

The trustees present their report along with the financial statements of the Charity for the year ended 5th April 2023. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out on pages 9 and 10 and comply with the Trust Deed and applicable law.

Structure, governance and management

Governing document

The City of Londonderry Charitable Trust is an unincorporated trust constituted by Deed of Trust dated 25th April 1972 recently amended by Deed of Variation dated 10th December 2019. The Trust was registered with the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland on 11th February 2020 under Charity Registration Number: 107396.

Recruitment and appointment of new trustees

The names of the Trustees who have served during the year and since the year end are set out on page 1. None of the Trustees, nor any person connected with them, received any remuneration or expenses from the Charity in the year ended 5 April 2023 (2022: £nil).

The Trust operates three Gospel halls and Trustees are chosen from among the regular congregation of the halls. New Trustees are nominated by the existing Trustees or by the congregation and must be appointed by unanimous resolution of the congregation. They are selected according to their skills and experience and are expected to use both in furthering the objects of the Charity. Checks are made to ensure the Trustees' eligibility to act and incoming Trustees are made aware of their responsibilities by the existing Trustees, who ensure that new Trustees read the Trust Deed and relevant Charity Commission guidance.

Wider network

The Trustees maintain informal links with similar charities with a view to pooling experience considered useful in pursuing the objects of the Charity.

The Charity also maintains particular links with Waterside Gospel Hall Trust, with which it shares members of its congregation.

Risk management

The Trustees have identified and reviewed the major risks to which the charity is exposed and confirm that they have established systems or procedures to manage and mitigate those risks.

Objectives and activities

Objectives and aims

The trust has the following charitable purposes:

The charitable purposes of the Charity are the advancement of the Christian religion for the public benefit, including by the carrying on of the service of God in accordance with the Old and New Testaments of the Holy Bible as followed by those Christians forming part of the world-wide fellowship known as the Plymouth Brethren Christian Church (the "Brethren") and any other charitable purposes connected with Brethren. The core doctrine of the Brethren and proper practices in furtherance of certain aspects of doctrine are summarised in two schedules to the Trust Deed.

Public benefit

The Trustees confirm that they have complied with their duty under the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008 to have due regard to the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland's general guidance to charities on public benefit.

Main activities and achievements

The Trust provides and maintains Gospel halls where religious meetings are held by the local Brethren community. Details of the origins, teachings and way of life of the Brethren can be found on the website - www.plymouthbrethrenchristianchurch.org and in the schedules to the Trust Deed.

The Trust's main achievement this year has been to complete the new gospel hall at Campsie and to continue to collect funds in order to clear the outstanding loan sooner than required.

Plans for future periods

The Trust plans to continue all the current activities.

Despite the increased cost of energy, the trustees feel that these increased costs are not significantly impacting on the ability of the charity to continue as a going concern.

Meetings

Meetings held at the gospel halls include the Lord's Supper (Communion), Gospel preachings, Bible readings and Bible addresses. There is a structured weekly schedule of meetings and, depending on the particular meeting, between 40 and 500 people normally attend these occasions.

The meetings are attended by the regular congregation and most are open to other properly disposed visitors. The notice board outside the Halls welcomes visitors and displays the times of Gospel preachings, along with a telephone number for those seeking further information or help. Gospel tracts, which are distributed by street preachers, also display this information.

Bibles and an extensive range of other Christian reading material are on display at the halls and visitors are free to help themselves.

Spreading the Gospel message and the life of a Christian

The City of Londonderry Charitable Trust's halls are a base from which the regular congregation and others who attend the meetings are encouraged to spread the Christian Gospel, in word and deed.

Members of the congregation participate in a programme of street preaching and Gospel tracts are provided free of charge by the Charity to such preachers to be handed out to interested members of the public.

In carrying out this work, the congregation considers itself to be living out its faith in practice, as particularly exemplified in the following extract from the schedule to the Trust Deed on living a Christian life:

1. We seek and are encouraged to live exemplary lives in all our relationships with others in the wider community (including former Brethren), in accordance with the teachings of Holy Scripture (1 Tim 2:2)
2. We regularly go out from our homes to preach on the streets, to distribute Christian literature and engage with the wider community (including former Brethren) in order to present eternal salvation, available to all men by faith in Jesus Christ. (2 Tim 4:2).

Spreading the Gospel message and the life of a Christian contd.

3. We seek as members of the public to lead Christian lives as husbands and wives, parents, children, employers, employees and neighbours. (Col 3:22-25, Col 4:1).
4. The preservation and protection of the family unit is fundamental and children are prized as a blessing from God. (Psalm 127:3-5). The elderly are valued members of the community, for whom both their family and the wider community are expected to care.
5. Holy Scripture commands us to be good neighbours to others, and deal with all other people (including former Brethren) openly, honestly and fairly and consistent with these principles, we should give our time, talents and money to assist those in need in the wider community, in so far as reasonable given our abilities and our available resources. (Matt 7:12, Matt 22:39, Eph 4:28).

Funding

Funding is sought through gifts from the congregation and Gift Aid is claimed on eligible donations. Funding is sometimes received from other charitable trusts with complementary objectives.

Financial review

Financial position

In the year ended 5 April 2023 the Trust had a surplus of incoming resources over resources expended. Total voluntary income received this year was £157,899 compared to £278,037 in the previous year.

All funds held were unrestricted funds.

The long term loan shown on the balance sheet of £35,000 is repayable by 31st January 2025 and interest is chargeable at 0% per annum.

Reserves policy

The Trustees have considered the level of reserves they wish to retain, appropriate to the charity's needs, based on its size and the level of its financial commitments. The Trust has no employees and its regular outgoings are minimal. Accordingly, the Trustees have decided to adopt a policy of maintaining no significant reserves although currently surplus funds are being saved to pay off a loan for the new hall. The congregation is kept regularly informed as to particular needs for funds, and other relevant matters and the Trustees aim to ensure that the Charity will be able to continue to fulfil its charitable objectives even if there is a temporary shortfall in income or unexpected expenditure, by raising a funds appeal to the congregation.

Free reserves at the year end were £134,653.

City of Londonderry Charitable Trust

Report of the trustees for the year ended 5th April 2023

Statement of trustees' responsibilities

The trustees are responsible for preparing the Report of the Trustees and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019).

The law applicable to charities in Northern Ireland, the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008, Charity (Accounts and Reports) Regulations and the provisions of the trust deed 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, including the income and expenditure, of the charity for that period. In preparing those financial statements, the trustees are required to

- a) select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- b) observe the methods and principles in the Charity SORP;
- c) make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- d) prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008, the Charity (Accounts and Reports) Regulations and the provisions of the Trust Deed. 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.

All transactions have been reviewed and approved by two trustees.

On behalf of the board:



Raymond W White

31/10/2023

Date