

House Church Limited

Trustees' Report

The trustees, who are also the directors for the purposes of company law, present their report and the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 May 2024.

Structure, governance and management

House Church Limited, registered as a charity with the Charities Commission for Northern Ireland on 2 June 2015, was incorporated as a company limited by guarantee in Northern Ireland on 20 May 2008, registration number NI069291.

In the event of the company being wound up, members are required to contribute an amount not exceeding £1 each.

The first trustees were appointed by the members. Additional and replacement trustees are appointed by a simple majority resolution of the board or members. A trustee must be a member of the Charity. At each AGM all trustees who have served four consecutive years or more as a trustee shall retire from office. A trustee who retires in accordance with this Article, if willing to act, shall be eligible for re-appointment for one further term of four years. The Pastor shall not be required to retire from office until such time as he or she ceases to be a Pastor.

Organisational and Decision Making Structure

Decisions on policy and governance are made by the board of Directors, who are also the trustees of House Church, consisting of 5 members. The members meet monthly and are responsible for the policy, governance, and financial management of the organisation. The Executive Pastor sits on the board as a member who reports to the Board of trustees on operational running of the church.

The day to day running of House Church is delegated to a Senior Lead Team, wider Leadership team and staff members who are accountable to both Board of Trustees and Elders.

Objectives and activities

Renamed in 2022, House Church exists to extend the kingdom of God as we worship God, love people, and make disciples of Jesus Christ.

We want to build a community where people can learn more about God in a bible-based community and have the space to explore and understand who God is. We have Sunday services, for adult, youth and Kids, Youth ministry on Friday evenings, House Tots fortnightly, Discipleship Community, Retirement Morning and our Compassion Centre which is there to support with Foodbank, Life skills and money management.

The objectives of House Church are as stated in the Memorandum and Articles of Association are:

To promote the following purposes for the benefit of the public: Turn spiritually lost people into passionate committed followers of Jesus Christ and to establish a biblically functioning community that is impacting all ages and backgrounds of people in Newtownards area beyond.

We have partnerships with other charitable organisations that help and aid us in our objectives as a charity e.g.: "Care for Family", Abaana, Christians Against Poverty and Trussel trust which are national charities which aim to promote strong family life and to help those hurting because of family circumstances, bereavement, poverty, and debt.

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Strategic report

The following sections for achievements and performance and financial review form the strategic report of the charity.

Activities and performance

Isaiah 43 v 18-19 "Forget the former things do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing! Now it Springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland."

This was the verse that led our ministry for the year as we sought to seek God's guidance and vision for what He was doing. We have had great spaces for community and gatherings of those within our community: Sunday Gatherings, prayer gatherings, Discipleship communities, Bible study group, Retired Morning and Crochet Group.

We have had real growth this year in our young families in church with Kids ministry experiencing significant growth and the need for more volunteers. A new SEN programme to support those who learn different ways, with training given to volunteers who will support in a 1-1 capacity.

Our youth team has been steadily growing in attendance for Friday nights and also Sunday ministry for Youth. We have seen young people more engaged and loving being part of the church community with their families in turn love seeing their young people grow and find community.

Our House Tots is still an ever popular ministry that serves all community. This is for parents or carers to come along to with kids under primary 1 age group. The team have seen numbers increase so much that we have had to move rooms to accommodate them.

Our Compassion Centre has been operating well with new partnerships of referral agencies. We have saw an increase on last year usage of Foodbank by 23%. We have been seeing an increase with working families unable to meet the demands of the cost-of-living crisis and people whose benefit payments fail to match their legitimate outgoings. We also ran our Life Skills course being a particular highlight and our first CAP money course giving support and opportunity to have support in areas around budgeting and living on a tight budget. We also ran our Christmas campaign offering new toys and meat vouchers to those within the community of Newtownards to get support for their families at Christmas.

Health, safety and wellbeing of staff, volunteers, and beneficiaries

Provision of a safe environment to facilitate the health and wellbeing of staff, volunteers, and beneficiaries.

All policies and procedures were reviewed and assessed with relevant training for staff and volunteers undertaken.

Policy on Reserves

A cash reserve is held in an interest bearing account to allow for financial reserves. There is a fixed calculation of this cash reserve, which is maintained at one month's running costs (2024: £67,045). There are no designated funds.

Major Risks

The directors review the possibility of major risks on an ongoing basis. No major risks have been identified.

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Volunteer Initiatives

We encourage and promote volunteer initiatives through our community action programmes, children's work, social action teams tackling debt and food poverty and through many other opportunities in the Church.

Fundraising

Fundraising activities are kept under review and are instigated in response to global initiatives.

Recruitment and Induction

Recruitment is undertaken on the basis of attracting suitably qualified individuals with appropriate skill sets to assist in the overall governance and values of the Church. Induction is ongoing and on a needs basis.

Grant-Making Policy

The Elders and Directors of the Company consider the payment of grants and donations on an on-going basis.

Financial review

Performance 2024

Total income amounted to £807,248, which showed an increase of £38,920. This total included Church Givings of £370,209, Rental Income of £49,536, Foodbank and Cap Income of £43,076 and other income of £5,708. Restricted Income related to Foodbank and CAP activities, Compassion Centre and BFL donations.

Donations were made during the year amounting to £3,000; Heat and Light reduced by £18,808; Cleaning reduced by £2,668; Repairs and Maintenance reduced by £17,560; Loan Interest amounted to £51,583. Depreciation reduced by £3,137 to £85,931. Salaries are similar to last year. Bank charges are reduced by £10,221 and Foodbank Expenses increased by £8,818.

Trustees' responsibilities statement

The trustees, who are also directors for the purposes of company law, 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).

Company law requires the charity trustees to prepare financial statements for each year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, for that period.

In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the applicable Charities SORP;
- make judgments and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- 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 adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the charity's transactions and 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 Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

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Auditor

Each of the persons who is a trustee at the date of approval of this report confirms that:

- so far as they are aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the charity's auditor is unaware; and
- they have taken all steps that they ought to have taken as a trustee to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the charity's auditor is aware of that information.

05 Mar 2025

The trustees' annual report and the strategic report were approved on _____ and signed on behalf of the board of trustees by:



Ms N Porter
Trustee