

Diocese of Southwark Mothers' Union

DRAFT Annual Report and Statement of Financial Activities

Year ended 31 December 2020

Vision

Our vision is of a world where God's love is shown through loving, respectful and flourishing relationships. This is not a vague hope, but a goal we actively pursue by praying, campaigning and enabling.

Mission

We aim to show our Christian faith by the transformation of communities worldwide. We can do this through supporting strong relationships within the family and promoting reconciliation at all levels.

Values

We are firmly rooted in voluntary ethos centred on mutual respect and collaboration. Our governance, leadership and programmes are driven by and undertaken through members within their own communities worldwide. We are inclusive and work with people of all faiths and none.

Aim

The Aim of the Mothers' Union is the advancement of the Christian religion in the sphere of marriage and family life. In particular we aim to:

- uphold Christ's teaching on the nature of marriage and to promote its wider understanding;
- encourage parents to bring up their children in the faith and life of the Church;
- maintain a worldwide fellowship of Christians, united in prayer, worship and service;
- promote conditions in society favourable to stable family life and the protection of children;
- help those whose family life has met with adversity.

Objectives and Activities

Together with members across the world, our objectives are:

- **Strengthen** communities all over the world
- **Help** the most disadvantaged at home
- **Shape** how we advocate for the rights of families
- **Build** supportive, loving relationships
- **Develop** our own relationship with God.

Achievements & Challenges

The MU theme in 2020 has been ***Building Hope and Confidence***: We have all been challenged to build our hope and confidence as we have all sought to work together in the context of a worldwide pandemic. However, in spite of limited ability to meet with people face to face, to travel and connect with friends and families, the Mothers' Union in Southwark has continued to be proactive in responding to some of our most vulnerable communities at home and abroad.

Strengthening communities all over the world

The Mothers' Union across Southwark continues to be active in raising funds for community development, emergency relief and support for the MU worldwide. In 2020 the Central MU charity sent out a plea for urgent funding to allow it to continue with its work worldwide and at home. Southwark MU immediately sent in £10,000 from its diocesan reserves to support this call. In addition, local branches and individuals also responded to the challenge. More than £875k has been raised to date worldwide.

Other campaign issues responded to during the year included:

- The 'Big Give' appeal for the Democratic Republic of Congo which was supported by numerous individuals and branches including those in Woolwich.
- The MSH Christmas Appeal which raised over £124,000 worldwide to support the work of the MU. Thanks are sent to all members who contributed to this individually or through their branch.
- Fundraising along with member donations which have increased the MU Overseas Fund.

Local groups too have been working hard to support organisations which work overseas. Three hundred beanie hats were sent off to 'Knit For Peace' in Hampstead. This is an organisation that distributes items to over 200 outlets, including hospitals, women's refuges, refugee drop-in centres, prisons, community groups, and hospices as well as to developing countries and refugee camps, or those living in the rubble in Syria.

Helping the most disadvantaged at home

Across the Diocese a number of MU funded projects are supported as well as those initiated by local branches:

Metamorphosis: Metamorphosis is Mothers' Union's approach to enabling and supporting meaningful relationships with God. Through these dialogues we have been inspiring transformation in individuals, churches and communities. The Metamorphosis process has enabled the Church and MU to build confidence and faith and engage with communities, bringing hope across 10 countries for over a decade.

Away from it All (AFIA): Offering holidays for families has been particularly challenging with numerous lockdowns in place. Nevertheless, the fund has been used creatively to reach out to families in need. In February 2020, £1,000 was given to a school in South London, which has children with very complex needs. This enabled two children to attend the holiday Play scheme. This was a huge success and extremely worthwhile. This is an approach that Trustees feel is something that should be repeated.

Of the seven holidays that were booked, three were subsequently cancelled; the families preferring to postpone until 2021. Of the 4 families supported two of these were to the B and B hotel in Eastbourne and two families chose to go to the Combe Haven caravan park at St. Leonard's on Sea.

The 3 families whose holidays were cancelled were given a voucher to the value of £100 each, to enable them to enjoy a treat.

Each of these holidays supported families with really significant needs, thanks are given for all who continue to fundraise for this important offering:

- A mother with a long-term medical condition with associated stress, compounded by a significant near-death admission to intensive care.
- A family who had been subjected to extreme domestic violence and been forced to move house several times.
- A vicar with his wife and 4 children who had been working very hard and was struggling to pay fuel bills.
- A mother, father and 3 children who were being terrorised by neighbours, which was causing a serious detrimental effect on the physical and emotional health of the family with high levels of anxiety in the children, one of whom has autism.

Supporting families of those in Prison: Sadly, no visitors are allowed and prisoners continue to have restricted access to others. Although Jan Gosling is involved in weekly meetings to discuss the way forward it is clear that at the moment there can only be virtual support. Online play time and a posted play pack has been organised but not all prisoner families' addresses are available. The MU continue to be called to pray for all prisoners and their families in these days of even more separation, all of which is causing mental stress and illness.

Communicating English: Although the groups have not been meeting during the pandemic those who have been helping have been able to keep in touch with those invited to join the programme with the hope that the group at St. Augustine, South Croydon will be reignited early in 2021. The same applies to the group at Christ Church, Purley. Resources are still available for other groups who would like to start and everyone continues to pray and give thanks to God for all that is done and for all those in need.

Advocate for the rights of families

Gender-Based Violence

Each year the MU engages in the global campaign - 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence. This included

- Opportunities for personal prayer and reflection.
- Socially distanced services based on a special MU service for Global day (St. Barnabas, Sutton).
- Engaging with the online Protest NoMore1in3.



Supporting the women in need: Sadly, during the pandemic The Lily Trust which had previously been supported by the MU closed without forewarning. Nevertheless, a number of branches have been involved in collecting and distributing resources for local Women's Refuges in Croydon, Sutton and Reigate & Banstead. This work has both supported women in need and their children as well as raised awareness of the permanent and increasing effect of domestic abuse. Examples of these actions include:

- St. Mary, Addington donated £200 to their local refuge.
- St. Dunstan, Cheam with others in the Sutton Deanery, regularly collecting donations for items including toiletries, biscuits, chocolates and crackers, plus, for the 4th year, got Homebase to donate a large real Christmas tree, which the children at the refuge loved decorating.
- The Horley Branch provided supermarket vouchers for Reigate & Banstead Women's Refuge which houses 11 women and their children at any one time. They also sent 12 packs of nappies, 3 bags of baby clothes, 1 toy, 8 general baby items, 37 general toiletry items, 10 maternity items.



St. Mildred, Addiscombe delivered about 500 items of toiletries, baby items, children's books, toys and games to the local women's refuge & the Lily Trust

Building supportive, loving relationships

Nurturing membership: The main focus for many Branches in 2020 has been to nurture its membership at a time when many felt incredibly vulnerable. The increasing use of technology has been seen as a vital lifeline for local groups to keep in touch. This has been facilitated through WhatsApp groups, Zoom as well as emails. These tools have been used to support each other through prayer and fellowship and to keep members up to date with all the helpful communications and support available from the MU nationally. The range of activities online included:

- A fortnightly short story book club meeting on zoom (St. John's, Caterham).
- Sharing crafts and presentations using YouTube (St. Augustine's, Grove Park).
- Celebrating VE-Day; finding out more about a link Diocese; mindfulness colouring (Horley).
- Virtual outings shared with other branches – facilitated by St. Mildred's, Addiscombe.

However, for those members without access to technology significant work has been done to reduce their risk of isolation through the use of phone calls and access to printed material. Members have demonstrated love and care by keeping these individuals connected as well as offering practical support when particularly older members have been self-isolating.

Some events have however taken place face to face. At the beginning of the year fundraising and social events did take place e.g., music quiz, afternoon tea parties, and bring and buy for MU funds.

After the first initial lock down confidence returned with a number of branches engaging in face-to-face events all be it within the rules of social distancing. These included:

- VE Day garden party (Sutton): MU members and passers-by were welcomed to eat, drink and dance; offering support particularly for those who had not spoken to anyone face to face for many months.
- Summer mini tea parties (Horley): To give support to members and raise funds for MU. Hosts agreed to open their gardens and up to 5 other members took their own tea. So successful we repeated the teas on 2 further occasions with hosts providing refreshments.
- A Produce Stall outside with donations to the Mothers' Union (St. James, New Malden).
- Walks around the parish to different members' homes for doorstep prayers and conversations (St, John's, Caterham).



VE Day Garden celebration: Donations were given for the food which raised £48.70 for NHS Charities.

As Christmas arrived with restrictions continuing members thought creatively around how they could support each other including:

- St. Andrew and St. Mark's, Surbiton put together small bags individually wrapped with a Christmas teabag and Biscoff biscuits. These were given to all members and supporters with an MU Christmas card.
- Horley Branch provided Christmas pastoral gifts to lift members spirits as Christmas approached without the usual interaction.
- At Christ Church, Gipsy Hill one member arranged to demonstrate how to make Christmas wreaths in her garden at a distance. They were sold and donations given to MU.



Making Christmas Wreaths – socially distanced Fundraising for MU Christ Church, Gipsy Hill

Supporting the vulnerable: The MU members have continued to support those suffering from or caring for people with poor health in the community which has been particularly difficult due to the restrictions to those in hospital. Sadly, the successful project known as Tea @ 3 at the Evelina Children's Hospital (based at St Thomas' Hospital) had to be put on hold as a result of the pandemic. Nevertheless, knitted items have been delivered to the hospital. In addition, many knitted baby items were delivered to:

- the special care baby unit at St Helier, (Sutton Deanery)
- Croydon University hospital (St. Mark, Sth Norwood,) this included 21 cot blankets and 33 premature baby matinee jackets.

At St Barnabas, Sutton two members have helped in the community. One delivering prescriptions for the local pharmacy, and one helping at the local vaccination hub. At Mortlake one member has made scrubs for care homes and in Motspur Park they gathered toiletries for Kingston Emergency admissions.

Members in local MU branches have been involved through their churches, in supporting those in need during this difficult year. This has included:

- Support for Foodbanks, food boxes (Redhill, Woolwich incl. St. John's, Deptford & Kingston)
- Delivering Christmas dinners to the needy on Christmas eve. (Woolwich)
- Provision of tablets for homes schooling – delivering four basic laptops to a local CoE Primary School (Horley)



Writing Christmas cards for those using the foodbank

Engaging with families locally: Branch members continue to engage with local families leading and participating in a range of spiritual, social and practical activities along with their church communities. This includes:

- Horley branch, led a project with members of the congregations to knit Christmas Angels tree decorations. This resulted in 200 angels being hidden on The Acres housing estate, exceeding the original goal of 150. A further 24 were placed in a box in the café and 36 used by St. Francis' Pastoral Team as gifts to the isolated and vulnerable.
- Two members at the Tadworth Branch who are normally involved with the weekly Saturday café have taken to delivering cakes themselves to people who would normally attend the café.
- A number of branches have continued with their work to support baptism families, including cards for anniversaries (e.g., Sutton; Caterham).



Developing our own relationship with God

Throughout the year the Mothers' Union in Southwark has continued to witness in prayer and worship, although much of this has been on line. This has included:

- Monthly topical Discussion & Prayer evening on zoom in the Reigate deanery.
- Cathedral prayers as well as area and deanery mid-day prayers supported online through zoom with contributions from members across the diocese.
- Diocesan retreat session held on line and facilitated by Caroline Welby.
- Diocesan Advent service held on Tuesday, 1st December, on Zoom which was led by the Revd Canon Les Wells. Originally, the service was due to be held at St. Bartholomew, Horley where he is the team rector.
- Local branch services online (anniversary celebrations at St. Augustine's Grove Park; Deanery service at St. Mildred's Addiscombe as part of 16 days of Activism).



When the opportunity arose some socially distanced worship also took place:

- Prayers and poems on Remembrance and Christmas (St. Johns, Catford).
- Wave of Prayer in Church and coffee in memorial gardens, (St. Barnabas, Sutton).
- Christmas Communion service (St. Paul's, Hook; St. Barnabas, Sutton).
- Celebrating Mary Sumner Day at the 10am eucharist (St. John's, Caterham).
- VE Day service (St. Barnabas, Sutton).



Other activities included

- St. John's, Old Malden members producing a booklet titled "Joy to the World" where members had sent in a favourite poem, reading or prayer,

Moving forward in 2021

The 2020 theme of Building hope and confidence was timely and pertinent, and this year has shown how members have been reaching out to each other and to the wider community in their suffering during this global pandemic. In recognition that the effects of COVID-19 will continue to be felt across the world for years to come the MU seek in 2021 to build on this with a theme of **rebuilding hope and confidence**.

In response to this the MU in Southwark is working hard to review ways in which members can continue to be supported to grow and flourish together. The emerging strategy is focused on promoting inclusion in a diverse population across Southwark and the need to set the MU at the heart of the Church and its mission in local communities. The Trustees are therefore developing plans to strengthen communication and understanding of the way the MU can work effectively to provide hope and confidence in its Christian care for families.

Safeguarding

As an organisation concerned with Christian principles and ministry in family life, the nurture and protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults is at the heart of Mothers' Union. Both individually as members and collectively as an organisation, Mothers' Union fulfils its duty to protect children, young people and vulnerable adults, doing everything possible to ensure that they are safe when involved in Mothers' Union activities.

Safeguarding policies and practices issued by the Anglican Church, and the Anglican Consultative Council (ACC) charter for the safety of people within the churches of the Anglican Communion are followed. Guidance is shared with members to help identify those who may present a risk to others and, should this occur, how to seek appropriate pastoral support for them.

During the last year the vulnerability of many has become more evident and so the MU is continuing to find new ways to build strong links with local parish and wider church leaders in helping each other to keep safe.

Data Protection

As an organisation the Diocese of Southwark Mothers' Union takes its duties under the relevant Data protection legislation seriously. Its actions are guided by Diocesan policy and advice from Mary Sumner House. Work is underway to ensure access to privacy notices are available through the web site and in hardcopy. Guidance to role holders has been circulated along with consent forms to be used in line with Diocesan and Central MU advice. The Trustees have made it a priority to maintain good Information Governance practice and provide support to all those responsible for holding personal data.

Financial Review

Under the Charities Act 2011, the Trustees have prepared a statement of accounts for 2020 which gives a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Mothers' Union Southwark Diocese. Full details can be found in the Annual Accounts.

Accounting Policies: The accounts have been prepared in accordance with applicable accounting standards and the Charities SORP.

The accounts include all transactions, assets and liabilities for which the Trustees are responsible in law.

Financial performance – General and unrestricted funds: General Funds represent the funds of the Trustees that are not subject to any restrictions regarding their use and are available for application on the general purposes of the Trustees. Funds designated for a particular purpose by the Trustees are also unrestricted. In 2020, £15,000 within the General Funds was held in the designated contingency fund.

In 2020 total income into unrestricted funds was £25,392. Of this income £34,227 was spent from unrestricted funds to support the administration and mission of the Southwark Diocesan Mothers' Union. The net result however for the year was an excess of expenditure over income of £8,835 on unrestricted funds. This was managed through the use of reserves which totalled £53,979 at the beginning of 2020. A donation of £10,100 to the Mothers' Union Emergency Appeal due to the Covid-19 pandemic was made from the General Fund. Unrestricted funds totalling £60,169 were carried forward at 31st December 2020.

Financial performance - Restricted Funds

Restricted funds are to be used for specified purposes as laid down by the donor. Expenditure which meets these criteria is charged to the fund

There were restricted donations totalling £31,114 in the year (this includes money sent to MSH which contributes to the leadership, administration and mission of MU worldwide). These are given to support all the various Diocesan and Mothers' Union Central funds (these are set out in the accounts). The total balance of restricted funds at 31st December was £26,175.

Receipts: Collections, subscriptions, donations and interest are recognised when received. Income tax recoverable on Gift Aid donations is recognised when the income is recognised; however, £1480 Gift Aid due in 2019 was paid in 2020, making the total received £5,274.

Funds raised through any other sources, including through sales of literature purchased from Mothers' Union Enterprises (MUE) are accounted for gross.

Payments: Grants and donations are accounted for when paid over.

Reserves Policy: Reserves are defined as income that becomes available and which is to be expended at the discretion of the Trustees in furtherance of their objects, but which has not yet been spent, committed or designated. The Trustees recognise the need to hold reserves to allow protection of the core activities in the event of income shortfalls and to promote balanced strategic planning. Through prudent housekeeping over a number of years, the reserves have been built up to the current level and include a legacy of £26,989 received in 2016 of which £10,000 of this has been allocated to support AFIA and the project focusing on Communicating English.

The Trustee Board budgets and plans its expenditure and intends to maintain reserves that will protect the Charity against income shortfalls. A sum of £15,000 has also been set aside in a designated fund to rent and equip a Diocesan Mothers' Union Office should the present premises become unavailable, and to cover the secretary's salary for 6 months in an emergency.

Investment Policy: The Trustees continue to invest in the Central Board of Finance of the Church of England.

Communication

The Southwark Mothers' Union continues to use a range of tools for communicating with its members and the wider community.

This includes joining with the Diocesan website where information about the organisation, services, the wave of prayer and projects and publications are posted resulting in a steady flow of visitors during the year- about 1000-page views in total.

<https://southwark.anglican.org/mission-ministry/faith-in-action/mothers-union/>

There has also been an active use of Twitter https://twitter.com/MU_Southwark. There have been 590 tweets in all. We have 84 followers

The Facebook page has been very successful - sharing information from the wider MU community - nationally and internationally - as well as events and activities within branches and the Diocese.

<https://www.facebook.com/MothersUnionSouthwarkDiocese>

During the year 174 people visited the page with approximately 608 views.

Discussions have also been ongoing with MSH as they look to develop communities of interest to connect members more widely.



Leadership and Governance

Leadership

The affairs of the Mothers' Union in the diocese are managed by the Board of Trustees. Under the Diocesan Constitution and Handbook, revised 2005 and regularly reviewed, the Trustees are elected on a triennial basis. The Trustee Board have been in office since 1 January 2019.

All subscribing members of the MU in the diocese are entitled to vote for the Diocesan President and Unit Co-ordinators; members from each geographical Area vote for their own Vice President and two area representatives on the Trustee Board.

The Trustees appoint the Honorary Treasurer and may co-opt up to three additional members with specific skills onto the Trustee Board for the triennial. The Diocesan Chaplain (Revd Esther Foss) is appointed after consultation between the Diocesan Bishop and the Southwark MU President. Also appointed by the Trustee Board are a number of officers listed in Annex 1. The Trustees employ a part-time secretary, who manages the office and provides administrative support for the Trustee Board.

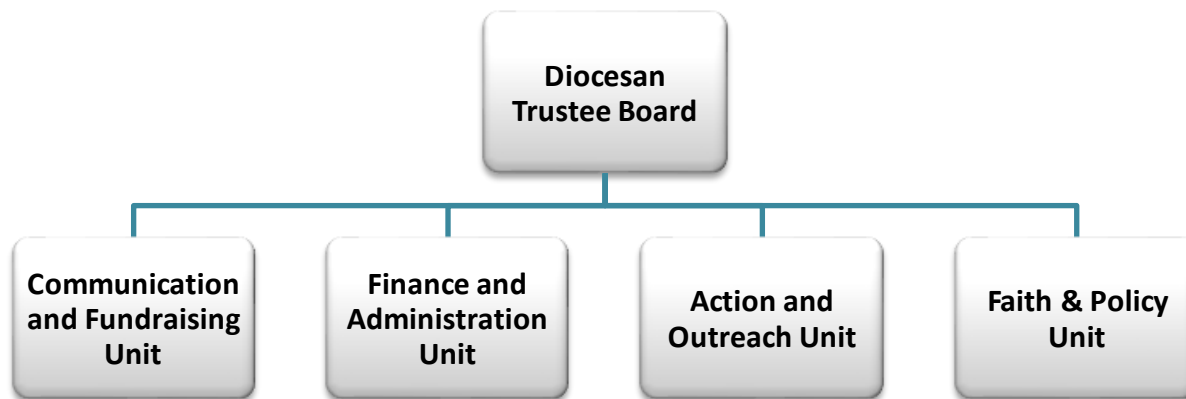
Governance Structure

The Trustee Board generally meets five times a year to develop and monitor MU plans and duties. Feedback is taken to Diocesan Council, meeting twice a year, when the membership is given the opportunity to vote on proposed plans in line with the aim and objects of Mothers' Union.

This year all meetings since the end of March, including Trustee, Council meetings and Unit meetings have taken place on line as a result of Government restrictions due to COVID-19 outbreak.

The Annual General Meeting (AGM) is arranged for July at which meeting the Annual Report and Accounts are presented to the membership. Council meetings and the AGM are open to all members although voting rights at Diocesan Council are restricted.

Within the Southwark Diocesan Mothers' Union there are four working units reporting to the Trustee Board and to Diocesan Council, coordinating diocesan activity and advising on policy and performance.



Southwark Diocesan Mothers' Union is divided into four geographical areas (Croydon, Kingston, Reigate and Woolwich). These four areas are subdivided into deaneries and thence into branches which coincide in most instances with Anglican church parishes.

Membership / Volunteers

In 2020, there were 60 branches in the Diocese to which over 1085 members belong, in addition to 6 deanery and 44 diocesan members, a total of 1135. Numbers of members and branches are sadly falling and a number of initiatives have been taken to widen the membership with some success across the Diocese.

Indoor Members are also well supported by local Branches as well as the additional support of the Diocesan Indoor member correspondent Olu Akitoye. In 2020, 6 new members were added to the list and 2 sadly passed away.

Member training and development

During 2020 branches continued to be supported with information, policies and presentations at Council meetings. In March where it was possible to meet face to face the revised safeguarding policies were presented with training offered by the Southwark Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor. At

the October Council meeting held on zoom members were introduced to tools developed as part of Metamorphosis the MU strategy for community engagement and transformation.

Although Branch leader meetings were established with the Diocesan President more formal training events to support officers were not possible. Plans are being developing to consider future models of flexible online training for officers.

In some areas of the Diocese, branches highlighted significant difficulties in securing leadership capacity to develop and grow their membership. Supporting these areas will be a high priority in the coming year as restrictions start to lift.

Members were also kept in contact through the newsletter which went online as well as resources and programmes of activity through the active work of the communications lead, cascaded down through VPs and area representatives.

Feedback from local Branches

The engagement of members at branch, deanery and area level is evident through regular reports to trustees as well as in the wide-ranging feedback within this report. Although many branches would normally hold monthly or quarterly meetings, and events throughout the year, many of these have not been possible. Nevertheless, this report provides evidence of the hard work members have continued to do to find ways to offer fellowship and wider community engagement as well as prayer and learning.

Each initiative has been part of our Aim, Purpose and Mission and leaves a lasting legacy on families here in the Diocese and worldwide. The Trustees are proud of the achievements of Southwark Mothers' Union members who offer friendship, care and love to many families within the Diocese and throughout the world.

Administrative Information

The Mothers' Union Southwark Diocese is under the patronage and sanction of the Bishop of the Diocese. It is affiliated to its parent charity, The Mothers' Union (Reg. Charity No. 240531, headquarters at Mary Sumner House, Westminster), but is an autonomous organisation.

Registered office:

Mothers' Union Office, Trinity House, 4 Chapel Court, Borough High Street, London SE1 1HW.

Tel: 020 7939 9459 Email: mu@southwark.anglican.org

Bank: HSBC, 66 High Street, New Malden, Surrey KT3 4HD

Independent Examiner: Mr A J Kett FCA, Little Dolby, Ifield Road, Charlwood, Surrey, RH6 0DR

Trustee Board members are appointed for three years from 1 January 2019. A list of Trustees and other officers can be found in Annex 1.

Report Approval

This report was approved by the Trustees on 16th June 2021 and signed on their behalf by:

Comfort Idowu-Fearon

Diocesan President (Southwark MU)

Annex 1

List of Trustees and officers

Trustees (appointed from 1 January 2019)

Diocesan President	Comfort Idowu-Fearon
Vice President for Croydon	Sally Steele
Vice Presidents for Woolwich	Jennifer Davis & Catherine Hall
Vice President for Reigate	Penny Lohead
Vice President for Kingston	Wendy Moss
Fundraising and Communications Unit Coordinator	Penny Lohead & Margaret Simmons
Finance and Administration Unit Coordinator	Joy Morrall
Faith and Policy Unit Coordinator	Cathy Brown (from June 2019)
Croydon Area Representatives	Olu Akitoye & Cathy Brown
Woolwich Area Representatives (2019 & 2020)	Althea Smith & Grace Adeoye
Reigate Area Representatives	Jennifer Kempself & Susan Gibbin
Kingston Area Representatives	Eastlyne Douglin & Vacancy

Attendees (non-voting)

Hon Treasurer	Jean Cartwright
Diocesan Secretary	Anne Love
Chaplain	Revd Esther Foss
Diocesan Safeguarding lead (co-opted)	Susan Gibbin

Other Officers

Away From It All (AFIA) Coordinator	Sally Steele
Action and Outreach Unit Coordinator	Cynthia Smith
Newsletter Editor	Val Green
Training Officer	Francesca Turner
Indoor Member Coordinator	Olu Akitoye
Gift Aid coordinator	Ann Squirrell