



**Minutes of the 1<sup>st</sup> Annual General Meeting  
as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation  
held via Zoom at 5.30pm on 25 November 2020**

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The Chairman, Professor the Worshipful Mark Hill QC, in the Chair:

The Chairman welcomed members to this unprecedented virtual meeting and said that, although the Society was founded in 1987, this was formally its first General Meeting. The Society had changed its legal personality from an Unincorporated Association to a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO). The former had now been wound up and removed from the Register of Charities; and the Society now operates as a CIO.

The Chairman called to mind all members who had died in the past year, thinking especially of Sir John Laws who had been a member of the Editorial Board of the Journal and Dr Frank Robson, a past Chairman of the Society. A period of silence was kept.

This AGM had been planned to take place in Minerva House, Southwark immediately following a celebration of the Eucharist in Southwark Cathedral last March but had been postponed due to the Covid pandemic. The Agenda and extensive accompanying paperwork had been circulated in advance with a request that members notify the Executive Secretary or Chairman if they had any observations. In the absence of any response (save in relation to a typographical correction to the proposed resolution) the Chairman indicated that the meeting could proceed speedily and with consensus.

The Chairman welcomed John Ford as Executive Secretary.

**1. Apologies**

Apologies had been received from Christine Ferris, David Hawtin, Howard Connell, Lee Longden and Simon Baker.

**2. Minutes of the Annual Meeting**

The minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Society as an Unincorporated Association were noted.

**3. Trustees' Annual Report**

The Trustees' Annual Report was received together with an Addendum from the Chairman. This supplement revealed how the Covid-19 pandemic had led to increased activity by the Society. He thanked all who were involved in the new initiatives, the Reading Groups on the Canons and the

YouTube channel. He also expressed thanks to the continuing work of the Education Sub-committee and welcomed the new curricula for the teaching of ecclesiastical law.

In commenting on administration he announced that Stephen Hogg had been appointed Finance Officer, bringing experience of IT and financial management in the charity sector. Stephen and John will take on the work previously undertaken by Andrew Male who steps down as Administrator at the end of the year. The Chairman thanked Andrew for all he had contributed to the Society over many years and expressed his hope that, once the restrictions on social gathering had been lifted, there would be an appropriate time and place for the Society to express its thanks.

#### **4. Statement of Accounts**

The Society's Statement of Accounts for the period 5 December 2018 to 30 June 2019 were received. They showed a zero balance.

#### **5. Treasurer's Report**

A written report from the Treasurer was received. The assets of the Unincorporated Society were transferred to the CIO on 1 July 2019, with a balance of approximately £45,000. The current financial position was healthy. Thanks were expressed to Darren Oliver for his work as Treasurer.

#### **6. President**

The Right Reverend Christopher Hill was elected President of the Society for a period of 5 years.

#### **7. Vice-Chairman**

The Right Reverend Stephen Conway, Bishop of Ely, was formally elected Vice-Chairman of the Society for a period of 2 years. Bishop Stephen's time in office effectively began last March when this meeting was due to have taken place. Therefore, the election of a new Vice-Chairman will take place at the annual meeting in 2022.

#### **8. Trustees**

The following were elected as Trustees for a period of 3 years, subject to retirement by rotation as provided in the constitution.

The Worshipful Ruth Arlow  
The Venerable Simon Baker  
Paul Barber  
The Reverend Paul Benfield  
The Reverend Russell Dewhurst  
Frances Godden  
The Right Reverend Christine Hardman  
Mrs Anne-Marie Organ  
The Revd Christopher Smith  
Luke Tatam  
Mrs Elizabeth Wilson

Frank Cranmer and the Reverend Stephen Coleman will continue as co-opted Trustees.

The meeting was reminded that the three officers of the Society (Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Treasurer) would be stepping down relatively soon and that suggestions to fill these posts should be directed to Frances Godden who was heading a group looking at succession planning and recruitment.

## 9. Patron

The appointment of The Most Revd Stephen Cottrell as joint Patron was confirmed. The Chairman reported that the new Archbishop of York was keen to support the work of the Society.

## 10. Journal

The Editor's Report was received. The Chairman commented that he had recently attended a virtual meeting of the Editorial Board of the Journal when over 20 members from all over the world. During Will Adam's time as editor it had continued to enjoy its reputation as an internationally acclaimed scholarly Journal without losing the feel of Society's in-house magazine.

The Chairman thanked Will for his work as Editor which would come to an end during the course of next year and welcomed the appointment of Ben Harrison as assistant editor with a view to succeeding Will at the end of a handover period.

## 11. Constitution

The Chairman noted that it was fortunate that the CIO Constitution needed amending so soon after it had come into existence, but it was necessary to ensure the functioning of the Society during the pandemic. The Chairman thanked David Leonard for emailing the Executive Secretary in advance of the meeting to point out a typographical error in the circulated papers.

It was resolved to amend the resolution to correct the reference in paragraph 3 so as to read clause **12 (3)(d)**. The following resolution, as amended, was then put to meeting by electronic poll:

*THAT the constitution of the CIO be amended as follows:*

1. *In clause 12(3)(b)(ii), insert the words "(in the case of a meeting to be held partly or fully at a physical location)" before "give the address at which the meeting is to take place;"*;
2. *Insert a new clause 12(3)(b)(iii): "(in the case of a meeting to be held partly or fully by electronic means) give arrangements for accessing the electronic meeting;"*;
3. *Renumber clause 12(3)(d) accordingly;*
4. *In clause 12(6)(d)(ii), insert "and/" before "or";*
5. *Insert a new clause 12(8):*

### ***"Participation in meetings by electronic means***

*(a) A meeting may be held by suitable electronic means agreed by the Charity Trustees in which each participant may communicate with all the other participants.*

*(b) Any member participating at a meeting by suitable electronic means agreed by the Charity Trustees in which a participant or participants may communicate with all the other participants shall qualify as being present at the meeting.*

*(c) Meetings held by electronic means must comply with rules for meetings, including chairing and the taking of minutes."*

6. *Insert a new definition at the end of clause 31: "A "**show of hands**" includes the electronic equivalent for virtual and hybrid meetings".*

The amended resolution was carried unanimously.

Observations in the chat box indicated that several members would welcome the blended or hybrid formula for meetings and other activities of the Society which these revisions will now allow for AGMs.

## **12. Any other business**

The President congratulated both the Chairman and all members present for the brevity and efficiency of the meeting. He thanked the Chairman for his energy and vision and wished to record thanks to the Trustees, the Standing Committee and all Working Groups for the considerable work undertaken in the past year, noting that much more seems to be going on in the life of the Society than in what might be described as more 'normal' times.

The meeting concluded at 5.56 pm

## **ECCLESIASTICAL LAW SOCIETY**

### **TRUSTEES' REPORT 2020**

The practice of the Society has been to present to the AGM a report of Trustees for the calendar year immediately preceding. For many of us 2020 is a year which we would rather forget. The Covid 19 pandemic disrupted our lives, curtailed travel and gatherings and many of us lost friends and relative to coronavirus. Despite all of these difficulties and challenges, the work of the Society continued and – in many ways – was enhanced. So front and centre of this Report must be a sincere expression of thanks to all those who have given of their time and talents to support the work of the Society and promote its activities.

The Society's AGM had been scheduled for 28 March 2020, but was cancelled due to the national lockdown, and eventually rescheduled for 25 November 2020, when it took place remotely using the all-too familiar Zoom platform, thanks to a statutory dispensation afforded to Charitable Incorporated Organisations (CIOs). The routine business of the AGM was efficiently transacted, and the Trustees confirmed in office for a further period. More significantly, an amendment to the Society's constitution was carried by the requisite majority to allow future AGMs to be carried out by electronic means or in a hybrid manner. Whilst it remains the intention of the Trustees to conduct future AGMs in person, steps have already been taken for the 20 March 2021 AGM to be conducted remotely as the pandemic continues.

The Trustees met on four occasions in 2021: on 5 February, 29 April, 22 July and 14 October, the last three being online. The Standing Committee met monthly by telephone. Once the likely impact and duration of the Covid 19 pandemic was known, the Trustees took immediate steps to keep members fully informed of the Society's activities, to move as many as possible online and to introduce entirely new activities to promote education in ecclesiastical law. In these ventures we were fortunate to have at our disposal the IT experience of the Revd Russell Dewhurst, head of the Society's Communications Committee, who was instrumental on facilitating new ways of working. Thanks to Frank Cranmer and John Ford respectively, the activities of the Society have been tweeted and communicated in weekly notifications to members.

#### **ELS YouTube Channel**

The Society established its own YouTube Channel on which an ever-growing series of interviews and presentations have been posted featuring Norman Doe, Simon Baker, the custodians of the *Law and Religion UK Blog* – Frank Cranmer and David Pocklington, Revd Andrea Russell, and the Bishop of Ely.

#### **London Lectures and Northern Province Lectures**

These moved seamlessly on line with the live streaming of Bishop Helen Ann Hartley's lecture on *Law and Life in the Anglican Communion*, and have continued thereafter with increased virtual participation and highly engaging Q&A sessions. Many of them were recorded and have been placed on the YouTube Channel allowing them to reach a much wider audience, and contributing to an enduring resource.

#### **Reading Group on the Canons**

The response to the suggestion of a fortnightly reading group on the Canons of the Church of England was overwhelming. Such was the demand that four groups had to be established which now meet fortnightly, two convened by Revd Russell Dewhurst and two by Revd Stephen Coleman. The success of this venture has led to the establishment of reading groups on the *Principles of Canon Law Common to the Churches of the Anglican Communion*, some at home and others in Provinces of the Anglican Communion elsewhere in the world.

### **CDM Working Party**

The CDM working party convened by HH Peter Collier QC has produced its interim report, which received considerable publicity, including a double-page spread in the *Church Times*. A further consultation has taken place and, at the time of writing, the final report is awaited.

### **Ecclesiastical Law Journal**

The Covid-19 emergency delayed the printing and mailing out of the May and September issues of the *Journal*. But publication is back on track. Ben Harrison has been appointed as Assistant Editor of the *Journal* in the expectation that he will succeed to the editor's chair in the latter part of 2021 when the Revd Dr Will Adam steps down as editor. Will took up the mantle of assistant editor in 2009, becoming editor in 2013 and the *Journal* has flourished with him at the helm. We thank him for his commitment to the *Journal* – the shop window of the Society – and wish him well with his burgeoning ecumenical brief.

### **Membership renewal**

The annual membership renewal proceeded with vigour and membership now standing at 712. A recruitment sub-committee led by Frances Godden is committed to building the membership yet further. The group is also engaged in succession planning for officers and trustees

### **ELS Newsletter**

The ELS newsletter continues to spread the news of the Society's activities and we will shortly be looking for a volunteer to replace Ben Harrison as editor.

### **Education Sub-Committee**

We continue to be grateful to Simon Baker and the education sub-committee for its work on promoting education in ecclesiastical law. The recent e-questionnaire of members has given a clearer idea of what is currently being done and where, and provided points of contact within the majority of dioceses which will promote concerted action in the future. A stand-out performance from the Education Committee was its recent webinar on Ecclesiastical Law in Clerical Formation. This can still be viewed on the ELS YouTube channel, and there is a promise of more to come next year.

### **Curricula**

Thanks to Ruth Arlow and her team, the Trustees have recently approved two basic curricula: one for clergy and one for laity giving an overview of subject areas and specific resources of which they ought to be aware concerning ecclesiastical law. This should be launched by the time of the AGM. It does not purport to be comprehensive. It does not cover everything. And it will need periodic updating and revisiting. But it should, at the very least, help to point to those who need to know something of the

ecclesiastical law of the Church of England in the right direction. It is one of the most significant outputs of the Society since its creation back in 1987.

### **Winding up of Unincorporated Association**

The CIO took over the assets and liabilities of the Society as an unincorporated association, and the membership migrated to the CIO. The unincorporated association has now been wound up and removed from the Register of Charities. Particular thanks are owed to the governance group under the able leadership of Elizabeth Wilson.

### **Change of Patron**

The Rt Revd and Rt Hon Dr John Sentamu stood down as Patron of the Society upon ceasing to be Archbishop of York. I am pleased to record our gratitude to Archbishop Sentamu for all the support he has given the Society during his time as Patron. The Confirmation of Election of the Rt Revd Stephen Cottrell as Archbishop of York took place on 9 July and Archbishop Stephen has generously accepted an invitation to be a Patron of the Society.

### **Administration**

Members will already be familiar with Bishop John Ford who has been Executive Secretary of the Society since January, servicing the Chairman and Trustees and generally running the administration. We are grateful for his energy and good humour. In January, Stephen Hogg joined us as Finance Officer, bringing with him a wealth of experience in accountancy, IT and charity administration.

This new administration was occasioned by the departure of Andrew Male who has been the administrator of the Society for many years, during which time it has undergone many changes. We wish him well in retirement.

### **Lord Williams**

What had been a gloomy year finished on a high note in December with a magnificent lecture by Rowan Williams, formerly patron of the Society, to mark the 850th anniversary of the murder of his predecessor Thomas Becket. As over 1,000 registered for the lecture we would never have found an auditorium sufficiently large to accommodate the global audience, so we were thankful to have moved on to the zoom platform.

Tracing church/state conflicts from medieval times to the present day served as a reminder of the continuing need for the Society fulfilling its function of promoting education in ecclesiastical law. The Society has weathered the challenges of 2020 with considerable success, and has never been as active as it is now with its largest ever membership. We can move forward with confidence.

Mark Hill QC  
Chairman, Ecclesiastical Law Society

**The Ecclesiastical Law Society (Charity No. 1181002)**

**RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDING 30 JUNE 2020**

<b>RECEIPTS</b>	<i>Notes</i>	<b>2019/20</b>
		£
Members' subscriptions	3	39,126
Conference and events fees:		
<i>2020 (Day) Conference</i>		2,770
<i>Training Day: Education</i>		2,375
Royalties: Ecclesiastical Law Journal		6,005
Sales: M. Hill <i>Ecclesiastical Law</i>	4	3,280
Interest received		106
Other miscellaneous income		85
<i>Grant – Dean and Chapter of Westminster</i>		2,000
<b>Total Income</b>		<b>55,747</b>
<b>PAYMENTS</b>		
Journal costs	5	9,130
Conference and events costs		
<i>2020 (Day) Conference</i>		1,203
<i>Training Day: Education</i>		905
<i>London &amp; Northern Province Lectures</i>		184
Purchases: M. Hill <i>Ecclesiastical Law</i>	4	3,768
Administration costs:		
<i>Website</i>		2,495
<i>Other administrative costs</i>	6	23,594
<i>Independent examiner's fees</i>		630
<i>Bank and subscription collection charges</i>		511
<b>Total Expenditure</b>		<b>42,420</b>
Surplus/(Deficit) of Receipts over Payments		13,327
Bank balances transferred from ELS as unincorporated charity	7	45,507
<b>Current assets at end of year</b>		<b>58,834</b>
Cash at Bankers: COIF Deposit		17,955
CAF Bank		20,792
GoCardless		20,087
<b>Total Current Assets</b>		<b>58,834</b>

**Notes to accounts for the year ending 30 June 2020:**

1. All the funds of the Society are unrestricted as defined by the Charities Act 2011.
2. These accounts cover the period from 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020.



3. Members' subscriptions are collected by cheque, direct debit, electronic transfer or credit card via the Society's website, and recorded on a cash basis.
4. The author of this publication is a trustee. The Society placed orders for this special paperback edition for onward sale to member in fulfilment of the Society's charitable object of promoting education in ecclesiastical law. Acquisitions and sales straddle more than one accounting year and some stock was still held as at 30 June. The author has waived his royalties on this special edition, and has contributed towards the cost of postage and packing. He has derived no profit from the transaction.
5. The Society is responsible for honoraria for the Editor and the Consultant Editor, and their related costs and expenses. In 2019/20 the honoraria totalled £9,000.
6. The administrative costs included the agreed costs paid for the services of the Administrator and Executive Secretary, their expenses and other administrative costs, e.g. travel expenses for Committee and sub-committee meetings, postage, office and stationery costs.
7. The assets are the bank balances transferred in from the previously unincorporated entity of the same name.

**Darren Oliver**  
Treasurer



**Charity Number 1181002**

The draft accounts for 2019/20 (year ending 30 June 2020) are set out above. These are essentially the CIO's first operational set of accounts, following the transfer of assets from the unincorporated charity on 1 July 2019. They have been independently examined and were approved by the Trustees on 3 February 2021.

Traditionally the accounts reflect the costs of the Society's principal annual activity which alternates between a Residential and a Day Conference. This accounting year should have included a Day Conference but it was cancelled due to the Covid pandemic. The Society incurred unrecoverable costs for catering, but due to the generosity of members not seeking reimbursement of their fees, a modest surplus was achieved which will be used to subsidise future conferences.

The Journal royalties paid to the Society from Cambridge University Press have risen to just over £6,000, which go a considerable way to covering the Society's costs in producing the Journal. Prior to the arrangement with CUP, the Society bore the entire production costs. This has released a much larger proportion of the membership fees to be applied in the Society's other charitable activities.

The sale of the special paperback version of the Chairman's fourth edition, *Ecclesiastical Law*, proved so popular that it was reprinted on several occasions. Several new members joined the Society in order to take advantage of the substantial discount on the hardback price. The transactions were cost neutral to the Society, and the Chairman derived no profit.

There have been cost savings as a consequence of the Society's activities taking place remotely. As a result, these accounts look very healthy. The Society is well placed to resume face-to-face activities as soon as Covid restrictions allow.

**Darren Oliver**  
Treasurer