

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

TRUSTEES REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE PERIOD JANUARY 2024 – DECEMBER 2024

Charity No: 1200563

**STANTONBURY ECUMENICAL PARTNERSHIP
FOR THE PERIOD JANUARY 2024 – DECEMBER 2024**

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Stantonbury Ecumenical Partnership

Trustees Report and Financial Statements for the period 1st January 2024 – 31st December 2024

Trustees:

Mr David Preston (Chair)	Revd Dr Paul Smith (Ex-officio until Sep 2024)
Mrs Anne Slee (Secretary)	Revd Dr Samuel Muthuveloe (Ex-officio)
Dr Adrian Prisk (Treasurer)	Revd David Haseldine (Ex-officio)
Ms Diana Stammers (Safeguarding)	Mrs Penelope Miller (PCC appointed)
Mr Stephen Fletcher	Revd Canon Chibuzor Okpala (Ex-officio from Sep 2024)
Revd Canon Chukwemeka Iwuagwu (Ex-officio until June 2024)	Revd Philip Dunning (Ex-officio from Sep 2024)

Office address:

Christ Church Stantonbury
Purbeck
Stantonbury Campus
Milton Keynes
MK14 6GU

Independent Examiner:

Jonathan Vowles FCA
114 High St
Cranfield
Bedford
MK43 0DG

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 2024 – 31st December 2024. 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 2024, the six congregations in the Partnership continued to provide worship throughout the year. Some progress was made in 2023 in arranging services for the entire Partnership, this has continued in 2024. The Congregational Leadership Teams have matured in their roles and are working well.

We have been fortunate in that the ministerial vacancies in 2023 have now been filled. Revd Canon Chibuzor Okpala has been appointed as Team Rector and has assumed the role of Team Leader. Revd Philip Dunning has taken the Baptist ministerial post with the role of Vision Enabler. Both started in September. Revd Dr Paul Smith, the previous Team Rector retired at the end of September after around 20 years in the Partnership.

The churches have continued to maintain recovery after the Coronavirus pandemic in terms of numbers, attendance and income. In common with most churches, the congregations are ageing and we are fully aware of the need to bring the Gospel to the younger generations. We hope and pray that with two newly appointed full-time ministers joining their part-time colleagues and lay-ministers, we will develop a vision for reaching those who have little connection with the Christian faith, let alone the Church.

Chatterbox at Cross and Stable church on Wednesday mornings has proved a great success as a resource to the community, raising the profile of the church and bringing the message of the Gospel to those who would otherwise never receive the ministry. Other initiatives such as 5 ways café at St Andrews and TTTT at St Mary Magdalene are promoting the church as a significant player in community life. We are hopeful of developing closer relationships with Stantonbury school.

Several churches introduced the technology to live-stream worship during the pandemic and have continued to develop this. There is a loyal following of online worship (Christ Church has a regular participant from Japan!)

The new clergy wish to devise a formula to optimise their Sunday ministry in the Partnership churches. This will likely involve some adjustment of service times. Discussion around this will be ongoing in 2025

Congregations have continued in their support of the ‘5th Mark of Mission’ and have looked at their environmental impact. They have applied for environmental ratings, carried out an environmental audit and started projects to reduce the use of fossil

fuels. The MK Deanery is also involved in this field and we will see further developments in 2025.

The Hooke Heritage Project at St Mary Magdalene Willen has continued its work of preparation of the project. Because of the potential exposure of St MM and hence the Partnership to risk, the trustees have asked for closer monitoring of that risk and that the link should be established with the Trustees in addition to the involvement with the Partnership Council.

The Trustees and Partnership Council are investigating the possibility of employing a part-time administrator in 2025.

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.

The current level of reserves and income enables us to conclude that the Charity is a viable going concern.

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.

A risk register is currently being developed along with robust financial policies.

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

Awaiting Inspector report

Stantonbury Ecumenical Partnership - (CIO 1200563)
Statement of Financial Affairs (SOFA) December 2024

	Notes	Total Unrestricted	Total Restricted	Total Endowment	Total Funds 2024	Total Funds 2023
		£	£	£	£	£
Income						
Donations and legacies	1	196,569	7,204		203,774	225,233
Income from charitable activities:	2	12,030	1,526		13,555	17,018
Income from trading activities	3	23,782			23,782	23,437
Grants	4	1,172	6,275		7,447	30,547
Income from investments	5	1,256	66		1,323	1,193
Other Income	6	1,039			1,039	1,167
Total income		235,848	15,072		250,919	298,595
Expenditure						
Cost of fundraising	7	1,271	50		1,321	3,161
Donations to charity and mission	8	7,850	537		8,387	9,217
Ministry costs and expenses	9	143,958			143,958	117,672
Running Costs	10	57,169	7,562		64,731	67,119
Major building repairs	11	14,469	14,499		28,968	50,883
Other costs	12	8,427			8,427	27,689
Total expenditure		233,143	22,649	-	255,791	275,741
Increase (Decrease) in investment value				643		
Net income/expenditure and net movements in funds for the year		2,705	(7,577)	643	(4,872)	22,854
Reconciliation of Funds						
Transfers and corrections		(2,535)	2,535			
Fund balance brought forward at 01.01.24		82,496	54,945	28,076	165,517	139,930
Fund balance Carried forward at 31.12.24		82,667	49,902	28,719	161,288	165,517

Signed

David Preston – Chair of Trustees

Adrian Prisk – Treasurer

Date

Stantonbury Ecumenical Partnership (CIO - 1200563)						
Balance Sheet Dec 2024						
					31/12/2024	31/12/2023
	Notes					
Debtors	13				8,535	9,814
Gift Aid Accrual					10,857	12,458
Bank Current Accounts					102,037	101,339
Bank Deposit Accounts					14,594	18,780
Cash					720	489
Endowments					28,718	28,076
Creditors	14				(4,158)	(5,440)
Adjustments					(17)	
Total					161,287	165,517
Funds						
		Unrestricted	Restricted	Endowment		
Bradwell		4,792	5,407	28,718	38,917	46,551
Christ Church		22,710	2,595		25,306	15,220
Cross & Stable		7,249	4,753		12,002	12,868
St James		2,897	9,182		12,079	19,150
St Andrew's		4,932	22,975		27,908	28,185
St MM Willen		13,906	3,492		17,398	15,837
SEP		26,180	1,498		27,678	27,706
Total		82,667	49,902	28,718	161,288	165,517

Signed

David Preston – Chair of Trustees

Adrian Prisk – Treasurer

Date

Notes to the Accounts

1. Accounting Policies

(a) Basis of preparation and assessment of going concern

The accounts (financial statements) have been prepared under the historical cost convention with items recognised at cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant note(s) to these accounts. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the second edition of the Charities Statement of Recommended Practice issued in October 2019, the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Charities Act 2011.

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

The trustees consider that there are no material uncertainties about the Partnership's ability to continue as a going concern. The most significant area of risk concerns the contributions from each of the congregations to the general funding. These have shown significant decline in recent years, a process accelerated by the coronavirus pandemic. As these contributions are used to pay the stipends of the ministerial team, there has been a reluctance to increase donations while there have been two significant long-term vacancies. These have now been filled and it is hoped that that will increase the overall income going forward.

(b) Funds structure

Each congregation has its own bank account(s). Most have their own treasurers. Decisions regarding income and expenditure are delegated by the trustees to the congregational leadership teams (CLT). Each congregation makes a contribution towards the Partnership budget based on the affordability from its own resources. Towards the end of each year, the denominations publish their budgeted requests for the following year. These are based on the salary calculations for the ministers working in the partnership with additional per capita membership costs to cover additional denominational expenditure. Baptist ministers are appointed to an office in the Partnership which is responsible for the stipend, pensions and housing and the associated payroll tasks including PAYE and National Insurance.

Restricted funds are funds which are to be used in accordance with specific restrictions imposed by the donor or trust deed.

Unrestricted income funds comprise those funds which the trustees are free to use for any purpose in furtherance of the charitable objects. Unrestricted funds include designated funds where the trustees, at their discretion, have created a fund for a specific purpose.

(c) Income recognition

All income is recognised once the charity has entitlement to the income, it is probable that the income will be received, and the amount of income receivable can be measured reliably.

Legacy gifts are recognised on a case by case basis following the granting of probate when the administrator/executor for the estate has communicated in writing both the amount and settlement date. In the event that the gift is in the form of an asset other than cash or a financial asset traded on a recognised stock exchange, recognition is subject to the value of the gift being reliably measurable with a degree of reasonable accuracy and the title to the asset having been transferred to the charity.

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. Dividends are recognised once the dividend has been declared and notification has been received of the dividend due.

This is normally upon notification by our investment advisor of the dividend yield of the investment portfolio.

(d) Expenditure recognition

Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to that expenditure, it is probable that settlement will be required, and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably.

All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis. All expenses including support costs and governance costs are allocated or apportioned to the applicable expenditure headings.

(e) Allocation of governance costs

Support costs have been allocated between governance costs and other support costs. Governance costs comprise all costs involving the public accountability of the charity and its compliance with regulation and good practice. These costs include costs related to statutory audit and legal fees together with an apportionment of overhead and support costs.

(f) Costs of raising funds

The costs of generating funds consist of costs and expenses of staging events including publicity, venue hire, insurance etc.

(g) Tangible fixed assets and depreciation

All assets costing more than £1000 are capitalised and valued at historical cost. Depreciation is charged on furniture and equipment on a straight-line basis over their estimated useful life of six years from the year of acquisition.

(h) Fixed asset investments

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 statement of financial activities includes the net gains and losses arising on revaluation and disposals throughout the year.

(i) Pensions

Baptist ministers are members of the Baptist Pension scheme. Before 2008 this was a defined benefit scheme. After this date members were transferred to a defined contribution scheme. For many years the defined benefit scheme was in deficit and members and employers were required to pay additional contributions to remedy this. If a cessation event had occurred, the Partnership would have been liable for a share of the outstanding debt. This debt gradually reduced and was completely eliminated when the scheme was taken over by a third-party provider. Registration as a CIO and the retirement of the last incumbent minister created a cessation event, but this was after the debt had been cancelled. The Partnership has withdrawn from the scheme, so there will be no future liabilities. With the appointment of a Baptist minister in September 2024, the Partnership has rejoined the scheme but has no ongoing liability to the defined benefit scheme.

Other employees will be subject to the rules of Auto Enrolment and will either be entered into a suitable scheme or join one on a voluntary basis depending on income thresholds.

INCOMING RESOURCES							
				Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Total
1. Donations and Legacies						2024	2023
Planned giving:							
	Gift Aided			102,575.93	2,400.00	104,975.93	112,985.92
	Income tax recoverable on Donations			34,652.06	188.65	34,840.71	44,314.28
	Not Gift Aided			9,209.00		9,209.00	12,059.26
Collections (open plate and card)				27,361.67		27,361.67	26,263.01
Gift Days				601.67		601.67	645.65
Small Donations				2,405.46	754.55	3,160.01	2,504.64
Donations, appeals etc.				8,995.26	3,861.15	12,856.41	24,073.32
Refreshments and Flowers				3,268.19			
Legacies and Memorials				7,500.00		7,500.00	2,387.30
				196,569.24	7,204.35	203,773.59	225,233.38
2. Income from Charitable activities							
Fetes, bazaars, other fund-raising events				4,364.57	1,525.89	5,890.46	9,413.30
Fees - Weddings/Funerals				7,665.00		7,665.00	7,859.00
				12,029.57	1,525.89	13,555.46	17,272.30
3. Income from trading activities							
Church letting				20,473.97		20,473.97	18,009.75
Chapel letting				466.92		466.92	1,642.46
Other Fees				2,841.27		2,841.27	3,530.11
				23,782.16		23,782.16	23,182.32
4. Grants							
St MM Willen Hooke project					150.00	150.00	18,425.00
Other				1,171.70	6,124.90	7,296.60	12,121.60
				1,171.70	6,274.90	7,446.60	30,546.60
5. Income from investments							
Dividends				779.36		779.36	767.41
Interest on CBF Accounts				327.24		327.24	199.07
Interest from bank accounts				149.58	66.41	215.99	226.57
				1,256.18	66.41	1,322.59	1,193.05
6. Other income							
Insurance claims							1,166.87
Sundry Refunds				1,039.00			
				1,039.00		1,039.00	1,166.87
TOTAL INCOMING RESOURCES				235,847.85	15,071.55	250,919.40	298,594.52

RESOURCES USED					
		Unrestricted	Restricted	Total 2023	Total 2023
7. Cost of fundraising					
Costs of fetes, bazaars, other fund raising		1,271.01	50.00	1,321.01	3,160.96
		1,271.01	50.00	1,321.01	3,160.96
8. Donations to charity and mission					
Overseas Miss Church Societies		1,000.00			
	Relief & development agency	616.00	818.76	1,434.76	1,238.30
Home Missions Church Societies		1,220.00		1,220.00	524.00
	Relief & development agency	1,082.66	468.44	1,551.10	1,952.10
Other		3,931.11	(750.00)	3,181.11	4,902.41
		7,849.77	537.20	7,386.97	8,616.81
9. Ministry Costs and Expenses					
Parish Share (Denominations)		117,840.68		117,840.68	115,830.83
Baptist Minister Salary Costs		15,652.80		15,652.80	998.00
Clergy Expenses		2,795.07		2,795.07	1,251.39
Manse Costs		7,669.14		7,669.14	(408.14)
		143,957.69		143,957.69	117,672.08
10. Running Costs					
Insurance		14,415.60		14,415.60	13,800.65
Utilities		24,653.78		24,653.78	27,459.02
Churchyard upkeep		3,128.50	540.00	3,668.50	2,525.50
Other Church running	Flowers	6,148.56		6,148.56	8,371.00
Worship		3,360.23		3,360.23	8,504.83
Equipment		1,094.48	1,842.81	2,937.29	3,007.29
Expenditure on church letting					
Expenditure on church hall letting					
Expenditure on other trading					
Junior Church and Youth Club / Training			299.83	299.83	586.73
Administration:		1,200.00			
	Printing and stationery	557.56		557.56	527.58
	Subscriptions	1,107.77		1,107.77	1,031.52
Bank charges		685.66		685.66	662.14
Safeguarding		817.00		817.00	642.00
		57,169.14	2,682.64	59,851.78	67,118.26
11. Major building repairs					
Repairs and Maintenance		14,468.35	14,499.04	28,967.39	42,154.69
Quinquennial Work					8,729.00
		14,468.35	14,499.04	28,967.39	50,883.69
12. Other costs					
St MM Willen Hooke Project			2,837.94	2,837.94	15,132.70
New Bradwell Community Centre					4,820.00
Sundry		8,426.66	2,041.88	10,468.54	7,736.33
		8,426.66	4,879.82	13,306.48	27,689.03
TOTAL RESOURCES USED					
		233,142.62	22,648.70	254,791.32	275,140.83

13. Debtors and Prepayments

Bradwell

Expenses charged to SEP	880.21	880.21
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Christ Church

Prepayment to CCLI	385.86	
Unpaid invoices Q4	3,785.00	4,170.86

St James

Fee Payment from SEP	329.00	329.00
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St MM Willen

Prepayment of Insurance	1,388.47	
Prepayment of Electricity		1,388.47

SEP

Prepayment of SEP Web hosting	202.04	
HMRC Gift Aid not accrued in the accounts	* 1,328.55	
Reclaim of overpayment of GASDS 2023 to St MM Willen	229.54	
Interest receivable from HMRC	6.58	1,766.71

Totals

8,535.25	8,535.25
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14. Payable

Cross & Stable

Miscellaneous Expenses	50.00	50.00
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St Andrew's

2025 Funeral Fees paid in 2024	540.00	540.00
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St MM Willen

2024 Payments to charities made in January 2025	329.91	
Ace Defence	884.65	
Kings Fire	143.40	
Cheque Fees charged	1.50	1,359.46

SEP

HMRC Gift Aid not accrued in the accounts	* 1,328.55	
Bradwell Chapel	880.21	2,208.76

Totals

4,158.22	4,158.22
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