

**Unitarian Church Cambridge CIO**  
**Annual General Meeting**  
**Held in the Church on Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> April 2025**

The meeting was quorate (i.e. more than 10 members present in Church or on Zoom)

1. **Attendance** *Members attending in the Church:* Celia James (Chairperson CJ), Sue Tombs (Secretary ST), Sylvain Van de Weyer (Treasurer SVW), Elden Horner (Trustee EH), Jerry Carr-Brion, Stephen Lawrence, Andrew Bethune, Tony Burns, Katie Burns, Marianna Michell, Frank Walker, Courtney Van de Weyer, Brendan Boyle, Jennifer Bishop, Clare Southall, Aysha Madha, Jacqui Carnall.

*Members attending by Zoom:* Stephen Watson, Rosemary Watson, Pascal Keller, Elizabeth Buie.

*Friends and Visitors attending in the Church:* Anita Mannion, Caroline Carr-Brion, Jenny Gibson, David Burns, Daiva Doualgienne, Loretta Hall, Rodney Quanin.

*Friends attending by Zoom:* none

**Apologies** were received from Nick Walker, Louise Walker, Rowland Thomas

2. **The Minutes of the AGM** held on 21<sup>st</sup> April 2024 had been circulated and read; they were approved unanimously.

Proposer: Marianna Michell

Seconder: Jacqui Carnall

3. **Matters arising from the Minutes:** None

4. **Statement of Accounts and Trustees' Report for 2024:**

ST explained the reasons why these are Draft Accounts and assured the Congregation that as soon as there is a Final and Signed Annual Report, it will be emailed to the Congregation, the Trustees will then ask Members if they require an EGM to discuss the Report further; this will take place either in person and on Zoom or just on Zoom.

The draft Statement of Accounts and Trustees' Reports was unanimously approved.

Proposer: Andrew Bethune.

Seconder: Clare Southall

The Treasurer SVW spoke to the Draft Accounts, explaining our Expenditure and Balance Sheet. Our losses are understandable and are offset somewhat by the interest returns of our investments. We are in a healthy situation and are working as prudently as we can while we plan our future work; to achieve a healthy situation for the long term.

We hope to be able to reduce the Council Tax on the Manse, at least for the time allowed by Council Rules for an empty building, and later for being part of a development project.

Following a question about selling the Manse to raise money, provoked by a wildly implausible valuation seen online, (probably, for the Church and Manse together) CJ answered that this is not the time even to discuss a possible sale of the Manse. The Congregation has been kept informed of the progress of our possible plans and was reminded that these will be brought in full to the Congregation at an EGM as soon as we know the Planning Committee's decision.

5. **Retirement of the Treasurer:** SVW told the Congregation that he needs to step down from his role as Treasurer, explaining that his life is too complex and pressured to continue in the role. He told us how much Courtney has done behind the scenes during this least year. He has been glad to have moved the Church in a particular direction and will continue to take a great interest in our Plans. We thank Sylvain for bringing us this far in our vision for the future and we thank Courtney for her support and all she has done behind the scenes during this year. We are very grateful that she will continue to help us in progressing our plans for the development of our buildings.
6. **Minister's Report:** (The Minister not being at the AGM due to being on Sabbatical) ST spoke to the Minister's Report, which he had given in person at Church some weeks ago and a copy of which has been circulated to the Congregation. ST referred to three Ministers words: Andrew Brown in 2025, Rev Dr William Copeland Bowie in 1928, and our Emeritus Minister Frank Walker in 1978. ST's full contribution is filed with these Minutes.
7. **Trustees' Report:** The Report has been circulated and read by those attending the Meeting. There were no matters arising or comments.
8. **Re-Election of Trustees:** Celia James, Sue Tombs and Elden Horner were unanimously re- elected.

Proposer: Brendan Boyle.    Second: Jerry Carr-Brion

9. **Election of New Trustee:** Jacqui Carnall was unanimously elected as trustee, and we thank her for standing

Proposer: Marianna Michell. Seconder: Aysha Madha

10. **Role of Treasurer to Trustees:** ST explained how she has come to volunteer for the Treasurer's role. "This I have agreed to do with the assistance of Thomas Carlile, our Church Administrator, and only includes the day to day, week to week and month to month financial jobs. This is only a temporary role, until we can find someone (preferably younger than me) who can take it on. Whilst I am in the role, along with the Trustees, we intend to come up with a Treasurer's Manual, which will contain all those "hidden" pieces of information.

David Burns has kindly agreed to come on board as an Adviser to help with our investments. Hopefully he will be able to find investments which are still ethically sound but also bring in a higher return than our present ones.

ST said that we are confident we shall present the Signed Statement of Accounts at our next AGM.

The appointment of ST as Treasurer to Trustees was unanimously approved.

Proposer: Sylvain Van de Weyer. Seconder: Jacqui Carnall

11. **Appointment of Independent Examiner of Accounts:**

The firm of Staffords as our Independent Examiner of Accounts was unanimously approved. WE appreciate that Staffords did all they could this year to produce our signed accounts, but were held back by complications around our investments, which needed new documentation due to us having become a CIO. We noted that our AGM is our internal deadline for receiving the Accounts, and that we have until each October to send them to the Charity Commission.

Proposer: Sylvain Van De Weyer. Seconder: Brendan Boyle

12. **AOB**

In answer to a question about the progress and character of our plans for the building work, CJ explained there are many requirements' Trustees have had to meet before any plans can be submitted, but that we are almost there (a compulsory sound survey having been done the day before). She read from the introduction of our submission:

“This Design and Access Statement has been prepared in support of the proposed development of the Unitarian Church, situated on Emmanuel Road, directly opposite Christ’s Pieces in the heart of Cambridge.

### **Reason for Development**

With a small Congregation and the increasing costs of maintaining the Church Buildings, achieving long-term financial stability is essential to ensuring the Church’s continued presence at this location. The proposed development aims to create a sustainable future for the site while preserving its historical and architectural significance.

### **The Site and Existing Buildings**

The site comprises three buildings: the Church, the Hall and the Manse. This application pertains only to the redevelopment and renovation of the Hall and the Manse, with a separate application for the refurbishment of the Church to be submitted in due course.

### **The Proposed Development and Heritage**

Although the buildings are not listed, they hold local historical and architectural interest. The proposals therefore seek to sensitively restore and adapt the buildings, preserving their distinctive character while revitalising them for contemporary use.

### **Planning Background**

A pre-application meeting was held with the Council between the Client and an Officer of the Council via a Teams call.

This application is for a full planning application and conservation area consent including change of use for the Hall from class F use to class E use, and the Manse from class C use to class F use.

### **Conclusion**

This statement outlines the design philosophy, the approach to accessibility, and the careful consideration of local context, heritage, and sustainability. A successful planning approval will not only enhance the functionality and appearance of the site but also secure the financial future of the Unitarian Church, allowing it to continue serving as a valuable social and cultural asset withing the Cambridge community.

13.Date of Next AGM: date set for Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> April 2026

We thank everyone for their attendance and attention.

Celia James – Chairperson

Signed .....

Dated.....