

The Chapels Society



PRESIDENT: *Dr Bill Jacob*

HON. SECRETARY: *Revd Dr Martin Wellings, 31 Long Lane, Finchley, London, N3 2PS*

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Minutes of the Thirty-Second Annual General Meeting of the Chapels Society,
held on Zoom on Saturday 5 December 2020

1. The meeting began shortly after 11 a.m. The President, Dr W.M. Jacob, welcomed members to the AGM. Seventeen members attended (see appended list); apologies for absence were received from Rachel Godden, Ted Royle, and Christopher and Marianne Wakeling.
2. The minutes of last year's AGM had been circulated and were approved without amendment.
3. The Annual Report for 2019, circulated with *Newsletter 74*, was presented. The President and Hon. Secretary spoke about the year's curtailed activities in light of Covid-19. The Hon. Treasurer gave a summary of last year's accounts, noting a useful surplus in preparation for the next issue of the *Journal*. The Hon. Editor observed that it has been possible to sustain the *Newsletter* through the period of the pandemic and encouraged members to submit items for the 'Featured Chapel' page of the website.

The adoption of the Report was moved by Chris Skidmore, seconded by Rod Ambler and agreed *nem. con.*

4. The Hon. Treasurer proposed that subscription rates should remain unchanged for the ensuing year, viz., £15 for individual membership, £20 for joint, overseas, and corporate membership, and £8 for students. This recommendation, proposed by John Ellis and seconded by Martin Wellings, was approved *nem. con.* The Hon. Treasurer also underlined the advantages of paying subscriptions by standing order.
5. The Hon. officers were re-elected en bloc, proposed by Kate Tiller and seconded by Rod Ambler. No vacancies had arisen on the Council, so no elections were required. The officers and Council for the coming year therefore comprise:-

President:: Bill Jacob;

Hon. Editor: Chris Skidmore;

Hon. Treasurer: John Ellis;

Hon. Secretary: Martin Wellings;

Hon. Visits Secretary: John Anderson.

Council members: Stuart Leadley and Kate Tiller (until 2021); Roger Holden, Caitriona McCartney, Gerard Charmley and Edward Royle (until 2022).

Stuart Leadley continues as Membership Secretary.

It was noted that Michael Atkinson has retired as Casework Officer, and the meeting asked the

Hon. Secretary to send a letter of thanks to him for his contribution to our work. The genesis and scope of the role was outlined by John Ellis, and it was agreed that a successor would be sought through the *Newsletter* and the website.

6. The re-appointment of Dr Alexander Calder as Independent Financial Examiner was proposed by Stephen Duckworth, seconded by Rod Ambler and agreed *nem. con.*

7. Under other business Kate Tiller outlined plans for a day conference to be held at Harris Manchester College, Oxford, on Saturday 30 October 2021. The conference, co-hosted by the Principal, The Revd Professor Jane Shaw, will build on the ‘Communities of Dissent 1850-1914’ project, and will include three substantial papers, on the English experience, the Welsh experience, and family and kinship. It is anticipated that these will form the basis of a double issue of the *Journal*, to be published next year. It is hoped that the afternoon session of the conference will take the form of a round-table discussion, and that this may further the possibility of establishing a ‘Chapels Alliance’, to draw together groups and individuals with an interest in the history, heritage, conservation and contribution of chapels.

It was noted that it would be good to invite Capel to participate in the conference, although the present state of the society is unclear.

Chris Skidmore spoke about the Historic Chapels Trust, giving encouraging news about recent funding and the rebuilding of relationships with local supporters and other groups. HCT is looking for new trustees, and it was emphasised that it is important to have representation from within chapel and faith communities, as well as expert conservationists. Should the central organisation of HCT cease to be viable, options for finding a successor-body are limited, although it might be possible to alter the statutory remit of the Churches Conservation Trust to incorporate non-Anglican buildings.

8. In his closing remarks the President looked forward to resuming a programme of visits in 2021, rolling forward the events originally planned for 2020. The Council is aware that face-to-face meetings might not be possible until the summer, and is proceeding with caution, but an exciting programme is in prospect nonetheless.

9. The meeting closed at 11.55 a.m.

In attendance:-

Rod and Margaret Ambler; John and Anne Anderson; Clyde Binfield; Matt Davis; Stephen Duckworth; John Ellis; Roger Holden; Bill Jacob; Stuart Leadley; Caitriona McCartney; Chris Skidmore; Kate Tiller; Joan and John Turner; Martin Wellings.