

THE CHAPELS SOCIETY



Annual Report and Accounts *2017*

Registered with the Charity Commission No. 1014207

If you are planning to attend the AGM please bring this document with you.

Overview

Full name: The Chapels Society.

Charitable status: Registered with the Charity Commission (No. 1014207).

Governing document: Constitution adopted 24th September 1988, revised 3rd July 2005 and 8th July 2017.

Objectives: The Chapels Society seeks to foster public interest in and knowledge of the architectural and historical importance of all places of worship and their related structures in the United Kingdom, loosely described as Nonconformist. These primarily comprise the buildings of Christian bodies (Protestant, Roman Catholic and Orthodox) outside the Established Church but may include those of other faiths. The Society seeks to promote the survival of Nonconformist places of worship by offering advice and encouragement to those responsible for their upkeep.

Address for correspondence: Moira Ackers, Secretary, 1 Valley Rd, Loughborough, Leicestershire LE11 3PX (or ChapelsSociety@gmail.com).

Trustees: The trustees (Council members) of the Society in 2017 were Moira Ackers ~ Secretary, Peter Ackers, Rod Ambler, Michael Atkinson, Jenny Freeman, Tim Grass ~ President, Stuart Leadley, Chris Skidmore ~ Editor, Jean West ~ Treasurer, and Martin Wellings.

Bankers: Santander PLC, Bridle Road, Bootle, Merseyside L30 4GB; Nationwide Building Society, St Michael's High Street, Stamford, Lincolnshire PE9 2AW; CCLA, COIF Charities Deposit Fund, 85 Queen Victoria Street, London EC4V 4ET.

Independent Examiner of the accounts: Dr Alexander Calder, Mallard House, Checkley Lane, Nantwich, Cheshire CW5 7PA.

Insurance: The Society is included in the group insurance policy of the British Association for Local History, PO Box 6549, Somersal Herbert, Ashbourne DE6 5WH.

Complaints: Any complaint about the operation of the Chapels Society should be made in writing to the President in his capacity as Chair of the Trustees or failing that to the Secretary.

Review of Financial Activities 2017

The Accounts are drawn up on an income and expenditure basis in accordance with the Charities Act 2006. The Accounts are reported as three distinct funds to aid comprehension of the Society's affairs but the assets are not held separately. The Life Membership and Advance Subscriptions Fund is where subscriptions are posted until transferred across to the General Fund at the start of each year. This fund continues to underpin the Society's financial stability. Small working balances are maintained in the Society's two current accounts but the major part of the Society's funds continues to be held in COIF accounts.

In 2014 £5,000 was deposited in a COIF Fixed Interest Fund and an additional unrealised income gain of £169.99 has been notified for 2017.

The closing balances of the bank accounts and COIF totalled £14,497.24, an increase of £1,242.24 on the previous year.

The Council considers that the reserves continue to be appropriate to the scale of the Society's activities.

The Accounts were approved by the Society's Council and have been considered by Dr Alexander Calder, the Society's Independent Examiner. He confirms that his examination of the 2017 Accounts brought no matter to his attention that gave him reasonable cause to believe that, in any material respect, the following requirements have not been met:

- 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 Act.

The Accounts and Statement of Assets & Liabilities set out on the following pages were approved by the Council of the Chapels Society on 8th May 2018.

The Chapels Society

(Charity No. 1014207)

Accounts for the Year ending 31st December 2017

General Fund

	2017	2016		2017	2016
<i>Income</i>	£	£	<i>Expenditure</i>	£	£
Subscriptions			Newsletters	1,184.37	1,385.53
Received to date	3,315.50	3,705.00	Officers' travel & expenses	1,437.64	1,134.17
Drawn from Life Membership	200.00	200.00	Council expenditure	219.00	320.02
Prepaid Subscriptions	40.00	45.68	Subscriptions to other bodies	334.00	334.00
			Refunds of members		
Donations	31.01	56.01	subscriptions	60.00	90.00
Tax Recoveries (Gift Aid)	602.83	592.51	AGM Costs	160.00	75.00
Spring Visit	1,074.00	670.00	Spring Visit	953.50	529.50
Summer Visit	732.00	340.00	Summer Visit	502.19	110.00
Autumn Visit	867.00	608.50	Autumn Visit	857.00	527.66
Bank Interest	11.33	18.75	Refunds of subscriptions	60.00	90.00
Unrealised income gain (Fixed interest fund)	169.99	494.38	Transf. to Publications Fund	1,000.00	1000.00
	<u>7,043.66</u>	<u>6,730.83</u>		<u>6,707.70</u>	<u>5,505.88</u>
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			Surplus of Income over Expenditure	335.96	1,224.95
			Balance b/fwd	7,228.64	6,003.69
			Balance c/fwd	7,564.60	7,228.64
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Life Membership & Advance Subscriptions

	£	£		£	£
<i>Income</i>			<i>Expenditure</i>		
Life subscriptions	-	-	Life Members' Subs. to Gen Fund	200.00	200.00
Advance Subs. for 2018-9	0.00	70.00	Advance Subs. to General Fund	40.00	45.68
	<u>0.00</u>	<u>70.00</u>		<u>240.00</u>	<u>245.68</u>
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			Surplus of Income over Expenditure	-240.00	-175.68
			Balance b/fwd	2,465.00	2,640.68
			Balance c/fwd	2,225.00	2,465.00
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Publications Fund

The Chapels Society ~ Annual Report and Accounts 2017

	£	£		£	£
Income			Expenditure		
Sales of <i>Building the Church</i>	45.00	50.00	<i>Building the Church</i>	-	3,019.77
Sales of <i>Dissent & Gothic Revival</i>	17.50	-	Postage - Books	4.62	6.35
Sales of <i>Nonconformist Plate</i>	15.00	-	Postage - General	6.60	6.48
Sales of <i>Chapel People</i>	35.00	-			
Sales of <i>Sitting in Chapel</i>	45.00	30.00			
Transf. from Gen. Fund	1,000.00	1,000.00			
	<u>1,157.50</u>	<u>1,080.00</u>		<u>11.22</u>	<u>3,032.60</u>
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			Surplus of Income over Expenditure	1,146.28	-1,952.60
			Balance b/fwd	3,561.36	5,513.96
			Balance c/fwd	4,707.64	3,561.36
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Statement of Assets and Liabilities

	£	£		£	£
Liabilities			Assets		
General Fund	7,564.60	7,228.64	Santander Account	4,307.00	3,215.86
Life Membership & Advance Subs.	2,225.00	2,465.00	Nationwide Account	518.19	429.69
Publications Fund	4,707.64	3,561.36	COIF Charities Deposit Fund	4,000.00	4,000.00
			COIF Fixed Interest Fund	5,779.44	5,609.45
			Uncashed Cheques	-107.39	-
	<u>14,497.24</u>	<u>13,255.00</u>		<u>14,497.24</u>	<u>13,255.00</u>
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Review of Activities 2017

The Council continues to have regard to the guidance set out by the Charity Commission in relation to public benefit.

Council: The Annual General Meeting elects a President and up to six Council members (each serving for three years). The Annual General Meeting also appoints the Society's four Honorary Officers – the Secretary, Treasurer, Visits Secretary and Editor. The Council normally meets four times during the year in February, May, September and December. All Officers' posts are honorary and unpaid although expenses may be claimed. The Society also has a Membership Secretary (Stuart Leadley) and a Casework Officer (Michael Atkinson). For the last four years, the post of Visits Secretary has been vacant, and the oversight of the Society's programme has been shared by the Council members. The Council also has a webmaster to manage the website (Sara Crofts).

Annual General Meeting: The Society's AGM took place on 8th July 2017 at Wesley Memorial Church, Oxford, at 1.15pm during our summer walking tour of Oxford. Thirty-two members of the Society were present. As always, the AGM provided a good opportunity to reflect on the Society's extensive range of activities over the last year the President emphasised the development of shared conferences with other interested organisations. On 30th September 2017, we held a joint conference with the Ecclesiological Society, *From Citadels to Warehouses: some places of Worship in Britain Today*. There is a continuing need to recruit new members and generally to raise awareness of the Society and its endeavours, and to this end Council have agreed this year to re-print our leaflet, which will be circulated at conferences and other events.

Publicity: The Society's website, hosted by the Council for British Archaeology, continues to be the main opportunity to advertise the Society's activities to a wider audience. The website hosts information about the Society as well as details of relevant publications, information about visits, copies of visit notes, there is an index of the Society's *Newsletter* together with an archive of back issues. The website is frequently updated, and items of news and general interest are posted regularly. This website was felt to be a very important way both to make the presence of the Society known but also to share our knowledge and interest with others. It is to be noted that most of our enquiries for information and support now come through this website. Items for the website such as contributions for our 'Chapel of the Month' slot are always welcome, and these can be sent either directly to our webmaster Sara Crofts or to the Secretary Moira Ackers.

Casework: Chapels in 2017 continue to be at risk; be they undergoing significant alteration, slipping into redundancy, under threat of demolition or at worst lost altogether. There remains an ever-present need to campaign and make

representation against casework that demonstrate justifiable damage and detriment to the significance of the nonconformist building stock across the United Kingdom. The Society encourages its members to make contact, send an email using the Society's dedicated casework email address – chapsoc.casework@gmail.com to raise the profile of any Chapels susceptible to change.

A selection of the major casework items reported and dealt with in 2017 is listed below:

- Rishworth Congregational Chapel, Calderdale, 1832 (Grade II)
- Wesleyan Chapel, Ellerton, East Riding of Yorkshire, 1811 (Grade II)
- Tolpuddle Martyrs Chapel, Dorset, 1818 (grade II*)

Good news arrived in 2017 from Barton upon Humber Civic Society who were successful in their listing upgrading application to Historic England of Providence Chapel, 1806 now listed at grade II*. We were delighted to support their work and encouraged that this important chapel has greater level of protection safeguarded against its future.

Also, support was provided when news reached the Society of the sale of Avebury United Reformed Church, Wiltshire, c1707 (Grade II). We were pleased to hear that the National Trust acquired the chapel which is sited within a stone circle. Plans are developing to use the chapel as a centre to highlight the conservation work of the Trust and engage people with the special landscapes within Avebury World Heritage Site.

The Victorian Society has included on its annual 'Top Ten' endangered buildings list (now in its 10th year) a pair of cemetery chapels (one Anglican, the other non-conformist) at Ince-in-Makerfield, near Wigan. Both have fallen into a critical state of disrepair, designed by A Waterhouse in 1855 the Architect of National History Museum.

Historic England's Heritage at Risk Register confirms that 130 new entries were made for places of worship with 115 removed from the preceding year, therefore a net increase was still recorded. Vulnerability to the building fabric of church buildings have been identified to roofs, rainwater goods and high-level stonework. This leaves the need for regular maintenance as a critical factor to ensure that places of worship do not fall into 'poor' or 'very bad' condition. This becomes ever more difficult for chapels that have found themselves in a vacant condition.

Publications: Three editions of the *Newsletter* were produced and distributed in 2017 and contained information about events of interest to members, short articles and reviews of books and other publications.

Back numbers of the Newsletter are now available on the website two years after

their publication. We are slowly building up a collection of digitised back numbers which will be made available on the web.

Work started in late 2017 on the third issue of *The Chapels Society Journal* which is due to be published in mid-2018. It will contain the first Christopher Stell lecture as well as a number of papers from the joint conference with the Ecclesiological Society on the architecture of less well-studied denominations.

Visits: The Society organised three very enjoyable, informative and illuminating visits in 2017, which were subsequently written up in detail in the Society's *Newsletter*. These were:

- A tour of West Yorkshire Communities on 1st April (*led by Chris Skidmore*).
- A walking tour of Oxford on 7th July 2017 (*led by Martin Wellings*) which incorporated our AGM and our first Christopher Stell Memorial lecture by our Dr Kate Tiller: *How to Read a Church: Cote Baptist Chapel, Oxfordshire*.
- Bristol and Kingswood on 28th October 2017 (*led by David Dawson*).

Membership: Membership numbers have declined slightly over the last few years. Council have discussed plans for a membership push in the next year.

Year	Personal	(inc. Life)	Corporate	Total
January 2012	286	(inc. 33)	29	315
January 2013	280	(inc. 33)	29	309
January 2014	272	(inc. 31)	30	302
January 2015	263	(inc. 32)	24	287
January 2016	259	(inc. 32)	23	282
January 2017	245	(inc. 32)	23	268
January 2018	237	(inc. 30)	22	259

Links with other organisations: The Society continues to hold membership of the Heritage Alliance. In addition, the Society is a member of the Association of Denominational Historical Societies and Cognate Libraries, the Historic Chapels Trust, the British Association for Local History and the Council for British Archaeology.

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The Council declares that it has approved the Annual Report and Accounts as laid out above.

Signed by Dr Tim Grass, President,
on behalf of the Council on 18th May 2018.

