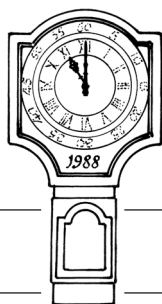


THE CHAPELS SOCIETY



Newsletter 69

September 2018



*Liverpool Wavertree Baptist Church, from the original design
by George Baines & Son of 1906 (see News and Notes)*

ADDRESS BOOK

The Chapels Society: registered charity number 1014207

Website: <http://www.chapelssociety.org.uk>

President: Tim Grass, 1 Thornhill Close, Ramsey, Isle of Man IM8 3LA; e-mail: tgrass.work@gmail.com; phone: 01624 819619 (also enquiries about visits)

Secretary: Moira Ackers, 1 Valley Road, Loughborough, Leics LE11 3PX; e-mail: ChapelsSociety@googlemail.com (for general correspondence and website)

Treasurer: John Ellis, 24 Shrublands Court, Mill Crescent, Tonbridge, Kent TN9 1PH; e-mail: john.ellis@urc.org.uk; phone: 01732 353914

Visits Secretary: *position continues in abeyance*

Membership Secretary: Stuart Leadley, 52 Southwood Avenue, Cottingham, East Yorks HU16 5AD; e-mail: sjleadley@hotmail.co.uk

Casework Officer: Michael Atkinson, 47 Kitchener Terrace, North Shields NE30 2HH; e-mail: info@atkinsonarchitecture.co.uk

Editor: Chris Skidmore, 46 Princes Drive, Skipton BD23 1HL; e-mail: chrisskidmore@waitrose.com; phone: 01756 790056 (correspondence *re* the *Newsletter* and other Society publications). **Copy for the next (January 2019) *Newsletter* needs to reach the Editor by 30 November 2018, please.**

NOTICEBOARD

CHAPELS SOCIETY EVENTS

6 July 2019	Visit to Bethesda Chapel, Hanley and the Museum of Primitive Methodism, Englesea Brook with AGM and Stell lecture
Autumn 2019	Possible visit to the Wirral and North Wales, joint with Capel

PERSONALIA

John Ellis was elected as Treasurer of the Society at the AGM. John is from a family of Devon Congregationalists and joined *The Chapels Society* shortly after its foundation. His first career was as an economist with the Bank of England where he became the Governor's Business Ethics Adviser. Later he was appointed one of four Strategic Leaders of the Methodist Church and managed its denominational staff team. He was heavily involved in the reforms of its Property Office and the creation of the Methodist Heritage Committee. An Elder of the United Reformed Church, he is a Past Moderator of its General Assembly and was its Treasurer 2007-17. He is currently the global Treasurer of the Council for World Mission and a Trustee of seven British charities, including the URC History Society. As the Secretary of a united URC-Anglican church in Kent, he has some responsibility for a rural Arts and Crafts style chapel of 1908, only parts of which were built well.

All statements and views published in this newsletter are those of the contributor alone. Neither the editor nor the Society may be held responsible.

THE CHAPELS SOCIETY: LOOKING BACK AND LOOKING FORWARD

BY TIM GRASS

The thirtieth anniversary of the formation of the Chapels Society is an occasion for celebration. The society has developed into a respected body, consulted by professionals and asked for its input. Its meetings and outings have facilitated much informal networking on the part of those involved in the growing field of Dissenting studies. Undoubtedly the society and its members have helped to put Nonconformity on the heritage map.

Such an anniversary is a time for reflection: we look back with appreciation at the work of our predecessors, but we also need to look forward as we try to discern what the society's future might be, and what the future of the field of Nonconformist heritage might be. Looking forward involves looking around, getting a sense of how things stand at present.

As president, therefore, I offer this 'think piece', reflecting on how the landscape has changed during the three decades of the society's existence, and asking questions which I believe we need to consider as we look ahead. My aim is to stimulate response on the part of our members and others. It should be stressed that this represents my personal opinion and not Council policy!

Early issues of the *Newsletter* sound some familiar notes. There is the conviction, expressed by Christopher Stell, that the answer to problems such as the inappropriate reuse or conversion of chapels 'lies largely in education' – of churches, architects, builders, and conservationists.

There is the perennial dilemma of how to reconcile conservation concerns with the contemporary church's needs. Again, understanding of each side's concerns and expertise was seen as crucial. But is reconciliation always possible? If not, which should take priority when? The Methodist historian John A. Vickers reviewing a booklet from the property division of the Methodist Church, concluded: 'However reluctantly, the Christian may be driven to the conclusion that conservation, which is desirable, must give way in the last analysis, to mission, which is the Church's *raison d'être*.'

There is the sense that we ought to be doing more 'out there'; Ian Hume called for the society 'to make a more positive contribution to the conservation of historic and other interesting old chapels'.

But there have also been significant changes. Early issues of the *Newsletter* speak of the desirability of formal links with the churches. Now we stress our non-confessional ethos. I suspect that our membership has broadened

correspondingly. The accession of others who share the society's concerns is to be welcomed, as the world of Nonconformity is all too prone to introversion. And although there is less formal interest from the denominations than hitherto, on the other hand there is perhaps more effort on their part to do justice to conservation matters. Bodies such as Historic England also show more interest in Nonconformist buildings: arguably Christopher Stell's *Inventory* helped to blaze a trail for others to follow. All things being equal, the buildings in which our society interests itself are as worthy of consideration as any other type of architecture, whether it be railway stations, Anglican churches, or stately homes. Chapels are mainstream. We need to get that message across, encouraging more architectural historians to accord them the interest they deserve. The problem of redundant buildings has become increasingly acute, sharpened by the decline in membership of most Nonconformist denominations. The building inventories undertaken by some Roman Catholic dioceses illustrate just how serious the problem is.

Like the population at large, in which a diminishing working segment faces the responsibility of financially supporting the increasing proportion of the population which is retired, our demographic has probably changed similarly. This change in our age profile is not easily addressed: recruitment of younger members is vital, but how? In an increasingly de-christianized society, there is not the pool of people who, even if not adherents of a particular faith community, nevertheless have some basic understanding of what these communities and their buildings are, what they do, and what they are for.

One word which didn't strike me as prominent in early issues was 'heritage'. This has become a major aspect of tourism, and one where we have a contribution to make. For example, how can we encourage local chapels to take advantage of Heritage Open Days and their equivalents? And what should we be doing to resource them, so that they participate to best effect? At the back of my mind is the hunch that we have a window of opportunity which may not last indefinitely.

What of the future? We could helpfully give more attention to how the society might share in resourcing those seeking to develop 'heritage' uses for local chapels. My reflections are earthed in involvement with efforts to find a continuing use for a small Manx Wesleyan chapel, Kerrowkeil, built in 1814. Our aim goes beyond preservation to the fostering of public interest, as we hope to show the role played by Methodists in local society, and the contribution made by chapel culture to the formation of social and political leaders. Not all chapels can or should be preserved or conserved, however. This is where the society's expertise could make all the difference.

I would also suggest that the society does well to maintain broad horizons, within our remit to cover the whole of Britain. It was only in 2015 that we made

our first visit to Scotland, and although we visited the Isle of Man in 2011, we have never yet explored the wealth of buildings in Northern Ireland. We don't want to duplicate what other societies (such as Capel in Wales) are doing, but we could helpfully be a 'go-to' body for those sharing our concerns in Scotland and Ireland, for instance – although differing legislation would complicate our casework.

Further afield, how might we develop fruitful co-operative links with the USA, for instance, and with whom? How might we learn from what is being done there in the heritage field? I am not aware of any body in the USA which fulfils a similar role to that of our society, but in a number of communities meeting houses have been preserved, restored, and made available for community use. In New England especially, many of these buildings are as old as many of ours, or even older. Older buildings there had a dual role, as venues for worship and for town meetings, making community involvement appropriate. Might there be other constituencies which could act as partners in local projects here?

Thirdly, the society has launched a successful and significant *Journal*. What more might we do by way of publication, introducing these buildings, their fittings and furnishings, and their life to an interested public?

Finally, we should continue to develop our public profile through our website and through the conferences we sponsor. As well as arranging national events, could we partner with appropriate local or county bodies to mount conferences? This would bring the society and its work to the attention of people who would not consider going to a big city for a conference, but would happily travel to their county town.

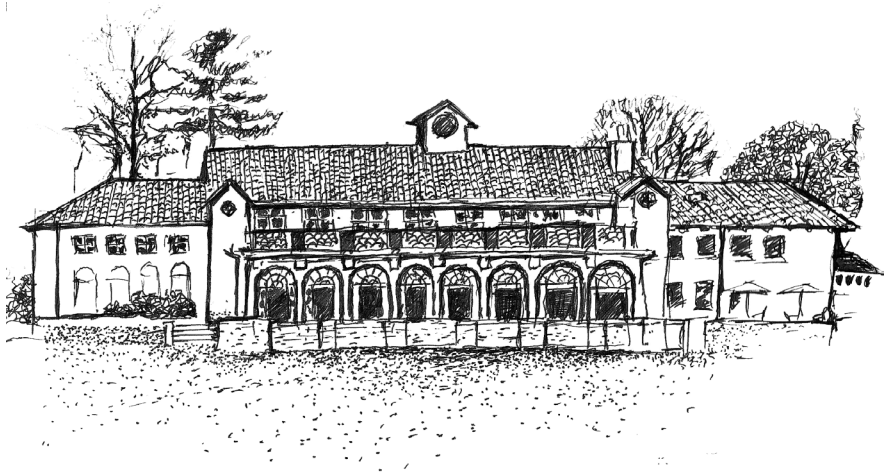
Well, over to you! As John Ebdon used to say on Radio 4, 'If you have been, thank you for listening'.

PROCEEDINGS

VISIT TO BOURNVILLE – 21 APRIL 2018

The Society's spring visit was to Bournville, the Birmingham suburb which grew up around the model village created by George Cadbury, the Quaker chocolate manufacturer. His factory moved to rural Bournville in 1879 and, from the mid 1890s, he started to develop the village. The day's theme might have been simplicity but, although the buildings we visited were short on ornamentation, the itinerary was certainly not short on interest.

We began with two congregations which had originated as suburban 'offshoots' of city centre churches. At first, they rented rooms in Bournville but eventually built their own premises. Both provided a plain rectangular room for worship but with the significant addition of an underfloor baptistery. The **Church of Christ** also allowed itself a striking façade which still proclaims its



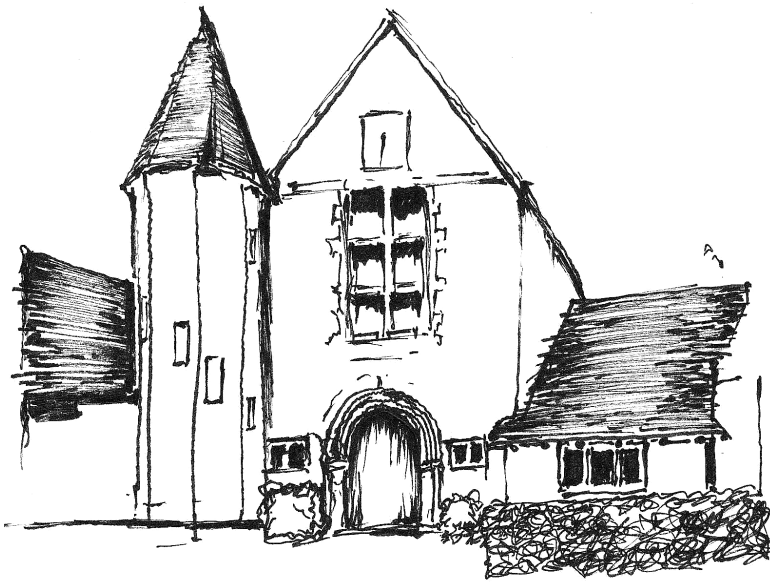
*Rowheath Pavilion, Bournville
(from a drawing by Michael Mackintosh)*

arrival in 1914. The **Christadelphian Hall**, which opened nearby in 1927, was more self-consciously plain throughout with nothing more extravagant than two external gables.

Earlier in the morning, Andy Vail had introduced the Churches of Christ, explaining their distinctiveness and their growth in Birmingham. In 1981, the majority of congregations, including Bournville, had chosen to join the United Reformed Church (URC) but others had continued as the Fellowship of the Churches of Christ. Our third visit of the day took us to **Rowheath Pavilion** which now houses the Fellowship's national headquarters and is home to one of its congregations. The Pavilion was also our first direct link to the model village. It was provided by Cadburys in 1924 along with extensive playing fields and leisure facilities and clearly demonstrates the 'Arts and Crafts' influence behind the village architecture.

After a long period of decline as support from Cadburys dwindled, the building has recently been rescued by the 'Rowheath Pavilion Church' which set up a charitable trust to lease it and to provide facilities, such as a café, for the local community. It was clear from our visit how popular these are. The Church itself adapts the Pavilion ballroom for Sunday services.

After lunch in the sunshine, we walked to the Green, the heart of the model village, where a group of attractive public buildings surrounds a small open space. While the carillon played, we explored the **Parish Church of St Francis of Assisi** and the Friends Meeting House, both designed by W Alexander Harvey, the first architect of the Bournville Village Trust. Here simplicity is interpreted differently. St Francis, consecrated in 1925, is in a Romanesque style unlike the



*Bournville Friends Meeting House, 1905, by Alex Harvey
(from a drawing by Michael Mackintosh)*

village as a whole. It has an interior of plain cream walls and rounded arches which create an air of serenity. Individual works of art are tastefully displayed around the building so that, for example, a simple font of Portland stone is beautifully set in a small apse in the west wall.

Meanwhile, the Quaker testimony to simplicity is under pressure at the **Friends Meeting House**. Built on a 'Y' shaped plan, a prominent gable over the entrance is flanked by two wings and an octagonal turret. Inside, a lofty timber roof reinforces the sense of permanence and dignity. The Meeting House was paid for by George and Elizabeth Cadbury and opened in 1905 as the first place of worship in Bournville. In 1915, it became the only Friends Meeting House in Britain to contain an organ. Whilst at the Meeting House, we learned more about the Cadburys from John Kimberley of Birmingham City University.

The meal which awaited us back at Bournville URC was far from simple. Provided by the Real Junk Food Project Central, it had been created from food which would otherwise have been thrown away and must surely rank as the Society's most imaginatively produced 'chapel tea'. It concluded an excellent day, well-paced and carefully organised which had introduced us to a unique suburb and some fascinating 'chapels'. We are grateful to Andy Vail for making all the arrangements and to our hosts at each chapel for making us welcome.

Paul Griffiths

STRANGERS' CHURCHES IN THE EAST END – 7 JULY 2018

The Society's summer walking tour this year coincided with the record-breaking spell of hot, dry weather and also with England's World Cup match against Sweden. This may perhaps have made East London unusually quiet for a Saturday afternoon, but did not inhibit our enjoyment of a stimulating perambulation of an area rich in multiple layers of history, reflecting the multi-cultural and multi-lingual nature of London life over many centuries.

The day began at St Boniface German RC Church, in Adler Street, Whitechapel, close to Aldgate East tube station and on the corner of Altab Ali Park (named for a victim of racially-motivated violence in the 1970s, and formerly the churchyard of St Mary's Church, where W.W. Champneys exercised an energetic evangelical ministry in the mid-nineteenth century). The original church on the site was opened in 1875, following several unsuccessful attempts to provide a suitable place of worship for the German-speaking RC community in the area. John Young's Romanesque church, extended in the 1880s and damaged by a Zeppelin raid in 1917, was destroyed in the blitz in 1940. The present building was constructed in 1959-60, to a design by Donald Plaskett Marshall & Partners. Pevsner describes the exterior as 'austere'; a tall slim tower carries bells from the old church. A simple white-plastered interior contains Stations of the Cross, also from the old church, a dark-green marble altar and font, and striking fittings of contemporary German craftsmanship. On the (ecclesiastical)

east wall a sgraffito mural of Christ in Glory with St Boniface, by Heribert Reul, of Kevelaer, draws the eye.

The Society's AGM was held in the church, testing the acoustics. Subsequent investigation suggested that the church was designed to project sound from the high altar, but not from the body of the congregation!

From St Boniface we walked to St George's German Lutheran Church, in Alie Street. St George's is the oldest surviving German church in Britain. Built in 1762-3, and largely funded by the sugar-baker Dederich Beckman, leading member of an influential and prosperous community in the Georgian East End, it was taken into the care of the Historic Chapels Trust



*Mural of Christ in Glory with
St Boniface by Heribert Reul of Kevelaer
at St Boniface German RC Church
(photograph copyright the author)*



*St George's German Lutheran Church, in Alie Street
(photograph copyright the author)*

in 1998 and carefully restored five years later. Complete with box pews, gallery around three sides of the chapel, central pulpit flanked by boards of the Ten Commandments (in German), this is a remarkable eighteenth-century survival: a nineteenth-century restoration fortunately left the box pews in place, perhaps reflecting the continuing Lutheran tradition of the church, untouched by English ecclesiological fashions and hostility to box pews! In the same restoration stained glass windows and an organ were added. The original building was adorned with a bell turret, but this had to be removed in 1934, due to rot and woodworm.

At St George's, Dr Bill Jacob delivered the second Andrew Worth Lecture, on 'Nonconformity in Victorian London'. Sharing his research in preparation for a book on the religious life of the metropolis in the nineteenth century, Dr Jacob explored how London was distinctive, noting that the greatest strength of Victorian Nonconformity was in provincial cities, and not the capital.



*Interior of the RC Church of the English Martyrs
by Edward Pugin of 1876
(photograph copyright the author)*

The attractions of chapels were described: they offered friendship, networks, membership of a community, and ‘a complete environment’ to protect people in the city. Dr Jacob then considered changes and challenges as the Victorian period unfolded: the increasing diversity in styles of worship, the expansion of activities in busy chapels, and the problems of success, as the affluent moved to the suburbs and found new opportunities for leisure.

Our third port of call was the RC Church of the English Martyrs, in Prescott Street. Designed by Edward Pugin for the Tower Hill Mission, the church was opened in 1876. The exterior is neo-perpendicular Gothic, with striped brick and stone, and a turret and spire. The constraints of the site meant that the nave is short, and seating capacity was increased by adding galleries. The interior is light and open, and very richly decorated, with a commemoration of the English Martyrs at the high altar and a shrine of Our Lady of Graces in the Lady Chapel.

The final visit of the day took us from Whitechapel to the City of London, and to eerily deserted streets in the commercial heart of the capital. In Austin Friars (familiar to readers of *Wolf Hall* as Thomas Cromwell's London home), stands the Dutch Church. The church of the dissolved Augustinian Friary was granted by Edward VI to Dutch and French Protestant refugees in July 1550. The French community moved to their own building in Threadneedle Street later in the same year, but the Dutch congregation remained, becoming the first officially-recognised Nonconformist congregation in England. The community fled to Emden during the reign of Mary Tudor, but returned on the accession of Elizabeth I, and sustained its witness through the tumultuous religious history of the next century and a half, navigating the changes of the Elizabethan Settlement, the Laudian era, the Civil War, the Restoration and the Glorious Revolution. Sadly the original building was destroyed in 1940, but a new church, designed by Arthur Bailey, was opened in 1954. The style of the building is classical, with a system of concrete boxframes arranged in a pattern of cubes, rectangles and geometric forms, and with a cladding of Portland stone. Inside, the church is dominated by a high central pulpit. Stained glass windows tell the story of the church, and commemorate Queen Wilhelmina of the Netherlands. A rich tapestry by Hans van Norden portrays 'God, Man and Creation', showing humanity's potential, but also hinting at its limitations and vulnerability.

So ended a day rich in history and rich too in reminders of the realities, opportunities and challenges of human diversity. All who took part in the tour owe a debt of gratitude to our hosts in the four churches, and especially to Jenny Freeman for organising such a splendid day and for guiding us around a fascinating part of East London.

Martin Wellings

REPORT OF THE THIRTIETH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Chapels Society's AGM was held on the 7th July 2018 at St Boniface German RC Church, Alder St, London. 27 people attended both the AGM and the walking tour, 'Strangers' churches in the East End' which followed.

Following the usual opening business. Tim Grass, President gave a short report. He described how this year Council had negotiated their way around adapting our practices to stay inline with changing legislation. Namely Data Protection and Safeguarding. He also commented that other than this there had been the usual business of organising Chapels Society activities. With no Visits Secretary this has been the joint responsibility of all Council members, it would be very helpful if a member interested in this aspect of the Society's work would be prepared to volunteer. Please consider this post and do feel free to discuss it with a Council member. Suggestions of possible days out and local organisers

would also be very welcome. The biggest Challenge though is the slow decline in numbers of members. He stressed that we need to all think about how we recruit new members. We are now in our 30th year as a society. We need to look forward and ask what contribution we can make as an organisation in the ever-changing heritage environment. He will be writing a 'think piece' for the next Newsletter and hopes this will stimulate a discussion on future directions for the society. He also reminded the meeting that his term of offices was nearly over and that we needed to think about who would take over as the next president.

The Honorary Secretary's report was given by Moira Ackers. She stressed the importance of our website, which both advertises our presence with a potential for enlisting new members but was also a very real way of offering and sharing information about all the wonderful Non-conformist buildings and communities. She also suggested we need to strengthen our ties with other likeminded heritage organisations, one way to do this was joint conferences and shared activities. She then gave a brief account of the Societies Safeguarding policy. We are a very small organisation and cannot hope to provide for all the specialist needs of vulnerable adults nor can we ensure the provision of an appropriate adult for a young member. However, we would of course welcome their inclusion in any of our activities and therefore have agreed to provide a free place on any activity for someone to accompany a member as a companion able to provide for such needs. This policy is available on the website and should anyone need help they should contact either a Council member or the organiser of the particular Chapels Society activity. This policy will be reviewed regularly to keep us inline with any further developments and members will be informed of any necessary changes at future AGMs.

Chris Skidmore, Honorary Editor gave a brief report about forth coming publications. The Society's Journal based on papers from our joint conference with the Ecclesiological Society and Kate Tillers talk at the last AGM *How to Read a Chapel* should be with members by the end of the summer. As always, he welcomes items for our Newsletter.

The Honorary Officers were elected; Moira Ackers as Secretary, Chris Skidmore as Editor and John Ellis as Treasurer. Both Jean West and Paul Gardner had stepped down from their posts in 2017. Jean has been replaced by John Ellis. Stuart Leadley has succeeded Paul as Membership Secretary. The Society currently has six elected members of Council each serving three-year terms. Two Council members - Rod Ambler and Michael Atkinson – stood down this year. Stuart Leadley has reached the end of his first term but was eligible to stand for another term. Current Council members willing to continue are Peter Ackers, Jenny Freeman and Martin Wellings. We were therefore seeking nominations for two Council members. We had received one and so Kate Tiller was elected to Council, so we still need another Council member. Michael Atkinson who has been our Casework Officer has agreed to continue in this role

and will be co-opted onto Council. The AGM would like to record their thanks and appreciation of all the work done on Council by Jean West, Paul Gardner and Rod Ambler, and we welcome Kate Tiller.

Stuart Leadley gave a short report on the recent GDPR legislation and explained our policy. This can be found in full on the website. He reminded members that the administration of the Society requires it holds data about its membership. However, this is very limited information, which is provided by a member when they apply for membership. This data will only be held by those Officers whose duties require it – The Membership Secretary, Honorary Treasurer and Honorary Editor - and that this information will be used for no other purposes. We will also require any third party to handle members' data in compliance with this policy. Council is responsible for ensuring compliance to this policy and will also regularly review the policy in the light of any further legislative developments or requirements. Tim Grass has amended the Guidance notes for visit organisers to keep in line with this and our Safeguarding policy.

The AGM appointed Alexander Calder as our Independent Financial Examiner. Tim closed the AGM by advertising our next Visits Day in the Horsham area on the 22nd September. Members were then free to enjoy St Boniface Church and the local area before proceeding to St George's German Lutheran Church.

Moiria Ackers

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

We are pleased to be able to welcome the Rev Ashley Hills of London, Mary Bryceland of Wigston and Rachel Godden of London as new members of the Society.

The total membership of the Society now stands at 258, somewhat down from its peak of 319 in 2011. During 2017 there were 5 new members who joined the Society, but unfortunately the membership still fell during the year. Council have discussed how we might recruit more new members, and any suggestions from the wider membership would be very welcome.

Stuart Leadley

DATA PROTECTION

The Society's Information Governance Policy and Data Procedure document was approved by Council in May and presented to this year's Annual General Meeting. The purpose of the policy is to ensure that the Society handles the data of its members and participants in Society events legally and in accordance with best practice. Although the production of the document was prompted by the coming into force of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) in May

2018, for the most part it documents the current practice of the Society and its Officers; the Society collects data about its members and other participants in its events for the purpose of administering the Society and its events. This data is held safely and securely and is not shared with any third party except for the purpose of administration of the Society or the event concerned. As the new GDPR has only recently come into effect, its full ramifications have not yet been worked out, so Council will review the policy and evolving best practice at its next meeting in November 2018.

If you would like a copy of the document, either electronically or printed, please contact me – my details are inside the front cover of this Newsletter.

Stuart Leadley

NEWS AND NOTES

Dovedale (Wavertree) Baptist Church, Liverpool

News has reached the Society of the imminent closure of Dovedale Baptist Church in Liverpool, which hosted the Society's AGM in 2013. In a letter to friends of the church, the deacons report that a dwindling membership and a building too large for their needs mean that it is not possible for church activities to continue. A sad decline for a cause which in the Baptist Handbook for 1936 reported 340 members and 308 Sunday scholars.

Dovedale Baptist Church – also referred to as Mossley Hill Baptist or Liverpool Wavertree Baptist, which complicates research a little – opened in 1906. It was designed by the father and son architectural partnership of George and Reginald Palmer Baines, those prolific designers of chapels, and is one of a series of churches in a distinctive flint and terracotta exterior which they produced in the early 1900s. There are others in Greater London, Brighton, and Hull. The designs are all different, though there is a family resemblance. The most similar to Dovedale is the former Presbyterian Church on Muswell Hill Broadway in north London, which is now a public house. Nor can any of these chapels be said to truly blend in to their surroundings – on the contrary they are extremely eye-catching, which was perhaps the intention.

Structurally the Baines design made use of iron framing to create a spacious interior for the church which remained largely intact when the Society visited five years ago, complete with pulpit, organ case, ironwork, windows, wood panelling and other fittings all in the Baines' Art Nouveau (with pseudo-arts and crafts touches) neo-Perpendicular style. Seating for around 700 was arranged in a semicircle around a central pulpit and baptistery, the effect somewhat but not wholly spoiled by the breeze block wall erected to partition off part of the nave. Outside, the original elaborate top section of the tower was removed for safety reasons in 1989. The future of the Grade II listed building is currently unclear.



Churches Conservation Trust provides maintenance service

The Churches Conservation Trust is branching out into providing a maintenance service for other bodies caring for historic churches and chapels. the service consists of an annual maintenance visit, an annual inspection visit, an emergency call-out service 24/7 and small repairs and periodic maintenance. One of those groups to take up this service has been the Norfolk and Waveney Area meeting of the Society of Friends where the volunteers directly involved with the care of the buildings have found the role increasingly burdensome and there has been no practical infrastructure. the dedicated team from the CCT now makes sure that volunteers are supported in the care of their buildings, informed of the work needed, and they respond to any building fabric issues about which the volunteers inform them.

Taylor Review Pilot launched

The Taylor Review was commissioned in April 2016, reporting to the Chancellor and Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport. The review's aim was to examine the funding and sustainability of listed Church of England buildings and ensure that they are conserved for future generations. The report recognised the importance of enhancing and resourcing the community use of church buildings, proposing that Community Support Advisers should

be available to promote wider and more mixed use of church buildings. The second strand was to ensure the good care and timely maintenance of buildings, thus reducing the long-term costs, this to be supported by a network of Fabric Support Officers.

A pilot phase was commenced on 3 September to take place in Suffolk and Greater Manchester: it is being administered by Historic England for the Department. Strikingly the pilot is available to all faith groups that manage listed places of worship. There will be a Community Support Adviser and a Fabric Support Officer together with a Minor Repairs Fund in each area. Workshops will also be available to support the work. Further information is available from taylorpilot@HistoricEngland.org.uk who will also provide an e-mail update service.

The Chapels Society Journal

You should have received your copy of the the latest issue of *The Chapels Society Journal*. However, if you are a member as well of the Ecclesiological Society, you will have received an extra copy from them. Should you not have any use for your second copy, we should be very glad if you would consider returning it to the Hon Editor, so that we can sell it to raise funds for the Society. The Society will repay your postage if you wish.

EDITORIAL

Your editor hopes that you will accept his apologies for the delay in delivery of this *Newsletter*. This summer saw a computer crisis in the Editor's office and, when this was resolved, the *Journal* had to take priority.

Members will have noticed that there is no Chapels Society visit arranged for Spring 2019. The burden of arranging these visits has fallen increasingly on members of the Council over the last few years, especially since we have been unable to recruit a member to serve as Visits Secretary. Council felt that the best way to alert members to the need for volunteers to come forward to offer visits, or even to take on the job of Visits Secretary was to reduce the number of visits arranged.