

**STANTONBURY ECUMENICAL PARTNERSHIP
(A Charitable Incorporated Organisation)**

TRUSTEES REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE PERIOD JANUARY 2023 – DECEMBER 2023

Charity No: 1200563

Stantonbury Ecumenical Partnership

Trustees Report and Financial Statements for the period 1st January 2023 – 31st December 2023

Trustees:

Mr David Preston (Chair)
Mrs Anne Slee (Secretary)
Dr Adrian Prisk (Treasurer)
Ms Diana Stammers (Safeguarding)
Mr Stephen Fletcher
Mr Michael Williamson (until August 2023)

Revd Dr Paul Smith
Revd Canon Chukwemeka Iwuagwu
Revd Dr Samuel Muthuveloe
Revd Nicola Martyn-Beck (until August 2023)
Revd David Haseldine (from September 2023)
Mrs Penelope Miller

Office address:

Christ Church Stantonbury
Purbeck
Stantonbury Campus
Milton Keynes
MK14 6GU

Independent Examiner:

Adrian Yardley

Principal Bankers:

CAF Bank Ltd
25 Kings Hill Ave,
Kings Hill,
West Malling
ME19 4JQ

The Trustees present their report together with the financial statements of the charity for the period from 1st January 2023 – 31st December 2023. The trustees are listed above. The Stantonbury Ecumenical Partnership was registered as a CIO (Charitable Incorporated Organisation) in October 2022. The financial processes for the new charity started with effect from January 1st 2023

Purposes and Public Benefit

Following the establishment of the CIO, the purposes of the charity and its associated public benefit are now as articulated below:

To advance the Christian faith by drawing together the congregations in the Partnership to further the “Five Marks of Mission” which have been adopted by the Forum of Churches Together in England and any other purposes which are charitable in law to the benefit of those living within the Partnership area and to support the wider mission in Milton Keynes and beyond.

The “Five Marks of Mission” are expressed as:

1. To proclaim the good news of the Kingdom
2. To teach, baptise and nurture new believers
3. To respond to human need by loving service
4. To seek to transform unjust structures of society
5. To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and to sustain the life of the earth.

These objectives generate public benefit through:

- Providing places of worship for regular worship and to conduct baptisms, weddings, funerals and other offices as required.
- Offering the opportunity for people to engage with and respond to the Christian faith.
- Raising awareness and understanding of religious benefits and practices, thus advancing the religion.
- Encouraging a direct, practical response to human need.
- Encouraging a just society.
- Promoting care for the environment.

Additionally, as an ecumenical body, the charity is intrinsically concerned with the public benefits of reconciliation and the broad advancement of the Christian faith.

Organisation

The charity is governed by trustees. Six are elected at the Annual General Meeting. Ministers in pastoral charge of congregations serve ex-officio. There is provision for appointment of a trustee by the PCC and other equivalent denominational bodies.

The wider membership is made up from the members of the six congregations in the partnership.

Trustee vacancies are advertised, with a closing date for written applications which require all pertinent information and a nominator. Elections are held at the

AGM.

All trustees are required to have full DBS checks with appropriate safeguarding training.

All trustees have been alerted to advice on the Charity Commission website regarding their roles. Recruitment procedures are in line with Charity Commission recommendations.

Review of the activities and future developments

In 2023, the six congregations in the Partnership continued to provide worship throughout the year. Some progress has been made in arranging services for the entire Partnership, but this is still to be developed fully. The Congregational Leadership Teams have taken up their new roles and are working well.

There have been two vacancies in the Ministerial Team throughout 2023, one Anglican and one Baptist. It has proved quite challenging to fill these posts. The vacancies have also put extra pressure on the lay ministers within the Partnership and we are grateful for the time and energy that all have contributed to leading worship.

Bradwell Church celebrated its 800th year anniversary in 2023. A full programme of events occurred throughout the year, including visiting preachers, a logo competition and art exhibition.

At St Mary Magdalene, Willen a feasibility study has been undertaken for a Hooke Heritage Centre in the churchyard, celebrating the 17th century scientist and architect, Robert Hooke.

The Green Champions have made a strong start this year in gathering together those who are committed to our environmental mission. Two congregations (St James and Christ Church) have now gained Eco Church Bronze awards. A Partnership-wide meeting was held in November to share ideas on Eco Church. The Green Champions are also now part of a wider MK Eco Church Network.

Looking to 2024, the Partnership will be exploring what it means to be an Inclusive Church. More joint services are planned, including an outdoor service at the Tree Cathedral (which had to be cancelled due to be bad weather in 2023). The Mission, Evangelism and Discipleship is still to be established..

Financial review

The current finances of the Partnership are reviewed at each trustees meeting. The accounts of the individual congregations are monitored by the church treasurers and concerns are passed to the trustees through the Partnership treasurer. The annual accounts of all the congregations are consolidated with the Partnership accounts for inspection and presentation at the AGM.

Salary policy

Anglican clergy are employed by the Oxford Diocese.

Methodist clergy are employed through the Milton Keynes Methodist Circuit. Baptist ministers are employed by the partnership. Parity is maintained between the Baptist and Anglian stipends. Employee pension contributions as well as employer contributions are paid in addition to the gross salary. There are no other employees currently. The Partnership follows the guidance of the National Living Wage foundation.

Investment powers

The trustees have the power to make any investment they see fit in the same manner and subject to the same conditions as the trustees of a trust are permitted to do by the Trustee Act 2000.

Related parties

There were no related parties in the period covered by this report

Reserves policy and risk management

The Partnership maintains reserves of at least two months regular expenditure.

Statement of Trustees responsibilities

The trustees are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the financial statements 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 trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources of the charity for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to: select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently; following the methods and principles in the Charities SOFA, make judgments 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 charity will continue in business.

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Charity (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 and the provisions of the trust deed.

They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities. The trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the charity and financial information included on the charity's website.

Signed

David Preston – Chair of Trustees

Adrian Prisk – Treasurer

Date