between funds (continued)

	<i>Restricted funds</i> £	<i>General funds</i> £	<i>Tangible fixed assets funds</i> £	<i>Designated funds</i> £	<i>Total 2023</i> £
<i>Fund balances at 30 September 2023 are represented by:</i>					
<i>Tangible fixed assets</i>	—	—	3,130	—	3,130
<i>Investments</i>	—	—	—	962,345	962,345
<i>Net current assets</i>	53,624	96,696	—	—	150,320
<i>Total net assets</i>	53,624	96,696	3,130	962,345	1,115,795

	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Reconciliation of movements in unrealised gains on investment assets:		
Unrealised gains at 1 October 2023	320,021	313,151
Net unrealised gains (losses) arising in the year	117,479	6,870
Unrealised gains at 30 September 2024	437,500	320,021

15 Financial commitments

At 30 September 2024 the charity was committed to pay £Nil in respect to rent and service charges payable (2023: £12,000).

16 Transactions with related parties

The religious congregations to which the members of the Executive Committee belong are all members of the charity and pay membership subscriptions to the charity. All such payments are made to the charity on an arm's length basis.

During the year, the congregations to which the members of the Executive Committee belong made contributions to the charity totalling £30,905 (2023 – £20,405). These contributions consist of membership fees and donations.

During the year, the charity incurred rent and service charges totaling £18,000 (2023 - £12,000) payable to the Poor Servants of the Mother of God (PSMG). PSMG, are members of the Conference of Religious in England and Wales.

THE CONFERENCE OF RELIGIOUS OF ENGLAND AND WALES

England & Wales - Charity number 277024

Accounts



CONFERENCE *of* RELIGIOUS

England & Wales

ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS

30 SEPTEMBER 2023

THE CONFERENCE OF RELIGIOUS IN ENGLAND AND WALES

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Reference and administrative information Year to 30 September 2023

Executive Committee	<p>Sr Sarah Dobson CJ <i>elected Oct 2021 – elected joint leader in November 2023</i></p> <p>Sr Catherine Lloyd RSCJ <i>elected Oct 2021 – elected joint leader in November 2023</i></p> <p>Sr Ellen Flynn DC <i>elected Interim President from May - November 2023 – stepped down from the Board in November 2023</i></p> <p>Fr Paul Smyth CMF (President) <i>stepped down from the Board in May 2023</i></p> <p>Sr Sue Berry CSF (Anglican Associate Member) <i>elected Sept 2017</i></p> <p>Sr Margaret Donovan HC <i>elected May 2019</i></p> <p>Fr Robert Marsh OSA <i>elected Oct 2021 stepped down from the Board in May 2023</i></p> <p>Sr Monica Matthews SHJC <i>appointed Oct 2019</i></p> <p>Sr Anne Morris DHS <i>elected Oct 2021</i></p> <p>Fr Richard Reid CSsR <i>elected Oct 2021</i></p> <p>Sr Jen Bromham <i>elected November 2023</i></p>
Principal office	<p>St Philomena's 70-71 Euston Square London NW1 1DJ</p>
Auditor	<p>Buzzacott LLP 130 Wood Street London EC2V 6DL</p>
Investment manager	<p>CCLA Investment Management Limited Senator House 85 Queen Victoria Street London EC4V 4ET</p>
Banker	<p>The Royal Bank of Scotland plc 48 Haymarket London SW1Y 4SE</p>
Solicitors	<p>Stone King LLP Upper Borough Court (UBC) Upper Borough Walls Bath BA1 1RG</p>

Report of the Executive Committee Year to 30 September 2023

The members of the Executive Committee (ie the trustees) of the Conference of Religious (CoR) present their report together with the audited financial statements of the charity for the year ended 30 September 2023.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out on pages 22 to 25 of the attached accounts and comply with the charity's trust deed, the Charities Act 2011 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 (FRS 102).

INTRODUCTION

The Conference of Religious (CoR) is a small charity, with around 243 members. Its formal membership consists of both the female and male Major Superiors of each institute and Superiors General in the Catholic Church (or their nominees) who work in England or Wales. Associate membership is offered to the superiors of Anglican Communities (since 1992) and to all Contemplative Superiors in England and Wales (since 2000).

Vision Statement of the Conference of Religious

The Conference of Religious seeks to be a dynamic and proactive presence in the Church and the world today.

Mission statement of the Conference of Religious

The Mission of CoR is to:

- ❖ enable the prophetic voice of Religious Congregations to be heard making Religious Life better known;
- ❖ unite its membership in collaborative initiatives translating Gospel vision into reality; and
- ❖ offer support to its membership and particularly those in positions of leadership.

Our Values

All our activities are inspired by Gospel Values. The hallmarks of CoR are:

- ❖ unity in diversity
- ❖ justice
- ❖ integrity
- ❖ hope

INTRODUCTION (continued)

Our Aims and Objectives

The object of the charity is to promote the welfare of apostolic institutes of Religious in the Catholic Church in England and Wales, while respecting the autonomy, nature and spirit of each other. This includes:

- ❖ effecting closer co-operation with each other and with various other religious bodies and individual bishops;
- ❖ providing representation with constituted authorities, both ecclesiastical and civil.

To create a Prophetic Voice that gives witness to the values of the Gospel

- ❖ to be a prophetic, corporate, pro-active voice in the Church and in Society;
- ❖ in particular, to speak on behalf of people who live on the margins, promoting justice;
- ❖ to promote visible witness of the Good News of Jesus Christ, and Gospel values in reality today;
- ❖ to witness to the gift of community living; and
- ❖ to witness to unity in diversity.

To generate and participate in Networks that promote Collaboration

- ❖ to actively promote collaboration amongst members;
- ❖ to find ways of improving communication between members;
- ❖ to promote greater links with Vicars for Religious;
- ❖ to seek greater dialogue with the Church and its agencies at national and local level;
- ❖ to foster coordinated liaison with the Bishops, nationally and in local dioceses;
- ❖ to build deeper ecumenical relationships; and

To serve and support Religious in England and Wales

- ❖ to answer enquiries and to respond to members' needs;
- ❖ to develop structures of mutual support;
- ❖ to set up a professional database and informal group mailing systems;
- ❖ to find ways of sharing gifts, skills and resources, ideas, etc;
- ❖ to be active participants in Safeguarding initiatives in the Church in England and Wales;
- ❖ to participate in the work of Vocations and to support the National Office; and
- ❖ to encourage and support the formation of new Religious Life initiatives.

INTRODUCTION (continued)

Our Aims and Objectives (continued)

To serve and support Religious in England and Wales (continued)

The charity pursues these objectives by operating through its Executive Committee and other committees and groups drawn from the expertise of the membership and professionals and coordinated through the Secretariat. The Secretariat disseminates information, organises conferences and meetings and maintains links with Religious and other bodies that have similar interests.

Public benefit

CoR exists to support and promote the work of Religious in England and Wales. The members of CoR are involved through their ministry in a wide range of activities including: education, pastoral support, healthcare, working with refugees and victims of modern-day slavery, chaplaincy and counselling, which are all of direct benefit to the public.

By providing the opportunity for collaboration and undertaking the other activities on behalf of its members that are outlined in this report, CoR assists in the provision of the public benefit, by our member congregations.

When setting the objectives and planning the work for the year and future activities, the members of the Executive Committee have given careful consideration to the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit.

ACTIVITIES AND PERFORMANCE

The Secretariat

There have been a significant number of staff changes in 2023 and we now look forward to 2024 being a year of stability, with a small Secretariat, while challenging historical and current practices, reducing costs, and focusing on the staffing structure and arrangements needed for the future.

Report of the Executive Committee Year to 30 September 2023

ACTIVITIES AND PERFORMANCE (continued)

Meetings

Throughout the year CoR has conducted or organised a host of meetings both in person and online, many of which are listed below:

On Monday 24 October 2022, CoR organised a Synodal Liturgy from 5-6pm, which was well attended.

General Meeting

In addition to the COR Annual General Meeting, the Executive organised a successful General Meeting, which took place on Wednesday 26 October 2022. CoR hosted the General Meeting at the Oasis Centre in Hayes, to which all religious are invited. Sr Una Agnew SSL was the guest speaker and she spoke about 'The Spiritual Challenges of the second half of life: The complex task of Growing Up'. 'This topic was well received.

There was also a Zoom Meeting hosted on Thursday 24 November 2022, regarding the CSSA Contracts. Damien Howard SJ shared some of the legal advice the Jesuits received which helped to clarify many areas.

2023 began with a host of meetings including the CSSA Audit Process via Zoom on Tuesday 31 January 2023 and the RLSS Annual General Meeting via Zoom, which took place on Wednesday 1 February 2023.

Work around the CSSA continued throughout the first quarter of 2023 with a meeting held on Thursday 23 February regarding the CSSA Audit. This was followed by another Zoom meeting re the CSSA contracts on Tuesday 14 March 2023 and further meetings in relation to the CSSA work and CoR's contract.

Connections with the Church

As well as attending meetings of the Mixed Commission with some of the Bishops of England and Wales, the Executive welcomed Archbishop Miguel Maury Buenda, the newly arrived Apostolic Nuncio. The Archbishop celebrated Mass with the Executive members and had conversation over lunch.

Representatives of the Executive attend the meetings of the Mixed Commission with some of the Bishops of England and Wales. It gives a chance for the Religious and Bishops to share what is happening in their lives and in the Church, and where we can work together and so become 'One Church'.

One of the significant happenings is the Collaboration Project. Meetings and conversations began towards the setting up of a support group for those congregations whose members are increasingly few, exploring ways in which we can help and support one another. This initiative is being led by Sr Jane Maltby RSCJ, with a Core Group. Various workshops are being planned, see below, on topics where Religious can collaborate and work together. Some Congregations are moving towards completion as a religious group in England and Wales.

Report of the Executive Committee Year to 30 September 2023

ACTIVITIES AND PERFORMANCE (continued)

Meetings (continued)

Connections with the Church (continued)

The Collaboration Project is proposing the following initial 6 workshops for the coming year:

1. New/innovative leadership and ways of organising ourselves.

Thursday 7 March from 11.00am to 3.30pm at St. Aloysius Parish Hall, Phoenix Rd. Euston, London. This workshop will enable us to raise our concerns, needs etc.

2. Change management - vision for religious life; living into change; spiritual, physical, and emotional accompaniment.

Friday 12 April from 11.00am to 3.30pm at St Aloysius Parish Hall, Phoenix Rd. Euston London This workshop will be led by Sister Cath Lloyd RSCJ and Father Paul Smyth CMF.

3. Charity governance, civil law, and Canon law

Thursday 6 June from 11.00 am to 3.30pm at the Grimshaw Rooms, St. Giles Cathedral Hall, Birmingham. Amanda Francis, Partner, Buzzacott LLP, Chartered Accountants, and Tim Rutherford, Partner, Stone King LLP, Solicitors will lead this session.

4. Financial and property management and planning

Thursday 27 June from 11am to 3.30pm at the Grimshaw Rooms, St. Giles Cathedral Hall Birmingham. Amanda Francis, Partner, Buzzacott LLP Chartered Accountants, and Tim Rutherford, Partner, Stone King LLP, Solicitors will again lead this session.

5. Archives and Legacy planning

This session will be held in September 2024 – We are in the process of securing facilitators for this workshop and as soon as we have confirmed speakers, we will communicate the date and venue to all members. In keeping with our aim to be less London centric, we are exploring venues in Greater Manchester.

6. Eldercare

This session will be held in October 2024. This session is being planned and developed within the CoR Health Care Group, chaired by Sr Monica Matthews. This is in response to increasing requests for support and advice on caring for Religious in community and care settings. The session will include practical advice and documents and contributions will be made by members of the Health Care Group, Susan Thomas and other health care professionals. It is hoped the venue will be in Greater Manchester.

Report of the Executive Committee Year to 30 September 2023

ACTIVITIES AND PERFORMANCE (continued)

Meetings (continued)

AGM High Leigh Conference Centre May 2023

The AGM for Leaders included facilitation by Sarah Broscomb who led the members on considering “From Reality to Vision”. Plus, a presentation by the CEO and Chair of RLSS, Dani Wardman and the presentation of the charity’s 2021/22 statutory accounts from Amanda Francis of Buzzacott LLP.



Report of the Executive Committee Year to 30 September 2023

ACTIVITIES AND PERFORMANCE (continued)

Meetings (continued)

Safeguarding

The Conference advertised the role of Religious Safeguarding Lead to replace Sister Francis Orchard CJ, who stepped down in October 2023.



In September 2023, following the departure of Frances Orchard as CoR's Safeguarding Lead, a recruitment drive was initiated and in late September 2023 we received an Expression of Interest from Sister Una Coogan to join CoR as the Safeguarding Lead.

Sister Una Coogan has extensive experience in relation to safeguarding including her role on the Safeguarding Trustee Sub-Committee in the Archdiocese of Birmingham.

Throughout the year, CoR was involved in meetings with the RLSS (Religious Life Safeguarding Services) and the CSSA (Catholic Safeguarding Services Agency), the two bodies established in the Catholic Church in England and Wales as a response to the national safeguarding report, IICSA. Members of the Executive engaged in discussions with the leaderships of these two organisations, representing the CoR membership in negotiations about contracts and financial contributions to CSSA and the setting up of CSSA audits. Members of the Executive also attended the AGM of RLSS.



Communications

Media

Raising the profile of Religious both within our congregations and to the wider world continues to be a key aim for us.

Our website www.corew.org continues to be a showcase of Religious life - for members and the wider world – by telling the stories of Religious life. It is intended to develop the website further in the coming year to ensure communication with members is more timely and focused on the issues they have requested. The website remains a way of providing members with information and resources and important documents.

The CORrespondent

The CORrespondent, our regular newsletter continues to be our main form of communication with members but this is being reviewed in 2024. Its aim is to carry significant news of our work, any relevant updates as well as being a platform for Religious to share information concerning initiatives, projects, retreats, meetings as well as to make requests. In 2024, we will consider other means of providing information in an accessible and timely way that makes best use of resources.

ACTIVITIES AND PERFORMANCE (continued)

Communications (continued)

Support Groups for Leaders

Three groups of Leaders met in broad geographical areas or hubs, covering:

- a) Midlands, Wales, Eastern England
- b) North West and North East England
- c) Southeast and Southwest England

These regional hubs join the well-established North London group which has been meeting to provide mutual support and information to Leaders for many years. These groups and the details of those who lead them are to be shared again with the members so that more may access the support they provide.

Report from the Health and Care Group

The work of the CoR healthcare group has not been able to develop as we would have wished this year due to more urgent demands on the time of the Executive and Secretariat. However, members and lay staff do continue to help congregations with particular queries and concerns and this work is led by Sister Monica Matthews.

The group comprises of 5 Religious, all with experience of health-related issues within their own order and supported by Susan Thomas.

It is intended that this group will resume its active work in 2024 and will participate in the collaboration project in relation to elderly care. As always, we are there to serve our members.

Collaboration with others

CoR continues to work to represent Religious, share information and develop relationships with others in the Church and the wider community through a variety of means. Sometimes this is done by the Executive, for example via the previously mentioned, Mixed Commission Meetings, to represent the views of Religious to the Bishops.

We also collaborate with organisations such as the Churches Legislative Advisory Service. Those who sit on the committees and groups ensure that CoR is kept abreast of activities and developments elsewhere including:

- ❖ The National Office of Vocations – through which we support Vocations work by funding the Religious Life Promoter
- ❖ CBCEW Department of Social Justice – A member of the Executive attends the Department of Social Justice Meetings. At this meeting Bishops responsible for various issues give a report, assisted by lay people. Papers are prepared on such topics as Life issues, Marriage and Family Life, CSAN, Environment, Human Rights, etc. We support and share information where possible.

ACTIVITIES AND PERFORMANCE (continued)

Collaboration with others (continued)

- ❖ Anglican Committees – Sister Margaret Shepard NDS sits on the Anglican Committees and Sister Sue Berry CSF is the Anglican representative on the CoR Executive.

FUTURE PLANS

A review of CoR's three-year Strategic Plan is overdue and will commence in 2024 as the Executive reviews the structure and working arrangements of CoR.

Along with progressing our overall Strategic Plan, one of the main focuses for the coming year will be the planning of sustainable ways to remain both responsive and supportive to our membership.

The work of the Collaboration Project will take up much of the coming year and this work will provide an opportunity for exploring how Religious might collaborate with respect to the challenges they are facing. This will continue to be a focus at the AGM in 2024.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Results for the year

The statement of financial activities shows that net expenditure for the year before gains on investments was £109,145 (2022: net expenditure of £57,691 before losses on investments). Net gains on the revaluation of investments were £27,517 (2022: net losses of £58,545) leading to an overall decrease in funds of £81,628 (2022: £116,236).

Income comprised mainly of membership fees, income from meetings and investment income. Some members continued to subscribe amounts in excess of their actual fees so that those members whose resources are more limited are not prevented from participating in conferences and other activities. Expenditure reflects the work of CoR.

Investment policy and performance

The charity's investments, managed by CCLA Investment Management Limited, were valued at £962,345 (2022: £984,829) at the year-end date.

The investment managers operate within specific ethical guidelines which are set out and reviewed periodically by the Executive Committee. The ethical guidelines mean that the charity cannot invest in any company connected with armaments, gambling, tobacco, alcohol, contraception and known social injustice in the third world. The charity's investment policy is to maintain a balance between capital growth and income, so that, over the long term, the real value of assets will be maintained.

In accordance with the above policy, investments were held in COIF Charities Ethical Investment Fund Income Units and COIF Charities Ethical Investment Fund Accumulation Units during the year. The holding returned a total yield (income and capital) of 10.2% for the year.

FINANCIAL REVIEW (continued)

Raising funds

The charity aims to achieve best practice in the way in which it communicates with members and other supporters. It takes care with both the tone of its communications and the accuracy of its data to minimise the pressures on members and supporters. It applies best practice to protect members' and supporters' data and never sells data, it never swaps data and ensures that communication preferences can be changed at any time. The charity manages its own activities in respect to raising funds and does not employ the services of professional fundraisers. The charity undertakes to react to and investigate any complaints regarding its activities for raising funds and to learn from them and improve its service. During the year, the charity received no complaints about such activities.

Reserves policy

The members of the Executive Committee consider that it is essential to have in place an appropriate amount of working capital so that the charity may meet its liabilities as and when they fall due. To meet this objective, the members of the Executive Committee consider that funds available for working capital and held as free reserves should be equivalent to at least six months' operating expenses.

Financial position

At 30 September 2023, the charity had total net assets of £1,115,795 (2022: £1,197,423).

Included within these total funds are restricted funds amounting to £53,624 to fund safeguarding advisory and associated activities in the future.

£962,345 (2022: £984,829) of these net assets comprise the charity's investment portfolio and represent a designated fund called the capital reserve fund. Demographic data relating to membership of religious congregations, together with the lower number of current vocations, continue to indicate that further reductions in income may be expected in future years.

The charity will rely more and more on investment income in order to fund its charitable work. Consequently, the members of the Executive Committee have set aside, or designated, the value tied up in the charity's investment portfolio as a capital reserve in order to provide a level of assurance that investment income will continue to be generated in future years and thereby 'finance' the charity's work in the long term.

Free reserves at 30 September 2023 stood at £96,696 (2022: £153,560). Comparing this to the charity's reserves policy set out above, the charity's free reserves are slightly below the level required. However, the Executive Committee believes that the reserves will be sufficient to enable CoR to continue to operate and do not expect material concerns to arise over the charity's financial position. The Executive Committee, therefore, is content with the level of free reserves which will be reviewed again in the light of the Strategic Plan that will take shape during 2024.

PRINCIPAL RISKS AND UNCERTAINTIES

The Executive is continuing to work on assessing the main risks to which the charity is exposed, in particular those relating to the specific operational areas of the charity, its investments, and its finances. The Executive believes that by monitoring reserve levels, by ensuring controls exist over key financial systems, and by examining the operational and business risks faced by the charity, it has established effective systems to mitigate those risks. These systems are also frequently reviewed with a view to possible updates and improvements.

Loss of key personnel

The Executive notes the importance of consistency in staff and key personnel within the organisation. It recognises the challenges that the loss of personnel can have on an organisation that relies on a relatively small team of people. To assist in mitigating this risk, a number of strategies are in place. Some of the Executive Trustees hold positions on external bodies, which are important to the effective functioning of CoR. There are also Religious and lay people who participate in aspects of CoR such as its Finance Committee and in respect of safeguarding.

Reliance on limited income sources

The reliance on one single source of income continues to be a significant risk to the future ability of CoR to provide the service that the members require and. The main source of income is the membership fees which are decreasing as numbers of those in Religious life diminish. The number of members is decreasing, resulting in a decrease in the income derived from congregations. This is reflected once again in the budget for 2023/2024.

The Executive also recognises that it receives professional support from its professional advisors. The charity is indebted to these firms for their advice and guidance.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Constitution

The Conference is governed by its own statutes and is registered with the Charity Commission (Charity Registration No. 277024). The property of the Conference is vested in a Trust, regulated by a trust deed dated 20 November 1978, as amended by deeds of variation dated 4 March 1992 and 20 September 2001.

CoR is administered by an Executive Committee, members of which constitute the trustees of the charity. At 30 September 2023, the Executive Committee comprised an interim President, and eight other members, as listed on page 1.

The responsibility for representing the charity at meetings of other ecclesiastical and civil bodies falls mainly on members of the Executive Committee. However, the day-to-day management of the charity has been delegated to the General Secretary. The Executive Committee monitors progress by meeting bi-monthly.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT (continued)

Constitution (continued)

The Executive Committee also maintains financial control by approving the annual budget and receiving management accounts which are prepared on a quarterly basis by their accountants.

Executive Committee

As stated above, members of the Executive Committee constitute the trustees of the charity. They are incorporated under the provisions of section 251 of the Charities Act 2011 as “The trustees of the Conference of Religious of England and Wales”.

Members of the Executive Committee, who served during the year or who were in office at the date on which this report was signed, are set out on page 1.

They are appointed by means of nomination and election procedures at the charity’s Annual General Meeting. Each member is elected for a period of three years and is eligible to serve for a maximum of two terms.

Key management personnel

The members of the Executive Committee consider that they, together with the General Secretary, comprise the key management of the charity in charge of directing and controlling, running and operating the charity on a day-to-day basis.

None of the members of the Executive Committee are remunerated for their services to the charity. The remuneration of the General Secretary and other staff members is considered annually by the Executive Committee and any increments to the salary are agreed and ratified.

STATEMENT OF RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The Executive Committee is responsible for preparing the report of the Executive Committee and accounts in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

The law applicable to charities in England and Wales requires the Executive Committee to prepare accounts for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the income and expenditure of the charity for that period.

In preparing these accounts, the Executive Committee is required to:

- ❖ select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- ❖ observe the methods and principles in 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 (FRS 102);
- ❖ make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;

STATEMENT OF RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (continued)

- ❖ state whether applicable United Kingdom Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the accounts; and
- ❖ prepare the accounts on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The Executive Committee is responsible for keeping proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable it to ensure that the accounts comply with the Charities Act 2011, applicable Charity (Accounts and Reports) Regulations and the provisions of the trust deed. The Executive Committee is 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.

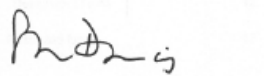
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Executive would like to thank the members of the current Secretariat for their support and commitment to CoR throughout this difficult year.

Signed on behalf of the Executive Committee:



Member of the Executive Committee



Member of the Executive Committee

SARAH DOBSON CJ

Approved on:





CONFERENCE *of* RELIGIOUS

England & Wales

Independent auditor's report Year to 30 September 2023

Independent auditor's report to the members of the Executive Committee of The Conference of Religious in England and Wales

Opinion

We have audited the accounts of The Conference of Religious in England and Wales (the 'charity') for the year ended 30 September 2023 which comprise the statement of financial activities, the balance sheet, the principal accounting policies and the notes to the accounts. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the accounts:

- ◆ give a true and fair view of the state of the charity's affairs as at 30 September 2023 and of its income and expenditure for the year then ended;
- ◆ have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- ◆ have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the accounts section of our report. We are independent of the charity in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the accounts in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the accounts, we have concluded that the Executive Committee's use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the accounts is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charity's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the accounts are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the Executive Committee with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Independent auditor's report Year to 30 September 2023

Other information

The Executive Committee is responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the Annual Report and Accounts, other than the accounts and our auditor's report thereon. Our opinion on the accounts does not cover the other information and we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the accounts, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the accounts or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the accounts or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Charities Act 2011 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- ◆ the information given in the Report of the Executive Committee is inconsistent in any material respect with the accounts; or
- ◆ sufficient accounting records have not been kept; or
- ◆ the accounts are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- ◆ we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

Responsibilities of the members of the Executive Committee

As explained more fully in the statement of responsibilities of the Executive Committee, the members of the Executive Committee (who are the charity's trustees) are responsible for the preparation of the accounts and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the Executive Committee determines is necessary to enable the preparation of accounts that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the accounts, the Executive Committee is responsible for assessing the charity's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the Executive Committee either intends to liquidate the charity or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Independent auditor's report Year to 30 September 2023

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the accounts

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the accounts as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these accounts.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below.

How the audit was considered capable of detecting irregularities including fraud

Our approach to identifying and assessing the risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations, was as follows:

- ◆ The engagement partner ensured that the engagement team collectively had the appropriate competence, capabilities and skills to identify or recognise non-compliance with applicable laws and regulations;
- ◆ We identified the laws and regulations applicable to the charity through discussions with management and members of the Executive Committee and from our knowledge and experience of the charity sector;
- ◆ We focused on specific laws and regulations which we considered may have a direct material effect on the accounts or the activities of the charity. These included but were not limited to the Charities Act 2011; Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable to the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102); and
- ◆ We assessed the extent of compliance with the laws and regulations identified above through making enquiries of management and those charged with governance and review of minutes of Executive Committee meetings.

We assessed the susceptibility of the charity's financial statements to material misstatement, including obtaining an understanding of how fraud might occur, by:

- ◆ Making enquiries of management and representatives from the Executive Committee as to where they considered there was susceptibility to fraud, their knowledge of actual, suspected and alleged fraud; and
- ◆ Considering the internal controls in place to mitigate risks of fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations.

Independent auditor's report Year to 30 September 2023

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the accounts (continued)

How the audit was considered capable of detecting irregularities including fraud *(continued)*

To address the risk of fraud through management bias and override of controls, we:

- ◆ Performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships;
- ◆ Tested and reviewed journal entries to identify unusual transactions;
- ◆ Carried out substantive testing of expenditure including the authorisation thereof;
- ◆ Assessed whether judgements and assumptions made in determining the accounting estimates were indicative of potential bias; and
- ◆ Investigated the rationale behind significant or unusual transactions.

In response to the risk of irregularities and non-compliance with laws and regulations, we designed procedures which included, but were not limited to:

- ◆ Agreeing financial statement disclosures to underlying supporting documentation;
- ◆ Reading the minutes of meetings of the Executive Committee; and
- ◆ Enquiring of as to actual and potential litigation and claims.

There are inherent limitations in our audit procedures described above. The more removed that laws and regulations are from financial transactions, the less likely it is that we would become aware of non-compliance. Auditing standards also limit the audit procedures required to identify non-compliance with laws and regulations to enquiry of the trustees and other management and the inspection of regulatory and legal correspondence, if any.

Material misstatements that arise due to fraud can be harder to detect than those that arise from error as they may involve deliberate concealment or collusion.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the accounts is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

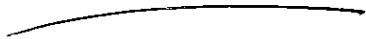
Independent auditor's report Year to 30 September 2023

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the members of the Executive Committee, (who are charity's trustees), as a body, in accordance with section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 and with regulations made under section 154 of that Act. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the members of the Executive Committee those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charity and the members of the Executive Committee, as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

 Buzzacott LLP

1 May 2024


Buzzacott LLP
Statutory Auditor
130 Wood Street
London
EC2V 6DL

Buzzacott LLP is eligible to act as an auditor in terms of section 1212 of the Companies Act 2006

Statement of financial activities Year to 30 September 2023

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds 2023 £	Total funds 2022 £
Income from:					
Investments and interest receivable	1	19,088	—	19,088	16,015
Charitable activities	2	130,195	—	130,195	161,387
Total income		149,283	—	149,283	177,402
Expenditure on:					
Charitable activities					
. Promotion of the welfare of Apostolic Institutes of Religious in England and Wales	3	258,427	—	258,428	235,093
Total expenditure		258,428	—	258,428	235,093
Net expenditure before investment gains (losses)	4	(109,145)	—	(109,145)	(57,691)
Net investment losses gains (losses)	8	27,517	—	27,517	(58,545)
Net expenditure and net movement in funds		(81,628)	—	(81,628)	(116,236)
Reconciliation of funds:					
Fund balances brought forward at 1 October 2022		1,143,799	53,624	1,197,423	1,313,659
Fund balances carried forward at 30 September 2023		1,062,171	53,624	1,115,795	1,197,423

All income and expenditure in the year to 30 September 2023 related to unrestricted funds. Expenditure for the year to 30 September 2022 included £6,582 in respect to restricted funds (see note 13). All other income and expenditure in the year to 30 September 2022 was unrestricted.

All of the charity's activities derived from continuing operations during the above two financial periods.

All recognised gains and losses are included in the above statement of financial activities.

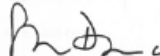
Balance sheet 30 September 2023

	Notes	2023 £	2023 £	2022 £	2022 £
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	7		3,130		5,410
Investments	8		962,345		984,829
			965,475		990,239
Current assets					
Debtors	9	5,324		4,106	
Short term deposits		150,000		150,000	
Cash at bank and in hand		116,455		109,002	
		271,779		263,108	
Liabilities					
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	10	(121,459)		(55,924)	
Net current assets			150,320		207,184
Total net assets			1,115,795		1,197,423
The funds of the charity:					
Unrestricted funds					
. General funds			96,696		153,560
. Tangible fixed assets fund	11		3,130		5,410
. Designated funds	12		962,345		984,829
			1,062,171		1,143,799
Restricted funds	13		53,624		53,624
			1,115,795		1,197,423

Approved by the members of the Executive Committee and signed on their behalf by:


Catherine Keydson

Member of the Executive Committee:


Sarah Dobson

Member of the Executive Committee

SARAH DOBSON CJ

Approved on: 29 April 2024

Principal accounting policies Year to 30 September 2023

The principal accounting policies adopted, judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty in the preparation of the accounts are laid out below.

Basis of preparation

These accounts have been prepared for the year to 30 September 2023 with comparative information provided for the year to 30 September 2022.

The accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention with items recognised at cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policies below or the notes to these accounts.

The accounts 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 United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (Charities SORP FRS 102), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Charities Act 2011.

The charity constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS 102.

The accounts are presented in sterling and are rounded to the nearest pound.

Critical accounting estimates and areas of judgement

Preparation of the accounts requires the Executive Committee and management to make significant judgements and estimates. These include assessing the impact of Covid-19 on the charity's income, expenditure and financial position (see assessment of going concern below).

The items in the accounts where these judgements and estimates have been made include:

- ◆ estimating the expected useful economic life of tangible fixed assets for the purpose of determining the annual depreciation charge; and
- ◆ allocating support costs between expenditure headings.

Assessment of going concern

The Executive Committee has assessed whether the use of the going concern assumption is appropriate in preparing these accounts. It has made this assessment in respect to a period of one year from the date of approval of these accounts.

Free reserves at 30 September 2023 stood at £96,696 (2022 £153,560). Comparing this to the charity's reserves policy set out above, the charity's free reserves are slightly below the level required. However, the Executive Committee believes that the reserves will be sufficient to enable CoR to continue to operate and do not expect material concerns to arise over the charity's financial position. The Executive Committee, therefore, is content with the level of free reserves which will be reviewed again in the light of the Strategic Plan that will take shape during 2024.

Principal accounting policies Year to 30 September 2023

Assessment of going concern (continued)

The Executive Committee believes that the reserves will be sufficient to enable CoR to operate and does not expect material concerns to arise over the charity's financial position.

The Executive Committee is of the opinion that the charity will have sufficient resources to meet its liabilities as they fall due. The most significant areas of judgement that affect items in the accounts are detailed above.

Statement of cash flows

The accounts do not include a statement of cash flows because the charity is considered a small charity and is therefore exempt from the requirement to prepare such a statement under the Charities SORP FRS 102 Update Bulletin 1.

Income recognition

Income is recognised in the period in which the charity has entitlement to the income, the amount of income can be measured reliably and it is probable that the income will be received.

Income comprises investment income and interest receivable and income from charitable activities, principally the income derived from membership subscriptions and financial contributions towards meetings.

Investment income is recognised once the dividend or equivalent has been declared and notification has been received of the amount due.

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the charity; this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the bank.

Income comprising annual membership subscriptions is credited to the statement of financial activities on an accruals basis with reference to the period covered by the subscription. Income in respect to meetings and other events is credited to the statement of financial activities when invoiced and is accounted for net of any discounts and/or rebates.

Expenditure recognition

Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to make a payment to a third party, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. All expenditure is stated inclusive of irrecoverable VAT.

Principal accounting policies Year to 30 September 2023

Expenditure recognition (continued)

All expenditure incurred by the charity relates directly or indirectly to the principal charitable objective of the charity i.e. promoting the welfare of Apostolic Institutes of Religious in England and Wales. Within this heading, expenditure is categorised between the key areas of activity and is analysed in note 3 to these accounts. Indirect expenditure comprises support costs and governance costs. Support costs include all expenditure on financial procedures, the provision of office services and general administration. Governance costs comprise the costs of public accountability (including audit costs). All support and governance costs are allocated to activities in the ratio of the direct expenditure on each activity.

Tangible fixed assets

All assets costing more than £1,000 and with an expected useful life exceeding one year are capitalised.

Improvements to leasehold property are depreciated on a straight-line basis over the life of the lease.

Depreciation is provided on office furniture and equipment purchased outright on a straight-line basis at rates of 20% and 25% per annum respectively.

Investments

Listed investments are a form of basic financial instrument and are initially recognised at their transaction value and subsequently measured at their fair value as at the balance sheet date using the closing quoted market price.

The charity does not acquire put options, derivatives or other complex financial instruments.

Realised gains (or losses) on investment assets are calculated as the difference between disposal proceeds and their opening carrying value or their purchase value is acquired subsequent to the first day of the financial year. Unrealised gains and losses are calculated as the difference between the fair value at the year end and their carrying value at that date. Realised and unrealised investment gains (or losses) are combined in the statement of financial activities and are credited (or debited) in the year in which they arise.

Debtors

Debtors are recognised at their settlement amount, less any provision for non-recoverability. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid. They have been discounted to the present value of the future cash receipt where such discounting is material.

Principal accounting policies Year to 30 September 2023

Cash at bank and in hand and short term deposits

Cash at bank and in hand represents such accounts and instruments that are available on demand or have a maturity of less than three months from the date of acquisition. Deposits for three or more months but less than one year have been disclosed as short term deposits. Cash placed on deposit for more than one year is disclosed as a fixed asset investment.

Creditors and provisions

Creditors and provisions are recognised when there is an obligation at the balance sheet date as a result of a past event, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefit will be required in settlement, and the amount of the settlement can be estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are recognised at the amount the charity anticipates it will pay to settle the debt. They have been discounted to the present value of the future cash payment where such discounting is material.

Funds structure

The unrestricted funds of the charity represent those funds which are freely available for use in furtherance of the charity's objectives at the discretion of the members of the Executive Committee. Within the total unrestricted funds of the charity, the members of the Executive Committee have designated amounts for specific purposes and have identified those non-liquid funds represented by the tangible fixed assets and fixed asset investments. Those funds not designated or represented by tangible fixed assets or fixed asset investments are classified as general funds.

Pension costs

Contributions payable to defined contribution pension schemes and/or personal pension plans are accounted for in the year in which they are payable.

Notes to the accounts Year to 30 September 2023

1 Income from investments and interest receivable

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2023 £	Unrestricted funds 2022 £
Investment income				
. Unit trusts and common investment funds	16,110	—	16,110	15,867
Bank interest	2,978	—	2,978	148
	<u>19,088</u>	<u>—</u>	<u>19,088</u>	<u>16,015</u>

2 Income from charitable activities

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2023 £	Unrestricted funds 2022 £
Membership subscriptions	98,920	—	98,920	139,373
Meetings	20,383	—	20,383	8,049
Other income	215	—	215	—
Grants receivable	10,677	—	10,677	13,965
	<u>130,195</u>	<u>—</u>	<u>130,195</u>	<u>161,387</u>

3 Expenditure on charitable activities:

Promotion of the welfare of Apostolic Institutes of Religious in England and Wales

	Direct staff costs £	Other direct costs £	Total Direct costs £	Support staff costs £	Other support costs £	Total support costs £	Total 2023 £
Safeguarding	4,886	—	4,886	5,863	12,086	17,949	22,835
Members Meetings	16,593	13,834	30,427	19,909	41,042	60,951	91,378
Advocacy	11,706	—	11,706	14,046	28,956	43,002	54,708
Vocations	—	14,000	14,000	—	—	—	14,000
Development	7,679	—	7,679	9,214	18,995	28,209	35,888
Communications	8,477	—	8,477	10,172	20,970	31,142	39,619
	<u>49,341</u>	<u>27,834</u>	<u>77,175</u>	<u>59,204</u>	<u>122,049</u>	<u>181,253</u>	<u>258,428</u>

	Direct staff costs £	Other direct costs £	Support staff costs £	Other support costs £	Direct staff costs £	Other direct costs £	Total 2022 £
Safeguarding	4,624	—	5,498	11,764	6,582	—	28,468
Members Meetings	17,103	10,820	8,391	17,953	—	—	54,267
Advocacy	13,118	—	6,436	13,771	—	—	33,325
Vocations	—	12,000	—	—	—	—	12,000
Development	18,739	—	9,193	19,671	—	—	47,603
Communications	23,395	—	11,477	24,558	—	—	59,430
	<u>76,979</u>	<u>22,820</u>	<u>40,995</u>	<u>87,717</u>	<u>6,582</u>	<u>—</u>	<u>235,093</u>

Notes to the accounts Year to 30 September 2023

4 Net expenditure before investment gains (losses)

This is stated after charging:

	2023 £	2022 £
Staff costs (note 5)	108,545	124,556
Audit costs including VAT		
· Statutory audit services	9,701	7,273
Depreciation	2,280	2,099

5 Staff costs

	2023 £	2022 £
Staff costs during the year were as follows:		
Wages and salaries	65,192	97,536
Severance costs	40,000	—
Social security costs	3,044	6,305
Pension costs	309	1,635
	108,545	124,556
Consultancy	—	19,080
	108,545	124,556
Staff costs per function were as follows:		
Safeguarding	4,886	11,206
Leaders' meetings	16,593	17,103
Advice and information	11,706	13,118
Development	7,679	18,739
Communications	8,477	23,394
Governance	43,978	19,144
Support	15,226	21,852
	108,545	124,556

One employee was paid between £90,000 and £100,000 per annum or more (including benefits) during the year (2022 – none). During the year the charity paid a severance payment totalling £40,000 to one employee (2022: £nil).

The average number of employees during the year, including consultants, (by head count), analysed by function, was as follows:

	2023 No.	2022 No.
Secretariat (safeguarding, advice and information, members' meetings, advocacy, vocations, formation)	1.2	2.3
Support	0.2	0.4
	1.4	2.7

Remuneration of key management personnel

The members of the Executive Committee, together with the General Secretary, comprise the key management of the charity.

Notes to the accounts Year to 30 September 2023

5 Staff costs (continued)

Remuneration of key management personnel (continued)

The remuneration paid to key management personnel during the year ended 30 September 2023 was £93,365 (2022 – £50,507).

No member of the Executive Committee received any remuneration in connection with his or her services during the year (2022 – £nil).

Two members of the Executive Committee was reimbursed expenses during the year of £1,254 (2022: £nil) in respect to travel and meeting expenses in connection with their duties as members of the Executive Committee.

6 Taxation

The Conference of Religious in England and Wales is a registered charity and, therefore, is not liable to income tax or corporation tax on income derived from its charitable activities, as it falls within the various exemptions available to registered charities.

7 Tangible fixed assets

	Office furniture and equipment £
Cost	
At 1 October 2022 and at 30 September 2023	9,123
Depreciation	
At 1 October 2022	3,713
Charge for year	2,280
At 30 September 2023	5,993
Net book values	
At 30 September 2023	3,130
At 30 September 2022	5,410

8 Investments

	2023 £	2022 £
Listed investments		
Market value at 1 October 2022	984,828	1,043,374
Disposal proceeds	(50,000)	—
Realised gains on disposal	1,838	—
Unrealised investment gains	25,679	(58,545)
Market value at 30 September 2023	962,345	984,829
Cost of listed investments at 30 September 2023	642,324	671,678

Notes to the accounts Year to 30 September 2023

8 Investments (continued)

At 30 September 2023, the listed investments comprised holdings in the following two Common Investment Funds managed by CCLA Investment Management Limited:

Holding	Market value at 30 September 2023 £	Percentage of portfolio %
COIF Charities Ethical Investment Fund Income Units	522,560	54.3
COIF Charities Ethical Investment Fund Accumulation Units	439,785	45.7
	962,345	100.0

Holding	Market value at 30 September 2022 £	Percentage of portfolio %
COIF Charities Ethical Investment Fund Income Units	515,731	52.4
COIF Charities Ethical Investment Fund Accumulation Units	469,098	47.6
	984,829	100.0

9 Debtors

	2023 £	2022 £
Prepayments and accrued income	5,324	4,106

10 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2023 £	2022 £
Membership subscriptions received in advance	80,325	33,818
Accruals	21,580	12,699
Other creditors	19,554	9,407
	121,459	55,924

The movement in membership subscriptions received in advance is reconciled below.

	2023 £	2022 £
Deferred income brought forward	33,818	37,055
Released in year	(33,818)	(37,055)
Deferred in year	80,325	33,818
Deferred income carried forward	80,325	33,818

Notes to the accounts Year to 30 September 2023

11 Tangible fixed asset fund

	2023 £	2022 £
At 1 October 2022	5,410	3,552
Movement in year	(2,280)	1,858
At 30 September 2023	3,130	5,410

The tangible fixed assets fund represents the net book value of the charity's tangible fixed assets. A decision was made to separate this fund from the general fund and other designated funds of the charity in recognition of the fact that the tangible fixed assets are essential to the day-to-day work of the charity and as such their value should not be regarded as funds that would be realisable with ease, in order to meet future contingencies.

12 Designated funds

The income funds of the charity include the following designated fund which has been set aside out of unrestricted funds by the members of the Executive Committee for specific purposes:

	At 1 October 2022 £	New designations £	Utilised/ released £	At 30 September 2023 £
Capital reserve fund	984,829	(22,484)	—	962,345

	At 1 October 2021 £	New designations £	Utilised/ released £	At 30 September 2022 £
Capital reserve fund	1,043,373	—	(58,545)	984,829

The charity will rely more and more on investment income in order to fund its charitable work. Consequently, the members of the Executive Committee believe it prudent to set aside, or designate, the value tied up in the charity's investment portfolio as a capital reserve in order to provide a level of assurance that investment income will continue to be generated in future years and thereby 'finance' the charity's work in the long term.

Notes to the accounts Year to 30 September 2023

13 Restricted funds

The income funds of the charity include the following restricted funds to be applied for specific purposes:

	At 1 October 2022 £	Income £	Expenditure £	At 30 September 2023 £
Safeguarding project	53,624	—	—	53,624

	At 1 October 2021 £	Income £	Expenditure £	At 30 September 2023 £
Safeguarding project	60,206	—	(6,582)	53,624

The safeguarding project fund is to be applied towards the cost of specific safeguarding advisory and associated activities.

14 Analysis of net assets between funds

	Restricted funds £	General funds £	Tangible fixed assets funds £	Designated funds £	Total 2023 £
Fund balances at 30 September 2023 are represented by:					
Tangible fixed assets	—	—	3,130	—	3,130
Investments	—	—	—	962,345	962,345
Net current assets	53,624	96,696	—	—	150,320
Total net assets	53,624	96,696	3,130	962,345	1,115,795

	Restricted funds £	General funds £	Tangible fixed assets funds £	Designated funds £	Total 2022 £
<i>Fund balances at 30 September 2022 are represented by:</i>					
<i>Tangible fixed assets</i>	—	—	5,410	—	5,410
<i>Investments</i>	—	—	—	984,829	984,829
<i>Net current assets</i>	53,624	153,560	—	—	207,184
<i>Total net assets</i>	<i>53,624</i>	<i>153,560</i>	<i>5,410</i>	<i>984,829</i>	<i>1,197,423</i>

	Total 2023 £	Total 2022 £
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Reconciliation of movements in unrealised gains on investment assets:

Unrealised gains at 1 October 2022	313,151	371,696
Net unrealised gains (losses) arising in the year	6,870	(58,545)
Unrealised gains at 30 September 2023	320,021	313,151

Notes to the accounts Year to 30 September 2023

15 Financial commitments

At 30 September 2023 the charity was committed to pay £12,000 in respect to rent and service charges payable (2022: £12,000).

16 Transactions with related parties

The religious congregations to which the members of the Executive Committee belong are all members of the charity and pay membership subscriptions to the charity. All such payments are made to the charity on an arm's length basis.

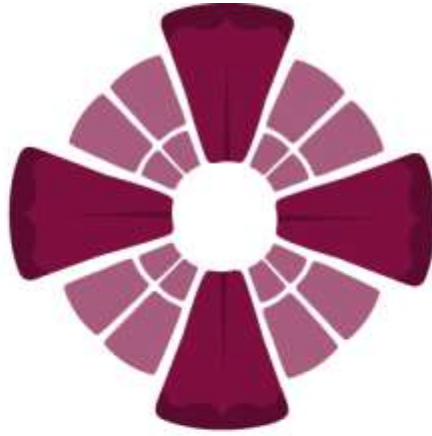
During the year, the congregations to which the members of the Executive Committee belong made contributions to the charity totalling £20,405 (2021 – £18,430). These contributions consist of membership fees and donations.

During the year, the charity incurred rent and service charges totaling £12,000 (2022 - £12,000) payable to the Poor Servants of the Mother of God (PSMG). PSMG, are members of the Conference of Religious in England and Wales.

THE CONFERENCE OF RELIGIOUS OF ENGLAND AND WALES

England & Wales - Charity number 277024

Accounts



CONFERENCE *of* RELIGIOUS

England & Wales

ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS

30 SEPTEMBER 2022

THE CONFERENCE OF RELIGIOUS IN ENGLAND AND WALES

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Reference and administrative information Year to 30 September 2022

Executive Committee	Fr Paul Smyth CMF (President) <i>re-elected Oct 2021</i> Sr Frances Orchard CJ (Vice President) <i>stepped down Oct 2021</i> Sr Sue Berry CSF (Anglican Associate Member) <i>elected Sep 2017</i> Sr Bernadette Boland IBVM <i>stepped down Oct 2021</i> Sr Philomena Bowers RSM <i>stepped down Oct 2021</i> Sr Sarah Dobson CJ <i>elected Oct 2021</i> Sr Margaret Donovan HC <i>elected May 2019</i> Sr Ellen Flynn DC <i>elected Vice President Oct 2021</i> Sr Catherine Lloyd RSCJ <i>elected Oct 2021</i> Fr Robert Marsh OSA <i>re-elected Oct 2021</i> Sr Monica Matthews SHJC <i>appointed Oct 2019</i> Sr Anne Morris DHS <i>elected Oct 2021</i> Rev Kenneth Okoli CSSP <i>stepped down Oct 2021</i> Fr Richard Reid CSsR <i>elected Oct 2021</i>
General Secretary	Valerie Nazareth (until 31 December 2021) Nicholas Witherick (from 1 January 2022) Valerie Nazareth (part time from 24 February 2022 to 18 August 2022) Nalini Nathan (from 19 August 2022)
Principal office	St Philomena's 70-71 Euston Square London NW1 1DJ
Auditor	Buzzacott LLP 130 Wood Street London EC2V 6DL
Investment manager	CCLA Investment Management Limited Senator House 85 Queen Victoria Street London EC4V 4ET
Banker	The Royal Bank of Scotland plc 48 Haymarket London SW1Y 4SE
Solicitors	Stone King LLP Upper Borough Court Upper Borough Walls Bath BA1 1RG

Report of the Executive Committee Year to 30 September 2022

The members of the Executive Committee (ie the trustees) of the Conference of Religious (CoR) present their report together with the audited financial statements of the charity for the year ended 30 September 2022.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out on pages 22 to 25 of the attached accounts and comply with the charity's trust deed, the Charities Act 2011 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 (FRS 102).

INTRODUCTION

The Conference of Religious (CoR) is a small charity, with around 156 members. Its formal membership consists of both the female and male Major Superiors of each institute and Superiors General in the Catholic Church (or their nominees) who work in England or Wales. Associate membership is offered to the superiors of Anglican Communities (since 1992) and to all Contemplative Superiors in England and Wales (since 2000).

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

The object of the charity is to promote the welfare of apostolic institutes of Religious in the Catholic Church in England and Wales, while respecting the autonomy, nature and spirit of each other. This includes:

- ❖ effecting closer co-operation with each other and with various other religious bodies and individual bishops;
- ❖ providing representation with constituted authorities, both ecclesiastical and civil.

Vision Statement of the Conference of Religious

The Conference of Religious seeks to be a dynamic and proactive presence in the Church and the world today.

Mission statement of the Conference of Religious

The Mission of CoR is to:

- ❖ enable the prophetic voice of Religious Congregations to be heard making Religious Life better known;
- ❖ unite its membership in collaborative initiatives translating Gospel vision into reality; and
- ❖ offer support to its membership and particularly those in positions of leadership.

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES (continued)

Our Values

All our activities are inspired by Gospel Values.

The hallmarks of CoR are:

- ❖ unity in diversity
- ❖ justice
- ❖ integrity
- ❖ hope

Our Aims and Objectives

To create a Prophetic Voice that gives witness to the values of the Gospel

- ❖ to be a prophetic, corporate, pro-active voice in the Church and in Society;
- ❖ in particular, to speak on behalf of people who live on the margins, promoting justice;
- ❖ to promote visible witness of the Good News of Jesus Christ, and Gospel values in reality today;
- ❖ to witness to the gift of community living; and
- ❖ to witness to unity in diversity.

To generate and participate in Networks that promote Collaboration

- ❖ to actively promote collaboration amongst members;
- ❖ to find ways of improving communication between members;
- ❖ to promote greater links with Vicars for Religious;
- ❖ to seek greater dialogue with the Church and its agencies at national and local level;
- ❖ to foster coordinated liaison with the Bishops, nationally and in local dioceses;
- ❖ to build deeper ecumenical relationships; and
- ❖ to liaise with other Conferences of Religious internationally.

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES (continued)

Our Aims and Objectives (continued)

To serve and support Religious in England and Wales

- ❖ to provide easy access via the CoR office to enquiries and to respond to members' needs;
- ❖ to develop structures of mutual support;
- ❖ to set up a professional database and informal group mailing systems;
- ❖ to find ways of sharing gifts, skills and resources, ideas, books etc;
- ❖ to be active participants in Safeguarding initiatives in the Church in England and Wales;
- ❖ to participate in the work of Vocations and to support the National Office; and
- ❖ to encourage and support the formation of new Religious Life initiatives.

The charity pursues these objectives by operating through its Executive Committee and other committees and groups drawn from the expertise of the membership and professionals and coordinated through the Secretariat led by the General Secretary. The Secretariat disseminates information, organises conferences and meetings and maintains links with Religious and other bodies that have similar interests.

Public benefit

CoR exists to support and promote the work of Religious in England and Wales. The members of CoR are involved through their ministry in a wide range of activities including: education, pastoral support, healthcare, working with refugees and victims of modern-day slavery, chaplaincy and counselling, which are all of direct benefit to the public.

By providing the opportunity for collaboration and undertaking the other activities on behalf of its members that are outlined in this report, CoR assists in the provision of the public benefit, by our member congregations.

When setting the objectives and planning the work for the year and future activities, the members of the Executive Committee have given careful consideration to the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit.

ACTIVITIES AND PERFORMANCE

The Secretariat

The Secretariat is comprised of the General Secretary, the Communications and Development Lead, the Administrative Coordinator, and the Safeguarding Adviser. The restrictions resulting from the pandemic were ongoing for much of the year but have had a limited impact. We have spent part of this year out of the office and like many have found a new balance in how we work, mixing home-working with being in the office. There have been a number of changes in staffing since September 2021. This has included saying farewell to Valerie Nazareth who had been General Secretary for the last few years. We look forward to 2023 becoming a year of increased stability.

Meetings

We held our first post pandemic 'in person' meeting for Leaders in Autumn 2021 whilst simultaneously continuing with a variety of other large sessions on zoom.

Meeting for Leaders, October 2021

We had a two-day nonresidential meeting at the Claretian Oasis in Hayes for Leaders and friends – with internationally renowned bestselling author, Sr Joan Chittister OSB, who joined live via zoom. Archbishop Malcolm McMahon also joined via zoom to talk about the synodal process (having recently held a synod in the Archdiocese of Liverpool) and Sr Nellie McLaughlin RSM, who leads retreats in creation spirituality throughout Ireland and internationally, joined in person. The conference concluded with a Mass presided by His Excellency Archbishop Claudio Gugerotti, Apostolic Nuncio to Great Britain.



ACTIVITIES AND PERFORMANCE (continued)

Meetings

'Cry of the Earth – how can Religious respond?' was held in October 2021. This featured contributions from four Religious and was aimed at inspiring and encouraging others to get involved. It included a video interview between Sr Kate Midgley & environmental activist, Melanie Nazareth.



Ukraine information session with a focus on hosting, April 2022

We held an information webinar on Ukraine with speakers including: Sr Agnesa Jenčíková, (Provincial Superior of the Congregation of Jesus in Slovakia), who shared firsthand accounts of assisting refugees; Nicola Harwood from the charity Nightstop about the various aspects of hosting that need to be considered; and Sr Catherine O'Neill PBVM who accommodates destitute asylum seekers in her own home.

AGM via zoom, May 2022

The AGM for Leaders included video input from Sr Imelda Poole IBVM in Albania and a financial presentation from Amanda Francis of Buzzacott. Sr Teresa White FCJ provided an animated opening and closing prayer sequence.

Health and Care Group: Second webinar on dementia, June 2022

There was a follow up session on dementia with two excellent external speakers: Sharon Johnston, Admiral nurse and Sarah Hodges, Occupational Therapy community team.

ACTIVITIES AND PERFORMANCE (continued)

Meetings (continued)

Synodal Feedback meetings, December 21 – February 2022

It was decided that we would create our contribution to the Synod of Bishops by organising a series of three online meetings that would be open to Religious to attend. The first session, on the theme of 'Communion' included a reflection by Sr Gemma Simmonds CJ; the second session focusing on 'Participation' included a reflection by Fr John McGowan OCD, and the third session on 'Mission' was led by Sr Lynda Dearlove.

Feedback from Religious in each session was collated and sent to The Dicastery for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life

Safeguarding Meetings

The Conference has hosted a variety of online meetings to keep Religious up to date with the developments in safeguarding structures after The Elliot Report and ICCSA. Meetings were set up to consult religious about the development of the RLSS. These were led by David Smolira SJ.

Training

December 21 – February 2022: CoR facilitated a series of three sessions for new Leaders, via zoom, with Sr Christine Anderson FCJ leading on input.

Communications

Media

Raising the profile of Religious both within our congregations and to the wider world has continued to be a key aim for us. Several articles have made their way into The Tablet and/or onto ICN eg.:

A pilgrim on the way: celebrating forty years of priesthood on the Camino:

<https://www.corew.org/news/2022/10/2/a-pilgrim-on-the-way-walking-tne-camino>

Rejoicing in the rich heritage of Religious Orders in Education:

<https://www.corew.org/news/2022/10/3/rejoicing-in-the-rich-heritage-of-religious-orders-in-education>

The Season of Creation and the making of a crucifix in the spirit of Laudato Si':

<https://www.corew.org/news/2022/9/28/the-season-of-creation-and-the-making-of-a-crucifix-in-the-spirit-of-laudato-si>

Key new role for FCJ Sister in Liverpool Archdiocese:

<https://www.corew.org/news/2022/6/14/key-new-role-for-fcj-sister-in-liverpool-archdiocese>

Our website www.corew.org continues to be a showcase of Religious life - for members and the wider world – by telling the stories of Religious and raising awareness of key issues. It features regularly updated 'stories' as well as reflections written by Religious in the 'blog' section. Additionally, the website is also a way of providing members with information and resources and important documents, eg., Guide to Stipends.

ACTIVITIES AND PERFORMANCE (continued)

Communications (continued)

Media (continued)



The CORrespondent

The CORrespondent, our monthly newsletter continues to be our main form of communication with members. It aims to carry significant news of our work, relevant updates as well as being a platform for Religious to share information concerning initiatives, projects, retreats, meetings as well as to make requests.

Support Groups for Leaders

Three groups of Leaders met in broad geographical areas or hubs, covering:

- a. Midlands, Wales, Eastern England
- b. North West and North East England
- c. Southeast and Southwest England

The hubs join the well-established North London group which has been meeting to provide mutual support and information to Leaders for many years.

Report from the Health and Care Group

The work of the CoR healthcare group has continued this year with members helping congregations with particular queries and concerns.

The group now comprises of 5 Religious, all with experience of health-related issues within their own order and supported by Susan Thomas (Director Employment Matters Limited).

This year we have focused on the many challenges and concerns that dementia brings, which have raised by so many of our members. We know that the variety of symptoms and behaviours associated with dementia leave so many feeling unsure of where to turn for help and advice.

At the request of members, we researched and delivered 2 webinars on the topic of dementia. The first was an outline of the different types of dementia and recognising the symptoms. This was led by a member of the Executive Committee who has a great deal of experience in this area and is a qualified and practicing nurse.

The second webinar was organised by Susan who invited former colleagues from the NHS to present to us. The topic was living with dementia, and living with those who suffer from dementia.

ACTIVITIES AND PERFORMANCE (continued)

Report from the Health and Care Group (continued)

We benefited from hearing an Admiral Nurse, who is one of a group of nurses specially trained in the care of dementia patients and those who care for them. She was joined by a colleague who is a specialist Occupational Therapist who deals with caring for those with dementia in their own homes. Together these professionals outlined a combination of general advice and strategies to be deployed when dealing with those with dementia. They gave their time voluntarily and we are extremely grateful to them.

Over the summer there have been no meetings of our group but we will be coming together again shortly to think about our work in 2023. As always, we are there to serve our members.

Monica Matthews
Chair

SAFEGUARDING

Religious Lead on Safeguarding

One of the recommendations made by IICSA was that the Conference of Religious and the Conference of Bishops should each appoint a Lead person with responsibility for Safeguarding. The inaugural post holder for CoR was Fr David Smolira SJ who help establish a role description. Fr David stepped back from his work on this on 30 September and on 1 October 2021, Sr Frances Orchard CJ was appointed Lead Religious for Safeguarding.



Collaboration with others

CoR continues to work to represent Religious, share information and develop relationships with others in the Church and the wider community through a variety of means. Sometimes this is done by the Executive, for example via the Mixed Commission to represent the views of religious to the Bishops (recent topics covered include safeguarding, One Church and the lack of consultation on the new lectionary) or on the CBCEW Department of Social Justice Committee Work. Sometimes it is done by the General Secretary e.g. in relation to IICSA work has been done through the Catholic Council and sometimes it is done by other Religious.

We also collaborate by joining organisations such as the Churches Legislative Advisory Service. Those who sit on the committees and groups to ensure that CoR is kept abreast of activities and developments elsewhere include:

- ❖ The Mixed Commission – Fr Paul Smyth CMF, Sr Ellen Flynn DC, Sr Anne Morris DHS

SAFEGUARDING (continued)

Collaboration with others (continued)

- ❖ The National Office of Vocations – through which we support Vocations work by funding the Religious Life Promoter
- ❖ CBCEW Department of Social Justice – Sr Margaret Donovan HC
- ❖ Anglican Committees – Sr Margaret Shepard NDS sits on the Anglican Committees and Sr Sue Berry CSF is the Anglican representative on the CoR Executive

FUTURE PLANS

A review of CoR's three-year Strategic Plan is now due.

A new project is also beginning, exploring how Religious might collaborate with respect to the challenges they are facing. This will be a theme to take forward at the AGM 2023.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Results for the year

The statement of financial activities shows that net expenditure for the year before gains on investments was £57,691 (2021: net income of £11,910). Net losses on the revaluation of investments were £58,545 (2021: net gains of £119,517) leading to an overall decrease in funds of £116,236 (2021: increase in funds of £131,427).

Income comprised mainly of membership fees, income from meetings and investment income. Some members continued to subscribe amounts in excess of their actual fees so that those members whose resources are more limited are not prevented from participating in conferences and other activities.

Investment policy and performance

The charity's investments, managed by CCLA Investment Management Limited, were valued at £984,829 (2021: £1,043,374) at the year end date.

The investment managers operate within specific, ethical guidelines which are set out and reviewed periodically by the Executive Committee. The ethical guidelines mean that the charity cannot invest in any company connected with armaments, gambling, tobacco, alcohol, contraception and known social injustice in the third world. The charity's investment policy is to maintain a balance between capital growth and income, so that, over the long term, the real value of assets will be maintained.

In accordance with the above policy, investments were held in COIF Charities Ethical Investment Fund Income Units and COIF Charities Ethical Investment Fund Accumulation Units during the year. The holding returned a total yield (income and capital) of 14.5% for the year.

FINANCIAL REVIEW (continued)

Raising funds

The charity aims to achieve best practice in the way in which it communicates with members and other supporters. It takes care with both the tone of its communications and the accuracy of its data to minimise the pressures on members and supporters. It applies best practice to protect members' and supporters' data and never sells data, it never swaps data and ensures that communication preferences can be changed at any time. The charity manages its own activities in respect to raising funds and does not employ the services of professional fundraisers. The charity undertakes to react to and investigate any complaints regarding its activities for raising funds and to learn from them and improve its service. During the year, the charity received no complaints about such activities.

Reserves policy

The members of the Executive Committee consider that it is essential to have in place an appropriate amount of working capital so that the charity may meet its liabilities as and when they fall due. To meet this objective, the members of the Executive Committee consider that funds available for working capital and held as free reserves should be equivalent to at least six months' operating expenses.

Financial position

At 30 September 2022, the charity had total net assets of £1,197,423 (2021: £1,313,659).

Included within these total funds are restricted funds amounting to £53,624 to fund safeguarding advisory and associated activities in the future.

£984,829 (2021: £1,043,374) of these net assets comprise the charity's investment portfolio and represent a designated fund called the capital reserve fund. Demographic data relating to membership of religious congregations, together with the lower number of current vocations, continue to indicate that further reductions in income may be expected in future years.

The charity will rely more and more on investment income in order to fund its charitable work. Consequently, the members of the Executive Committee have set aside, or designated, the value tied up in the charity's investment portfolio as a capital reserve in order to provide a level of assurance that investment income will continue to be generated in future years and thereby 'finance' the charity's work in the long term.

Free reserves at 30 September 2022 stood at £153,560 (2021: £206,527). Comparing this to the charity's reserves policy set out above, it is clear that normally there would be scope to reduce the free reserves. The Executive Committee believes that the reserves will be sufficient to enable CoR to continue to operate in uncertain circumstances and do not expect material concerns to arise over the charity's financial position. The Executive Committee, therefore, is content also to allow the free reserves to exceed the amount set out in the policy for the immediate future.

PRINCIPAL RISKS AND UNCERTAINTIES

The Executive is continuing to work on assessing the main risks to which the charity is exposed, in particular those relating to the specific operational areas of the charity, its investments, and its finances. The Executive believes that by monitoring reserve levels, by ensuring controls exist over key financial systems, and by examining the operational and business risks faced by the charity, it has established effective systems to mitigate those risks. These systems are also frequently reviewed with a view to possible updates and improvements.

Loss of key personnel

The Executive notes the importance of consistency in staff and key personnel within the organisation. It recognises the challenges that the loss of personnel can have on an organisation that relies on a relatively small team of people particularly when more than one leave at the same time. To assist in mitigating this risk, a number of strategies are in place. Some of the Executive Trustees hold positions on external bodies, which are important to the effective functioning of CoR. There are also other Religious and lay people who participate in aspects of CoR such as its Finance Committee, Health and care Group and in safeguarding.

Reliance on limited income sources

The reliance on one single source of income has long been recognised as a risk to the future ability of CoR to provide the service that the members require and to ensure that religious congregations are represented in areas of concern. The main source of income is the membership fees. The Strategic Plan highlighted the fact that the number of members is decreasing, resulting in a decrease in the income derived from congregations. This is reflected in the budget for 2022/2023.

The Executive also recognise that it receives professional support from companies and notably this year from Buzzacott; Stone King; IBB; D.E. Ford; and CCLA. The charity is indebted to these firms for their advice and guidance.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Constitution

The Conference is governed by its own statutes and is registered with the Charity Commission (Charity Registration No. 277024). The property of the Conference is vested in a Trust, regulated by a trust deed dated 20 November 1978, as amended by deeds of variation dated 4 March 1992 and 20 September 2001.

Organisation

CoR is administered by an Executive Committee, members of which constitute the trustees of the charity. At 30 September 2022, the Executive Committee comprised a President, a Vice President, and eight other members.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT (continued)

Organisation (continued)

The responsibility for representing the charity at meetings of other ecclesiastical and civil bodies falls mainly on members of the Executive Committee. However, the day-to-day management of the charity is delegated to the General Secretary. The Executive Committee monitors progress by meeting bi-monthly to receive reports from the General Secretary and other staff members when appropriate. The Executive Committee also maintains financial control by approving the annual budget and receiving management accounts which are prepared on a quarterly basis.

Executive Committee

As stated above, members of the Executive Committee constitute the trustees of the charity. They are incorporated under the provisions of section 251 of the Charities Act 2011 as “The trustees of the Conference of Religious of England and Wales”.

Members of the Executive Committee, who served during the year or who were in office at the date on which this report was signed, are set out on page 1.

They are appointed by means of nomination and election procedures at the charity’s Annual General Meeting. Each member is elected for a period of three years and is eligible to serve for a maximum of two terms.

Key management personnel

The members of the Executive Committee consider that they, together with the General Secretary, comprise the key management of the charity in charge of directing and controlling, running and operating the charity on a day to day basis.

None of the members of the Executive Committee are remunerated for their services to the charity. The remuneration of the General Secretary is based on market rates. The remuneration is considered annually by the Executive Committee and any increments to the salary are agreed and ratified.

STATEMENT OF RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The Executive Committee is responsible for preparing the report of the Executive Committee and accounts in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

The law applicable to charities in England and Wales requires the Executive Committee to prepare accounts for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the income and expenditure of the charity for that period.

In preparing these accounts, the Executive Committee is required to:

- ❖ select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;

STATEMENT OF RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (continued)

- ❖ observe the methods and principles in 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 (FRS 102);
- ❖ make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- ❖ state whether applicable United Kingdom Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the accounts; and
- ❖ prepare the accounts on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The Executive Committee is responsible for keeping proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable it to ensure that the accounts comply with the Charities Act 2011, applicable Charity (Accounts and Reports) Regulations and the provisions of the trust deed. The Executive Committee is 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.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Executive would like to thank the members of the Secretariat: the General Secretary, the Communications and Development Lead and the Administrative Co-ordinator for their support and commitment to CoR throughout this year.

Signed on behalf of the Executive Committee:

Fr Paul Smyth CMF

Member of the Executive Committee Approved on: 5th May 2023



Independent auditor's report Year to 30 September 2022

Independent auditor's report to the members of the Executive Committee of The Conference of Religious in England and Wales

Opinion

We have audited the accounts of The Conference of Religious in England and Wales (the 'charity') for the year ended 30 September 2022 which comprise the statement of financial activities, the balance sheet, the principal accounting policies and the notes to the accounts. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the accounts:

- ◆ give a true and fair view of the state of the charity's affairs as at 30 September 2022 and of its income and expenditure for the year then ended;
- ◆ have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- ◆ have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the accounts section of our report. We are independent of the charity in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the accounts in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the accounts, we have concluded that the Executive Committee's use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the accounts is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charity's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the accounts are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the Executive Committee with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Independent auditor's report Year to 30 September 2022

Other information

The Executive Committee is responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the Annual Report and Accounts, other than the accounts and our auditor's report thereon. Our opinion on the accounts does not cover the other information and we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the accounts, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the accounts or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the accounts or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Charities Act 2011 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- ◆ the information given in the Report of the Executive Committee is inconsistent in any material respect with the accounts; or
- ◆ sufficient accounting records have not been kept; or
- ◆ the accounts are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- ◆ we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

Responsibilities of the members of the Executive Committee

As explained more fully in the statement of responsibilities of the Executive Committee, the members of the Executive Committee (who are the charity's trustees) are responsible for the preparation of the accounts and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the Executive Committee determines is necessary to enable the preparation of accounts that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the accounts, the Executive Committee is responsible for assessing the charity's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the Executive Committee either intends to liquidate the charity or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Independent auditor's report Year to 30 September 2022

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the accounts

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the accounts as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these accounts.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below.

How the audit was considered capable of detecting irregularities including fraud

Our approach to identifying and assessing the risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations, was as follows:

- ◆ The engagement partner ensured that the engagement team collectively had the appropriate competence, capabilities and skills to identify or recognise non-compliance with applicable laws and regulations;
- ◆ We identified the laws and regulations applicable to the charity through discussions with management and members of the Executive Committee and from our knowledge and experience of the charity sector;
- ◆ We focused on specific laws and regulations which we considered may have a direct material effect on the accounts or the activities of the charity. These included but were not limited to the Charities Act 2011; Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable to the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019); and
- ◆ We assessed the extent of compliance with the laws and regulations identified above through making enquiries of management and those charged with governance and review of minutes of Executive Committee meetings.

We assessed the susceptibility of the charity's financial statements to material misstatement, including obtaining an understanding of how fraud might occur, by:

- ◆ Making enquiries of management and representatives from the Executive Committee as to where they considered there was susceptibility to fraud, their knowledge of actual, suspected and alleged fraud; and
- ◆ Considering the internal controls in place to mitigate risks of fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the accounts (continued)

How the audit was considered capable of detecting irregularities including fraud
(continued)

To address the risk of fraud through management bias and override of controls, we:

- ◆ Performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships;
- ◆ Tested and reviewed journal entries to identify unusual transactions;
- ◆ Carried out substantive testing of expenditure including the authorisation thereof;
- ◆ Assessed whether judgements and assumptions made in determining the accounting estimates were indicative of potential bias; and
- ◆ Investigated the rationale behind significant or unusual transactions.

In response to the risk of irregularities and non-compliance with laws and regulations, we designed procedures which included, but were not limited to:

- ◆ Agreeing financial statement disclosures to underlying supporting documentation;
- ◆ Reading the minutes of meetings of the Executive Committee; and
- ◆ Enquiring of as to actual and potential litigation and claims.

There are inherent limitations in our audit procedures described above. The more removed that laws and regulations are from financial transactions, the less likely it is that we would become aware of non-compliance. Auditing standards also limit the audit procedures required to identify non-compliance with laws and regulations to enquiry of the trustees and other management and the inspection of regulatory and legal correspondence, if any.

Material misstatements that arise due to fraud can be harder to detect than those that arise from error as they may involve deliberate concealment or collusion.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the accounts is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

Independent auditor's report Year to 30 September 2022

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the members of the Executive Committee, (who are charity's trustees), as a body, in accordance with section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 and with regulations made under section 154 of that Act. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the members of the Executive Committee those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charity and the members of the Executive Committee, as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Buzzacott LLP
Statutory Auditor
130 Wood Street
London
EC2V 6DL

31st May 2023

Buzzacott LLP is eligible to act as an auditor in terms of section 1212 of the Companies Act 2006

Statement of financial activities Year to 30 September 2022

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2022 £	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2021 £
Income from:							
Investments and interest receivable	1	16,015	—	16,015	15,727	—	15,727
Charitable activities	2	161,387	—	161,387	186,002	61,000	247,002
Total income		177,402	—	177,402	201,729	61,000	262,729
Expenditure on:							
Charitable activities							
. Promotion of the welfare of Apostolic Institutes of Religious in England and Wales	3	228,511	6,582	235,093	201,718	49,101	250,819
Total expenditure		228,511	6,582	235,093	201,718	49,101	250,819
Net (expenditure) income before investment (losses) gains	4	(51,109)	(6,582)	(57,691)	11	11,899	11,910
Net investment (losses) gains	8	(58,545)	—	(58,545)	119,517	—	119,517
Net (expenditure) income and net movement in funds		(109,654)	(6,582)	(116,236)	119,528	11,899	131,427
Reconciliation of funds:							
Fund balances brought forward at 1 October 2021		1,253,453	60,206	1,313,659	1,133,925	48,307	1,182,232
Fund balances carried forward at 30 September 2022		1,143,799	53,624	1,197,423	1,253,453	60,206	1,313,659

All of the charity's activities derived from continuing operations during the above two financial periods.

All recognised gains and losses are included in the above statement of financial activities.

Balance sheet 30 September 2022

	Notes	2022 £	2022 £	2021 £	2021 £
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	7		5,410		3,552
Investments	8		984,829		1,043,374
			<u>990,239</u>		<u>1,046,926</u>
Current assets					
Debtors	9	4,106		8,283	
Short term deposits		150,000		150,000	
Cash at bank and in hand		109,002		171,412	
		<u>263,108</u>		<u>329,695</u>	
Liabilities					
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	10	(55,924)		(62,962)	
Net current assets			207,184		266,733
Total net assets			<u>1,197,423</u>		<u>1,313,659</u>
The funds of the charity:					
Unrestricted funds					
. General funds			153,560		206,527
. Tangible fixed assets fund	11		5,410		3,552
. Designated funds	12		984,829		1,043,374
			<u>1,143,799</u>		<u>1,253,453</u>
Restricted funds	13		53,624		60,206
			<u>1,197,423</u>		<u>1,313,659</u>

Approved by the members of the Executive Committee and signed on their behalf by:

Member of the Executive Committee: Fr Paul Smyth CMF

Approved on: 5th May 2023

Principal accounting policies Year to 30 September 2022

The principal accounting policies adopted, judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty in the preparation of the accounts are laid out below.

Basis of preparation

These accounts have been prepared for the year to 30 September 2022 with comparative information provided for the year to 30 September 2021.

The accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention with items recognised at cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policies below or the notes to these accounts.

The accounts 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 United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (Charities SORP FRS 102), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Charities Act 2011.

The charity constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS 102.

The accounts are presented in sterling and are rounded to the nearest pound.

Critical accounting estimates and areas of judgement

Preparation of the accounts requires the Executive Committee and management to make significant judgements and estimates.

The items in the accounts where these judgements and estimates have been made include:

- ◆ estimating the expected useful economic life of tangible fixed assets for the purpose of determining the annual depreciation charge;
- ◆ allocating support costs between expenditure headings; and
- ◆ estimating future income and expenditure levels for the purposes of assessing going concern.

Assessment of going concern

The Executive Committee has assessed whether the use of the going concern assumption is appropriate in preparing these accounts. It has made this assessment in respect to a period of one year from the date of approval of these accounts.

Principal accounting policies Year to 30 September 2022

Assessment of going concern (continued)

Free reserves at 30 September 2022 stood at £153,560 (2021: £206,528). Comparing this to the charity's reserves policy set out in the Report of the Executive Committee, it is clear that normally there would be scope to reduce the free reserves. However, members of the Executive Committee believe that these additional reserves will act as a cushion against the effects of current macroeconomic and geopolitical climate on the charity and its investment portfolio in particular and other unforeseen events. The Executive Committee believes that the reserves will be sufficient to enable CoR to operate in the exceptional economic circumstances that exist in the UK and wider world and does not expect material concerns to arise over the charity's financial position.

The Executive Committee is of the opinion that the charity will have sufficient resources to meet its liabilities as they fall due. The most significant areas of judgement that affect items in the accounts are detailed above.

Statement of cash flows

The accounts do not include a statement of cash flows because the charity is considered a small charity and is therefore exempt from the requirement to prepare such a statement under the Charities SORP FRS 102 Update Bulletin 1.

Income recognition

Income is recognised in the period in which the charity has entitlement to the income, the amount of income can be measured reliably and it is probable that the income will be received.

Income comprises investment income and interest receivable and income from charitable activities, principally the income derived from membership subscriptions, financial contributions towards meetings and grants receivable.

Investment income is recognised once the dividend or equivalent has been declared and notification has been received of the amount due.

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the charity; this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the bank.

Income comprising annual membership subscriptions is credited to the statement of financial activities on an accruals basis with reference to the period covered by the subscription. Income in respect to meetings and other events is credited to the statement of financial activities when invoiced and is accounted for net of any discounts and/or rebates.

Principal accounting policies Year to 30 September 2022

Income recognition (continued)

Grants and donations from members are recognised when the charity has confirmation of both the amount and settlement date. In the event of grants and/or donations pledged but not received, the amount is accrued for where the receipt is considered probable. In the event that a grant or donation is subject to conditions that require a level of performance before the charity is entitled to the funds, the income is deferred and not recognised until either those conditions are fully met, or the fulfilment of those conditions is wholly within the control of the charity and it is probable that those conditions will be fulfilled in the reporting period.

Expenditure recognition

Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to make a payment to a third party, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. All expenditure is stated inclusive of irrecoverable VAT.

All expenditure incurred by the charity relates directly or indirectly to the principal charitable objective of the charity i.e. promoting the welfare of Apostolic Institutes of Religious in England and Wales. Within this heading, expenditure is categorised between the key areas of activity and is analysed in note 3 to these accounts. Indirect expenditure comprises support costs and governance costs. Support costs include all expenditure on financial procedures, the provision of office services and general administration. Governance costs comprise the costs of public accountability (including audit costs). All support and governance costs are allocated to activities in the ratio of the direct expenditure on each activity.

Tangible fixed assets

All assets costing more than £1,000 and with an expected useful life exceeding one year are capitalised.

Improvements to leasehold property are depreciated on a straight-line basis over the life of the lease.

Depreciation is provided on office furniture and equipment purchased outright on a straight-line basis at rates of 20% and 25% per annum respectively.

Investments

Listed investments are a form of basic financial instrument and are initially recognised at their transaction value and subsequently measured at their fair value as at the balance sheet date using the closing quoted market price.

The charity does not acquire put options, derivatives or other complex financial instruments.

Principal accounting policies Year to 30 September 2022

Investments (continued)

Realised gains (or losses) on investment assets are calculated as the difference between disposal proceeds and their opening carrying value or their purchase value if acquired subsequent to the first day of the financial year. Unrealised gains and losses are calculated as the difference between the fair value at the year end and their carrying value at that date. Realised and unrealised investment gains (or losses) are combined in the statement of financial activities and are credited (or debited) in the year in which they arise.

Debtors

Debtors are recognised at their settlement amount, less any provision for non-recoverability. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid. They have been discounted to the present value of the future cash receipt where such discounting is material.

Cash at bank and in hand

Cash at bank and in hand represents such accounts and instruments that are available on demand or have a maturity of less than three months from the date of acquisition. Deposits for more than three months but less than one year have been disclosed as short term deposits. Cash placed on deposit for more than one year is disclosed as a fixed asset investment.

Creditors and provisions

Creditors and provisions are recognised when there is an obligation at the balance sheet date as a result of a past event, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefit will be required in settlement, and the amount of the settlement can be estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are recognised at the amount the charity anticipates it will pay to settle the debt. They have been discounted to the present value of the future cash payment where such discounting is material.

Funds structure

The unrestricted funds of the charity represent those funds which are freely available for use in furtherance of the charity's objectives at the discretion of the members of the Executive Committee. Within the total unrestricted funds of the charity, the members of the Executive Committee have designated amounts for specific purposes and have identified those non-liquid funds represented by the tangible fixed assets and fixed asset investments. Those funds not designated or represented by tangible fixed assets or fixed asset investments are classified as general funds.

Pension costs

Contributions payable to defined contribution pension schemes and/or personal pension plans are accounted for in the year in which they are payable.

Notes to the accounts Year to 30 September 2022

1 Income from investments and interest receivable

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	2022	Unrestricted funds
	£	£	£	2021
				£
Investment income				
. Unit trusts and similar funds	15,867	—	15,867	15,699
Bank interest	148	—	148	28
	<u>16,015</u>	<u>—</u>	<u>16,015</u>	<u>15,727</u>

2 Income from charitable activities

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	2022	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	2021
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Membership subscriptions	139,373	—	139,373	162,171	—	162,171
Meetings	8,049	—	8,049	8,678	—	8,678
Other income	—	—	—	10	—	10
Grants receivable and donations from members	13,965	—	13,965	15,143	61,000	76,143
	<u>161,387</u>	<u>—</u>	<u>161,387</u>	<u>186,002</u>	<u>61,000</u>	<u>247,002</u>

3 Expenditure on charitable activities:

Promotion of the welfare of Apostolic Institutes of Religious in England and Wales

	Unrestricted				Restricted		Total 2022
	Direct staff costs	Other direct costs	Support staff costs	Other support costs	Direct staff costs	Other direct costs	
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Safeguarding	4,624	—	5,498	11,764	6,582	—	28,468
Leaders' meetings	17,103	10,820	8,391	17,953	—	—	54,267
Events	13,118	—	6,436	13,771	—	—	33,325
Vocations	—	12,000	—	—	—	—	12,000
Development	18,739	—	9,193	19,671	—	—	47,603
Communications	23,395	—	11,477	24,558	—	—	59,430
	<u>76,979</u>	<u>22,820</u>	<u>40,995</u>	<u>87,717</u>	<u>6,582</u>	<u>—</u>	<u>235,093</u>

Notes to the accounts Year to 30 September 2022

3 Expenditure on charitable activities: (continued)

	<i>Unrestricted</i>				<i>Restricted</i>		<i>Total 2021 £</i>
	<i>Direct staff costs</i>	<i>Other direct costs</i>	<i>Support staff costs</i>	<i>Other support costs</i>	<i>Direct staff costs</i>	<i>Other direct costs</i>	
	<i>£</i>	<i>£</i>	<i>£</i>	<i>£</i>	<i>£</i>	<i>£</i>	
<i>Safeguarding</i>	9,753	—	17,343	29,929	48,101	1,000	106,126
<i>Leaders' meetings</i>	14,935	6,080	4,477	7,726	—	—	33,218
<i>Events</i>	16,344	—	4,900	8,455	—	—	29,699
<i>Vocations</i>	—	6,649	—	—	—	—	6,649
<i>Development</i>	18,383	—	5,511	9,511	—	—	33,405
<i>Communications</i>	22,961	—	6,883	11,878	—	—	41,722
	82,376	12,729	39,114	67,499	48,101	1,000	250,819

4 Net (expenditure) income before investment (losses) gains

This is stated after charging:

	2022 £	2021 £
Staff costs (note 5)	124,556	169,591
Audit costs including VAT		
. Statutory audit services	7,273	10,263
Depreciation	2,099	1,291

5 Staff costs

	2022 £	2021 £
Staff costs during the year were as follows:		
Wages and salaries	97,536	154,685
Social security costs	6,305	12,369
Pension costs	1,635	2,537
	105,476	169,591
Consultancy	19,080	—
	124,556	169,591
Staff costs per function were as follows:		
Safeguarding	11,206	57,854
Leaders' meetings	17,103	14,935
Advice and information	13,118	16,344
Development	18,739	18,383
Communications	23,394	22,961
Governance	19,144	17,942
Support	21,852	21,172
	124,556	169,591

There were no employees who earned £60,000 per annum or more (including benefits) during the year (2021: none).

Notes to the accounts Year to 30 September 2022

5 Staff costs (continued)

The average number of employees during the year, including consultants, (by head count), analysed by function, was as follows:

	2022 No.	2021 No.
Secretariat (safeguarding, advice and information, members' meetings, advocacy, vocations, formation)	2.3	2.8
Support	0.4	0.4
	<u>2.7</u>	<u>3.2</u>

Remuneration of key management personnel

The members of the Executive Committee, together with the General Secretary comprise the key management of the charity. No member of the Executive Committee received any remuneration in connection with his or her services during the year (2021: £nil).

The remuneration paid in respect to the post of General Secretary for the year ended 30 September 2022 was £31,427 (2021: £48,217) in respect to an employed post and £19,080 (2021: £nil) in respect to a consultancy arrangement.

No member of the Executive Committee was reimbursed expenses during the year of (2021: one member was reimbursed expenses totaling £20) in respect to travel and meeting expenses in connection with their duties as members of the Executive Committee.

6 Taxation

The Conference of Religious in England and Wales is a registered charity and, therefore, is not liable to income tax or corporation tax on income derived from its charitable activities, as it falls within the various exemptions available to registered charities.

7 Tangible fixed assets

	Office furniture and equipment
	£
Cost	
At 1 October 2021	5,166
Additions	3,957
At 30 September 2022	<u>9,123</u>
Depreciation	
At 1 October 2021	1,614
Charge for year	2,099
At 30 September 2022	<u>3,713</u>
Net book values	
At 30 September 2022	<u>5,410</u>
At 30 September 2021	<u>3,552</u>

Notes to the accounts Year to 30 September 2022

8 Investments

	2022 £	2021 £
Listed investments		
Market value at 1 October 2021	1,043,374	923,857
Unrealised investment (losses) gains	(58,545)	119,517
Market value at 30 September 2022	984,829	1,043,374
Cost of listed investments at 30 September 2022	671,678	671,678

At 30 September 2022, the listed investments comprised holdings in the following two funds managed by CCLA Investment Management Limited:

Holding	Market value at 30 September 2022 £	Percentage of portfolio %
COIF Charities Ethical Investment Fund Income Units	515,731	52.4
COIF Charities Ethical Investment Fund Accumulation Units	469,098	47.6
	984,829	100.0

Holding	Market value at 30 September 2021 £	Percentage of portfolio %
<i>COIF Charities Ethical Investment Fund Income Units</i>	554,015	53.1
<i>COIF Charities Ethical Investment Fund Accumulation Units</i>	489,359	46.9
	1,043,374	100.0

9 Debtors

	2022 £	2021 £
Prepayments and accrued income	4,106	499
Other debtors	—	7,784
	4,106	8,283

Notes to the accounts Year to 30 September 2022

10 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2022 £	2021 £
Membership subscriptions received in advance	33,818	37,055
Accruals	12,699	16,305
Other creditors	9,407	9,603
	55,924	62,963

11 Tangible fixed asset fund

	2022 £	2021 £
At 1 October 2021	3,552	4,843
Movement in year	1,858	(1,291)
At 30 September 2022	5,410	3,552

The tangible fixed assets fund represents the net book value of the charity's tangible fixed assets. A decision was made to separate this fund from the general fund and other designated funds of the charity in recognition of the fact that the tangible fixed assets are essential to the day-to-day work of the charity and as such their value should not be regarded as funds that would be realisable with ease, in order to meet future contingencies.

12 Designated funds

The income funds of the charity include the following designated fund which has been set aside out of unrestricted funds by the members of the Executive Committee for specific purposes:

	At 1 October 2021 £	New designations £	Utilised/ released £	At 30 September 2022 £
Capital reserve fund	1,043,374	—	(58,545)	984,829

	At 1 October 2020 £	New designations £	Utilised/ released £	At 30 September 2021 £
Capital reserve fund	923,857	119,517	—	1,043,374

The charity will rely more and more on investment income in order to fund its charitable work. Consequently, the members of the Executive Committee believe it prudent to set aside, or designate, the value tied up in the charity's investment portfolio as a capital reserve in order to provide a level of assurance that investment income will continue to be generated in future years and thereby 'finance' the charity's work in the long term.

Notes to the accounts Year to 30 September 2022

13 Restricted funds

The income funds of the charity include the following restricted funds to be applied for specific purposes:

	At 1 October 2021 £	Income £	Expenditure £	At 30 September 2022 £
Safeguarding project	60,206	—	(6,582)	53,624

	At 1 October 2020 £	Income £	Expenditure £	At 30 September 2021 £
<i>Safeguarding project</i>	48,307	61,000	(49,101)	60,206

The safeguarding project fund is to be applied towards the cost of specific safeguarding advisory and associated activities.

14 Analysis of net assets between funds

	Restricted funds £	General funds £	Tangible fixed assets funds £	Designated funds £	Total 2022 £
Fund balances at 30 September 2022 are represented by:					
Tangible fixed assets	—	—	5,410	—	5,410
Investments	—	—	—	984,829	984,829
Net current assets	53,624	153,560	—	—	207,184
Total net assets	54,624	153,560	5,410	984,829	1,197,423

	Restricted funds £	General funds £	Tangible fixed assets funds £	Designated funds £	Total 2021 £
<i>Fund balances at 30 September 2021 are represented by:</i>					
<i>Tangible fixed assets</i>	—	—	3,552	—	3,552
<i>Investments</i>	—	—	—	1,043,374	1,043,374
<i>Net current assets</i>	60,206	206,527	—	—	266,733
<i>Total net assets</i>	<i>60,206</i>	<i>206,527</i>	<i>3,552</i>	<i>1,043,374</i>	<i>1,313,659</i>

	Total 2022 £	Total 2021 £
Reconciliation of movements in unrealised gains on investment assets:		
Unrealised gains at 1 October 2021	371,696	252,179
Net unrealised gains arising in year	(58,545)	119,517
Unrealised gains at 30 September 2022	313,151	371,696

15 Financial commitments

At 30 September 2022 the charity was committed to pay £12,000 in respect to rent and service charges payable (2021: £12,000).

16 Transactions with related parties

The religious congregations to which the members of the Executive Committee belong are all members of the charity and pay membership subscriptions to the charity. All such payments are made to the charity on an arm's length basis.

During the year, the religious congregations to which the members of the Executive Committee belong made contributions to the charity totalling £20,182 (2021: £18,430). These contributions consist of membership fees and donations.

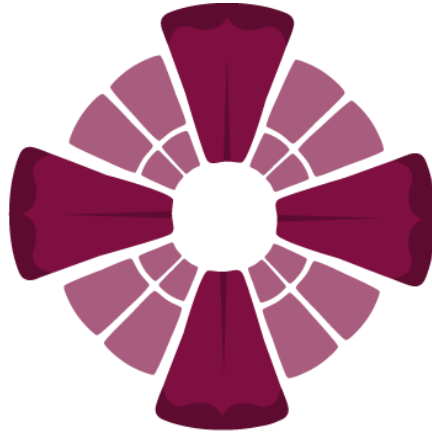
During the year, the charity incurred rent and service charges totaling £24,000 (2021: £24,000) payable to the Poor Servants of the Mother of God (PSMG). PSMG, are members of the Conference of Religious in England and Wales.

During the year, the charity made a payment of £6,830 (2021: £nil) in respect to venue hire to the Claretian Missionaries Trust, a charity of which Father Paul Smyth, a member of the Executive Committee, is also a trustee of. The Claretian Missionaries are members of the Conference of Religious in England and Wales.

THE CONFERENCE OF RELIGIOUS OF ENGLAND AND WALES

England & Wales - Charity number 277024

Accounts



CONFERENCE *of* RELIGIOUS

England & Wales

ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS

30 SEPTEMBER 2021

THE CONFERENCE OF RELIGIOUS IN ENGLAND AND WALES

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Reference and administrative information Year to 30 September 2021

Executive Committee	Fr Paul Smyth CMF (President) <i>re-elected Oct 2021</i> Sr Frances Orchard CJ (Vice President) <i>stepped down Oct 2021</i> Sr Sue Berry CSF (Anglican Associate Member) <i>elected Sep 2017</i> Sr Bernadette Boland IBVM <i>stepped down Oct 2021</i> Sr Philomena Bowers RSM <i>stepped down Oct 2021</i> Sr Sarah Dobson CJ <i>elected Oct 2021</i> Sr Margaret Donovan HC <i>elected May 2019</i> Sr Ellen Flynn DC <i>elected Vice President Oct 2021</i> Sr Catherine Lloyd RSCJ <i>elected Oct 2021</i> Fr Robert Marsh OSA <i>re-elected Oct 2021</i> Sr Monica Matthews SHJC <i>appointed Oct 2019</i> Sr Anne Morris DHS <i>elected Oct 2021</i> Rev Kenneth Okoli CSSP <i>stepped down Oct 2021</i> Fr Richard Reid CSSR <i>elected Oct 2021</i>
General Secretary	Valerie Nazareth (until 31 December 2021) Nicholas Witherick (from 1 January 2022)
Principal office	St Philomena's 70-71 Euston Square London NW1 1DJ
Auditor	Buzzacott LLP 130 Wood Street London EC2V 6DL
Investment manager	CCLA Investment Management Limited Senator House 85 Queen Victoria Street London EC4V 4ET
Banker	The Royal Bank of Scotland plc 48 Haymarket London SW1Y 4SE
Solicitors	Stone King LLP 13 Queen Square Bath BA1 2HJ

Report of the Executive Committee Year to 30 September 2021

The trustees of the Conference of Religious (CoR) present their report together with the audited financial statements of the charity for the year ended 30 September 2021.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out on pages 31 to 34 of the attached accounts and comply with the charity's trust deed, the Charities Act 2011 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 (FRS 102).

INTRODUCTION

The Conference of Religious (CoR) is a small charity, with around 245 members who are superiors of religious orders or their nominees, in the Roman Catholic Church, both male or female, working in the United Kingdom and beyond. The charity also has a small number of Anglican congregations who are associate members.

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

The object of the charity is to promote the welfare of apostolic institutes of Religious in the Catholic Church in England and Wales, while respecting the autonomy, nature and spirit of each other. This includes:

- ❖ effecting closer co-operation with each other and with various other religious bodies and individual bishops;
- ❖ providing representation with constituted authorities, both ecclesiastical and civil.

Vision Statement of the Conference of Religious

The Conference of Religious seeks to be a dynamic and proactive presence in the Church and the world today.

Mission statement of the Conference of Religious

The Mission of CoR is to:

- ❖ enable the prophetic voice of Religious Congregations to be heard making Religious Life better known;
- ❖ unite its membership in collaborative initiatives translating Gospel vision into reality; and
- ❖ offer support to its membership and particularly those in positions of leadership.

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES (continued)

Our Values

All our activities are inspired by Gospel Values.

The hallmarks of CoR are:

- ❖ unity in diversity
- ❖ justice
- ❖ integrity
- ❖ hope

Our Aims and Objectives

To create a Prophetic Voice that gives witness to the values of the Gospel

- ❖ to be a prophetic, corporate, pro-active voice in the Church and in Society;
- ❖ in particular, to speak on behalf of people who live on the margins, promoting justice;
- ❖ to promote visible witness of the Good News of Jesus Christ, and Gospel values in reality today;
- ❖ to witness to the gift of community living; and
- ❖ to witness to unity in diversity.

To generate and participate in Networks that promote Collaboration

- ❖ to actively promote collaboration amongst members;
- ❖ to find ways of improving communication between members;
- ❖ to promote greater links with Vicars for Religious;
- ❖ to seek greater dialogue with the Church and its agencies at national and local level;
- ❖ to foster coordinated liaison with the Bishops, nationally and in local dioceses;
- ❖ to build deeper ecumenical relationships; and
- ❖ to liaise with other Conferences of Religious internationally.

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES (continued)

Our Aims and Objectives (continued)

To serve and support Religious in England and Wales

- ❖ to provide easy access via the CoR office to enquiries and to respond to members' needs;
- ❖ to develop structures of mutual support;
- ❖ to set up a professional database and informal group mailing systems;
- ❖ to find ways of sharing gifts, skills and resources, ideas, books etc;
- ❖ to be active participants in Safeguarding initiatives in the Church in England and Wales;
- ❖ to participate in the work of Vocations and to support the National Office; and
- ❖ to encourage and support the formation of new Religious Life initiatives.

The charity pursues these objectives by operating through its Executive Committee and other committees and groups drawn from the expertise of the membership and professionals and coordinated through the Secretariat led by the General Secretary. The Secretariat disseminates information, organises conferences and meetings and maintains links with Religious and other bodies that have similar interests.

Public benefit

CoR exists to support and promote the work of Religious in England and Wales. The members of CoR are involved through their ministry in a wide range of activities including: education, pastoral support, healthcare, working with refugees and victims of modern-day slavery, chaplaincy and counselling, which are all of direct benefit to the public.

By providing the opportunity for collaboration and undertaking the other activities on behalf of its members that are outlined in this report, CoR assists in the provision of the public benefit, by our member congregations.

When setting the objectives and planning the work for the year and future activities, the members of the Executive Committee have given careful consideration to the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit.

ACTIVITIES AND PERFORMANCE

The Secretariat

The Secretariat is comprised of the General Secretary, the Communications and Development Lead, the Administrative Coordinator, and the Safeguarding Adviser. The restrictions resulting from the pandemic were ongoing for much of the year but have had a limited impact. We have spent part of this year out of the office and like many have found a new balance in how we work, mixing home-working with being in the office. Since the summer of 2021 we have increasingly been meeting in person. Our meeting room is beginning to be used, not just by us but also by others and we welcome congregations, religious organisations, and some charities to make use of our space.



Staff changes

Although not within this reporting period, three staff changes took place shortly after the close of the financial year. Firstly, our Safeguarding Adviser, Dani Wardman left to join the Religious Life Safeguarding Service (the RLSS) in November. While we are sorry to see Dani go, we know that she will be with the RLSS, with whom CoR will have close links. Secondly, in September the General Secretary, Valerie Nazareth informed the Executive she would be leaving at the end of the year after three years at the helm. Lastly, our Administrative Coordinator Charlotte Vassallo left at the end of December.



Report of the Executive Committee Year to 30 September 2021

ACTIVITIES AND PERFORMANCE (continued)

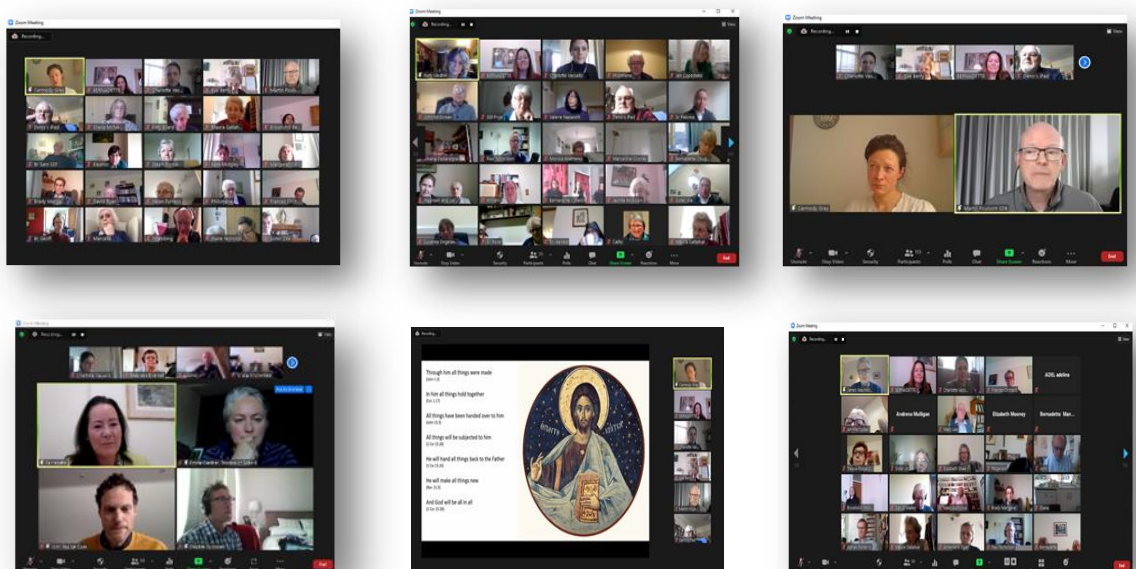
The Secretariat (continued)

Staff changes (continued)

Although the staff is small, these changes should not unduly affect the Charity, for the following reasons: In relation to the Dani Wardman, the establishment of the RLSS, means that CoR should not need its own full time Safeguarding Adviser. Secondly, the Executive acted promptly to find a replacement, General Secretary, Nicholas Witherick, who began in early December, to ensure sufficient time for induction and hand over. Thirdly a temporary Admin Coordinator was found with sufficient time to ensure a full handover with Charlotte.

Meetings

This year we have held more numerous events and talks than in previous years. These have primarily been conducted on zoom which has enabled us to engage with a wider range of topics and a greater number of religious than in previous years.



Leaders' Day, 28 October 2020

In place of the usual two-day residential AGM, the Executive decided it would be appropriate to hold a one day zoom meeting for Leaders. The day started with a presentation from the President and the General Secretary setting out information relating to the recent work of the Conference of Religious. Our auditor, Amanda Frances, then joined us for a financial review. This was followed by four videos relating to key areas of CoR's work and collaboration. The afternoon was given over to a session on the Independent Review into Safeguarding in the Church which was presented by members of the Review Panel and Steering Committee. Cardinal Nichols addressed the opening session and re-joined the meeting for some closing thoughts.

ACTIVITIES AND PERFORMANCE (continued)

Meetings (continued)

General Meeting, 29 October 2020

This meeting on the theme of 'Embracing the Future with Hope' started with a presentation from Fr Timothy Radcliffe OP. The rest of the morning and early afternoon were animated by Inno van den Berg of Smith & Williamson Investment Management LLP on the many facets of congregational planning for the future. He focused on governance, asset management, age care, legacy planning and where the laity can be used to help. Later there was a presentation from Sr Katherine O'Flynn FCJ on embracing hope, spirituality, ecology, creativity, and inter-cultural living. We concluded the day with a useful panel discussion involving the speakers and Sr Cath Lloyd RSCJ.

Talk by Fr Nicholas King SJ, 26 November 2020

In the autumn of 2020, we received the Report by IICSA into the Catholic Church and the outcome of the Independent Review on Safeguarding in the Church undertaken by Ian Elliott. Information on this is set out in the safeguarding section below, but before we began the task of dealing with the implementation of the recommendations made by IICSA and the Independent Review, we started with a talk by distinguished biblical scholar Fr Nicholas King SJ who considered the impact of IICSA and other issues facing religious in the light of the Gospel.

Roses in December: A service for the 40th anniversary of women martyrs of El Salvador

On 2 December 2020 in collaboration with the Archbishop Romero Trust, Pax Christi and CAFOD we held a service in person which was live streamed to commemorate the women martyrs in El Salvador.

Service for Religious on the Day of Prayer for Victims and Survivors of Abuse

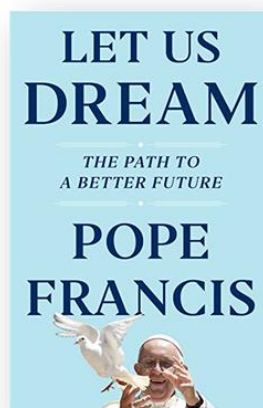
On 4 May 2021 we held a service so that religious could join together in prayer on this day. To enable as many people as possible to participate, the service was live streamed and made available later via YouTube.

ACTIVITIES AND PERFORMANCE (continued)

Meetings (continued)

General Meeting, 18 May 2021

At this meeting Austen Ivereigh spoke on the topic of Let Us Dream following which breakout rooms gave time for reflection on what the post Covid era might mean for Religious and what individuals and congregations might do differently as a result of the impact of the pandemic.



Faith and Arts in Lent 2021

In Lent we held a series of talks by zoom about Faith in the arts. Topics covered were:

- ❖ Faith in art - in which we considered a video by Dr Gabriel Finaldi on depicting the Image of Christ and heard from artist Andrew White;
- ❖ Faith and media – in which we heard from the Tablet Online Editor Ruth Gledhill and BBC technology journalist Jen Copestake;
- ❖ Faith and creation in which we considered Laudato Si and developing a prophetic voice for Vowed Religious with Dr Carmody Grey and Fr Martin Poulson; and
- ❖ Faith and Sacred Music featuring Sir James McMillan CBE.



ACTIVITIES AND PERFORMANCE (continued)

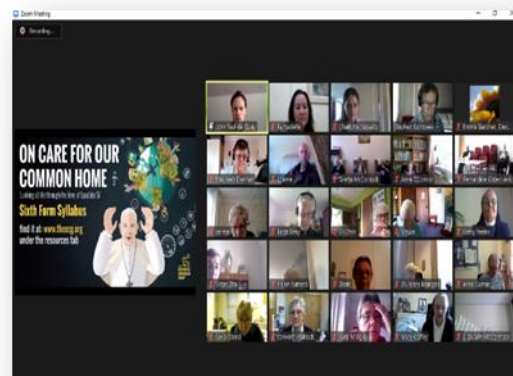
Care for the environment

This topic has been of increasing importance to us. To promote religious engagement on this we held our first Cry of the Earth webinar in January which was addressed by Sr Sheila Kinsey FCJM of the UISG, Bishop John Arnold and Dr Carmody Grey.

After considering Faith and Creation with Dr Carmody Grey in Lent, in the run up to COP 26 we held two further online meetings:

'Cry of the Earth – how the Church in England & Wales is responding to the climate crisis' on 27 September and

'Cry of the Earth – how can Religious respond?' On 18 October. This featured contributions from four religious and was aimed at inspiring and encouraging others to get involved.



Divestment continues to be of interest with more congregations signing up to this.

Communications

Media

Raising the profile of Religious both within our congregations and to the wider world has been a key aim for us. Several articles generated by the Communications & Development Lead, Bernadette Kehoe have made their way into The Tablet and / or onto ICN, e.g.

The appointment by CoR of Sr Frances Orchard CJ as Lead Religious Safeguarding, a post created in response to a recommendation made by IICSA.

<https://www.corew.org/news/2021/9/24/sr-frances-orchard-cj-appointed-as-religious-safeguarding-lead>

A film festival organised by the charity Renate to draw attention to human trafficking:

<https://www.corew.org/news/2021/9/14/film-festival-highlights-victims-of-human-trafficking>

A view on life in lockdown from Hying Monastery:

<https://www.corew.org/news/2020/10/8/life-in-lockdown-the-view-from-the-monastery-1>

The closure of the well-known bookshop on Kensington High Street run by the Daughters of St Paul:

<https://www.corew.org/news/2020/10/6/long-established-pauline-bookshop-in-kensington-to-close-after-more-than-fifty-years>

Report of the Executive Committee Year to 30 September 2021

ACTIVITIES AND PERFORMANCE (continued)

Communications (continued)

Media (continued)

A reflection on the pandemic by Sr Margaret Atkins OSA:

<https://www.corew.org/blog/2020/10/5/danger-and-opportunity>

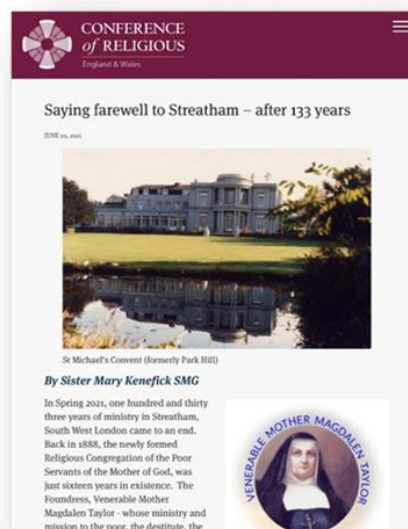
A reflection on the season of creation by Sr Susan Richert:

<https://www.corew.org/news/2020/10/5/reflecting-on-the-world-we-will-leave-behind-for-those-who-follow>



Website

Our website <https://www.corew.org> continues to be a strong means of telling the stories of Religious and also to raise awareness of issues by featuring all the stories above and many more. In addition, we feature reflections for the 'blog' section. The website is a way of providing members with information and features documents and resources on the site they may find useful. We now include a section on changes within congregations. The website also provides information about CoR and our members to the Catholic and wider world.



Report of the Executive Committee Year to 30 September 2021

ACTIVITIES AND PERFORMANCE (continued)

Communications (continued)

The CoRespondent

The CoRespondent, our monthly newsletter continues to be our main form of communication with members. It is now published in 'email' form, which means it doesn't have to be downloaded. This monthly update from the Secretariat aims to carry significant news of our work and relevant updates, as well as being a platform for Religious to share information concerning initiatives, projects, retreats, meetings and to make requests. It is uploaded monthly to the website www.corew.org homepage to ensure it reaches as many religious as possible.



Training and development

Zoom: In early 2021 Bernadette Kehoe held zoom training sessions in conjunction with Sr Cathy Edge RSM. This covered the basic knowledge of attending meetings via zoom as well as a more advanced session on screen sharing. Close to 100 Religious benefitted from the training.



SAFEGUARDING

Safeguarding children and vulnerable adults

This year CoR has continued to focus on safeguarding, in particular, as detailed below, the implementation of the recommendations of IICSA and the Independent Review. As well as it being part of the Executive's standing agenda items, our specialist safeguarding subgroup, CoRSC has met regularly to discuss and support this process.

IICSA report Into the Catholic Church

The IICSA report into the Catholic Church was published in November. It included many very serious criticisms of the church and of religious congregations. When the Report was published, we made a statement expressing our profound sadness to all those who are victims and survivors of sexual abuse at the hands of Catholic clergy and members of religious congregations. We thanked IICSA for bringing to light the acute suffering that has been inflicted over many years and our failures in safeguarding and in engagement with victims and survivors. We also thanked the victims and survivors for their courage in coming forward. We are wholeheartedly committed to learning lessons from this Inquiry and making every effort to assist religious congregations to embed a safeguarding culture at all levels of religious life.

The findings were discussed by our Safeguarding Committee (CoRSC) and by the Executive and we sent a summary of what we considered to be the key points made in the Report, to leaders and safeguarding leads. On 7 December we held a meeting, by Zoom, to provide members with the opportunity to learn more and to discuss the report.

The Independent Review

CoR provided information, assistance, and a channel for communication to the review panel and worked to assist them. Religious sat on the panel and on the Steering Committee which oversaw the work. The Independent Review or the 'Elliott Review' as it is often called, was released in October/November 2020, and recommended a restructure of safeguarding in the Church. The review recommended the creation of a standards agency that would have regulatory power over its members aimed at strengthening safeguarding across the Church. It also recommended that Religious be taken out of the current alignment system and that a new service be set up which would provide specifically for the safeguarding needs of Religious, from casework to training.

Once the Review had been released, CoR spent time working to understand the implications of the restructure and communicating the changes to members. Much of our 2020 Leaders Day was given over to this. Ian Elliott, review panel and Steering Committee members explained the outcomes and answered the questions of Religious.

SAFEGUARDING (continued)

Safeguarding Implementation Project

CoR has fully supported the work of the Safeguarding Implementation Project. We requested the release of Fr David Smolira SJ to lead on this work, ensuring he was able to bring his skills and experience to the project to find the best way forward. Fr David commenced work in January 2021 and CoR provided our Safeguarding Adviser Dani Wardman to support Fr David in his role. Dani Wardman has been working in this support role for Fr David (and latterly seconded to the Religious Life Safeguarding Service) on an almost full-time basis, for most of 2021. During this time, Fr David and Dani have consulted Religious, developed and implemented a new safeguarding service for Religious.

In order to inform this work CoR helped Fr David to set up various groups such as a working group of people with expertise which met every 2 weeks to discuss ideas in detail and a Religious Leaders group which met monthly to review ideas to ensure they met Religious needs. CoR's safeguarding committee met monthly to offer Fr David support and advice in this complex task. The Executive also considered the recommendations and progress made at every meeting.



Fr David ran monthly consultation meetings facilitated by CoR to consult Religious on the best way forward and on options for the new structure and service. We also invited Religious who are not members of CoR to attend the meetings, which were generally attended by 200 plus people. This work resulted in a company called The Religious Life Safeguarding Service Ltd or RLSS being established in June 2021.



SAFEGUARDING (continued)

Safeguarding Implementation Project (continued)

To ensure that the services of the RLSS are available to all religious congregations, regardless of their ability to pay, a Common Fund has been created from the generous donations of religious congregations. CoR assisted with this.

We also asked people to represent Religious on various working streams set up by the overall Church Safeguarding Implementation team on topics such as standards and audit, finance, and the ending of the alignment system.

During his work on the Safeguarding Implementation Project, Fr David represented Religious by attending Church Task Group meetings to ensure that all the new safeguarding structures were representative of Religious needs, not just the dedicated service being created. He was joined in this by other Religious who sat of the Steering Committee and later the Task Group.

While recognising its status as an independent entity, CoR will continue to support the work of the RLSS and to build a close and collaborative relationship with the RLSS.

The Executive are grateful to the Jesuits for making Fr David available to do this vital work and to Fr David for all he did as well as to all those who helped him, too many for us to mention by name.

CoR Safeguarding Committee (CoRSC)

Committee members are Elizabeth Bano, Dani Wardman, Sr Anne Stewart SHCJ, Sr Eileen Glancy DC, Fr David Smolira SJ, Sr Philomena McCluskey FMSJ, Sr Frances Cullen, Fr Robert Marsh OSA (executive link member), and Fr Nicholas Edmonds-Smith Cong.Orat. During the year the committee has principally dealt with issues connected to IICSA and the Independent Review.

Religious Lead on Safeguarding

One of the recommendations made by IICSA was that the Conference of Religious and the Conference of Bishops should each appoint a Lead person with responsibility for Safeguarding. The inaugural post holder for CoR was Fr David Smolira SJ who help establish a role description. Fr David stepped back from his work on this on 30 September and on 1 October Sr Frances Orchard CJ was appointed Lead Religious for Safeguarding.



SAFEGUARDING (continued)

General advice

CoR have worked with some individuals throughout the year to support safeguarding matters as well as safeguarding adjacent work. This has covered advice and support on paperwork, victim/survivors and safeguarding cases, welfare checks with individuals and interventions in difficult situations that have occurred in congregations. We have also supported some direct safeguarding cases working closely with the current alignment system to ensure Congregations were supported throughout the processes.

Support groups for Leaders

For some time now we have wanted to re-establish some additional regional support groups for Leaders. We began the process with a series of talks by Fr Frank Turner SJ on the topic of Fratelli Tutti. We have now established three new groups in broad geographical areas or hubs, covering:

- a. Midlands, Wales, Eastern England
- b. Northwest and Northeast England
- c. Southeast and Southwest

They join the well-established North London group which has been meeting to provide mutual support and information to leaders, for many years. The new groups have been meeting by Zoom. They will continue with the support of the Secretariat, but their agendas are set by members.

Report from the Health and Care Group

This committee has continued to offer help and advice on matters of health and care to members of CoR over the year. The committee members currently are Susan Thomas who coordinates the committee, Sr Bernie Boland, IBVM (and member of CoR Executive), Sr Jacinta Boland, Religious Sisters of Charity, Sr Doreen Cunningham, Nazareth Sisters and Sr Monica Matthews, Holy Child Sisters (Chair of the group and also on the CoR Executive). We will shortly be joined by two further Religious members who also have considerable experience in healthcare.

The committee has continued to offer help and advice during this difficult period of the Covid-19 pandemic. In particular, Susan Thomas lobbied tirelessly on behalf of those communities who run care homes which are not CQC registered and so were not being included in the government's lists of homes. Eventually she achieved her goal of having these homes recognised and they were able to have regular testing and receive the vaccines.

In January 2021, the committee organised a webinar at which two of the members gave input on power of attorney, living wills and related subjects. This was attended by close to 100 people and we were grateful for the support of the CoR staff in helping us with this first venture. Early in 2022, the committee plans to offer a series of three webinars on dementia, a topic which is of concern to so many congregations with ageing members.

SAFEGUARDING (continued)

Report from the Health and Care Group (continued)

Having become accustomed, like so many people, to using digital platforms, this has become a much easier way to gather CoR members.

CoR members continue to approach the committee asking for advice on a number of issues, including the possibilities of partnering with another congregation in the running of a care home, where they might find a vacancy for their members in need of care, alternative ways of managing care homes and advice about individual members with special care needs. If the committee is unable to offer relevant advice itself, it can usually find someone who can, and this service is much appreciated. There is a wealth of wisdom and experience within the CoR membership, and we are grateful to be able to draw on that to give assistance to other members.

Collaboration with others

CoR continues to work to represent Religious, share information and develop relationships with others in the Church and the wider community through a variety of means. Sometimes this is done by the Executive, for example via the Mixed Commission to represent the views of religious to the Bishops (recent topics covered include safeguarding, One Church and the lack of consultation on the new lectionary) or on the CBCEW Department of Justice Committee Work. Sometimes it is done by the General Secretary e.g. in relation to IICSA work has been done through the Catholic Council and sometimes it is done by other Religious.

We also collaborate by joining organisations such as the Churches Legislative Advisory Service and the European Union of Conferences of Major Superiors. Those who sit on the committees and groups to ensure that CoR is kept abreast of activities and developments elsewhere include:

- ❖ The Mixed Commission – Fr Paul Smyth CMF, Sr Frances Orchard CJ and Sr Ellen Flynn DC
- ❖ The National Office of Vocations – through which we support Vocations work by funding the Religious Life Promoter, Sr Frances Kelly (a report from the NoV is in the Appendix)
- ❖ CBCEW Department of Social Justice – Sr Margaret Donovan HC
- ❖ Catholic Council for IICSA – Valerie Nazareth
- ❖ Anglican Committees – Sr Margaret Shepard NDS sits on the Anglican Committees and Sr Sue Berry CSF is the Anglican representative on the CoR Executive
- ❖ St Luke’s Centre, Manchester – Fr Eamonn Mulcahey CSSp
- ❖ Let’s Be Honest the CBCEW Liturgy and Pastoral group for victims of abuse and their families – Sr Ellen Flynn DC and Fr Eugene Curran CM
- ❖ Boundary Breaking: Ecclesial-cultural Implications of the Sex Abuse Crisis within the Catholic Church– Sr Frances Orchard CJ and Dani Wardman

FUTURE PLANS

Synodality

We started our Synodal process as quickly as possible, in response to a letter from the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life (CICLSAL) to gather the contributions of Religious, by establishing a steering group to assist the Executive with planning and delivering our contribution. The group comprised Sr Margaret Donovan HC, Fr Paul Smyth CMF, Lynda Dearlove IOLM, Sr Ann O'Sullivan RLR, Sr Jane Bertelsen FMDM, Sr Christine McGarry OP, Sr Bridgetta Rooney CSJP and Fr John McGowan OCD.

Our process began at the AGM 2021 with speakers on the topic including Archbishop Malcom McMahon and the Papal Nuncio. This will be followed by three meetings to which all religious in England and Wales, not just CoR members, are welcome.

24 November 2021 on Communion with reflection by Sr Gemma Simmonds CJ

12 January 2022 on Participation with a reflection by Fr John McGowan OCD

9 February 2022 on Mission with a reaction by Sr Lynda Dearlove IOLM

These meetings will be supplemented by a questionnaire to gather views and to aid the provision of information to CICLSAL at the end of the process.

New Leaders course

A course called Faith-Filled Leadership to assist those who are relatively new to leadership, led by Sr Christine Anderson FCJ will run from December 2021 to February 2022.

Future work

A review of CoR's Strategic Plan is due in 2022.

A review CoR's safeguarding arrangements needs to take place in light of the establishment of the RLSS this includes the function and remit of CoRSC.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Results for the year

The statement of financial activities shows that net income for the year before gains on investments was £11,910 (2020: net income of £57,727). Net gains on the revaluation of investments were £119,517 (2020: £53,084) leading to an overall increase in funds of £131,427 (2020: £110,811).

Income comprised mainly of membership fees, income from meetings and investment income. Some members continued to subscribe amounts in excess of their actual fees so that those members whose resources are more limited are not prevented from participating in conferences and other activities.

Investment policy and performance

The charity's investments, managed by CCLA Investment Management Limited, were valued at £1,043,374 (2020: £923,857) at the year end date.

The investment managers operate within specific, ethical guidelines which are set out and reviewed periodically by the Executive Committee. The ethical guidelines mean that the charity cannot invest in any company connected with armaments, gambling, tobacco, alcohol, contraception and known social injustice in the third world. The charity's investment policy is to maintain a balance between capital growth and income, so that, over the long term, the real value of assets will be maintained.

In accordance with the above policy, investments were held in COIF Charities Ethical Investment Fund Income Units and COIF Charities Ethical Investment Fund Accumulation Units during the year. The holding returned a total yield (income and capital) of 14.5% for the year.

Raising funds

The charity aims to achieve best practice in the way in which it communicates with members and other supporters. It takes care with both the tone of its communications and the accuracy of its data to minimise the pressures on members and supporters. It applies best practice to protect members' and supporters' data and never sells data, it never swaps data and ensures that communication preferences can be changed at any time. The charity manages its own activities in respect to raising funds and does not employ the services of professional fundraisers. The charity undertakes to react to and investigate any complaints regarding its activities for raising funds and to learn from them and improve its service. During the year, the charity received no complaints about such activities.

FINANCIAL REVIEW (continued)

Reserves policy

The members of the Executive Committee consider that it is essential to have in place an appropriate amount of working capital so that the charity may meet its liabilities as and when they fall due. To meet this objective, the members of the Executive Committee consider that funds available for working capital and held as free reserves should be equivalent to at least six months' operating expenses.

Financial position

At 30 September 2021, the charity had total net assets of £1,313,659 (2020: £1,182,232).

Included within these total funds are restricted funds amounting to £60,206 to fund safeguarding advisory and associated activities in the future.

£1,043,374 (2020: £923,857) of these net assets comprise the charity's investment portfolio and represent a designated fund called the capital reserve fund. Demographic data relating to membership of religious congregations, together with the lower number of current vocations, continue to indicate that further reductions in income may be expected in future years.

The charity will rely more and more on investment income in order to fund its charitable work. Consequently, the members of the Executive Committee have set aside, or designated, the value tied up in the charity's investment portfolio as a capital reserve in order to provide a level of assurance that investment income will continue to be generated in future years and thereby 'finance' the charity's work in the long term.

Free reserves at 30 September 2021 stood at £206,527 (2020: £205,225). Comparing this to the charity's reserves policy set out above, it is clear that normally there would be scope to reduce the free reserves. However, members of the Executive Committee believe that these additional reserves will act as a cushion against the continuing impact of Covid-19 and other unexpected events. The Executive Committee believes that the reserves will be sufficient to enable CoR to continue to operate in uncertain circumstances and do not expect material concerns to arise over the charity's financial position. The Executive Committee, therefore, is content also to allow the free reserves to exceed the amount set out in the policy for the immediate future.

PRINCIPAL RISKS AND UNCERTAINTIES

The Executive is continuing to work on assessing the main risks to which the charity is exposed, in particular those relating to the specific operational areas of the charity, its investments, and its finances. The Executive believes that by monitoring reserve levels, by ensuring controls exist over key financial systems, and by examining the operational and business risks faced by the charity, it has established effective systems to mitigate those risks. These systems are also frequently reviewed with a view to possible updates and improvements.

PRINCIPAL RISKS AND UNCERTAINTIES (continued)

The key risks facing CoR at present are the potential loss of income due to the creation of a new more costly new safeguarding system and the ongoing financial uncertainty caused by Covid-19. These are dealt with elsewhere in more detail.

The other key risks for the charity, as identified by the Executive, are described below together with the principal ways in which they are mitigated:

Loss of key personnel

The Executive notes the importance of consistency in staff and key personnel within the organisation. It recognises the challenges that the loss of personnel can have on an organisation that relies on a relatively small team of people particularly when more than one leave at the same time. To assist in mitigating this risk, a number of strategies are in place. Some of the Executive Trustees hold positions on external bodies, which are important to the effective functioning of CoR. There are also other Religious and lay people who participate in aspects of CoR such as its Finance Committee, Health and care Group and in safeguarding.

The CoR Secretariat has now been restructured, records and databases updated, and systems put in place ensure the future viability and functioning of the Secretariat for members. One measure of the success of this can be seen in the smooth transition between Administrative Coordinators in October 2019, despite the absence of a handover period. This time the change in the key position of General Secretary will be managed through a period of induction. The Executive Committee also recognises that the size of the Secretariat makes it vulnerable to any one member of staff being affected by the Covid-19 virus. To mitigate this risk staff work from home whenever appropriate.

Reliance on limited income sources

The reliance on one single source of income has long been recognised as a risk to the future ability of CoR to provide the service that the members require and to ensure that religious congregations are represented in areas of concern. The main source of income is the membership fees. The Strategic Plan highlighted the fact that the number of members is decreasing, resulting in a decrease in the income derived from congregations. This is reflected in the budget for 2021/2022. Addressing this remains outstanding, given the other work necessitated this year by the Safeguarding Implementation work.

It is recognised that many congregations have increasing demands on their income due to care of the elderly and related costs including safeguarding. In recognition of this risk, the Executive has discussed this reality and mandated the General Secretary to explore the possibility of external funding from agencies that support religious congregations. The charity sought external funding towards costs associated with the recruitment a safeguarding adviser.

The Executive also recognise that it receives professional support from companies and notably this year from Buzzacott; Stone King; IBB; D.E. Ford; and CCLA. The charity is indebted to these firms for their advice and guidance.

PRINCIPAL RISKS AND UNCERTAINTIES (continued)

Risks associated with working from home

Like many other businesses and charities, for much of the year, the CoR Secretariat team has continued to work from home, and this may be necessary in the next financial year. The principal risk raised for by this is an increased cyber security risk as all our tasks are conducted online and by phone, increasing the likelihood of phishing, fraudulent emails, texts etc. We employ independent IT specialists to advise on this and our security arrangements include connecting to the office via a secure VPN.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Constitution

The Conference is governed by its own statutes and is registered with the Charity Commission (Charity Registration No. 277024). The property of the Conference is vested in a Trust, regulated by a trust deed dated 20 November 1978, as amended by deeds of variation dated 4 March 1992 and 20 September 2001.

Organisation

CoR is administered by an Executive Committee, members of which constitute the trustees of the charity. At 30 September 2021, the Executive Committee comprised a President, a Vice President, and eight other members.

The responsibility for representing the charity at meetings of other ecclesiastical and civil bodies falls mainly on members of the Executive Committee. However, the day-to-day management of the charity is delegated to the General Secretary. The Executive Committee monitors progress by meeting bi-monthly to receive reports from the General Secretary and other staff members when appropriate. The Executive Committee also maintains financial control by approving the annual budget and receiving management accounts which are prepared on a quarterly basis.

Executive Committee

As stated above, members of the Executive Committee constitute the trustees of the charity. They are incorporated under the provisions of section 251 of the Charities Act 2011 as “The trustees of the Conference of Religious of England and Wales”.

Members of the Executive Committee, who served during the year or who were in office at the date on which this report was signed, are set out on page 1.

They are appointed by means of nomination and election procedures at the charity’s Annual General Meeting. Each member is elected for a period of three years and is eligible to serve for a maximum of two terms.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT (continued)

Key management personnel

The members of the Executive Committee consider that they, together with the General Secretary, comprise the key management of the charity in charge of directing and controlling, running and operating the charity on a day to day basis.

None of the members of the Executive Committee are remunerated for their services to the charity. The remuneration of the General Secretary is based on market rates. The remuneration is considered annually by the Executive Committee and any increments to the salary are agreed and ratified.

STATEMENT OF RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The Executive Committee is responsible for preparing the report of the Executive Committee and accounts in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

The law applicable to charities in England and Wales requires the Executive Committee to prepare accounts for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the income and expenditure of the charity for that period.

In preparing these accounts, the Executive Committee is required to:

- ❖ select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- ❖ observe the methods and principles in 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 (FRS 102);
- ❖ make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- ❖ state whether applicable United Kingdom Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the accounts; and
- ❖ prepare the accounts on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The Executive Committee is responsible for keeping proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable it to ensure that the accounts comply with the Charities Act 2011, applicable Charity (Accounts and Reports) Regulations and the provisions of the trust deed. The Executive Committee is 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.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Executive would like to thank the members of the Secretariat: the General Secretary, the Communications and Development Lead and the Administrative Co-ordinator for their support and commitment to CoR throughout this year.

Signed on behalf of the Executive Committee:

Fr Paul Smyth CMF

Member of the Executive Committee Approved on: 30th April 2022



CONFERENCE *of* RELIGIOUS

England & Wales

Independent auditor's report Year to 30 September 2021

Independent auditor's report to the members of the Executive Committee of The Conference of Religious in England and Wales

Opinion

We have audited the accounts of The Conference of Religious in England and Wales (the 'charity') for the year ended 30 September 2021 which comprise the statement of financial activities, the balance sheet, the principal accounting policies and the notes to the accounts. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the accounts:

- ◆ give a true and fair view of the state of the charity's affairs as at 30 September 2021 and of its income and expenditure for the year then ended;
- ◆ have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- ◆ have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the accounts section of our report. We are independent of the charity in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the accounts in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the accounts, we have concluded that the Executive Committee's use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the accounts is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charity's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the accounts are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the Executive Committee with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Independent auditor's report Year to 30 September 2021

Other information

The Executive Committee is responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the Annual Report and Accounts, other than the accounts and our auditor's report thereon. Our opinion on the accounts does not cover the other information and we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the accounts, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the accounts or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the accounts or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Charities Act 2011 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- ◆ the information given in the Report of the Executive Committee is inconsistent in any material respect with the accounts; or
- ◆ sufficient accounting records have not been kept; or
- ◆ the accounts are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- ◆ we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

Responsibilities of the members of the Executive Committee

As explained more fully in the statement of responsibilities of the Executive Committee, the members of the Executive Committee (who are the charity's trustees) are responsible for the preparation of the accounts and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the Executive Committee determines is necessary to enable the preparation of accounts that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the accounts, the Executive Committee is responsible for assessing the charity's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the Executive Committee either intends to liquidate the charity or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Independent auditor's report Year to 30 September 2021

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the accounts

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the accounts as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these accounts.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below.

How the audit was considered capable of detecting irregularities including fraud

Our approach to identifying and assessing the risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations, was as follows:

- ◆ The engagement partner ensured that the engagement team collectively had the appropriate competence, capabilities and skills to identify or recognise non-compliance with applicable laws and regulations;
- ◆ We identified the laws and regulations applicable to the charity through discussions with management and members of the Executive Committee and from our knowledge and experience of the charity sector;
- ◆ We focused on specific laws and regulations which we considered may have a direct material effect on the accounts or the activities of the charity. These included but were not limited to the Charities Act 2011; Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable to the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019); and
- ◆ We assessed the extent of compliance with the laws and regulations identified above through making enquiries of management and those charged with governance and review of minutes of Executive Committee meetings.

We assessed the susceptibility of the charity's financial statements to material misstatement, including obtaining an understanding of how fraud might occur, by:

- ◆ Making enquiries of management and representatives from the Executive Committee as to where they considered there was susceptibility to fraud, their knowledge of actual, suspected and alleged fraud; and
- ◆ Considering the internal controls in place to mitigate risks of fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations.

Independent auditor's report Year to 30 September 2021

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the accounts (continued)

How the audit was considered capable of detecting irregularities including fraud *(continued)*

To address the risk of fraud through management bias and override of controls, we:

- ◆ Performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships;
- ◆ Tested and reviewed journal entries to identify unusual transactions;
- ◆ Carried out substantive testing of expenditure including the authorisation thereof;
- ◆ Assessed whether judgements and assumptions made in determining the accounting estimates were indicative of potential bias; and
- ◆ Investigated the rationale behind significant or unusual transactions.

In response to the risk of irregularities and non-compliance with laws and regulations, we designed procedures which included, but were not limited to:

- ◆ Agreeing financial statement disclosures to underlying supporting documentation;
- ◆ Reading the minutes of meetings of the Executive Committee; and
- ◆ Enquiring of as to actual and potential litigation and claims.

There are inherent limitations in our audit procedures described above. The more removed that laws and regulations are from financial transactions, the less likely it is that we would become aware of non-compliance. Auditing standards also limit the audit procedures required to identify non-compliance with laws and regulations to enquiry of the trustees and other management and the inspection of regulatory and legal correspondence, if any.

Material misstatements that arise due to fraud can be harder to detect than those that arise from error as they may involve deliberate concealment or collusion.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the accounts is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

Independent auditor's report Year to 30 September 2021

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the members of the Executive Committee, (who are charity's trustees), as a body, in accordance with section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 and with regulations made under section 154 of that Act. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the members of the Executive Committee those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charity and the members of the Executive Committee, as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Buzzacott LLP
Statutory Auditor
130 Wood Street
London
EC2V 6DL

13 June 2022

Buzzacott LLP is eligible to act as an auditor in terms of section 1212 of the Companies Act 2006

Statement of financial activities Year to 30 September 2021

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2021 £	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2020 £
Income from:							
Investments and interest receivable	1	15,727	—	15,727	15,529	—	15,529
Charitable activities	2	186,002	61,000	247,002	193,303	59,000	252,303
Total income		<u>201,729</u>	<u>61,000</u>	<u>262,729</u>	<u>208,832</u>	<u>59,000</u>	<u>267,832</u>
Expenditure on:							
Charitable activities							
. Promotion of the welfare of Apostolic Institutes of Religious in England and Wales							
	3	201,718	49,101	250,819	199,412	10,693	210,105
Total expenditure		<u>201,718</u>	<u>49,101</u>	<u>250,819</u>	<u>199,412</u>	<u>10,693</u>	<u>210,105</u>
Net income before investment gains	4	11	11,899	11,910	9,420	48,307	57,727
Net investment gains	8	119,517	—	119,517	53,084	—	53,084
Net income and net movement in funds		<u>119,528</u>	<u>11,899</u>	<u>131,427</u>	<u>62,504</u>	<u>48,307</u>	<u>110,811</u>
Reconciliation of funds:							
Fund balances brought forward at 1 October 2020							
		1,133,925	48,307	1,182,232	1,071,421	—	1,071,421
Fund balances carried forward at 30 September 2021							
		<u>1,253,453</u>	<u>60,206</u>	<u>1,313,659</u>	<u>1,133,925</u>	<u>48,307</u>	<u>1,182,232</u>

All of the charity's activities derived from continuing operations during the above two financial periods.

All recognised gains and losses are included in the above statement of financial activities.

Balance sheet 30 September 2021

	Notes	2021 £	2021 £	2020 £	2020 £
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	7		3,552		4,843
Investments	8		1,043,374		923,857
			<u>1,046,926</u>		<u>928,700</u>
Current assets					
Debtors	9	8,283		17,131	
Short term deposits		150,000		150,000	
Cash at bank and in hand		171,412		156,453	
		<u>329,695</u>		<u>323,584</u>	
Liabilities					
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	10	(62,962)		(70,052)	
Net current assets			266,733		253,532
Total net assets			<u>1,313,659</u>		<u>1,182,232</u>
The funds of the charity:					
Unrestricted funds					
. General funds			206,527		205,225
. Tangible fixed assets fund	11		3,552		4,843
. Designated funds	12		1,043,374		923,857
			<u>1,253,453</u>		<u>1,133,925</u>
Restricted funds	13		60,206		48,307
			<u>1,313,659</u>		<u>1,182,232</u>

Approved by the members of the Executive Committee and signed on their behalf by:

Fr Paul Smyth CMF

Member of the Executive Committee:

Approved on: 30th April 2022

Principal accounting policies Year to 30 September 2021

The principal accounting policies adopted, judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty in the preparation of the accounts are laid out below.

Basis of preparation

These accounts have been prepared for the year to 30 September 2021 with comparative information provided for the year to 30 September 2020.

The accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention with items recognised at cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policies below or the notes to these accounts.

The accounts 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 United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (Charities SORP FRS 102), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Charities Act 2011.

The charity constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS 102.

The accounts are presented in sterling and are rounded to the nearest pound.

Critical accounting estimates and areas of judgement

Preparation of the accounts requires the Executive Committee and management to make significant judgements and estimates.

The items in the accounts where these judgements and estimates have been made include:

- ◆ estimating the expected useful economic life of tangible fixed assets for the purpose of determining the annual depreciation charge;
- ◆ allocating support costs between expenditure headings; and
- ◆ estimating future income and expenditure levels for the purposes of assessing going concern.

Assessment of going concern

The Executive Committee has assessed whether the use of the going concern assumption is appropriate in preparing these accounts. It has made this assessment in respect to a period of one year from the date of approval of these accounts.

Principal accounting policies Year to 30 September 2021

Assessment of going concern (continued)

Covid-19 is likely to have a continuing impact on the charity's in the year to 30 September 2022 although the impact on income and expenditure is expected to be small.

Although the charity's work continues to be affected by Covid-19, the Executive Committee is delighted that much of what it wished to achieve during 2021 has been carried out. Also, on the positive side Covid-19 has accelerated the pace of change in the charity's use of video conferencing in place on meetings. Whilst the Executive Committee looks forward to holding meetings in person, it recognises online meetings bring environmental benefits, via reduced travel, and enable wider participation in the charity's activities.

Free reserves at 30 September 2021 stood at £206,528 (2020: £205,225). Comparing this to the charity's reserves policy set out in the Report of the Executive Committee, it is clear that normally there would be scope to reduce the free reserves. However, members of the Executive Committee believe that these additional reserves will act as a cushion against the impact of Covid-19 and other unforeseen events. The Executive Committee believes that the reserves will be sufficient to enable CoR to operate in the exceptional circumstances created by the pandemic and do not expect material concerns to arise over the charity's financial position.

The Executive Committee is of the opinion that the charity will have sufficient resources to meet its liabilities as they fall due. The most significant areas of judgement that affect items in the accounts are detailed above.

Statement of cash flows

The accounts do not include a statement of cash flows because the charity is considered a small charity and is therefore exempt from the requirement to prepare such a statement under the Charities SORP FRS 102 Update Bulletin 1.

Income recognition

Income is recognised in the period in which the charity has entitlement to the income, the amount of income can be measured reliably and it is probable that the income will be received.

Income comprises investment income and interest receivable and income from charitable activities, principally the income derived from membership subscriptions and financial contributions towards meetings.

Investment income is recognised once the dividend or equivalent has been declared and notification has been received of the amount due.

Principal accounting policies Year to 30 September 2021

Income recognition (continued)

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the charity; this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the bank.

Income comprising annual membership subscriptions is credited to the statement of financial activities on an accruals basis with reference to the period covered by the subscription. Income in respect to meetings and other events is credited to the statement of financial activities when invoiced and is accounted for net of any discounts and/or rebates.

Expenditure recognition

Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to make a payment to a third party, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. All expenditure is stated inclusive of irrecoverable VAT.

All expenditure incurred by the charity relates directly or indirectly to the principal charitable objective of the charity i.e. promoting the welfare of Apostolic Institutes of Religious in England and Wales. Within this heading, expenditure is categorised between the key areas of activity and is analysed in note 3 to these accounts. Indirect expenditure comprises support costs and governance costs. Support costs include all expenditure on financial procedures, the provision of office services and general administration. Governance costs comprise the costs of public accountability (including audit costs). All support and governance costs are allocated to activities in the ratio of the direct expenditure on each activity.

Tangible fixed assets

All assets costing more than £1,000 and with an expected useful life exceeding one year are capitalised.

Improvements to leasehold property are depreciated on a straight-line basis over the life of the lease.

Depreciation is provided on office furniture and equipment purchased outright on a straight-line basis at rates of 20% and 25% per annum respectively.

Investments

Listed investments are a form of basic financial instrument and are initially recognised at their transaction value and subsequently measured at their fair value as at the balance sheet date using the closing quoted market price.

The charity does not acquire put options, derivatives or other complex financial instruments.

Principal accounting policies Year to 30 September 2021

Investments (continued)

Realised gains (or losses) on investment assets are calculated as the difference between disposal proceeds and their opening carrying value or their purchase value if acquired subsequent to the first day of the financial year. Unrealised gains and losses are calculated as the difference between the fair value at the year end and their carrying value at that date. Realised and unrealised investment gains (or losses) are combined in the statement of financial activities and are credited (or debited) in the year in which they arise.

Debtors

Debtors are recognised at their settlement amount, less any provision for non-recoverability. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid. They have been discounted to the present value of the future cash receipt where such discounting is material.

Cash at bank and in hand

Cash at bank and in hand represents such accounts and instruments that are available on demand or have a maturity of less than three months from the date of acquisition. Deposits for more than three months but less than one year have been disclosed as short term deposits. Cash placed on deposit for more than one year is disclosed as a fixed asset investment.

Creditors and provisions

Creditors and provisions are recognised when there is an obligation at the balance sheet date as a result of a past event, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefit will be required in settlement, and the amount of the settlement can be estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are recognised at the amount the charity anticipates it will pay to settle the debt. They have been discounted to the present value of the future cash payment where such discounting is material.

Funds structure

The unrestricted funds of the charity represent those funds which are freely available for use in furtherance of the charity's objectives at the discretion of the members of the Executive Committee. Within the total unrestricted funds of the charity, the members of the Executive Committee have designated amounts for specific purposes and have identified those non-liquid funds represented by the tangible fixed assets and fixed asset investments. Those funds not designated or represented by tangible fixed assets or fixed asset investments are classified as general funds.

Pension costs

Contributions payable to defined contribution pension schemes and/or personal pension plans are accounted for in the year in which they are payable.

Notes to the accounts Year to 30 September 2021

1 Income from investments and interest receivable

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	2021	Unrestricted funds 2020
	£	£	£	£
Investment income				
. Unit trusts and common investment funds	15,699	—	15,699	15,249
Bank interest	28	—	28	280
	<u>15,727</u>	<u>—</u>	<u>15,727</u>	<u>15,529</u>

2 Income from charitable activities

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	2021	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	2020
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Membership subscriptions	162,171	—	162,171	171,404	—	171,404
Meetings	8,678	—	8,678	6,216	—	6,216
Other income	10	—	10	15,683	—	15,683
Grants receivable	15,143	61,000	76,143	—	59,000	59,000
	<u>186,002</u>	<u>61,000</u>	<u>247,002</u>	<u>193,303</u>	<u>59,000</u>	<u>252,303</u>

3 Expenditure on charitable activities:

Promotion of the welfare of Apostolic Institutes of Religious in England and Wales

	Unrestricted				Restricted		Total 2021
	Direct staff costs	Other direct costs	Support staff costs	Other support costs	Direct staff costs	Other direct costs	
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Safeguarding	9,753	—	17,343	29,929	48,101	1,000	106,126
Leaders' meetings	14,935	6,080	4,477	7,726	—	—	33,218
Events	16,344	—	4,900	8,455	—	—	29,699
Vocations	—	6,649	—	—	—	—	6,649
Development	18,383	—	5,511	9,511	—	—	33,405
Communications	22,961	—	6,883	11,878	—	—	41,722
	<u>82,376</u>	<u>12,729</u>	<u>39,114</u>	<u>67,499</u>	<u>48,101</u>	<u>1,000</u>	<u>250,819</u>

Notes to the accounts Year to 30 September 2021

3 Expenditure on charitable activities: (continued)

	<i>Unrestricted</i>				<i>Restricted</i>		<i>Total 2020 £</i>
	<i>Direct staff costs</i>	<i>Other direct costs</i>	<i>Support staff costs</i>	<i>Other support costs</i>	<i>Direct staff costs</i>	<i>Other direct costs</i>	
	<i>£</i>	<i>£</i>	<i>£</i>	<i>£</i>	<i>£</i>	<i>£</i>	
<i>Safeguarding</i>	15,182	—	11,328	18,797	8,893	1,800	56,000
<i>Advice and information</i>	5,767	—	2,714	4,503	—	—	12,984
<i>Members' meetings</i>	18,232	2,653	8,579	14,235	—	—	43,699
<i>Vocations</i>	—	12,000	—	—	—	—	12,000
<i>Development</i>	8,719	—	4,102	6,807	—	—	19,628
<i>Communications</i>	29,225	—	13,751	22,818	—	—	65,794
	77,125	14,653	40,474	67,161	8,893	1,800	210,105

4 Net income before investment gains

This is stated after charging:

	2021 £	2020 £
Staff costs (note 5)	169,591	126,492
Audit costs including VAT		
. Statutory audit services	10,263	8,690
Depreciation	1,291	323

5 Staff costs

	2021 £	2020 £
Staff costs during the year were as follows:		
Wages and salaries	154,685	116,924
Social security costs	12,369	8,193
Pension costs	2,537	1,375
	169,591	126,492
Staff costs per function were as follows:		
Safeguarding	57,854	24,075
Leaders' meetings	14,935	18,232
Advice and information	16,344	5,767
Development	18,383	8,719
Communications	22,961	29,225
Governance	17,942	18,279
Support	21,172	22,195
	169,591	126,492

There were no employees who earned £60,000 per annum or more (including benefits) during the year (2020 – none).

Notes to the accounts Year to 30 September 2021

5 Staff costs (continued)

The average number of employees during the year, including consultants, (by head count), analysed by function, was as follows:

	2021 No.	2020 No.
Secretariat (safeguarding, advice and information, members' meetings, advocacy, vocations, formation)	2.8	2.8
Support	0.4	0.6
	3.2	3.4

Remuneration of key management personnel

The members of the Executive Committee, together with the General Secretary comprise the key management of the charity. No member of the Executive Committee received any remuneration in connection with his or her services during the year (2020 – £nil).

The remuneration paid in respect to the post of General Secretary for the year ended 30 September 2021 was £48,217 (2020 – £46,860).

One member of the Executive Committee was reimbursed expenses during the year of £20 (2020 – £112) in respect to travel and meeting expenses in connection with their duties as members of the Executive Committee.

6 Taxation

The Conference of Religious in England and Wales is a registered charity and, therefore, is not liable to income tax or corporation tax on income derived from its charitable activities, as it falls within the various exemptions available to registered charities.

7 Tangible fixed assets

	Office furniture and equipment £	Total £
Cost		
At 1 October 2020 and at 30 September 2021	5,166	5,166
Depreciation		
At 1 October 2020	323	323
Charge for year	1,291	1,291
At 30 September 2021	1,614	1,614
Net book values		
At 30 September 2021	3,552	3,552
At 30 September 2020	4,843	4,843

Notes to the accounts Year to 30 September 2021

8 Investments

	2021 £	2020 £
Listed investments		
Market value at 1 October 2020	923,857	870,773
Unrealised investment gains	119,517	53,084
Market value at 30 September 2021	1,043,374	923,857
Cost of listed investments at 30 September 2021	671,678	671,678

At 30 September 2021, the listed investments comprised holdings in the following two Common Investment Funds managed by CCLA Investment Management Limited:

Holding	Market value at 30 September 2021 £	Percentage of portfolio %
COIF Charities Ethical Investment Fund Income Units	554,015	53.1
COIF Charities Ethical Investment Fund Accumulation Units	489,359	46.9
	1,043,374	100.0

Holding	Market value at 30 September 2020 £	Percentage of portfolio %
COIF Charities Ethical Investment Fund Income Units	497,339	53.8
COIF Charities Ethical Investment Fund Accumulation Units	426,518	46.2
	923,857	100.0

9 Debtors

	2021 £	2020 £
Prepayments and accrued income	499	5,555
Other debtors	7,784	11,576
	8,283	17,131

Notes to the accounts Year to 30 September 2021

10 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2021 £	2020 £
Membership subscriptions received in advance	37,055	38,272
Accruals	16,305	19,921
Other creditors	9,603	11,859
	62,963	70,052

11 Tangible fixed asset fund

	2021 £	2020 £
At 1 October 2020	4,843	—
Movement in year	(1,291)	4,843
At 30 September 2021	3,552	4,843

The tangible fixed assets fund represents the net book value of the charity's tangible fixed assets. A decision was made to separate this fund from the general fund and other designated funds of the charity in recognition of the fact that the tangible fixed assets are essential to the day-to-day work of the charity and as such their value should not be regarded as funds that would be realisable with ease, in order to meet future contingencies.

12 Designated funds

The income funds of the charity include the following designated fund which has been set aside out of unrestricted funds by the members of the Executive Committee for specific purposes:

	At 1 October 2020 £	New designations £	Utilised/ released £	At 30 September 2021 £
Capital reserve fund	923,857	119,517	—	1,043,374

	At 1 October 2019 £	New designations £	Utilised/ released £	At 30 September 2020 £
Capital reserve fund	870,773	53,084	—	923,857

The charity will rely more and more on investment income in order to fund its charitable work. Consequently, the members of the Executive Committee believe it prudent to set aside, or designate, the value tied up in the charity's investment portfolio as a capital reserve in order to provide a level of assurance that investment income will continue to be generated in future years and thereby 'finance' the charity's work in the long term.

Notes to the accounts Year to 30 September 2021

13 Restricted funds

The income funds of the charity include the following restricted funds to be applied for specific purposes:

	At 1 October 2020 £	Income £	Expenditure £	At 30 September 2021 £
Safeguarding project	48,307	61,000	(49,101)	60,206

The safeguarding project fund is to be applied towards the cost of specific safeguarding advisory and associated activities.

14 Analysis of net assets between funds

	Restricted funds £	General funds £	Tangible fixed assets funds £	Designated funds £	Total 2021 £
Fund balances at 30 September 2021 are represented by:					
Tangible fixed assets	—	—	3,552	—	3,552
Investments	—	—	—	1,043,374	1,043,374
Net current assets	60,206	206,527	—	—	266,733
Total net assets	60,206	206,527	3,552	1,043,374	1,313,659

	Restricted funds £	General funds £	Tangible fixed assets funds £	Designated funds £	Total 2020 £
<i>Fund balances at 30 September 2020 are represented by:</i>					
<i>Tangible fixed assets</i>	—	—	4,843	—	4,843
<i>Investments</i>	—	—	—	923,857	923,857
<i>Net current assets</i>	48,307	205,225	—	—	253,532
<i>Total net assets</i>	<i>48,307</i>	<i>205,225</i>	<i>4,843</i>	<i>923,856</i>	<i>1,182,232</i>

	Total 2021 £	Total 2020 £
Reconciliation of movements in unrealised gains on investment assets:		
Unrealised gains at 1 October 2020	252,179	199,095
Net unrealised gains arising in year	119,517	53,084
Unrealised gains at 30 September 2021	371,696	252,179

Notes to the accounts Year to 30 September 2021

15 Financial commitments

At 30 September 2021 the charity was committed to pay £12,000 in respect to rent and service charges payable (2020: £12,000).

16 Transactions with related parties

The religious congregations to which the members of the Executive Committee belong are all members of the charity and pay membership subscriptions to the charity. All such payments are made to the charity on an arm's length basis.

During the year, the congregations to which the members of the Executive Committee belong made contributions to the charity totalling £18,430 (2020 – £19,775). These contributions consist of membership fees and donations.

During the year, the charity incurred rent and service charges totaling £24,000 (2020 - £12,000) payable to the Poor Servants of the Mother of God (PSMG). PSMG, are members of the Conference of Religious in England and Wales.

Appendix

APPENDIX



October 2021

I am very grateful to the Conference of Religious for its ongoing support to the National Office for Vocation, thank you for your continuing collaboration over these years.

As you know, CoR financially provides us with the means to employ Sr Frances Kelly as the Religious Life Promoter in the office. Sr Frances collaborates with me and Mr James Ryan (Discipleship Promoter) in building up a culture of vocation in the Church of England & Wales. I write this report in place of Sr Frances this year, so I have this opportunity to be able to highlight what a blessing she has been to our office in these challenging months since she started to represent you. Sr Frances has the wonderful gift of being able to “dream big” and steadfastly drives ahead with her inspirational ideas and capacity to elicit collaboration and teamwork. Our most ambitious projects this year have come through her creative presence, and we look forward to being able to build upon these precious gifts even more as we move on from the recent pandemic, with courage and hope.

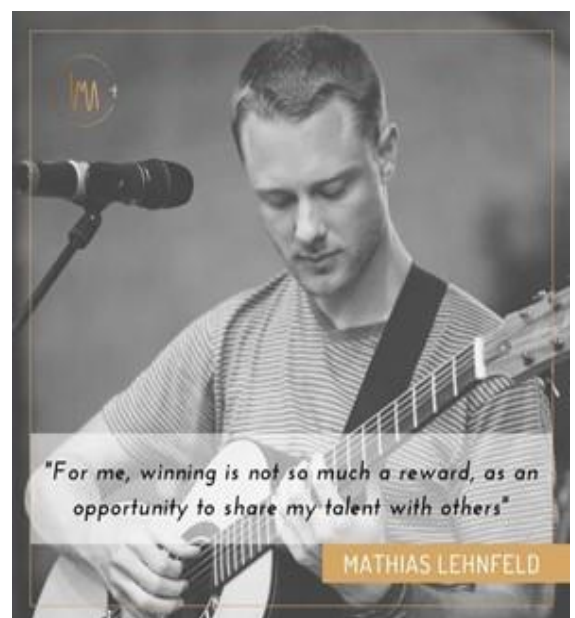
Sr Elaine Penrice fsp
Director of NOV

Some 2021 projects

Vocation Music Award

Sr Frances, in collaboration with Vocations Ireland, worked to bring to life a new initiative for the vocations scene here in the UK and Ireland.

We all know how important music can be for young people, and this event takes this truth to a practical conclusion. Young people were invited to reflect on the theme of vocation, either individually or as a group, and translate that into an original piece of music. This is one way of building a culture of vocation in our local church and supporting young aspiring musicians to work for God and evangelisation. The prizes included a financial gift and an opportunity to have a professional quality recording session to produce their own music CD. Many thanks go to the whole team of volunteers and collaborators in this project.



"For me, winning is not so much a reward, as an opportunity to share my talent with others"

MATHIAS LEHNFELD

The final took place on Saturday 25 September with 16 finalists. A programme was edited together and run over the VMA YouTube account which led into a live final with the winner announced. <https://youtu.be/eBOBHcozk5E>

Appendix

Some 2021 projects (continued)

Youth 2000

27 – 30 August

The NOV team attended the **Youth 2000 retreat: Rejoice** which instead of Walsingham this year was held in Ampleforth college. This new location meant that 350 people could attend, 60% of these were new to the event, and came from all over the UK. This is the first time NOV has been given such wide access to this even and we really enjoyed it and are eager to continue working relationship with the Youth 2000 team in the future.



- NOV participated by animating the morning and evening prayer each day.
- NOV sponsored an information stand in the hall between the main chapel and the workshop rooms, which was attended with the support especially of collaborating religious.
- The Vocation Café Gazebo was situated opposite the refreshment stand just off the main foyer, to which many people stopped off for a casual but faith-centred chat with one or all the team.
- A discernment workshop filled the room with interested participants.
- There was vocation themed guided adoration in the main adoration chapel, with musical support from the Youth2000 musicians.
- All three of us were interviewed by Shalom TV.

COP26

We have been working in collaboration with Vocation Network Scotland and Vocations Ireland, along with other voluntary bodies to create a faith-filled satellite event in Glasgow during the COP26 climate meeting in November. We see this as an opportunity to follow the advice of Pope Francis and the Synod on Youth – to go and meet young people where they are, rather than expect them to find us.

New Website: <https://www.sowingseedsofthefuture.org>

This new temporary website is to spread the word and be a place where people can find out more on how to participate in this important event.

Seeds of the Future

We have purchased packets of wild seeds with a postcard which has a prayer and reflection linking sowing of seeds and vocation. NOV will send 2 free packs of seeds to groups who request them through our website, and our collaborators in Scotland will send packs to requests which come from Scotland, and as will Vocations Ireland.

Appendix

Some 2021 projects (continued)

Carfin Grotto

On Sunday the 31 October there will be a candlelight procession to pray the rosary for Pope Francis's address to the delegates (the next day), and the good outcome of the conference.

Other events

- Pauline Books & Media will host **the Welcome Hub**, which will accommodate the volunteer organisations and religious groups organising the events. Free tea and coffee will be provided to pilgrims who wish to chat with us. This central location will be where we can inform people about what's happening, where and how to get there. We will put these on our GodCalls app for participants information. We hope this will encourage more people to download our app.
- Other events that have been organised include: The **Mercy Bus**, a **Carlo Acutis Eucharistic Miracle exhibition**, **Night Fever** with **youth lead liturgy and presentation**, and talks on **Stewardship of the Earth and Laudato Si**.
- We have invited **Radio Maria England** to join us, they will give us the possibility of sharing the experience with listeners in England & Wales who are unable to attend in person.

100 Days of Prayer

The 100 Days of prayer started on the 1st of January and its focus is the Saints of England and Wales, celebrating our Church and our countries' inspirational people. It was decided in January that this would be taken onto a live stream through Facebook every night in February at 7pm, with a guest from around the country and from various states of life. In all we had: 7 Priests, 15 Religious, 10 Married/Single and 1 Permanent Deacon. The live interviews were streamed through the NOV Facebook page stream lasting approximately 15 minutes. Everyone would discuss the history of their chosen Saint and finished with the prayer of the day. This has had on average between 300-500 watches per video, with many interacting, commenting, and sharing the posts. It has brought about an awareness of different states of life, through communities outlining their own Charisms, individual vocation testimonies and introducing to different organisations within our Church.

Website Update: www.UKVocation.org

NOV launched our updated website. The website has consolidated the different states of life and various kinds of vocation, so that we communicate a more unified message about vocation and vocational discernment. We hope to help people have a clearer understanding of the ways we can live out our Christian discipleship and take into consideration the many ways we can serve God, the Church, and our world.

Appendix

GodCalls: Adventure

<https://www.godcalls.co.uk/godcalls-adventure>

NOV launched on our NOV website in time for Lent GodCalls: Adventure. This idea came from hearing about an American program called Exodus 90 which helps people deepen their spirituality by focusing their religious practices and encourages them to grow. The GodCalls Adventure is a 40-day program which aims to help people learn new spiritual habits and grow in their faith. The program is flexible so that it can accommodate all levels from beginners to experienced. The NOV team all contributed to writing this program, along with volunteers and advisors.

Small Vocation Groups

Sr Frances has worked throughout the pandemic months in collaboration with other religious, to create a network of local vocation teams throughout England and Wales. There are about 60 religious who have been asked to form local vocations groups: London, Wales, Midlands, Nottingham, Liverpool, and Lancaster. (Some of these groups already existed and some are new initiatives). We can direct new vocation directors to their local group for support.

Living Joyfully

Living Joyfully was organised by Sr Frances and Sr Lynne Baron, planned for the Thursday and Friday of the week running up to Vocations Sunday. It was an opportunity for schools to meet different religious. 9 schools got involved, which meant that 960 students met 22 different congregations. The meetings were held either by Zoom or MS Teams links sent out by the schools. The links were sent to 4 different religious, considering a mix of male and female, contemplative, and apostolic congregations. Teachers coordinated the day. Feedback was very good, and many schools are asking for more. The students and teachers were really interested in the difference between the different kinds of religious. This way the students get a very diverse view of religious life.

On the Saturday before Vocations Sunday, 60 religious signed up to participate in a day of different conversations on religious topics: poverty, chastity, obedience, and general. 30 discerners applied and 12 came. The conversations were serious and enquiring.

Year 12 General RE Module for Vocation

A vocation module is being developed with 2 Catholic Secondary Schools, Cardinal Pole Catholic School and Our Lady's who are helping to write some of the content and trial it in Core RE Lessons. There are 7 lessons and each one is based upon various states of life, there are discussion topics and writing topics to be completed, finishing with a written essay assignment. The topic has videos and other engaging features that have already been created and placed into the module, but this can be developed in the future. This module also allows the students ample time to think about vocation, building a culture and allowing them to think about the many ways God can call them.

Appendix

Radio Maria: Vocation

We have been developing a collaborative relationship with Radio Maria England these months and have worked with them on a season of Vocation themed programs. We are trying to promote Radio Maria so that we can further the understanding of a culture of vocation in England & Wales among public listeners. We have discussed with Helena Judd, a series on the Evangelical Councils, to help people understand that the values of the religious vows are traditional Catholic values which are for everybody, and to help people understand better how they can contribute to their own spiritual lives.

Appendix

RELIGIOUS LIFE INSTITUTE (RLI)

The Religious Life Institute [RLI] was transferred from Heythrop College, University of London to the Margaret Beaufort Institute in 2018 with the demise of Heythrop. Its director is Dr. Gemma Simmonds CJ. Research Associates who have worked in collaboration since the move are Drs. Susan O'Brien, Carmen Mangion, Catherine Sexton, María Calderón-Muñoz, Petá Dunstan, Kate Stogdon RC, Jim Sweeney CP and Martin Poulson SDB. The RLI continues to stand in collaboration with the Durham University Centre for Catholic Studies.

The director has continued throughout lockdown to give lectures and presentations on the RLI's recent research on New Entrants to Religious Life from 2000-2020 to national and international congregations and organizations of religious both apostolic and monastic, male and female. **A hard copy of the research booklet is available for free to all congregations who are members of CoR. Further copies are available for £6.25 + P & P. Other book and CD resources are also available on application to Gemma Simmonds at gmcas2@cam.ac.uk**

RESEARCH PROJECTS: This research has also attracted a further generous research contract in collaboration with Profs. Mary Johnson and Patricia Whittberg, Dr. Mary Gautier [USA] and Sr. Nathalie Becquart, Under Secretary to the Synod of Bishops [Rome]. The two-year project, based in the RLI, brings together similar research projects on New Vocations to Religious Life in the USA, Canada, Australia, UK, Ireland, and France.

A second two-year research project begun in 2021 is being funded by the Passionist Order and the Sisters of St. Joseph of Peace. It is looking at radical forms of social insertion by religious in inner city missions in the UK, especially during the lifetime of Fr. Austin Smith CP & his collaborators. So far, we have the agreed collaboration of the Society of Jesus, the Sisters of the Infant Jesus and the Faithful Companions of Jesus as well as the congregations originally named. The researchers and writers for this project are Gemma Simmonds and Drs. Susan O'Brien, Carmen Mangion and Sue Price. **Any congregations or individual religious interested in being interviewed as part of this project are asked to contact Gemma Simmonds at gmcas2@cam.ac.uk**

A final project currently underway is in collaboration with the Union of International Superiors General [UISG] in Rome and the Center for the Study of Consecrated Life [CSCL] at Catholic Theological Union, Chicago. This project is promoting a global network of sisters under 60 working in a variety of theological and associated disciplines. The network is fostering emerging writing on the theology of women's religious life from a global perspective. Together with Sr. Maria Cimperman RSCJ, director of the CSCL and 2 male religious, the RLI director will be producing the synthesis on synodality in religious life on behalf of the USG/UISG which will be presented to the Vatican Synod on Synodality.

Appendix

As director of the RLI Gemma Simmonds continues to run retreats for religious, to facilitate assemblies and to teach courses in the theology of religious life online in French, Spanish, German and Portuguese at the UISG, at the Gregorian University in Rome, for the Arbeitsgemeinschaft der Formationsleiterinnen (AGF) in Germany and the Live Out Loud Formation Program, USA [2021-2022 Live Out Loud Program | Religious Formation Conference \(relforcon.org\)](https://www.relforcon.org)

Dr Gemma Simmonds CJ
RLI Director
9th October 2021

Appendix

ANGLICAN RELIGIOUS LIFE 2021

The House of Bishops of the Church of England released an updated Safeguarding Policy for Religious Communities in November 2020. The National Safeguarding Team has been providing support for the implementation of this policy.

In November 2020 the General Synod enacted a Canon, which gives a place within the canonical structure of the Church for religious communities. All the communities have had to be registered under the conditions laid down by the Canon and the Religious Communities Regulations 2020. This has entailed ensuring the governance documents conform to the requirements of the Regulations. The Advisory Council for Religious Communities, a body first established in 1943 to provide support and advice for communities and bishops, has become a Committee of the House of Bishops. The Advisory Council has overseen this work of registration, which is continuing.

The Advisory Council continues to provide support for new and emerging communities. In many cases the members are dispersed. Some have a ministry within a particular parish or urban area. They draw on the traditional values of religious communities with a rule or rhythm of life and common prayer, expressed in a way that suits their circumstances.

The Leaders of the religious communities didn't hold their usual annual conference in 2020 but will be meeting at the Retreat House of the Community of the Resurrection at Mirfield, West Yorkshire from 11 to 14 October 2021. This time they intend to spend time together, sharing our experiences of the past eighteen months or so. Fr Colin, Secretary of the Anglican Council and the Leaders' Conference says, "As for everyone else, it has been a challenging year or more. Our own experience has been that it has confirmed our vocation to a life of prayer, within the monastic tradition, and that this has been our contribution. I have been very encouraged with the way we have just got on with it."

I have attended all Zoom meetings of the Advisory Council for Religious Communities (now a Committee of the House of Bishops). Unfortunately, I am unable to attend this year's meeting in Mirfield of the Leaders of Anglican Religious Communities, but hope to do so again in 2022.

Sr Margaret Shepherd nds
CoR Representative on the Anglican Advisory Council for Religious Communities
With thanks to Fr Colin CSWG, (The Community of the Servants of the Will of God)