

**THE GREEK ORTHODOX COMMUNITY OF HASTINGS
(GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH OF ST. MARY MAGDALENE)**

ANNUAL REPORT AND UNAUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

THE GREEK ORTHODOX COMMUNITY OF HASTINGS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
Legal and administrative information	1
Trustees' report	2-4
Independent Examiner's report	5
Statement of Receipts and Payments	6
Statement of Assets and Liabilities	7
Notes to the Financial Statements	8

THE GREEK ORTHODOX COMMUNITY OF HASTINGS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024
LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Page 1

<u>Church address</u>	St. Mary Magdalene Orthodox Church Church Road St Leonards-on-Sea East Sussex TN37 6EE
<u>Charity number</u>	285794
<u>Charity trustees</u>	His Eminence Archbishop Nikitas Lulias Mr Demetrios Demetriades Mr Sotirios Joannou Miss Maria Kiniari Mr John Neofitou
<u>Financial administrator</u>	Mrs I Edwards 8 Baldslow Down St Leonards on Sea East Sussex TN37 7NH
<u>Independent examiner</u>	J R Caladine FCCA CTA FCIE Caladine Limited Chartered Certified Accountants Chantry House 22 Upperton Road Eastbourne East Sussex BN21 1BF

Trustees' Report

The trustees present their Annual Report and the Financial Statements of the church for the year ended 31 August

Structure, governance and management

The Greek Orthodox Community of Hastings (the "charity"), which is also known as the Greek Orthodox Church of St. Mary Magdalene, was registered with the Charity Commission on February 1983 and is governed by a Declaration of Trust as amended on 17 July 2018.

Trustees are appointed by the church Executive Committee. Newly appointed trustees are invited to induction meetings to familiarise themselves with the work of our Charity, they are introduced to the Church executive committee and we familiarise them with the Deed of Trust and the Constitution of the Greek Orthodox Communities. We offer guidance and provide them with a welcome pack including:

- Equal Opportunities Statement
- The Essential Trustee – what you need to know’.
- Our Safeguarding policy – we are registered with CCPAS to ensure full compliance with safeguarding including DBS checks where appropriate.
- Health & Safety and Fire Risks
- Good Governance – we strive to ensure we are fully in compliance in everything we do.

The Charity operates under the spiritual guidance of His Eminence Archbishop Nikitas and the Archdiocese of Thyateira and Great Britain

Our reporting and administrative procedures are in place to ensure we give due consideration to and endeavour to minimise all risks, our trustee's together with the executive committee regularly meet to discuss and oversee the work of the various sub-committees.

Objectives and activities

The objects of the Charity are by such means as are charitable to promote the Orthodox Faith to all Orthodox Christians and the Greek Orthodox charitable institutions for the old and sick people the students and the poor of the Orthodox Faith and all denominations living in Hastings and environs and the advancement of the education of the public.

The Executive Committee in co-operation with our parish priest, Reverend Ierotheos Georgiou is fully committed to ensuring everyone is made welcome and invited to participate in worship, learning and social activities at our Church and are encouraged to become part of the lively parish community at St Mary Magdalene.

The principal charitable activities can be defined as follows:

- Prayer and Worship for the community at Holy Services.
- Catechesis, or Christian religious teaching of children and adults to develop knowledge and faith including introduction to the Holy Sacraments.
- Pastoral and Social Care and Advice for our parish community.
- Providing space and facilities for activities including education and social development of children and adults within the local and wider Hastings community.
- Greek Language School for Children and Adults.
- Sunday Crèche for younger children to learn, discover and grow in the orthodox faith.
- Provision of meeting and group activities space to the wider community and minority groups of many cultures and nationalities from a wide catchment area.
- Community Social Events to promote social inclusion and friendship within the wider community.

The executive committee together with our priest consults with our parishioners when planning for community services, activities and events.

We give due consideration to the Commissions guidelines in relation to public benefit and the specific guidance to charities for the advancement of religion.

The dedication of our volunteers and community members continues to be the solid foundation that ensures our Church and its facilities are open and available to all.

Trustees' Report

Achievements and performance

- We continue to reach out and offer support to all within the wider community and particularly Orthodox Christians who have arrived in the local area in recent years.
- Our parish community and congregation continues to enjoy multicultural worship, prayer, friendship and social integration with Orthodox Christians from Romania, Russia, Bulgaria, Lithuania, Georgia, Ukraine Greece, Cyprus, and indeed, many other nationalities within our wider local community.
- To help promote community cohesion and greater participation we continue the saying of important parts of our liturgy services in 4 different languages to help integration into the Church community.
- Future restoration plans include the provision of two new classrooms/meeting rooms, crèche and disabled facilities at the rear of our Church to facilitate expansion of the valued community needs and further expansion of the language schools.
- The Community Hall continued to be a regular meeting place for different communities and local creative groups.

Financial review

Total cash receipts in the year were £75,790 (2023: £79,805) and total payments were £79,967 (2023: £62,045). Cash funds at the year end stood at £55,168 (2023: £59,345)

Future plans

The Church committee is pleased to present a series of suggestions aimed at further promoting Church activities through social media, the Church website, and collaborations with local organizations and companies. Additionally, recommendations are provided to enhance efforts in welcoming newcomers, introducing them to the Orthodox way of life, and involving them in Church events and activities. These suggestions are offered with the goal of fostering a vibrant, inclusive, and engaged community.

1. Promoting Church Activities on Social Media

To strengthen the Church's presence on social media, it is suggested that a consistent posting schedule be maintained, featuring a mix of photos, videos, and text to keep content engaging and informative. Highlighting Orthodox traditions, feast days, and liturgical practices through educational posts could help deepen understanding and appreciation among followers. Sharing personal stories and testimonials from parishioners may foster emotional connections and inspire both members and newcomers. Promoting upcoming events, such as festivals, retreats, and charity drives, with clear and detailed announcements is recommended to encourage participation. Incorporating interactive content, such as Q&A sessions, polls, and live videos, could further engage the audience and address questions about the Orthodox faith.

2. Enhancing the Church Website

To improve the Church website, it is suggested that the design be optimized for user-friendliness, with clear navigation and up-to-date information. A dedicated section for newcomers could be developed, offering guidance on what to expect during services, how to get involved, and answers to frequently asked questions. Implementing features such as online event registration and RSVPs may streamline participation and improve event planning. Adding a blog or news section to share articles, reflections, and updates about Church activities could keep the website dynamic and informative. Incorporating multimedia resources, such as videos of sermons, virtual tours of the Church, and recordings of choir performances, may provide visitors with a deeper connection to the Church's life and

3. Collaborating with Local Organizations and Companies

To strengthen ties with the local community, it is suggested that partnerships be formed with local organizations and businesses. Collaborative events, such as charity drives, cultural festivals, and educational workshops, could benefit both the Church and the broader community. Seeking sponsorships from local businesses to support Church events, with recognition provided on social media, the website, and event materials, is recommended. Organizing community service initiatives, such as food drives and neighbourhood clean-ups, may demonstrate the Church's commitment to serving the local area. Networking with local leaders and organizations to create opportunities for mutual support and collaboration is also encouraged.

Future plans cont'd

4. Welcoming Newcomers

To create a welcoming environment for newcomers, it is suggested that a dedicated greeting team be established to welcome them at services, introduce them to other members, and provide guidance. Preparing welcome packets containing information about the Church, its history, and upcoming events, along with small gifts such as prayer books or icons, may help newcomers feel valued. Hosting regular orientation sessions to help newcomers learn about the Orthodox faith, Church practices, and ways to get involved is recommended. Sending follow-up communications, such as emails or notes, to express gratitude for their visit and extend invitations to future events could foster a sense of belonging. Organizing informal social gatherings, such as coffee hours and pot lucks, may provide opportunities for newcomers to connect with members in a relaxed setting.

5. Introducing the Orthodox Way of Life

To help newcomers and members deepen their understanding of the Orthodox way of life, it is suggested that educational programs, including classes and workshops on Orthodox theology, history, and practices, be offered. Highlighting seasonal celebrations, such as Lent and Easter, through special services, activities, and educational materials may enrich the community's participation. Planning family-oriented events, such as youth programs, family retreats, and craft workshops tied to Orthodox traditions, could engage all age groups. Developing a mentorship program to pair newcomers with experienced members who can guide them in understanding and living the Orthodox way of life is also recommended.

6. Promoting Events and Activities

To ensure the community is well-informed about upcoming activities, it is suggested that an updated event calendar be maintained on the Church website and social media platforms. Distributing flyers and posters in the local community and posting announcements in public spaces may attract new attendees. Encouraging members to invite friends, family, and coworkers to Church events could leverage word-of-mouth outreach. Organizing collaborative events, such as cultural festivals, concerts, and lectures on topics of general interest, may appeal to a broader audience and showcase the Church's vibrant community.

7. Measuring Success and Gathering Feedback

To evaluate the effectiveness monitoring social media metrics, website traffic, and event attendance may provide valuable insights into engagement levels and areas for improvement. Using the feedback and data collected to refine outreach and engagement strategies is recommended to ensure the Church continues to grow and thrive as a welcoming and inclusive community.

In conclusion, these suggestions are offered with the aim of enhancing the Church's outreach efforts and creating a welcoming environment for all. By leveraging social media, improving the Church website, collaborating with local organizations, and implementing thoughtful welcoming strategies, the Church can share the beauty and richness of the Orthodox way of life with a broader audience.

Independent examination

J R Caladine FCCA CTA FCIE was appointed during the year to undertake the Independent Examination.

The trustees report was approved by the board of trustees



.....
Maria Kiniari
Trustee

Date: 31st March 2025

Independent Examiner's Report

I report to the trustees of the Greek Orthodox Community of Hastings (the "charity") for the year ended 31 August 2024, which are set out on pages 6 to 8.

Responsibilities and basis of report

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

I report in respect of my examination of the CIO's accounts carried out under section 145 of the Act. In carrying out my examination I have followed all applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

- (1) accounting records were not kept in respect of the charity as required by section 130 of the Act; or
- (2) the accounts do not accord with those records.

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



John Caladine FCCA
Chartered Certified Accountant
Caladine Limited
Chantry House
22 Upperton Road
Eastbourne
East Sussex
BN21 1BF

Date: 31st March 2025

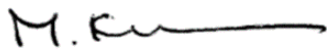
Receipts and Payments Account

	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Receipts		
Donations - Plate Gift Aided	13,818	5,914
Donations - Plate Cash	11,105	7,777
Donations - General	18,073	16,583
Community Hall Hire - Various	12,326	25,388
House - Rent Received	8,000	11,700
Church Shop	4,867	3,299
Church Tea & Coffee Sales	135	404
School fees	-	84
Memorials & Feasts	725	1,188
Baptism & Christenings	1,785	1,255
Funeral	150	-
HMRC Gift Aid Received	4,222	5,330
Weddings	175	240
Events & Fundraising	-	464
Interest Received	410	179
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total receipts	75,790	79,805
Payments		
Salaries	17,822	12,157
Church General Expenses	13,348	6,937
Church Insurance	6,886	5,863
Church General Repairs and maintenance	15,348	7,582
Church Shop - Stock	1,071	1,659
Church Administration	225	2,050
Church & Hall Utilities	8,484	6,109
Hall Repairs	476	12,707
House Repairs	8,425	416
Garden & Grounds	1,256	275
Charitable Family Donations	2,584	731
Accountancy	1,236	1,310
Visiting Priest	1,110	3,100
School Expenses	-	180
Cleaning	1,160	371
Office Costs	-	25
Website Expenses	266	206
Insurance	-	227
Bank charges	99	140
Miscellaneous expenses	170	-
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total payments	79,967	62,045
Net movement in funds	(4,177)	17,760
Cash funds b/f at 1st September 2023	59,345	41,585
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Cash funds c/f at 31 August 2024	55,168	59,345
	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>

Statement of Assets and Liabilities

	2024		2023	
	£	£	£	£
<u>ASSETS</u>				
<u>Monetary Assets</u>				
Cash at Bank and in hand				
Lloyds Bank	35,024		40,256	
CAF Cash	2,519		1,898	
CAF Gold	16,681		16,279	
Paypal	5		5	
Petty Cash	939		907	
		55,168		59,345
Cash funds made up of				
Restricted funds		-		-
Unrestricted funds:				
Reserve (designated)	15,000		15,000	
General Funds	40,168		44,345	
		55,168		59,345
		55,168		59,345
<u>LIABILITIES</u>				
<u>Creditors</u>				
Accountancy Fee/Independent Examination		1,080		1,080

Approved by the Trustees on 31st March 2025


.....

Maria Kiniari
Trustee

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Accounting Policies

The financial statements have been prepared as a Receipts and Payments in accordance with section 133 of the Charities Act 2011.

Designated funds

Reserves - The church endeavours to maintain cash reserve of at least £15,000 for unforeseen emergencies and has set up a designated fund for this purpose.