

THE FRIENDS OF THE CITY CHURCHES

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING held at St Mary Abchurch, Abchurch Lane,
London EC4N 7BA on Thursday 27 June 2017 at 3.30pm**

1 Attendance

The meeting was attended by 53 members of The Friends of the City Churches and Trustees Oliver Leigh-Wood (Chairman), Nancy Branson, Brian Evans, Neil Graham (Honorary Treasurer), Signe Hoffos, David Jessop, John Reynolds, Liz Simpson (Honorary Secretary), Paul Simmons.

Apologies for absence were received from 60 members and Trustees Alexey Moskvina and Tony Tucker.

2 Minutes of the AGM held on 23 June 2016

The Minutes were accepted as a correct record of the meeting. There were no matters arising.

3 Trustees' Annual Report and Financial Statements 2016-2017

i Oliver Leigh-Wood, Chairman, spoke to the Annual Report, which had been posted on the FCC website before the meeting. He highlighted the following points:

- The current membership of 1024 comprised 765 single memberships and 259 joint memberships. Ten members had committed to Life Memberships.
- The FCC's magazine 'Skyline' had been published on its regular schedule; Judy Stephenson had worked with Paul Simmons in the editorial role and would be taking over as Editor in the year 2016-2017. The work of John Reynolds and his team in preparing and distributing 'City Events' was also noted – it continued to provide a unique method of sharing information about church-centred events in the City.
- Members continued to enjoy a flourishing programme of events, including walks and lectures, coordinated by Signe Hoffos.
- Special services included the annual Carol Service organised by Nancy Branson, which was led by Bishop Richard, in his final months as Bishop of London before retiring. The Trustees had, on behalf of the membership, invited him to remain as the FCC's patron and were awaiting his reply to the invitation.
- The Revd David Goodburn had been formally inducted as chaplain to St Mary Abchurch and continued to hold regular weekly services.
- Trustee David Jessop's role as 'Church Manager' was emphasised, particularly in the current period of TfL work on upgrading Bank Station. State-of-the-art systems were being put in place to monitor any possible effects on St Mary Abchurch. Also, a full survey of electrical wiring and lighting in the church had been commissioned.
- Through the Friends' 'church watching' scheme the FCC continued its major commitment to working with City churches; several grants had also been made to churches through the Small Grants programme – to the Dutch Church, St Ethelburga's Centre and to St Mary Abchurch for repairs to the Mothers' Union banner.

ii The Honorary Treasurer, Neil Graham, spoke to the Financial Statements, which had been posted on the FCC website before the meeting. His main points were:

- In the year 2016-2017 the FCC reserves had been depleted by a little over £19,000. £6,000 was a deficit in operating expenses, which he believed indicated a need to increase revenue. However, he felt there to be no cause for alarm at this stage.
- The Trustees' Report referred to possible investments of funds in the stock market; Trustees were proceeding prudently, since current market levels indicated it was not a good time to invest.
- The Trustees were negotiating with the Diocese on a new agreement to replace the FCC's present arrangement for St Mary Abchurch which would expire in May 2018. The FCC should be prepared for an increase in the current rental of £18,000 pa (after capital deductions).
- Members were aware that subscription rates were increased some time ago: this is still working through the system as members amended their subscriptions; membership records were being updated and transferred to the new database, MADS.

There were no questions on the Annual Report and Financial Statements; acceptance was proposed, seconded and passed nem con.

4 Election of Trustees

Trustees Paul Simmons and Liz Simpson, having completed their terms of office, were not standing for re-election.

The following Trustees, having expressed themselves willing to act as Trustees for a further period of office, were elected, nem con, for a term of three years:

Nancy Branson, Signe Hoffos, Tony Tucker.

Judy Stephenson, having served on the Committee as observer, was elected a Trustee for a period of three years.

Peter Eaton was elected a Trustee for a period of three years and has agreed to act as Honorary Secretary.

David Salter led tributes to Paul Simmons on his retirement as a Trustee and editor of 'Skyline'; presentations were made to Paul Simmons and Liz Simpson in recognition of their work for the FCC.

5 Appointment of Independent Examiners

The Honorary Treasurer explained to the meeting that due to sickness Bickerstaff Accountancy Services Ltd had been unable to take up the role of Independent Examiners following the 2015 AGM. The Trustees had appointed Keith Raffan & Co to take on the role for the 2016-2017 Financial Statements, and the permanent appointment of this firm as Independent Examiners was proposed, and approved.

6 Any other business

In answer to a question about services and watching at St Michael Cornhill, it was confirmed that watching would continue as usual, with the church open for visitors. Sunday services in Mandarin will be held for a Chinese congregation, with a weekly service in English and the well-known organ recital series continuing as well.

FCC member Mark Williams gave an update on the work tracing the history of the Joseph Travers & Sons war memorial originally stored in the crypt and now in the kitchen awaiting permanent display. A document with a short historic background, research methodology and list of men named on the memorial had been circulated. Only 3 men on the list were still unidentified, and in one case – that of Albert Ernest Pearce – it had been possible to identify where he was buried (in Abney Park cemetery) and inform his grandchildren of the fact for the first time. It is hoped that this work can be completed in the second half of 2018, in time for the commemoration of the end of the First World War.

The Chairman continued by stating that the faculty approval for re-siting the war memorial, and other works including adapting the choir stalls to provide a more flexible space for rehearsals and performances, was in hand.

After completion of the formal business of the AGM, the meeting continued with a powerpoint-led discussion 'FCC: the next 20 years'.