Saffron Walden Baptist Church

Registered Charity Number: 1199611

Trustees' Annual Report and Financial Statements
For the year ended 31 December 2025

Saffron Walden Baptist Church, High Street, Saffron Walden, Essex, CB11 3HD
01799 523031
www.sw-bc.org

Administrative Details

Charity Name	Saffron Walden Baptist Church
Charity Registration Number	1199611
Registered Address	Audley Road, Saffron Walden, Essex, CBII 3HD
Property Trustees	The Baptist Union Corporation Limited Baptist House, 129 Broadway, Didcot, Oxfordshire OX11 8RT
Trustees	Rev'd John Goddard (Minister) Mrs Rosemary Timms (11/07/2022 – 05/06/2025) Mrs Tracy Todman (Treasurer) (11/07/2022 – 24/05/2028) Mrs Angela Sabey (28/11/2022 – 30/05/2029) Mr Robert Wiseman (28/11/2022 – 30/05/2029) Mr Peter Matthewson (24/06/2024 – 23/06/2027) Mr Michael Smith (02/03/2025 – 26/09/2025) Dr Pamela Jenner (31/05/2026 – 30/05/2029) Ms Denise Vincent (31/05/2026 – 30/05/2029)
Financial Administrator	Mrs Rosemary Timms (voluntary)
Bankers	CAF Bank Ltd 25 Kings Hill Avenue, Kings Hill, West Malling, Kent, ME19 4JQ The Co-operative Bank plc P O Box 101, 1 Balloon Street, Manchester M60 4EP
Independent Examiner	Mr Geoff Mann Dee House, Highworth Avenue, Cambridge, CB4 2BQ

Charitable Objective

Saffron Walden Baptist Church is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) and is governed by its Constitution adopted on 16th May 2022 and registered with the Charity Commission on 11th July 2022, which states that, "the principal purpose of the Church is the advancement of the Christian faith according to the principles of the Baptist denomination to include the advancement of education and other charitable purposes in such parts of the United Kingdom and the world" as the Church shall determine.

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

The Trustees present their Annual Report and Financial Statements for 2025

Structure, Governance and Management

Members of the Church are accepted, in accordance with the Constitution, which requires them to be baptised upon personal profession of faith in Jesus Christ, or by transfer from other Christian churches, or by profession of faith in Christ after visitation by two church members approved by the Church Members' Meeting. Acceptance into membership shall be the decision of a Church Members' Meeting.

In accordance with the Constitution, the members appoint Trustees who, together with the Minister and the Church Secretary and Treasurer, who are also Trustees appointed by the Members, are collectively known as the Diaconate. They are responsible for the day to day running of the Church's work and witness, and the financial and legal aspects of the charity.

Church Members' Meetings are held regularly and normally take place at least six times every year and are an opportunity to consider and review matters associated with the life of the Church including:

- issues related to church membership;
- the appointment and dismissal of the Charity Trustees;
- the approval of the budget and financial reporting;
- issues relating to the overall policy of the church; and
- considering proposals from the Charity Trustees or Church Members for the development of the Church and the advancement of its purpose through its activities.

All members are encouraged to take an appropriate part in the 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 Church meeting for further consideration. Though 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 principal objective, which is set out above, the Church provides a variety of activities both to its membership and to the community as a whole. 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.

The Church engages in a range of activities either on its own or with others and these vary from time to time with activities being initiated, expanded or closed as appropriate.

Central to the work and witness of the Church is the provision of regular public services of Christian worship. Services take place on Sunday mornings at 10.30 am. There are also occasional activities at other times which are advertised in the Church Notices. The Church seeks to be a friendly and welcoming community and anybody is free to attend any of these services. The Church also runs a series of small groups for the growth of faith and discipleship in the homes of some members and a fellowship group at the church on Wednesday mornings.

Other Church activities may include:

- prayer meetings and opportunities for Bible Study, preaching and teaching;
- courses for people interested in discovering more about Christianity;
- courses designed to nurture faith and discipleship;
- evangelism and mission locally, regionally, nationally and internationally;
- giving and encouraging pastoral care;
- supporting and encouraging charitable social action in the UK and abroad;
- sharing Communion, normally once a month as part of morning worship; and
- opportunities to discover more about adult baptism and church membership.

Church organisations, groups, committees and individuals appointed to operate within the life of the church shall be accountable to the Diaconate and also through any specific direction of the Church Members' Meeting.

The Church operates systems to ensure that all people working with children, young people and vulnerable adults are appropriately trained (in line with Baptist Union guidance) and vetted with regard to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

The Trustees are aware of the Charity Commission guidance on public benefit and are satisfied that the activities outlined above clearly demonstrate that the charity is providing a benefit to the public.

The Church's activities on Sundays and throughout the week are intended to cater for people of all ages, providing structured and unstructured leaming opportunities and encouraging worship, spiritual growth, fellowship, prayer and praise.

Achievements and Performance

Review of the Year

Attendance at Sunday morning worship is usually 40-50 people meeting in the chapel and with a few also joining on-line. Sermons are recorded and made available on-line. As at 31 December 2025, the number in Church Membership was 54 (2024 – 57). During the year three people were admitted into membership, two long standing members died and four members resigned following an exercise to contact members who had not attended for an extended period. Three evening small groups meet during the week in people's houses and a Fellowship Group, led by the Minister, meets on Wednesday mornings in the church.

Our minister took sabbatical leave during June, July and August 2025. During this period we enjoyed Sunday morning services from a variety of visiting preachers and from members of the fellowship.

We are indebted to all the people who have faithfully taken responsibility for running the Church's activities during the year. Special thanks are due to our lettings manager: our premises are very busy and income from community use forms a significant part of the church's funds. We especially give thanks to our minister who has guided, resourced and facilitated all aspects of Church life.

Our cleaner has been with us for a number of years now and we are very grateful to him for his service.

In the autumn of 2025, we became aware that our aged boiler was broken beyond economic repair. This meant that over the winter we were without heating in our chapel, other than from

mobile electric heaters which were not powerful enough to adequately heat the space. Thankfully, the heating of our church halls were not affected and, although we continued to meet in the chapel until the end of December, at the start of 2026, due to the drop in temperature, we took the decision to hold our weekly service in our lower hall. With assistance from specialist advisers a number of significant issues have been identified which will need to be addressed before a new heating system can be installed.

It is clear that this will be a major capital project, and we have commissioned a detailed survey and report from a specialist company to help us understand what options are available and what the cost of these is likely to be.

Main Church Activities

- **Church activities** include Sunday morning services, Small Groups, Lunch Club, Fellowship Group, Boys Brigade, Breakfast Club in partnership with the local MIND branch, Warm Welcome Coffee Morning (alongside a Touchpoint Foodshare scheme) and joint activities with other local churches, such as messy church and community pastors.
- **Uniformed Organisations** including our Boys Brigade, the Scouts, the Guides and the Brownies all meet regularly on our premises.
- **Youth Activities** have included running Messy Church activities with our friends at the local United Reformed Church and hosting a number of school visits from both primary and secondary school children. We also host a Sunday morning parade service once a term which is well attended by our uniformed organisations and their families.
- **Social Outreach Events** - Lunch Club is normally held once a month providing home cooked food and companionship, primarily to older members of the church and community. The team have also provided some light refreshment events to smaller groups. There are also regular ladies' breakfasts and men's breakfasts which meet in the town providing valuable informal opportunities for people to get together and invite others along.
- **Outreach Events** include joining with Churches Together in Saffron Walden at the Good Friday March of Witness and Lent Groups. We also partner with local churches in providing Community Pastors in Saffron Walden. In June 2025 we hosted a Pride service again at the church. The service was well supported and well received by those who attended. We were again able to enjoy a Carol Service featuring the Saffron Walden Town Band and to host an East Anglia's Children's Hospices Carol Service.
- **Community use of our Premises** is diverse and extensive and normally includes our Uniformed Organisations and Lunch Club as well as activities organised by U3A, Tiny Tempos, Hyperfusion, MIND in West Essex and karate and pilates classes. We continued to host a weekly Community Food Share event run by the local charity TouchPoint in conjunction with our Warm Welcome Group. This is exceptionally well attended by the community each week. Our Minister is available to conduct funerals at the local crematorium or at the church.

Financial Review 2025

The accounts cover the period from 1 January 2025 to 31 December 2025. The total income of the Church in 2025 was £97,928 (2004 - £115,407) and expenditure was £118,051 (2024 - £109,339) giving a deficit for the year of £20,123 (2024 – surplus of £6,068). The deficit this year was due, in large part, to much needed expenditure of £14,521 on the replacement of the cloakroom and bathroom for our manse. Falling interest rates in the year

adversely impacted our income as the interest received on a trust fund administered by the Baptist Union fell from £20,267 in 2024 to £10,943 in 2025.

The Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme gives grants covering the VAT on certain eligible repairs to listed buildings used primarily as a place of worship (including those chapels within the curtilage of listed buildings). Some of the work on the chapel was eligible and we have received £861 (2024 - £903) from the scheme this year. This scheme closed at the end of March 2026 and no further sums will be received from it after that date.

Funds raised from offerings from within the membership and congregation and the gift aid tax recovered thereon continue to be our primary source of income. However, we have continued to benefit again this year with:

1) a significant level of lettings income £27,104 (2024 - £30,963) and
2) interest from a BUC Trust Fund £10,943 (2024 - £20,267).

We are very grateful to everyone who has continued to support us financially in 2025. As a Baptist Church we receive no government funding and are dependent on offerings from our congregation as our primary source of income.

Our lettings manager has worked hard to stay in touch with those who regularly hire our premises, managing our lettings and invoicing the hirers. We are grateful to him and our minister who have continued to work with the hirers to ensure that we maintain good relationships with them. Revenue from lettings forms a significant part of the church's income and facilitates premises repairs and maintenance that are needed.

We have also given £4,020 to BMS and £4,500 to Home Mission from our general fund budget and we have continued to support a number of different Mission appeals during the year including:

- £640 sent to BMS from our Harvest Appeal
- £1,017 sent to Christian Aid which was donated by members of our Lunch Club
- £770 raised for our Christmas Appeal Charities (with a further £167.25 from gift aid received in 2026)

We are very grateful that our BMS Birthday Scheme secretary continues to send birthday cards to those in the Scheme and in 2025 this raised £460.

Funds from the Baptist Union Corporation (BUC)

During the year we received £10,943 in interest from the permanent Endowment of the Robert Cozens charity set up in 1729. A further amount of interest £1,500 accrued before the year end but was received in January 2026 and is shown as a monetary asset in the accounts. The capital sum remains with, and is managed by, the BUC. As the only current beneficiary the church will continue to receive the entirety of the income from the endowment, for the benefit of the church, for the foreseeable future. The amount receivable will fluctuate each year in line with changes in interest rates.

In 2020 we received capital from the BUC from a Trust Fund that was closed down. It is shown as a designated fund in our accounts and is not a restricted fund. At the time we agreed that we would not use to the fund to subsidise routine operating costs but use it for specific projects. This year we have used these funds for the replacement of the bathroom and cloakroom at our manse. The remaining balance of the fund at the year end was £17,476 (2024 -£31,997). The balance of the fund is likely to be used in 2026 on financing the replacement of the church boiler.

Restricted Funds

The 1st SW Boys' Brigade: 2025 saw the leaders and boys meeting together on Tuesday evenings and enjoying activities in the church and local area. We held a very successful week long camp in Sheringham, Norfolk which was attended by 36 young people and adults and also received several visitors from the church family throughout the week.

We are very grateful to all of the people involved for their time, energy and commitment in the organising and running of regular activities as well as special events. We held a celebration in the autumn to thank our Company Captain when he resigned after 45 years of service since founding our Boys' Brigade Company in 1980. We now have a new Company Captain and are grateful for his service and dedication and willingness to take over the role.

Their funds are shown in our accounts as follows:

1st January 2025 balance b/fwd	4,204
Receipts	12,415
Payments	(11,336)
31st December 2025 balance c/fwd	5,283

Reserves Policy

The Trustees have a reserves policy to ensure the Church functions effectively and meets its obligations in the event of a decline in our income or in the event of some major costs. Having reviewed and considered the relevant risks of changes in income and expenditure the policy was revised and it was agreed that the appropriate level of reserves should be equivalent to three months' average gross expenditure plus a further £10,000 to allow for emergencies.

On this basis, at the year end, reserves should be at least £37,000. As at 31 December 2025 the church held total reserves of £73,264 of which £43,097 was within the General Fund. There is a delegated spending authority policy to ensure there are appropriate controls and procedures in place.

The Future

We are encouraged by a number of new people who have started to worship with us regularly and the church is currently in a stable financial position to further the advancement of the Christian faith whilst serving the community and other charitable purposes.

However, 2026 is likely to be a challenging year financially in the light of having to finance and manage a major capital project in order to be able to modify parts of our building to accommodate a modern heating system so that we may heat the chapel properly once more. We are planning to seek funding opportunities and carry out a number of fundraising activities and events.

Signed on behalf of the Trustees of Saffron Walden Baptist Church

Tracy Todman
Trustee and Treasurer

GENERAL RECEIPTS & PAYMENTS ACCOUNT

	Note	2025	2024
Receipts			
Regular offerings		41,945	44,749
Donations & other income	2	6,606	6,142
Income tax recovered on gifts	3	8,120	9,359
Rents and contributions for use of premises		27,104	30,963
Raised for other causes	4	3,210	3,927
Interest from BUC	5	10,943	20,267
		£ 97,928	**£ 115,407**
Payments			
Ministry	6	47,033	45,073
Mission	7	14,461	17,491
Upkeep of church premises	8	51,930	42,512
Administration	9	4,627	4,263
		£ 118,051	**£ 109,339**
(Loss)/Surplus for the year		(20,123)	6,068
Balance brought forward		93,387	87,319
Balance carried forward		**£ 73,264**	**£ 93,387**

UNRESTRICTED - FUNDS	**Total**	**General fund**	**Capital from BUC**	**Building fund**
Balance at 1 January 2025	93,387	48,699	31,997	12,691
Transfer between funds	-			
Receipts	97,928	97,928	-	-
Payments	(118,051)	(103,530)	(14,521)	-
Balance at 31 December 2025	**73,264**	**£ 43,097**	**£ 17,476**	**£ 12,691**

RESTRICTED FUNDS RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT

	Balance 1 Jan 25	**Receipts 2025**	**Payments 2025**	**Balance 31 Dec 25**
Boys Brigade	4,204	12,415	(11,336)	5,283
	£ 4,204	**£ 12,415**	(11,336)	**£ 5,283**

	Balance 1 Jan 24	**Receipts 2024**	**Payments 2024**	**Balance 31 Dec 24**
Boys Brigade	5,499	5,499	(6,794)	4,204
	£ 5,499	**£ 5,499**	(6,794)	**£ 4,204**

REPRESENTING BALANCES ON THE FOLLOWING ACCOUNTS

	2025	2024
Unrestricted funds	73,264	93,387
Restricted funds	5,283	4,204
	£ 78,547	£ 97,591

STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES AT 31 DECEMBER 2025

	Note	2025	2024
ASSETS			
Bank balances		78,547	97,591
Other cash balances		-	-
		£ 78,547	£ 97,591
Other monetary assets (general fund)	10	£ 9,550	£ 10,536
Non monetary assets	11	£ 5,939,298	£ 5,724,777
LIABILITIES			
Current liabilities	12	£ 1,969	£ 1,478
Pension Scheme Liability	13	£ -	£ -

The Financial Statements set out on pages 7 to 11 relating to the year ending 31 December 2025 were produced by Rosemary Timms.

They were approved by the Deacons/Trustees of Saffron Walden Baptist Church

Signed on behalf of the Trustees by:

Tracy Todman (Trustee and Treasurer) ..... Date: 15 June 2026

Angela Sabey (Trustee) ..... Date: 15 June 2026

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS
(Except for Note 1 and as stated elsewhere, these notes refer solely to the General Fund)

1 Basis of accounts:
These accounts have been prepared on a receipts and payments basis and accord with Section 133 Charities Act 2011.

2 Donations and other income	2025	2024
Lunch Club income (excluding charity donations)	369	360
Donations	1,461	2,178
Bank interest	4,776	3,604
Legacies	-	-
	£ 6,606	£ 6,142

3 Gift Aid Income	2025	2024
Gift Aid General Fund	8,120	9,359
Gift Aid - included in Raised for Others	258	360
Gift Aid - included in Restricted Boys Brigade	331	268
Total Claim	£ 8,709	£ 9,987

4 Other causes	2025 Receipts	2025 Payments	2024 Receipts	2024 Payments
BMS Birthday Scheme	460	460	405	405
Harvest Appeal (BMS) 2025	640	640	-	-
Christmas Appeal 2025	770	770	-	-
Christian Aid - Lunch Club	1,017	1,017	979	979
Christmas Appeal 2024	273	994	722	-
Christmas 2023 (Touchpoint Stansted)	-	-	125	340
Christmas 2023 (Medecin Sans Fronti	-	-	125	341
Harvest Appeal (Operation Agri) 2024	50	-	740	790
Christian Aid - CTSW Offering 2024	-	-	831	831
	£ 3,210	£ 3,881	£ 3,927	£ 3,686

5 Funds from the BUC
We received £ 10,943 accrued interest associated with the permanent Endowment of the Robert Cozens charity set up in 1729 (£2024: £20,267). A further interest amount of £1,500 accrued before the year end which we received in January 2026 and is shown as a monetary asset (note 10) (2024: £3,899).

The capital sum remains with and is managed by the BUC. As the only known beneficiary we will continue to receive the entirety of the income, for the benefit of the church, for the foreseeable future.

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS (continued)

6 Ministry	2025	2024
Minister's stipend	34,200	33,062
Pension contributions (current)	4,279	4,157
Pension contributions (deficit)	-	10
Manse costs	3,807	3,685
Travel and other expenses	1,278	2,080
Visiting preachers	1,809	1,106
Conferences & training	556	526
Resources	-	101
Miscellaneous	-	145
Sunday Club and Youth Groups	1,104	201
	£ 47,033	£ 45,073

The Minister acts as one of the church's trustees and receives remuneration and other benefits in respect of his services as Minister, including the provision of manse accommodation owned by the church

7 Mission		
Given to other causes (Note 4)	3,881	3,686
Eastern Bapist Association	4,500	4,500
Baptist Missionary Society	4,020	4,500
Lunch Club costs	369	360
Boys brigade - subs paid to HQ	1,524	1,554
Church Events	167	2,891
	£ 14,461	£ 17,491

8 Upkeep of church premises		
Power, water & oil	9,759	10,911
Cleaning salary and materials	8,382	7,309
Church repairs and maintenance	14,991	19,423
Insurance	3,387	3,280
Linton Close repairs and maintenance	14,521	1,286
Equipment	580	-
Grounds Maintenance	310	303
	£ 51,930	£ 42,512

9 Administration		
Printing & copying	362	408
Hospitality	1,017	730
Stationery & postage	106	139
Telephone & internet	674	646
Licences, subscriptions, website	1,613	1,437
Miscellaneous	855	903
	£ 4,627	£ 4,263

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS (continued)

10 Other monetary assets (general fund)

	2025	2024
Lettings debtors	5,906	3,954
BUC Trust Fund Interest	1,500	3,899
Gift aid receivable	2,144	2,306
Shelford Oil credit account	-	377
	£ 9,550	£ 10,536

11 Non-monetary assets - held for the Church's own use

The Church is the beneficial owner (subject to the relevant trusts) of the following assets, the legal title to which is held by the Church's custodian trustee, the Baptist Union Corporation Ltd.

	2025	2024
Insured Value of the following :		
Saffron Walden Baptist Church, Audley Road, Saffron Walden, Essex, CB11 3HD	5,196,059	5,020,271
The Manse, 31 Linton Close, Saffron Walden, Essex, CB11 3BU	596,708	562,932
The Church also owns fixtures, furniture and equipment with an insured value of:	146,531	141,574
	£ 5,939,298	£ 5,724,777

12 Current Liabilities

	2025	2024
Website & Zoom invoices	219	140
Gas & Electricity December invoice	1,498	616
Harvest Appeal Gift Aid claim	85	-
Christmas Appeal Gift Aid claim	167	722
	£ 1,969	£ 1,478

13 Pension Scheme Liabilities

The Church is a participating employer in the Baptist Pension Scheme ("the Scheme") which is a separate legal entity administered by the Pension Trustee (Baptist Pension Trust Limited). The Scheme, previously known as the Baptist Ministers Pension Fund, started in 1925. At the beginning of the 2024 financial year, the Scheme comprised of a defined benefits scheme which was closed to future accrual on 31 December 2011 and a defined contribution plan which was opened in January 2012. The assets of the Scheme are held separately from those of the Employer and the other participating employers.

For the current and previous financial year, the pension provision for members of the Scheme is being made through the Defined Contribution Plan. In general, members pay 8% of their pensionable income and employers pay 6% of members' pensionable income into individual pension accounts, which are operated and managed on behalf of the Pension Trustee by Broadstone Corporate Benefits Ltd. In addition, the employer pays a further 4% of pensionable income to cover Death in Service Benefits, administration costs, and an associated insurance policy which provides income protection for Scheme members if they are unable to work due to long term incapacity. This income protection policy has been insured by the Baptist Union with Aviva Limited.

In October 2024, the insurance company Just Group completed a buy out of the liabilities of the closed defined benefit scheme. From that date any remaining liability of the participating scheme members to the defined benefit scheme ceased and the £1 per month deficit contributions payable by the participating employers which were agreed in the recovery plan approved in August 2022 also ceased from that date. Administration of the closed defined benefit scheme transferred from the pension trustees to Just Group from that date.

The Minister is eligible to join the Scheme.

Saffron Walden Baptist Church

Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2025

Independent Examiner's Report

To the Trustees of Saffron Walden Baptist Church

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the charity for the year ended 31 December 2025 which are set out on pages 7 to 11.

Respective Responsibilities of the Trustees and the Examiner

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

I report in respect of my examination of your charity's accounts carried out under section 145 of the Act, and in carrying out my examination I have followed the applicable directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent Examiner's Report

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:

> the accounting records were not kept in respect of the charity as required by section 130 of the Act; or
>
> the accounts do not accord with those records; or
>
> the accounts do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination

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

Geoff Mann
Geoff Mann Limited
Dee House
Highworth Avenue
Cambridge
CB4 2BQ