

Registered Charity Number 283511

LUTON CHRISTIAN BOOK CENTRE
ALSO TRADING AS
LUTON CHRISTIAN BOOK SHOP

**Annual Report
and Financial Statements**

**For the Period
1 March 2019 – 29 February 2020**

**Kestin House
45 Crescent Road
Luton
LU2 0AH**

Luton Christian Book Centre
Trustees' Annual Report for the Period
1 March 2019 – 29 February 2020

Structure Governance and Management

Names of Trustees

Eddie Boghossian who had previously given IT support to the Bookshop and had worked as a volunteer on Tuesdays joined the Trustees. The Trustees at the end of the year are:

Mr. J. S. Maple (Chair of Trustees)
Mr R. L. Stammers
Mr O Brown
Mrs Deborah Bernard
Mrs Elizabeth Coulson
Mr Eddie Boghossian

Luton Christian Book Centre is an independent Christian Charity. It exists to serve the need for Christian resources in and around the Luton area. It is non-denominational and Trustees represent a number of different Churches in and around Luton. The current Trustees are responsible for the appointment of new Trustees and there is no limit to the period Trustees can serve.

The Trustees met four times during the current reporting period (May, July, September and January). None of the Trustees receive remuneration and there has been no request for reimbursement of any expenses.

The Trustees decide on all matters of policy and regularly review the performance and strategy for the bookshop. They guide and give encouragement to staff and contribute to the close relationship that exists between Churches and LCBC.

Staff

David Coleman was welcomed as a new Volunteer willing to work two days a week. After training he took on the role of Manager on Tuesdays. The day to day running of the shop has continued to be the responsibility of John Maple assisted by Robin Pinner, Guy Marshall and David Coleman.

After completely updating the shop IT systems Eddie Boghossian has stayed on to give IT support and has been appointed Trustee (see above). His other Christian commitments have prevented him working as a regular volunteer in the shop.

We were sorry to learn that Rosemary had to leave us as a volunteer in order to take up full time employment. We do miss her but we are very grateful to Dawn who has filled the part time slot vacated by Rosemary.

We have a compliment of 14 staff and are grateful for their breadth of experience and commitment to the ongoing success of the shop. We are also so grateful to John Read who diligently looks after our accounts and end of year reporting.

John Maple worked 2 days a week and responsibilities have been delegated to other staff where possible.

Charitable Objectives and Activities

The objective of Luton Christian Book Centre is to propagate Christian knowledge and understanding by means of display and sale to the public of Bibles, evangelical Christian literature, audio visual material, teaching resources, gifts and cards for all occasions.

A discount is offered to all Churches and to those in full time Christian ministry. We are always mindful of internet prices and seek to provide competitive quotations to churches ordering multiple copies of books and other resources.

The history of a Christian bookshop in Luton can be traced back to 1947 when the Religious Book Depot opened in Reginald Street Luton. Moving premises several times and changing its name twice, Luton Christian Book Shop now provides an extensive resource of Bibles, Bible study and teaching materials, youth resources general Christian literature, music, DVDs, gifts, cards and selected fair trade products.

It is non-profit making and does not normally receive any donations. However, we have been greatly encouraged and touched by the generosity of one of our customers who has made regular donations towards the work of the bookshop.

The building is owned by Urban Saints and we are very grateful for the continuing support of Richard Langmead, CEO of Urban Saints.

Achievements and Performance

This is the fifteenth year of operation for Luton Christian Book Centre (LCBC) in the premises at Kestin House. It remains a difficult retail climate due to the competition from on-line sale of books and the sale of e-books and e-music. This year we have seen an overall drop in sales of 9.8%. The sale of General Christian Books (-10%) Children's Books (-20%), CDs (-30%), General Gifts (-12%), Children's Sundries (-35%) and Books Supplied to Churches (-29%) all contributed to the decline in sales. It is particularly pleasing that Bible sales have held up (+2.8%) as we have intentionally extended the range of Bibles we stock.

We continue to receive good support from churches in Luton, Harpenden and St Albans. We are grateful to Guy Marshall who makes the majority of deliveries to Churches in St Albans. However, we are still aware that there is a lot more we could do to attract new customers and to interact fully with Churches and Christians in Luton. However, we are always busy with essential ordering and selling to give sufficient time to marketing. There is a vacancy for a person willing to develop the reach and service provided by the Bookshop. We still regularly welcome new customers who have found the shop for the first time. Thanks to Avril we have maintained a good presence on Facebook and she also runs a successful Book Club which meets the first Friday of each month in the Bookshop.

We have 4 regular book agents taking a selection of titles into local churches.

Seven orders were received from Church of England Primary Schools for Bibles to present to School Leavers.

We were invited to organise bookstalls for the Baptist Union Home Hub Conference and for the Methodist District Conference.

John Maple has been invited to speak at three mid-week meetings to give a brief history of the bookshop and to review some favourite titles.

Storyboards recommending selected books and newly published books now feature in our shop displays.

Nine open evenings or afternoons were again arranged before Christmas with free tea/coffee and mince pies allowing visitors to shop whilst enjoying fellowship together.

Christian Literature Wholesalers, Kingsway/CLC Trust provide excellent support especially to smaller Bookshops. For the first time we have taken advantage of their Take Note Scheme. This allows bookshops to take a predetermined selection of Books, CDs and DVDs on consignment for a 3-month period. At the end of 3 months unsold stock is returned and an invoice raised for items sold. This has allowed us to take a range of new titles without the risk of accumulating unsold stock.

The customer loyalty scheme continues to be popular. Customers spending £10 or more receive a discount card which offers £10 off a purchase after an equivalent of 10 purchases of £10.

A discount is also offered for all church purchases and to all involved in full time Christian service. We do not believe that Churches should pay more by shopping with us and we aim to meet or better internet prices wherever possible.

Three Counties Booksellers exists to provide a forum for local Christian Bookshops. We met three times during the year to share ideas and experience with our four nearest Christian bookshops: Dunstable, Bedford, Letchworth and Stony Stratford.

The Manager of "The Word" Christian Bookshop in Bedford retired in January and attempts at finding a replacement team to take on the lease and run the bookshop have been unsuccessful. We wish Joy and Martin a long and happy retirement.

Financial Review

As reported above, sales fell by £9596 (9.8%). Stock purchases were reduced in line with sales (-£8907 -14%) and we are able to report a small surplus of £819 for the year. The stock was reduced by £3248 (-6.5%) and clearly, we cannot continue to sustain a fall in sales and a fall in stock.

The Trustees are grateful to John Read for preparing the current accounts and to Mr Terry West for reviewing these accounts.

Risk Management

The Trustees reviewed the financial risk assessment following the Charity Commission Guideline (Simplified Risk Management for Small Charities). We are

fully insured for fire and theft, and public and employee liability and have the necessary licence to play music in the shop.

There were no further break-ins during the year and the extra security measures installed by Urban Saints are much appreciated.

HMRC required VAT returns to be made using digital software and we are grateful to Terry West for assisting John Read to find and use suitable software to meet HMRC requirements.

Future Plans

There are a number of factors affecting our plans for the future. Urban Saints would ideally like to move to smaller and more secure premises more in line their needs. They plan to put Kestin House on the market at the end of 2020 to see if this is a viable plan. With three churches and five Christian organisations using the building it has become a Christian Centre which would be sorely missed. However, the future of Luton Christian Bookshop is by no means secure.

John Maple planned to retire in February 2020 but advertisements for the position placed in Luton Churches Together weekly newsletter and copies given out to customers have not attracted any applicants. He plans to continue for a further year working just one day a week. Without the appointment of an energetic full time Manager it is difficult to see how the trend in falling sales can be reversed.

In contrast to this rather pessimistic position we have been in conversation with Rev Andrew Gale minister of Central Baptist Church regarding their plans to build a shop/visitor centre at the entrance to their site. This could be the new location for Luton Christian Book Shop. The rent would be lower providing the possibility of paying a part time Manager, however, the area available for the bookshop would be significantly less and although some parking is available the access may not be as suitable as we enjoy at present.

At the time of writing this report we are in the middle on Covid-19 lock-down and all plans are temporarily put on hold.



John Maple

For the Trustees
13th August 2020

Luton Christian Book Centre
Statement of Assets and Liabilities
As at 28 February 2020

| | February <u>2020</u> £ | February <u>2019</u> £ |
|---|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Fixed Assets | | |
| Cost (stock control system upgrade) | - | - |
| Cumulative Depreciation | - | - |
| | <u>-</u> | <u>-</u> |
| Monetary Assets | | |
| Bank Current Account | 26,462 | 23,123 |
| Church accounts outstanding & Prepayments | 673 | 539 |
| VAT | 108 | 726 |
| Cash in Hand | 327 | 590 |
| | <u>27,570</u> | <u>24,978</u> |
| Other Assets | | |
| Stock at cost | 46,981 | 50,229 |
| Stock write off provision | (2,000) | (2,450) |
| | <u>44,981</u> | <u>47,779</u> |
| TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS | 72,551 | 72,757 |
| Liabilities | | |
| Trade creditors | 4,555 | 5,580 |
| PAYE payable | 144 | 144 |
| | <u>4,699</u> | <u>5,724</u> |
| NET ASSETS LESS LIABILITIES | <u>67,852</u> | <u>67,033</u> |
| ACCUMULATION FUND | | |
| As of 1 March | 67,033 | 67,372 |
| Surplus/Deficit for year | 819 | (339) |
| As at 28 February | <u>67,852</u> | <u>67,033</u> |

Approved by the Trustees



J Maple
Chair of Trustees

**Luton Christian Book Centre
Income and Expenditure Account
For the Year Ended 29 February 2020**

| <u>INCOME</u> | February <u>2020</u> £ | February <u>2019</u> £ |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| SALES | | |
| Christian Goods | | |
| Books | 53,508 | 61,069 |
| Cards | 9,853 | 10,638 |
| CDs, DVD's | 4,086 | 4,709 |
| Gifts and accessories | 14,169 | 16,265 |
| Church Supplies | 4,528 | 3,287 |
| Traidcraft | 2,259 | 2,194 |
| Refreshments | 220 | 145 |
| Carriage charged | 23 | - |
| Tokens sold less tokens redeemed | 49 | (16) |
| TOTAL SALES | <u>88,695</u> | <u>98,291</u> |
| OTHER INCOME | | |
| Donations Received | 40 | 95 |
| TOTAL INCOME | <u>88,735</u> | <u>98,386</u> |
| EXPENDITURE | | |
| Cost of Sales | <u>55,486</u> | <u>64,393</u> |
| EXPENSES | | |
| Postage and carriage | 55 | 7 |
| Staff costs | 15,486 | 15,938 |
| Rent ,rates, services | 12,236 | 12,236 |
| Insurance/licences | 97 | 94 |
| Telephone and e-mail | 991 | 999 |
| Computer & Booksolve maintenance | 1,656 | 3,098 |
| Donations payable | - | 100 |
| Credit card transaction charges | 1,138 | 1,100 |
| Bookshop administration | 587 | 525 |
| Advertising and signage | 184 | 235 |
| Depreciation | - | - |
| | <u>32,430</u> | <u>34,332</u> |
| TOTAL EXPENDITURE | <u>87,916</u> | <u>98,725</u> |
| SURPLUS FOR YEAR | <u>819</u> | <u>(339)</u> |

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of Luton Christian Book Centre

I report on the accounts of the charity for the year ended 29 February 2020, which comprise Income and Expenditure Report and Balance Sheet.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

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

It is my responsibility to:

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

Basis of 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 of the statement below.

Independent examiner's statement

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

1. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that, in any material respect, the requirements:
 - to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Charities Acthave 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.



Terence West
ACMA
165 Old Bedford Road
Luton LU2 7EG

4 December 2020