

**Minutes of the
Christ Church Association AGM
Saturday 17th September 2022
12.00pm Thatched Barn**



<u>Attending</u>	<u>Apologies</u>
Robin Priest (RP)– Chair (C)	Pauline Liniere-Hartley (C)
Roger Davies (RD) (C)	Simon Offen (C)
Sarah Foot, Censor Theologiae (SF) (C)	Renee Choi (C)
Dirk Aarts, Senior Censor (C)	Jane Dodd (C)
Philippa Roberts, Development Director (PR) (C)	Delaney Dominey-Foy (C)
Sarah Budzier (C)	Tarquin Edwards (C)
Laura Jostins-Dean, Senior Development Officer (minutes)	Joanna Hodnett (C)
Tia Patel (JCR Rep) (C)	Joanne Harris (C)
Simon Mungall (C)	Clare Pervez (C)
Jeremy Orme (JO)	Matthew Robinson (C)
Kimberley Littlemore (KL)	
Paul Woodmansterne	(C) = Committee member
Bella Woodmansterne (BW)	
Mark Reckless	

1. Introductions and apologies

The Chair reminded attendees of the need to declare conflicts of interest and to have due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty when formulating policies and taking individual decisions.

The Chair stated that Simon Offen was sadly not able to attend because of ill health and expressed thanks for everything Simon has done for the Association over many years, as an alum and subsequently as Deputy Development Director. The Chair suggested that best wishes are sent from attendees.

The Chair introduced Professor Roger Davies, Development Director Philippa Roberts and Simon Mungall.

2. Minutes of the previous AGM

The minutes for the previous AGM held in May 2022 were approved. One small amendment was requested as SF's apologies at the May meeting had not been recorded.

3. Committee elections

The Chair announced that Joanne Harris and Clare Pervez, both elected members, will be stepping down from the Committee at this AGM. Tony Hart who has been the careers rep for 15 years is also stepping down from being a co-opted member. The Chair thanked them all for their years of service to the House.

The new Constitution sets out a slightly smaller Committee and hence there are two openings, not three, for alumni to join the Committee. One of those places was for an elected member to be voted on at the meeting

As the Constitution sets out voting to be in person at the AGM, we wanted to give a wider audience the chance to participate and this year offered alumni the chance to give an advisory vote. 540 alumni voted for the 12 candidates who had put themselves forward to join the committee.

The top 4 candidates received over 55% of the votes so the Chair announced these four candidates:

Xavier Chwoles Villers: 50 votes (9.3% of vote)

Jasper Reid: 69 votes (12.8% of the vote)

Jeremy Orme: 80 votes (14.8%)

Kimberley Littlemore: 100 votes (18.5%)

The Chair thanked all the candidates who were interested in joining the Committee and recommended that Kimberley Littlemore be elected to join the Committee.

JO stated that his candidate statement was the only one which addressed the events of recent years and sought to have the Committee play a part in restoring confidence. JO observed that the meeting did not know Kimberley's views on this and would benefit from hearing from her on this before deciding about election to the Committee. KL stated that if asked to speak on the matter she would prepare thoroughly but did not feel the need to say anything on this sensitive issue at that moment.

BW asked, if KL were elected, who would take on the concerns of alumni regarding governance. The Chair stated it was the responsibility of the committee as a whole to come together to represent the alumni body. RD stated the governance review would be addressed later in the meeting.

The Chair stated that given the desire from the Association and the House for greater communication, Kimberley's election would be a very positive outcome.

The Chair reiterated the recommendation that Kimberley Littlemore be elected and this was approved by the attendees.

JO asked about the plans to fill the other member place on the committee. The Chair confirmed we are looking for someone to take on the role of careers rep and as this is a co-opted member this will be decided by the committee but they welcome suggestions of names to consider.

The Chair reminded attendees there are other ways of getting involved which do not involve being a member of the Committee and there will be opportunities in the future to join the committee as further places will be coming up next year.

The Chair announced his decision to step down as Chair and that he was delighted that Simon Mungall, a Committee member since 2019, had offered to take over as Chair with the support of the Committee. The Chair asked attendees to vote and the motion was approved.

4. Update from the House

SF offered her thanks to RP in his role as Chair for the past seven years.

SF reported that the mood at the House had been sombre over the past week since the passing of Her Majesty the Queen and the cathedral's evensong services had been full each day that week.

SF reported that the governance review, led by Dominic Grieve, is now well under way. DG is starting meetings with members of college and will be attending GB this term. SF shared that DG will be meeting with CCA committee members (without GB members present) and that a letter to alumni from DG will be sent out by the Development Office offering the chance to share their views and opinions. DG has confirmed he is happy to talk to alumni here in Oxford or on Zoom, if individuals wish to do so.

The new term is almost upon us and we have new Career Development Fellows in various subjects including Astrophysics. We had a successful visit day and open day recently and we have confirmed our fresher intake will return to more normal figures this year (after the pandemic affecting A Levels) with 134 students due to join the House in October.

A project to install portraits of female alumni, staff members and members of GB is now nearing completion. The photographs will be installed around college, including in the JCR, SCR and Hall.

SF also wanted to note that for the first time in a long time there is currently no scaffolding at Christ Church, with repairs undertaken during the pandemic now having been completed.

5. Alumni questions for the House

Questions from Alan Fox:

- a) Will the committee confirm that it will engage with the Grieve governance review, and that it will seek input from alumni in that respect.

SF responded yes to both of these questions and reiterated the importance of the governance review.

- b) Notwithstanding "chch connections", will the committee press for the alumni Facebook page to be retained (though I know it is owned by the Dev Office), and that E-Matters will continue to be emailed to alumni.

PR responded that the e-Matters will go out via Christ Church Connections (chchconnections.org). (It should be noted that this does not present any barriers to recipients – it will appear to the recipient in the familiar format). Editions of e-Matters are also available on the Christ Church website. The Alumni Facebook page will continue.

- c) Will the committee commit to publishing committee members' email addresses (or provide a collective group email). (i.e. not the Dev Office)

The Chair and PR responded to confirm that committee members will not be asked to share their personal email addresses and a collective group email will be considered by the committee.

- d) Will the committee please commit to engaging with the alumni Facebook page. To my knowledge most are not even members of the group.

The Chair said that it would be up to individual members of the Committee.

Catherine Story (1987) submitted a question about the theft from the Picture Gallery. While the question was abridged at the meeting, it appears in full in the minutes at Catherine's request.

The reason I chose to attend Christ Church while studying Fine Art at Oxford was the presence of the incredible Christ Church Picture Gallery. The purpose-built gallery was opened by Queen Elizabeth II in 1968, the year I was born, and twenty years later I was able to examine actual Leonardo and Michelangelo drawings there as well as exhibit my tentative student work in the corridors. It was also a quiet and almost secret refuge from the very male dominated university of that time.

However, at the start of the pandemic in March 2020 the biggest robbery in the country occurred there, a 10-million-pound theft of three of the best masterpieces. Please can the meeting explain why, during the pandemic, we were emailed so much about the trials and tribulations of the leadership, but told nothing about this appalling theft? It was as if it did not happen, or the college was embarrassed.

However, I found it more embarrassing that we were instead left to draw murky conclusions, for example, about the timing of the robbery. It also reminded me of how often art is thought to be a lesser subject, when in fact it can be one of best things that human beings leave behind. The staff of the College are but temporary whereas these paintings are as permanent as Tom Tower, to me and many others they were Christ Church. The significance of this terrible wound to the Gallery and the city of Oxford should be acknowledged and I would be grateful if the Governing Body could tell us how they plan to do this? I would be grateful if these paragraphs could be included in the paperwork for the meeting.

SF stated that this was a major criminal act and we have been acting, and must continue to act, on advice from the police. Security has been tightened since the incident. SF apologised if it is felt that not enough had been said but as this is still a live police investigation we continue to be restricted in what we can share. In the picture gallery you can see the empty frames to remind us and our visitors of this great theft.

There were no further questions.

6. Development and Alumni Office Report

PR shared the following report on fundraising and alumni activities.

Just over £2.8m was received in donations in the last financial year to July. This compares with £1.8m the year before with just over £2.3m going into the endowment and 0.5m going into spendable funds. We were particularly fortunate to receive two very significant gifts last year, towards the endowment of the Boat Club and the endowment of a graduate scholarship, the latter receiving match funding from the University.

Nearly 50% of the income received came via American Friends of Christ Church or Americans for Oxford.

After the Boat Club and the new Graduate Scholarship, the areas receiving the most support last year were Outreach, Assess and Student Support, the endowment of tutorial posts and the Cathedral Music Trust.

Over 1000 alumni made donations in the last financial year, with gifts ranging from £40 to £1m and I would like to all donors here today for their support of Christ Church. We received 10 new legacy pledges in the last financial year and are grateful to those who pledged and all alumni remembering the House in their Wills.

We had two major events to thank donors last year – the Board of Benefactors Gaudy took place in October. This is a biennial dinner to recognise donors of £25,000 or more in lifetime giving. On the alternate years we hold a reception in London and this year's will take place at the House of Lords next month. In May, we held an event to thank regular donors and were delighted to welcome back donors and their guests to the House for a programme of fascinating short talks before heading down to the river to watch the last day of Eights' races.

Over the last three years, the Development Office has not run a telethon and this in the past has been one of the most effective ways of bringing in new regular donors. But the effectiveness of telethons is changing for all institutions. This year, we will be running our first Giving Day, aiming to attract the next generation of donors through an initiative which will use a combination of mail, email and social media, to raise support for a graduate scholarship for a student refugee, part of a wider initiative of the University called Academic Futures.

In recent years, we have asked for a Leavers Gift of £15.46, the amount reflecting the sates establishment of Christ Church. 95% of this year's leavers made this contribution. All will be invited back to a Returners' Dinner in March next year, now very much part of the Development Office's calendar, where they will be thanked and welcomed back early in their new relationship with the House as alumni.

The Development Office's human capacity currently is more focussed on alumni relations than fundraising. Running the alumni events programme, producing communications such as e-Matters (the monthly email bulletin) and Christ Church Matters (the biannual magazine), running events which engage students (our future alumni) and events which bring together students and alumni (such as The Entrepreneurs Circle, TEC) as well as responding to all manner of enquiries and requests.

Looking ahead, we are moving forward with major plans to mark the 500th anniversary of the founding of Christ Church (strictly, Cardinal's college) in 2025. This is such a huge milestone for any institution and one that gives us a great opportunity to launch a major Campaign for new

projects which will set the House on a path for its next century, as well as events to engage the Christ Church diaspora. Under development are plans for new Graduate Centre and more library provision as well as the expansion of Computer Science and much more. We look forward to sharing 2025 developments with you over the coming year.

7. Events calendar and future plans

PR shared the latest events calendar. PR stated that the Development Office was always happy to receive suggestions for other events to bring different groups together throughout the year.

8. Brixton House

The Chair shared an update on Brixton House, formerly Oval House. The Chair encouraged people to go along to the new building. It is a fantastic facility for the people of South London and beyond, and was built and developed in collaboration with Lambeth Council.

AOB

None.

The Chair thanked those who attended. RD gave personal thanks to the Chair for his service over the past seven years.