

## THE FRIENDS OF THE CITY CHURCHES

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING held at St Mary Abchurch, Abchurch Lane,  
London EC4N 7BA on Thursday 23 June 2016 at 3.15pm**

### **1 Attendance**

The meeting was attended by 70 members of the Friends of the City Churches and Trustees Oliver Leigh-Wood (Chairman), Neil Graham (Honorary Treasurer), Nancy Branson, Brian Evans, Signe Hoffos, David Jessop, Alexey Moskvina, John Reynolds, Liz Simpson (Honorary Secretary), Tony Tucker.

Apologies for absence were received from 29 members and Trustee Paul Simmons

### **2 Minutes of the AGM held on 25 June 2015**

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

### **3 Trustees' Annual Report and Financial Statements 2015-2016**

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

- The objectives of the FCC to preserve and support City of London churches, particularly in the light of changing circumstances in the City and Diocese.
- The advantages for the FCC as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO).
- The opportunities of using new media, thanking Alex Moskvina for his work in developing the website.
- The regular publication of the Newsletter, now named 'Skyline'. He noted that Judy Stephenson was assisting Paul Simmons in his role as editor. He also thanked John Reynolds and colleagues for their tireless efforts in producing 'City Events' which was an essential means of publicising City activities.
- The range of events for members, organised by Signe Hoffos.
- Special services including the service to mark the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Church Watching and the planned bell baptism, both organised by Nancy Branson
- The use of St Mary Abchurch for regular services led by our chaplain Rev'd David Goodburn and for special services for outside organisations such as the Tyndale Society, CMS Cameron McKenna and the Parish Clerks' and Fruiterers' livery companies.
- The impact of the development of Bank Station by TfL, noting the technology being employed to monitor possible effects on the structure of St Mary Abchurch
- The work of the volunteers including: Church Watchers, whose volunteering to keep open City churches was appreciated by the membership, the Trustees and the Bishop of London and his colleagues; and those volunteers, whose special care in cleaning St Mary Abchurch was equally appreciated by everyone who visited or used the church.
- The generous legacy left by David Raphaeline, which had enabled work on St Mary Abchurch to be taken forward.

- He also made special reference to the appointment of Karen Hearn who had been confirmed in her position of FCC administrator and was welcomed by the meeting.

ii The Honorary Treasurer, Neil Graham, spoke to the Financial Report which had been posted on the FCC website before the meeting. He noted that due to an oversight, no hard-copies were available at the meeting and apologised for this. He explained that the Financial Reports were given in more detail, with substantial notes, because of the requirements of the Charities Commission and FCC's status as a CIO.

- He reported that the FCC was in good shape financially. The increase in membership fees, agreed at the 2015 AGM, meant that general operating expenses were covered without diminishing reserves.
- He highlighted that the FCC pays rent to the diocese for the use of St Mary Abchurch, currently £18,000 pa, once capital deductions had been made.
- Currently the FCC holds reserves of £309,000, in several bank accounts protected by the Financial Services Compensation scheme.
- Reviewing the figures he noted that one significant payment was outstanding, that to Whitechapel Bell Foundry and that accruals had been applied to subscription income.
- Administrative costs have risen since 2014-2015, partly because the administrator had been employed for a full year and also because a new membership data-base was being developed.
- The FCC's policy on its reserves, required by the Charities Commission, was referred to and explained, differentiating between medium-term projects such as education and longer-term projects including major fabric repairs.
- He reported that the current Independent Examiner was retiring and that on his recommendation, the appointment of Bickerstaff Accountancy Services Ltd would be put to the membership.

Answering a question from a member about on-going renovations at St Mary Abchurch, the Treasurer replied that these would have been undertaken even if the Raphaeline legacy had not been available. It would have been a drain on FCC funds, but an allowable and necessary one.

Acceptance of the Annual Report and Financial Statements was proposed, seconded, and passed nem con.

#### **4 Election of Trustees**

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:

Neil Graham

David Jessop

John Reynolds

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

## **5 Appointment of Independent Examiners**

The meeting approved the appointment of Bickerstaff Accountancy Services Ltd as Independent Examiners for 2016-2017, following the retirement of Mitchell, Rodrigues and Co Ltd

## **6 Any other business**

i Robert Burns thanked the FCC on behalf of St Benet Paul's Wharf, for the replacement poor box, which was on display. He expressed his hope that it would be installed in St Benet's soon.

ii Mark Williams gave a short presentation on the war memorial stored in the crypt of St Mary Abchurch, and the research involved in identifying the company (Joseph Travers and Sons) and the individuals named. His fellow researcher Elaine Edge had already written two substantial articles for 'Skyline' and it was hoped that the memorial would be re-sited in the church and a commemorative booklet published for the centenary of the end of WW1 in 1918.

There being no further matters for discussion, the Annual General Meeting was closed.

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After the formal business meeting Tony Tucker gave an illustrated presentation on sword-rests in City churches, drawing on his recent publication.

Refreshments were served.