

**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 2025

THE GREEK ORTHODOX COMMUNITY OF HASTINGS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2025

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THE GREEK ORTHODOX COMMUNITY OF HASTINGS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2025
LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

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Church address

St. Mary Magdalene Orthodox Church
Church Road
St Leonards-on-Sea
East Sussex
TN37 6EE

Charity number

285794

Charity trustees

His Eminence Archbishop Nikitas Lulias
Mr Demetrios Demetriades
Mr Sotirios Joannou
Miss Maria Kiniari
Mrs Lina Kumar
Mr John Neofitou

Financial administrator

Mrs I Edwards
8 Baldslow Down
St Leonards on Sea
East Sussex
TN37 7NH

Independent examiner

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 Madgalene, 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.

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

Objectives

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.

Activities and achievements

Organisation of Elections for Church Committee

The recent organisation of elections within our Church community stands as a testament to what we can achieve when united in faith and purpose, successfully bringing the congregation together in a shared, transparent process. This initiative, a long-standing request from the Archdiocese, was embraced by our parish as an opportunity for active participation, fostered by the profound guidance and participation of our Father, whose spiritual leadership infused every step with wisdom and pastoral care. He walked alongside us not merely as an overseer, but as a shepherd ensuring that the proceedings remained rooted in prayerful discernment and mutual respect, creating a sacred space where every member felt both seen and heard. Through his encouragement, the congregation came together with open hearts, allowing us to elect the most appropriate committee members in a manner that reflected not just our collective voice, but our shared commitment to Christ-centered stewardship. Far from being a mere administrative task, the election became a profound act of unity, strengthening our bonds and ensuring our leadership truly reflects the will of the people under the blessed guidance of our spiritual father.

Church House

The refurbishment of the Church house property at 39 St. Margarets St. has delivered a strong and successful return on investment. With key improvements to all areas of the house, the Church has successfully protected the asset while substantially raising its income-generating capacity. Quality work was delivered at a reasonable cost through the engagement of skilled professionals, enhancing the property's market appeal. The decision to lease the property to a management company has resulted in a 40% increase in monthly revenue over the prior arrangement. This outcome has yielded both immediate financial gains and ongoing long-term stability for the Church. Overall, the refurbishment has proved to be a sound investment, securing the Church's income stream and reinforcing its financial position.

Church Hall

The Church Hall refurbishment plans aim to enhance the building's functionality and appeal, making it a more attractive and versatile venue for a wide range of users, including individuals, companies, clubs, charities, and other organisations. By addressing specific features such as modernised facilities, improved accessibility, flexible spaces, and updated technology, the refurbishment will ensure the hall meets contemporary standards and caters to diverse needs. These upgrades are designed to create a welcoming and professional environment suitable for various gatherings, events, and activities, while also incorporating sustainable practices to reduce the building's environmental impact.

Activities and achievements (continued)

Notably, the renovation has already begun through the dedicated volunteer efforts of the Church congregation. Their commitment has resulted in significant financial savings, allowing more of the budget to be directed toward high-impact improvements and essential materials. The generous support from the congregation—both in time and resources—has been instrumental in driving this project forward and reflects a shared vision for the hall's future.

The anticipated outcome of these improvements will result in a significant increase in rental revenue, aligning with the success achieved by the Church House. By broadening the hall's appeal and usability, the refurbishment aims to attract a wider audience, maximising its potential as a community hub. This initiative not only supports the financial sustainability of the hall but also strengthens its role in fostering community engagement and providing a high-quality space for local events and activities.

Promoting Church Activities on Social Media

To strengthen the Church's presence on social media, a consistent posting schedule is 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 help deepen understanding and appreciation among followers. Sharing personal stories and testimonials from parishioners fosters emotional connections and inspire both members and newcomers. In line with our commitment to accessibility, we have invested in new equipment and adopted the online broadcasting of our catechesis groups. This initiative allows us to accommodate a broader audience, including those who are unable to visit our premises to attend the sessions in person. Promoting this online offering through social media can help ensure that no one is excluded from spiritual education and community life. Promoting upcoming events, such as festivals, retreats, and charity drives, with clear and detailed announcements is recommended to encourage participation. Future additions to our social media will include incorporating interactive content, such as Q&A sessions, polls, and live videos, to further engage the audience and address questions about the Orthodox faith.

Financial review

Total cash receipts in the year were £73,124 (2024: £75,790) and total payments were £62,064 (2024: £79,967). Cash funds at the year end stood at £66,228 (2024: £55,168)

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 organisations 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. Enhancing the Church Website

To improve the Church website, it is suggested that the design be optimised 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 traditions.

2. Collaborating with Local Organisations and Companies

To strengthen ties with the local community, it is suggested that partnerships be formed with local organisations 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. Organising 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 organisations to create opportunities for mutual support and collaboration is also encouraged.

Future plans (continued)

3. 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. Organising informal social gatherings, such as coffee hours and pot lucks, may provide opportunities for newcomers to connect with members in a relaxed setting.

4. 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.

5. Promoting Events and Activities

We are making great strides in promoting events and activities, with growing engagement across our platforms and a strong foundation in place to connect with both members and the broader community. However, more work remains to be done. To build on this momentum, it is suggested that an updated event calendar be consistently maintained on the Church website and social media platforms to ensure the community stays well-informed. Expanding our reach through flyers, posters in local spaces, and announcements in public places can help attract new attendees. Strengthening word-of-mouth outreach by encouraging members to personally invite friends, family, and coworkers will also be key. Additionally, organising collaborative events—such as cultural festivals, concerts, and lectures on topics of general interest—offers a valuable opportunity to appeal to a wider audience and showcase the Church's vibrant, welcoming community. By continuing to build on our progress in these areas, we can deepen our impact and reach even more people in meaningful ways.

6. 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 organisations, and implementing thoughtful welcoming strategies, the Church can share the beauty and richness of the Orthodox way of life with a broader audience.

The trustees report was approved by the board of trustees



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Maria Kiniari
Trustee

Date:

Independent Examiner's Report

I report to the trustees of the Greek Orthodox Community of Hastings (the "charity") for the year ended 31 August 2025, 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').

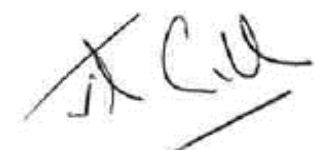
I report in respect of my examination of the CIO's accounts carried out under section 145 of the Act. In carrying out my examination I have followed all applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act.

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:


Receipts and Payments Account

	2025	2024
	£	£
Receipts		
Donations - Plate Gift Aided	11,964	13,818
Donations - Plate Cash	8,947	11,105
Donations - General	15,717	18,073
Community Hall Hire - Various	7,401	12,325
House - Rent Received	12,426	8,000
Church Shop	4,345	4,867
Church Tea & Coffee Sales	629	135
Memorials & Feasts	777	725
Baptism & Christenings	3,175	1,785
Funeral	60	150
HMRC Gift Aid Received	6,463	4,222
Weddings	710	175
Events & Fundraising	129	-
Interest Received	381	410
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total receipts	73,124	75,790
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Payments		
Salaries	15,914	17,822
Church General Expenses	10,338	13,348
Church Insurance	7,239	6,886
Church General Repairs and maintenance	326	15,349
Church Shop - Stock	2,249	1,071
Church Administration	-	225
Church & Hall Utilities	9,154	8,484
Hall Repairs	971	476
House Repairs	8,946	8,425
Garden & Grounds	1,206	1,256
Charitable Family Donations	1,370	2,584
Accountancy	1,080	1,236
Visiting Priest	-	1,110
Cleaning	1,520	1,160
Office Costs	577	-
Website Expenses	269	266
Insurance	-	-
Bank charges	94	99
Miscellaneous expenses	811	170
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total payments	62,064	79,967
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Net movement in funds	11,060	(4,177)
Cash funds b/f at 1 September 2024	55,168	59,345
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Cash funds c/f at 31 August 2025	66,228	55,168
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Statement of Assets and Liabilities

	2025		2024	
	£	£	£	£
<u>ASSETS</u>				
<u>Monetary Assets</u>				
Cash at bank and in hand				
Lloyds Bank	46,109		35,024	
CAF Cash	1,789		2,519	
CAF Gold	17,057		16,681	
Paypal	189		5	
Petty Cash	1,084		939	
		66,228		55,168
Cash funds made up of				
Restricted funds		-		-
Unrestricted funds:				
Reserve (designated)	15,000		15,000	
General Funds	51,228		40,168	
		66,228		55,168
		66,228		59,345
<u>LIABILITIES</u>				
<u>Creditors</u>				
Accountancy/Independent examination fee		1,080		1,080

Approved by the Trustees on


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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.