

General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches

# Annual Reports

## 2014



General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches

The Nightingale Centre

The Sustentation Fund





*Unitarians and Free Christians at the  
2014 GA Meetings held at Whittlebury Hall*

## **Photographers**

We would like to thank everyone who provided photographs for this report, particularly Emma Lowe and James Barry.

## **Cover image:**

Chalice image, taken by Mina Carson, at the ICUU Conference and Council Meeting in New York in 2014. Used by kind permission of ICUU and Mina Carson



The Eighty-Sixth

# 2014 Annual Reports

General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches

*Registered Charity No. 250788*

The Nightingale Centre

*Registered Charity No. 242256*

The Sustentation Fund

*Registered Charity No. 235449*

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## GENERAL ASSEMBLY PRESIDENT'S REPORT

### General Assembly President 2014-2015, Marion Baker

My two years representing the Unitarian denomination as Vice President and President have passed by in a jiffy. The warm welcome I received as I travelled to events the length and breadth of the British Isles boosted my spirits and made me aware yet again that our Unitarian community is a large, accepting family that embraces all in a spirit of inclusiveness and respect.

By the end of March 2015, I will have visited 45 Unitarian chapels and churches, including 18 that I visited for the first time. We have a variety of beautiful buildings, which are lovingly cared for by their loyal and proud congregations. The indomitable spirit of Unitarians serving their local communities with pride and commitment showed me that as a denomination we are gaining strength and recognition.

When I visited District Association meetings, I spoke on the theme of "What are we doing here". The short survey I asked participants to complete, gave me an excellent understanding of what concerns Unitarians across the British Isles. The emerging themes informed the discussion topics at the Vision Day organised by the Executive Committee held in Manchester in September 2014.

I have taken services with the themes of *Changing Landscapes, Belonging, With Freedom comes Responsibility, Cherishing our Earth and The Turn of the Year* in our chapels and churches.

Our affiliated societies contribute greatly to our denominational work, so I was delighted to give greetings to the FOY conference, Unitarian Music Society conference, Unicoms and to speak at the Unitarian Renewal Group conference. UKUnitarianTV recorded my presentation at the Western Union District meeting and a Christmas message.

I also represented the Unitarian and Free Christian Churches at the Remembrance Ceremony at the Cenotaph, the Interfaith commemoration of the imprisonment of the seven former Bahai Leaders in Iran at Westminster Abbey, the IARF Congress in Birmingham, Christian Aid's AGM and Church Leader's Consultation at St Martin in the Fields and the hundredth anniversary of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association celebratory lunch at Dr Williams's Library.

A special delight was attending the Valedictory services at Unitarian College Manchester and Harris Manchester College Oxford for the eight ministry students who had completed their studies and attending several induction services of Ministers settled in new ministries.

In order to improve communications, the President is again being invited to attend the Executive Committee (EC) meetings as an observer and with permission can make comment during discussion. Perhaps as important is that the President's role as chairperson of the General Assembly Annual Meetings is a reminder to the EC members of their accountability to the constituent members of the Unitarian denomination. Consequently, I have attended all the EC meetings, mindful of this responsibility.

My heartfelt thanks for your generous hospitality. I have been humbled and privileged to serve you all, to give encouragement and to witness the tremendous work you do for the benefit of our beloved faith community.

*Marion Baker*



*Marion Baker  
President*

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE - TRUSTEES' REPORT



The Executive Committee (EC) acts as the trustee body of the General Assembly and is responsible for determining the overall direction and development of the Assembly in line with the decisions and policies agreed at the Annual Meetings and the requirements of charity and other legal requirements. The Executive Committee provides strategic leadership and is responsible for ensuring the effective use of the assets of the General Assembly. Executive Committee members are not representatives of individual districts or areas of the country but must act in the best interests of the General Assembly as a charity.

The members of the Executive Committee during the year were: James Barry, John Clifford, Joan Cook, Robert Ince, Louise Rogers, Alison Thursfield, Martin Whitell and Jacqueline Woodman.

### Achievements

The highlights for the year included:

- Improved GA Meetings experience
- Eight newly-qualified Ministers & Lay Pastors
- The introduction of same-sex marriage in England and Wales in March 2014 and in

Scotland in December 2014

- Raising the public profile of the Unitarian movement and building stronger relationships with like-minded liberal religious communities and other progressive organisations
- Managing a major upgrade of IT facilities at Essex Hall, including a new national website
- Significant efforts to promote Safeguarding arrangements within congregations
- Finances kept under control
- Establishing a Youth Strategy Group
- Developing a fresh vision for our future starting with a Vision Day with District Association representatives, Executive Committee members and others

### Aims and Objectives

This year's prime focus was to promote the current objective (for the period 2010 – 2015) of building "sustainable and thriving Unitarian and Free Christian communities." The achievement of this objective involves close working together at congregational, district and national levels and can be divided into four aims.



The four aims are:

- encouraging and supporting leadership at local level (“Local Leadership”).
- developing Ministry within the denomination (“Ministry”).
- raising the visibility of the Unitarian movement (“Visibility”).
- improving the services to the movement provided by staff and volunteers (“Improving services”).

We also recognise that when we undertook the ‘Difficult Choices’ consultation, which led to these four aims, we accepted as given the need to support the national programme of activities for children and young people.

### Targets

The Executive Committee set out targets against which the achievement of the aims could be measured:

- We will increase our membership by 20%
- We will increase the number of qualified and active Ministers to at least fifty
- We will ensure that all Unitarian congregations can have access to professional Ministerial or recognised lay leadership and support
- We will ensure that all volunteers have access to training and support

### How are we doing against the targets?

As we draw to the end of the five year period we have taken the opportunity to reflect upon the performance of the Movement against these aims.

- We will increase our membership by 20%

The survey of congregations that was promised in last year’s Annual Report took place and confirmed that the quota system represented a poor measure of congregational size as there is no common definition of membership. Whilst

indicating that there are probably more people active than show up in quota figures there is no evidence of substantial increase in overall membership. The quota returns for 2013/14, which drew on membership in mid-2013, show a fall from 3,384 to 3,179, of which 55 is a result of a review of membership in one large congregation with the remainder across many congregations. The survey did not reveal any major new insights into an alternative mechanism of funding the General Assembly’s work to the quota and further work will be undertaken on this issue. It is with regret that we report that the number of congregations in membership of the General Assembly fell by one following the closure of the Halliwell Road Free Church, Bolton and we honour the commitment of members and Ministers over the generations.

- We will increase the number of qualified and active Ministers to at least fifty

The number of active Ministers currently working in congregations is kept under regular review and it is likely that the target of 50 Ministers by 2015 will be substantially met. The Ministerial Vacancy List, despite the successful appointment of several newly qualified Ministers, has not reduced although an increasing number of ministries are now part-time.



Students and newly-qualified Ministers at the 2014 Annual Meetings

We think that the target of 50 ministers should now be increased as a reflection of outstanding demand for Ministers and the likelihood this will increase as time goes by. We recognise, however, the changing face of Ministerial appointments with fewer full-time posts and Ministers combining part-time Ministry with other occupations. We also need to be aware that unexpected changes in the circumstances to a few individuals can have a significant impact given the small numbers involved. The increase in the number of Lay Persons in Charge has enabled local leadership to be maintained. However this raises issues of how they are to be supported by the wider Movement.

- We will ensure that all Unitarian congregations can have access to professional Ministerial or recognised lay leadership and support

There is clearly now an increasing demand for professional leadership and an increasing number of people wishing to take an active role in leading worship and performing rites of passage. Our training and development programmes will need further development to reflect and fulfil the aspirations of many members of the Movement. This must include the Advanced level of the Worship Studies Course. We must also be aware that, whilst some districts have taken initiatives to enable ministry, funding in others is restricted and there has been limited development of district or group ministry.

- We will ensure that all volunteers have access to training and support.

Professional support to Congregations and Districts from GA Headquarters staff is increasingly utilised. We believe this is of considerable importance and will be maintained and potentially expanded in future.

We have ensured that safeguarding training and support has been given the highest priority and we encourage congregations and Districts to redouble their efforts to ensure all those at risk are properly protected.

It is clear that there are considerable obstacles to recruiting volunteers of the right calibre at all levels in the Movement and more work needs to be done to sustain our existing volunteer structures. As part of this drive to encourage more volunteers, we aim to put in place a group primarily representing District Associations to encourage and develop new volunteers. We also see the need for the role of Treasurer within congregations to be simplified in such a way that there is a wider group of people able to undertake the role.

In summary, whilst much has improved, there is still need for more effort and new ideas to improve governance of our various organisations.

We believe the time is now right to consider a major change to the remit of the Ministry and Local Leadership Strategy Groups. The former has been working to address ministerial competencies and training. The latter has been reforming and beginning to look at plans for the future drawing upon work on modular training. There is recognition that there needs to be a co-ordinated approach to leadership in all its forms.

This year the Future Ministry (FM) Scottish Pilot on future ministry was brought to a close, concluding that whilst there were some local benefits of the additional funding for training of lay people it did not result in major changes to leadership capacity.



## 2020 Congregational Development Programme

With funding in place of £100,000 (committed and pledged) the Leadership Team undertook an open selection process and the Executive Committee approved a project in Derby for funding. We are pleased that this has the support of East Midlands District Association. Training has been provided to enhance knowledge and capacity at what can be done at local level to develop new fellowships and congregations or encourage re-kindling of congregations.

### Youth Strategy Group

A new initiative was launched at the Annual Meetings to review the provision of services for children, young people and young adults. The new Youth Strategy Group is investigating what can be done to retain our young people when there is clearly a huge drop-off rate and few young adults. New initiatives will be brought forward in the New Year and will need the support of everyone within the Movement.

### Financial governance

The Accounts of the General Assembly are set out later in this report in summary form along with those of The Nightingale Centre and Sustentation Fund. A deficit budget was set recognising the need for investment in identified areas although the Accounts will show that the deficit was significantly less than planned. This was a one-off step. Spending has been controlled and income maintained. The General Assembly's reserves policy is to hold sufficient free reserves (not restricted by their purpose or by virtue of endowment) to ensure that it is able to service its annual budgeted expenditure and to ensure that its risks in relation to its pension fund obligations are mitigated. Changes to the accounting arrangements for the staff pension have

affected the Accounts but measures are in place to reduce the pension liabilities over a ten-year period. The planned financial development review did not proceed as hoped and will be a major action for 2014/15.

During the year, five grants were made from the Millennium Fund totalling £12,987 to support growth initiatives in congregations.



*New equipment purchased for the One World Café project at Oldham*

The EC would like to thank Rev Martin Whitell for serving as Acting Treasurer since May 2014, in addition to his Trustee role. This is an unsustainable situation and the identification of a permanent Honorary Treasurer is a priority.

### Understanding what the EC is doing

The Executive Committee has been conscious of the criticisms about secrecy and lack of openness in their regular meetings and is actively seeking to find new ideas to improve communications with the Movement as a whole. EC members have continued to undertake 'link' roles to District Associations and have been trying to build upon initiatives taken in the previous year.



The GA President is now invited to attend Executive Committee meetings as an observer to ensure they can bring the views of grassroots Unitarians whom they meet during their engagements and that they are aware of significant issues.

The Vision Day workshop proved an excellent opportunity to engage others in discussions about the future and showed the value of looking outwards. The agenda for meetings is now circulated as are the approved Minutes. Executive Committee Question and Answer sessions are now held at the Annual Meetings and have been well-attended with an open exchange of views.

### Social Justice and Social Action

The implementation of the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act in March 2014, which relates to England and Wales, and similar moves in Scotland, resulted in considerable media interest in our inclusive, Unitarian perspective.



Derek McAuley (Left) celebrates with other Faith Leaders after the implementation of the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act

This approach is also reflected in work on education with the Accord Coalition and on religious freedom which also attracted attention. The issue of Assisted Dying remains high on the public agenda and we remain one of the few religious bodies to support change to the law. For a Movement of our size it is clear we ‘punch above our weight’.

A number of Resolutions on public affairs were approved at the Annual Meetings. Work to prepare a pack on climate change, after a motion was referred back for consideration by congregations, has not been completed and will mean that a further debate is likely to be postponed until 2016. Work on penal reform has been pursued by the Penal Affairs Group. Unitarians continue to participate in the ‘RADAR’ group for churches’ parliamentary officers.

It is pleasing to report that the final total for funds raised for the British Red Cross Appeal for The Philippines was over £20,000. Subsequently other Red Cross projects for Syria and Gaza were also supported by many congregations.



*Presentation of the cheque for the Philippines Appeal*

We were also pleased to support new social action initiatives through the Millennium Fund for the One World Café in Oldham and the Simple Gifts project in Bethnal Green. We would encourage all those able to help with these projects in whatever way to do so.

## Visibility

The Chief Officer is to be commended for his work as an effective ambassador for the Movement externally, including speaking at the Lincoln Theological Institute, Manchester; Sea of Faith Conference and the IARF World Congress. He also was introduced and spoke at the Annual Meetings of the Unitarian Universalist Association in Providence, Rhode Island. Jacky Woodman attended the World Humanist Congress in Oxford.



Chief Officer, Derek McAuley, attending an event at 10 Downing Street

In January 2014 representatives attended the International Council of Unitarians and Universalists (ICUU) Council Meeting, Conference and International Ministers Meeting in New York, offering training in multi-cultural effectiveness and introducing a new focus on financial and organisational capacity building. In August many British Unitarians supported the World Congress of the International Association of Religious Freedom in Birmingham, England and we are pleased to report that Robert Ince was elected to the IARF Council.

The new GA website has been widely welcomed and will provide a tool for further promoting the Unitarian Movement. A small grant was made from the Millennium Fund to support the development of UKunitarianTV.

## Risk Management and Public Benefit

The risk register was reviewed in July 2014 resulting in a number of changes reflecting an assessment of the current risks facing the General Assembly. The importance of effective local arrangements for Safeguarding cannot be under-estimated and this remains the highest risk area. The Executive Committee referred to the guidance given by the Charity Commission in relation to public benefit when reviewing their aims and objectives and in planning future activities. In particular the Executive Committee members, in their role as charity trustees, have a responsibility to consider how planned activities will contribute to the aims and objectives they have set.

## Annual Meetings 2014



Whittlebury Hall - our 2014 venue

The 2014 Annual Meetings took place at Whittlebury Hall, Northamptonshire on 13 – 16 April 2014. This was a new style of high-quality hotel venue rather than a university campus and worked well.

It was of course an excellent opportunity for Unitarians to meet and debate serious issues of concern, join together in worship and celebration and learn together. We would thank the Midland Unitarian Association for arranging the “Celebrating Our Community” event.

## A Vision for our future

As the current five-year plan developed by the Executive Committee draws to a close, a fresh vision for our future has been developed to plot a way forward for the Unitarian and Free Christian Movement from which a plan is being prepared for the coming five years.

The Executive Committee invited the participation of a wider group of Unitarians to think about the shared vision for our future. A Vision day was held at Cross Street Chapel in Manchester on 6 September 2014. The Day certainly met our expectations with enthusiastic and meaningful engagement by all attendees and has been followed by discussion in a number of arenas and also online of the key themes that emerged. This work will be presented to the Annual Meetings and will be the basis for a new Strategic Plan for the years 2015 – 2020.

### Staffing, Accommodation and Volunteers

“Improving Services” is the strategic objective led by the Executive Committee. Everything we have achieved this year would not be possible without the dedication of our staff, volunteers and supporters.

The Executive Committee would like to thank the Chief Officer and staff at Essex Hall for their work and commitment during a period of major change. The significant programme to upgrade the Information Technology infrastructure and services was substantially implemented, led by Martin Sarbicki, Head of Finance and Administration. These changes have impacted on all staff and led to new ways of working.

During the year, Andrew Mason project-managed major changes to Essex Hall accommodation which included some General Assembly staff moving and a new tenant moving into the building. The GA changes should improve communications between staff and also reduce accommodation costs.

The Essex Hall building is owned by an independent trust, the Essex Hall Trust, and the Trustees generously provide the General Assembly with free office space, including Business Rates, utility bills and service charges and provide a grant. The General Assembly also receives a contribution towards staffing costs reflecting the management and financial services provided to the Trust and a substantial grant. The Executive Committee would like to thank the Essex Hall Trustees for their continuing support.

We would also like to thank everyone who serves on the various bodies within the General Assembly or takes part in the various activities for their commitment in a voluntary capacity. We know that without their efforts much of our work to support congregations would not be possible. This report bears witness to what has been achieved. We would in particular wish to thank Rosemary Ruston who continued to provide weekly support in a volunteer capacity at Essex Hall for the Associate Member scheme.

### Organisation

The Executive Committee met as follows during 2013/14:

15/16 November 2013

Luther King House, Manchester

17/18 January 2014 Essex Hall, London

21/22 February 2014

The Nightingale Centre, Great Hucklow

13 April 2014

Whittlebury Hall, Northamptonshire

16/17 May 2014 Essex Hall, London

14 July 2014 Essex Hall, London

5 September 2014

Luther King House, Manchester

By Robert Ince

Executive Committee Convenor





## Investment Panel

By Michael Tomlin

The panel has met three times this year to review the investments of the members on the panel and to discuss problems over their relationships with Newton., our Investment Managers.

As mentioned last year, changes were being made to the administration on Newton's charity and other departments due, they said, to "the increasing complexity and high (and increasing) cost of managing portfolios under the regulatory regime that Newton operates within", so that instead of Newton being the discretionary investment managers they would attend meetings of the panel but not manage each portfolio. Each charity would then be responsible for the investment of their portfolio but Newton could **suggest** how investments could be moved. We would therefore lose the day-to-day management of our portfolios by Newton.

This change has meant that all holdings have had to be moved from Newton to BNY Mellon (the parent company) with the resulting paperwork for the transfers. We understand there have been teething troubles but these have now been mostly sorted out.

As a result of the changeover this has led to two members of the panel (the British & Foreign Unitarian Association and the Hibbert Trust) deciding to leave Newton and appoint new discretionary investment managers. The other members of the panel have decided (for the time being) to remain with Newton. We shall still have the three meetings with their investment manager and the benefit of their corporate thinking. These are as yet early days of this arrangement and we will know better after say a year or so if it should continue or whether we need to review the situation again.

The panel met in November under the new set-up and we were able to resolve any problems and were then given an overview of the funds used by the panel members, their make up and how markets were expected to move in the coming days.

Since the last meeting we have been saddened to learn of the death of Geoffrey Head, a previous Honorary Treasurer and one of the founders of the Investment Panel. His wise judgement will be sorely missed.

At present the members of the panel are: Ministers Pension Fund, Unitarian College Manchester, General Assembly Funds, Manchester District Association, Sheffield District Association, Widows Fund, Various Unitarian Churches, Ministers Stipend Augmentation Fund, Upper Chapel Sheffield, Sustentation Fund.

## Sustentation Fund

By Michael Tomlin

The Fund has met once this year to receive the Accounts, Reports from Churches and review applications for grants for the coming year.

Following our review of the way we would in future look at applications last year and the agreement of this policy at the GA Meetings in April 2014 these recommendations were put into force at our meeting in October 2014.

The Accounts, and Reports by the Trustees and the Accounts Examiner are dealt with later in the Annual Reports.

The Accounts showed a fall in investment income of £3,000 for the year due to a drop in dividends and a re-arrangement of investments. However, with a reduction in applications, in most cases we were able to increase the grants for the coming year.



When looking at the summary of Accounts and Reports sent in by Churches, the Committee was pleased to see that the number of congregations where live giving (weekly/monthly offertories, Gift Aid Tax, cash on plate and gift day donations) amounted to less than £250 per annum has reduced considerably over the years. This has been one of the Committee's objects and we are pleased that congregations have risen to the challenge.

The Committee also looked at development plans by congregations for new ministry or outside initiatives with the objective of increasing membership and/or improving the relationship of congregations with the world outside and made grants accordingly.

As mentioned above, there was a reduction in the number of applications this year so that grants were in the main larger than last year but since we do not expect income to increase significantly, and we may receive more applications in the future, grants may go down in the future.

Finally, the Committee would like to thank the Accounts Examiner, Ken Johnson, for his speed in reviewing this year's Accounts. It was much appreciated.

## 2020 Group

*By Ash James*

The 2020 Congregational Development Programme was pleased to announce at the 2014 Annual Meetings, the first rekindled scheme in the UK, at Friargate Unitarian Chapel, Derby. Led by Christina Smith, Derby Unitarians will receive £100,000 over a five-year period, plus training, mentoring and the essential support necessary to ensure enduring Unitarian growth. We hope this will be the first of many rekindled or new growth schemes across the UK by the year 2020.

This was one of six submissions made to 2020, two of which (Oxford and Boston) also proceeded to the full application stage of the rigorous selection process. We were extremely pleased to receive these submissions, and encourage all those Unitarian communities with exciting and vigorous plans to make future applications, once funding rounds are announced.

The Derby scheme is due for full launch in early 2015, and there has been excellent collaboration with the East Midland Unitarians (EMU) District Association. EMU have also contributed significant resources to support the initiative.



The 2020 Activists (L-R)

Top (L-R): Rev Andy Pakula, Jane Couper, Andy Phillips, Aleks Zglinska,  
Bottom (L-R): Ash James, Claire MacDonal, Rev Martin Whitell,  
Rev Susanne Skubik Intriligator, Rev Winnie Gordon

Training and support has been an important element of the 2020 approach. The website [www.2020unitarian.org](http://www.2020unitarian.org) and Facebook sites contain information, updates, contacts and ideas to support the initiative. Additionally, there have been workshops at the Annual Meetings and FUSE, a week-long training session at The Nightingale Centre (11-16 May 2014) plus reports in The Inquirer and District-based publications.

The training session in May was led by Rev Dr Terasa Cooley, Chief Programme and Strategy Officer for the UUA. Entitled 'Innovation from the inside out',. This covered insights into start-up ministries, non-profit branding, and adaptive leadership, together with a variety of growth topics, including reaching outward in a modern world, serving the community, and building resilience in the face of change and inevitable conflict. A further such session is planned for the spring of 2015.

One of the practical challenges of 2020 is raising funding to support each project. We explore grant opportunities and have ongoing commitments from generous donors from within UK Unitarian circles, to whom we are indeed most grateful. However we really do need more donors to come on board and would be delighted if you would consider this.

Linked to this and the need to enhance the profile of Unitarianism is the 2020-inspired "Unite The Light: The Chalice Tour", in 2015. The brainchild of Andy Phillips (Belper), it is a form of 'baton relay' connecting Unitarians, in which the 'Flaming Chalice' takes centre stage. Going from one Unitarian church to another across the country, by the most publicity conscious way possible, it is hoped to raise awareness within our Unitarian community of the 2020 initiative.

We hope that this will also enable others outside Unitarian circles to find out more about our Unitarian values and of course become aware of the locations and services of our local Unitarian communities. In the process we plan to raise a sizeable sum for 2020 and other charities. We do hope you will support this.

2020 has a very hard-working team of volunteers and supporters, who help the Leadership Team both in a practical sense and creatively. That team consists of Rev Andy Pakula and Claire MacDonald (both New Unity), Rev Martin Whitell (Portsmouth), Jane Couper (Evesham) Andy Phillips (Belper) and Ash James (Kidderminster). Sue Cooper (York) stood down from the team in August 2014, and we thank her for her excellent contribution. We were delighted to welcome Aleks Zglinska (Kidderminster) and Rev Susanne Skubik Intriligator (Bangor) to the team in September 2014, together with Rev Winnie Gordon (Birmingham) who joined in October 2014.

We look forward to the continued challenge of developing a thriving Unitarianism across the UK. We don't pretend to know all the answers. We continue to believe though that locally-based ideas and initiatives that promote our Unitarian values are by far the best way forward. We very much welcome new members, volunteers, supporters ([www.2020unitarian.org/2020-supporters/](http://www.2020unitarian.org/2020-supporters/)), and the sharing of wisdom both new and old. So please join us if you can, in trying to promote enduring Unitarian growth.





## CHIEF OFFICER'S REPORT

By *Derek McAuley*

The world is changing more rapidly than we could ever have imagined. New technologies present new opportunities and challenges. As a country we are seemingly richer than ever; yet inequalities widen in response to globalisation. Climate change and damage to the environment is a growing problem. Society is being transformed and some people feel left behind in the embrace of the “new”. The traditional role of religion is being replaced by more personal forms of spirituality or by non-religious stances yet in other parts of the world fundamentalist religions grow in strength. We all need to ask ourselves serious questions about the response of the Unitarian and Free Christian churches in Great Britain.

This Annual Report describes the work of the General Assembly across the breadth of its activities. That we have achieved so much is down to the committed volunteers and staff at Essex Hall. Volunteers and staff need to work together in a co-operative spirit in pursuit of shared objectives. As we reach the end of the five-year strategic plan we present a mixed picture. In the midst of a very unstable situation we have sustained, and in some cases expanded, our programmes in support of the congregations. Our finances remain in a healthy position and whilst expenditure has been kept under control this has not impeded new initiatives. We have achieved a higher public profile on a range of issues than for many years and we are better known amongst the faith communities.

Yet it is apparent that many of our congregations are shrinking, albeit slowly, or are working hard to stand still. Fewer people wish to be members but still want to participate in some of our activities. This places practical and legal responsibilities on fewer people. We often rely on the generosity of the



past and levels of “live giving” are sometimes too low. In looking ahead as we develop a shared vision for Unitarianism in the next five years, we must explore the implications of the major changes outlined above. There are congregations who have embraced change and at the same time preserved all that is good about their communities. But simply doing what we have always done, however comfortable, will produce similar results.

My primary responsibilities lie in supporting the Executive Committee, giving leadership to the staff team and managing our central function and engagement with the external world. The latter is described later in the report in the sections on social justice, social action and public profile. Internally there have been two major changes.

The significant upgrade to the IT systems has been embraced with enthusiasm by all staff and we now have a modern and robust infrastructure which facilitates home working as well as greater teamwork. The new General Assembly website has been widely welcomed as it offers a crisper presentation and more meaningful description of Unitarianism for seekers. Information is easier to find and better structured. On a very practical level there have been changes to the accommodation for staff at Essex Hall which will help communications between us and also open up opportunities for the Essex Hall Trust to generate more income in a healthy letting climate. This should ultimately feed through into increased support for the General Assembly.

I have been in the role of Chief Officer for five years. I sit at the centre of a complex web of relationships across various Unitarian institutions. Moving everyone forward in the same direction is an exciting challenge and it is a pleasure to contribute to the life-changing work of our Denomination.



# LOCAL LEADERSHIP

## Support for Congregations

### Local Leadership

By Louise Rogers

The role of the Local Leadership Strategy Group is to ensure that every congregation is served by trained leaders, by providing training, advice and information, to encourage and support congregations through:

- Developing and implementing a modular training strategy for local leadership and governance;
- Providing advice and support to congregations and districts; and
- Providing facilitation services to congregations and districts.

### Review of 2013/14

The **Worship Studies Course**, has three Steps (Foundation, Intermediate and Advanced), is well-established and many Unitarians have received training to help develop their skills in leading worship and enable them to have informed discussions on Unitarian principles. Two successful **Rites of Passage Courses** were run at York and Stalybridge this year.

The **Building Advisory Group** has offered advice, guidance, information and practical support on developing, financing, and maintaining congregational buildings. They respond to enquiries from churches and chapels for help and have a number of new and ongoing projects in many Unitarian buildings. Thank you to this small band of volunteers, for their excellent work.

**Information and Resources** for congregations and districts can be found on the GA website ([www.unitarian.org.uk](http://www.unitarian.org.uk))

under Resources and then Education and Training. There is also information on the website on building management, charity law, publications, books, worship material, the LLSG Modular Training Scheme, Adult RE courses, forms and reports, documents and web support.

Help is at Hand, a congregational governance handbook, which all congregations should have a copy of, is available to download. Resources for the GA Chalice Award Scheme can also be downloaded, as can the GA Safeguarding policy. There is also a wide variety of promotional materials and images available.

### Help is at Hand



Practical Hints for Church Officers and Trustees

September 2007

The General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches  
Broomfield, 141 Broom Street, London EC2A 4PU  
Tel: +44 (0)20 7262 2246, Fax: +44 (0)20 7262 2245, email: [info@unitarian.org.uk](mailto:info@unitarian.org.uk)

The **Hucklow Summer School** is an intensive religious education week with a variety of perspectives on an overarching theme. The 2014 Summer School was successful with a theme of The Authentic Self.

Many Districts have **Religious Education Coordinators (REC)**, who are to be congratulated for the sterling work they are doing in promoting religious education for adults, children and young people among their congregations and districts, thank you to them all.



**Chalice Award Scheme:** Thanks to Mary Wightman for all her work in co-ordinating this for a great number of years. The Chalice Award Scheme will now be co-ordinated by Margaret Robinson [margaretrobinson81@gmail.com](mailto:margaretrobinson81@gmail.com)

The Group held a review day in June and developed a revised working structure (agreed by the EC in July) where work streams would be grouped under four themes which are:

- Running our Communities;
- Growth and Development;
- Personal Spiritual Development; and
- Dealing with Problems and Risk.

It was also agreed that we would move away from a meetings-based way of working to reaching out to engage with those who may be able to develop work in this area; agreeing goals and budgets; and providing on-going support. It is also necessary to link with those already doing the work. This has started with discussions with the 2020 group on Growth and Development; and links which were already being made with the Ministerial Strategy Group around using a competency framework for worship studies courses.

### **Plans for 2014/15**

The further development of the new working structure – making links with Unitarian groups, communities and individuals to develop new resources and developmental programmes.

A new **REvolution** course with a November 2014 start. REvolution, is an established course to train leaders to provide religious education in their congregations and districts for children, young people and inter-generational groups.

The 2015 Hucklow Summer School will run from 22-29 August with a theme of 'Between the Dreaming and the Coming True'.

Many thanks to everyone who has given of their time, energy and expertise to support fellow Unitarians and local communities.

There are some districts which do not have a REC, so we need more volunteers for this role. Would you be interested in this position for your district? If so, please contact me.

### **The Building Advisory Group**

The Group has had another active year, conducting most of its business by email, as well as meeting once, in May, at Leicester Great Meeting. There have been no changes in personnel this year.

The Buildings Advisory Group (BAG)'s 'mission' is to offer practical guidance and suggestions on developing, financing, and maintaining our building stock. The main focus of the Group this year, as previously, has been on responding to requests for advice from various Unitarian places of worship and other denominational buildings. These are usually submitted via Essex Hall. Nine enquiries have been handled this year compared with twelve last year.

The main enquiries - new and ongoing - are listed below:

**Ainsworth:** Possible closure: advice sought on organisations, such as the Historic Chapels Trust, who might be able to take care of this eighteenth-century building and associated graveyard etc.



**Birmingham New Meeting:** Discussion took place and advice was given concerning alternative heating strategies for the building. The present system does not allow 'zoning' so unused spaces are unnecessarily being heated.

**Chatham:** continuing discussions concerning updating the building to make it efficient and attractive to worshippers.

**Dr Williams's Library:** advice was given concerning modifications to the existing heating system with a view to giving more flexibility and efficiency in operation and use of the building [Zoning problems].



Dr Williams's Library, London

**Dukinfield:** this architecturally important and listed Victorian chapel's ongoing problems with a leaking heating system have been overshadowed by the discovery of severe structural dry rot, which has necessitated closure of the building. BAG has suggested a strategy whereby resolution of the heating problem could be part of a much bigger and expensive restoration project for which substantial grants from national grant awarding bodies such as the National Lottery Fund will be needed.

**Essex Hall, London:** the Group continues to be represented with two members on both the Board of Trustees and Board of Management. Advice has been given on the

options for replacing one or more of the existing three boilers in order to increase fuel efficiency and reliability.

**Gt Hucklow:** Advice was sought and given re possible funding sources for loft insulation and restoration of the chapel bell.

**Horsham:** re obtaining a quinquennial review of the building's condition - guidance has been provided.

**Plymouth:** The church's new heating system is up and running. Advice has been sought concerning disappointment at the temperatures achieved in the worship space and the seemingly high cost of the work. It is hoped a member of BAG will be able to visit the church during the coming heating season.

During the year a second member of the Group was appointed a trustee of the Gregson Trust.

The group had a stall at the 2014 GA Annual Meetings with a slide show of Unitarian places of worship past and present and videos connected to Unitarian places of worship. Two members of the group attended the meetings to give buildings and grounds advice.

Howard Wilkins gave a presentation at the Gregson Trust slot at the Meetings on the role of the Buildings Advisory Group.

Whilst at the Meetings, Zoe Bremer received an inquiry not about building maintenance but about managing a chapel garden. This prompted Howard and Zoe to discuss setting up a Buildings Advisory Group website including a section on chapel garden maintenance and a photo gallery of Unitarian chapel gardens. This idea is ongoing.

## Hucklow Summer School

**From the mission statement of Hucklow Summer School:** *“The core purpose of Hucklow Summer School is religious education: we focus on matters of religion and spirituality and intend to draw out and develop the potential of all participants. We aim to provide a balanced programme, offering a rich mix of activities for both the heart and head, and a variety of optional sessions showcasing a range of worthwhile activities which participants might “take home” and try out in their own congregations and communities. We also ensure that there are plenty of opportunities for relaxed fellowship and fun during the week. Small group activities are at the heart of summer school and provide a safe environment for deep exploration and personal relating. Morning theme talks provide a contrast in style to the small group activities, stimulate dialogue on religious and spiritual matters, and allow participants to engage with the topic on an intellectual level.*

*Summer School also provides opportunities for daily spiritual practice such as morning meditation and evening epilogues. Summer School brings fellow Unitarians together and allows them to get to know each other deeply and form lasting and meaningful connections. It is our hope that participants will be inspired and challenged to develop and promote high-quality religious education activities when they return home.”*

The theme of Hucklow Summer School 2014, held from 16th to 23rd August, was 'The Authentic Self - Discovering the Real You'. Jane Blackall, Maria Curtis, Rev Michael Dadson, Ralph Catts and Rev Celia Cartwright made up the team of theme speakers who gave excellent, well researched and superbly presented daily talks on this subject. Audio recordings of these talks (and those from previous years) are freely available for download from the Hucklow Summer School website: [www.hucklowsummerschool.org.uk](http://www.hucklowsummerschool.org.uk).



Summer School 2014 Participants



Four different morning engagement groups were offered to adults: "The Conference of Birds" with Rev John Harley and Claire MacDonald; "The Art of Self-Recovery" with Rev Rob Gregson and Kate Dean; "Coming Home to Ourselves" with Stephen Crowther and Kate McKenna; "Identifying and Living as Your Authentic Self" with Rev Winnie Gordon and Ned Prideaux. Jim Blair ran "Life is a Roller Coaster, without the sickness" for 12-16 year olds and "One More Step" was offered by Claire Maddocks and Caroline Boyce for 5-11 year olds. These small groups met for six two-hour sessions over the course of the week and were intended to give participants an intensive experience of liberal religious education, providing – we hope – examples of best practice in small group facilitation. The Minister for the Week, providing pastoral care for participants and supervision for group facilitators, was Rev Michael Dadson. Summer School participants offered a diverse range of optional afternoon and evening activities.

Summer School was over-subscribed this year despite the increase in cost. It was attended by 69 people in total comprising 57 adults, 8 children, aged 7-11 and four young people aged 12-14 years. Twenty-nine of the participants were first-timers. The increase in numbers attending was made possible by accommodating children and their parents in an outdoor pursuit centre in the village; this was achieved by effective liaison between The Nightingale Centre and the village. Ten people received help from the Summer School bursary fund this year.

The great number of very positive comments at Summer School itself and on the evaluation forms testify to the contribution it makes to the spiritual lives of participants, for example: "the Theme was immediately addressed in two ways - in the compassionate fellowship that Hucklow Summer School fosters and in the deep

scepticism, energetic enquiry and loving wit that kept it in the air as a subject that kept on opening up and generating question, reflection and personal stories. Really, truly good."

We are losing Caroline Blair, Stephen Crowther and Christine Thompson from the panel this year, all of whom have been positive supporters of Summer School over the years. All have made a substantial contribution to Summer School planning as well as leading engagement groups and/or contributing reflective, practical and relaxing sessions to the programme of optional activities. We thank them, not just for all their hard work, but also for the way they have influenced the religious nature of Summer School.

## Safeguarding

The Charity Commission in their Safeguarding Children & Young People Policy Paper 2014 outlines how (by law) trustees of charities working with children and other vulnerable groups **must** promote their welfare and protect them from harm, in both the UK and working abroad. The Commission's related strategy document also defines safeguarding as one of the three key areas of high regulatory risk. They have made it clear that the failure of a charity to adopt and implement rigorous safeguarding arrangements is now considered to be a serious regulatory issue. The protection of children and vulnerable adults must be our top priority and all congregations should give this their urgent attention.

The General Assembly has continued to give support to congregations to improve safeguarding standards as well as maintaining a focus within the National Youth Programme. Congregations were reminded of their responsibilities in a



mailing in July 2014, following the wide media coverage of matters relating to historic cases of abuse involving individuals and institutions. The need for all congregations to comply with the requirements of the General Assembly Safeguarding Policy “Safe and Sound” was highlighted and “Golden Rules” which set out the minimum standards and a draft policy statement circulated. Assistance continues to be available from Essex Hall and the Churches Child Protection Advisory Service (CCPAS).

## Safe and Sound



### The Safeguarding Policy for the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults

January 2013

The General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches



‘Safe and Sound’ - the GA’s Safeguarding Policy.

Available for download from our website.

Youth leaders currently volunteering for the Youth Programme have received recent safeguarding training through the Youth Panel feel strongly that safeguarding training should be frequent and ongoing. With this principle in mind the Youth Panel are currently ensuring that all our youth leaders access another wave of training so that their knowledge is kept up to date and as effective as possible.

We are urging our youth leaders to access and complete an online safeguarding course run by the NSPPC or give evidence that they have received training of an equal rigour from an alternative source. All youth leaders are obliged to have regular Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks. In addition there is also safeguarding training in the current REvolution course for new RE leaders, which includes cyberbullying.

Workshops on child protection will also be included in the Youth Leaders’ Conference which will be held from 30 January – 1 February 2015 at The Nightingale Centre.

The Director of Ministry has undertaken an extensive exercise to ensure that DBS checks have been completed for all active Ministers, Lay Pastors and Approved Lay Leaders and for Ministry Students and has initiated an annual updating procedure. Procedures are also being implemented to ensure that all Ministry Students have safeguarding training.

# MINISTRY

## A Wider View of Where We're Going

By Stephen Lingwood

*Mission Statement: To provide the General Assembly with excellent spiritual leadership with the skills and ability to develop and lead thriving religious communities.*

The key area of project work for the Ministry Strategy Group in 2013/14 was the continuing work on the organisation and funding of Ministry training. The first step in this has been the development of a new set of Competencies to support the training and assessment of our spiritual leaders. Whilst these are intended primarily to help shape future ministry training, it is recognised this is a valuable opportunity to provide guidance and direction to all who are called to leadership in our religious communities.

Importantly, the Competencies will bring together the essential and desirable skills and traits required for spiritual leadership, across a wide range of areas including theology, pastoral care, self-awareness, media-handling and safeguarding. We have consulted with congregations, Ministers, Lay Pastors, individuals and others through letters, Emails, presentations and meetings. Our presentation at the Annual Meetings in 2014 provided an opportunity to air some of the final recommendations, and fine-tune the document as a result. The Competencies are now being prepared by representatives of the Ministry Strategy Group and the Executive Committee for final approval and publication.

With the Competencies all but complete, we have in parallel continued to review how and where our training is co-ordinated, delivered and assessed. Working closely with the Tutor at Harris Manchester College, Oxford (HMCO) and the Principal at Unitarian College Manchester (UCM), we have progressed preparation for a joint review of

training. Areas under consideration will include: location of different elements of training; options for the most appropriate providers for different aspects of the new Competency-based requirements; an assessment of readiness of individuals for training and acceptance on the Roll; and greater clarity on Categories of Ministry. We continue to work with the Colleges on this, and will be meeting regularly to discuss external support to the development and implementation of new curricula.

As this work on new training progresses, we will take the opportunity to look further at the role of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) across the working lives of our Ministers, ensuring they are encouraged to refresh, broaden and develop their skills in line with the new Competency framework.

Work on the Categories of Ministry has been suspended as we gain a greater understanding of the opportunities and appropriate levels of recognition that a new Competence-based assessment might provide. Contributions from congregations and individuals to the debate on the possible future of the Lay Pastor title have been valuable to this ongoing discussion and will inform our formal recommendations on this matter to the Executive Committee at a later date.

In addition to the consideration and planning of future training, the Ministry Strategy Group also has a brief on the oversight of a number of areas concerning new and existing Ministers and Lay Pastors. This year saw a bumper crop of students valedicting from HMCO (John Carter, Jo James, Matthew Smith and Kate Whyman) and UCM (Ralph Catts, Maria Curtis, Anna Jarvis and Shammy Webster) and taking



their first steps as leaders of our congregations. All these students, and those from recent years, attended the third annual 'Ministry in the Making' retreat at Great Hucklow, with generous sponsorship from The Hibbert Trust, providing necessary developmental training for those new to professional ministry.

Our new Unitarian Ministers and Lay Pastors are also supported through a Mentoring programme which has been re-invigorated through a new training course held in July. This not only created a number of new mentors, but also refreshed the training of a number of our current mentors.

All Ministers and Lay Pastors on the General Assembly Rolls are expected to behave with dignity and professionalism, and the Ministry Strategy Group and its members have continued to work with congregations where differences or concerns have arisen, ensuring satisfactory agreements and actions are achieved where necessary. We are also responsible for the continuing DBS checks as part of our commitment to Safeguarding.

The Ministry Strategy Group would like to take this opportunity to voice its thanks to Rev Linda Phillips, the GA Director of Ministry, for all her support to the Group more widely, but especially for the detailed work she undertakes around liaison with Ministers, Lay Pastors and congregations on vacancies, safeguarding issues and liaison with other denominational groups.

It has been a busy year, and the 'busy-ness' will continue for some time to come as we prepare, redraft, and rebuild our training agenda to ensure we, and our Unitarian Ministers and Lay Pastors, are match-fit for the future and the promise of thriving religious communities.



Ministry Strategy Group current members  
Top: Rev Ant Howe, Rev Daniel Costley,  
Rev Sarah Tinker, Rev Linda Phillips  
Bottom: Richard Gaines, Dr Jane Williams

## Interview Panel

*By Rev Sarah Tinker*

The Interview Panel has continued its regular cycle of work throughout the last year, meeting overnight in Oxford in early January to conduct interviews with potential ministry students and meeting in May in Sheffield for final interviews with students about to complete their training.

The role of Director of Ministry continues to be vital to our work and we thank Rev Linda Phillips for her effective management of many varied tasks. This role is partly administrative but, just as importantly, involves behind the scenes guidance to congregations and individuals. Much of the work of the Interview Panel has inevitably to remain confidential, in order to respect individuals' privacy but our processes are regularly reviewed and candidates are offered verbal feedback if they wish.

In January 2014 we offered a training place to Robert Whiteman to commence in Autumn 2014 at Unitarian College Manchester.





During the academic year to the summer of 2014, 11 students were in training:

Harris Manchester College, Oxford:

John Carter, Kate Dean, Jo James, Kate McKenna, Matthew Smith, Kate Whyman

Unitarian College Manchester:

Ralph Catts, Maria Curtis, Anna Jarvis, Philip Waldron and Shammy Webster

In deciding on the number of training places available, the Interview Panel seeks prior guidance from the Executive Committee and the Ministry Strategy Group, to whom we report.

We also encourage potential candidates to consider deeply their sense of calling to ministry and the many other ways that they might serve our Movement.

Those who do embark on training for our ministry deserve our congratulations for their commitment and dedication and we would encourage our wider movement to give them every support and encouragement as they embark on this path.



Students valedicting from Harris Manchester College, Oxford  
L-R: Matthew Smith, Kate Whyman, Rev Dr Arthur Smith (Tutor), John Carter, Jo James



## Director of Ministry

By Rev Linda Phillips



One of the privileges of being the Director of Ministry is the variety of ways in which I am able to support our ministry by working with congregations and ministers. My work ranges from supporting the meetings of the Ministry Strategy Group and the Interview Panel to talking to individual ministers and congregations about particular issues.

This year has been extremely busy. We have had very significantly more students than normal reaching the end of their training and seeking positions, and very significantly more congregations than normal have identified ministerial vacancies. I was pleased to be one of the leaders of the successful Mentor Training Course, as a result of which we now have a good supply of trained mentors available.

The underlying work has continued – carrying out tasks like the annual Roll Review, ensuring compliance with our policy on safeguarding clearances for those on the Roll or training for it, and ensuring that there is a working mentor relationship in place for all our students and those on the Roll with probationary status.

Personally, I have been able to attend an ICUU conference and visit Transylvania, which gave me an insight into how other countries do ministry support. I have continued to attend the Ecumenical Liaison Group on Ministerial Training (a 'Churches Together' meeting) which has given me, and through me, the Ministry Strategy Group, an insight into how other denominations in this country do ministry support.

It remains a privilege to be entrusted with this role, and one which I am very conscious of.



Students valedicting from Unitarian College Manchester  
L-R: Ralph Catts, Maria Curtis, Phillip Waldron (ongoing student), Shammy Webster, Anna Jarvis



# VISIBILITY

## Visibility Strategy Group

By James Barry

**Online meetings** have been a massive breakthrough for the Visibility Strategy Group (VSG) and I hope it shows other groups that this is the way to meet in the 21<sup>st</sup> century - particularly when budgets are so small. They reduce the commitment of volunteers and it takes home geographic location out of the equation thus increasing who can be involved. Personally I can be attending a meeting and baby-sit at the same time which is fab! Like everything to do with technology, you need the right attitude and access to technical support, but just like it seems silly these days to write a letter needing a postage stamp, so we feel it is a bit crazy to burn carbon / time / budgets travelling to a physical meeting. If any group wants help with online meetings please contact me.

**Posters** are one of our successes this year. Susie Ince created four new ones which are available from Essex Hall in A2 and A3 sizes. We have also created over one hundred posters that can be edited. These can be downloaded, changed and printed by anyone who has Microsoft Word and a printer. See [www.uccn.org.uk/wordPosters](http://www.uccn.org.uk/wordPosters)

**Pin Badges** are now available as VSG has purchased a badge machine so groups can have custom badges made which they can sell. The enamel ones may look really lovely, but they really only mean something to an 'insider'. If we are to educate the public, a good start is wearing a badge which says something about us. It turns us all into walking bill-boards.

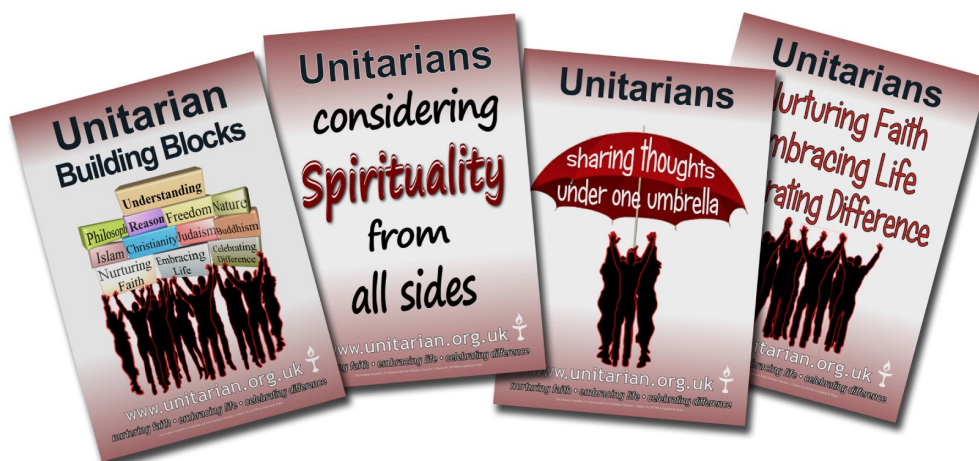
See [www.uccn.org.uk/badges](http://www.uccn.org.uk/badges)



New 'Pride' badge

**UKunitarianTV** is really helping to get our message out. I'd like to thank all those who have supported this self-funding group. The project aims to increase the amount of Unitarian videos available on the internet, believing this to be critical to us. In the last year the films have had about 1,000 hours of viewing in 18,000 visits!

See [www.ukunitarian.tv](http://www.ukunitarian.tv)



## Next Year

**Attitude** - We still haven't convinced some Unitarian groups that we only have a future if we put far more energy into letting people know we exist. This is not about growth but survival. I feel it is the duty of all of us to ensure the whole UK population know what we stand for, so they can then know if they wish to join us. Please look at the outside of your Church; does it say anything that gives a complete stranger outside a real idea of what we stand for? Giving the times of the services is really only useful if they are inspired to come!

**New Flyers** - we will be producing some less wordy flyers that can be put into the hand of anyone who indicates they want to know more about us.

**Communication** – VSG needs to communicate more with many of our groups involved with increasing our public profile - these include Simple Gifts, 2020, the Facebook moderators, Penal Affairs and others. All of these do a great job, but could be supported in a better way by VSG.

A big thanks to all who have been involved in publicity this year – you all have been a really great bunch to work for.

## Lindsey Press Panel

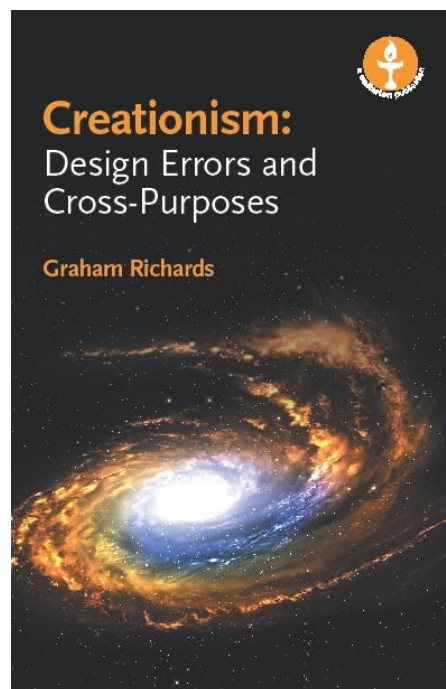
*By Kate Taylor*

The Panel has met three times during the year. Derek McAuley has joined us on each occasion.

We published one new book, *Creationism: Design Errors and Cross-Purposes* by Graham Richards, which was launched at the Panel's slot at the Annual Meetings in April 2014.

We have been disappointed with its sales so far. Although it is available via Amazon, we find penetrating the market in the United

States – where we would hope for good sales – an unsolved challenge.



Creationism: Design Errors  
and Cross-Purposes

Progress has been made on two other manuscripts: *Life Spirit: for groups and individuals exploring deep questions*, by David Usher which we are publishing on behalf of The Hibbert Trust, and *Carnival of Lamps*, a new collection of prayers and meditations by Rev Cliff Reed. We owe substantial gratitude to Catherine Robinson for undertaking the copy-editing of these and Professor Richards' book and for overseeing their design and steps towards publication.

In a more embryonic stage is a collection of essays on Unitarian Ways of Living in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century which is being gathered by Kate Whyman. We hope that at some future point a projected book on drawing children into worship will reach maturity.

We are also planning to work with George Chrystides on an up-to-date version of his *Elements of Unitarianism* in order to have a good guide to the Movement back in print.





We are grateful to Audrey Longhurst at Essex Hall for providing us with a report prior to each of our meetings on the sales of our books from Essex Hall and to Derek McAuley for reporting sales via Amazon. There are pleasing figures in particular for sales of *Sing Your Faith*.

## The Penal Affairs Panel (PAP)

By Bruce Chilton

The Panel continues to be a social responsibility activity of the Unitarians. It was created in 1992 out of the General Assembly's "great concern at the poor conditions and regime at many local prisons". The Panel was directed "to investigate the current situation on... penal policy, to keep the denomination informed..., and to provide a liberal religious voice in response... to current legislation."

The conditions of UK prisons have not improved since 1992. The numbers of men, women and children have doubled from less than 45,000 in 1992 to nearly 90,000 in 2014. Over-crowding is endemic. Older, usually Victorian, prisons are being demolished but replaced by cheaply-built prisons with even less space. The number of trained prison officers is falling. More UK prisons are exhibiting the problems of prisons in the USA, including gangs and violence. The number of unnatural deaths in UK prisons in 2014 has reached record heights. This year has also seen another new and unpalatable record - the prison estate has become the biggest carer of the elderly in the UK.

And so the PAP continues its work of informing Unitarians and "providing a liberal religious voice in response..." During the year the PAP has had three business meetings and met informally at the GA meetings in April. Two PAP Issues Papers, No.15 "Votes for Prisoners" and No.16 "Why

Keep Human Rights?" have been published and PAP articles have appeared regularly in *The Inquirer*. The PAP News, now past its 18<sup>th</sup> edition, is liked and needs news from Unitarians of their social responsibility activities. The PAP Network now has about 300 members but the list of email addresses is somewhat out of date. Should you wish to receive the publications, please be sure to send your current email address. The PAP publications can also be found at the PAP webpage on [www.unitarian.org.uk](http://www.unitarian.org.uk)

The PAP Presentation to the GA Meetings at Whittlebury Hall was "Emmaus – A Tough and Effective Answer to Reoffending". Selwyn Image CBE, the founder of Emmaus UK, told the GA delegates the history of



Panel Members Bruce Chilton and Tony Cann at the Annual Meetings Presentation

Emmaus in Paris and now in 37 countries. Emmaus UK started after Selwyn had a chance conversation with a temporary resident of a nightshelter. When he asked the man what he needed, the answer was blunt - "Somewhere I can work, where I belong and where I can regain my self-respect. What are you going to do about it?" Emmaus UK now has more than 20 houses. Over the last 20 years, the charity has raised and spent £9million and, for every £1, it has saved the UK Government at least £11 in providing for the homeless, including many ex-offenders. To find out more, see [www.emmaus.org.uk/](http://www.emmaus.org.uk/)





The PAP presented an Emergency Motion on Books for Prisoners to the 2014 GA Meetings supporting the Howard League in its criticism of the Government's new Incentives and Earned Privileges Scheme in prisons. The motion was approved overwhelmingly.

The PAP has continued to urge the Government to mount a Royal Commission into the problems of the misuse of drugs. Again, the response has been that it is "unnecessary". Although it has occurred beyond the date of this report, the major Parliamentary debate into drugs in early November has shown the mounting pressure for major reform. The PAP has sent draft letters for MPs to all the secretaries of Unitarian chapels, churches and fellowships. The draft letters are still cogent and effective. Has your chapel, church or fellowship written to the local MPs? Now is the time to do it!

The concerns of the General Assembly in 1992 remain even more valid and pressing. The PAP needs new, active members to help in providing "a liberal, religious voice". Could this be your social responsibility work? Please, do contact Bruce Chilton - [bruce\\_chilton@hotmail.com](mailto:bruce_chilton@hotmail.com)

## **Social Justice and Profile Raising**

*By Derek McAuley, Chief Officer*

### Social Justice and Social Action

The past year has seen a growing recognition of the differences between social justice and social action and also with visibility. All these activities are, of course, valid in their own right, however, have tended to be confused. We do social justice and social action (what used to be called "social responsibility") because they are intrinsically right and in my view part of what being a Unitarian and Free Christian is all about and not because it

might raise our profile; although we hope that in some cases it will and this requires work and expertise. Social Justice is all about working to change the structures of society which result in injustice and marginalisation; social action is putting our faith into action in a very practical way.

During the year, we have continued to work closely with other faith and non-faith organisations in pursuit of our social justice objectives. It was a pleasure to welcome Rabbi Danny Rich, Chief Executive of Liberal Judaism, to our Annual Meetings as our plenary speaker and to have our joint work recognised. Danny has been a valuable colleague and friend since I took up the post of Chief Officer.

I have also continued to meet regularly with Paul Parker, Recording Clerk of British Quakers, and been building relations with other progressive leaders, such as Rabbi Laura Janner-Klausner of Reform Judaism and Andrew Copson of the British Humanist Association. I would like to thank the Executive Committee for their support during the year in my role as an Executive Committee member of the Inter-Faith Network of the UK, which saw major changes to ensure the organisation properly reflected the religious diversity of the four nations.

Karen Hanley has continued to ensure that Unitarians are represented on the 'RADAR' group of parliamentary staff from various churches and voluntary organisations who meet each month to review what is happening in Parliament; particularly the progress of legislation. One initiative during the year was the "Good Society" by Churches Together in Britain and Ireland in preparation for the lead-up to the 2015 General Election. Alan Ruston and I have ensured that there is a presence at the Churches Legislative Advisory Service (CLAS) quarterly meetings, where issues of Government affecting the churches, such as tax policy, are explored.



The implementation of the same-sex marriage legislation in England and Wales in March 2014 resulted in liaison with the Ministry of Justice, Registrar-General's Office and the Equalities and Human Rights Commission on processes and policy advice. We continued our involvement with the Cutting Edge Consortium; working with trade unions and a range of voluntary and faith groups to challenge faith-based homophobia and transphobia. This included planning for a major Conference held in November 2014 where I chaired a plenary session. I facilitated links between Stonewall and the Unitarian Universalist United Nations Office on LGBT rights. We worked closely with the Accord Coalition on inclusive education which resulted in a meeting with the Prime Minister's adviser on education and family issues.

The possible detrimental effects of the "Transparency of lobbying, Non party Campaigning and Trade Union Bill" as it passed through Parliament were kept under scrutiny with other churches and voluntary groups, and we jointly met the Electoral Commission. It is not thought necessary that the General Assembly will have to register.

Essex Hall has supported the work of the Penal Affairs group and the Home Office was approached following the Resolution on 'Access to Books in Prisons' passed at the Annual Meetings. The response from the National Offender Management Service was unsatisfactory and it is understood that the policy has been judged as illegal in a recent case. A mailing was circulated to all congregations on the GA Resolution on drugs law reform.

Religious freedom remains a major issue with growing international concern. Support was given to the 34<sup>th</sup> World Congress of the International Association of Religious Freedom in Birmingham in August 2014.



There was a good attendance of Unitarians from the UK and the General Assembly sponsored the attendance of one young adult. The conference theme 'Challenges for Religious Freedom in the Digital Age' saw exploration of the impact of new technologies to promote and limit religious freedom and I was pleased to speak at a plenary session. I have attended meetings of the All Party Parliamentary Group on Religious Freedom and Belief and met their Chair, Baroness Berridge.

The role of the General Assembly is primarily focused on social justice. Social action is normally undertaken locally and the role of the General Assembly is to work to co-ordinate wider activities amongst congregations and individual Unitarians. The very successful Red Cross Appeal for the Philippines was promoted by the Executive Committee in support of Golders Green Unitarians and others. Funds were also made available from the Millennium Fund to Simple Gifts to develop sharing and learning on social action.

## Profile Raising

It is sometimes said that Unitarians “punch above their weight” in the public debate, particularly when people realise how small we are in numbers and churches. Partly this relates to our historic legacy of past influence; more recently we have proved adept at being at the forefront of social change. This, of course, provides opportunities to raise our profile.

The BBC “Thought for the Day” controversy at Christmas 2013 involving Tim Berners-Lee saw coverage in the National media, including the Guardian and Daily Telegraph, and a definite increase in views of the GA website. This, of course, led to the Motion at the Annual Meetings and we will continue to press this issue which I am sure has not gone away. Same-sex marriage led to media coverage in March 2014, including in the Reform magazine of the United Reformed Church. I joined with others in letters to the Press on the Lobbying Bill, sex education, on a Manifesto on inclusive education and on the role of Christianity in our country.

Unitarian Headquarters facilitates others within the Unitarian Movement; for example, we arranged for a same-sex couple to speak on the Sunday Programme on Radio 4 and a blog from Rev Tom McCready on an “Interfaith Ramadan” service was carried by the Christian Muslim Forum.

We sometimes get unusual requests and, for example, I was invited to appear on Ahlebait Networks TV, a Shia Islamic web television station to talk about Unitarianism and to participate in a group discussion on interfaith work.

The work of the International Council for Unitarians and Universalist (ICUU) had a greater focus this year. In November 2013 we issued a fund-raising Appeal with support

from Rev Celia Midgley as part of a global initiative and we were pleased at the response from congregations and individuals. The ICUU Council Meeting was held in January 2014 at Shelter Rock Unitarian Universalist Church in New York with the theme of Intercultural Competencies. There was a British delegation of eight maintaining our long-standing commitment to international engagement. Rev Celia Midgley was appointed to the Nominating Committee following her service on the ICUU Executive Committee. I attended the Annual Meetings of the Unitarian Universalist Association in Providence, Rhode Island and was introduced at the opening plenary and spoke briefly to the plenary session on international activities highlighting our achievements. Both these events raised the profile of British Unitarians within the wider global Unitarian and UU Movement.

I maintain the Chief Officer’s Blog on the GA website and the number of views, from across the world, has risen to nearly 24,000. Our growing public profile is now resulting in invitations to speak at various gatherings. I joined Rev Richard Boeke on a panel at the Globalisation for the Common Good Initiative on Creative Leadership, was a speaker at the Sea of Faith Annual Conference and spoke at a Conference of the Lincoln Theological Institute, University of Manchester on individualism.

On internal communications I have continued to meet regularly with the Editor of The Inquirer on how we can work together and have submitted numerous articles during the year on newsworthy issues. I submitted a monthly “View from Essex Hall” to The Unitarian and other material. Uni-news, sent to all on a General Assembly email distribution list, was issued regularly and is now publicly available on the new GA website. EC key messages were issued using Uni-news and The Inquirer.



## WELSH DEPARTMENT



Welsh Unitarians gathered outside the birthplace of Dylan Thomas at Swansea.

*By Melda Grantham*

There have been a few changes in the membership of the Welsh Department Committee this year, with Melda Grantham being appointed in April to fill the post of Secretary which had been vacant. Also Gwyn Pritchard joined in September as a replacement for Keith Lewis-Jones. We would like to extend our gratitude to Keith for his hard work during his period of service

The Welsh Department has been as diligent as usual in the promotion and development of the Movement within Wales, and has featured in the media on several occasions. Some of the highlights have been the filming of the re-enactment of the eviction at Llwynrhydowen which appeared on Heno, the Welsh language programme broadcast on S4C every evening. There was also a half hour programme on BBC Radio Cymru discussing Unitarianism and Radicalism.

The stand at the National Eisteddfod, which was held in Llanelli this year, proved to be a very valuable opportunity to promote the Movement and the interest shown by people from all over the world was encouraging. The Welsh Department would like to thank all the volunteers who generously supported the venture by manning the stand.

Both District Associations (South Wales and South East Wales) have this year celebrated the birth of Dylan Thomas and his connection to Unitarianism through his relationship to the Rev Gwilym Marles.

The South East Wales Rally was held in Swansea in July when members of the South Wales Association joined them for a visit to the Dylan Thomas centre as well as to his birthplace in Cwmdoncyn Drive.

The following weekend saw some of the members of the South East Wales District travelling to South Wales for a sponsored walk ending at the old chapel of Llwynrhydowen for a talk by the journalist and author Kate Crockett.

The focus for the coming year will be on developing leadership by identifying the training needs of the various congregations and providing suitable training opportunities to address these needs.





# YOUTH

## Our Future



*Paddling a self-built canoe at Five Days Away*

*By Sue Talbot*

We've had another busy year at the Youth Panel, continuing ongoing activities, and introducing new initiatives. As a standard, we provide 9 residential weekends, contribute to the GA programme, and deliver ongoing training; the planning for which is not to be underestimated.

During 2013-14 a total of 125 places were taken up on our successful and high-quality youth events (Junior Weekend: 44 over two weekends; Inter Weekend: 35 over two weekends, Senior Weekend: 18 over two weekends; Bridging Weekend: 10; Five Days Away: 8; Unikids: 10).

During the last year we introduced **YUP News**, a newsletter aimed at youth, which will be produced around four times a year. The Autumn 2014 edition can be found at <http://us7.campaign-archive2.com>. If you haven't yet signed up, email [yupnewsuk@gmail.com](mailto:yupnewsuk@gmail.com).

Summer 2014 saw some of our youth leaders make the trip over the border to our Scottish neighbours, to deliver a **Youth Roadshow** in Edinburgh, and for us, this has been one of our **Moments of Magic**. What a fantastic day we had; lots of games, craft activities, biscuit decorating, jigsaw hunting (we hope you found those last few pieces!) and more. Perhaps more importantly we got to know a lot of new faces, and do hope to see some of them at other future events. The roadshow had been requested by St Marks as a resource for their

children, but also as inspiration to their new aspiring youth leaders; we hope we succeeded with both. If you have several 5-11 year olds or teenagers (we can also help bring together local chapels), and you'd like a visit from the highly experienced Youth Roadshow team, email [suetalbot@virginmedia.com](mailto:suetalbot@virginmedia.com).

Recently, members of the Youth Programme and the youth themselves worked with Unitarian UK TV on producing a **video** about some of our activities - take a look at: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=pakXtpkJa0k&feature=youtu.be](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pakXtpkJa0k&feature=youtu.be).

By the time this Report has gone to press, eight of our youth will have made the special trip to visit their contemporaries at the **Prague Unitarian Church**, we hope this will not only inspire our young people to become active ambassadors of our Movement, but also we plan for this to be the first step in developing a positive relationship with this congregation (we hope to welcome some of them to a future youth programme event in the UK). We would like to congratulate Tilly Pugh, George King and Lizzie Smith, who were successful in applying for a **Youth Travel Grant** to help them get there. We look forward to receiving their report from this trip. We will have also delivered our third **Youth Leaders' Conference**, a rare opportunity to bring all our youth leaders together to share best practice and to deliver essential training), - thanks to the Wood Green Trust for funding. Finally, in the year(s) ahead we look forward to working with the new Youth Strategy Group to develop our youth provision further.

Thanks are due to group members and to Emma Nichols, who has done a sterling job as voluntary Marketing Officer.

Thanks also to all for their continued support to the future of our Movement, whether as part of the National Youth Programme or on a local level.



# THE NIGHTINGALE CENTRE

## A Spiritual Home



By Mike Tracey

The Management Committee deeply appreciate the loyalty and commitment of staff, led in a calm and consistent manner by Stella Burney. They have to work at times in a challenging environment during improvements which disrupt the smooth running routine of preparing the house for guests.

Once again, staff morale has been good with staff closely involved in many of the improvements to the Centre. The team is working well together supported by continuing training including a Team Building event led by one of the regular users of the Centre. Particular mention must be made of Sam who achieved a distinction in his MA which in part was related to his work at the Centre. Sam left the Centre's employment to take up a teaching post in Thailand but has now returned to a part-time role on a temporary basis.



Julie Dadson has also returned in a dual role, part internal, part external. Julie is developing the kitchen garden side contributing to the Centre's own catering needs (focusing on the produce most expensive to source externally) and also at times making produce available for sale to guests. This is an innovative and exciting development, fitting well with the Centre's commitment to exploring ways of becoming more 'green.'



During the year there have been significant improvements to the Centre, most notably the front entrance and reception area, and the children's playground. The results have been much appreciated by regular users of the Centre who enjoy not only the new light and welcoming entrance but also the preservation of the stained glass window and the colourful depiction of Florence Nightingale.

The new playground equipment has been well tested by both old and young guests and is a great asset for the schools and 'Send a Child to Hucklow' groups which use the Centre.





Plans for the coming year include:

- ⇒ further development of the garden with Ted's Tunnel (a polytunnel funded by the sale of Ted puppets knitted by Kath Ryder) providing opportunities for garden workshops and sale of home grown plants.
- ⇒ completion of the Roundhouse with the creation of a lesson plan and "Make your own Round House" kits for the Key Stage 2/3 Iron Age history period
- ⇒ the addition of further en-suite rooms
- ⇒ updating of the *Friends of The Nightingale Centre* database and concept to encourage greater participation by both regular and new users
- ⇒ new, improved outside notice-boards

The improving accommodation and facilities at the Centre have given us the opportunity to tempt new people to use the Centre as well as offering better provision for our regular guests. We have gained many new visitors through recommendations as people and organisations have experienced what we have been able to offer. Encouraging is the continuing use by many differing Unitarian groups and also the range of differing faith groups using the Centre.



In marketing the Centre, one of the challenges has been how to define the Centre in terms used by the media. The Centre is not really a hostel, nor a hotel, guest house nor a bed and breakfast. It's special, and that is what we have tried to emphasise.

On the [www.groupaccommodation.com](http://www.groupaccommodation.com) website, a useful source in recent years, we are now categorised under a broader range of

accommodation types than previously, and shown under a number of different holiday categories, including family and friends, walking, team activities for business and cycling/mountain biking. This website has recently been upgraded and the opportunity taken to thoroughly update our content.

Our own Centre website has served us well for a number of years now but was in need of refreshment and we decided it was time for a fresh start. We now have a new website (same address) which, apart from having a cleaner look, is more suitable for those accessing the website via computer tablets or mobile phones, both now increasingly used by those searching for accommodation. We continue to promote the Centre through other websites and publications including the Walk magazine produced for members of the Ramblers Association.

In June, we again held an Open Day which welcomed some visitors for the first time and gave others a chance to see what had changed at the Centre since the previous year. Thanks are due to those who contributed to the day, running stalls and other activities or simply coming along and joining in. Special thanks are due to the staff team and also to Gwyneth Roper for co-ordinating the event. We plan to hold our next Open Day on 6th June 2015.

We are indebted to many people in our promotion of the Centre. Apart from the Manager, staff and Management Committee, we are grateful to John Wilkinson for his work on the Centre's old website and to John St Leger for developing the new one. We have been helped in various ways by Helen Merritt, John Hewerdine and James Barry and are grateful to all those who from time to time have provided photographs or helped in other ways with the marketing effort. And our thanks go to those who have simply spread the word about the Centre - word of mouth remains the best marketing tool!





# INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S STATEMENT

## INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S STATEMENT TO THE MEMBERS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF UNITARIAN & FREE CHRISTIAN CHURCHES

We have examined the summarised financial statements for the year ended 30 September 2014 set out on pages 39 –40.

### Respective responsibilities of the trustees and the auditor

The trustees are responsible for preparing the summarised financial statements in accordance with applicable United Kingdom law and the recommendations of the Charities Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP).

Our responsibility is to report to you our opinion on the consistency of the summarised financial statements with the full annual financial statements and the Trustees' Annual Report.

We also read other information contained in the summarised annual report and consider the implications for our report if we become aware of any apparent misstatements or material inconsistencies with the summarised financial statements.

We conducted our work in accordance with Bulletin 2008/3 issued by the Auditing Practices Board.

### Opinion

In our opinion the summarised financial statements are consistent with the full annual financial statements and the Trustees' Annual Report of The General Assembly of Unitarian & Free Christian Churches for the year ended 30 September 2014.

*Shaw Gibbs Limited*

SHAW GIBBS LIMITED  
Chartered Certified Accountants & Statutory Auditor  
264 Banbury Road  
Oxford  
OX2 7DY

### TRUSTEES' STATEMENT

The auditor has issued an unqualified report on the full annual financial statements of The General Assembly of Unitarian & Free Christian Churches for the year ended 30 September 2014 and on the consistency of the Trustees' Report with those financial statements.

# GENERAL ASSEMBLY

## Financial Summary

By Martin Sarbicki,  
Head of Finance  
& Administration



**The income of the General Assembly was £713,783 in the year ended 30<sup>th</sup> September 2014.**

This total includes income from the Annual Meetings and courses we run such as Summer School where there is an equivalent amount of expenditure.

Our real income comes from a number of different sources:

- Live Giving
- Bowland Trust
- Grants from Essex Hall Trust and the B&FUA
- Legacies
- Sales of Books
- Investment Income

Live Giving fell by 11% to £157,683. The previous year included £19,636 of donations for the Simple Gifts programme sponsored by the London District and without this item live giving this year is largely unchanged year on year. Associate Membership revenue (including Gift Aid) was £18,500 – 104% of that received last year. Funds raised from the Congregational Quota were £101,275 compared to £101,441 the year before.

The grant from the Bowland Trust of £151,838 compares to £180,123 last year when that year's Bowland Trust grant included the matching of Simple Gifts donation of £19,636 mentioned above.

Income from the sale of books was £6,988 compared to last year's sales of £10,046.

Grants from the Essex Hall Trust and Management fees charged to the Trust were £73,750 along with a gift-in-kind of free office space valued at

£70,000. The overall grant increased by £20,000. The B&FUA grant was £28,404 a decrease of £1,918. Investment income was £79,415 a decrease of £11,773. This represented a return on the value of financial investments of 3.3%.

**The expenditure of the General Assembly was £794,115 in the year to September 2014.**

This includes the expenditure from the Annual Meetings and courses we run such as Summer School where there is an equivalent amount of income.

Strategy Group Programme activities includes the Local Leadership, Visibility and Ministry strategy groups and also the Youth Programme and Welsh Programme and cost £248,692, 61% of which is GA staff time. This is an increase of £36,946 or 17% on the previous year. Excluding salaries the net cost of programme activities was £95,752. The cost of committee activities for these groups was £7,922, an increase in costs of £399.

Grants made were £108,073 - £29,922 higher than last year's figure.

Administration costs were £300,959, an increase of £14,739. The additional spend reflected the investment in upgrading the GA's IT resources during the year.

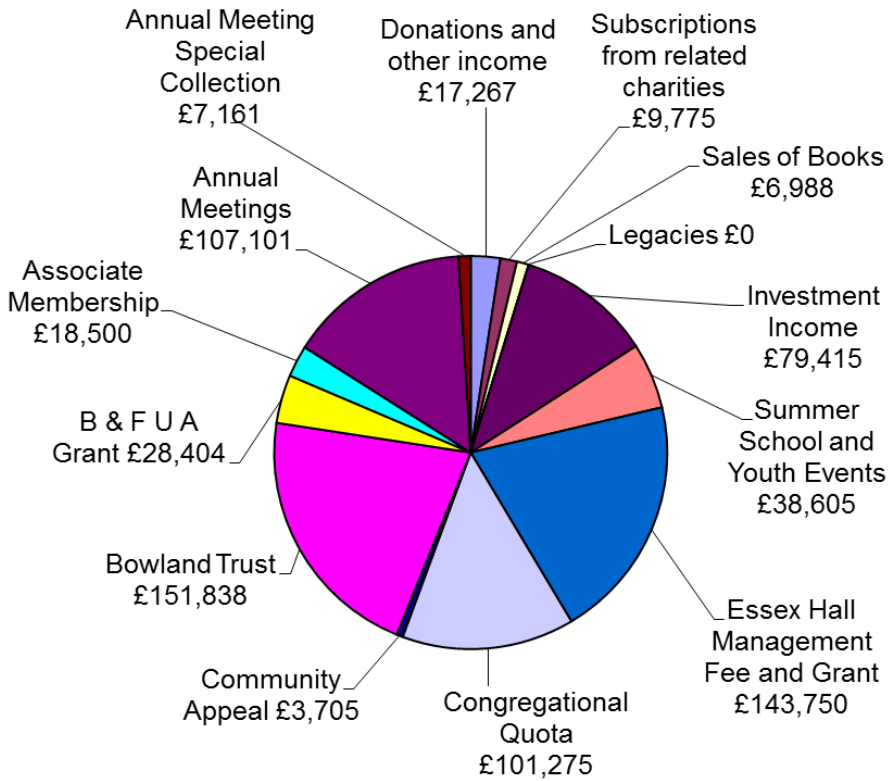
The cost of governance and EC activities was £20,221 compared to £22,229 the previous year, a decrease of £2,008. This includes the retired ministers' costs at the Annual Meetings and support for the Safeguarding programmes together with the costs of the Executive Committee.

The withdrawal penalty payable to The Pension Trust should there be no contributing members in the staff pension plan has been accounted for as a liability in the balance sheet and the change in the liability has been shown in the

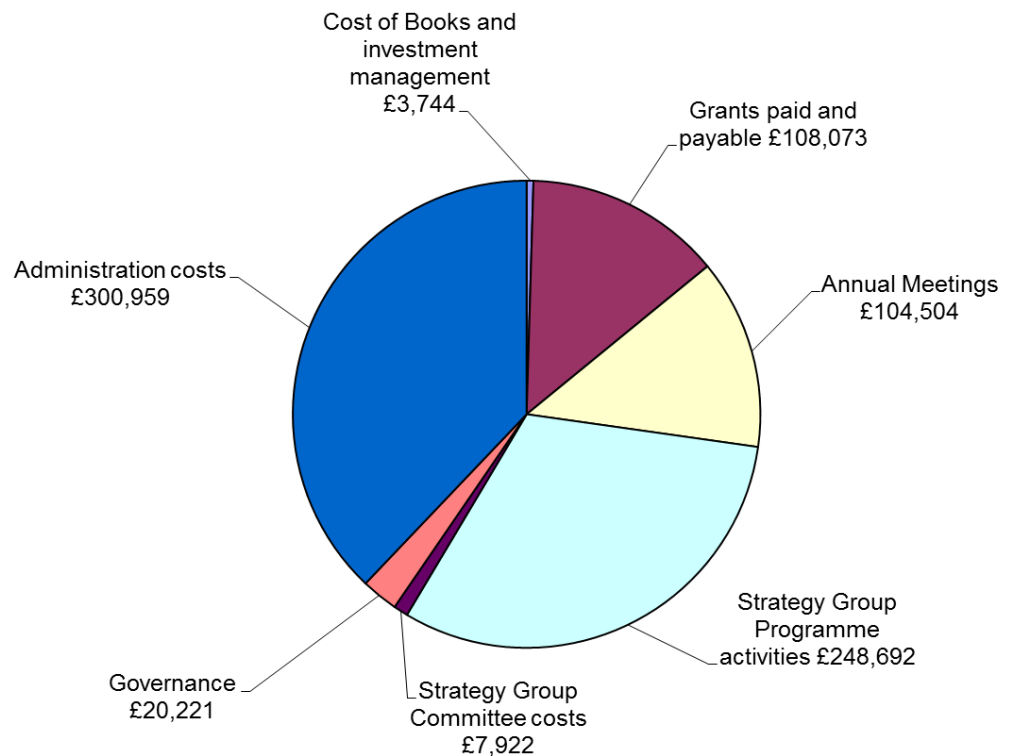


Income and Expenditure report. The liability shown in the 2013 Statements is the whole penalty first estimated at 31 March 2012 of £253,427. In the 2014 Statements the liability had reduced to £186,068 and the difference of £67,359 was released to the Income and Expenditure Account.

## Income



## Expenditure



## Balance Sheet

### Total Balance Sheet of the Assets managed by the General Assembly at 30 September 2014

	2014	2014	2013	2013
	£	£	£	£
<b>Fixed Assets</b>				
Tangible Assets	128,376		105,828	
Investments	<u>2,388,154</u>		<u>2,225,267</u>	
		2,516,530		2,331,095
<b>Current Assets</b>				
Stocks	4,913		4,760	
Loans	2,784		1,068	
Debtors	174,190		143,929	
Short Term Deposits	100,187		168,578	
Cash at Bank and in hand	<u>12,007</u>		<u>78,858</u>	
		294,081		397,193
<b>Current liabilities</b>				
Creditors falling due within one year	<u>(67,920)</u>		<u>(68,152)</u>	
<b>Net Current assets</b>		226,161		329,041
Long term Liabilities		(186,068)		(253,427)
<b>Total assets less liabilities</b>		<b>2,556,623</b>		<b>2,406,709</b>
General Funds		1,455,200		1,274,883
Designated Funds		135,141		134,630
Restricted Funds		345,876		416,438
Endowment Funds		620,406		580,758
<b>Total Funds</b>		<b>2,556,623</b>		<b>2,406,709</b>



## Income and Expenditure Report

<b>Where the money came from</b>	<b>2013-14</b>	<b>2012-13</b>
<b>Voluntary Income</b>		
Legacies	0	5,058
Associate Membership fees received	18,500	17,810
Subscriptions from Related Charities	9,775	9,702
Congregational Quota	101,275	101,441
Community Appeal	3,705	3,288
Annual Meeting Special Collection	7,161	6,000
Bowland Trust	151,838	180,123
Donations and other income	17,267	50,069
Essex Hall Management Fee and Grant	143,750	123,750
B & F U A Grant	28,404	30,322
	481,675	527,563
<b>Sales of Books</b>	6,988	10,046
<b>Furtherance of GA Objects</b>	38,605	33,687
<b>Investment Income</b>	79,415	91,188
<b>Annual Meetings Income</b>	107,101	104,777
	713,783	767,261

### Where we spent our money

<b>Cost of Books and Investment Management</b>	3,744	5,758
<b>Grants paid and payable</b>	108,073	78,151
<b>Annual Meetings</b>	104,504	98,857
<b>Strategy Group Programme activities</b>	248,692	211,746
<b>Strategy Group Committee costs</b>	7,922	7,523
<b>Governance</b>	20,221	22,229
<b>Administration costs</b>	300,959	286,220
	794,115	710,484
<b>Net Incoming Resources</b>	(80,332)	56,777
<b>Gains/(losses) on investments</b>	162,887	192,793
<b>Recognition of "withdrawal penalty" on staff pension fund</b>	67,359	(253,427)
	149,914	(3,857)

### Millennium Fund Grants 2013—2014

		£
Oldham	Equipment for the One World Café	£5,687
Shelf	Illuminated signage	£250
Aberdare	New sound & loop system	£1,500
UK Unitarian TV	All in one PC for mixing / editing / streaming	£800
Simple Gifts, LDPA	National Learning Programme for social action	£4,750
<b>Total:</b>		<b>£12,987</b>



# THE NIGHTINGALE CENTRE

## Financial Summary

By Colin Partington

The trading environment continues to be challenging and our net result is a slight financial loss. The active promotion of the Centre throughout the year has resulted in some new customers but the economic climate has resulted in a reduction in the size of some long-standing groups who use the Centre.



The Centre continues to invest in improvements to increase customer satisfaction, but this has resulted in a growing depreciation – now amounting to some 12% of our expenditure.

Centre Management staff have continued to exercise excellent control over the salaries bill, but the food bill is higher than expected and is being more closely monitored in the future. Repairs and maintenance was higher than previous years, partly due to some unexpected repair activities and partly due to the taking advantage of other work being carried out during times of low occupancy. Heat, light and power was well-controlled and is partly due to the increasing use of more efficient systems.

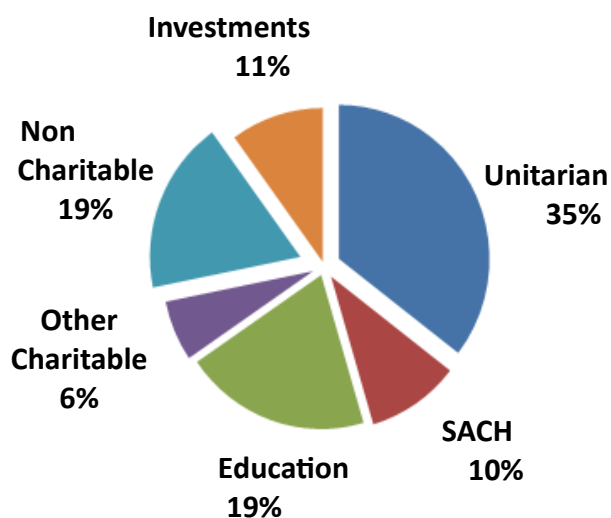
Donations were again lower than previous years.

### Income and Expenditure Report

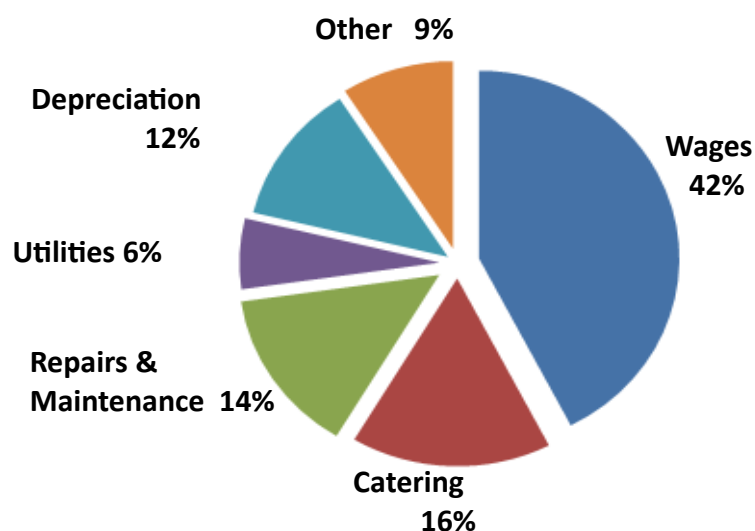
Where the money comes from	2013-2014	2012-2013
	£	£
Donations	8,002	9,396
Charitable Activities	211,869	211,401
Non Charitable Activities	52,967	52,850
Investment Income	29,556	31,982
<b>Total incoming Resources</b>	<b>302,394</b>	<b>305,629</b>
<b>Where we spent the money</b>		
Providing the Services - Charitable	242,708	233,487
Providing the services - non-charitable	60,677	60,072
Governance Costs	850	750
<b>Total Outgoing Resources</b>	<b>304,235</b>	<b>294,309</b>
<b>Net Incoming resources</b>	<b>(1,841)</b>	<b>11,320</b>
Gains/losses on investment assets	424	767
<b><u>Net Movement of Funds</u></b>	<b><u>(1,417)</u></b>	<b><u>12,087</u></b>



## Where our money comes from:



## How the money is spent



## Balance Sheet

### Total Assets of The Nightingale Centre as at 30 September 2014

	2014 £	2014 £	2013 £	2013 £
<b>Fixed Assets</b>				
Tangible Assets	2,152,878		2,127,662	
Investments	4,664		4,240	
		2,157,542		2,131,902
<b>Current Assets</b>				
Stocks	3,029		3,641	
Debtors	149,179		152,152	
Cash at Bank and in hand	178,810		211,193	
		346,827		366,986
<b>Current Liabilities</b>				
Creditors falling due within one year	(43,319)		(52,230)	
<b>Net Current Assets</b>		287,699		314,756
<b><u>Total Assets</u></b>		2,445,241		2,446,658



# THE SUSTENTATION FUND

## Financial Summary

*By Michael Tomlin – Chair*

**Sustentation Fund:** The accounts for the year ended 30<sup>th</sup> September 2014 showed an operating surplus of £511 (2013: surplus £2,565). After a year-end market revaluation gain of £19,268 (2013: gain £21,456) and investment management fees of £28 (2013: £69) there was an overall gain of £19,751 (2013: gain £23,952).

**Lay Pastors' Fund:** The accounts for the year ended 30<sup>th</sup> September 2014 showed an operating surplus of £480 (2013: surplus £48). After a year-end market revaluation gain of £977 (2013: gain £1,516) there was an overall gain of £1,457 (2013: gain £1,564).

### Investments

Newton Investment Management Ltd continued as Investment Manager, but no longer on a discretionary basis, and participated with the Trustees in the Unitarian Investment Panel.

The investments are held in the name of Custodian Company of BNY Mellon Ltd, 1 Canada Square, London, E14 5AL, on behalf of the Trustees and may be held outside the United Kingdom. The Trustees pursue an investment policy that provides revenue for their current purposes and enhances income and capital growth over the longer term, thereby enabling them to meet their current and future objectives in accordance with the purpose of the fund.

## Balance Sheet

### Total Balance Sheet of the Assets managed by the Sustentation Fund at 30 September 2014

	2014	2014	2013	2013
<b>Fixed Assets</b>				
Investments		456,885		436,591
<b>Current Assets</b>				
Cash at Bank and in hand	23,063		22,054	
Investment Manager's Client account	0		1	
Income Tax recoverable	377		485	
	23,440		22,540	
<b>Current liabilities</b>				
Provision for Investment Manager's fee	0		(14)	
<b>Net Current assets</b>		23440		22,526
<b>Total assets less liabilities</b>		480,325		459,117
The Sustentation Fund		460,367		440,616
The Lay Pastors fund		19,958		18,501
<b>Total Funds</b>		480,325		459,117





## Income and Expenditure Report

	2013-14 £	2013-14 £	2012-13 £	2012-13 £
	Sustentation	Lay Pastors	Sustentation	Lay Pastors
<b>Where the money came from</b>				
Bank Interest & Income from Investments	19,035	480	21,806	498
Donations	1,751		2,775	
<b>Total Incoming Resources</b>	<b>20,786</b>	<b>480</b>	<b>24,581</b>	<b>498</b>
<b>Where we spent our money</b>				
Grants	(19,775)	0	(20,262)	(450)
Administration Expenses	(500)		(1,754)	
<b>Operating Surplus / (Deficit)</b>	<b>511</b>	<b>480</b>	<b>2,565</b>	<b>48</b>
Gains/(Losses) on Investments	19,268	977	21,456	1,516
Investment Management Fees	(28)		(69)	
<b>Total Increase/(Reduction) in Funds Value</b>	<b>19,751</b>	<b>1,457</b>	<b>23,592</b>	<b>1,564</b>

### The Congregations to whom we gave money

(Combined Sustention Fund and Lay Pastors' Fund)

	2014	2013
Bolton Bank Street	1,500	1,300
Bolton Unity	750	650
Bolton Egerton	1,050	0
Bristol Unitarian Meeting	375	1,300
Chorlton	750	0
Chowbent	1,500	1,300
Croydon	1,500	1,300
Cotswold Group	1,500	0
Doncaster	1,050	900
Edinburgh	1,500	1,300
Failsworth	0	450
Golders Green	0	812
Kidderminster	0	450
Knutsford	750	650
Macclesfield	1,500	1,300
Monton	0	1,300
Newington Green/Islington	0	1,300
Oldham	1,050	650
Portsmouth	1,500	0
Rochdale	0	1,300
South Wales Group	2,000	1,700
Stand, Bolton	0	650
Stannington	750	650
Urmston, Queens Road	750	650
York	0	800
	19,775	20,712



## BEING A CHARITY

### Operating Within the Rules

#### General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches

*Registered Charity No 250788*

#### The Nightingale Centre

*Registered Charity No 242256*

#### The Sustentation Fund

*Registered Charity No 235449*

The General Assembly :

- Is a charity in its own right
- acts as a 'supervisory charity' to many congregations with 'excepted' status
- Is considered a parent charity under law to The Nightingale Centre and the Sustentation Fund

#### The objects of the General Assembly:

##### Preamble

We, the constituent congregations, affiliated societies and individual members, uniting in a spirit of mutual sympathy, co-operation, tolerance and respect; and recognising the worth and dignity of all people and their freedom to believe as their consciences dictate; and believing that truth is best served where the mind and conscience are free, acknowledge that the Object of the Assembly is:

##### Object

To promote a free and inquiring religion through the worship of God and the celebration of life; the service of humanity and respect for all creation; and the upholding of the liberal Christian tradition.

To this end, the Assembly may:

Encourage and unite in fellowship bodies which uphold the religious liberty of their members, unconstrained by the imposition of creeds;

Affirm the liberal religious heritage and learn from the spiritual, cultural and intellectual insights of all humanity;

Act where necessary as the successor to the British and Foreign Unitarian Association and National Conference of Unitarian, Liberal Christian, Free Christian, Presbyterian and other Non-Subscribing or Kindred Congregations, being faithful to the spirit of their work and principles (see appendix to the constitution), providing always that this shall in no way limit the complete doctrinal freedom of the constituent churches and members of the Assembly;

Do all other such lawful things as are incidental to the attainment of the above Object.

In reference to the penultimate clause of Object, the following is a statement of the Objects of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association, as set forth in Rule 2 of its Constitution:

The diffusion and support of the principles of Unitarian Christianity, including the formation and assistance of Congregations which do not require for themselves or their Ministers subscription to any doctrinal articles of belief; the publication and circulation of biblical, theological, scientific and literary knowledge related to Unitarian Christianity; the doing of all such other lawful things as are incidental or conducive to the attainment of the above objects or any of them.



The following is a statement of the Objects of the National Conference of Unitarian, Liberal Christian, Free Christian, Presbyterian and other Non-Subscribing or Kindred Congregations, as set forth in Rule 1 of its Constitution:

To consult, and when considered advisable to take action, on matters affecting the well-being and interests of the Congregations and Societies on the Roll of the Conference, as by directing attention, suggesting plans, organising expressions of opinion, raising funds to carry out the foregoing objects.

**The objects of the Nightingale Centre:**

(1) The object of the charity is, for the benefit of the public, to further the religious and other charitable work of the Unitarian and Free Christian Churches including:

(a) the relief of those in need by reason of youth, age, ill-health, financial hardship or other disadvantage; and

(b) the provision of facilities for the education of students of educational establishments.

Subject to the provisions of clauses 5 (Power to dispose of purpose property) and 10 (Disposal of land), the land identified in the schedule to this scheme must be retained by the trustees for use for the object of the charity.

**The objects of the Sustentation Fund:**

To aid the maintenance of faithful and efficient Ministers and Lay Pastors serving congregations affiliated to the General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches.

## Trustees

The **Trustees of the General Assembly** are the Members of the GA Executive Committee, which comprises the Honorary Treasurer and eight elected Members (Members may be co-opted to fill vacancies) as listed below.

### GA Executive Committee

Honorary Treasurer: Robert Ince (acting until May 2014)  
Martin Whitell (acting from May 2014)

Members: James Barry  
Rev John Clifford  
Joan Cook  
Robert Ince  
Louise Rogers  
Alison Thursfield  
Rev Martin Whitell  
Dr Jacqueline Woodman

Secretary: Derek McAuley

### Other Appointments:

Solicitors: Charles Russell LLP

Auditors: Shaw Gibbs LLP

Custodian Trustee:

The British and Foreign Unitarian Association (Incorporated)



The **Trustees of The Nightingale Centre** are the Members of the GA Executive Committee.

Day to day Management of the Centre is delegated to a Management Committee:

Chair	Marion Baker
Financial Secretary	Colin Partington
Secretary	Michael Tracey
Other members	Sue Cooper
	David Copley
	Dorothy Hewerdine
	Richard Merritt
	Gwyneth Roper
EC Link	Robert Ince
Independent Examiners	Fawthrop Williams
Custodian Trustee:	
The British and Foreign Unitarian Association	
(Incorporated)	

The **Trustees of the Sustentation Fund** are:

Chair	Michael Tomlin
Hon Treasurer	Alan Eastwood
Hon Secretary	Jeff Teagle
Member ex Officio	Rev Bill Darlison (until April 2014)
	Marion Baker (from April 2014)
	Derek McAuley
	Robert Ince (until May 2014)
	Rev Martin Whitell (from May 2014)
Members appointed by the GA	Dawn Buckle
	Joan Cook (from Nov 2013)
	Rev Eric Jones
	Neville Kenyon
	Rev Jim McClelland
	Louise Rogers (from Nov 2013)
	Rev David Usher (until Nov 2013)
Independent Examiner	KJ Johnson FCA
Custodian Trustee:	
The British and Foreign Unitarian Association	
(Incorporated)	

## Being a Charity

### Advantages

As a charity the General Assembly is exempt from income tax and corporation tax on its charitable earnings, and there are advantages involving VAT and rates.

Particular decisions on tax decisions are complex and need to be taken with professional advice.

### Responsibilities

As a charity the General Assembly is subject to charity law which insists we behave in a business like manner and fulfil the obligations of the Charities Act.

The General Assembly is subject to supervision by the Charity Commission to whom Annual Reports and financial accounts must be submitted.

The General Assembly has taken great care and professional advice in relation to its position as a parent charity to The Nightingale Centre and the Sustentation Fund and has concluded that at the moment the objects of all three charities are sufficiently similar and the degree of control exerted by the Trustees of sufficient magnitude that the General Assembly should be considered as a parent charity.

In accordance with this, the GA has fulfilled the requirement to publish consolidated accounts for all three charities.



## STAFF MEMBERS

The following were members of the GA Staff during the financial year:

Chief Officer	Derek McAuley	dmcauley@unitarian.org.uk
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### PROGRAMME STAFF:

Director of Ministry	Rev Linda Phillips	lphillips@unitarian.org.uk
Welsh Department Secretary	Melda Grantham	mgrantham@unitarian.org.uk
Youth Coordinator	Rev John Harley	jharley@unitarian.org.uk

### SUPPORT STAFF

Operations Manager, Essex Hall Manager & Annual Meetings Manager	Andrew Mason	amason@unitarian.org.uk
Administrator (Internal)	Mary-Jean Hennis	mhennis@unitarian.org.uk
Administrator (External)	Audrey Longhurst	alonghurst@unitarian.org.uk
IT / Communications	Aniuska Dominguez	it@unitarian.org.uk

### FINANCE:

Head of Finance & Administration	Martin Sarbicki	msarbicki@unitarian.org.uk
Finance Officer	John Crosskey	jcrosskey@unitarian.org.uk

### VOLUNTEERS:

Howard Hague  
Rosemary Ruston



Our new Welsh Secretary, Melda Grantham, points towards the future.

The following were members of the Essex Hall Trust Staff during the financial year:

Isabella Clarke	Caretaker
Hepzi Lewis	Cleaner

## GROUP & COMMITTEE MEMBERS

The following people were members of GA Groups and Committees during the financial year:

### THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Convenor: Martin Whitell (until May 2014), Robert Ince (from May 2014)

Members: James Barry, John Clifford, Joan Cook, Robert Ince (Acting Treasurer until May 2014), Louise Rogers, Alison Thursfield, Martin Whitell (Acting Treasurer from May 2014), Jacqueline Woodman.

Staff Support: Derek McAuley, (Chief Officer), Mary-Jean Hennis (Minutes)

### STRATEGY GROUPS

#### Local Leadership Strategy Group

Members: Margaret Robinson (Chair until November 2013), Louise Rogers (Chair from September 2014), Christine Thompson.

Staff Support: Mary-Jean Hennis

#### Ministry Strategy Group

Members: Daniel Costley (from November 2013, Chair from September 2014), Richard Gaines, Margaret Kirk (until November 2013), Stephen Lingwood (until September 2014, Chair until September 2014), Melanie Prideaux, Wendy Sudbury, Sarah Tinker, Jane Williams.

Staff Support: Linda Phillips (Director of Ministry), Mary-Jean Hennis

#### Visibility Strategy Group

Members: James Barry (Chair, from July 2014), Diane Bennett, Philip Colfox (from July 2014), David Dawson (from February 2014), Lyanne Mitchell (from February 2014), Phil Tomlin (until July 2014).

### PANELS / ACTION GROUPS / OTHER GROUPS

#### Annual Meetings

Members: Penny Quest, Alison Thursfield, Martin Whitell.

Staff Support: Andrew Mason (Meetings Organiser), Derek McAuley (Chief Officer).

#### Buildings Advisory Group

Members: Mike Barber (Convenor), Zoe Bremer, Howard Wilkins.

Staff Support: Derek McAuley (Chief Officer)

Historic Buildings Consultants: John Goodchild, Graham Hague, Judy Hague.





### **Electoral Panel**

Members: Gavin Mason, Wade Miller-Knight, Howard Wilkins.

Staff Support: Derek McAuley (Chief Officer).

### **Hucklow Summer School**

Members: Caroline Blair, Janet Costley (from September 2013), Stephen Crowther (from September 2013), Kate Dean, Rev Michael Dadson, Christine Thompson

Staff Support: Audrey Longhurst

### **Interview Panel**

Members: Alex Bradley, David Dawson, Margaret Kirk, David Shaw, Arthur Stewart, Sarah Tinker (Chair).

Staff Support: Linda Philips, Director of Ministry, Mary-Jean Hennis

### **Lindsey Press Panel**

Members: David Dawson, Kay Millard, Catherine Robinson, Kate Taylor (Convenor), Kate Whyman.

Staff Support: Audrey Longhurst, Derek McAuley (Chief Officer).

### **Penal Affairs Panel**

Members: Tony Cann, Bruce Chilton (Chair/Secretary), Bernard Omar, Tony Rees.

### **Welsh Department**

Members: Diana Bianchi, Nans Davies, Eric Jones, Megan Jones (Chair), Keith Lewis-Jones (from August 2014) Cen Llwyd, Julie Nedin, Gwyn Pritchard (from September 2014) Wyn Thomas.

Staff Support: Melda Grantham (Secretary).

### **Youth Panel**

Members: Sarah Atkinson, Ella Field (until September 2014), Jen Hazel, Claire Maddocks, Vanessa Rothwell, Christina Smith, Sue Talbot (Chair)

Youth Representatives: Sarah Hall, Tilly Pugh.

Staff Support: John Harley (Youth Coordinator), Andrew Mason (Minutes).

### **2020 Leadership Team**

Sue Cooper (until August 2014), Jane Couper, Ash James, Andy Pakula, Andy Phillips, Martin Whitell

# Our Members

## Honorary Members

Mr Geoffrey Head (Dec'd)  
Rev Dr Peter Godfrey  
Mr Michael Tomlin

Rev J Eric Jones  
Rev James McClelland  
Mr David Dawson

In accordance with rule 4 of the Constitution of the General Assembly the following persons, having contributed not less than £30 each to the funds of the Assembly in the financial year 2013-14, are Associate Members of the General Assembly. Names of Honorary Members and Full Members who have subscribed not less than £30 during the financial year each are also listed.

Adkinson EB Miss	Calderara B Mrs	Edwards J Ms	Hewerdine C Ms
Allured M Mr	Callander GS Rev	Elder RC Mr	Hewerdine DC Mrs
Anderson EC Mrs	Camper A Rev	Evans S Mrs	Hewis H Mrs
Archer DN Mrs	Cann HA Mr		Hewis P Rev
Arthur D Mr	Carter J Rev	Faiers E Mrs	Higgins M Mr
Ashworth J Mrs	Cartwright CM Rev	Fieldhouse AM Miss	Hill AM Rev
Atkinson JM Mrs	Chilton CD Mrs	Fieldhouse S Miss	Hill L Ms
Attfield R Prof	Chilton GEB Mr	Firth RE Mrs	Hill M Mrs
Aylmer V Mrs	Clarke HM Mrs	Ford JM Ms	Hills A Rev
	Clifford B Mrs	Forrester E (Dec'd)	Hills E Mrs
Baker M Mrs	Clifford JC Rev	Foulkes RO Mr	Hird JL Dr
Barber JM Mr	Cockroft BS Rev	Fowler AM Miss	Hoskins DG Mr
Barbour R Mrs	Cockroft L Rev		Howarth J Mrs
Barlow EJ Mrs	Coldwell AH Mr		Howarth M Mr
Barlow H Mr	Collier JS Mr	Gabriel S Rev	Hughes M
Barry J Mr	Cook J Mrs	Gaines R Mr	Hugill M Ms
Barwick S Mrs	Cooper LS Mrs	Gienke M Mr	
Beck R Mr	Copley DW Mr	Gillman DE Mr	Ince R Mr
Bennett DE Ms	Copley H Mrs	Godfrey PB Rev	Ingold J Dr
Birtles E Rev	Corrigall J Rev	Godfrey S Mrs	Inkson J Mrs
Blair J Mr	Crompton DF Mr	Goodchild J Mr	Inkson RHE Mr
Blake C Mrs	Crompton J Mrs		Isaac A Mr
Boeke Rev J	Crosskey JM Mr	Hague G Mrs	Isaac RB Mr
Boeke Rev R	Crosskey KSM Dr	Hague HR Mr	
Boyce S Mrs	Cupper AM Mr	Hague J Mrs	
Bradley A Rev		Hankinson AS Mrs	Janes JA Mrs
Bradley J Rev	Darling DF Mr	Hardy SJ Dr	Jennings G Mr
Brooks B Mrs	Darlison JW Rev	Harris LA Ms	Johnson KJ Mr
Brown AHO Mr	Dawson C Mrs	Harrison A Mrs	Johnson PF Rev
Brown I Mr	Dawson D Mr	Harrison M Mrs	Jones A Ms
Brown M Mrs	Day M Mr	Hartley LJ Mrs	Jones A Mrs
Buckle D Mrs	Deas E Mrs	Hartley R Mr	Jones AW Dr
Buckle R Mr	Denby RN Mr	Hastie WJ Mr	Jones B Mrs
Buckley D Mr	Dobson A Ms	Haughton DP Ms	Jones JE Rev
Burbage M Miss	Doel DC Rev Dr	Head G Mr (Dec'd)	
Burgess B Mr	Dolso, C	Hewerdine AJ Mr	
Burns C Ms	Dyson-Jones E Ms		
Burns M Mrs			



Kay H Mrs  
 Kenyon B Mrs  
 Kenyon NA Mr  
 Kerr DG Dr  
 King L Ms  
 Kirk M Rev  
 Knopf B Ms

Lake M Mrs  
 Latta S Mrs  
 Laycock BA Mrs  
 Lingwood S Rev  
 Lloyd G Mr  
 Maguire M Mrs  
 Martin C Ms  
 Mason CB Mr  
 Mason GH Mr  
 Mason JI Mr  
 Maud G Mr  
 McAuley D Mr  
 McClelland A Rev  
 McClelland J Rev  
 Meek J Mr  
 Merritt H Mrs  
 Merritt R Mr  
 Midgley C Rev  
 Midgley J Rev  
 Mitchell SCF Ms  
 Moore TJ Mr  
 Morais M Mrs  
 Nuttall M Mrs

Oates ADG Mr  
 O'Brien E Mrs  
 O'Connor F Rev  
 Ogilvie S Mrs  
 Omar B Mr  
 O'Neil SE Mrs  
 Oulton RA Mr

Parker AR Rev  
 Parsons H Mrs  
 Partington C Mr  
 Partington J Mrs  
 Paxton MRH Mrs  
 Payne B Mrs  
 Peace I Mr  
 Pearce G  
 Peart A Rev Dr  
 Pennington AC Mr  
 Percy A Mrs  
 Pilkington C Mr

Ramage RW Mr  
 Ratcliffe M Mrs  
 Rathbone B Mrs  
 Raymond S Dr  
 Reed CM Rev  
 Reed P Mrs  
 Rees AM Mr  
 Rees C Mrs  
 Reynolds HM  
 Richards J Mrs  
 Richards JCT Mr  
 Richards W Mr  
 Roberts D Rev  
 Roberts J Dr  
 Roberts J Rev

Roberts WM Mrs  
 Robinson J Rev  
 Robinson M Ms  
 Rogers J Mrs  
 Rowson J Mrs  
 Rowson P Mr  
 Ruston AR Mr  
 Ruston J Ms  
 Ruston M Mr  
 Ruston R Mrs

Sampson PW Mr  
 Sanders N Dr  
 Scott JA Mr  
 Seal S Mrs  
 Seccombe JA Mrs  
 Sellman J Ms  
 Sharpe S Mrs  
 Shellabear RD Mrs  
 Short A Mrs  
 Silk J Mrs  
 Silk PA Rev  
 Simmons J Mrs  
 Sinclair A Mrs  
 Slaven S Ms  
 Smith C Mrs  
 Smith CF Mrs  
 Smith KJ Mr  
 Smith MF Rev  
 Soulsby P Sir  
 Storey D Mr  
 Stott S Mrs  
 Sykes J

Teagle JJ Mr  
 Teagle SM Mrs

Thompson J Miss  
 Thursfield A Mrs  
 Tinker SM Rev  
 Tomlin JR Mrs  
 Tomlin MJ Mr  
 Tucker A Mr  
 Tupman M  
 Turnage C Mr

Usher A Mrs  
 Usher D Rev  
 Usher GR Rev

Voegeli I Mrs

Wagner E Mr  
 Walker F Rev  
 Warhurst DE Mr  
 Warhurst H Mrs  
 Watson N Ms  
 West MG Mr  
 Whitell M Rev  
 Whitham P Mr  
 Wightman M Mrs  
 Wightman R Rev  
 Wilkie C Mrs  
 Wilkins H Mr  
 Wilkinson J Rev  
 Williams DA Prof  
 Williams J Dr  
 Williams RH Mrs  
 Williams SR Mr  
 Williams WM Mrs  
 Wilson AM Mrs  
 Winder JR Mrs  
 Wood D Dr  
 Woodhouse J Mr  
 Woolley S Rev  
 Wykes DL Dr  
 Wykes E Dr

## Not an Associate Member?



Please consider joining. To see the many benefits of membership and also have your name listed here, please go to our website:

[www.unitarian.org.uk](http://www.unitarian.org.uk)



## Congregational Contributions

1 October 2013 to 30 September 2014. Amounts are shown as at 30 September 2014 and contributions received after that date will ordinarily be shown in the next annual report.

England (and Isle of Man)	Quota Members	£			
Ainsworth	6	192	Derby	3	96
Altrincham	44	1408	Ditchling	20	640
Ashton-in-Makerfield	45	1440	Doncaster	18	576
Atherton	44	1408	Douglas (Isle of Man)	6	192
Banbury	12	384	Dover	0	0
Bath	7	224	Dudley	1	32
Belper	4	128	Dukinfield	35	1120
Billingshurst	9	288	Eccles	54	1728
Birmingham Edgbaston	29	928	Evesham	23	736
Birmingham Hollywood	68	2176	Framlingham	6	192
Blackpool	15	480	Gloucester	4	128
Bolton Bank Street	58	1856	Godalming	30	960
Bolton Chorley New Road	13	416	Great Hucklow	12	384
Bolton Egerton	30	960	Great Yarmouth	9	288
Boston	5	160	Hale Barns	19	599
Bradford Unitarians	15	480	Hastings	18	576
Bridgwater	6	192	Hinckley	41	1312
Bridport	10	320	Hindley	9	288
Brighton	43	1376	Horsham	33	1056
Bristol Brunswick Square	16	512	Horwich	6	180
Bristol Frenchay	15	480	Hull	23	736
Bury	60	1920	Hyde	2	64
Bury St Edmunds	8	256	Hyde Flowery Field	0	0
Cambridge	35	1120	Hyde Gee Cross	8	250
Chatham	8	256	Ipswich	45	1440
Chelmsford	6	192	Kendal	52	1664
Cheltenham	11	352	Kidderminster	33	1056
Chester	5	160	Knutsford	50	1600
Chesterfield	10	320	Leeds	28	896
Chorley	18	576	Leicester	31	990
Cirencester	13	416	Lewes	1	32
Coseley	7	224	Lincoln	14	448
Coventry	6	192	Liverpool Gateacre	20	640
Cradley	14	448	Liverpool Sefton Park	25	800
Crewkerne	13	416	Liverpool Toxteth	5	160
Croydon	46	1472	London Brixton	16	512
Cullompton	4	128	London Golders Green	54	1728
Dean Row	54	1728	London Hampstead	79	2528
Denton	10	324	London Islington	45	1440





London Kensington	63	2000	Styal	25	800
London Lewisham	6	192	Taunton	12	384
London Newington Green	42	1344	Tenterden	7	224
London Stratford	5	160	Torquay	9	288
Loughborough	1	32	Trowbridge	12	384
Lytham St Annes	0	0	Urmston	25	800
Macclesfield	28	896	Wakefield	18	576
Maidstone	6	192	Warrington	15	480
Manchester Chorlton	10	320	Warwick	17	544
Manchester Cross Street	32	1024	Watford	10	320
Manchester Dob Lane	14	448	Whitby	6	192
Manchester Gorton	3	96	Whitefield	38	1216
Mansfield	48	1536	Wirral	25	800
Mossley	10	320	Wolverhampton	3	96
New Mill	4	128	Woodhall Spa	1	32
Newcastle upon Tyne	22	704	Worthing	2	64
Newcastle-under-Lyme	20	640	York	39	1248
Newport, Isle of Wight	10	320	<b>Wales</b>		
Northampton	6	192	Aberdare	25	800
Norwich	54	1728	Alltyblaca	2	60
Nottingham	12	384	Bangor	11	352
Oldbury	3	96	Cardiff	18	576
Oldham	12	384	Cefn Coed y Cymer	20	640
Oxford	44	1408	Cellan	1	36
Padiham	45	1440	Ciliau Aeron	1	16
Plymouth	23	736	Cribyn	3	110
Portsmouth	53	1696	Cwmsychbant	4	114
Rawtenstall	0	0	Cwrtnewydd	5	146
Richmond	38	1216	Felinfach	2	50
Rivington	20	640	Lampeter	10	320
Rochdale	26	832	Llandysul	3	100
Scarborough	7	224	Llanwnnen	5	168
Sevenoaks	24	768	Nottage	4	128
Sheffield Fulwood	37	1184	Pontsian	3	94
Sheffield Norfolk Street	45	1440	Prengwyn	4	132
Sheffield Stannington	25	800	Swansea	11	352
Shelf	8	256	Talgarreg	6	200
Shrewsbury	22	704	Trebanos	20	640
Sidmouth	5	160	Wick	5	160
Southampton	18	576			
Southend-on-Sea	4	128	<b>Scotland</b>		
Southport	7	224	Aberdeen	16	512
St Albans	10	320	Dundee	25	800
Stalybridge	10	320	Edinburgh	65	2080
Stockton-on-Tees	22	704	Glasgow	38	1216
Stourbridge	4	128			
			<b>Total:</b>	<b>3,179</b>	<b>£101,729</b>

**Note:** There is a small difference to the quota figure shown in the Accounts.  
This is a balance following payments made just before or after the year end.

## OUR HERITAGE

Please be aware that, from next year, this section will be moved from the Annual Report onto the GA website, where it will be available to a larger number of people.

### **General Secretaries / Chief Executives / Chief Officers**

1928	Rev S H Mellone, MA, DSc
1928	Rev R Travers Herford, BA, DD
1929-49	Rev Mortimer Rowe, BA, DD
1949-69	Rev John Kielty, LD, DD
1969-79	Rev Brian L Golland, MA
1979-94	Mr Roy W Smith, DHL
1994-07	Mr Jeffrey J Teagle
2007-09	Rev S Dick, MSc
2009-	Mr Derek McAuley, MA, BSSc

### **Treasurers**

1928-39	Lieut-Col S Chatfield-Clarke, DL
1939-59	Mr Ronald P Jones, MA, FRIBA
1959-70	Sir C Herbert Pollard, CBE, FCA
1970-71	Mr Albert Forrester, FCA
1971-79	Mr Arnold Graves, FCA, FCIS
1979-98	Mr Geoffrey Head, BA
1998-05	Mr Michael Tomlin
2005-09	Mr Martin West
2009	Mr Derek McAuley, MA, BSSc
2010-12	Mr Huw Thomas, MA, CA, MSc
2012-14	Mr Robert Ince (Acting)
2014-	Rev Martin Whitell (Acting), BA

### **Deputy Treasurers**

1996-98	Mr Michael Tomlin
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## Presidents

1929	Rev C J Street, MA, LLB (B&FUA)	1972-73	Mr M Humphreys Winder, BA
1929	Rev Henry Gow, BA, BD (Nat Conf)	1973-74	Rev D Jacob Davies, BA
1929-31	Mrs Sydney Martineau	1974-75	Mrs Gwyneth J M Thomas, BSc
1931-32	Mr J Harrop White, JP	1975-76	Rev Evan David Davies
1932-34	Rev Alfred Hall, MA, DD	1976-77	Mr George Morrison, MA
1934-35	Mr Ronald P Jones, MA, FRIBA	1977-78	Rev Dr Peter B Godfrey, BA, DD
1935-36	Mr George G Armstrong	1978-79	Mr Geoffrey Head, BA
1936-37	Rev H McLachlan, MA, DD, LittD	1979-80	Rev A Hilton Birtles, JP, BA
1937-38	Mr N Bishop Harman, MA, LLD	1980-81	Dr June Bell, MA, MB, BS, PhD
1938-39	Rev R F Rattray, MA, PhD	1981-82	Rev Eric Wild, BA
1939-40	Mr J T Bibby	1982-83	Mrs Eleanor Dixon
1940-41	Rev E Rosalind Lee, MA	1983-84	Rev Arthur J Long, MA
1941-42	Mr P M Oliver, CBE, BA	1984-85	Mrs Helen M Nicholson, MBE
1942-43	Rev H J Rossington, MA, BD	1985-86	Rev Sydney H Knight
1943-44	Mr R H Mottram, JP, FRSL	1986-87	Mrs Sheila Crosskey, MB, ChB
1944-45	Mr Alfred Pilling, OBE, JP	1987-88	Rev Derek Smith
1945-46	Rev Raymond V Holt, MA, BLitt	1988-89	Mr Robert HE Inkson, BSc, FSS, FIS
1946-47	Mr Harold Baily, MBE	1989-90	Rev J Eric Jones, BA
1947-48	Rev Lawrence Redfern, MA, BD	1990-91	Mrs Eila Forrester, BA
1948-49	Prof FJM Stratton, LLD, FRS	1991-92	Rev Peter Hewis, BA
1949-50	Rev Fred Cottier	1992-93	Mrs Celia Kerr
1950-51	Mr Harold B Moore	1993-94	Rev James McClelland, MA
1951-52	Rev G Randall Jones, MA, BSc, BD	1994-95	Mr Michael Tomlin
1952-53	Miss Dorothy Tarrant, MA, PhD	1995-96	Rev Anne McClelland, BA
1953-54	Rev Herbert Crabtree	1996-97	Dr Jane Williams, MB, BCh, BAO
1954-55	Mr Stanley R Butler, ACA	1997-98	Rev Clifford Reed, BA
1955-56	Rev Frank A Bullock	1998-99	Dr B Littlepage, MSc, MRCOG, FFPHMI
1956-57	Mr C Herbert Pollard, CBE, FSA	1999-00	Rev Keith Gilley, BA, MA
1957-58	Rev James Percival Chalk	2000-01	Mrs Judith Crompton, JP
1958-59	Rt Hon J Chuter Ede, CH, JP, DL, MP	2001-02	Rev John Midgley, BA, BD, MA, MEd
1959-60	Rev Arthur W Vallance, BA	2002-03	Mr Alan Ruston, BSc
1960-61	Mr Arthur L Blake, OBE	2003-04	Rev Austin Fitzpatrick
1961-62	Rev J Harry Smith	2004-05	Mrs Dawn Buckle, MEd
1962-63	Mr Kenneth M Street, MM	2005-06	Rev Brian Cockroft
1963-64	Rev Walter M Long	2006-07	Mr David Dawson, MA, GRSM
1964-65	Mr Stanley J Kennett, BSc, PhD	2007-08	Rev Celia Midgley, BA
1965-66	Rev E Shirvell Price, MA	2008-09	Mrs Joyce Ashworth
1966-67	Mr T H Hollingsworth	2009-10	Rev Bob Wightman
1967-68	Rev Fred Kenworthy, MA, BD	2010-11	Mr Neville Kenyon
1968-69	Mrs Amy Howarth, MA	2011-12	Rev Dr Ann Peart, BA, MA, PhD
1969-70	Rev C Gordon Bolam, MA, BD	2012-13	Ms Lis Dyson-Jones, JP
1970-71	Mr Arnold Graves, FCA, FCIS	2013-14	Rev Bill Darlison, BA, MA
1971-72	Rev H John McLachlan, MA, BD, DPhil	2014-15	Marion Baker



## Anniversary Service Preachers

- 1929 Rev Alfred Hall, MA, DD  
1930 Rev H J Rossington, MA, BD  
1931 Rev Herbert McLachlan, MA, DD, LittD  
1932 Rev Herbert Barnes  
1933 Rev John C Ballantyne, MA  
1934 Rev Charles M Wright, MA  
1935 Rev Lawrence Clare  
1936 Rev Arthur S Hurn, MA, DLitt  
1937 Rev Sidney Spencer, BA  
1938 Rev Raymond V Holt, MA, BLitt  
1939 Rev Arthur H Lewis  
1940 Rev W E Williams, BA  
1941 Rev Fred R Cottier  
1942 Rev Rev Leslie Belton, MA, MSc  
1943 Rev E George Lee  
1944 Rev Stanley Mossop  
1945 Rev Reginald W Wilde, MA, MSc, PhD  
1946 Rev Wallace B Travener  
1947 Rev Frank A Bullock  
1948 Rev Frederick May Elliot, MA, DD LLD  
1949 Rev G Randall Jones, MA, MSc, BD  
1950 Rev Mortimer Rowe, BA, DD  
1951 Rev Lawrence Redfern, MA, BD  
1952 Rev H G Woodford  
1953 Rev Arthur L Agnew, OBE, BA, DD  
1954 Rev Sydney P Whitehouse, MA, BLitt  
1955 Rev H Stewart Carter, MA  
1956 Rev Basil Viney  
1957 Rev Arthur W Vallance, BA  
1958 Rev W J Carter, MA  
1959 Rev Wilfred Waddington, BA, BD  
1960 Rev Dana L McGreeley, DD  
1961 Rev Phillip N Tindall, BA, BD, PhD  
1962 Rev C Gordon Bolam, MA, BD  
1963 Rev A Margaret Barr, MA  
1964 Rev Fred Kenworthy, MA, DD  
1965 Rev D Jacob Davies, BA  
1966 Rev John Radcliffe, BA  
1967 Rev Charles Bartlett, BA  
1968 Rev Brian L Golland, MA  
1969 Rev John Kielty, LLD, DD  
1970 Rev Harry Lismer Short, MA  
1971 Rev Eric S Price, MA  
1972 Rev Robert N West, BA, BD, DD  
1973 Rev Lancelot A Garrard, MA, BD, LLD  
1974 Rev E Basil Short, BSc  
1975 Rev A Hamilton Birtles, BA  
1976 Rev Fred M Ryde, MA  
1977 Rev Dudley E Richards, MA, BD  
1978 Rev Anne McClelland, BA  
1979 Rev Eric Wild, BA and Eileen Kielty, BA  
1980 Rev A Ben Downing, MA, BD  
1981 Rev Gabor Kereki  
1982 Rev Arthur J Long, MA  
1983 Rev Bruce Findlow, BA  
1984 Rev O Eugene Pickett, BA, BD, DD  
1985 Rev D Elwyn J Davies, MA, BD, PhD  
1986 Rev Peter B Godfrey, BA  
1987 Rt Rev William McMillan, MA  
1988 Rev William F Schulz, MA, DMin, DD  
1989 Rev Frank Walker, BA  
1990 Rev Glyn Pruce, STB, MA  
1991 Rev Andrew Hill, BA  
1992 Rev Leonard Smith, MA, PhD  
1993 Rev Denise Boyd  
1994 Rev Keith Gilley, BA, MA, BDQ  
1995 Rev Clifford Reed, BA  
1996 Rev Judith Walker-Riggs, DD  
1997 Rev John A Buehrens, DD  
1998 Rev David C Doel, MA, PhD  
1999 Rev Alec Finbow, BA  
2000 Rev Joy Croft, BA, MA, MTh  
2001 Rev Penny Johnson  
2002 Rev Bill Darlison, BA, MA  
2003 Rev John Clifford, BA, MSc, ThM  
2004 Rev Ann Peart, BA, MA, PhD  
2005 Rev J Eric Jones, BA  
2006 Rev Peter Hewis, MA  
2007 Rev Brenda Catherall, BA  
2008 Rev Art Lester, BA  
2009 Rev Margaret Kirk, BA, MA  
2010 Rev Michael Dadson, BA  
2011 Rev Jeffrey Gould, BA, MA  
2012 Rev Celia Cartwright, BA  
2013 Rev Feargus O'Connor, BA, MA  
2014 Rev David Usher, BA, MA, DMin





## GENERAL ASSEMBLY MEETINGS 2014 - PROCEEDINGS

The eighty-sixth Annual Meetings of the General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches were held from Sunday 13 April to Wednesday 16 April 2014 at Whittlebury Hall, Northamptonshire. The programme of General Assembly and affiliated society meetings and workshops commenced during the afternoon of 13 April, preceded by the John Rely Beard Lecture delivered by Alan Ruston on "200 Years Being Legal: Its Meaning for Unitarians in the Past and the Present".

The first plenary session commenced at 15.45 on Sunday 13 April 2014 with an opening welcome from the General Assembly President, Rev Bill Darlison and the lighting of the Chalice. The Standing Orders for the Conduct of Business, as set out on document AGM12/14, were adopted. The Steering Committee, consisting of Rev Peter Hewis, Neville Kenyon and Rev Dr Ann Peart, was confirmed.

Apologies were received from: Rev Elizabeth Birtles, Colleen Burns, Rev Cen Llwyd, Eleanor Dixon, Lis Dyson-Jones, Lorna Hill and Masie Barry, Rev Anthony Howe, Rev Eric and Ann Jones, Rev Ann McClelland, Revs Daphne and John Roberts, Rev Derek Smith, Rev Dr Leonard and Joan Smith, Rev Wyn Thomas and Rev Geoff Usher. Overseas attendees; Rev Petr Samojsky (Czech Republic), Rev Gary and Elizabeth Smith (United States) and Rev Bridget and Paul Spain and Ray Naughton (Republic of Ireland); were welcomed and the contribution of the staff of the General Assembly was acknowledged.

The Report of the Local Leadership Strategy Group was presented by Margaret Robinson. Dawn Buckle, on behalf of the Worship Studies Panel, introduced Iain Brown who was presented by the President with the

Advanced Certificate of the Worship Studies Course. He thanked all who had supported him, particularly Rev John Clifford.



*Iain Brown, displaying his Advanced Certificate*

The Report of the Ministry Strategy Group was presented by Rev Sarah Tinker who indicated that Stephen Lingwood was unable to attend until the following day and had sent apologies. She thanked Rev Linda Phillips for her work to support the Group as Director of Ministry. Work continued on Ministerial competencies and a consultation was being held on the Lay Pastor title. It was confirmed that the Colleges and ministry students were involved in the work on training.

The Sustentation Fund report was presented by Michael Tomlin and received. Ken Johnson was thanked for acting as Independent Examiner of the Accounts. There had been a review of the investment strategy and changes to the policy on the awarding of grants to congregations and feedback was requested. Several questions were asked about particular decisions and the change in policy. It was explained that each application

was looked at carefully both in terms of need and access to other resources. Levels of “live” giving were also an important consideration and a target of £250 per member was a guideline. The Fund wished to have more impact in developing ministry but could only assist congregations who had a Minister or Lay Pastor. In relation to investment strategy it was confirmed that ethical considerations were taken into account.

Martin West presented with enthusiasm the Anniversary Appeal. The evening closed with the Anniversary Service led by Rev David Usher.

The second plenary session commenced at 08.45 on Monday 14 April 2014 with Opening Reflections led by Rev Andy Pakula. The Executive Committee Convenor, Rev Martin Whitell, reported on their work during the previous year and the current plans. He indicated that it would be a short report to allow ample time for questions. He acknowledged the work of the Chief Officer and all GA staff in support of the volunteer efforts as seen in the reports of the Strategy Groups. The work of the 2020 Congregational Development Programme and the IT upgrade were highlighted.

Robert Ince, Acting Treasurer, presented the General Assembly’s Financial Review for the year ending 30 September 2013. He announced that £7,500 had been raised the previous evening with the Anniversary Service Appeal. A particular focus had been on rationalising the designated and restricted funds. Grants had again been made from the Millennium Fund and applications were welcomed. A major investment had been made to upgrade the IT facilities and a new GA website would be launched in the summer.

During questions, it was highlighted that the involvement of British Unitarians in the International Council of Unitarians and

Universalists (ICUU) should be given more prominence, particularly as there had been a very positive response to the Appeal for funds. The role of the EC “link” to Districts was outlined and it was expected that at least once a year a visit should be made to the District meeting. This was felt to be insufficient and it was agreed that the point would be discussed by the Executive Committee at its next meeting. A “gap” between the Worship Studies Courses and Ministerial Training was highlighted and it was explained that the need for the Local Leadership and Ministry Strategy Groups to work together was recognised. It was explained that the income from legacies related to a previous legacy and no new ones had been received during the year. The forthcoming IARF World Congress in Birmingham in August 2014 was highlighted. Arrangements for risk management were explained and the risk register was reviewed each July. The recognition in the Report of the need to plan for the ending of Bowland Trust support was commended, given the serious financial implications for income. The limited financial support for ministry available from the General Assembly was noted.

The third plenary session commenced at 10.45 on Monday 14 April 2014. A report on Youth activities was presented by Sue Talbot with new initiatives highlighted. Nine residential events had been held and she thanked Rev John Harley, the volunteer youth leaders and all external donors, particularly the Wood Green Trust. It was asked how religious education co-ordinators fitted into the Youth Programme and it was explained that all recognised the need for greater involvement subject of course to other demands.

The Convenor, Rev Martin Whitell, launched the Youth Strategy Group, which had been established to review the General Assembly’s provision for children, young people and



young adults and had come up with innovative proposals for the future. The group comprised Jen Hazel, Helen Mason, Cathie Masztalerz, Katie Millard and Vanessa Rothwell with support from Rev John Harley and Colin Partington, who were thanked for agreeing to serve.

Motion 1. "2014 Vice President" was proposed by Stand Unitarian Chapel. It was agreed that a secret ballot be held. An extensive debate was held. A procedural motion 5.2 "move to next business" was defeated. In a secret ballot the motion was defeated. The Convenor reported to the Meeting that the Executive Committee had discussed how the responsibilities of the Vice-President could be fulfilled in the event of the motion being defeated and that recent Past Presidents had agreed to assist with any requests to be made via Essex Hall. That evening a "Celebrating Our Community" service was held, arranged by the Midland Unitarian Association.

The fourth plenary session was held at 08.45 on Tuesday 15 April 2014 with Opening Reflections led by the young people. The President sent his condolences to Rev Eric Jones following the death of his father and thanked the Midland Unitarian Association for arranging the celebrations held the previous evening. Rev Celia Cartwright was invited to reflect on the debate held the previous day.

The report of the Visibility Strategy Group was presented by Diane Bennett and James Barry. Media training had been held as planned along with a "train the trainers" event on use of social media and guidance on the new GA strapline developed. A re-launch of the Group was announced with plans for a publicity guide, new web opportunities and posters and materials. Motion 2. "BBC" was proposed by Westgate Chapel, Wakefield and approved with an amendment. Motion 3. "Constitutional Amendment" was proposed by the Executive Committee and approved.

The report of The Nightingale Centre was presented by Marion Baker and Colin Partington who highlighted the ongoing success of the Centre which also enabled them to give a significant discount to the Youth Programme. She thanked the members of the Management Committee. An explanation was given of the changes in the format of the Accounts in relation to charitable and non-charitable services. The support for "Send a Child to Hucklow" (SACH) was commended and the flexibility to accommodate the needs of the Youth Programme welcomed. Emergency Motion 1. "Books for Prisoners" proposed by the Octagon Chapel, Norwich and 12 Full Members was accepted for debate and was approved.

The fifth plenary session commenced at 11.00 on Tuesday 15 April 2014. Rev Gary Smith, on behalf of the Partner Church Council, introduced their new initiative linking Unitarian Universalist congregations in the United States with British congregations. He offered his thanks for the opportunity to attend the Meetings and hold a workshop and brought the greetings of Peter Morales, President of the Unitarian Universalist Association.

The Report of the Stipend Review Committee was presented by the Acting Treasurer. It was argued that allowing congregations without Ministers to decide on stipends for others was unfair. The Committee was asked to look at removal costs (item 5). The Report was accepted. The Report of the Stipend Review Committee on Pulpit Supply was presented by the Acting Treasurer. After lengthy debate the Report was approved. Rabbi Danny Rich, Chief Executive of Liberal Judaism, gave the Keynote Address on promoting the liberal voice of faith and combining the values of Judaism and modernism, which was followed by a short question time. Rabbi Rich was thanked for his stimulating contribution.



The sixth plenary session commenced at 09.00 on Wednesday 16 April 2014 with Opening Reflections led by Rev Danny Crosby. Rev Maud Robinson led a tribute to Rev Jane Barraclough who had died recently in the midst of her ministry. Motion 4. "Transylvanian Mining" was proposed by 12 Full Members and approved. Motion 5. "Vice-Presidency Rotation" was proposed by Yorkshire Unitarian Union and approved. Emergency Motion 2. "Climate Change" was proposed by 12 Full Members. During the debate, Procedural Motion 5.2 to "refer back" for more consultation was proposed and approved.

The seventh plenary session commenced at 10.45 on Wednesday 16 April 2014. Motion 6. "Red Cross" proposed by 12 Full Members was approved. Representatives of the British Red Cross spoke to the meeting on their relief work in The Philippines following Typhoon Haiyan and thanked the Unitarian Movement for its generous financial support.

The Closing Plenary session commenced at 11.20. The Procedural Resolutions were approved. Rev Bill Darlison gave his Presidential Address as outgoing President. Mrs Marion Baker was installed as President for 2014/15 and spoke to the Annual Meeting. She conducted a closing service of worship and the Annual Meetings closed at approximately 12.30pm.

## RESOLUTIONS

The following resolutions were agreed.

### 1. FROM WESTGATE CHAPEL, WAKEFIELD

That this General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches calls upon the BBC Religion and Ethics advisers to broaden the BBC Radio 4 Thought for the Day by including secular and spiritual non-theist speakers.

### 2. FROM THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

That this General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches add a new paragraph to the Constitution:

"18. Dissolution

- (1) If the Members resolve to dissolve the charity the Executive Committee will remain in office as charity trustees and be responsible for winding up the affairs of the charity in accordance with this clause.
- (2) The trustees must collect in all the assets of the charity and must pay or make provision for all the liabilities of the charity.
- (3) The trustees must apply any remaining property or money:
  - (a) Directly for the objects;
  - (b) By transfer to any charity or charities for the purposes the same or similar to the charity;
  - (c) In such other manner as the Charity Commission for England and Wales ("the Commission") may approve in writing in advance.
- (4) The Members may pass a resolution before or at the same time as the resolution to dissolve the charity specifying the manner in which the trustees are to apply the remaining property or assets of the charity and the trustees must comply with the resolution if it is consistent with paragraphs (a) – (c) inclusive in sub-clause (3) above.
- (5) In no circumstances shall the net assets of the charity be paid to or distributed among the Members of the charity (except to a Member that is itself a charity).
- (6) The trustees must notify the Commission promptly that the charity has been dissolved. If the trustees are obliged to send the charity's accounts to the Commission





for the accounting period which ended before its dissolution, they must send the Commission the charity's final accounts."

### **3. FROM TWELVE FULL MEMBERS**

The General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches expresses its support for the campaign being undertaken by our Unitarian co-religionists, the Hungarian Unitarian Church, along with other church groups and environmental protection groups, against extensive mining operations in the Roşia Montană area of Transylvania, Romania. We are appalled at (i) the possible uprooting of the residents of this community from their homes, livelihoods, places of worship and their burial grounds and (ii) the known risk of major environmental damage from the use of cyanide in the mining operations. We call upon the Romanian Government to discontinue permanently all consideration and negotiations regarding this mining development by the Roşia Montană Gold Corporation in this area.

### **4. FROM THE YORKSHIRE UNITARIAN UNION**

That this General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches asks the Executive Committee to make their recommendation for GA Vice-President on the basis of appropriateness for the post, and without reference to the present convention of alternating lay person and minister. We would hope that the Executive Committee would still be mindful of the need for some balance, over time, between lay persons, ministers and other variables such as gender and geography.

### **5. FROM TWELVE FULL MEMBERS**

This General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches, reaffirming our commitment to the Charter for Compassion and its message of empathy and universal compassion and our respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part:

acclaims the vital work of the British Red Cross in helping save the lives of millions of people in Syria and the Philippines and commends fellow Unitarians and all people of goodwill who have contributed to the Clara Barton Disasters Emergency Appeal in response to recent appeals issued on behalf of the General Assembly;

and, should the General Assembly, through the Executive Committee, decide to issue further appeals in response to major international disasters, encourages Unitarians everywhere to support them generously and wholeheartedly.

### **EMERGENCY RESOLUTION**

#### **6. FROM THE OCTAGON CHAPEL NORWICH AND 12 FULL MEMBERS**

This General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches supports the campaign by the Howard League for Penal Reform urging the Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State for Justice, Chris Grayling, to reconsider the Prison Service Instruction that limits books and other essentials being sent to prisoners from family and friends. Reading is a right and not a privilege.

### **PROCEDURAL RESOLUTIONS**

- 1) That the Report of the General Assembly Executive Committee and the Accounts of the General Assembly be received and adopted.
- 2) That Shaw Gibbs LLP be reappointed as Auditors.
- 3) That the thanks of the Assembly be given to Robert Ince for his services as Honorary Treasurer, and to district association and local officers for their invaluable services. This meeting authorises the Executive Committee to make appropriate interim arrangements to ensure that the



- functions of the Honorary Treasurer are fulfilled until a permanent appointment can be made.
- 4) That greetings be sent to kindred churches and societies abroad.
  - 5) That the thanks of the Assembly be given to the Reverend Dr David Usher for preaching the Assembly Sermon.
  - 6) That the thanks of the Assembly be given to all those who provided music and other content for the Anniversary Service and on other worship occasions during these Meetings.
  - 7) That the thanks of the Assembly be given to the members of the General Assembly staff and to all volunteers for their inestimable help in organising the Meetings.
  - 8) That Marion Baker be appointed President of the General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches for the year 2014-2015.
  - 9) That this eighty-sixth General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches expresses its gratitude for the services provided by Reverend Bill Darlison as President during the year 2013-2014.

## Annual Meetings Whittlebury Hall 2014 Accounts

	2014	2014	2014	2013
<b>Summary of Financial Results</b>	<b>Income</b>	<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>Balance</b>	Balance
Accommodation and Conference Fees	95,372	86,423	<b>8,950</b>	6,798
Group Registration	4,009		<b>4,009</b>	3,877
Wood Green Trust	6,425		<b>6,425</b>	6,250
Other Donations to Meetings	1,294		<b>1,294</b>	1,146
Printing and Postage	0	2,849	<b>-2,849</b>	-2,875
Pre-AGM Expenses	0	337	<b>-337</b>	-764
Room Hire and Audio Visual	0	8,424	<b>-8,424</b>	-2,494
Speakers, Fees and Social event	0	3,064	<b>-3,064</b>	-1,780
Sundries	0	187	<b>-187</b>	-2,032
Travel	0	1,904	<b>-1,904</b>	-1,290
Youth Honoraria & Expenses	0	1,186	<b>-1,186</b>	-917
Transfer for future Meetings	0	0	<b>0</b>	0
Previous Year's transfer	0	0	<b>0</b>	0
	107,100	104,372	<b>2,728</b>	5,919

# Leaflets

If you would like leaflets, please call Unitarian Headquarters on (020) 7240 2384, for printed copies, or download electronic copies from [www.unitarian.org.uk](http://www.unitarian.org.uk)

