

TRUSTEES REPORT

Long-standing members of the ELS, whether in its former legal personality as an unincorporated association or its new iteration as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO), will be familiar with this annual report on the Society's activities. But there is a distinction between this one and those that have gone before. Hitherto, it was headed Chairman's Report and travelled under the name of the Chairman, but article 12(1) of the CIO constitution expressly states that the AGM must receive the trustees' annual report so this document is no longer exclusively mine: rather it is the collective report of each and all of the Trustees, directed to each and all of the members. Thus it has been drafted earlier in the year than previously, and tabled at a prior Trustees' meeting for comment and approval. It is therefore appropriate that the first Report under the new dispensation identifies all the Trustees who stand behind it. They are:

The Worshipful Mark Hill QC, Chairman

The Rt Revd Stephen Conway, Vice Chairman

Darren Oliver Esq, Treasurer

The Worshipful Ruth Arlow

The Venerable Simon Baker

Frank Cranmer Esq

The Revd Russell Dewhurst

Miss Frances Godden

Benjamin Harrison Esq

Mrs Elizabeth Wilson

The Rt Revd Christine Hardman

Paul Barber Esq

The Revd Paul Benfield

Mrs Anne-Marie Organ

The Revd Christopher Smith

Luke Tatam Esq

The Trustees met four times during 2019: in February, May, July and October. In addition the Standing Committee continued its practice of monthly telephone meetings transacting the routine business of the Society. The change in nomenclature from Committee Meetings to Trustees' Meetings is more than superficial. It serves as a reminder of the concept of trusteeship which carries legal duties as a matter to Charity law, as well as duties to the membership to carry forward the charitable objects of the Society, principally 'to promote education in ecclesiastical law'. But it should be remembered that the role of Trusteeship is one of oversight: we need to move away from the expectation that all the work of the Society is to be done by Trustees or – worse – a small sub-set within the Trustees.

The past year

Traditionally this report has covered events during the calendar year prior to the AGM so I will focus on 2019, in the middle of which the assets and liabilities of the ELS were transferred from the unincorporated association to the CIO. So what I say is of relevance to both iterations of the Society which have existed in parallel throughout the year, albeit the work of the Society (and the membership) migrated from the one to the other on 30 June 2019. It is expected that the unincorporated association will be formally dissolved in the coming months and thereafter removed from the Register of Charities. A closing statement of account will be tabled for information at the AGM, revealing the buoyant state of the Society's finances when the assets were transferred. The CIO's statement of accounts (circulated with the Notice of AGM) show a zero balance as it was not operational during the period from its registration with the Charity Commission on 6 December 2018 to 30 June 2019, when its accounting year ended.

Royal patronage

Judging from the feedback, the crowning glory of 2019 was the Society's residential conference in Cumberland Lodge, Windsor. Whilst the accommodation might have been a little cosy, it provided a magnificent and elegant backdrop for a series of first-rate lectures by leading experts offering opinions on the nature of establishment, several of which have subsequently graced the pages of the *Ecclesiastical Law Journal*. Admittedly, time to enjoy the Great Park was limited, but this was the inevitable consequence of cramming most of the lectures into the Saturday to free up time on Sunday to attend morning service at the Royal Chapel of All Saints, after which many of the participants at the conference were presented informally to Her Majesty the Queen. This was the first occasion on which the Supreme Governor has participated at an ELS event. In conversation with her, I delicately avoided the fact that the topic of our conference had been church-state relations in the post-Elizabethan age.

Education

Whilst the mechanics of transitioning to a CIO absorbed much of the Trustees' time and energy, the focus of their work remained the promotion of education in canon law. The education sub-committee, ably led by Simon Baker, is at the hub of the Society's work particularly the frequent workshops and seminars aimed variously at trainers, churchwardens, and PCC members. But all the other work of the Society has education at its heart, and this continues apace, notably the Journal, the Website and Twitter account, the Newsletter, the London Lectures, the Northern Province Lectures, and occasional *ad hoc* events. We are grateful to all those who work tirelessly to ensure the success of these ventures.

Governance

The CIO has put in place a series of policies, some adopted wholesale from the unincorporated association, others inherited and revised, and a few created afresh. The suite of policies are listed below and a process for periodic review has been agreed.

Communications Policy

Complaints Policy

Conflicts of Interest Policy

Investment Policy (incorporating the previously separate Reserves Policy)

Risk Management Policy

Data Security Policy

Data Protection Policy

Privacy Policy

Safeguarding Policy

Volunteers Policy

The Trustees completed a risk assessment and this will be revisited at least annually.

Personnel

Last year the unincorporated association elected Bishop Christopher Hill as President in succession to The Right Worshipful Dr Sheila Cameron CBE, QC after a decade in office and warm tributes were paid to her. Bishop Christopher was one of the 'assets' transferred to the CIO last June. I am, delighted to report that Bishop Stephen Cottrell has signified his willingness to succeed the retiring Archbishop of York the Most Reverend and Right Honourable Dr John Sentamu as Patron of the Society upon his translation from Chelmsford to York

Sadly, in the course of the year, Canon John Rees felt he should step down as Vice Chairman as health concerns compelled him to adjust his workload. John's service to the Society as Treasurer for many years, then briefly as Chairman and then latterly as Vice Chairman has been considerable. We are greatly in his debt. We are thrilled that the Bishop of Ely, the Rt Revd Stephen Conway has agreed to succeed him. The Society will benefit from Bishop Stephen's high profile in the national church and in the House of Lords, although his heavy commitments elsewhere inevitably mean he will be less involved in the routine work of the Society.

Andrew Male has served as the Society's administrator for ten years or more. During this time his workload has increased considerably by assuming the duties previously undertaken by the Secretary and Deputy Secretary whose roles became obsolete several years ago and have not been carried over into the CIO. Andrew indicated his wish to decrease his responsibilities and focus on the 'back office' element of the role particularly membership

and book keeping. Rather than lose him, the Trustees decided on an interim solution retaining Andrew for these functions while recruiting an executive secretary to service the Trustees and to coordinate the other activities of the Society. In December, John Ford, recently returned from episcopal ministry in Australia, was appointed to that post. This robust short-term arrangement will serve the Society for the next eighteen months or so, allowing the Trustees to review administration to find the best long-term solution for the expanding work of the Society. We are grateful to Luke Tatam for leading this review and producing preliminary recommendations. We thank Andrew Male for all he has done, and Sarah Neden for the assistance she has given him. We also acknowledge the generous support of Lee Bolton Monier-Williams, Winckworth Sherwood (London), and Francis Taylor Building Chambers for providing meeting rooms and refreshments, and express our gratitude to Wrigleys Solicitors LLP, for their continued sponsorship of the Society's Northern Province Lectures.

Membership

Gentle recruitment campaigns have brought the Society's membership to nearly 700, the highest in its history. Andrew Male reports that the special offer of the paperback version of the fourth edition of Hill's *Ecclesiastical Law* has been a contributory factor, as people have joined the Society to avail themselves of the offer. It should be recorded that the Chairman waived his royalties, and derives no personal benefit from this arrangement.

The future

The Trustees are pleased to report on the health of the Society. But we need new members if we are to continue to deliver on our growing programme, and we need volunteers to assume responsibility for areas of the Society's work. We need to start breeding the next generation of leaders, identifying potential future Trustees, and welcoming fresh faces in all aspects of the Society's life. And, as every year, we seek the prayers of the membership for the Trustees, as partners in the gospel, giving of their time and talents in the mission of God's church.

Mark Hill QC

Chairman, Ecclesiastical Law Society
For and on behalf of the Trustees

St David's Day, 2020



Ecclesiastical
Law
Society

charity number 1181002

RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS

beginning with registration on 5 December 2018 for the year ending 30 June 2019

RECEIPTS	2018/19
	£
Total Income	0.00
PAYMENTS	
Total Expenditure	0.00
Surplus/(Deficit) of Receipts over Payments	0.00
Current assets at start of year	0.00
Current assets at end of year	0.00

Notes to accounts for the year ending 30 June 2019:

1. The charity is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation registered with the Charity Commission under number 1181002. The charity was established to receive all the assets and liabilities of the unincorporated charity of the same name (number 296553).
2. These accounts cover the period from the date the charity as entered onto the register of charities (5 December 2018) to 30 June 2019.
3. No income was received, no expenditure was made and no assets were held during this period.

Darren Oliver
Treasurer