

**Religion Media Centre**  
**Draft Accounts for the period 1st April 2019 - 31 March 2020**

**Registered Charity Number**

1169562

**Address**

Collaboration House  
 77-79 Charlotte Street  
 London  
 W1T 4PW

**Trustees**

	<u>Date appointed</u>	
Mr Benedict Samuel Rich	10 <sup>th</sup> October 2016	
Rev Christopher Landau	10 <sup>th</sup> October 2016	
Mr Michael Wakelin (chair)	10 <sup>th</sup> October 2016	
Mr Kevin Jaquiss	20 <sup>th</sup> March 2017	
Ms Eleanor Puttock	8 <sup>th</sup> February 2018	resigned November 2019
Ms Remona Aly	8 <sup>th</sup> February 2018	
Dr Mohammed Azim Ahmed	8 <sup>th</sup> February 2018	resigned January 2020
Roger Bolton	26 <sup>th</sup> June 2019	

**Accountant**

Andrew Jennings MA FCA

**Independent Examiner**

Mr Keith Halstead MA (Oxon) FCA

**Bank**

Cooperative Bank, PO Box 101, 1 Balloon Street, Manchester M60 4EP

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## **Trustees Report**

The trustees are pleased to present the annual report of the Religion Media Centre from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020.

### Governance

The Religion Media Centre is a Charitable Incorporated Organization, charity number 1169562, registered on 10<sup>th</sup> October 2016.

Its constitution states its objects are: 'To advance education of the public in world religion, including the Baha'i faith; Buddhism; Christianity; Hinduism; Islam; Jainism; Judaism; Sikhism and Zoroastrianism by: the dissemination of accurate, authoritative, independent and impartial information and research about religious faiths to the media; and the provision of media training to religious organisations.'

The trustees have met 6 times during the year and the advisory council once. The trustees have remained in place, with the exception of Eleanor Puttock and Dr Azim Ahmed who have resigned. Roger Bolton joined as a trustee in June 2019.

Our Trustees are responsible for ultimate responsibility for compliance with charity law and with the RMC's own charitable objectives. They set the RMC's strategic direction; line manage the work of the RMC's director; monitor progress and prioritise the RMC's activities; support the team of consultants and freelancers who work on projects and content; monitor and supervise fund raising initiatives and advise on marketing.

The advisory board met once on 27<sup>th</sup> June 2019. Many members advise the RMC on ongoing projects such as the festival, meeting venues, operational matters, editorial content. The trustees are considering a review of the advisory board and its remit. Its members are:

Professor Adam Dinham:	Director of Faiths and Civic Society at Goldsmiths University, London
Dr Clive Field:	Co-Director of British Religion in Numbers
Canon Ed Newell:	Director Cumberland Lodge
Rev George Pitcher:	Author, journalist and vicar
Jasvir Singh:	Lawyer and co-chair Faiths Forum for London
Professor Jolyon Mitchell:	Director Centre for Theology and Public Issues, Edinburgh University
Katie Harrison:	Director of the Faith Research Centre, ComRes
Lord Navnit Dholakia:	Deputy leader Liberal Democrats in the House of Lords
Nick Spencer:	Research Director Theos
Roger Bolton:	Journalist and broadcaster (joined 26 <sup>th</sup> June 2019)
Rev Tony Miles:	Methodist minister at Westminster Central Hall

### Charitable objectives:

The Religion Media Centre is an impartial and independent organization aiming to help the media report and understand religion. It has no editorial line nor does it promote any one religion, or religious belief in general. Instead, it exists to provide accurate, timely and relevant information to the media, enabling the public to be better informed.



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### **Trustees Report cont'd**

85% of the world's population identifies with a religious group, so understanding religion and belief is and will remain central to public life and debate, however significant the growth of secularism. Tens of millions of people in the UK continue to identify with a religious faith. Religious literacy is essential to understanding the world in which we live. The media plays a key role in developing and enhancing this understanding.

#### Activities, achievements and performance:

- Ruth Peacock has continued her engagement directing activities as project manager on a consultancy basis.
- Editorial: A team of freelance journalists and sub editors has been created who produce news comment and fact sheets. Advice was sought from a journalism consultant to improve the content when funds became available, chiefly by providing news round ups every day to give journalists ideas for stories. Negotiations to redesign the website were started and a design company YorkMix was engaged. New weekly 'zoom briefings' were started when the Covid19 pandemic began, where faith leaders addressed religious stories in the news, to journalists who use material for stories.
- Events: A second Religion in the Media festival 'Exploring Belief' was held on 30<sup>th</sup> April 2019, with speakers including Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks, James Purnell from the BBC and Simon Terrington from Ofcom. More than 200 people attended and feedback was very positive. In February 2020, we held our first annual lecture, with Rev Dr Diarmaid MacCulloch on Insights from History for a Divided Nation. This was in conjunction with St Martin in the Fields and drew an audience of 300.
- Training: we were invited to train groups in presentations on Reporting Religion in Britain, for the NUJ London freelance branch, the NCTJ with Reach PLC and other regional publications, and Press Association trainees.
- Links: We attended the annual meeting of Theology and Religious Studies UK and subsequently signed a Memorandum of Understanding to cement strong links so that academics could help us with our work and we could advise them on matters relating to the media. We met representatives from organisations involved in Religious Education, presenting at the RE council annual meeting and exploring collaborative activities with Culham St Gabriel and NATRE.
- Governance: Two trustees left us due to limited time and availability. A new trustee, the broadcaster Roger Bolton, joined in June 2019. Ruth Peacock undertook refresher safeguarding training. We explored the possibility of paying for Impact studies and began discussions to enhance our structure for monitoring work and resources.
- Finance: we were delighted to receive a grant from the Porticus Trust enabling us to continue for the next four years. We were also grateful to our new accountant and financial adviser Andrew Jennings, who joins on a pro bono basis.

#### Funding:

In this financial year, we received £100,000 from the Porticus Trust and £20,000 from Mr Neil Harbury. The RMC's ambition is to seek donations from a wide variety of organisations, capping the amount from any one institution as a proportion of its annual income in order to protect the Centre from any undue influence. The trustees resolved to step up fundraising to achieve this aim, by



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**Trustees Report cont'd**

engaging Michael Wakelin to build stronger relationships and seek support from media, academic and religious institutions and individual companies, charities, foundations and government.

Payments of fees were made to people acting as consultants, or individual freelances, or small companies.

The RMC has an anti-bribery policy and accepts funds from those who support our vision, values and aims; who have a clear governance structure and transparent accountability.

Our business case is reviewed during the year.

**Statement of public benefit**

The Trustees have complied with their duty to have due regard to the guidance on public benefit published by the Charity Commission in exercising their powers and duties.

Benefit has been demonstrated to journalists and media professionals who have used material for programmes and articles and built their knowledge through training. Academics and RE teachers have been able to spread their knowledge and expertise through providing insight in articles and contributions to discussions with the media. Faith leaders and media organizations have engaged with the media and each other through events, training and discussions.

**Results**

The Charity achieved a surplus of £72,771 (2019 - £16,782) in the year. Net assets at the end of the year were £103,410 (2019 - £30,639) in liquid funds.

**Reserves Policy**

The Charity is keeping future obligations low and currently has no future commitments or overheads as contributors are freelance. The current policy is to retain enough reserves to cover costs and to build up resources to fulfil the Charity's activities at the same level in the ensuing year.

**Responsibilities of Trustees regarding the accounts**

Charity law requires the Trustees to prepare a receipts and payments account and a statement of assets and liabilities for each financial year. In addition, they are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which are sufficient to show and explain the Charity transactions and to disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Charity. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities

Michael Wakelin  
Chair, Religion Media Centre  
Signed on behalf of the Trustees



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**RELIGION MEDIA CENTRE - DRAFT ACCOUNTS 2019-2020**

**RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT 2019-20**

	2020 Unrestricted £	2020 Restricted £	2020 Total £	2019 Unrestricted £	2019 Restricted £	2019 Total £
<b>RECEIPTS</b>						
Grants	120,000	800	120,800	31,000	8,750	39,750
Training	-	-	-	275	-	275
Individual donations	-	-	-	443	-	443
Refund	-	-	-	1,200	-	1,200
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>120,000</b>	<b>800</b>	<b>120,800</b>	<b>32,918</b>	<b>8,750</b>	<b>41,668</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>						
Project direction	12,500	-	12,500	6,000	-	6,000
Communications costs	13,448	-	13,448	9,805	-	9,805
Computers / equipment and web	3,380	-	3,380	2119	-	2119
Fundraising costs	3,759	-	3,759			
Events	3,830	9,676	13,506	153	-	153
Marketing	340	-	340	782	-	782
Travel	180	-	180	537	-	537
Insurance	409	-	409	293	-	293
Professional fees	122	-	122	300	-	300
Training	385	-	385	4,897	-	4,897
<b>Total</b>	<b>38,479</b>	<b>9,676</b>	<b>48,029</b>	<b>24,886</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>24,886</b>
<b>Surplus/(Deficit) for the Year</b>	<b>81,647</b>	<b>(8,876)</b>	<b>72,771</b>	<b>8,032</b>	<b>8,750</b>	<b>16,782</b>
Transfer between funds	(126)	126			-	-
Cash funds at the beginning of year	21,889	8,750	30,639	13,857	-	13,857
Cash Funds at the end of year	103,410	-	103,410	21,889	8,750	30,639

**STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES as at 31st MARCH 2020**

	Note	
	2020	2019
<b>ASSETS</b>	£	£
Bank and cash balances	103,410	30,639
<b>Represented by : ACCUMULATED FUNDS</b>		
Unrestricted funds	103,410	21,889
Restricted funds (4)	-	8,750
<b>Total funds at 31 March 2020</b>	<b>103,410</b>	<b>30,639</b>



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**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS**

**1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES**

**Basis of accounting**

The accounts have been prepared on the receipts and payments basis. The receipts and payments account is a record of monies received and paid during the financial year. The statement of assets and liabilities is a list of significant possessions and outstanding financial obligations at the end of the financial years. The accounts comply with the appropriate legal requirements.

**2. FUNDS**

Unrestricted funds comprise those funds which the Trustees are free to use for any purpose in furtherance of the charitable objects.

Restricted funds are funds which are to be used in accordance with specific restrictions imposed by the donor.


**3. TRANSACTIONS INVOLVING RELATED PARTIES**

Included in the accounts within "Fundraising Costs" is £2000 paid to the chairman relating to expenses for fundraising initiatives. £500 was paid to the wife of one of the Trustees for the design of the festival brochure; the Trustees approved this as an expense at a cost which compared very favourably with the commercial rates for similar work. £285 was paid to Rebecca Smith, niece of Ruth Peacock, for graphic design work for the festival and lecture, and creating the revised logo.

**4. RESTRICTED FUNDS**

The restricted fund in 2019 represented monies raised for a festival which took place on 30 April 2019. The purpose of the festival was to celebrate religion in the media and promote the vital need for religious literacy, using high profile speakers and workshops. A similar festival was arranged for March 2020 but had to be cancelled due to the Covid19 pandemic.

These accounts were approved by the board of Trustees on 8<sup>th</sup> July 2020 and signed on its behalf by Michael Wakelin, chair



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**Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of Religion Media Centre**

I report to the Trustees on my examination of the accounts of Religion Media Centre (the Charity) for the year ended 31 March 2020.

**Responsibilities and basis of report**

The Charity's Trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").


I report in respect of my examination of the Charity's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

**Independent Examiner's statement**

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the Charity as required by section 130 of the Act;  
or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed:- 

Date..... 01/08/2020

Keith Halstead MA(Oxon) FCA,  
60 Woodcote Hurst  
Epsom  
Surrey  
KT18 7DT