



## TRUSTEE REPORT 2016

Eastern Baptist Association  
Member of the Baptist Union of Great Britain  
Registered charity no. 1089795  
Company limited by guarantee registered in England no. 4221429  
Registered office: 46 Churchill Road, Thetford, IP24 2JZ  
[www.easternbaptist.org.uk](http://www.easternbaptist.org.uk)

### Objectives and Activities

The Trustees believe that advancement of the Christian faith, particularly as expressed through the Baptist movement, is of public benefit as it encourages social cohesion, provides an ethical framework for life and works itself out in the sacrificial giving of funds, time and effort by church members and attenders for the good of their own community and beyond.

As part of their work and witness, the Baptist Churches in membership with Eastern Baptist Association deliver a wide variety of activities which benefit the general public. These activities include: -

- promoting the study of religious teachings, practices and scriptures
- Support of religious office holders e.g. ministers, deacons and elders of member churches
- promoting prayer, praise and provision of training events
- pastoral support to ministers and church congregations;
- contributing to the spiritual and moral education of children and young people and the provision of training to comply with the legal requirements regarding safeguarding.

The Vision Statement of the Eastern Baptist Association is

**“To see God’s kingdom grow in the East of England through healthy churches, living as wholesome communities and engaging in relevant mission.”**

Below are some specific examples of how this has been achieved in this last year

To see Gods Kingdom grow through healthy churches....

2016 saw the second round of the “Regional Ministers new way of working” overall this new way has been positively received, member churches have feedback that having focused times when the Regional Minister visits has been good. The Regional Ministers have found that this has helped bridge some gaps in relationship and enhanced every relationship with each member church. Ministers were given the opportunity to attend a conflict management training day to give them skills to manage situations where conflict could happen.

Living as wholesome communities....

The safeguarding training has been updated during 2016 and the few courses that ran towards the end of 2016 have been very positive about the updated version. Around 320 individuals attended the training during 2016 more courses have been booked for 2017. The Regional team have also assisted churches in resolving disputes, dealing with conflicts and issues with buildings and property. The association was also able to signpost various other information evenings or training days that have been held by other agencies within our region that would have been of benefit to our members.

Engaging in relevant mission.

The association has looked for ways in which we can learn from each other and share ideas. Within our churches there is plenty of really good mission that has seen some good results with more people interested in God. The association has seen its role to signpost churches to other churches who have done a similar project to share their journey.

### Achievements, Performance and Developments

2016 has been a stable year from a staff point of view. The year started with a full complement of Regional Ministers Revd Richard Lewis who is also team leader and is based in the North of our region, Revd Simon Goddard who is based in the central part of our region and Revd Nick Lear who is based in the southern part of our region. Mr Paul Hancock continued as Association Treasurer. Mrs Julie Eady continues as Book keeper, Mrs Hayley Beckett as Association Secretary and Revd David Mayne as Association Moderator. In June as anticipated David stood down as moderator and Revd Linda Turner was duly elected for a four year term. Richard Lewis also informed the trustees that he would be retiring in 2017, the trustees took steps to consult the churches on the role of a Regional Minister and put together a Job description for a replacement. Interviews were held towards the end of 2016 and the trustees were pleased to be able to announce that Revd Beth Powney would succeed Richard Lewis during 2017.

2016 also saw the review of the associations objectives which led to the development of a revised strap line "Growing healthy churches in relationship for Gods Mission in the East of England" this is the same as the Baptist union's strapline with the addition of the last three words which symbolises us being a part of the union within our area of Great Britain. The trustee board in consultation with the churches have been working on some strategic priorities to give this strapline life and we hope to roll these out during 2017

The membership of the association is currently 176

2016 started with the following members of the trustee board in place: Revd Linda Tuner, Mrs Jeniya Gwendu and Revd Richard Shorter as co-opted members. As task group leaders: Revd Peter Neale for Administration, Revd Graeme Ross for Mission Strategy and Mrs Helen Thatcher as Finance, Revd Peter Thomas for Mission resourcing and social action, Mr Andrew Wade for communication and Mrs Melanie Pike for the children's task group. At the AGM, Revd Jim Mullin was re-elected for World Mission, Mr Andrew Dalwood was re-elected for Ministry and Mr Tom Greene was elected for the Youth task group. In addition Revd Linda Turner moved to become Moderator.

The Association has once again been involved in various aspects in the life of the churches. These are:

### **1. Ministry**

The Ministry Task Group only met twice during 2016. We have continued to develop training for moderators, and a second moderator training morning was held in the summer. Two checklists were developed which moderators could use with churches, including one for planning an induction. More moderator training is proposed for 2017.

We have continued to consider the 'Ignite' report, particularly the section on Continuing Ministerial Development. The group brought to Council the matter of training offered by the EBA and from that came a list of what is already available through the EBA, thanks to NL. This allows the Group to work on what is still lacking.

A list of lay preachers who had given permission for their names and contact details to be circulated to churches needing preachers had been compiled and passed to the RMs for use as necessary. The same constraints on circulating contact details apply to ministers out of pastorate or retired, and work is in progress to create a list of those ministers who can offer preaching, moderating, pastoring and support for churches in need of assistance (and to know which ministers feel they are no longer able to be involved). Both of these will need ongoing attention to be kept up to date.

The welcome meal held in January of 2017 was again very beneficial with many new ministers and their spouses attending.

The Ministerial Recognition Committee this year has met with 12 Candidates 9 of which have been commended for ministerial training, 2 have been commended for National Accreditation as Pastoral Ministers and 1 who is in the process of local recognition of pastoral ministry.

## 2. Mission Strategy/Mission Resourcing

Graeme Ross task group leader for Mission Strategy has worked towards one simple goal which is to encourage and to challenge all EBA churches and the people within them to be willing to share the good news with the people around them. In order to achieve the goal, we have produced a number of parables and questions that are designed to encourage churches to think about and to consider their life in these five key areas:

The **P**laces where they are

The **O**pportunities that there are in those places to share and be good news

The **I**nspiration that they need and also that they can share with others

That we **N**eed God rather than trying to do his work without him.

To consider what **T**rainning that we need to share our faith.

Whilst we have produced some good and useful resources it is difficult to measure if we have been successful in making all or even most EBA churches more missional. We have had some good feedback from people who have engaged with our mission mailings and parables but from most churches there is a resounding silence.

This leaves us to consider how we can communicate effectively with our churches regarding the strategy and the resources which we are producing. Going forward we have developed some aims for 2017 and will start to put plans and ideas into place for the coming year.

## 3. Youth

In June of 2016 we had the pleasure of Tom Greene joining the trustee board as task group leader for Youth. After finding his feet within the workings of the association he is looking forward to 2017. Tom has aims and objectives ready for 2017 and hopes that during the year some of these will come to fruition and some will start to be developed.

## 4. Finance

The EBA have continued to provide three Regional Ministers for the Association despite the continued backdrop of falling income from the main income source which fell short of the Baptist Union Appeal target. Resources expended on charitable activities was £234,782 including governance. £105,896 was awarded in Home Mission grants. When combining these two and comparing to income, we actually achieved a balanced budget for the year. This is not expected in future years due to inflationary pressures on costs and increased Home Mission Grants likely. 2016 has seen significant one off receipts of funds from several sources, the largest two amounting to £777,857. Total funds at the year-end including unrestricted, restricted and designated funds were £2,105,837.

The main focus in respect to financial matters for 2017 will be to ensure that extra income is invested prudently to ensure a secure future for the Association. However, the issue of quantifying pension deficit liabilities both for EBA itself and any liability that the EBA might have for EBA churches, is certainly one that will require significant funds being committed by the Association.

### Principal Funding Sources

The charity's main source of income are the payments from the Baptist Union for both Operational Funding and Mission Payments which are calculated according to a funding formula which is applied to the total amount received by the BU for Home Mission from churches. Further income is received from investments, rental income and preaching fees.

### Principal Expenditure

The majority of expenditure is directly related to the provision of 3 Regional Ministers which Council consider the minimum needed to service the needs of all the EBA churches over such a vast area. This includes amounts to main the property portfolio to a good standard of repair. The RM team is supported by a Company Secretary for governance issues, and a Finance Officer. Loans to churches were temporarily suspended due to a need for investigations triggered by the FCA. The

year-end amount owed by churches was £201,686. There were 7 awards made under the Bursary Fund scheme, totalling £2,120.

#### Property matters

The Finance Group oversees the property portfolio for the EBA. The Thetford house continues as the RM manse for the northern sector. The Wickford property is the RM manse for the southern sector. In addition, under the terms of the Finance Arrangement for Associations with the BU, a property is owned in Bury St Edmunds, by the BU, and is used as the RM manse for the central sector. The rental property in Wickford continues to be let to generate income to support ministry and governance costs. Moving forward, all properties continue to be reviewed annually to maintain the five year plan for routine maintenance and planned refurbishment of the three EBA properties.

### **5. World Mission**

Jim Mullin continued to serve in the role of Task group leader. During the year the group has expanded and welcomed a new member although due to time commitments have only managed to meet once, However the group feel they have made progress looking at the following items;

- Mission Acts is now ready to be rolled out by BMS (A tool designed to aid the churches in developing a world mission strategy)
- Had two overseas mission events in Cambridgeshire attended by 20 or so churches
- Made presentations on the work of the group at EBA assembly and at the ministers conference
- Supported young people going on mission to Africa & India
- Young people from a number of EBA churches have been on BMS action teams
- Elnur Jabiyevev of Upton Vale Baptist Church and Turkic Belt Ministries, has been invited to speak to EBA churches on the persecuted church in the "Turkic Belt"
- We have attended the Council of Reference of BMS on behalf of the association

### **6. Ministerial Support**

The Ministers' Conference held in February at High Leigh Conference Centre was attended by just over 100 ministers both retired and active and some spouses.

The speaker at the conference was Revd Alan Donaldson, General Secretary of the Baptist Union of Scotland. Alan was received well by those that attended sharing some of the work done up in Scotland and encouraged all present that continual ministerial development is really important to keep yourself inspired and fresh within your own ministry.

### **7. Administration and Communication**

2015 saw the continued development of the way we offer secretarial support to our Regional Ministers in the form of booking preaching engagements and other appointments. The team are still learning how to make best and most effective use of Microsoft 365. Facebook and twitter still exist although have not been used to the best of their ability. The trustees have reviewed most of the existing policies updating those that needed to be updated. The communication task group has identified people with the churches who have gifting in communications and they are forming a group to look at this throughout 2017. The aim being to redevelop the website and look at logo design and branding for the association, to assess the current technological methods of communication and to decide which the best method for the association to use to communicate most effectively with the member churches.

### **8. Church Support**

The settlement of ministers and churches continues to be facilitated by the Association through the National Settlement Team of the Baptist Union. In addition the Regional Team has provided support for churches through preaching, teaching weekends and supportive visits providing advice on a number of issues, this year association has been able to identify a number of people, who have been trained in conflict management to assist the Regional team in providing conflict resolution when the need arises. The Home Mission grants committee considered applications from 19 churches, 3 special ministries and 4 chaplaincy partnerships. Each application is considered on its

own merit and if successful grants are awarded for a 3 year period measured by an active mission action plan. The grants committee submitted its recommendations to the trustees and these recommendations were agreed.

**9. Ecumenical**

The regional staff continue to relate to ecumenical structures in the region within the counties where they are based. Further Ecumenical work is supported by Denominational officers in the counties. This work is particularly important where Baptists are partners.

**10. Risk Assessment**

An annual risk assessment continues to take place in the areas required by the Charities Commission. This is completed in October each year.

**11. Serious Incidents**

There are no serious incidents that the Regional Ministers/Council are aware of that require reporting.

There have been no significant events affecting the Association's financial position since the end of the year, the trustees are aware of the current financial position and are taking steps to discuss and implement ways forward. There are no commitments or guarantees requiring disclosure.

..... Approved

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