

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 2020 – 28 February 2021**

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

Luton Christian Book Centre
Trustees' Annual Report for the Period
1 March 2020 – 28 February 2021

Structure Governance and Management

Names of Trustees

There has been no change in Trustees who 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.

Barely 3 weeks into the current reporting period the true nature of Covid 19 was revealed and the first lockdown began on 23rd March. The Trustees were able to meet using Zoom which provided a convenient and efficient way of keeping the situation under review. There were six meetings during the reporting period. 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. They guide and give encouragement to staff and contribute to the close relationship that exists between Churches and LCBC.

Staff

It is with sadness that we report that Enid Burton who had served as a volunteer for more than 15 years died in September after a short battle with cancer. We remember her husband Denny and son and daughters. There was another sad loss in May when Carol Beasley's husband Mick died after contracting Covid 19. Carol has continued to look after ordering and display of gifts and cards as well as working alternate Saturdays.

David Coleman has continued to work Tuesdays and has covered for Robin on Thursdays. Robin and Gordon hope to return after receiving their second vaccination. Guy continues to work on Wednesdays and John Maple on Fridays. In February 2021 we received applications from three new volunteers – Joy Denny (who retired from The Word bookshop in Bedford), Peter Woodruff and Alan Short.

We now have a compliment of 15 volunteer and paid 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.

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 and Christian literature.

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 would not have survived beyond the pandemic if it had not been for small business grants received from the Local Council (see below) We are also touched by the generosity of one of our customers who has made further donations towards the work of the bookshop.

The building is owned by Urban Saints and we are very grateful for the continuing support of Urban Saints. When the second lockdown began, just before Christmas, we applied for a 25% rent reduction for the shop and were so grateful when we were offered a 50% reduction for the whole of 2021. Although the financial report shows a healthy position, we are already experiencing a significant drop in sales after opening in April 2021 and we are grateful for the help received from Urban Saints.

Further help was received from the Booksellers Association who provided distance markers for the floor and reminders about distancing to be displayed on bookshelves.

Achievements and Performance

This is the sixteenth year of operation for Luton Christian Book Centre (LCBC) in the premises at Kestin House. It has been a difficult year due to the Covid-19 Pandemic. The shop was closed during the first lockdown from March to June. A full risk assessment was carried out before the shop reopened on 24th June. There was a 20% discount sale during July and August but even with this customer numbers were well down.

Two metre spacing markers were placed on the floor, the coffee shop was closed, fresh air ventilation was provided by opening windows, surfaces were decontaminated at the start of each day, a transparent screen was installed at the till and hand sanitiser and a tracking record provided for customers. Because not all staff were able to return for health reasons the shop remained closed on Mondays and Tuesdays.

The shop closed again from mid December 2020 to April 2021. The closures significantly affected Easter and Christmas sales and, even when the shop has been open, customer numbers are down. The shop continues to be closed on Mondays. Throughout the closure periods we have kept customers supplied with Bible Reading Notes by delivering these by hand, but overall sales have fallen by 59.4%.

We are grateful to John Pinnock for re-designing and installing the new website which became live for the July opening.

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. There is a vacancy for a person willing to develop the reach and service provided by the Bookshop. Thanks to Avril we have maintained a good presence on Facebook and she also runs a successful Book Club which continued to meet via Zoom during the lockdown.

With Churches not meeting in person there were no sales through our book agents.

Seven orders were received from Church of England Primary Schools for Bibles to present to School Leavers. These are supplied at a discounted price through the wholesaler Kingsway CLC Trust

It was not possible to arrange open evenings before Christmas and the shop had to close the Saturday before Christmas.

All these safety measures were necessary to try to control the spread of the Covid-19 virus and save lives. We are so grateful for the support for small businesses which allowed our paid staff to receive furlough payments and we also received a Local Authority Grant for periods of lockdown. The days ahead will be difficult with customers reluctant to return but we are in a good position to recover from the periods of closure and other restrictions.

Financial Review

As reported above, sales fell by £52,700 (59.4%) and stock purchases were reduced by £31,675 (-55.1%). Grants and other donations totalled £13,409 and thus we are able to report a surplus of £4587 for the year. There was a very small increase in value of stock (£723).

The Trustees are grateful to John Read for preparing the current accounts and to 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.

The building security measures put in place by Urban Saints have prevented break-ins for a second year and are much appreciated.

The Covid-19 precautions are described above.

Future Plans

We have ordered stock for Christmas 2021 but do not have firm plans beyond this date. Urban Saints have appointed a new Chief Mission Office who will take up office in June and, together with the Urban Saints Trustees, a decision will be made whether they want to stay in the present building.

David Coleman has made a significant contribution working two days a week allowing John Maple to work just one day a week. This together with the new volunteers does make for an improved level of staffing and the shop should be viable for another year beyond 2021 if we are able to stay in the present building. There has been no further discussion with Andrew Gale concerning the planned building by Central Baptist.



John Maple

For the Trustees
26th May 2021

Luton Christian Book Centre
Statement of Assets and Liabilities
As at 28 February 2021

	February <u>2021</u> £	February <u>2020</u> £
Fixed Assets		
Cost	-	-
Cumulative Depreciation	-	-
	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Monetary Assets		
Bank Current Account	27,428	26,462
Church accounts outstanding	406	673
VAT	4	108
Cash in Hand	443	327
	<u>28,281</u>	<u>27,570</u>
Other Assets		
Stock at cost	47,704	46,981
Stock write off provision	(2,000)	(2,000)
	<u>45,704</u>	<u>44,981</u>
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	<u><u>73,985</u></u>	<u><u>72,551</u></u>
Liabilities		
Trade creditors	591	4,555
PAYE payable	144	144
Prepayments and accruals	811	-
	<u>1,546</u>	<u>4,699</u>
NET ASSETS LESS LIABILITIES	<u><u>72,439</u></u>	<u><u>67,852</u></u>
ACCUMULATION FUND		
As of 1 March	67,852	67,033
Surplus/Deficit for year	4,587	819
As at 28 February	<u><u>72,439</u></u>	<u><u>67,852</u></u>

Approved by the Trustees



J Maple
Chair of Trustees
19 November 2021

Luton Christian Book Centre
Income and Expenditure Account
For the Year Ended 28 February 2021

	February <u>2021</u> £	February <u>2020</u> £
INCOME		
SALES		
Christian Goods		
Books	19,926	53,508
Cards	4,828	9,853
CDs, DVD's	1,248	4,086
Gifts and accessories	5,869	14,169
Church Supplies	2,501	4,528
Traidcraft	1,217	2,259
Refreshments	118	220
Carriage charged	7	23
Tokens sold less tokens redeemed	281	49
TOTAL SALES	<u>35,995</u>	<u>88,695</u>
OTHER INCOME		
Bank Interest	-	-
Donations and Grants Received	13,409	40
TOTAL INCOME	<u><u>49,404</u></u>	<u><u>88,735</u></u>
EXPENDITURE		
Cost of Sales	<u><u>23,881</u></u>	<u><u>55,486</u></u>
EXPENSES		
Postage and carriage	-	55
Staff costs	5,753	15,486
Rent ,rates, services	10,707	12,236
Insurance/licences	100	97
Telephone and e-mail	1,297	991
Computer & Booksolve maintenance	1,593	1,656
Credit card transaction charges	963	1,138
Bookshop administration	523	587
Advertising and signage	-	184
Depreciation	-	-
	<u>20,936</u>	<u>32,430</u>
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	<u><u>44,817</u></u>	<u><u>87,916</u></u>
SURPLUS FOR YEAR	<u><u>4,587</u></u>	<u><u>819</u></u>

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

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of Luton Christian Book Centre for the year ended 28 February 2021, 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
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19 November 2021