

**Rivington Unitarian & Free Christian Chapel**  
**Congregational AGM 22.03.2022**  
**Minutes**

**Those present:** Alison Whitaker (chairman), Frank Ascroft (treasurer), Peter Bearon, Diane Fairclough, Paul Fairclough, Mary Horrocks, Richard Horrocks, Geoff Newey, Chris Oldham, Iris Wharton, Vince McCully (Lay Person in Charge)

**1 Welcome and Prayer:** Alison Whitaker welcomed everyone to the meeting and Vince McCully said a short prayer.

**2 Apologies:** Judith Crompton, Jacqueline Dagnall, Olive Fisher, John Green, Linda Green, Jacqui Kershaw, Tim Kershaw, Chris Martin, Carol Worsley, David Worsley

**3 Minutes:** The Minutes of the last AGM had been circulated by email and post after the meeting. They were accepted as a true record. Proposed: Geoff Newey, Seconded: Diane Fairclough

**4 Matters Arising:** There were no matters arising.

**5 Chairman's Report:** (this had been circulated by email prior to the meeting)

In 2021, services were held on Zoom until the end of May, but since then, with the exception of the Christmas Carol service, it has been possible to meet in the Chapel. We have continued to stream the services via Zoom for those who are still unable to join us in person; we have two people who are Zoom regulars. Thanks to Vince for keeping the Zoom link going despite the somewhat intermittent connection due to the weak phone signal in the Rivington area.

Thanks to Peter Bearon for continuing to update the risk assessments to accommodate the changes in legislation and guidance that have come into force at the various stages of the pandemic.

Over the year there have been three naming ceremonies and two weddings. We have bookings for two weddings later this year, one of which will be the first same sex celebration to be held at Rivington.

The number of Chapel members is currently 22. We were sad to lose Rev Frank Williams in May 2021. A few of us were able to attend his funeral in June at Charnock Richard Crematorium and gather at his house afterwards. Frank's daughters hope to visit Rivington soon to scatter his ashes in the Garden of Rest. Later in the year we had the sad news of the deaths of John Patefield and Mary Hough, both of whom had a long-standing association with the Chapel. In October we were at last able to hold a fitting memorial service for Dennis Crompton who had died in October 2020.

COVID-19 restrictions were lifted sufficiently during the autumn to enable some events to go ahead. In September, Heritage Open Days were marked with a smaller than usual Late Summer Fair. On two Saturdays at the end of November and the beginning of December, the Chapel hosted some stalls that were part of the Christmas craft market organised by the Tea Room.

The quarterly newsletter was resumed over the summer. As the number of paper copies needed has reduced significantly since before the pandemic, production has moved 'in-house', which has meant a considerable saving in printing costs.

Thanks to the Committee and members of the Congregation for their support over the last year. Thanks in particular to Mary Horrocks, who has decided to retire from the Committee.

(AW presented a gift to MH on behalf of the Congregation.)

**6 Correspondence:** VM reported that correspondence comes mainly by email or via information on the GA and MDA websites.

**7 Treasurer's Report:** (The statement of accounts and Independent Examiner's notes had been circulated by email prior to the meeting)

Income - £5,434.48. Expenditure - £7,847.30. Deficit - £2,383.51. Assets stand at £45,654.43.

FA said that we need to try to manage the electricity consumption more efficiently. He suggested that we should turn off the heaters in pews that are used infrequently.

It was proposed that the accounts should be accepted. Proposed: Diane Fairclough, seconded: Mary Horrocks. Carried unanimously.

**8 Election of Officers:** There was only one nomination for each of the posts of Chairman and Treasurer, so AW and FA remain in post.

Secretary: there were no nominations for secretary, so VM will remain as the contact for correspondence and other secretarial duties will be carried out by members of the Committee as necessary.

**9 Election of Committee:** There were three nominations for the seven places on the Committee, so all those nominated were elected – Jacqueline Dagnall, Diane Fairclough and Paul Fairclough.

Peter Bearon was re-appointed as Independent Examiner.

At this point, VM was asked to leave the meeting.

**10 Election of Lay Person in Charge:** The motion was put that VM should remain as Lay Person in Charge. Proposed: Paul Fairclough, seconded: Geoff Newey. Carried unanimously.

Some members of the Congregation expressed concern regarding VM's workload and the possible impact on his health.

VM returned to the meeting and was informed of the Congregation's decision.

**11 GA Annual Meetings:** AW has booked to attend the meetings which take place on 19 - 21 April. She asked if the Congregation were happy for her to act as the Chapel's delegate. Proposed: Diane Fairclough, Seconded: Mary Horrocks. Carried unanimously.

AW reported that she has received notification of the motions that will be debated at the meetings. Congregations are asked to consider the motions and give their views to the delegates to guide how they vote. AW will circulate the motions and background papers. Members will be able to pass on any comments at the services in April.

AW reported that Judith Crompton will also be attending the meetings.

**12 Ironman event:** This event takes place on Sunday 3 July, which is a service day. After some discussion, it was decided that we should still meet in Chapel and on Zoom, and have a more informal service. PB offered to play for the hymns on melodeon instead of having an organist.

**13 Pilgrimage:** This will take place on Saturday 1 October. The meal will once again be in the Parish Hall, but this year the catering, service and washing-up will be done by Spring Cottage. The speaker will be Rev Sue Woolley, District Minister for the Midland Unitarian Association, who will be appointed President of the GA in April. The service in Chapel will be taken by Rev Phil Waldron from Ullet Road Chapel in Liverpool. AW will liaise with Jacqui Kershaw about publicity for the event.

**14 Social events:** Sunday 15 May - Anniversary meal. Two possible venues had been suggested: The Cherry Tree at Blackrod and The Goose & Gander, Little Scotland. It was decided that both should be contacted to find out if they can accommodate a large group. It is possible that the scattering of Frank Williams' ashes will take place on that day. If so, Frank's daughters will be invited to join us at the meal.

Canal boat trip - Judith Crompton had suggested that we should arrange a trip in memory of John Patefield who, with Olive Mayor, used to organise such outings. We will look at possibilities in Adlington, Wigan and Riley Green.

**15 A.O.B.** Defibrillator: AW reported that Judith Crompton has offered to fund a defibrillator for the Chapel. The possibility of installing one has been discussed recently by the Trustees. PB said that there are several factors that need to be considered, such as reliability of electricity supply and the possible need for listed building consent. It was generally thought that it was a good idea in principle, and that the Committee should look into the practicalities.

Notice Board: RH commented that the Notice Board outside the Chapel needs some attention. It requires some refurbishment and we need to think about making the display more informative. PF thought that the perspex needs to be replaced as it has become discoloured. AW will liaise with JK about improving the display.

**16 Date of Next AGM:** Sunday 19 March 2023