



Annual Report

ACAT Annual Report 2021-2022

Registered Charity number 1072733

acat 
Association of Church Accountants & Treasurers

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a year's overview

YEAR OF STABILITY

When we look back on the last year, across the world, a lot has changed. We were able to celebrate Christmas with our families again. Restrictions began to be lifted, and much of our lives began to return to normal.

The past few years have been a rollercoaster for all of us, and for our churches. We have had to adapt, learn, and get creative in order to worship together. Many of us have faced financial difficulties, losing income from collections and events. It hasn't been an easy time to be a church treasurer.

Here at ACAT, our mission continues to be to support church treasurers and accountants across the country as they serve their churches in this way. After a year of change when the pandemic hit, we are very thankful to say that this year has been a year of stability for us as a charity.

This stability has been a wonderful thing. We have continued to provide our training courses online, and hosted our second virtual conference in October 2021. It has enabled us to become more proactive and less reactive. It has allowed us to strengthen and build relationships with our partners, such as CAF Bank (read more about our partnership on page 4).

We hope that this stability will continue into the future. Recently, we said goodbye to our Communications Officer, Ben Ro; and recruited two Media, Digital and Marketing Officers with whom many of you may have had contact with already. Following the success of our online training courses, which have allowed us to reach so many people across the country, this will continue to be part of our ongoing training opportunities. However, we are also delighted to be able to return to in-person training once again, as well as meeting with you all at our Annual Conference in October 2022.

As we look to the future, we are also sadly saying goodbye to two of our wonderful trustees. We are so grateful to Cyril Wood and Trevor James for their many years of dedicated service and for their tireless support and encouragement.



Ashley Ellis
ACAT Executive Officer

OUR YEAR IN NUMBERS



23

Courses



45

Training
Sessions



2

New Courses



952

Delegates attending
our events



16,466

Members



1

New Block
Member



ACAT: A Year in Review

ACAT: Our Year in Partnership



Social purpose lies at the heart of both CAF Bank and ACAT. Our organisations facilitate, support and promote positive change. For ACAT members, this is through their ministry and support for the wider community. Similarly, CAF Bank supports the work of its parent charity, the Charities Aid Foundation (CAF), to accelerate progress in society towards a fair and sustainable future for all.

CAF Bank provides banking and lending facilities for charities operating within every cause area imaginable. Working closely with CAF, our focus is to help charities build resilience, enabling them to do more life-changing work with lasting benefits for all.

From listening to the challenges and goals of the charities we exist to serve, we recognise that training, peer-to-peer support and good governance, especially around finance, is vital for organisations to achieve their purpose. That's why we are delighted to be a Partner in Ministry. We believe that the work ACAT does underpins churches across the UK, helping to deliver their purpose in the best way possible.

CAF Bank offers a range of banking services, from current accounts to long-term commercial mortgages. We work with many faith-based and secular organisations tackling some of the most challenging issues in our society. As a specialist lender, we have supported faith groups to buy and develop buildings for worship, offices for staff members and facilities for the local community. Our approach is always consistent: to listen, to understand and to develop a positive working relationship.

The period since early 2020 has not been easy. But it's clearly demonstrated the adaptability of the UK faith sector. During a time of national crisis and successive challenges testing us all, Churches continue to play an essential role –not only as places of worship, but also as community hubs and food distribution centres. The purpose and impact of faith groups has been reinforced and recognised across the UK. We are proud to work with the churches, faith groups and other charities to which communities turn for support. Our partnership with ACAT is a key part of our support of the sector, and we are looking forward to meeting many of you at ACAT's Annual Conference.



Richard Hunt
Head of Customer & Lending, CAF Bank



Report of the Corporate Trustee for the year ended 31 March 2022

The trustee company presents its annual report herewith, together with the financial statements of the charity, for the year ended 31 March 2022

Reference and Administrative Details

Registered Charity number: 1072733

Principal address:

Administrative office

Unit 125, Coney Green Business Centre

Wingfield View, Clay Cross

Chesterfield, S45 9JW

Telephone: 01246 767787

Email: admin@acat.uk.com

**Executive Officer of ACAT and Company
Secretary of its trustee company (the Association
of Church Accountants & Treasurers Corporate
Trustee Limited):**

Ashley Ellis

**Trustee company directors as at the date of this
report:**

Errol Vassell - Chairman

Cyril Wood

Trevor James

Catherine Beech

Ursula Fuller

Nick Donaldson

Livia Velicu

Structure, Governance and Management

Governing document

The charity is a Membership Association governed by its Constitution dated 11 February 1998 (last amended 15 October 2016), and is administered by a sole corporate trustee whose members and directors are determined by the Association's members, in general meeting, under the Constitution, which provides for:

- up to 12 members nominated by the charity to serve for three-year terms in office; including
- a Chairman elected for up to two consecutive three-year terms; and
- a limit of 16 including those co-opted by the Board until the next AGM.

Co-option of directors and election of officers of the trustee company

The Board co-opts additional directors from among ACAT members, and other Christians with relevant skills and experience, who can help promote the most effective and efficient performance of the work of church treasurers and others involved in their charity's financial administration and public accountability. The Board also elects a Treasurer and may appoint a Company Secretary or Deputy.

Objectives and Activities

The trustee has given due consideration to the Charity Commission's public benefit guidance in planning and managing the Association's activities, which comprise:

- the provision of a regularly updated Members' Handbook covering many aspects of financial administration, accounting and other legislation with which churches must comply, as well as best practice in matters of charity governance;
- publishing a regular newsletter to all members;
- answering members' questions on specific issues and their advice-requests via a website helpline;
- arranging annual conference(s), with keynote speakers on relevant topics, open to members and non-members who can meet and discuss matters of common interest;
- holding regional training courses giving members and others the opportunity to network with their peers and increase their knowledge of relevant issues, as well as the new online training courses;
- encouraging denominations and other church groups to consider "block" membership for their treasurers at reduced annual subscription rates;
- championing members' interests as church treasurers by liaison with regulatory authorities and by responding to relevant public consultations as they arise.

Public benefit

For the public benefit, the Association aims to advance the Christian religion through the promotion of the efficiency and effectiveness of Christian churches and organisations by the provision, primarily to the Association's members, of advice, training in the role of the treasurer and information on accounting, financial, legal, governance and other related issues. Membership of the Association is by annual subscription, the modest level of which, the trustee believes, should not exclude any church treasurer or official with financial responsibilities from access to benefit.





Achievements and Performance

The services of ACAT have never been more essential than they are now. As the true financial repercussions of the Covid crisis continue manifesting themselves for churches and the looming cost of living crisis, ACAT remains dedicated to supporting treasurers as they, in turn, facilitate the ministry of their church.

ACAT continues to look to the future positively to ensure that we continue to surpass the requirements of both treasurers and trustees.

At the end of the year, the Association had 16,466 members and although this is a slight decrease from the previous year we were still pleased to welcome the Diocese of Portsmouth as a new block member. We are always building new relationships to grow this number both with individuals and block members.

ACAT's website – which was launched in mid-December 2019 – combined with increased and improved communication should help consolidate existing membership while ensuring that even more new Block and individual treasurers can discover the benefits of ACAT membership in years to come.

Throughout the pandemic, ACAT has consistently responded to requests for guidance and information resulting from phone calls, emails and via the website helpline in the most timely and appropriate manner. We also started to explore what training should look like moving forwards and our ability to return to in-person training. We are now using a hybrid model, delivering training both online and in person. This allows us to reach a wider geographic audience, whilst maintaining the benefits of in-person training that many of our members value.

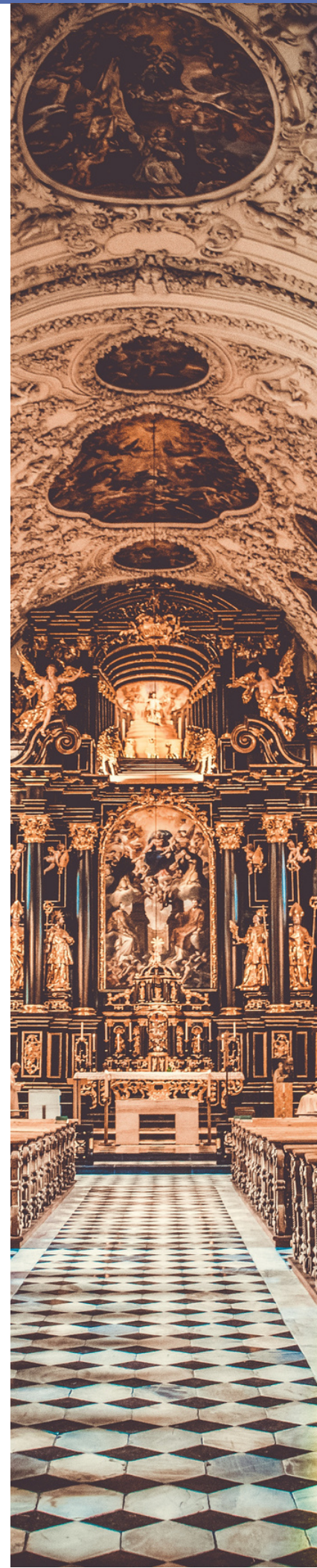
In June 2022 we said goodbye to our Communications Officer Ben Rooth after serving us for just under 3 years. This left us with an opportunity for new members to join the team. We welcomed two new employees Aaron Fenton-Blake and Robin Jones, both working on a part-time basis. They bring to the team extensive experience in website design, analytics, and publicity. We hope together they will enable us to better promote ACAT and continue the great work Ben did.

e-newsletter

Our e-newsletters provide members with regular updates. For much of the year, these e-newsletters have been distributed twice a month – with one dedicated to news while the other specifically covers training opportunities. All are tailored to meet the specific needs of both Block and individual members.

Handbook

The Members' Handbook is available in its entirety in a dedicated section on the ACAT website. This enables ACAT to better point our members to the relevant information specific to their needs. It also enables the handbook to be updated in a timely manner, to ensure our members always have access to relevant and up-to-date guidance.

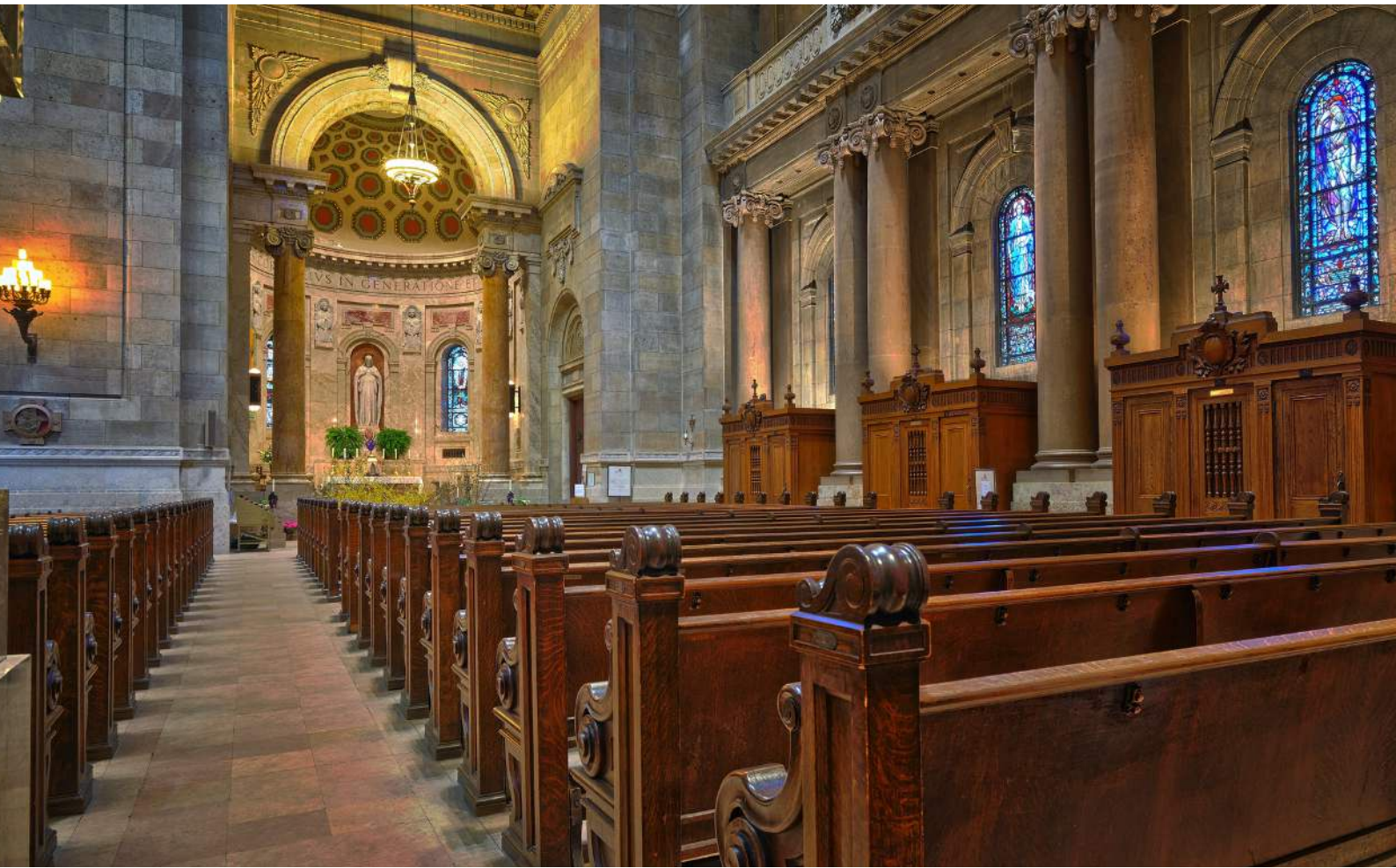


Conference

The ACAT 2021 Conference, entitled “Mission-Driven Finance: The Way Forward Post-Covid”, built upon our experience of the 2020 conference and was delivered virtually. ACAT is most grateful to CCLA, who returned as our headline sponsor for that event. CCLA is the UK’s leading Fund Manager for Christian churches and charities, with 60 years experience of in providing competitive and attractive investment management services. The 2021 conference proved an ideal opportunity for members to discover more about the key issues affecting church treasurers and the truly essential role they play in enabling their church’s mission. Speakers from Keystone Law, Kingdom Bank, The National Churches Trust, Strengthening Faith Institutions, The Diocese of York’s Generous Giving Team, CCLA and ECCR – among others - were all represented. The event was attended by more than 112 delegates from across the country. The event was also sponsored by many of our Partners in Ministry drawn from the worlds of church accountancy software and utility providers – besides others.

We are delighted that our 2022 conference will once again be held in person after 2 years of being online. Entitled “Inspiring Excellence: The Ministry of Administration”, the conference will be held on Saturday, October 22, and consists of presentations and workshops from some great speakers as well as the chance to meet our sponsors and other church treasurers in person. ACAT is delighted that CCLA has decided to return as one of the event’s headline sponsors along with a new headline sponsor CAF Bank. This year we are joined by Rosie Venner and Sarah Edwards from ECCR, Sammi Tooze from the Diocese of York and Livia Velicu from Bates Wells, and will also feature workshops from Mark Heaton from ACIE and Eddie Tulasiewicz from the National Churches Trust. The event will conclude with our Annual General Meeting (AGM) at 3.15 pm.

Over the past financial year, ACAT has continued to achieve its primary purpose not only through its advice and guidance services but also through its extensive list of training courses – which are open to non-members as well as existing members. The training courses ACAT has held in 2021-22 are briefly described below.



ACAT Courses

With the successful launch of our virtual courses in 2020/21, we have continued to offer our courses online into 2022. With the great successes we have had virtually, we will continue to offer our courses online alongside restarting our in-person training going into 2023.

This year we delivered 45 training sessions for 23 courses with an average of 30 delegates per session. Of the 23 courses, two were new for this year. They included The Church Treasurer: Insights into the role and responsibilities and Tax Issues for Churches that Trade.

The Church Treasurer: Insights into the role and responsibilities

This course is a brief, non-technical introduction to the role of church treasurer, providing an overview and some insights into aspects of church financial administration.

It's aimed at those with limited or no knowledge of the specific requirements which underpin church and charity accounts but who may have been approached to become church treasurer.

It is also beneficial for those looking for an overview of the role and responsibilities of a church treasurer.

From the feedback we received, it was clear that delegates found this valuable training for their role, with one delegate saying:

“

I learnt a lot and have much food for thought.

”

Tax Issues for Churches that Trade

This course looks at the world of trade and tax in the context of church and charity. It helps the church to define trade and the exemptions that may be available. It also looks at potential problems that can arise with trading subsidiaries.

It's aimed at those who partake in trade within their church or may be responsible for the accounting.

We are delighted that this course has been so well received. Delegates highlighted how well the content was broken down and explained, making quite a complex topic relevant and clear.

“

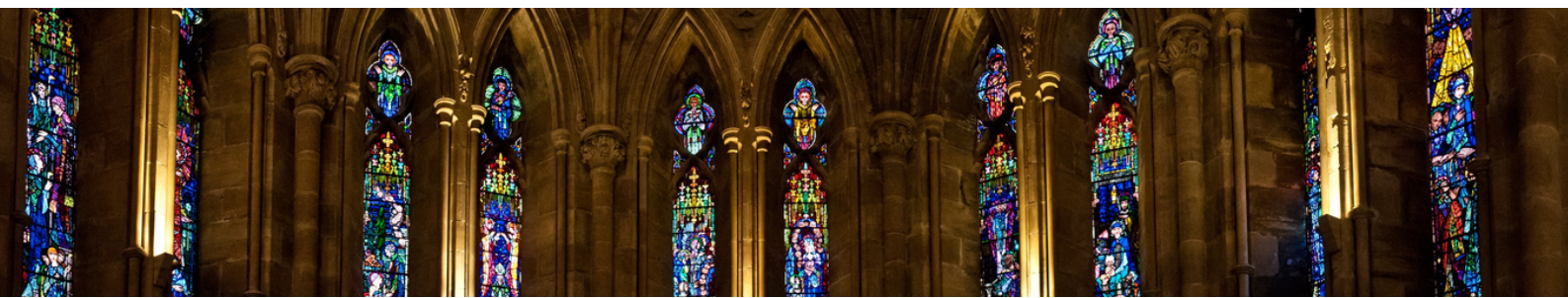
I found the topics clear and to the point. Lots of questions were answered in the presentation, and I felt much more confident at the end that I understood the issues.

”

“

"I thought it was an excellent introduction to the topic, well-structured with a good balance of information and answering questions. Very helpful."

”



Representing ACAT's members

The Association continues to work closely with government agencies and other national bodies. The organisation is recognised as representing many small Christian Church charities.

As part of our strategy for increasing the effectiveness of this work, we have regular meetings for board members and trainers. This allows us to identify emerging issues and review our planning for the coming years.

Since the onset of the pandemic, we have continued to organise regular online meetings for trainers. We are reviewing face-to-face processes for the coming year.

The trustees continue to discuss with the Charity Commission and HMRC/Treasury matters of interest to churches. We also liaise with the Charity Finance Group (of which we are a member), the Charity Tax Group, the Churches Legislation Advisory Service, the Institute of Chartered Accountants for England and Wales (ICAEW) and the Association of Charity Independent Examiners (ACIE).

Advice Line

The advice line is an essential resource for our members. Hundreds of queries are submitted and answered yearly, supported by the staff and, where necessary, the training team and specialist directors.

Thank You

ACAT's work would not exist without our dedicated team of volunteer trainers. The trustee would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge – most gratefully – the essential contribution they make.

In addition, the trustee gratefully acknowledges the contribution made by our other Partners in Ministry, including CCLA; CAF Bank; the Association of Charity Independent Examiners (ACIE); Liberty Accounts; Data Developments; Kingdom Bank; easyfundraising; and ECCR, among others.

The Board thanks ACAT's team of dedicated part-time staff: Joy Spencer (Finance Officer), Cath Fox (Training Officer), and Nick Fox (Membership Officer) for their work over the past year in ensuring ACAT's objectives and activities were upheld consistently to the highest standards.

We would also like to welcome and thank Peter Young, who joined us in May 2021 as our Administrative Officer (Membership Support), facilitating our Helpline and Aaron Fenton-Blake and Robin Jones, who joined us in June 2022 as the new Communication Team.

Finally, the Board would like to thank Ashley Ellis for his outstanding work as ACAT's Executive Officer as the Association looks to help even more church treasurers nationally as the pandemic abates.



Future Plans

Our commitment to supporting an ever-increasing number of church treasurers in their roles remains unchanged.

With the recent appointment of two new members to form a communications team, we will be focusing on how to grow our engagement. This has already begun with the revival of our social media presence on Facebook and Twitter. Just search for The Association of Church Accountants & Treasurers. We are also looking at how we can interact with our block members so they can better use the resources and training we offer.

Our high-quality online courses remain in great demand. Liaison with our existing trainers ensures they are comfortable continuing to deliver their courses virtually in the present and for the foreseeable future.

Partnerships remain vital in developing the work of ACAT. Ashley continues to work with various organisations – insurance, investment, software and banking, etc. - to enhance treasurers' support from their ACAT membership.



Financial Review

Reserves policy

The trustee considers that the Association's unrestricted year-end reserves of £168,399 (2021: £121,982) are in line with the policy level of at least 6 to 12 months of planned expenditure for the current financial year. The 2022-2023 spending budget is approximately £162,995.

Finances (Unrestricted)

Total income for the year was £154,511 up from £137,290 in 2020-2021. Total expenditure was £110,317 against £109,802 for 2020-21. This resulted in an operating surplus of £44,194 (2020-21 surplus: £27,488). The operating surplus can be attributed to ACAT's courses and conference taking place virtually – in contrast to previous years when physical events have always been staged. After including a holding gain on the investment in Charifund Units £2,223 (2020-21 £5,737), the surplus for the year was £46,417 (2020-21 £33,225), increasing ACAT's total unrestricted reserves from £121,982 to £168,399.

Statement of Trustee's Responsibilities

The trustee company is responsible for preparing the annual report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law, the Charities Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) (FRS102) and the United Kingdom Accounting Standard on which it is based (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice). The law applicable to charities in England and Wales, the Charities Act 2011, the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 and the provisions of ACAT's Constitution require the trustee to prepare financial statements for each financial year which (unless the receipts and payments option is chosen) must give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Association and of its incoming resources and application of resources for that year.

In preparing those accruals-based financial statements, the trustee is required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP (FRS102), as adopted;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in business.

The trustee is responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and to enable the trustee to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011 and the regulations thereunder and the provisions of the Constitution. The trustee is also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and ensuring their proper application under charity law and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Approved by the Board on 5th October 2022 and signed on its behalf, as authorised, by:

Errol Vassell
Chairman



Statutory Accounts: Year to 31st March 2022

Statement of Financial Activities

	31st March 2022	31st March 2021
Income	£	£
Membership Fees (Note 1)	115,011	103,465
Conference and Training Receipts	31,735	29,335
Gift Aid Tax Recoverable	4,019	2,518
Investment Income	1,567	1,364
Other Income	2,179	609
	154,511	137,290
Expenditure		
Conference and Training Costs	1,125	419
Printing, Stationery and Postage	201	552
Membership Support (Note 4)	92,291	96,157
Website and IT Costs	12,712	9,604
Trustees/Meeting Expenses	567	0
Legal, Professional, Insurance	1,767	2,051
Subscriptions, Gifts and Donations	1,654	1,019
	110,317	109,802
Net Operating surplus	44,194	27,488
Investment gain	2,223	5,737
Net surplus for the year	46,417	33,225
Balance of Funds Brought Forward	121,982	88,757
Balance of Funds Carried Forward	168,399	121,982

Balance Sheet

	31st March 2022	31st March 2021
Office Fixtures and Fittings	1,278	2,622
Investments	32,725	30,502
Total Fixed Assets	34,003	33,124
Current Assets and Liabilities		
Cash and Bank Current Accounts	152,850	117,252
Bank Deposit Accounts	21,510	21,501
Debtors and Prepayments	8,679	6,305
Current Assets Total	183,038	145,058
Deferred Income	(48,642)	(52,900)
Creditors Due within One Year	-	(3,300)
Net Current Assets	134,396	88,858
Total Net Assets	168,399	121,982
Funds		
Unrestricted General Funds	168,399	121,982
TOTAL	168,399	121,982

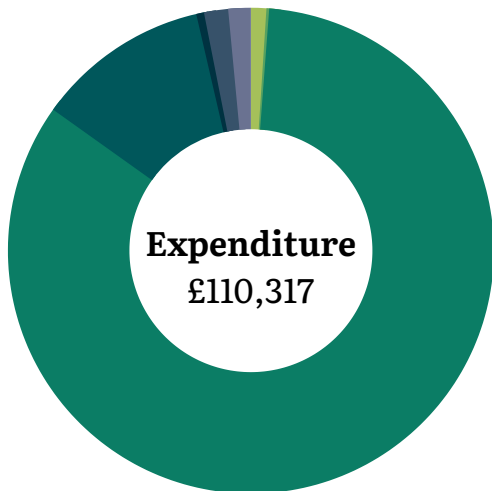
Approved by the Board on 5th October 2022 and signed on its behalf by Errol Vassell (Chairman)

Our Income



- Membership Fees 74.4%
- Conference and Training Receipts 20.5%
- Gift Aid Tax Recoverable 2.6%
- Investment Income 1.0%
- Other Income 1.4%

Our Expenditure



- Conference and Training Costs 1.0%
- Printing, Stationery and Postage 0.2%
- Membership Support (Note 4) 83.7%
- Website and IT Costs 11.5%
- Trustees/Meeting Expenses 0.5%
- Legal, Professional, Insurance, 1.6%
- Subscriptions, Gifts and Donations 1.5%



£154,511

Income



£110,317

Expenditure



£44,194

Net Operating
Surplus

Notes to the Financial Statements

These Financial Statements are on the historical cost basis under Section 1A of FRS102, and the Charities Act 2011, in accordance with the Charities SORP(FRS102), effective 1 January 2016, but with investment securities carried at fair value as required by the SORP. In the absence of new regulations relating to SORP(FRS102), the “true and fair override” provision within the 2008 regulations under the 2011 Act is invoked for the adoption of SORP(FRS102) as the relevant current replacement for SORP 2005. As a charity, ACAT is a public benefit entity within the meaning of FRS102. The deemed future element of Membership Renewals is accounted for as Deferred Income. Interest on Term Deposits is accrued daily. The Association has only basic financial instruments under FRS102, which (apart from investment securities) are all accounted for at their settlement value.

- 1.** Due to changes in membership rates and despite changes in numbers for Individual and Block membership we are still pleased to report an increase in membership fee income for the year (up from £103,465 to £115,011).
- 2.** Office equipment costing at least £1,000 per item/ set is capitalized and depreciated at an average annual rate of 25% on cost, depending on its estimated useful life.
- 3.** Incoming and outgoing resources: Gift Aid tax claims are accrued as ‘probable’ when the entitlement arises; other income and all expenditure when receivable or incurred.
- 4.** Membership Support includes salary costs of ACAT’s four part-time staff (FTE:3) comprising Salaries, NIC & Pension costs £82,256 (2021: £88,280), including any holiday pay accruals.
- 5.** Related Party transactions: £567 (2021: £3,213) was reimbursed to nine directors of the trustee company for travel, subsistence and other costs to do with meetings, training events and conferences. There was no trustee-remuneration. There were no other related party transactions in the year.
- 6.** VAT: The Association is not VAT–registered and its activities are considered outside the scope of Value Added Tax. Irrecoverable input tax is included in the relevant expenditure.
- 7.** Deferred Income: Membership, once renewed, is deemed to accrue month by month, counting future months’ fees as “deferred income”, together with any Grants only for use in future financial years.
- 8.** Lease of office premises: The Association has a three-year lease on its office premises at Clay Cross, Derbyshire, at an annual rental of £6,235 the minimum rental commitment being for three months.
- 9.** Basic financial instruments are accounted for at their settlement value. The Association has no other financial instruments as defined by FRS102.



Independent Examiner's Report

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustee of the Association of Church Accountants and Treasurers.

I report on the accounts of the charity for the year ended 31st March 2022, which are set out on pages 14, 15 and 16 in this Report.

Respective responsibilities of the trustee and examiner.

The charity's trustee is responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustee considers that an audit is not required for this year under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to :

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2011 Act;
- follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145 (5) (b) of the 2011 Act; and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of the independent examiner's report.

My examination was carried out in accordance with the general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent examiner's statement.

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

1. which give me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act; and to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the 2011 Act have not been met; or
2. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Bryan Lewis ACMA, CGMA

Date: 5th October 2022

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Ackworth
West Yorkshire
WF7 7LF





Association of Church Accountants and Treasurers

Helping Christian churches with their financial administration

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acat



Association of Church Accountants & Treasurers
