

ASHBY BAPTIST CHURCH ANNUAL REPORT

2025

Complied by Mat Sheffield (Minister), Louise Scott (Secretary) and Mary Jones, on behalf of Ashby Baptist Church

Statutory Information

Registered Address

Brook Street, Ashby-de-la-Zouch, Leicestershire. LE65 1HA

Charity Registration Number 1159600

Trustees 25/26

Rev Mathew Sheffield (Minister) (Inducted as Minister 17 August 2024)

Mr Ian Hunt (Appointed as Deacon 28 February 2023)

Mrs Brenda Hunter (Appointed as Deacon 27 February 2024

Prof. Martin Insley (Appointed as Deacon 22 February 2022)

Mr Heath Marlow (Appointed as Deacon February 2025)

Mrs Louise Scott (Secretary) (Appointed as Deacon February 2025)

Mr Michael Sweeney (Appointed as Deacon 27 February 2024)

Mrs Sheila Rook (Appointed as Deacon 27 February 2024)

Mrs Wendy Becker (Retired as Deacon 25 February 2025)

Mrs Sue Treasure (Retired as Deacon 25 February 2025)

Property Trustees

The Baptist Union Corporation Limited

Baptist House

129 Broadway, Didcot

Oxfordshire OX11 8RT

Bankers

National Westminster Bank, Ashby-de-la-Zouch

Kingdom Bank, Beeston

Independent Examiners

Mrs Anne Myring

Mrs Sandra Shaw

Ashby Baptist Church

A place to grow...

Charities Commission Annual Report.

Charitable Object

The Charity is governed by an Approved Governing Document which states that the principal purpose of the charity is the advancement of the Christian faith according to the declaration of principle of the Baptist denomination to include the advancement of education and other charitable purposes in the United Kingdom and other parts of the world.

The Church occupies premises which are held by the Baptist Union Corporation Ltd, on trusts which are entirely compatible with the above object.

Organisational Structure and Decision-making process.

Members of the Church are accepted in accordance with the Constitution which requires them to be baptised by immersion upon personal profession of faith or, at the discretion of the Church, upon an alternative personal profession of faith.

The members' Meeting normally takes place five times per year and has responsibility for the overall policy of the Church. In accordance with the Constitution, the members appoint a minimum of six Trustees (including the Secretary and Treasurer), who together with the Minister (who is also appointed by the Members), and collectively known as the Diaconate, are responsible for the day to day running of the Church's work and witness and the financial and legal aspects of the charity. All members are encouraged to take an appropriate part in the spiritual and practical tasks involved in the furtherance of the charitable objective.

Relevant matters may be submitted to the Church Meeting by the Trustees for guidance or may be raised by Members in the Church meeting for further consideration by the Trustees. Although the Constitution permits decisions to be made at Church Meetings by appropriate majorities, the Church seeks to work by consensus wherever possible.

Objectives and Activities

In order to achieve the Charitable Object, which is set out above, the Church provides a variety of activities both to its membership and to the community generally. The aim is to show the love of Jesus Christ in both word and deed and to bring people into a closer relationship with Him as Living Lord.

Central to the work and witness of the Church is the provision of regular public services of Christian worship. Anybody is free to attend these services which take place each Sunday morning at 10.30am; there are also occasional services at other times, as advertised from time to time. There is a children's programme linked to the morning services.

The Church runs a series of mid-week home groups for the growth of faith and discipleship, both in the homes of members and on the Church premises. The Church runs various activities specifically for the wider community, some of which are recommended by the local Council's Social Services Department, including Renew Wellbeing and a monthly coffee morning.

Rainbows and Guides meet regularly in the Church building and a number of activities for young people are held on a regular basis, some in conjunction with Ashby Youth for Christ; the Women's Institute meets monthly on the premises, and many other organisations use the facilities on an occasional basis.

Valued links with the other Churches in Ashby and local community find expression through involvement with Ashby Youth for Christ, Christians Against Poverty, and Street Pastors, as well as through town-wide gatherings for prayer. Many members are involved individually in the life of the community, in Ashby and further afield.

The Church operates systems to ensure that all people working with children and adults at risk are appropriately vetted through the Disclosure and Barring Service. Safeguarding training is provided to volunteers working with vulnerable adults and young people.

The Trustees are satisfied that the Church's activities, which can be seen in more detail on the Church's website, clearly demonstrate that it is providing a benefit to the public.

Achievements and Successes

The Church does not measure the success of its programmes only in numbers, whether financial or otherwise, but also in less tangible areas like fellowship, encouragement and spiritual growth. The Trustees recognise that these are difficult to measure, but the wide range of successful activities indicate that the Charitable objective has been met in 2025 and will continue to be met in 2026.

This section of the report comprises both the Trustee's and the Minister's formal reports, reflecting as it does the Baptist principle that leadership within a Baptist Church is done collaboratively, while also being fundamentally an act of service to both the membership and wider community.

(i) Changing Membership

Our membership at the end of 2025 was 84.

During the past year we received 11 people into membership. One family left us, as they were called by God to continue their service, career and calling in another part of the country. They went with our blessing, and we are excited for them. At this point they remain members, until such a time as transfer of membership is appropriate.

Four adults were Baptised.

(ii) Growth & Ambition

One of the major changes this year has been the growth of our Sunday morning gatherings, and of the various groups within the week. The end of 2024 and beginning of 2025 saw a jump in people attending and most of this growth seems to have sustained over the year.

Putting that in blunt statistics, our average attendance on a Sunday morning across 2024 was between 60 and 70, rising towards 80 at the end of the year, but the average figure for 2025 has been just over 100. A similar story can be said of Junior Church, and our Youth ministries. This obviously leaves us with several challenges that we are only beginning to explore as a leadership team, not least the capacity of the building, which feels increasingly stretched, not just on a Sunday but mid-week as well. But challenge comes together with opportunity, and we are excited to enter a period of experimentation and exploration about what the future holds.

(iii) Sunday Services / Word & Worship

This year we have covered a lot of ground in terms of the ministries of Word and Worship. A wider team of people now assists in the service, from leaders and prayers to a dedicated welcome team. We have had several guest speakers and services, and our services continue to be contemporary in style, balancing creativity and variety with our Baptist heritage and tradition.

In terms of the preaching of the Word this year we have worked through the following series:

- We began 2025 with "**New Beginnings and Eternal Promises**"
- We had our **Covenant Service** in February
- Taking us from February to Easter we explored a series going through Mark's Gospel called "**The Unexpected King**
- From Easter to Pentecost, we had an Old Testament series called "**Firm Foundations**", looking primarily at Genesis 1-12.
- Between July and September, we had our longest series of the year, entitled "**Going Deeper**", exploring the Person, Role and Power of the Holy Spirit in the life of the church.
- In October we returned to the Old Testament for a series through Jonah called "**The Reluctant Prophet**"
- In November we had a short series called "**Hot Shots**" looking at some of the oft-neglected short epistles.
- Our Advent and Christmas series for 2025 was a journey through **Isaiah 60**, unpacking the promises and applying them to ourselves.

Taken together we have covered a lot of biblical material. The series on Jonah and accompanying notes was the best received as measured by feedback, but the overall pattern and programme of preaching here at Ashby Baptist Church continues to be encouraging and challenging, and for Mat personally, a source of great encouragement and a privilege. In terms of broader public worship, we continue to be served by a small team of excellent musicians and singers.

(iv) Missional Activities

The mid-week small groups for adult Bible study, prayer and support continued, and just as our Sunday gatherings have expanded, so to have these. The Friday *'Why Jesus?'* and the regular 'reflective' Sunday afternoon communion service, *'Prime Time'* continued, although the Friday afternoon 'lunch club' came to a natural end. A new group called *'Rise'* began this year, led by and for some of our older teenagers.

'Renew 139' the weekly Wednesday group where it is 'OK to not be OK,' with craft and other activities, and an opportunity to gather for quiet prayer; continued to be very popular.

In Lent and Advent, we had two more series where we went deeper together into some aspects of life and faith. In Lent we did a series of studies in Christology called "Christology 101", looking at what it means for Jesus to be both Man and God, and the implications of this for our theology and worship. In Advent our series ("Faultlines") we looked at the place of Scripture in church, and what it means to believe that the Bible is the Word of God.

'Explore' began in 2025 on the final Sunday of each month. Explore is an informal style of gathering focussed on ministry to families with young children. We have seen small but sustained growth over the year, as we have looked at the fruits of the Spirit.

A new small group started meeting regularly on a Thursday morning looking at the question of discipleship and the *'Practicing the way'* course. Although begun with the expectation of simply completing this course, the group has continued to grow and is now looking at prayer and planning a programme well beyond this. It has been hugely encouraging for all involved.

In addition to these activities, we have been much more intentional about the need to gather in fellowship together and have held a newcomer's event and several fellowship lunches and have created a new 'catering team' to assist in these.

Some other yearly highlights include the churches together Good Friday walk of witness, our involvement in the civic events at Remembrance Day, and the Bumper Cars service alongside the Methodist church at Ashby Statutes. In short, it's been a very busy year!

(v) Prayer

The life of prayer in Ashby Baptist Church continues to expand. We held a week of prayer in the Autumn, a pattern of daily or weekly prayer in both Lent and Advent, and a regular prayer gathering before each service. At the tail end of 2025 suggestion was made of a mid-week and early morning prayer group as well, to start in January.

(vi) Children and Youth

The provision for children and young people continued Sunday mornings and saw a significant restructure with the handover of a new coordinator, and several new team members. The growth of the church in general also applies to our young people, and we had a need this year to form an additional group. The children continue to an essential part of our gathering, and the church have enjoyed both the all-in services roughly once a month, and the weekly all-age and junior church feedback slots each week.

However, the children and youth provision continues to be an area where we are sorely stretched in terms of leaders and capacity, particularly our youth helpers and leaders. The need to rectify this is more urgent than ever as we grow and develop as a church.

This year we also began a new baby group, which meets on Monday mornings.

(vii) Wider Charitable & Community Support

Ashby Youth for Christ ran activities from our premises for young people, as did the *Guides and Rainbows.* The monthly *Women's Institute* meeting continued, and a monthly Saturday morning *'Make do, mend and create'* group in partnership with another local church continued.

As a member of the local East Midlands Baptist Association, we continued to support the ministry of *Ebenezer Baptist Church* and the *Kingsgate Project* at *Greenhill Baptist Church*, both in Coalville, while the annual toy service brought generous contributions for the *Marlene Reid Centre*. The church also provides ongoing financial and prayer support to several ministries, both in this country and overseas, aiding church workers, young people, students, victims of abuse, and those in need of development aid or emergency assistance.

(viii) Other

In relation to finance the church has transitioned this year to a new system of expenses and finance management called Expense Plus, for which we pay a yearly fee.

Our Deacons met in October on a Saturday, where we shared our vision for the church, spent time in fellowship with each other, and sought to discern God's will for the future. While nothing binding came out of this meeting, it was unanimous that the next year will be a period of 'experimentation and exploration' of our options when it comes to responding to our growth and the need for more capacity in the people and people.

Minister's Report.

Recognising the end of my first 'full' year here, it seems there is almost too much to reflect on, as the report prior to this point makes clear. God continues to be noticeably at work among us, in both the big and the small, the humble and the dramatic, and so it remains my privilege as minister to attribute the great many positive things we are seeing to God and God alone. Indeed, as I often joke, when I gather with other ministers to talk about our churches I have so many things to be positive about that I genuinely have to search hard to think of negative things! For this, more than anything else, I am sincerely and continuously thankful.

As a family we feel to have transitioned fully into the church, the town and life here in Ashby. The children are all integrating very well into school, though sometimes the transition is a struggle, and all three have made friends here in the church. My wife has found wonderful purpose in leading Squirrels (the youngest section in Scouting), the baby group on Mondays, as well as Explore on Sundays too. As a whole family, we are very much enjoying the calling here and seeing the opportunities that God places in front of us.

I continue to be especially thankful for Regent's Park College, and as I complete my dissertation this year look forward to the completion of that work. The East Midlands Baptist association are supporting me well, and I continue to meet somewhat regularly with my assigned mentor, Steve, and attend assembly and the minister's conference.

Picking a few highlights is difficult, as it was last year, but two things stand out for me. The first is the miraculous healing of a much-loved member of the church, restored to us as if from the dead, from being bed-bound and largely uncommunicative, to singing and dancing, worshipping together with her family in church again. Hallelujah. This has been of such importance to the family and to the church (who have persisted in prayer for two years!) that it is hard to overstate. The second is the addition into our church family of a small number of people returning to church, or coming for the very first time, simply because of the prompting/leading of the Spirit in their lives. No invite from another Christian, no deliberate evangelism, just the simple quiet leading of the Spirit.

Given that our theme for this year was 'Hope', it seems in retrospect to have been exceeded in almost every way.

In thinking ahead about the shape this year will take, the theme for 2026 is 'rooted'. A new series bearing this name is in the works for the year ahead, but the broader principle, taken from Colossians, is that the church can and will grow when it is properly rooted and anchored to the Word of God, and to the Word-made-Flesh, Jesus Christ. Our priority this year is to capitalise on God's response to our hopes, and to be faithful and attentive to work hard with what we have been entrusted.

Sola Deo Gratia (*for the Glory of God alone*)

Rev. Mat Sheffield, 2025/26

Thanksgiving:

The Deacons and Minister continue and persist in gratitude for everyone who contributed to all that was achieved during 2025. May God enable us to ‘prepare the way for the Lord’ in 2026, so His purposes might be fulfilled in our own lives and in the lives of those He calls us to serve.



Ashby Baptist Church

Reports & Accounts

Financial Year Ending 31/12/2025

Contents

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Notes to the Accounts

Created using ExpensePlus

Legal & Administrative Details

Charity Name:	Ashby Baptist Church
Charity Number:	1159600
Charity Address:	Brook Street Ashby de la Zouch Leicestershire LA65 1HA
Trustees:	Mr Ian Hunt (Appointed as Deacon 28 February 2023) Mrs Brenda Hunter (Appointed as Deacon 27 February 2024 Prof. Martin Insley (Appointed as Deacon 22 February 2022) Mr Heath Marlow (Appointed as Deacon February 2025) Mrs Sheila Rook (Appointed as Deacon 27 February 2024) Mrs Louise Scott (Secretary) (Appointed as Deacon February 2025) Rev Mathew Sheffield (Minister) (Inducted as Minister 17 August 2024) Mr Michael Sweeney (Appointed as Deacon 27 February 2024) Mrs Wendy Becker (Retired as Deacon 25 February 2025) Mrs Sue Treasure (Retired as Deacon 25 February 2025)
Independent Examiner:	Ann Myring 14 Woodlands Way Moira DE12 6HE

Trustees Report

Objects of the charity

The Charity is governed by an Approved Governing Document which states that the principal purpose of the charity is the advancement of the Christian faith according tothe declaration of principle of the Baptist denomination to include the advancement of education and other charitable purposes in the United Kingdom and other parts of theworld.

The Church occupies premises which are held by the Baptist Union Corporation Ltd, on trusts which are entirely compatible with the above object.

Summary of the charity's main activities and achievements

To further the above objects and vision, the charity\s main activities and achievements were as follows:

In order to achieve the Charitable Object, which is set out above, the Church provides a variety of activities both to its membership and to the community generally. The aim is to show the love of Jesus Christ in both word and deed and to bring people into a closer relationship with Him as Living Lord.

Central to the work and witness of the Church is the provision of regular public services of Christian worship. Anybody is free to attend these services which take place each Sunday morning at 10.30am; there are also occasional services at other times as advertised from time to time. There is a children's programme linked to the morning services.

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The Church operates systems to ensure that all people working with children and adults at risk are appropriately vetted through the Disclosure and Barring Service.

The Trustees are satisfied that the Church's activities, which can be seen in more detail on the Church's website, clearly demonstrate that it is providing a benefit to the public.

In planning the activities, the trustees have applied the guidance on public benefit issued by the Charity Commission.

Financial Review

2025 has been a good year for the Church in terms of finance. Income received has exceeded the target in the budget, in keeping with the growth in attendance. Although expenditure has also increased, we are pleased to report that the church has an in-year budget surplus of over £14,000. This is particularly pleasing as 2025 was the first year for some time that the church has employed a full-time minister.

In 2024 the Church purchased a manse, using money raised on a gift day plus a legacy, and taking out a mortgage to cover the balance. We are delighted that in 2025 the Church has been able to reduce the amount of the mortgage outstanding by £9,000.

The Church has started to use a financial management package, Expense Plus, to ease the process of accounting and increase transparency.

The Church would like to extend thanks to the outgoing treasurer, who has served faithfully in this role for 9 years.

Funds in Deficit

N/a

Reserves Policy

The charity aims to hold a minimum of £25,000 (which is approximately three months of salary expenditure) as unrestricted cash, so that the charity could continue to operate should income and / or expenditure vary adversely. At the year end, the charity held unrestricted cash of £56,695.

Signature

This report was approved by the trustees, and is signed on their behalf by:

Name M. Sheffield

Signature



Date 10/3/26

Independent Examiners Report

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of Ashby Baptist Church ('the charity') for the year ended 31/12/2025.

Responsibilities and Basis of Report

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

I report in respect of my examination of the charity's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the 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 accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with the accounting records.

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

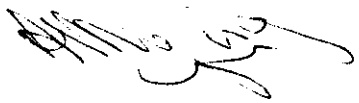
Independent Examiner's Details

Name: Ann Myring

Address: 14 Woodlands Way
Moira
DE12 6HE

Name ANN MYRING

Signature



Date 20-2-2026

Receipts & Payments Statement

Receipts				
Donations & Legacies				
Donations	106,017	0	106,017	193,428
Gift Aid	21,338	0	21,338	14,195
Grants	464	0	464	0
Charitable Activities				
Event Income	3,188	0	3,188	6,601
Investments				
Bank Interest	486	0	486	4,086
Trading Activities				
Rental Income	3,881	0	3,881	3,324
Sales	0	0	0	0
Other				
Loans Received	0	0	0	0
Other Income	2,682	0	2,682	1,132
Sale of Fixed Assets	0	0	0	0
Sale of Investments	0	0	0	0
Total receipts	**138,056**	**0**	**138,056**	**222,766**
Payments				
Charitable Activities				
Activities	1,540	0	1,540	7,948
Admin	12,235	0	12,235	11,462
Advertising	0	0	0	0
Bank Charges	0	0	0	0
Event Costs	1,378	0	1,378	911
Gifts Given	27,147	387	27,534	37,287
Other Expenditure	0	0	0	0
Premises	11,197	0	11,197	5,851
Staff Costs	64,597	0	64,597	46,936
Governance Costs				
Governance Costs	0	0	0	0
Other				
Fixed Asset Purchases	0	0	0	294,700
Loans Repaid	5,000	0	5,000	0
Money Invested	0	0	0	0
Total payments	**123,095**	**387**	**123,482**	**405,095**
Net Receipts / Payments (before transfers)	**14,960**	**-387**	**14,573**	**-182,329**
Fund Transfers In	1,663	360	2,023	0
Fund Transfers Out	2,023	0	2,023	0
Net Movement of Cash Funds	**14,600**	**-27**	**14,573**	**-182,329**
Total Cash Funds Brought Forward	42,034	2,062	44,097	226,426
Total Cash Funds Carried Forward	**56,635**	**2,035**	**58,670**	**44,097**

Represented By				
General (Unrestricted)	19,788	0	19,788	2,610
Ministry and Manse Deposit Fund (Designated)	3,146	0	3,146	6,720
Reserves (Unrestricted)	25,000	0	25,000	25,000
General Maintenance & Repairs (Designated)	8,701	0	8,701	7,705
Benevolent Fund (Restricted)	0	2,035	2,035	2,062

Asset & Liability Statement

Cash Assets

	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Prior Year
General (Unrestricted)	19,788	0	19,788	2,610
Ministry and Manse Deposit Fund (Designated)	3,146	0	3,146	6,720
Reserves (Unrestricted)	25,000	0	25,000	25,000
General Maintenance & Repairs (Designated)	8,701	0	8,701	7,705
Benevolent Fund (Restricted)	0	2,035	2,035	2,062

Other Monetary Assets

	Notes	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Prior Year
Gift Aid		5,576	0	5,576	4,258
Stock		0	0	0	0
Other		0	0	0	2,732

Investment Assets

	Notes	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Prior Year
Property		0	0	0	0
Investment Accounts		0	0	0	0
Other		0	0	0	0

Fixed Assets

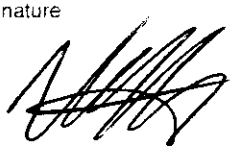
	Notes	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Prior Year
Land & Buildings		2,436,202	0	2,436,202	2,425,690
Music & PA Equipment		187,445	0	187,445	181,292
Computers & IT		0	0	0	0
Furniture		0	0	0	0
Motor Vehicles		0	0	0	0

Liabilities

	Notes	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Prior Year
Loans Outstanding	Mortgage with Kingdom Bank	80,399	0	80,399	0
Pension Payment Owed		0	0	0	0
HMRC Payments Owed		1,048	0	1,048	0
Independent Examination Fee Due		0	0	0	0
Other		503	0	503	0

Signature

These accounts have been approved by the trustees, and are signed on their behalf by:

Name	Mat Sheffield
Signature	
Date	10/3/26

Notes to the Accounts

Accounting Policies

The accounts have been prepared on a receipts and payments basis and comprise a statement that shows the charity's receipts and payments, a statement that summarises the charity's assets and liabilities and related notes.

General funds are unrestricted funds which are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the charity. Designated funds comprise unrestricted funds that have been set aside by the trustees for particular purposes. Restricted funds are donations which are to be used in accordance with specific restrictions imposed by donors; they include donations received from appeals for specific activities or projects.

Transactions to Related Parties

The minister is the only trustee in receipt of a payment, at an annual cost £47,737.The wife of one trustee is employed by the church as administrator at an annual cost £12,720.

Movement of Funds

Fund Name	Opening Balance	Income	Expenditure	Fund Transfers	Closing Balance
Unrestricted					
General (Unrestricted)	2,610	126,995	107,794	-2,023	19,788
Reserves (Unrestricted)	25,000	0	0	0	25,000
Total	**27,610**	**126,995**	**107,794**	**-2,023**	**44,788**
Designated					
Ministry and Manse Deposit Fund (Designated)	6,720	1,457	5,030	0	3,146
General Maintenance & Repairs (Designated)	7,705	9,604	10,271	1,663	8,701
Total	**14,424**	**11,061**	**15,301**	**1,663**	**11,847**
Unrestricted Total	**42,034**	**138,056**	**123,095**	**-360**	**56,635**
Restricted					
Benevolent Fund (Restricted)	2,062	0	387	360	2,035
Total	2,062	0	387	360	2,035
Restricted Total	**2,062**	**0**	**387**	**360**	**2,035**
TOTAL	**44,097**	**138,056**	**123,482**	**0**	**58,670**

Other

Note to the Assets and Liabilities Statement

Fixed Assets

The figure for land and buildings comprises the church building (insurance value £2,068,702) and the manse (purchase price £367,500). The figure shown as 'music and PA equipment' is the insurance value for all the contents of the church building.

Liabilities

The figure for 'other' liabilities is the net value of income and expenditure items belonging to 2025 that have been paid or received in 2026.

Reconciliation of bank balances to accounting fund balances

	31-Dec-25
Nat West current account	£300.00
Nat West reserve account	£21,992.62
Kingdom Bank account	£36,373.92
Petty cash	£3.48
Total cash	**£58,670.02**
General unrestricted	£19,787.77
Ministry and manse	£3,146.33
Reserves	£25,000.00
General repais and maintenance	£8,700.79
Benevolent	£2,035.13
Total funds	**£58,670.02**

Independent Examiners Report

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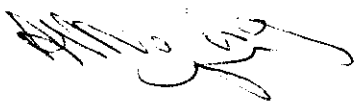
Independent Examiner's Details

Name: Ann Myring

Address: 14 Woodlands Way
Moira
DE12 6HE

Name ANN MYRING

Signature



Date 20-2-2026