

# Review of 2016

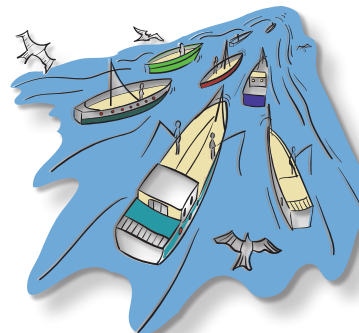
*Trustees Report*



## **BAPTISTS TOGETHER**



*The full Trustee Report and Accounts for 2016 is available from [baptist.org.uk](http://baptist.org.uk)*



## Vision and Culture

We believe that we must intentionally develop a Union that encourages and builds upon our relationships together as more than 1900 member churches, 13 member Regional Associations and 5 member Colleges i.e. Baptists Together.

### Why do we exist?

Baptists Together exists to grow healthy churches in relationship for God's mission.

### How do we behave?

We believe that we must intentionally develop a culture where we...

**Follow Jesus** and seek to be a movement of Spirit led communities. As those who have encountered the living Christ, to intentionally seek his will and purpose for our local churches and every expression of our shared life. (Galatians 5:22-25)

**Embrace Adventure** – being serious about discipleship, willing to take risks, pioneer and move out of the comfort zone of familiar ways of doing things. (Matthew 28:18-20)

**Inspire others** – with a generosity of spirit, energise and motivate people to be all that God created them to be. (Ephesians 5:1 & 2)

**Feel like one Team** – celebrating diversity; valuing, respecting and trusting each other as we work together in partnerships - making sure everyone feels included and listened to. (I Corinthians 12:24b-27)

**Share a Hunger for God's coming Kingdom** – nurturing a "holy discontent" that arises from our desire to give practical expression to our vision of God's purpose for creation - confronting evil, injustice and hypocrisy and challenging worldly attitudes to power, wealth, status and security both within and beyond our Union. (Matthew 6:9 & 10)



# Review of 2016

## Trustees Report

## Priorities looking towards 2020

- ***Our vision for Baptists Together is clearly embraced and understood*** and our renewed culture has become the norm.
- ***We have established structures for relating that reflect our governance report*** and enable relationships of trust to flourish and mission to be enabled as easily as possible.
- ***We have a clear grasp of the health of our churches*** and a clear understanding of what needs to be done where to enable mission across Baptists Together
- ***To have implemented the Ministries Project recommendations***
- ***To navigate well the issues of human sexuality*** and find a settled place
- ***To implement the Loaves and Fishes project*** to identify new income streams
- ***To ensure that a strategy is developed and implemented to stabilise the Pension scheme***
- ***To complete and implement the review of our safeguarding***
- ***To develop the database to incorporate the needs of Associations and our Union as a whole.***
- ***To further develop our communications strategy.***





## Achievements and Performance

*Overall our Union made good progress in 2016. Key successes were:*

- **The launch of the new Collaborate national database** has largely addressed the objective of having a single database for Baptists Together.
- **The completion of the Fit4Mission survey** and the sharing of the resulting analysis has given us a clearer picture of the state of the churches in Baptists Together.
- **The Launch of new Level 2 and Level 3 Excellence in Safeguarding training** programmes and “Train the trainer” sessions for Safeguarding.
- **Completion of the Review of Ministerial Recognition rules** in the light of legislation on Same Sex Marriage, and the development of a proposal of guidance notes for ministers, which has subsequently been approved in 2017.
- **Significant progress in our Communications strategy** and engagement through more effective use of our website and social media.
- **Formation of the Pension Employers Group** and their subsequent work to develop a proposed “Family Solution” to the deficit in the Baptist Pension Scheme, giving us a way forward to address the challenges as we enter the triennial valuation process in 2017.



*There have been areas where we have not made as much progress as we would like, including:*

- Development of new income streams, where little progress was made following the Loaves and Fishes report.
- Limited progress around improving our governing structures in Baptists Together and this will be an area of focus in 2017
- Progress on implementing the recommendations from the Ignite report on the future of Ministries has been slower than we would like, although progress has been made on developing the Calling Marks of Ministry element of the proposals.



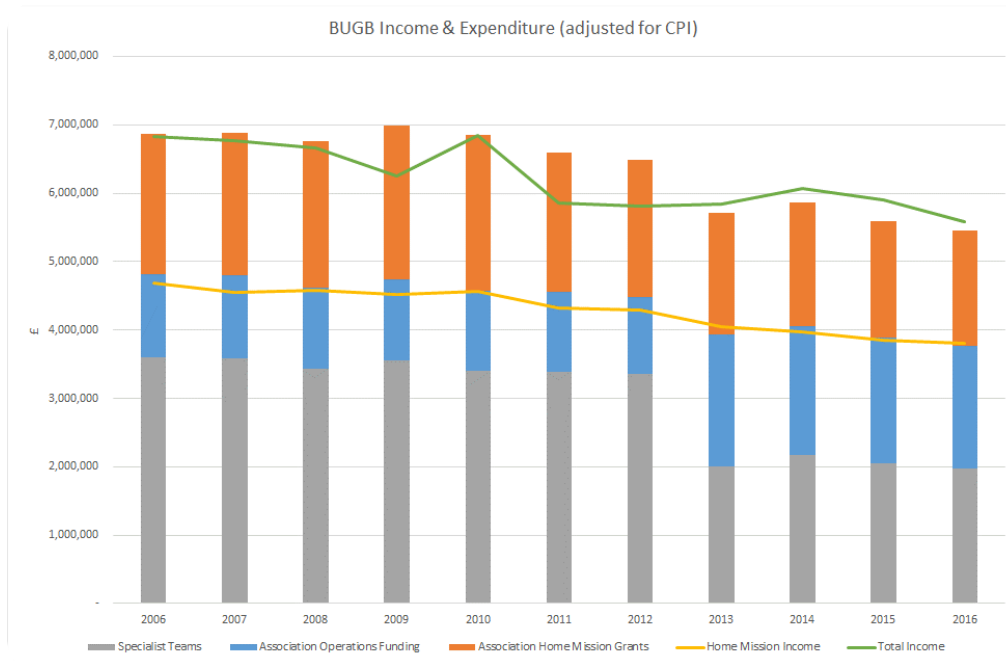
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## Trustees Report

## Fundraising and Home Mission



**Most of the Union's income is raised for its member churches on a voluntary basis.** The Union has set a goal in this respect for every church to give at least 5% of its General Fund Income to the Home Mission Appeal. In 2016, the Union Trustees set an appeal figure of £4.11m (2015: £4.11m), whilst the actual amount raised was £3.81m (2015: £3.83m) which was 93% of target. The trustees are disappointed that we have been unable to increase income in line with growth in the economy, and are examining ways to improve income in the coming years.



**There has been a steady downward trend in Home Mission income,** with a year on year decline in every year since 2010. We have reduced our expenditure in line with this downward trend, with the most significant step down in 2013 following the completion of the Futures process. The Trustees continue to monitor the situation closely to ensure that we secure the financial sustainability of our work.

## Ministries Team



*One of the major areas of work support for our churches is the training and development of ministers who enable mission and ministry*

In 2016, 41 people started ministerial training at our colleges compared with 29 in 2015. The Ministries Team enrolled 36 ministers as Newly Accredited Ministers (2015: 49). 67 ministers progressed from Newly Accredited Minister to the status Fully Accredited Minister (2015: 58).



The Ministries Team supports the operation of the National Settlement Team (NST), which includes representatives of each Regional Association. NST works to nominate Ministers and final year Ministers in Training seeking a ministerial role to churches seeking ministers. In total 59 (2015: 54) Fully Accredited Ministers and 31 (2015: 45) Newly Accredited Ministers were called by Churches via the settlement process in 2016. 116 (2015: 93) churches that had engaged with the settlement system were settled.



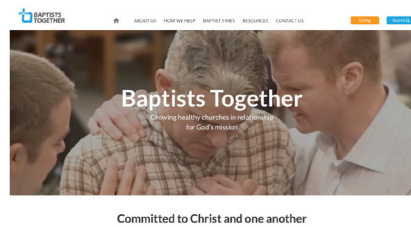


## Faith and Society Team

*The Baptists Together website ([www.baptist.org.uk](http://www.baptist.org.uk))* continues to be the hub of our communications strategy, supplemented by monthly Baptists Together Updates and electronic mailings. Last year the website had 1.7 million views, a 100% increase compared to 2014.

We have continued to develop and promote our social media profile and we now post to:

- **Facebook**
- **Twitter**
- **Flickr**
- **YouTube**
- **Instagram**
- **Google+**
- **Pinterest**



*Three editions of the Baptists Together Magazine have been produced* by the Faith & Society Team in 2016, enabling reflection on faith and practise as Baptists Together. It has a circulation of around 10,000 with 4 copies distributed to every local church in our union.

*The Faith & Society Team* enables Baptists to contribute to the Joint Public Issues team, a Baptist, a Methodist, United Reform Church and Church of Scotland collaboration which provides resources and speaks out on issues of justice, social affairs, peace-making, international affairs and the environment. During 2016 much of the work has focussed on responses to the EU referendum, refugee crisis, welfare reform and national security (Trident).

*The short film produced by JPIT highlighting the plight of refugees in the UK, 'A Very British Nativity'* generated over 3000 FB shares and 145K views, over 15K YouTube views. We also contributed to work on Syria, the UK's involvement in the international arms trade and welfare sanctions during December.

*The Faith & Society Team facilitates a number of Working Groups* in order to resource local churches, colleges and associations. These include 3 Justice Groups coving Race, Gender and Disability. During 2016 the groups have been working on developing regional justice hubs to further support and enable local churches.

*The Racial Justice Group have developed two new resources* for churches, 'Moving Stories', a web based download to enable Christians to develop a biblical response to contemporary people movements and the people affected by them and 'Pentecost People', a resource to enable theological reflection and promote guidelines and good practice in multicultural worship.

## Support Services

*Operating churches and the Regional Associations effectively and properly, and in accordance with legislation, is increasingly demanding, the Support Services Team continues to provide support to these organisations in their work.* In 2016 we produced a set of example employment policies for use by Association teams. In 2017 we plan to develop an online HR Hub for churches as a source of best practice and templates and produce training materials for core HR issues in churches



*We have also put considerable work into improving the standards of Safeguarding of Children and Vulnerable adults in our churches.* In particular, we launched new Level 2 and Level 3 Excellence in Safeguarding training programmes. We also carried out "Train the Trainer" events to increase our capacity to offer regular safeguarding training in all regions and published 3 new guides for church safeguarding officers. In the year ahead, we plan a full review of "Safe To Grow" the safeguarding manual published by BUGB.

*The Finance team manage funds received into the Home Mission fund and provide finance services to the subsidiary organisations, some Associations and the Pension team as well as for BUGB itself.*

The formation of the Pension Employers Group and their subsequent work in developing a proposed "Family Solution" to the challenges presented by the deficit in the Baptist Pension Scheme marked a significant step forward in our attempts to deal with this long standing issue. The recommendations have been widely consulted on within Baptists Together and work has begun on implementation, in time to deliver an affordable funding plan under the triennial valuation due in 2017.



*Want to find out more?*

<http://www.baptist.org.uk/associations> or <http://www.baptist.org.uk/colleges>  
For information and links to our Associations and colleges