



WOODLANDS GROUP OF CHURCHES

ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023



Charity number: 1125029
Company number: 06569993

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WOODLANDS GROUP OF CHURCHES

YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

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WOODLANDS GROUP OF CHURCHES

ANNUAL REPORT

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INTRODUCTION

This is the Board of Trustees of Woodlands Group of Churches' combined annual report for the year ended 31 March 2023 under the Companies Act 2006 and the Charities Act 2011 together with the audited financial statements for the year. The charity has followed the requirements of the Charities Statement of Recommended Practice (FRS 102 SORP 2019) in preparing these financial statements.

BACKGROUND

Woodlands Church Family has a shared structure, vision, values, goals and multiple congregations based in various parts of Bristol. Woodlands Church Family is registered as Woodlands Group of Churches with registered charity number 1125029 and as a company limited by guarantee (company number 06569993). The legal entity continues to be called 'Woodlands Group of Churches', with 'Woodlands Church Family' increasingly used as a working name. These names and 'the Church' are used interchangeably throughout this report.

Motivated by the Great Commission in Matthew 28v18-20, the **Mission Statement** of the Woodlands Church Family is:

"to help reach the one million people of the Greater Bristol region, through church planting and regeneration and networking existing churches"

The Goal is to see a light in every street and for every person to have opportunities to hear and see a demonstration of the Gospel.

Shared structure – The Woodlands Church Family has four main congregations:

- **Woodlands Central**, a multi-service resource congregation based in Clifton, with Woodlands Southside as a recent South Bristol plant.
- **Woodlands Community Church**, a multi-service resource congregation serving Southmead, Westbury-on-Trym and Henleaze, with Branch, a missional congregation reaching Brentry and Henbury.
- **Woodlands Highgrove**, a multi-service resource congregation serving Sea Mills, Coombe Dingle, Kingsweston, Stoke Bishop and Shirehampton.
- **Woodlands Metro**, a multi-service resource congregation based in the city centre.

The Woodlands Church Family has three key Biblical expressions of church life through Cell, Congregation and Celebration. Cell is "being church in the home" with small groups. Congregation is "being church in the community", and Celebration is "being church in the City" through gathering congregations together.

Each of the congregations has its own congregational leadership team and where multi-services exist, there may be service congregational leadership teams. The Woodlands Church Family has a Senior Leadership Team and Trustee Board.

The Woodlands Church Family has several linked churches around Bristol with whom it partners. Each of these associated and affiliated churches are independently governed charities.

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CHARITABLE PURPOSES, VISION, VALUES, ACTIVITIES AND GOALS

The declared charitable purposes of Woodlands Group of Churches are:

"The proclamation and furtherance of the Gospel of God concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord and the preaching and teaching of the Christian Faith throughout the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and elsewhere"

"The organisation, sponsorship, promotion and continuing support of unincorporated bodies of Christians recognised by the Trustees as Christian churches or Christian fellowships meeting and functioning in various places in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and elsewhere as the Trustees may decide for the worship of God, the instruction and edification of Christians, the care and instruction of young people and children, the evangelisation of non Christians, the relief of poverty and sickness and the advancement of the Christian Faith generally."

The **shared vision** of the Woodlands Church Family is to **continually reproduce the life of Jesus**. We seek to achieve this vision through the following strategic aims and objectives:

1. **Commitment**
To help an increasing number of people become committed Christians and part of the life and worship of the Church.
2. **Discipleship**
To disciple each member in an atmosphere of love, prayer and Bible teaching to follow and become like Jesus.
3. **Service**
To release every member into ministry and mission in the power of the Holy Spirit, with opportunities to discover, develop and fruitfully use their gifts.
4. **Unity**
To build together in unity with other churches to reach the whole city and region with the gospel, to be a salt and light in the region and to bless the nations of the world, especially the poorest and persecuted, and to care for the planet.

This shared vision is motivated by the Great Command of Matthew 22v37-39, expressed in a set of **shared values** of Word and Spirit, Intimacy in Worship, Passion in Prayer, Depth of Discipleship, Infectious Witness, Love and Faithfulness in relationships, Forming and being Community, Care for the Poor, the Persecuted and the Planet.

Our principal activities to achieve our charitable purposes for the public benefit are:

- The establishment of **Global Partnerships** with Christian overseas missionaries and organisations;
- Local **City and Community Outreach** activities and events to enhance the outreach of congregations into local communities;
- The provision of **Gathered Church** services and events for the general public;
- The provision of services, events and programmes for **Children and Youth**;
- The provision of services, events, programmes and community living opportunities for **Students**;
- The provision of programmes of **Discipleship, Teaching and Leadership Development** and associated resources;
- **Pastoral Care** for those of any age or background associated with Woodlands Church Family.

More detailed descriptions of the activities of the Church, together with how these deliver public benefit and our achievements for the period, are under the heading of Achievements and Performance, below.

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There are overall **shared goals** for each aspect of our vision, with regular reviews with each congregation leader. Goals prayerfully encourage:

- **Commitment** - net growth for committed adults, made up of new adult joiners less movers and leavers. This includes committed new or returning to faith believers. This has been measured by the congregational leader tracking movers, joiners and leavers, gathered church counts and Newcomers & Alpha Course follow up.
- **Discipleship** is measured through baptisms and mentoring, small group membership, Wholeness, leadership development and other courses involvement and financial giving.
- **Service** is measured through engagement in church rotas for internal service and community outreach ministries.
- **Unity** is measured through involvement in city wide and global partnership ministries. This is part of building Bristol as a 'City of Hope' and reaching the one million people of the Bristol region. Globally this involves the encouragement and support of a growing number of Woodlands Global Partners who are blessing the nations of the world, especially the poorest and the persecuted and the care for the planet.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

The Woodlands Church Family is committed to enabling as many people as possible to participate and become part of the life of the church. As such, we operate no formal membership structure and all are welcome, whether 'just visiting' or wishing to get connected and involved. In practice, the opportunities to attend services and take part in other activities in person are most accessible to those who live in Bristol and the surrounding region.

We continue to have a significant presence online which means that many throughout the world can and do benefit by being able to receive teaching, inspiration and interaction with the Woodlands Church Family.

In addition, our prayerful and financial support of national and international institutions, individuals and projects which advance the Christian faith, means that the Church does impact and bring benefit to sections of the public well beyond Bristol and the surrounding region.



On 2 July 2022, we held a special evening event to celebrate the ministry of Rob and Pam Scott-Cook. Rob and Pam founded the first congregation in the Woodlands Church Family when they, with a small group of people, re-opened Highgrove Church in Sea Mills as a place of worship in 1982. Rob chaired the Senior Leadership team of the Church as it grew and expanded onto multiple sites, and it was Rob's vision and perseverance that led to the purchase of the Woodlands Christian Centre in Belgrave Road from the BBC in 1995. Rob has also been Chair

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of Trustees and it was a significant marker for the Church when Rob stepped down from both those roles this year.

The Church was packed for a service to thank God for their ministry. Rob and Pam continue to be significant and prayerful members of the Woodlands Church Family. Ed Marsh has succeeded Rob as Chair of Trustees, and Dave Mitchell, pastor of the Woodlands Central Congregation, now leads the Senior Leadership team.

At a significant time of transition for the Woodlands Church Family, Dave Mitchell and the Senior Leadership team commissioned a team of consultants to carry out an extensive external strategic review of its ministries and congregations. Led by Mick and Tricia Woodhead from Sheffield, a team of ten people visited us, conducted a range of interviews and collected data to assess our capacity to grow significantly over the next 7 years. Staff wellbeing was addressed and there was significant attention given to governance, and work with children and young people. The report was six months in preparation and is in practice a compilation of several reports each with significant recommendations.



The Senior Leadership Team and Trustees are working together to respond to the recommendations from the report, the effects of which are likely to shape direction and ministry for the next decade.

As we look back on 2022/23, the following are examples of our key ministry activities throughout the year as we sought to put faith into practice in a variety of ways:

Global Partnerships

One of our strategic aims is 'to bless the nations of the world, especially the poorest and persecuted and to care for the planet'. The Woodlands Church Family actively supports a number of individuals and charities who we refer to as 'global partners and global associates'. They work in a variety of countries all over the world.

This past year has seen an increased connectivity with our Global Partners as they have been able to join in with on-line services, training and courses. This has been a particular encouragement to those working in more remote and religiously challenging locations.



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During the year:

- We made grants totalling £259,764 (2021/22: £242,086) to a significant number of individuals/families and institutions. Further details can be found in note 7 of the accounts.
- We took special offerings to respond to the devastating earthquake in Turkey and Syria in February 2023 and were able to send grants totalling £20,700 to Christian agencies working to provide relief;
- We regularly contacted our global partners and associates to hear news of their work and ask how we might best support them through prayer;
- Global prayer is the bedrock of our global partnerships work, with monthly prayer meetings which consistently drew 35-40 to attend in a hybrid format (face to face and virtual), where two global partners 'Zoomed' into the meeting each month to share their needs. There was also regular international focus in weekly congregational prayers, on monthly global offering Sundays and in the prayer rooms during our bi-annual 24/7 weeks and prayer rooms.
- In June 2022, the Global Partnership Weekend took the theme of 'The Joy of the Whole Earth', with twelve global partners joining us for the weekend to share in services and be encouraged in their ministries.
- This year, we piloted 'Life Ministry Reviews', with 23 of our global partners submitting formal annual reviews to church leadership, highlighting areas of success, growth life changes, as well as ongoing concerns and need. This has been a very helpful exercise in supporting their ongoing pastoral and financial needs and assessing effectiveness of their work.
- Global partner families from Peru and Uganda were given homes to stay in over 3-6 months and supported in extended furlough in Bristol during the last year. The generosity of the congregations in offering accommodation, car loans and hospitality was very sacrificial. These families in turn enriched the local church life through sharing and serving at multiple events, including leading a mission Bootcamp weekend to train 30 members of Woodlands in cross-cultural outreach, followed by offering them opportunities to do short term outreaches abroad in 2023-24.
- Our partnership with Hands at Work in Africa has continued to develop, with grants in total given of £25,993 (2021/22: £35,627);
- We gave bursaries of £2,920 from our short term mission fund to twelve members of Woodlands for trips ranging from an architect's internship supporting building design for Christian projects in developing countries, trauma care for refugees in Iraq and Poland/Ukraine border support for



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refugees, and an on-location prayer initiative in North Africa.

- The Woodlands Climate Action Network is a new initiative, led by young adults aiming to help Woodlands look at the big picture of our sustainability and challenging us as a Church to move towards Carbon Neutral operations with some practical suggestions for change.
- During the year, Woodlands signed the Operation Noah Bright Now pledge to abstain from financial investment in fossil fuels.
- The Highgrove congregation was awarded the Silver Eco Church award just after the year end.

City and Community Outreach

The Woodlands Church Family is committed to social action and evangelism in the Bristol region through our own activities and in partnership with many local agencies. This includes work with the homeless, those in debt, urban regeneration and more. Much of this work is with the most marginalised members of the local community and we aim to support them through practical expressions of support as well as offering them the opportunity to get involved in Church life and come to faith.

Examples of this during the year were:

- We are grateful for the ongoing partnership with local government which means Bristol Churches have been quick where they can to respond to urgent needs identified by the City council. This includes work with TLG (Transforming Lives for Good). Bristol City Council has encouraged Churches to support schools particularly where already vulnerable children have fallen behind with disruption from COVID-19 school closures. Woodlands Central is now in three schools with training and support from TLG (a national charity). Volunteers commit to sitting with an individual child one-on-one every week and improving their confidence and self-esteem.
- Woodlands Central has continued to run two men's football teams. These are thriving communities made up of people from inside and outside of the church, playing in the Bristol Churches League.
- The basketball outreach 'Bristol Brickers' took place in Southmead and Henbury engaging teenagers from the community and giving them a safe space to interact with other teens, get some exercise and hear some uplifting team talks.
- The Alpha Course is a fantastic opportunity for people from all walks of life to explore the Christian faith. We have held the Alpha Course at Woodlands Central every term this year, with courses also running across many of the congregations of the Woodlands Church Family. It has been great to have many guests attending each course, but especially a large percentage of young adults. At the end of each course, we have had people joining mid-week Church groups as they continue their faith journey. Our most recent church plant, Woodlands Southside, has partnered with Victoria Park Baptist in running a daytime Alpha course which has seen several



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people on the edge of our church communities enter into greater ownership of faith.

- The Noise ran in May 2022 and it was back to something like the pre-pandemic numbers of 700 volunteers working across many of the more disadvantaged communities of Bristol.



- With Foodbank outlets in Southmead run by Community Church and support given by volunteers at the NW Bristol Foodbank and the East/South Bristol Foodbank, 100s of families received emergency food supplies. Woodlands Southside has strengthened its efforts in serving Victoria Park Foodbank in terms of people volunteering, provision of food, and a monetary gift through Southside's youth raising the foodbank's profile and participation in some sponsored activities.

- A highlight of the year came in November 2022 when we were able to hold our annual Single Parents Fair again to bless the single parents in the community. We saw over 100 families during the morning and once again everything was provided free of charge. We had second-hand clothes, books and toys, family portraits, professional haircuts, a free café and advice stands from a range of organisations.

- In partnership with Victoria Park Baptist, Woodlands Southside has been operating a weekly hub for Ukrainians. This has been really valued by our Ukrainian guests due to the crucial context of belonging it has provided, its provision of amazing food, and fantastic and enduring friendships that have developed. There has also been quite a bit of signposting which has also helped many of the guests find appropriate paid work.



- Branch congregation has also offered a very successful 'Warm Space' and lunch facility throughout the winter months.
- Highgrove works closely with Sea Mills Community Initiatives, a charity run by the two local churches, to bless the surrounding area in a number of ways. This year they provided a Warm Space in one of their buildings with volunteers from Highgrove. Highgrove makes use of its own garden space, as well as the SMCI-run Community Garden by regularly running Muddy Church for local families, plus a Christmas wreath-making event and an Easter Garden Trail for families to discover the Easter story using hands-on activities.
- In January 2023, we partnered with the Charity Commission, Burton Sweet, Stewardship and Charity Finance Group to run a conference called Faith Charities in Focus. Bringing together over

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150 Trustees and senior leaders of faith charities and churches from across the region, the morning event helped equip people to undertake their valuable roles with excellence and confidence.

City and Community Outreach Charitable Loans

Over the years, the Church has employed a particular strategy to see thriving churches in local communities in providing **short-term secured loans** to enable key workers and volunteers to be able to purchase a house in those communities. It has been our experience that having people living in the heart of communities, getting

involved in community life and resourcing local outreach makes a significant difference in fruitfulness and growth. These loans have been typically 3-5 years in duration and, once repaid, were being recycled to enable further loans to be made. These loans are classified as programme-related investments in these accounts because their purpose is not to generate a commercial financial return but to enable people to live and serve Christ in the community to which they are called.

In light of the cost-of-living crisis and escalating inflation and interest rates, the Trustees decided to temporarily close the scheme to new applications (those not already in process) early in the financial year given the challenges of assessing applicant loan affordability in an uncertain economic environment. By the end of the financial year, the Trustees resolved that the scheme be permanently closed and, once existing loans have been repaid, alternative uses for the funds will be developed in order to further the purposes of the Church. The Trustees are thankful for the charitable benefit and fruitfulness that this strategy has brought over the years, but recognise that skills required, the risk involved and the opportunity cost of continuing the scheme mean this is not a strategy that should be continued.

The current carrying value of loans outstanding is shown as a designated fund in these financial statements. There were eight such loans outstanding at the year end (2022: five). The value of the outstanding loans was £2,160,225, which also includes a £14,500 short term loan to a global partner to assist them in their ministry. Funds that had previously been held to resource new loans have been redesignated to other purposes in the year.



Gathered Church

The Woodlands Church Family offers a range of services during the week and over the course of the year that are open to all members of the public and which many people of different ages and backgrounds and with different preferences find to be beneficial and fulfilling. Over the years, significant changes have made to the services to adapt to growing numbers of people attending.

On a typical Sunday there will be eleven public worship services conducted over the six sites where Woodlands Church Family congregations are based. We are committed to growing expressions of Church further into neighbourhoods in the City and region where we

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feel we can serve communities, and in the nearby North Somerset village of Backwell we have begun a monthly family service that attracts up to 100 people.

We continue to offer on-line worship, streaming our larger Sunday services and gathering a Zoom congregation at our early service. We have learnt an enormous amount about how to film and distribute on-line content in a way that makes Church accessible for elderly, invalid or geographically dispersed adherents, and also those whose social anxiety makes in-person attendance challenging for them.

Woodlands Church Family congregations are very easy to find through on-line search engines, and our on-line services attract hundreds of watches each Sunday. Indeed we have discovered that many people who are looking for a Church explore on-line services first before making in-person connection.

It has been encouraging to see our 'in person' congregations return to pre-pandemic levels, in part at least through new numerical growth. At Woodlands Central last year, we saw over 500 visitors give us their contact details. There has been significant momentum in our ministry to young adults, and over 150 of them attended our recent weekend house party.



Our most recent neighbourhood congregation, Woodlands Southside, has moved its location from a Methodist building to Victoria Park Baptist Church, still on the edge of Bedminster.

Our congregation 'Branch' meets in Emmanuel Chapel on the large estate of Henbury. The amalgamation with a small indigenous congregation at Emmanuel has solidified very well and the Church offers a vibrant and welcoming act of worship each Sunday afternoon.

Our congregation at Highgrove in Sea Mills has had the exciting and challenging

experience of a major building project to help accommodate its growth. Numbers at Highgrove are too many for one morning service, and so this year the Church has held two consecutive morning services, the earlier of which is live streamed. A new foyer has been built and is on the cusp of completion to help access and space to facilitate this burgeoning congregation, which has the highest percentage of children in any of our congregations.

An exciting development for our congregation in Southmead, the 'Community Church' has been the growing attendance of a significant number of Hong Kong Cantonese speaking migrants. Many of these recent arrivals to the UK are choosing a path of integration, rather than affiliating to the 'Chinese Church' in Bristol, but the large numbers mean that occasional sermons in Cantonese are offered as an alternative to the regular preaching at Community Church.

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Woodlands Metro has had a challenging year in some respects. Shortly after returning from COVID-19 restrictions to in-person meetings in the very prominent 'We the Curious' building which has been their home, there was a serious fire in the roof space of that venue. It closed for repair and has remained closed, and the congregation has had to re-locate to Bristol Cathedral School. It is relatively nearby but less visible and the Church has had to work hard to consolidate as the student and young adult community which are its key demographic are so mobile.



Woodlands Metro has begun a monthly morning service in response to that consolidation, and with increasing numbers of married members are building a less transient community. Their recent house party weekend attracted over 90 people and included children for the very first time.

A distinctive element of community at Woodlands Central has been the large Church-linked community houses which are in their own right 'religious communities'. A significant factor for the Church to process is that the most prominent of these houses, which are close to Woodlands Central, will be sold in 2024 by their owners, a Christian charity called The George Muller Charitable Trust. A working group has looked at the feasibility of Woodlands purchasing one of these houses. At present it is anticipated that the market may make this the wrong priority for us, and the working group are also looking at alternative accommodation to serve the growth and midweek needs of Woodlands Central.

It was wonderful to celebrate Christmas and Easter services in-person this year and to see large numbers attending our suite of services, as well as following on-line. Our portfolio of Christmas services included Contemporary Carols, Carols by Candlelight, 'Folky Christmas' and a midnight service. Our Easter events included family Good Friday services and events as well as a beautiful reflective service, and Easter Sunday saw full buildings with again some Easter Sunday baptisms to celebrate.



Unity and prayer underpin the Woodlands Church Family, and as well as our regular congregational prayer events the New Year always begins with a week of prayer and fasting.

This year was exceptionally encouraging as on the Tuesday of Prayer Week, after a day when many chose to fast, hundreds of us gathered at Woodlands Central for a combined prayer and worship event that emphasised our unity, but also prioritised the life of the Spirit together.

Children and Youth Ministry

The Woodlands Church Family offers a wide range of activities which children and young people join in with to make friends, discover and use their gifts and talents and learn more about being disciples of Jesus. Activities are a varied as activity based open youth clubs, basketball training, youth church and discussion groups.

The following are examples of key activities and developments that took place this year:

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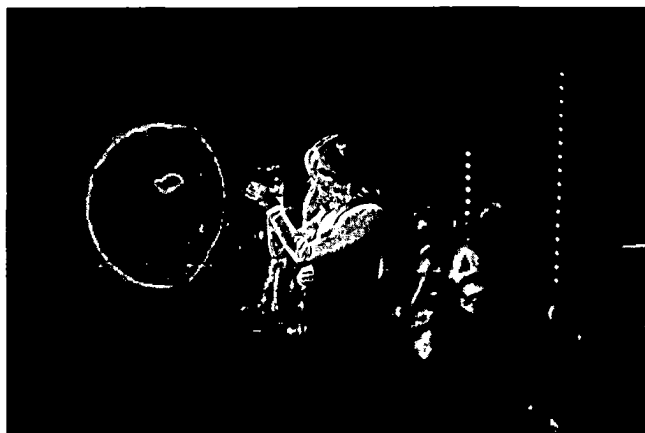
- Children's Church has run each Sunday throughout the year. All the Sunday groups have continued to thrive, including football church with over 150 children regularly connecting across the groups. We've also started new groups - a Sunday dance ministry and a monthly mid-week group called 'T Club' for older children. All of these groups have been focusing on helping children connect with church, grow in faith and build relationships with one another.

- It was so encouraging to see consistent attendance at youth gatherings. There have been a large number of non-church youth engaging with our regular programmes.

- Mental health continues to be a real challenge for many young people. The team have adjusted well to continuing the best they can to connect with young people. A residential weekend away happened in the autumn which again gave a sense of building community.
- Our Youth Club 'Alberts Place' relaunched and is providing a fun evening of games and activities for young people from our local community.
- Highgrove have supported families throughout the year by running a number of parenting courses. The church co-ordinates the chaplaincy in their local secondary school, with a team of volunteers from local churches who listen to Year 7 students read each week. There is a team who are continuing to provide assemblies for the local primary school, as well as outreach events around the church calendar, like a Candlelight Nativity and Holiday Clubs.
- Southmead Stars, one of several parent and toddler groups we run, relocated to the 'Ranch' a local adventure playground and now has over 50 parents and children attending. On Good Friday 2023, in partnership with the parent and toddler group from another local church, we ran an Family Fun morning attended by around 200 adults and children.

Student Ministry

University students are at a strategic time of their lives in terms of experiences that inspire and shape the rest of their lives but we are aware that thousands of students in Bristol have little involvement with Church or the Christian faith. We want to play our part in reaching this demographic with the gospel. Our Woodlands Christian Centre building is strategically located in the midst of Bristol University and our Woodlands Metro community is located near much of the new student accommodation in the centre of Bristol. We want to see students become Christians, to grow in their faith and be inspired and equipped to serve God with their lives.



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This year, after all the disruption and isolation caused by the pandemic, we've put a particular emphasis on building a strong, racially diverse community amongst students. With Woodlands Metro now meeting in Cathedral School, we've been able to mobilise teams of students to help pupils in the Junior School with their reading. Alongside this we've engaged students with social action and care alongside partners like Beloved, the FoodBank and The Noise. We've been able to offer study spaces and drop-ins for students who don't normally connect with church, as well as taking the initiative with outreach in some University spaces. Metro has also put together a team of young professionals to provide mentoring, support and career advice for students.

Discipleship, Teaching and Leadership Development

We are committed to raising up a new generation of leaders to impact the city, the region and the world with the gospel. A key part of 'continually reproducing the life of Jesus' is discipleship. This involves learning to imitate and obey Jesus Christ in every aspect of our lives.

Examples of how we have encouraged this during the year are:

- The Bristol Westminster Theological Centre Hub has continued this year meeting in Woodlands Foyer and their two residentials were held at Nottingham University. There have been 28 students in this year's hub. WTC faculty delivered two theology events for staff team, Associate Church leaders and church members. A number of the church staff team have been studying with WTC and it has had a positive impact on their confidence in handling the Bible.
- Woodlands Bible School has run each 3rd Sunday and it has been good to have a number of visiting speakers who have brought some great insights. This year's cohort of 13 leaders on the Leadership Learning Community have thrown themselves into the discussion and learning, and it has been greatly appreciated.



Pastoral Care

All of our congregations have midweek small groups as key elements of what it means to belong, and we follow a memorable formula to describe our mission, Find, Love, Follow, Serve. We hope that people who find faith and find their way to our Church will be invited to be involved in loving and caring smaller communities. We see small groups as the first line of pastoral care and initial development of gifts and the primary place to get to know others and to be known. Many pastoral issues are picked up and managed in these small group settings.

Our second line of pastoral care includes the following:

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- The Wholeness Course offers an opportunity to identify and remove barriers to growth in our personal lives, deal with gaps in our emotional development and repair hurts from the past. We had 90 people sign up for our spring course, including people from several churches around Bristol as we gathered for six weeks at Woodlands Central for evenings of testimonies, teaching and prayer ministry. Each week, the team of 30 prayer ministers offer one-to-one prayer for people attending the course and shared things they sensed God had been saying to them for people attending the course. Many Course attendees experienced healing and breakthrough in their personal lives through the teaching and prayer. We have had many follow up emails with wonderful stories of freedom and healing from people who attended and the whole team were as always very encouraged by taking part.
- Last year, we launched a new mental health website, Whole Minds. The website has articles, stories and creative content designed to support and encourage good mental health and spiritual growth. The idea for the website came out of a survey about mental health across the Woodlands Church Family. It was felt that there was a growing need to acknowledge the increased mental health pressure that many people are experiencing, particularly following the pandemic. Following the survey we felt that it would be good to develop an online space to collect articles and stories that would encourage people across the Woodlands Church family in their mental, emotional and spiritual health journeys, and also to develop an online presence that would be accessible to people from outside the church seeking spiritual solutions to mental health pressures. We acknowledged the need to talk more openly about mental health in church life and followed the website launch with a mental health sermon series across the church congregations. Alongside the website there is a growing social media presence and articles on mental health for teenagers, eating disorders and overcoming anxiety have been shared widely.
- Shortly after the year end, we employed a Mental Health Practitioner in a role that involves her supporting young adults by offering regular mental health support sessions via referral by student and young adult leaders. It was felt that with mental health currently a serious concern amongst these communities we need to find ways to support and encourage good mental health practices and provide spaces for reflection and community for those isolated and struggling with their mental health. She will also be facilitating Head Space an 8-week course looking at various aspects of mental health and wellbeing that encourages people to come and share experiences and support one another along the journey towards wellness. She will be building a resource base of material for leaders to access across the WCF which will include articles and suggestions for managing mental health issues such as anxiety and depression.
- The Community Church are launching a Wellbeing Café to provide a safe, welcoming space for those struggling with poor mental health.
- We operated a 'needy saints fund' throughout the year enabling us to give gifts totalling £6,571 (2021/22: £5,935) to those facing financial hardship through redundancy, loss, relationship breakdown or low income.



Charging Policy

The Woodlands Church Family is committed to making its activities accessible to as wide a range of people as possible and so seeks to minimise the cost of events and, where a charge is levied, subsidies are offered by congregational leadership teams where appropriate to ensure that money is not a barrier

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to people participating in activities. Church services are entirely free with no obligation to pay or give and the church offers many activities, courses and services without charge.

Fundraising

Whilst the primary source of income for the charity is voluntary donations, the Church does not regularly engage in significant public fundraising. Most of the giving is from committed attenders who express their 'belonging' and commitment to the congregations through regular and one-off giving to share in the ministry costs of church life. The Church prayerfully teaches about the biblical principles of financial stewardship and generosity in the context of discipleship. From time to time, the leaders encourage giving towards particular global partners or mission projects and, very occasionally, hold offerings for special projects such as building developments. The charity does not subscribe to any particular fundraising scheme or standards but regularly reviews the charity's practices to ensure that any incidental fundraising is carried out appropriately.

Each congregation has monthly Sunday service offerings to support global and local mission. All gifts collected, including any attributable Gift Aid and Gift Aid on Small Donations relief is used to support our global and local mission partners. In addition, a discretionary percentage of up to 50% is added from free reserves to each offering.

Contribution of volunteers

Most of what happens in the congregations is driven by volunteers, whether that is worship, youth and children's work, practical jobs or roles requiring specialised skills. It is not possible to quantify the contribution of volunteers to the Woodlands Church Family except to say that we would not be able to carry out many of our activities without them. The Church seeks to provide as many opportunities as possible for volunteers to grow in their gifts and abilities and has hundreds of people volunteering in at least one role within Church. The way in which volunteers have continued to serve who faithfully and creatively throughout the last few challenging years is something we are so thankful to God for.



FINANCIAL REVIEW

The financial position and performance of Woodlands Group of Churches is in line with the expectations of the Trustees, based on their planning and monitoring of income and expenditure throughout the year.

Total income was £1,939,452 in the year compared to £1,654,686 in the prior year, a rise of 17%. Donations have risen overall by 16%, with core giving to free funds (a key measure we use to budget for future spending) having increased by 9.8%, which is a remarkable and encouraging result with all the economic and social challenges brought about by the continued global economic uncertainty and the cost of living crisis.

Income from Charitable activities rose from £196,127 in the prior year to £231,819 and has now risen above pre-pandemic levels.

WOODLANDS GROUP OF CHURCHES

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Investment income rose from £159,287 in the prior year to £204,442, driven by higher interest rates and Financial Investments performance. Investment income includes the income both from Financial Investments and from a number of interest-bearing charitable loans classified as programme related investments in the accounts and interest-bearing loan stock classified as mixed purpose investments.

Total expenditure was £1,542,206 (2021/22: £1,265,887); a rise of 22%. Activity levels have significantly increased this year and a pay-benchmarking review has led to monthly payroll costs increasing by 10% from January 2023. A total of £393,010 (2022: £299,458) spent on grants for mission and blessing the poor and persecuted both in the UK and overseas.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT POLICIES

Reserves

Free reserves available for use by Woodlands Church are deemed to be those that are readily realisable, less funds whose uses are restricted or else designated for particular purposes. The calculation thus excludes £2,594,613 representing tangible fixed assets that will continue to be used in the day-to-day running and restricted funds of £127,073. The calculation also excludes the carrying value of charitable loans held as programme related investments of £2,160,225, which are not readily realisable assets and are held in designated funds. It also excludes other designated funds of £3,943,068 including the Property Purchase Fund of £2,239,606, which exists to enable the opportunistic purchase of new property.

The purpose, balances and movements of each designated fund are explained clearly within note 18 of the accounts.

Each year the Trustees review the level of free reserves and the appropriateness of the free reserves policy. The Board considers our exposure to major risks in terms of their likely impact on its income sources and planned expenditure in the medium term. They also consider the opportunities available to them for expansion and growth in the facilities and activities of the Woodlands Church Family.

This year, the Trustees decided to increase the target range for free reserves to reflect the uncertain economic environment and the higher commitment relating to permanent employed staff arising from an expanding team and the recent pay review.

The revised target range for free reserves is £550,991 to £826,487, equal to between 6 and 9 months of reported expenditure in the Free Reserves fund. At the year end, the actual free reserves, as clearly shown within the accounts, were £688,603 (2021/22: £352,424), which is equivalent to 7.5 months of reported expenditure in the Free Reserves Fund. This is within the target range. The Trustees recognise that the operating environment is evolving rapidly and that the current strategic review of the Woodlands Church Family may result in a need to significantly change our financial operating model. All reserves held will be subject to a thorough review in the coming financial year.

Financial Impact of Significant Events

The Trustees are conscious of the challenging economic and social conditions brought about by the continued global uncertainties caused by geopolitical events in Europe and the cost-of-living crisis. As well as seeking to use the charity's resources to meet some of these needs, the Trustees are thankful to God that we have not seen a drop in giving income or a sustained drop in other sources of income so far. The Trustees will be budgeting carefully for the coming financial year given these factors but are

WOODLANDS GROUP OF CHURCHES

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satisfied that the level of reserves held by the charity will enable the continuation of the charity's activities into the future.

The Trustees confirm their assessment that the charity is a going concern as at the date of the signing of the accounts, despite the ongoing global uncertainty.

Investment powers and policy

The Memorandum and Articles of Association allow the Trustees to invest in any stocks, funds, shares, securities or other investments of whatsoever nature as the Trustees shall, in their absolute discretion, think fit.

The Trustees have an Investment Policy covering the charity's Financial, Programme Related and Mixed Purpose Investments. In particular, the Trustees have sought to ensure that the time horizon of the likely use of all funds is matched well to the investment vehicle used.



In the case of Financial Investments, the Charity seeks to produce the best financial return within an acceptable level of risk and this year have more clearly articulated its responsible investments approach, taking into account the social, ethical and environmental impact of investments. The Trustees have joined other faith charities in signing a pledge not to invest in fossil fuels.

The investment objective for funds needed in the medium to long term is to generate a return in excess of inflation over the long term whilst generating an income to support the ongoing activities of the Charity. For funds needed in the short term, the investment objective is to preserve the capital value with a minimum level of risk. Assets should be readily available to meet unanticipated cash flow requirements.

Grant making

The Charity has a grant making policy and makes grants to individuals and organisations engaged in mission and ministry and primarily with whom we have developed long term partnerships. Most of these partners are members of the church family serving on short term, medium term or long-term mission trips. With the exception of members of the church family going on short term mission, there is not a formal application process for grant funds. Missionary financial support is instead just a part of a wider range of on-going communication and prayer support for the work.

The Charity also makes grants from the 'needy saints fund' to individuals in the church facing financial hardship as a result of redundancy, loss, relationship breakdown or low income.

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FUTURE PLANS



The Woodlands Church Family is excited by the opportunities for growth, ministry expansion and church planting. We will continue to engage with the needs of the city through food poverty relief and family care, including encouraging fostering and adoption and addressing mental health issues.

As we continue to unpack the findings and recommendations of the Strategic Review report, it is anticipated that significant investment and development will be required as we enter this next season.

The Woodlands Church Family is also continuing to further develop the organisational and administration structures appropriate to a growing group of congregations in the current environment. The key operational leads have met a number of times throughout the year to revise and update the charity's risk management process. The Woodlands Church Family is embarking on a rebranding exercise, as we sharpen our vision and identity.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

The Charity was formed in 2008 by the merger of four previous charities: Highgrove Christian Charitable Trust, Highgrove Fellowship Centre, Woodlands Church and Henleaze & Westbury Community Church.

The Charity is governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association adopted on 18 April 2008.

Under the Memorandum and Articles of Association, all members of the Company are Trustees, and all Trustees are members. No other formal membership is operated. The minimum number of Trustees is three; there is no maximum. Trustees are required to meet at least once a year.

Any new Trustees are recruited in light of the mix of skills and experience needed on the Board and on the basis of the knowledge of the existing Trustees of suitable candidates and after prayer and listening to the leading of the Holy Spirit. In selecting persons to be appointed, the Trustees take into account the benefits of appointing a person who is able by virtue of his or her professional qualifications or experience to make a contribution to the pursuit of the purposes or the management of Woodlands Group of Churches. Selected candidates are appointed by a simple majority by Trustees at a meeting or by a formal resolution.

Any new Trustees receive an Induction Pack appropriate to their level of existing knowledge of and involvement with Woodlands Group of Churches. As a minimum, new Trustees receive a copy of the Charity Commission publication CC3 – *The Essential Trustee* together with the Charity's governing document and the latest Annual Report and Accounts.

The Trustees are aware of the importance of maintaining their knowledge of current charity and related legislation and best practice so Trustees take advantage of external trustee training sessions and, where not all members of the Board of Trustees are present, circulate any relevant information and guidance to the other Trustees for due consideration.

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The role of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and the Trustees

The SLT is responsible for the overall spiritual and day-to-day operational leadership of the Woodlands Church Family. The Senior Leader of the SLT provides apostolic input to the SLT, which operates as an Ephesians 4 ministry team (Ephesians 4v11-12). The Trustees have overall legal responsibility, taking account of the spiritual direction of the Woodlands Church Family set by the Senior Leadership Team, who themselves are always to act in accordance with the Memorandum and Articles of Association and the general law.

Rob Scott-Cook stood back as Senior leader of the Senior Leadership team from 1 July 2022 and stood down as a Trustee from December 2022. Dave Mitchell is now Senior Leader of the SLT and Ed Marsh was elected Chair of Trustees. Alison Dawson and Steve Bodley were appointed to the Board in July 2022.

The Key Management Personnel of the Charity consists of the Trustees and the Senior Leadership Team. Where such individuals or those closely connected with them are remunerated by the Charity, their pay is set by the non-remunerated members of the Trustee Board at a meeting each year.

Church leaders and teams

The Woodlands Church Family has delegated the day-to-day oversight and direction of the four congregations to congregational leadership teams. These teams meet regularly to oversee delivery of activities in accordance with the vision and purposes of the Charity. Members of the Trustee Board and Senior Leadership Team regularly meet with the congregational leaders to review progress, provide any advice and assistance as required and provide accountability around goals, vision and values.

PUBLIC BENEFIT

The Trustees have taken account of the Charity Commission's guidance on Public Benefit where appropriate when exercising their powers and duties, planning and reviewing the aims, objectives and activities of the Woodlands Church Family. Throughout this report, the Trustees have sought to demonstrate the many ways that it delivers benefit to the public – whether they are members of one of the congregations that are part of the Church, another church or have no church /religious affiliation.

STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES AND CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

The Trustees (who are also directors of Woodlands Group of Churches for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Annual 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 trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year, which give true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for the year. 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 Charities SORP 2019 (FRS102);
- make judgments and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;

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- state whether applicable United Kingdom accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in operation.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

In so far as the trustees are aware:

- There is no relevant audit information of which the charitable company's auditors are unaware; and
- The trustees have taken all steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditors are aware of that information.

Corporate Governance

Internal controls over all forms of commitment and expenditure continue to be developed to improve efficiency and enable the Trustees to discharge their responsibilities around safeguarding the Charity's assets. Processes are in place to ensure that performance is monitored and that appropriate management information is prepared and reviewed regularly by both the Senior Leadership Team and the Board of Trustees.

The systems of internal control are designed to provide reasonable but not absolute assurance against material misstatement or loss. They include:

- an annual budget approved by the Trustees;
- regular consideration by the Trustees of financial results and variances from budgets;
- delegation of day-to-day management authority and segregation of duties; and
- identification and management of risks.

Charity Governance Code

The Trustees have reviewed the Charity Governance Code. The Trustees consider that the Charity is already applying most of its recommendations and is working towards further application of its recommended practice.

Risk Management

The Trustees have a formal risk management process, which has been reviewed, revised and improved during the current financial year. This involves identifying the types of risks the Charity faces, prioritising them in terms of potential impact and likelihood of occurrence, and identifying means of managing or mitigating the risks and the individual responsible for managing each risk.



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The Trustees have a formal incident recording process to identify incidents that can inform the risk management process.

The Trustees carry out an annual review of the principal risks to which the charity is exposed and systems have been established to manage those and other risks.

The principal risk facing the Church at this time is the possibility of an ineffective transition of senior leadership undertaken in July 2022 following 40 years from the founding of the Church. Planning and preparation for this transition has been taking place over the last five years and the Trustees and Senior Leadership Team have been working on the leadership structure and teams needed to help the Church to thrive in this new era.

The Trustees have been continuing to closely manage the risk of further cyber attacks following a serious incident in 2019/20 and especially in light of the extra risks the current operating environment has presented. This has included training and new guidelines issued to charity staff and a charity-wide IT infrastructure review project.

Auditors

A resolution proposing that Haines Watts Bristol Limited be reappointed as auditors of the charitable company will be put to the Annual General Meeting.

This report has been prepared in accordance with the special provisions of Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

Signed by order of the board of Trustees:



Mr E J Marsh (Chair of Trustees)



Mr D J Mitchell (Senior Leader and Trustee)

20 July 2023

WOODLANDS GROUP OF CHURCHES

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YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Company registration number: 06569993
Charity registration number: 1125029

Members of the Board of Trustees

The trustees, who are also directors for the purposes of Company law, that served during the year and since the year end, are:

Mr E J Marsh	(Chair from 1 January 2023)
Mr D J Mitchell	
Mr T J Dobson	
Mrs A Addison	(Vice-Chair from 20 April 2023)
Mr W Matthews	(Vice-Chair from 20 April 2023)
Mr D Roderick	
Mrs A Dawson	(appointed 14 July 2022)
Mr S Bodley	(appointed 14 July 2022)
Mr R L Scott-Cook	(resigned as Trustee and Chair on 31 December 2022)

Senior Leadership Team (SLT) of the Woodlands Church Family

Mr D J Mitchell (Senior Leader of the Woodlands Church Family)		
Mr E J Marsh	Mr T J Dobson	Mrs D A Marsh
Mr N Savage	Mrs R Riddall	Mr P O Jinadu
Mrs K Jinadu	Mr D Roderick	Mrs H C Thompson
Mr R Pollard	Mr R L Scott-Cook (<i>stepped down in July 2022</i>)	

Principal Professional Advisers

Bankers

Lloyds TSB, High Street, Westbury-on-Trym, Bristol, BS9 3DA
Bank of Scotland, 2nd floor, Pentland House, 8 Lochside Avenue, South Gyle, Edinburgh, EH12 9DJ.

Auditors

Haines Watts Bristol Limited, Bath House, 6-8 Bath Street, Bristol, BS1 6HL

Registered office address: Woodlands Christian Centre
Belgrave Road
Clifton
Bristol BS8 2AA

Website addresses: www.woodlandschurch.net
www.thecommunitychurch.net
www.highgrove.church
www.woodlandsmetro.church
www.woodlandssouthside.church
www.branchchurch.co.uk

WOODLANDS GROUP OF CHURCHES
INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS
YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Woodlands Group of Churches (the 'charitable company') for the year ended 31 March 2023 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet, the Statement of Cash Flows and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 *The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland* (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2023, and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charitable company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The trustees are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the trustees' annual report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial

WOODLANDS GROUP OF CHURCHES
INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS
YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the information given in the trustees' report (incorporating the directors' report) for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the directors' report has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of our knowledge and understanding of the charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the directors' report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of directors' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit; or
- the trustees were not entitled to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the small companies' regime and take advantage of the small companies' exemptions in preparing the directors' report and from the requirement to prepare a strategic report.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the trustees' responsibilities statement set out on pages 19 and 20, the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

WOODLANDS GROUP OF CHURCHES
INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS
YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

Explanation as to what extent the audit was considered capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below:

- We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory frameworks applicable to the charitable company and the sector in which it operates. We determined that the following laws and regulations were most significant: The Companies Act 2006, UK GAAP, The Charities Act 2011 and the Charities SORP.
- We obtained an understanding of how the charitable company is complying with those legal and regulatory frameworks and made enquiries to the management of known or suspected instances of fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations. We corroborated our enquiries through our review of board minutes, other relevant meeting minutes and review of correspondence with regulatory bodies.
- We assessed the susceptibility of the charitable company's financial statements to material misstatement, including how fraud might occur. Audit procedures performed by the audit team included:
 - Identifying and assessing the controls management has in place to prevent and detect fraud;
 - Understanding how those charged with governance considered and addressed the potential for override of controls or other inappropriate influence over the financial reporting process;
 - Challenging assumptions and judgments made by management in its significant accounting estimates and judgments,
 - Identifying and testing journal entries, in particular journal entries posted with unusual account combinations; and
 - Assessing the extent of compliance with the relevant laws and regulations.

Because of the inherent limitations of an audit, there is a risk that we will not detect all irregularities, including those leading to a material misstatement in the financial statements or non-compliance with regulation. This risk increases the more that compliance with a law or regulation is removed from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, as we will be less likely to become aware of

WOODLANDS GROUP OF CHURCHES
INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS
YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

instances of non-compliance. The risk is also greater regarding irregularities occurring due to fraud rather than error, as fraud involves intentional concealment, forgery, collusion, omission or misrepresentation.

A further description of our responsibilities is available on the FRC's website at: A further description of our responsibilities is available on the FRC's website at: <https://www.frc.org.uk/auditors/audit-assurance-ethics/auditors-responsibilities-for-the-audit>. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and the charitable company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Matthew Bracher FCA (Senior Statutory Auditor)
for and on behalf of Haines Watts Bristol Limited, Statutory Auditor
Chartered Accountants and Statutory Auditors

Bath House
6-8 Bath Street
Bristol
BS1 6HL

20 Only 2023

WOODLANDS GROUP OF CHURCHES

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES (INCORPORATING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT)

YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

	Note	Unrestricted Free Reserves £	Unrestricted Designated funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds 2023 £	Total funds 2022 £
Income from:						
Donations and Legacies	2	1,134,097	144,445	224,649	1,503,191	1,299,272
Charitable activities	3	63,659	167,722	438	231,819	196,127
Investments	4	-	204,442	-	204,442	159,287
Total		1,197,756	516,609	225,087	1,939,452	1,654,686
Expenditure on:						
Charitable activities						
Global Partnerships		55,937	88,776	137,486	282,199	261,040
City and Community Outreach		117,406	105,275	41,037	263,718	168,553
Gathered Church		351,689	21,807	697	374,193	279,770
Children and Youth Ministry		190,098	7,102	2,286	199,486	165,951
Student Ministry		151,185	7,193	7,211	165,589	155,056
Discipleship and Leadership Development		165,047	7,766	205	173,018	160,637
Pastoral Care		54,864	7,061	6,322	68,247	58,289
	5	1,086,226	244,980	195,244	1,526,450	1,249,296
Raising funds	8	15,756	-	-	15,756	16,591
Total		1,101,982	244,980	195,244	1,542,206	1,265,887
Net (losses)/gains on investments	15	-	(140,582)	-	(140,582)	184,249
Net income	9	95,774	131,047	29,843	256,664	573,048
Transfers between funds	18	240,405	(211,957)	(28,448)	-	-
Other gains		-	-	517	517	369
Net movement in funds		336,179	(80,910)	1,912	257,181	573,417
Reconciliation of funds						
Total funds brought forward		352,424	8,778,816	125,161	9,256,401	8,682,984
Total funds carried forward	18	688,603	8,697,906	127,073	9,513,582	9,256,401

The Charity has no recognised gains or losses other than the results for the period as set out above.

Fund comparatives are disclosed in note 20.

The notes on pages 30 to 49 form part of these financial statements

WOODLANDS GROUP OF CHURCHES

BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 31 MARCH 2023

	Note		2023 £	2022 £
Fixed assets:				
Tangible assets	12	2,594,613	2,315,614	
Programme related investments	13	1,442,225	1,191,297	
Mixed purpose investments	14	200,000	200,000	
Financial Investments	15	<u>3,012,666</u>	<u>3,153,248</u>	
			7,249,504	6,860,159
Current assets:				
Debtors	16	73,790	64,274	
Programme related investments	13	734,879	418,724	
Mixed purpose investments	14	300,000	300,000	
Cash at bank and on short term deposit		<u>1,206,676</u>	<u>1,646,425</u>	
		2,315,345	2,429,423	
Liabilities:				
Creditors : Amounts falling due within one year	17	<u>(51,267)</u>	<u>(33,181)</u>	
Net current assets			2,264,078	2,396,242
Total assets less current liabilities			9,513,582	9,256,401
Total net assets			9,513,582	9,256,401
The funds of the charity:				
Unrestricted income funds				
Free reserves		688,603	352,424	
Earmarked Giving Funds (designated)		127,902	150,562	
Fixed asset NBV (designated)		2,594,613	2,315,614	
Charitable Loans NBV (designated)		2,160,225	1,593,585	
Available for Charitable Loans (designated)		-	1,693,475	
Capacity Development (designated)		350,000	259,537	
Housing the Homeless (designated)		500,000	-	
Property Purchases (designated)		2,239,606	1,895,266	
St James/UPA (designated)		52,370	40,024	
Mental Health and Wellbeing (designated)		27,170	29,152	
South Bristol Church Planting (designated)		51,000	66,000	
Unrealised Investment Gains (designated)		<u>595,020</u>	<u>735,601</u>	
	19		9,386,509	9,131,240
Restricted income funds	19		127,073	125,161
Total charity funds			9,513,582	9,256,401

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions of Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small charitable companies and were approved by the Trustees on 20 July 2023 are signed on their behalf by:

Mr E J Marsh
Chair of Trustees

Mr D J Mitchell
Trustee

Company registration number: 06569993

The notes on pages 30 to 49 form part of these financial statements

WOODLANDS GROUP OF CHURCHES

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

	Note	Total funds 2023 £	Total funds 2022 £
<u>Operational cash flows</u>			
Cash flows <u>for</u> operating activities			
Receipts from Donations and Legacies	21 (A.1)	1,496,756	1,305,986
Payments for Raising funds	21 (B.1)	(15,756)	(15,034)
Net inflow for operating activities		1,481,000	1,290,952
Cash flows <u>from</u> operating activities			
Receipts from Charitable activities	21 (A.2)	238,649	192,534
Payments for Charitable activities	21 (B.2)	(1,465,792)	(1,227,038)
Receipts from Programme-related investments	21 (C.1)	76,317	68,127
Receipts from Mixed Purpose investments	21 (C.2)	21,999	30,000
Additions to Programme-related investments	13	(766,882)	(416,057)
Repayments from Programme-related investments	13	163,920	401,582
Additions to Mixed purpose investments	14	-	(300,000)
Repayments from Mixed purpose investments	14	-	400,000
Net (outflow)/inflow of operating activities		(1,731,789)	(850,852)
<u>Non-operational cash flows</u>			
Investing activities:			
Receipts from Financial investments	21 (D.1)	105,014	62,756
Purchase of investments	15	-	(500,000)
Purchase of tangible fixed assets	12	(293,974)	(23,858)
Net cash used in investing activities		(188,960)	(461,102)
Net cash outflow for the year	22	(439,749)	(21,002)

Charity law prohibits the use of net cash flows on any restricted fund to offset net cash outflows on any fund outside of its own purposes, except on special authority. In practice, this restriction has not had any effect on cash flows for the year.

The notes on pages 30 to 49 form part of these financial statements

WOODLANDS GROUP OF CHURCHES

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

1 Accounting policies

a) Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared on the historical cost basis with the exception of financial investments which are shown at fair value. The financial statements are prepared on a going concern basis and in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019) – (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

The charity is a Public Benefit Entity as defined under FRS 102. The presentation currency is pounds sterling.

The Statement of Cash Flows has been prepared on the gross/direct basis, as permitted by the Charities SORP. Cash has been defined as Cash on hand and short-term deposits of less than 3 months for the purposes of the Statement of Cash Flows. The Balance sheet additionally includes short term deposits of less than one year within Cash on hand.

There are no material uncertainties about the charity's ability to continue as a going concern, despite the ongoing uncertainty and inflationary pressures arising from the geopolitical crisis in Europe and the lingering impact of Brexit and COVID-19. The charity has sufficient reserves to be able to meet these challenges and have also observed how well core giving income has held up over the last few years.

There have been no management judgements or any key sources of estimation uncertainty at the reporting date in the accounts that give rise to a significant risk of causing a material adjustment to the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities within the next reporting period.

b) Funds

Unrestricted free reserves are available for use at the discretion of the Trustees in the furtherance of the charitable purposes of the charity.

Designated funds form part of unrestricted funds and have been identified as being for particular purposes by the Trustees. They are not restricted and can be transferred to free funds at any time at the discretion of the Trustees. Material designated funds are identified and explained in note 18 to the financial statements.

Restricted funds can only be used for particular restricted purposes within the objects of the charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular restricted purposes. Expenditure which meets these criteria is charged to the fund. The purpose and use of each material restricted fund is set out in note 18 to the financial statements.

(c) Income

All income is included in the Statement of Financial Activities when the charity is legally entitled to the income, when the amount can be quantified with reasonable accuracy and receipt is probable. The following specific policies are applied to particular categories of income:

Donations and Legacies are included in full in the Statement of Financial Activities when receivable, except as follows:

WOODLANDS GROUP OF CHURCHES

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

1 Accounting policies (continued)

- i. Income from offerings is recognised when received;
- ii. Income from 'planned giving' is recognised only when received;
- iii. When the donor specifies that donations given to the charity must be used in future accounting periods, the income is deferred until those periods;

Gift Aid relief on eligible donations is recognised on an accruals basis at the same point as the original donation.

Investment Income represented by interest on bank deposits, dividends receivable, interest on programme-related investments and interest on mixed purpose investments is recognised when receivable. Investment income from Charitable Loans and Mixed Purpose Investments is added to the 'Available for Charitable Loans' fund, with the remaining investment income apportioned between the 'Property Purchases' and 'Capacity Improvement' designated funds. The purpose of these funds is described fully in note 18.

Rental income is recognised within **Income from Charitable Activities** as the promotion of student community living and the hiring of the buildings for weddings and other Christian conferences and events is considered part of the activities the charity undertakes to achieve its objects. The rental income on student rooms is recognised when invoiced (usually on a monthly basis) and, for events, is recognised in the period the event takes place. Rental income is apportioned to the Property Purchase Fund.

Donated services and facilities are included in the Statement of Financial Activities at their value to the charity at the date of the gift. Donated assets which are capitalised are included in the accounts at fair value. In accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice, no amounts are included in the financial statements for services donated by volunteers.

(d) Expenditure

Expenditure is recognised on an accruals basis as and when a legal or constructive obligation arises.

Expenditure is allocated to the identified **Charitable Activities** directly, where applicable. Support costs relating to engaging church workers, administration costs and premises costs are allocated to Charitable Activities as follows:

<u>Support cost</u>	<u>Basis of allocation</u>
Church workers	Estimated time spent on each activity
Administration costs	Estimated usage of the resource
Premises costs	Estimated usage of the resource
These estimates are reviewed on an annual basis.	

Grants payable are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities in the accounting period in which communication of the award is communicated to the recipient.

Governance costs include those costs associated with meeting the constitutional and statutory requirements of the charity and include the audit fees and costs linked to the strategic management of the charity. Governance costs are included within Support costs.

WOODLANDS GROUP OF CHURCHES

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

1 Accounting policies (continued)

(e) Foreign currency

The microfinance element of the charity's programme related investments are managed in US\$. In view of there being a very large number of small loans, the transactions are not converted to £s at the transaction date but the US\$ balances at the year-end are converted to £s at the year-end rate. Gains and losses on exchange are treated as other gains and losses within the Statement of Financial Activities.

(f) Tangible fixed assets and depreciation

Fixed assets are stated at cost and new items costing more than £3,000 are capitalised (increased from £1,000 from 1 April 2022). Depreciation is calculated so as to write off the cost of fixed assets on a straight line basis over their estimated useful lives on the following basis:

Freehold property:	No depreciation charged (see below)
Audio, Visual and office equipment:	20%
Furniture and Fittings:	20% (with some assets being depreciated at 10%)

No depreciation is charged in the year of acquisition and a full year's depreciation is charged in the year of disposal. No provision for depreciation has been made for freehold property as it is the view of the Trustees that the estimated residual value of each property is not materially different from the carrying value. The Trustees undertake an impairment review whenever they identify any indicators that impairment may have occurred.

Donated properties have been included in the Balance Sheet at their current value at the date of the gift.

The charity owns three residential properties located adjacent to two of its church buildings. These properties were purchased and are held for the charitable benefit derived from their proximity to the church. Such benefits include better parking and access to church premises, the use of gardens for church events and activities and the ability to offer housing to staff and volunteers, where the proximity to the churches is to the benefit of its operations. Where vacancies arise, the charity seeks to rent rooms to such volunteers or staff. Where no such tenants are in prospect, the charity makes short-term lets to other members of the public in order to steward its resources well. As the charity holds the properties primarily for the benefit of its charitable purposes rather than for rental, the properties are held as functional fixed assets and not as investment properties.

(g) Financial instruments

A financial asset or a financial liability is recognised only when the charity becomes party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at the amount receivable or payable including any related transaction costs.

Debt instruments are subsequently measured at amortised cost.

Where investments in shares are publicly traded or their fair value can otherwise be measured reliably, the investment is subsequently measured at fair value with changes in fair value recognised in income and expenditure. All other such investments are subsequently measured at cost less impairment.

WOODLANDS GROUP OF CHURCHES

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

1 Accounting policies (continued)

Other financial instruments, including derivatives, are initially recognised at fair value, unless payment for an asset is deferred beyond normal business terms or financed at a rate of interest that is not a market rate, in which case the asset is measured at the present value of the future payments discounted at a market rate of interest for a similar debt instrument.

Any reversals of impairment are recognised immediately, to the extent that the reversal does not result in a carrying amount of the financial asset that exceeds what the carrying amount would have been had the impairment not previously been recognised.

(h) Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due.

(i) Financial investments

Listed investments are held in a common investment fund and are stated at market value at the balance sheet date. The Statement of Financial Activities includes the net gains and losses arising on revaluations and disposals during the year.

(j) Programme-related and mixed purpose investments

Programme-related investments consist of charitable loans; some of which carry an interest rate and some which are interest free. These investments are carried at cost less any provision for impairment less any repayments received. Mixed purpose investments are held for a financial return but also contribute to the charity's purposes.

(k) Lease contracts

Rentals applicable to operating lease agreements where substantially all of the benefits and risks of ownership remain with the lessor are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities on a straight-line basis over the period of the lease.

(l) Creditors and provisions

Creditors and provisions are recognised where the charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are normally recognised at their settlement amount after allowing for any trade discounts due.

The charity makes grants to financially support global partners overseas and to UK-based missionaries and mission organisations. Where an individual or organisation has been supported by the charity for a number of years, strict compliance with the Charities Statement of Recommended Practice may regard some arrangements as constituting constructive obligations such that future years' support is accounted immediately as a liability.

The Trustees are confident that the individuals and organisations supported would not view their support as an open-ended obligation on the part of the charity as they are aware that all support is reviewable annually.

(m) Pension costs

The charity contributes to a defined contribution pension plan on behalf of its eligible employees. The contributions are recognised as an expense in the period in which the related service is provided.

WOODLANDS GROUP OF CHURCHES

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

2 Donations and Legacies

	Unrestricted Free Reserves £	Unrestricted Designated funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds £
Year ended 31 March 2023				
Tithes, offerings, donations and legacies	928,422	122,828	184,386	1,235,636
Gift Aid tax reclaims	205,375	21,617	29,763	256,755
Grants receivable	300	-	10,500	10,800
	<u>1,134,097</u>	<u>144,445</u>	<u>224,649</u>	<u>1,503,191</u>
Previous year ended 31 March 2022				
Tithes, offerings, donations and legacies	844,442	48,938	183,167	1,076,547
Gift Aid tax reclaims	188,670	3,778	30,277	222,725
	<u>1,033,112</u>	<u>52,716</u>	<u>213,444</u>	<u>1,299,272</u>

Included in Grants receivable in the current year are £5,500 of government grants in support of a Welcome Hub for Ukrainian refugees.

No grants were received in the prior year.

3 Income from Charitable Activities

	Unrestricted Free Reserves £	Unrestricted Designated funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds £
Year ended 31 March 2023				
Student rooms rents	-	92,174	-	92,174
Other rents and building hire	-	75,548	-	75,548
Church events and weekends away	63,659	-	438	64,097
	<u>63,659</u>	<u>167,722</u>	<u>438</u>	<u>231,819</u>
Previous year ended 31 March 2022				
Student rooms rents	-	84,143	-	84,143
Other rents and building hire	-	67,725	-	67,725
Church events and weekends away	44,259	-	-	44,259
	<u>44,259</u>	<u>151,868</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>196,127</u>

WOODLANDS GROUP OF CHURCHES

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

4 Income from Investments

	Unrestricted Free Reserves £	Unrestricted Designated funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds 2023 £	Total funds 2022 £
Bank deposit interest	-	19,909	-	19,909	552
Loan stock interest	-	21,914	-	21,914	28,875
Programme related investments return	-	77,514	-	77,514	67,656
Dividend income on financial investments	-	84,641	-	84,641	61,702
Feed in Tariff from solar panels	-	464	-	464	502
	-	204,442	-	204,442	159,287

All prior year Income from Investments was incurred in Unrestricted Designated Funds.

5 Expenditure on Charitable Activities

	Grant funding of activities £ (note 7)	Activities undertaken directly £	Church worker and support costs £ (note 6)	Total funds £
Year ended 31 March 2023				
Global Partnerships	259,764	-	22,435	282,199
City and Community Outreach	133,246	17,661	112,811	263,718
Gathered Church	-	54,530	319,663	374,193
Children and Youth Ministry	-	23,238	176,248	199,486
Student Ministry	-	14,047	151,542	165,589
Discipleship and Leadership Development	16,918	26,947	129,153	173,018
Pastoral Care	13,168	-	55,079	68,247
	423,096	136,423	966,931	1,526,450
Previous year ended 31 March 2022				
Global Partnerships	242,086	-	18,954	261,040
City and Community Outreach	57,372	15,230	95,951	168,553
Gathered Church	-	37,313	242,457	279,770
Children and Youth Ministry	-	16,256	149,695	165,951
Student Ministry	-	14,424	140,632	155,056
Discipleship and Leadership Development	8,963	23,214	128,460	160,637
Pastoral Care	7,448	-	50,841	58,289
	315,869	106,437	826,990	1,249,296

WOODLANDS GROUP OF CHURCHES

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

6 Church worker and Support costs

	Church worker costs £	Admin costs £	Premises costs £	Total funds £
Year ended 31 March 2023				
Global Partnerships	19,394	3,041	-	22,435
City and Community Outreach	84,300	4,562	23,949	112,811
Gathered Church	216,263	7,603	95,797	319,663
Children and Youth Ministry	125,309	3,041	47,898	176,248
Student Ministry	97,562	6,082	47,898	151,542
Discipleship and Leadership Development	100,642	4,562	23,949	129,153
Pastoral Care	53,558	1,521	-	55,079
	697,028	30,412	239,491	966,931

Previous year ended 31 March 2022

Global Partnerships	15,881	3,073	-	18,954
City and Community Outreach	73,765	4,610	17,576	95,951
Gathered Church	164,468	7,684	70,305	242,457
Children and Youth Ministry	111,468	3,073	35,154	149,695
Student Ministry	99,332	6,147	35,153	140,632
Discipleship and Leadership Development	106,274	4,610	17,576	128,460
Pastoral Care	49,304	1,537	-	50,841
	620,492	30,734	175,764	826,990

Included in Admin costs are Governance costs of £4,962 (2022: £4,680).

Church worker costs are allocated to activities on the basis of time spent on each activity.
Admin and Premises costs are allocated to activities on the basis of usage estimates.

WOODLANDS GROUP OF CHURCHES

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

7 Grant funding of Charitable activities	Discipleship and Leadership				Total funds
	Global Partnerships	City and Community Outreach	Leadership Dev't	Pastoral Care	
Year ended 31 March 2023	£	£	£	£	£
Grants to Institutions	135,103	91,806	-	-	226,909
Grants to Individuals	124,661	41,440	16,918	13,168	196,187
	259,764	133,246	16,918	13,168	423,096
Previous year ended 31 March 2022					
Grants to Institutions	129,155	51,192	-	-	180,347
Grants to Individuals	112,931	6,180	8,963	7,448	135,522
	242,086	57,372	8,963	7,448	315,869

Analysis of grants to institutions

Institutions receiving over £2,500 in either the current or prior year or with Trustee links have been disclosed.

Institution name	Charitable activity	Total funds 2023	Total funds 2022
		£	£
Beloved	City and Community Outreach	30,200	9,848
* Bristol Noise	City and Community Outreach	2,400	1,000
inHope (Bristol)	City and Community Outreach	9,913	11,485
Sixty One	City and Community Outreach	27,425	2,621
Urban Pursuit	City and Community Outreach	4,650	4,650
* Sea Mills Community Initiatives	City and Community Outreach	680	463
South Bristol Methodist Church	City and Community Outreach	-	3,000
* The George Muller Charitable Trust	Global Partnerships & City/Comm'ty Outreach	72,549	66,018
Christian Aid	Global Partnerships	12,462	-
Open Doors	Global Partnerships	4,490	1,740
World Vision UK	Global Partnerships	3,009	1,853
Tearfund	Global Partnerships	5,118	21,049
ForEthiopia	Global Partnerships	3,625	3,250
The Bridge Trust	Global Partnerships	-	8,000
Friends of Asha GB	Global Partnerships	-	8,166
Hands at Work (UK) - see below	Global Partnerships	-	4,169
* Bristol International Trust (BISC)	Global Partnerships	30,602	3,265
International Justice Mission	Global Partnerships	-	15,000
Other Institutional grants	Global Partnerships & City/Comm'ty Outreach	19,786	14,770
		226,909	180,347

Institutional grant recipients marked * have at least one trustee in common with Woodlands Group of Churches:

A Dawson is the Director of Bristol International Trust (BISC)

T J Dobson is a Trustee of Bristol Noise

E J Marsh was a Trustee of The George Muller Charitable Trust until 3 July 2023.

S P I Marsh (brother of E J Marsh) was a Trustee of Sea Mills Community Initiatives until 3 November 2022.

WOODLANDS GROUP OF CHURCHES

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

7 Grant funding of Charitable activities (continued)

The George Muller Charitable Trust facilitates prayer and financial support for a number of global and local mission partners. Woodlands Group of Churches partner with The George Muller Charitable Trust in supporting many of these partners, who also have a close partnership with our churches.

Included within the grants made to The George Muller Charitable Trust are grants totalling £25,993 (2022: £31,458) in respect of the charity's two partnerships with Hands at Work in Africa.

8 Expenditure on Raising funds

	Unrestricted Free Reserves £	Unrestricted Designated funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds £
Year ended 31 March 2023				
Online donation processing fees	15,756	-	-	15,756
	15,756	-	-	15,756
Previous year ended 31 March 2022				
Online donation processing fees	15,034	-	-	15,034
Investment management fees (see note 15)	-	1,557	-	1,557
	15,034	1,557	-	16,591

9 Net income

This is stated after charging:	Total funds 2023 £	Total funds 2022 £
Depreciation (see note 12)	14,975	20,354
Auditor's remuneration for statutory audit services	4,962	4,680

10 People resources

A summary of the cost of church workers for the current and preceding financial year is below:

	2023 £	2022 £
Wages and Salaries	620,106	573,618
Social Security Costs	32,620	29,350
Pension costs	9,985	8,980
	662,711	611,948

In the year to 31 March 2023, the average number of staff employed was 47 (2022: 42)

No employee received employment benefits of more than £60,000 in the current or preceding year.

WOODLANDS GROUP OF CHURCHES

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

10 People resources (continued)

The charity is heavily dependent on volunteers to conduct its activities and achieve its mission and aims. As voluntary involvement is encouraged for all those who consider themselves a part of the churches, it is impossible to reliably quantify the numbers of people or hours that the charity receives. The Trustees' report further illustrates the impact that volunteers have on the work of the charity.

The key management personnel of the charity includes the Trustees and the Senior Leadership Team. The employment benefits paid to key management were £256,182 (2022: £220,355).

The charity operated a defined contribution pension plan for its employees. The amount recognised as an expense in the year was £9,985 (2022: £8,980). The defined contribution liability is allocated between activities and funds on the same basis as the salary of the individual to whom those contributions relate.

11 Taxation

Woodlands Group of Churches is recognised as a charity for UK tax purposes and is therefore exempt from Corporation Tax on its income and gains provided that these are used for charitable purposes only.

12 Tangible fixed assets

	Freehold Property and Improvements £	Audio, Visual and office Equipment £	Furniture & Fittings £	Total £
Cost				
At 1 April 2022	2,254,766	182,222	63,193	2,500,181
Additions	283,749	4,997	5,228	293,974
Disposals	-	(1,000)	-	(1,000)
At 31 March 2023	2,538,515	186,219	68,421	2,793,155
Depreciation				
At 1 April 2022	-	147,065	37,502	184,567
Charge for the year	-	9,735	5,240	14,975
Disposals	-	(1,000)	-	(1,000)
At 31 March 2023	-	155,800	42,742	198,542
Net book value				
At 31 March 2023	2,538,515	30,419	25,679	2,594,613
At 31 March 2022	2,254,766	35,157	25,691	2,315,614

WOODLANDS GROUP OF CHURCHES

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

13 Programme related investments

	Global Partnership Microfinance loans £	City and Community Outreach loans £	Total £
At 1 April 2022	16,436	1,593,585	1,610,021
Additions	26,882	740,000	766,882
Written off loans (charged to Charitable Activities as grants payable)	(88)	(1,500)	(1,588)
Increase in provision (charged to Charitable Activities as grants payable)	-	(35,360)	(35,360)
Exchange rate gains	1,069	-	1,069
Amounts repaid	(27,420)	(136,500)	(163,920)
At 31 March 2023	16,879	2,160,225	2,177,104
Included within:			
Fixed assets	-	1,442,225	1,442,225
Current assets	16,879	718,000	734,879
	16,879	2,160,225	2,177,104

Global Partnership Microfinance loans include small short term loans to entrepreneurs in poverty.

City and Community Outreach loans include short term loans to local charities and individuals to assist in their ministries linked with the charity's City and Community Outreach activities. A fuller explanation on the nature and basis for these loans is included within the Trustees' report.

14 Mixed purpose investments

	Loan Stock £	Other Loans £	Total £
At 1 April 2022	500,000	-	500,000
Additions	-	-	-
Amounts repaid	-	-	-
As at 31 March 2023	500,000	-	500,000
Included within:			
Fixed assets	200,000	-	200,000
Current assets	300,000	-	300,000
	500,000	-	500,000

Mixed purpose investments includes £500,000 of interest bearing loan stock issued by Green Pastures Community Benefit Society (an exempt charity). The funds are used to help house the homeless and are unsecured. Under the charity's investment policy, the maximum that can be invested for this purpose is limited at any one time to £500,000.

WOODLANDS GROUP OF CHURCHES

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

15 Financial Investments

	2023 £	2022 £
Market value brought forward	3,153,248	2,470,556
Acquisitions at cost	-	500,000
Investment management fees (see note 8)	-	(1,557)
(Losses)/gains in the year	(140,582)	184,249
Market value carried forward	3,012,666	3,153,248

16 Debtors

	2023 £	2022 £
Other debtors	39,953	33,648
Gift Aid tax reclaims	24,732	23,292
Prepayments and accrued income	9,105	7,334
	73,790	64,274

17 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2023 £	2022 £
Other creditors	3,120	1,853
Taxation and social security	9,035	8,857
Accruals and deferred income	39,112	22,471
	51,267	33,181

WOODLANDS GROUP OF CHURCHES

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

18 Movement in funds

Year ended 31 March 2023	At 1 April 2022 £	Income and gains £	Expenditure and losses £	Transfers between funds £	At 31 March 2023 £
Unrestricted funds					
Free reserves	352,424	1,197,756	(1,101,982)	240,405	688,603
Earmarked Giving Funds (designated)	150,562	144,445	(166,905)	(200)	127,902
Fixed asset NBV (designated)	2,315,614	-	-	278,999	2,594,613
Charitable Loans NBV (designated)	1,593,585	-	(35,360)	602,000	2,160,225
Available for Charitable Loans (designated)	1,693,475	99,429	-	(1,792,904)	-
Capacity Development (designated)	259,537	-	(13,284)	103,747	350,000
Housing the Homeless (designated)	-	-	-	500,000	500,000
Property Purchases (designated)	1,895,266	251,002	(18,063)	111,401	2,239,606
St James/UPA (designated)	40,024	21,733	(9,387)	-	52,370
Mental Health and Wellbeing (designated)	29,152	-	(1,982)	-	27,170
South Bristol Church Planting (designated)	66,000	-	-	(15,000)	51,000
Unrealised Investment Gains (designated)	735,601	-	(140,581)	-	595,020
	9,131,240	1,714,365	(1,487,544)	28,448	9,386,509
Restricted Funds					
Hands at Work (Bhandeni)	3,654	9,667	(9,920)	2,750	6,151
Hands at Work (Houtbos)	9,192	14,624	(13,440)	170	10,546
Hands at Work (Missionary support)	17	24,978	(24,522)	189	662
Highgrove Global Partner Fund	2,778	9,244	(11,316)	2,994	3,700
Local Care and Mission Fund	14,297	17,932	(27,191)	3,120	8,158
Metro Special Offering	7,148	962	(5,006)	-	3,104
Highgrove Special Offering	-	28,494	-	(28,494)	-
Central Special Offering	-	11,608	(14,469)	2,861	-
Microfinance	16,453	517	(88)	-	16,882
Needy Saints	27,814	2,448	(6,571)	-	23,691
Reach (Single Parents Ministry)	23,839	5,216	(5,125)	-	23,930
Sunday Evening Offerings (Woodlands Central)	-	4,320	-	(4,320)	-
Sunday Mission Offerings (Branch)	900	6,177	(5,952)	(247)	878
Sunday Mission Offerings (Community Church)	-	8,505	(6,993)	(1,512)	-
Sunday Mission Offerings (Highgrove)	-	2,994	-	(2,994)	-
Sunday Mission Offerings (Metro)	60	4,648	(4,708)	-	-
Sunday Mission Offerings (Woodlands Central)	-	9,883	-	(9,883)	-
Sunday Mission Offering (South Bristol)	-	733	-	(733)	-
Woodlands Global Partner fund	7,344	30,905	(34,461)	7,842	11,630
Other restricted funds (see description)	11,665	31,749	(25,482)	(191)	17,741
	125,161	225,604	(195,244)	(28,448)	127,073
Total funds	9,256,401	1,939,969	(1,682,788)	-	9,513,582

WOODLANDS GROUP OF CHURCHES

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

18 Movement in funds (continued)

Previous year ended 31 March 2022	At 1 April 2021 £	Income and gains £	Expenditure and losses £	Transfers between funds £	At 31 March 2022 £
Unrestricted funds					
Free reserves	567,688	1,077,371	(922,826)	(369,809)	352,424
Earmarked Giving Funds (designated)	205,213	51,711	(76,362)	(30,000)	150,562
Fixed asset NBV (designated)	2,312,110	-	-	3,504	2,315,614
Charitable Loans NBV (designated)	1,578,960	-	-	14,625	1,593,585
Available for Charitable Loans (designated)	1,580,481	139,722	(12,103)	(14,625)	1,693,475
Capacity Development (designated)	262,437	8,603	(11,503)	-	259,537
Property Purchases (designated)	1,467,080	140,019	(11,833)	300,000	1,895,266
St James/UPA (designated)	25,501	23,816	(9,293)	-	40,024
Mental Health and Wellbeing (designated)	-	-	(848)	30,000	29,152
South Bristol Church Planting (designated)	-	-	-	66,000	66,000
Unrealised Investment Gains (designated)	551,352	184,249	-	-	735,601
	8,550,822	1,625,491	(1,044,768)	(305)	9,131,240
Restricted Funds					
Hands at Work (Bhandeni)	5,167	10,643	(12,414)	258	3,654
Hands at Work (Houtbos)	6,405	16,596	(13,809)	-	9,192
Hands at Work (Missionary support)	142	27,503	(27,947)	319	17
Highgrove GP Fund	3,705	7,425	(11,670)	3,318	2,778
Local Care and Mission Fund	15,624	24,886	(29,664)	3,451	14,297
Metro Special Offering	11,175	712	(4,739)	-	7,148
Microfinance	16,182	369	(98)	-	16,453
Needy Saints	26,959	6,850	(5,935)	(60)	27,814
Reach (Single Parents Ministry)	15,688	10,308	(2,157)	-	23,839
Sunday Evening Offerings (Woodlands Centr)	-	2,155	-	(2,155)	-
Sunday Mission Offerings (Branch)	-	6,119	(5,435)	216	900
Sunday Mission Offerings (Community Church)	-	7,447	(7,447)	-	-
Sunday Mission Offerings (Highgrove)	-	3,767	-	(3,767)	-
Sunday Mission Offerings (Metro)	558	6,808	(7,306)	-	60
Sunday Mission Offerings (Woodlands Central)	-	5,828	(332)	(5,496)	-
Woodlands GP fund	16,776	54,152	(64,923)	1,339	7,344
Other restricted funds (see description)	13,781	22,245	(27,243)	2,882	11,665
	132,162	213,813	(221,119)	305	125,161
Total funds	8,682,984	1,839,304	(1,265,887)	-	9,256,401

Description and purpose of funds and transfers

All funds with an opening balance, closing balance, income, gain, expenditure, loss or transfer greater than £10,000 have been separately disclosed. With the exception of monthly mission offerings which are disclosed in full regardless of size, all other funds have been included within 'other restricted funds'. The Charity accounts fully for all restricted funds and a summary of the movement on any smaller fund is available upon request.

Free reserves

These funds represent the free reserves of the charity. Transfers out include £10,225 to the Fixed Asset NBV Fund representing assets purchased with free funds. Transfers into the fund include the annual depreciation charge of £14,975 met by the Fixed Assets NBV fund and £235,000 from the Available for Charitable loans fund in line with the decision to wind down the Charitable loans scheme and to increase the Free Reserves target from 3-6 months to 6-9 months.

WOODLANDS GROUP OF CHURCHES

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

18 Movement in funds (continued)

Earmarked Giving Funds (designated)

From time to time, the charity receives unrestricted donations and allows the donor to express wishes as to their ultimate application within the charitable purposes of the charity. The application of these funds is at the full discretion of the Trustees, but they take account of the expressed wishes of the donor. The Trustees have determined that it is appropriate to hold these 'earmarked' funds in a designated fund.

Fixed asset NBV (designated)

This fund represents the net book value of tangible fixed assets held by the charity. The transfers in and out of this fund relate to additions and depreciation.

Charitable Loans NBV (designated)

This fund represents the carrying value of the charitable loans held by the charity. These exist to further the City and Community Outreach dimension of the charity's work. As at the year end, the trustees have decided to close this scheme and no new loans will be dispersed.

Available for Charitable Loans (designated)

This fund was used to hold the funds from repaid Charitable loans ready for recycling into other loans.

This fund has now been wound down in line with the decision to close the Charitable loan scheme.

No new loans will be dispersed. Transfers of funds from this fund were made to Free Reserves (£235,000), the Property Purchases fund (£111,400), the Capacity Development fund (£359,000) and to create a new fund, 'Housing the Homeless' (£500,000).

Capacity Development (designated)

This fund enables major capital developments of existing buildings that provide increased capacity or usage. Expenditure this year includes the costs associated with the Central congregation garden development project, renovations to Albert Place building (Community Church) and extensive development at the Highgrove building. £283,750 of these incurred costs were taken to the balance sheet.

Housing the Homeless (designated)

A new fund created this year which is used to support housing for the homeless, currently through Green Pastures loans.

Property Purchases (designated)

This fund exists to enable the opportunistic purchase at short notice of a property that will serve as a campus expansion of our Woodlands Christian Centre building. With the upcoming loss of Ashley Down House as a venue for activity, there is now a lot of work being done on exploring the viability of potential venues locally to provide added capacity. With the Charitable loans scheme being wound down, funds were transferred from the Available for Charitable loans fund (£111,400), to ensure the balance stays at a level that can meet our emerging building strategy plans.

South Bristol Church Planting (designated)

A fund created for the monthly contribution towards the stipend being paid by the West of England Baptist Network to R&N Pollard to work with Woodlands to plant a congregation in South Bristol.

Mental Health and Wellbeing (designated)

The fund was created from a gift of £30,000 received from a donor for 'use by the trustees as deemed fit'. As Mental Health is a key priority for the trustees, they have set aside this gift for this purpose. This fund is being used to employ an in-house Well-being facilitator two days a week.

St James/UPA (designated)

The charity started renting out accommodation in their St James building in 2021. The net rental is included within this designated fund in order to help meet the costs of future upkeep liabilities for the ageing building.

Unrealised Investment Gains (designated)

This fund represents the cumulative unrealised investment gains from the charity's equity investment portfolio.

Hands at Work (restricted)

Woodlands Group of Churches has two partnerships to support the work of the charity Hands at Work in two needy communities in Africa. These funds represent the monies raised from our congregations in support of these partnerships. Additional funds have been raised to support missionaries serving with Hands at Work.

WOODLANDS GROUP OF CHURCHES

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

18 Movement in funds (continued)

Highgrove Global Partners Fund (restricted)

This fund arises from offerings and is held to enable Highgrove Global and Local mission partners to be supported both on a regular and on an ad hoc basis, as needs arise.

Local Care and Mission Fund (restricted)

This fund was established for the Trustees to make discretionary gifts to Local Mission and Care Projects and organisations. The funds arise from regular offerings at the Woodlands Central congregation.

Metro Special Offering (restricted)

This fund was established following an offering to support the vision of the Metro Campus to reach the many university students in Bristol who are unconnected with church.

Highgrove Special Offering (restricted)

This fund was established to facilitate one-off exceptional offerings to take place. The fund ensures special offerings are ring-fenced from the monthly offerings taken. This year, one special offering was taken - to raise funds towards the cost of building work at Highgrove.

Central Special Offering (restricted)

This fund was established to facilitate one-off exceptional offerings to take place. The fund ensures special offerings are ring-fenced from the monthly Sunday offerings taken. This year two special offerings were taken - to raise funds at Central's Christmas events for a global and local partner and for an offering towards the Turkey/Syria earthquake appeal.

Microfinance (restricted)

These are funds given specifically for the purpose of investing in Microfinance initiatives. Any microfinance repayments received are reinvested as part of the same restricted fund.

Needy Saints (restricted)

The Trustees have established a fund to be spent at their discretion on grants to those who are in financial hardship or particular need. Other members of church are invited to give into this fund.

Reach (Single Parents ministry) (restricted)

This fund arises from restricted giving to support the activities of Reach, a Single Parents outreach and includes the activities associated with the annual Single Parents Fair. The fund is now being used to meet the cost of a community worker to reach and support single parent families.

Sunday Offerings (restricted)

Across the church, an offering is taken once a month during the morning and evening services. These offerings are taken for the benefit of global partners serving overseas or for nationwide or city-based community care and outreach initiatives. Gifts are either sent directly to recipients from these funds or transferred to other funds as appropriate to their ultimate application.

Woodlands Global Partners Fund (restricted)

This fund arises from offerings and is held to enable Woodlands Global Partners to be supported both on a regular and ad hoc basis as needs arise.

WOODLANDS GROUP OF CHURCHES

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

19 Summary of assets and liabilities of each fund category

At 31 March 2023	Unrestricted Free Reserves £	Unrestricted Designated Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total funds £
Tangible assets	-	2,594,613	-	2,594,613
Programme related investments	-	2,160,225	16,879	2,177,104
Mixed purpose investments	-	500,000	-	500,000
Financial investments	-	3,012,666	-	3,012,666
Cash, Deposits and other current assets	739,870	430,402	110,194	1,280,466
Other current liabilities	(51,267)	-	-	(51,267)
	688,603	8,697,906	127,073	9,513,582

At 31 March 2022	Unrestricted Free Reserves £	Unrestricted Designated Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total funds £
Tangible assets	-	2,315,614	-	2,315,614
Programme related investments	-	1,593,585	16,436	1,610,021
Mixed purpose investments	-	500,000	-	500,000
Financial investments	-	3,153,248	-	3,153,248
Cash, Deposits and other current assets	385,605	1,216,369	108,725	1,710,699
Other current liabilities	(33,181)	-	-	(33,181)
	352,424	8,778,816	125,161	9,256,401

WOODLANDS GROUP OF CHURCHES

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

20 Prior year fund comparatives for the Statement of Financial Activities

	Unrestricted Free Reserves £	Unrestricted Designated funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds 2022 £
Income from:				
Donations and Legacies	1,033,112	52,716	213,444	1,299,272
Charitable activities	44,259	151,868	-	196,127
Investments	-	159,287	-	159,287
Total	1,077,371	363,871	213,444	1,654,686
Expenditure on:				
Charitable activities				
Global Partnerships	44,961	50,027	166,052	261,040
City and Community Outreach	113,146	12,370	43,037	168,553
Gathered Church	251,692	26,348	1,730	279,770
Children and Youth Ministry	157,946	8,005	-	165,951
Student Ministry	133,833	18,379	2,844	155,056
Discipleship and Leadership Development	155,625	4,073	939	160,637
Pastoral Care	50,589	1,183	6,517	58,289
	907,792	120,385	221,119	1,249,296
Raising funds	15,034	1,557	-	16,591
Total	922,826	121,942	221,119	1,265,887
Net gains on investments	-	184,249	-	184,249
Net income/(expenditure)	154,545	426,178	(7,675)	573,048
Transfers between funds	(369,809)	369,504	305	-
Other gains	-	-	369	369
Net movement in funds	(215,264)	795,682	(7,001)	573,417
Reconciliation of funds				
Total funds brought forward	567,688	7,983,134	132,162	8,682,984
Total funds carried forward	352,424	8,778,816	125,161	9,256,401

WOODLANDS GROUP OF CHURCHES
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

21 Reconciliation of the Statement of Financial Activities to the Statement of Cash Flows

	Statement of Financial Activities £	Debtors £	Creditors £	Cash flow £
A.1 Receipts from Donations and Legacies	1,503,191			
Decrease in debtors		(6,435)		1,496,756
A.2 Receipts from Charitable activities	231,819			
Increase in debtors		(1,309)		
Increase in deferred income and other creditors			8,139	238,649
B.1 Payments for Raising funds	(15,756)			
Investment management costs	-			(15,756)
B.2 Payments for Charitable activities	(1,526,450)			
Depreciation eliminated	14,975			
Non-cash grant on charitable loans	1,588			
Provision for Charitable loans	35,360			
Increase in prepayments and other debtors		(1,212)		
Increase in creditors and accruals			9,947	(1,465,792)
C.1 Receipts from Programme-related investments	77,514			
Non-cash foreign exchange movement	(552)			
Increase in debtors		(645)		76,317
C.2 Receipts from Mixed Purpose investments	21,914			
Decrease in debtors		85		21,999
D.1 Receipts from Investments	204,442			
Income from programme-related investments	(77,514)			
Income from mixed purpose investments	(21,914)			
				105,014
Balance sheet movements		(9,516)	18,086	

22 Analysis of changes in cash and cash equivalents

	2023 £	2022 £	Change £
Cash in hand	188,546	153,276	35,270
Notice deposits (less than 3 months)	1,018,130	1,493,149	(475,019)
Total cash and cash equivalents	1,206,676	1,646,425	(439,749)
	2022 £	2021 £	Change £
Cash in hand	153,276	204,825	(51,549)
Notice deposits (less than 3 months)	1,493,149	1,462,602	30,547
Total cash and cash equivalents	1,646,425	1,667,427	(21,002)

WOODLANDS GROUP OF CHURCHES

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

23 Commitments

The charity had no capital or non-cancellable lease commitments at the end of the current or preceding period.

24 Payments to Trustees and other related party transactions

Remuneration and benefits paid to Trustees and other related parties

Under the Memorandum and Articles of Association, the Trustees have the authority to employ or engage under a contract for services a Trustee or any person connected with a Trustee as long as certain conditions are met and procedures followed. Below is a summary of these payments and those made to other related parties:

	Payments for services, Gifts and Grants £	Salary from employment £	Pension costs £	Total £
Year ended 31 March 2023				
D J Mitchell	-	37,150	927	38,077
T J Dobson	-	29,301	692	29,993
D Roderick	-	18,288	361	18,649
Close family members of Trustees	300	37,096	549	37,945
Senior Leadership Team (if not included above)	15,000	109,456	2,383	126,839
Year ended 31 March 2022				
D J Mitchell	-	36,608	911	37,519
T J Dobson	-	28,846	678	29,524
D Roderick	-	17,271	331	17,602
Close family members of Trustees	1,280	30,052	405	31,737
Senior Leadership Team (if not included above)	9,000	97,106	2,164	108,270

Close family members of Trustees comprises: D J Mitchell (son of D Mitchell), C Mitchell (spouse of D Mitchell), D A Marsh (spouse of E J Marsh), M Dobson (son of T Dobson).

The above disclosure of payments to Senior Leadership Team members comprises the following individuals who were not Trustees or close family members of a Trustee during the year: N J Savage, R Riddall, P O Jinadu, K Jinadu, H C Thompson and R Pollard. Included in the current year is grants of £15,000 to the West of England Baptist Network as a contribution towards the stipend received by R and N Pollard.

R Riddall, a member of the Senior Leadership Team and Key Management, is in receipt of a charitable loan from the charity. The outstanding balance of the loan was £402,288 at the balance sheet date and is secured on a property. The rate of interest charged is on the same basis as that charged to the charity's other loan holders.

Donations from Trustees and related parties

The aggregate donations received from Trustees, SLT and related parties were £82,899 (2022: £85,118).

Trustee expenses

One trustee was reimbursed £50 for training relating to trustee duties (2022: £562 paid to three trustees for travel expenses).

25 Company limited by guarantee

The charity is incorporated in England and Wales as a company limited by guarantee having no share capital and, in accordance with the Memorandum of Association, every member is liable to contribute £1 towards the costs of dissolution and the liabilities incurred by the charity in the event of the company being wound up.