

40. Managing Trustees of John Wesley's Chapel, The New Room, Bristol, and 4 & 5 Charles Street, Bristol

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Summer 2017 marks a step-change in the life of the New Room, the oldest Methodist chapel in the world. On 9 June the President and Vice-President of the Conference will lead the staff, volunteers, trustees and key people from other Methodist heritage sites in an act of dedication to God's mission through heritage. Then, on 13 July, there will be a Royal opening of the Horsefair Building and the museum to which civic representatives, the architects, builders, contractors and significant donors will be invited. The generosity of the Bristol District in making available funding from the sale of Methodist International House and, on a smaller scale, the support of various trusts, Local Churches and individuals has made this immensely complex venture possible. The Heritage Lottery funding of key posts continues to 2020 by which time challenging targets have to be met. We proceed with faith, hope and determination in the Spirit that inspired the Wesley brothers.

The 18 month construction period has not been easy and there have been delays. Thanks are due to the Horsefair Project Team, especially Gary Best, the Warden, Mike Rose, Deputy Warden, who has taken on the onerous role of Project Coordinator and had to deal with various construction hitches, David Markall, the volunteer Project Accountant, and Peter Knowles, Hon. Treasurer, who has dealt with intricacies of VAT and an increasing payroll as well as regular construction payments. The Warden has masterminded the development of the exciting new museum along with Bristol-based designers, Cod Steaks, while contriving to write books on Grace Murray, John Cennick and the children's book *Gospel's Story* allegedly written by John Wesley's horse, launched on 18 April. His book on the New Room – the first ever full history – is due out in June. He is particularly grateful for the constant support shown by David Bainbridge, the Senior Property Steward.

David Worthington, the New Room Manager, has worked tirelessly to keep the show on the road. His wife Liz, as Assistant Manager, has used her design gifts in creating a new logo. They and the rest of the staff have contrived to stay cheerful and focused in spite of long periods with no central heating and various temporary office locations. Our HLF mentor is not the only one to comment on how much has been achieved in outreach and imaginative activity in spite of dust, noise and interruption. The volunteer stewards, who have also been very forbearing, are excited and challenged by the new opportunities opening up. Committed volunteers are our lifeblood. We are very grateful for the sterling work of Constance Gould, who has retired as Volunteer Coordinator after many years' service, and for the role played by Bob and Maureen Wood in their time as Secretaries of the Friends of the New Room.

The weekly communion services and regular lunchtime concerts have maintained usual attendance levels. Samuel Wesley's 250th anniversary was celebrated by editing and republishing his unique book of hymn tunes *Harmony in the Heart*, available from the New

Room. Special events at the New Room in the last year included an exhibition on the Revd J P Martin's *Uncle* books and an accompanying conference on writing and publishing in Bristol; lectures in the Healthy City Week programme in October; a talk on Cities of Sanctuary by the Revd Dr Inderjit Bhogal; sale of Cards For Good Causes; carol services; and a fair trade pop-up shop and talk. Engagement with the life of the city is continually being strengthened, with good links with Destination Bristol, Broadmead Traders, BBC, Bristol Old Vic, the two Universities, Further Education colleges, Girl Guides, and Mencap. The website is refreshed, the new-look New Room magazine is supplemented by monthly e-newsletters and the *Methodist Recorder* has carried lots of New Room news.

Mandy Briggs, the Education Officer, worked with Crockerne C of E Primary School on a Postcards from Pill project and with the Circuit planned a successful community day at Pill on 3 September as part of Asbury 200. The following day two dozen folk led by the Revd David Weeks walked along the Avon from the New Room to Pill, where they joined in an act of commemoration by the creek from which Asbury sailed to America, and in an inspirational service in the village chapel. With the help of a history student placement, teaching materials for schools have been prepared. Mandy and Lucie Connors have developed an RE Day on John Wesley for use in schools across Reception, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, and successfully trialled this at St. Peter's School, Pilning. Links with Kingswood School remain strong. Terrific Tuesdays of family crafts were held in the summer holidays and again throughout Broadmead there was a children's animal hunt before Easter. The Education Room in the new building will host a wide array of learning opportunities and will be the key Bristol venue for Discipleship and Ministries Learning Network regional activity.

Lucie Connors, the Community Engagement Officer, is networking with organisations across the city, to develop a wider range of visiting groups and of volunteers. It has proved difficult to recruit museum volunteers until the new museum was open, so the staff have initially had to step into the breach frequently. The decision was taken to employ a cafe manager and a deputy to establish a professional standard from the outset, as the cafe will be the main ongoing source of income. The part-time Collections Manager's main task is to co-ordinate the library, archives and artefacts, working with the existing specialist volunteers.

Unfortunately the Revd Andrew Pratt has had to resign as a trustee on health grounds during the year. The Trustees are considering major changes to the governance structures which they are exploring with Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes in the light of Charity Commission guidance. As these will take some time to resolve it has been decided that all those presently serving should be nominated to continue for 2017/18 and no new names put forward at this juncture.

SUMMARY OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS – YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2016

Incoming Resources		Resources Expended	
Grants, Donations & Tax recovered	£336,512	Salaries, Tax etc	£93,241
Investment Income & Interest	£9,084	Repairs & Maintenance	£14,776
Tours & other fund raising	£8,003	Utilities & Insurance	£14,993
Shop sales	£14,373	Shop costs	£7,301
No5 Charles St rent & New Room hire	£38,126	Administration	£4,321
From Bristol District	£1,237,956	Horsefair Project Costs	£918,888
From Heritage Lottery Fund	£629,588	New Room Museum development	£84,775
VAT recovered	£124,176	VAT paid	£207,823
Other Income	£14,911	Other Expenditure	£25,381
TOTAL	£2,412,729	TOTAL	£1,371,500
At the year end the breakdown of the Trust's total funds of £1,488,706 is as follows :			
Unrestricted Funds & Trusts	£73,263		
Restricted Funds & Trusts	£1,286,101		
Permanent Endowments	£129,342		

(For 2015/16 the accounts have been prepared on an accruals basis)

*****RESOLUTIONS**

40/1. The Conference adopted the Report.

40/2. In accordance with Standing Order 220, the Conference appointed the following as the Managing Trustees of the New Room for 2017/18:

The Revd A Ward Jones (Chair); the Revd Dr Jonathan H Pye (Bristol District Chair, ex officio); the Revd David R Alderman (Superintendent of Bristol and South Gloucestershire Circuit, ex officio); Mr Gary Best (Warden ex officio); Ms Jane Allin; Mr T David Bainbridge; Mrs Jennifer Carpenter (Hon Sec); Mr Philip Carter (Musical Director); Mr Michael J Culshaw (Deputy Warden); Mr Stephen Duckworth; Mr Geoffrey Gollop; Mr John Hirst; Mr Martin R Hunt; Mrs Linda Jones; Mr Peter Knowles (Hon Treasurer); the Revd Jongsin Lee; Mr Michael Rose; Mrs Aroona Smith; the Revd David G Weeks (Hon Chaplain); Mr Stephen Williams; Mr Robert Wood.