



**TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2023**

The Trustees present their report and the financial statements for the year ended 31st December 2023.

**1.1 REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION**

<b>Charity Name</b>	Whiteabbey Congregation of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland	
<b>Other names used by the charity</b>	Whiteabbey Presbyterian Church Whiteabbey Presbyterian WPC	
<b>Northern Ireland Charity Number</b>	NIC104452	
<b>Operational Address</b>	602 Shore Road Newtownabbey Co Antrim BT37 0SN	
<b>Members of the Board of Trustees (Kirk Session)</b>	Rev Angus Stewart Dr Neale Blair Mr Clifford Campbell Mrs Caroline Chambers Mr Mark Chambers Mr Thomas Creighton Mr Gareth Dalzell Mr Rodney Ferguson Mr David Gamble Dr James Gamble Dr Harold Harvey Dr Tim Huey Mr Roland Jamison Mr David Arnold McAlpin Mr Philip McBride	Mr Richard McChesney Mrs Ann McClelland Mr Ian McClelland Mr Alan McCreedy Mrs Sadie McCullough Mr David McNicol Mrs Rosemary McNicol Mr Allan Nesbitt Mrs Vyvienne Orr Mrs Elaine Russell Mr Richard Shearer Mrs Christine Swarbrick Mr Ken Swarbrick Mr Alan Taylor Mr Jim Warke

**MANAGEMENT INFORMATION**

<b>Office Bearers</b>	Rev Angus Stewart..... MINISTER
	Mr Richard McChesney..... CLERK OF SESSION
	Vacant..... DEPUTY CLERK OF SESSION
	Mrs Rosemary McNicol..... SECRETARY OF CONGREGATIONAL COMMITTEE
	Mr Rodney Ferguson..... TREASURER

**OTHER INFORMATION**

<b>Reporting Accountant</b>	Diamond & Skillen Sinclair House 89/101 Royal Avenue Belfast BT1 1FE
<b>Bankers</b>	Danske Bank Limited Donegall Square West Belfast BT1 6JS

## 1.2 The purpose and objectives of Whiteabbey Presbyterian Church

Whilst our ultimate purpose is to put into practice those features of a Christian church identified in the Bible - showing God's love, care and compassion to all with whom we come in contact - our purpose is summarised in the PCI Code (the Governing document of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland) as follows:

*'3. (1) The visible Church consists of all those throughout the world who profess to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation and to live obedient to God's Word, together with their children.*

*(2) The visible Church was established by the Lord Jesus Christ for the glory of the Father and the advancement of His Kingdom in the world. These great purposes are to be accomplished by the proclamation of the Gospel, by witness-bearing to the truth as it is in Jesus Christ and by the promotion of Christian fellowship and mutual edification among all believers.'*

It is appreciated that it is difficult by the nature of our purpose, and with the necessary attention to personal privacy, to articulate performance and achievements. We have attempted to do so later in this report by the crude measure of the numbers of public benefit services and activities provided, the extent of volunteer participation and the level of attendance and participation by members and the wider public.

## 1.3 Governance and Management Structure

The Board of Trustees of Whiteabbey Presbyterian Church (WPC) is referred to in the Presbyterian Church context as the **Kirk Session** which is made up of the ordained minister and the Ruling Elders. Ruling Elders are elected by congregational vote based on a list prepared by the Session of persons nominated by the congregation. The present Elders, and past Elders who served during the reporting year, are listed above. The Kirk Session is chaired (moderated) by a Teaching Elder who is normally the Ordained Minister called to the Church.

Under the Presbyterian Church in Ireland (PCI) form of governance the corporate oversight of WPC is the responsibility of the North Belfast Presbytery which superintends the spiritual and temporal affairs of the congregations assigned to it by the General Assembly of PCI. The Presbytery consists of the active ministers of congregations within the Presbytery, retired ministers, one elder appointed by the Kirk Session of each congregation and other individuals allowed by the Code of PCI.

Whilst the ultimate guide for WPC is the Bible, the Code (or Constitution Document) of the PCI (latest amendment in 2022), forms the governance document through which we seek to meet our obligations to church members, the public and our statutory obligations and good practice aspirations under the Charities and other legislation.

At WPC a Clerk of Session is elected from amongst the elders. The Kirk Session meets at least six times each year. Several Kirk Session Ministry Groups have been set up to expedite the work of the Kirk Session and each reports, and submits proposals, to Kirk Session on a regular basis.

Whilst the Kirk Session has overall responsibility for the governance of the church, selected tasks are delegated to the Congregational Committee (CC) and the day to day management to the Staff Ministry Team. To facilitate communication and consistent decision making all members of Kirk Session are ex-officio members of the CC, the Committee is chaired by the Minister and the CC minutes are a fixed item on the Kirk Session agenda. All staff team members are invited to attend Kirk Session meetings.

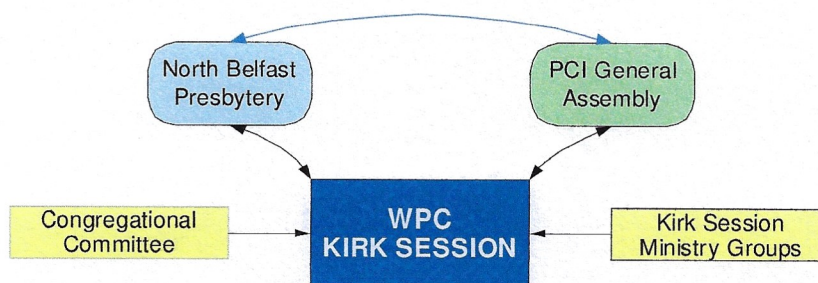


Figure (i): Whiteabbey Presbyterian Church Governance Structure

#### 1.4 Achievements and Performance (Public Benefit Report)

The Trustees are aware of the importance of achieving public benefit as described in the WPC entry on the CCNI Register and welcome the guidance given in the CCNI documents. We consider that working for the public benefit has been a core activity of WPC since its foundation in 1833 and it fits easily within our current vision. It is a continuous thread in discussions and decision making at governance meetings.

In addition to the essential work of our nine full and part-time paid employees, unpaid volunteers contribute a significant number of hours per week in delivering a wide range of activities and services.

This is the source of energy through which our public benefit is delivered, and the Trustees express their sincere thanks to all our staff and volunteers.

The public benefit services delivered by WPC are listed in Table (i), and a statistical description of the level of participation is shown in Table (ii).

Badminton Club	Funeral Services	The Village (Annual Youth Event partnership)
Baptismal Services	Grief Share	Whiteabbey Traders Association Membership
BB Anchor Boys	Holiday Bible Club (Children's Annual Event)	Wedding Ceremonies
BB Company Section	Home Groups Weekly Studies	Financial (and occasional physical) support for selected missions and poverty relief organisations
BB Junior Section	Hope Street (Weekly Youth Event)	
GA Anchor Girls	Indoor bowls	
GA Junior Girls	Kids & Co. (Mothers, Carers & Toddlers)	
GA Girls Company / Seniors	Kingdom kids	
Casual Café (occasional coffee and chat event for all)	Mulanje, Malawi Mission Partnership	
Catering Team Service	Pastoral visits to homes, hospitals and Retirement and Care Homes	
Christianity Explored Study Group	Retirement and Care Homes Services	
Crèche	Sew & So's Craft Group	
Crossroads (Male Youth Home Group)	Storehouse (foodbank run in Partnership with Whiteabbey Churches Together Partnership)	
Deeper (Youth events)	Sunday Morning Service	
Discipleship Duos	Sunday Evening Service	
Dun Laoghaire PC Partnership	Sunday Morning Live (Children's Sunday School)	
Divorce Care	The Pod (Regular Youth Study Event)	
Firehouse (Female Youth Home Group)		
Friendship Hour (for older members and friends)		

- Further details on these organisations and activities are available on our website [whiteabbey.org](http://whiteabbey.org) and in our regular publications; the weekly printed Notices, the weekly eBulletin and the quarterly Whiteabbey Presbyterian News.
- Several of our organisations and activities are provided for children and young people. The essential safeguarding is facilitated through the PCI Taking Care programme for which we have two members appointed as Designated Persons.

**Table (i): Public benefit services provided by WPC**



	2023	2022
Number of families under the pastoral care of the church	404	418
Number of persons - under 18 years	84	101
- 19 - 64 years	498	517
- Over 65 years	304	296
- TOTAL	886	914
	Average Weekly participants	Average Weekly participants
Sunday Services - Morning	325	310
- Evening	50	50
Average number of weekly online views (YouTube)	283	290
Bible Studies and Fellowship meetings (excluding Sunday Services)	240	215
Sunday School / Bible class type activities	43	15
Non-uniformed organisations for children and young people	90	54
Uniformed organisations for children and young people	83	84
<b>Table (ii). Level of participation in organisations and activities as a crude measure of impact</b>		

**Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities and Corporate Governance**

The organisation has been registered with the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland.

The Elders are responsible for their annual report and for the preparation of financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Organisation and of the net movement in funds of the Organisation for that period.

In preparing those financial statements, the Elders are required to:-

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- Observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- State whether applicable accounting standards have been followed subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; *and*
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the organisation will continue to function.

The Elders are responsible for ensuring that the Organisation keeps proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the organisation and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with Charities legislation. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Organisation and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities and to provide reasonable assurance that:

- The Organisation is operating efficiently and effectively;
- All assets are safeguarded against unauthorised use or disposition and are properly applied;
- Proper records are maintained and financial information used within the Organisation, or for publication, is reliable; *and*
- The Organisation complies with relevant laws and regulations

**Statement as disclosure to our reporting accountant**

In so far as the Elders are aware at the time of approving our trustees' annual report:

- there is no relevant information, being information needed by the auditor in connection with preparing their report, of which the charity's reporting accountant is unaware; *and*
- the Elders, having made enquiries of fellow Elders and the charity's reporting accountant that they ought to have individually taken, have each taken all steps that he/she is obliged to take as a trustee in order to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the reporting accountant is aware of that information.

#### **Internal controls**

The Kirk Session has overall responsibility for ensuring that Whiteabbey Presbyterian Church has a system of internal control. Such a system of control can provide only reasonable and not absolute assurance against errors or fraud. Controls are concerned with safeguarding the church's assets and maintaining the integrity of accounting controls.

#### **Risk Statement**

An internal risk assessment has been undertaken in order to identify the major risks to which the organisation is exposed. The Kirk Session recognises its responsibility for the management of risk.

#### **Risk Management**

The organisation has in place a well-established system of internal controls that govern its operations. These controls have been designed to provide a reasonable assurance against risks.

#### **STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE WITH THE DUTY TO HAVE REGARD TO THE CHARITY COMMISSION FOR NORTHERN IRELAND'S GUIDANCE ON PUBLIC BENEFIT**

In setting our objectives and planning our activities for the year the trustees have given careful consideration to the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland's guidance on public benefit to ensure that the activities have helped to achieve the Charity's purpose and provide a benefit to the beneficiaries. No harm and no private benefit flowed from the purposes of the charity.

#### **FINANCIAL REVIEW and RESERVES POLICY**

The Elders believe that the Organisation should hold financial reserves because:

- It has little endowment funding and is currently dependent for income upon donations from year to year which are subject to review;
- It requires protection against and the ability to continue operating despite unforeseen setbacks; and
- It requires the ability to be able to take advantage of change and opportunities to further its objectives.

The Elders believe that the level of unrestricted reserves represented by investments and net current assets should be the equivalent of between three and preferably six months' operating costs calculated and reviewed annually. Reserves should be built up to the desired level in stages consistent with the charity's overall financial position and its need to maintain and develop its charitable activities.

The level of total unrestricted reserves stands at £121,674 (2022: £107,735) represented by investments and net current assets. Operating costs (on unrestricted funds only) currently amount to approximately £285,000 per year, this would mean a target reserve balance of between £71,250 and £142,500. The current level of reserves therefore is within the terms of the Reserves Policy.

Details of the Charity's funds are shown in Note 15. An analysis of the Charity's net assets between the funds is given in Note 13. The Elders consider that sufficient resources are held in an appropriate form to enable each fund to be applied in accordance with any restriction imposed.

#### **EMPLOYEES**

The Charity aims to be an organisation that employees enjoy working for and where they feel supported and developed. Employees are kept fully informed about its strategy and objectives, as well as day to day news and events. Regular information about the organisation is available through meetings and e-mails. All employees are encouraged to give their views and suggestions on performance and strategy.

#### **INDEPENDENT EXAMINERS**

Diamond & Skillen Chartered Accountants were appointed as the charity's independent examiners.

This report was approved by the Trustees on 20th March 2024 and signed on its behalf by:

**Mr Richard McChesney**  
Clerk of Session