Friends of Christ the Consoler

Trustees' Annual Report and Accounts
For the year ending 31st August 2026

This is our second reporting period, covering the 12 months from 1st September 2025 to 31st August 2026.

---

1. Structure, Governance, and Management

Legal structure: Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO)
Charity number: 1207736

Governing document: Available by email hello@christtheconsoler.com, or in writing to the registered office c/o Estate Office, Newby Hall, Ripon HG4 5AE
Trustee recruitment and appointment:

- Trustees are co-opted on the following basis,
- Trustees are drawn from the three representative stakeholder groups, being the village of Skelton-on-Ure, the Newby Estate, and the local Anglican benefice, where possible. One trustee chairs the group (typically six members) and at least one trustee is considered the lead Operational Trustee. Trustees will typically serve for a minimum of three years (renewable).

Policies and Procedures in place:

- Bullying and Harassment
- Complaints
- Engaging External Speakers at Charity Events
- Financial Reserves
- Internal Financial Controls
- Internal Risk Management
- Safeguarding
- Serious Incident Reporting
- Social Media
- Trustee Conflicts of Interest
- Trustee Expenses
- Trustee Induction and Training

---

2. Charitable Purposes and Public Benefit

Objects of the charity:

For the public benefit, to promote the preservation, maintenance, and improvement of the fabric, furnishings and fittings of Christ the Consoler Newby Hall.

Public benefit statement:
Friends of Christ the Consoler delivers public benefit by supporting the work of the Churches

Conservation Trust (the church was vested in 1991) through conservation, maintenance, stewardship, and the organisation of services and events, bringing life to this nationally important Grade I listed former Parish Church.

Trustees confirm that all activities carried out during the year further these purposes for the public benefit.

---

3. Achievements and Performance

Summary of activities:

- Supporting the conservation of the building in conjunction with the Churches Conservation Trust (CCT)
- Organising a programme of services and events (see www.christtheconsoler.com)
- Advancing Project 150, which covers both the conservation heating and the restoration of the Thomas C. Lewis organ

Notable achievements:

- The church receives an estimated 8,000 visitors a year, from across the UK and, over the past two years, 25 countries on six continents. Alongside these visitors, we welcomed 835 people to our six events and 628 people to our five services.
- Our events included three This is My Theatre (TIMT) productions, Pride & Prejudice, Great Expectations and Jane Eyre, and an evening of opera with Nicola Mills. We were delighted to welcome the acclaimed HandleBards for the first time, with their energetic performance of Macbeth, and likewise the Ryedale Festival.
- Our services included the United Benefice Services in September 2025 and August 2026, the Area Confirmation Service led by Bishop Anna Eltringham of Ripon, the Celebration of Farming, the Festival of Carols, and our Easter Day service.
- Our Easter Day service was broadcast live by ITV Calendar, the church featured on the cover of the Yorkshire Post Magazine in August, we took part in BBC Radio Yorkshire's Sunday Faith programme, and the church was the subject of an episode of Secret North Yorkshire on BBC Radio.
- Project 150 fundraising advanced significantly, with £36,750 of restricted grants and donations received during the year from charitable trusts, North Yorkshire Council and individual supporters.
- We are grateful for the ongoing support of the Newby Estate in caring for the grounds and in a programme of conservation cleaning, which this year included the black Irish marble throughout the nave and aisles, an incredible transformation.
- Visitors gave £1,219 through the church donations box during the year, which is income of the CCT. With our support in processing the Gift Aid envelopes, the CCT can also claim Gift Aid on £326 of these gifts, worth a further £81.

---

4. Financial Review

Income for the year: £41,395
Expenditure for the year: £5,230

Summary of assets and reserves:

- Total assets at year-end: £49,892
- Reserves policy: The trustees aim to hold sufficient reserves to cover operating costs to ensure sustainability.
- No funds were held for other purposes outside of charitable objectives.
- Churches Conservation Trust charges were met directly from collection revenue and did not pass through the charity's accounts.

Future plans:

- In our 2026/27 accounting year we will deliver the recommissioning of conservation heating, which we are funding through Project 150, to stabilise the internal environment of the church.
- Subject to a successful application to the National Lottery Heritage Fund, we will then proceed with the restoration of our nationally important Thomas C. Lewis organ, silent for more than 25 years and one of only a few Lewis organs to survive unaltered.
- The legacy of Project 150 will go far beyond the organ itself. The Newby Bursary will support aspiring young organists to learn on this historic instrument; improved interpretation and new volunteering opportunities will deepen our community engagement; and the restored organ will allow an even wider choice of musical events.
- Combined with the conservation heating, the project will create a stable and protected environment which is good for the building and great for visitors.

---

5. Trustee and Professional Information

Patrons:

- Gyles Brandreth
- Richard Compton DL (Chair of Patrons)
- Sir Loyd Grossman CBE
- Edward Harley CBE, LL
- Tim Knox FSA
- Sir Andrew Lawson-Tancred Bt
- Sir Laurie Magnus Bt, CBE
- Dame Kristin Scott-Thomas DBE

Trustees during the year:

- John Hoddinott (Chair)
- Lucinda Compton
- Guy Critchlow
- Stuart Gill
- Jane Mosley
- Tom Robinson

Professional advisors:

- As part of Project 150 we have engaged with a number of professional advisors which may change during the course of the project, details can be found at www.christtheconsoler.com/project150

Trustee expenses:

- Trustees received £464.11 in reimbursed expenses during the year.

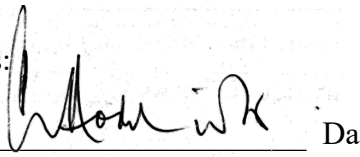
---

6. Statement of Compliance

The trustees confirm that:

- They have complied with the duty to have regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit.
- The annual report and accounts comply with the Charities Act 2011 and relevant Charity Commission requirements.

Signed on behalf of the Trustees:

- Chair of Trustees:  Date: 19th October 2026

---

7. Receipts & Payments Accounts (Summary)

Description	Receipts (£)	Payments (£)	Balance (£)
Opening balance			13,726
Incoming funds	41,395		
Expenditure		5,230	
Closing balance			49,892

Note. The balance includes restricted funds of £41,159 and unrestricted funds of £8,732. Restricted funds have been classified as such as they have been donated for specific projects (e.g. Project 150, which covers both the conservation heating and the organ restoration, and other fabric repairs inc. lighting). The opening balances are taken from the 2025 receipts and payments accounts, which showed restricted funds of £7,614 and unrestricted funds of £6,111 at 31st August 2025.
