



Kensington Unitarians

112 Palace Gardens Terrace, Notting Hill, London W8 4RT
t: 020 7221 6514 e: info@kensington-unitarians.org.uk w: www.kensington-unitarians.org.uk



Annual Report 2013



Essex Unitarian Church

Annual Report for the year ended 31st December 2013

Name of Charity

Essex Unitarian Chapel and Minister's House and Other Charities, as shown, known locally as Kensington Unitarians, 112 Palace Gardens Terrace, Kensington, London W8 4RT.

Charitable Registration

The church is registered as Charity number 230789. The original governing instrument is a conveyance dated 7th January 1783 and modified by schemes dated 9th December 1884, 15th January 1973 and 18th April 1986, which last incorporated the remaining eight charities.

Trustees

Howard Hague (*Chairperson*), Caroline Blair, David Francis Darling, Juliet Edwards, Heidi Ferid-Hands, Harold Lorenzelli, Roy Parnell, Jo Ridgers (*until October 2013*)

The Custodian Trustee is the British and Foreign Unitarian Association Incorporate.

Management Committee

David Francis Darling (*Chairperson*), Caroline Blair (*Treasurer*), Natasha Drennan (*from June 2013*), Juliet Edwards, Heidi Ferid-Hands, Howard Hague, Harold Lorenzelli, Jo Ridgers (*until October 2013*), Carol Sheppard.

Minister

Rev. Sarah Tinker
The Manse Flat, 112 Palace Gardens Terrace, London W8 4RT

Treasurer

Caroline Blair
40 Killowen Avenue, Northolt, Middlesex, UB5 4QT

Warden

Jenny Moy
Warden's Flat, 112 Palace Gardens Terrace, London W8 4RT

Secretary

Jane Blackall
20 Manchester Grove, London E14 3BG

Independent Examiners and Accountants

Lindeyer Francis Ferguson
North House, 198 High Street, Tonbridge, Kent, TN9 1BE

Investment Advisers

Citi Quilter
4th Floor, The Pinnacle, 73 King Street, Manchester, M2 4NG

Bankers

CAF Bank Ltd.
25 King's Hill Avenue, King's Hill, West Malling, Kent, ME19 4TA

Essex Unitarian Church

Annual Report for the year ended 31st December 2013

The Charity's Purpose and Objectives:

Charitable Purpose and Policies

The purpose of the charity is to perpetuate public worship and to celebrate divine service every Sunday in the Unitarian manner.

Public Benefit

The Trustees have had due regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit when reviewing the charity's objectives and planning future activities.

Aims and Activities of the Charity

We are here to worship, to share our experiences, to learn from each other, to explore our diverse faiths, to welcome spiritual seekers and to offer companionship on life's journey. We advance Unitarianism in West London for the benefit of the public through: the holding of open Sunday services; celebrating rites of passage and multi-faith festivals; sharing our experience and learning from each other in religious education and social activities. We welcome spiritual seekers and offer companionship on life's journey (including visiting the sick and comforting the bereaved) and producing and distributing Unitarian literature. The church also provides meeting spaces to other spiritual and social groups that are in accord with our liberal and spiritual ethos.

Organisation

The running of the church is under the control of the management committee with the trustees having overall responsibility for finance and staff employment. Trustees are appointed by invitation with a maximum number of 9 trustees to serve. They manage the charity by means of monthly meetings. The management committee is elected at the AGM with casual vacancies filled during the year. New trustees are given copies of the church accounts and previous Annual Reports along with a Charity Commission booklet explaining the responsibilities of trustees and a verbal explanation of how the church is organised.

Trustees

The trustees who have served during the year are listed, with other key personnel, on page 1.

Review of Activities

During 2013 the trustees continued to work towards key objectives identified during previous AGMs. In particular these objectives included:

- The on-going maintenance and improvement of our church building and its facilities and renting space to other groups whose activities are in accord with our Unitarian ethos
- The on-going commitment to maintain a high standard in public liberal religious worship and in making our congregation visible to the wider world through high quality publicity materials and notice boards
- Encouraging families with children into our community by running weekly children's activities on Sunday mornings
- Widen the number of people actively involved in congregational life by offering opportunities for people to attend a wide range of small group activities and to volunteer for a range of roles to support the life of the church.

These objectives will continue to shape the trustees' future plans with a continuing emphasis on maintaining and improving facilities within our building, seeking professional advice about the continuing roof problems, and ensuring that our liberal religious activities are well publicised.

Risks

The major risk is generating enough income to finance the charity's occupation of the building. The trustees have reviewed the risks to which the charity is exposed and systems have been established to mitigate those risks.

Policy on Reserves

The church has invested most of the reserves in funds expected to give a reasonable rate of interest, while keeping accessible enough to cover three month's running costs, and to fund anything but very major repairs to the building.

Restrictions on Funds

All Funds/Trusts under the control of the Trustees are for the benefit of the Church other than Thomas Scott's Endowment (income may be expended at the sole discretion of the Minister) and Stock Bequest (income must be used for Church music). We are working towards merging the small trusts, except the Stock Bequest and the Lindsey Hall Trust, into the main Essex Church charity, in which case Thomas Scott's Endowment will be replaced by a sum from general church funds, agreed by the trustees, being set aside for the minister's discretionary use.

Investment Performance

Having consulted financial advisors attached to the Unitarian and Free Christian General Assembly, the church divided their financial reserves between short and long term investments, bearing in mind their duty to invest safely and sensibly.

Approval on behalf of the Trustees:

Howard Hague, Chair of Trustees

Date: 19th May 2014

ESSEX UNITARIAN CHURCH

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES

I report on the accounts of the Charity for the year ended 31 December 2013, comprising a statement of financial activities, balance sheet and accompanying notes.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the Act;
- follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act; and
- state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a "true and fair view" and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below:

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

- (1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that, in any material respect, the requirements:
 - to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act; and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the requirements of the 2011 Acthave not been met; or
- (2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Sam Wells FCA
LINDEYER FRANCIS FERGUSON
Chartered Accountants

1st June 2014
North House
198 High Street
Tonbridge
Kent TN9 1BE

ESSEX UNITARIAN CHURCH

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2013

Income and expenditure	2013 Unrestricted Funds £	2013 Endowment Funds £	2013 Restricted Funds £	2013 Total Funds £	2012 Total Funds £
INCOMING RESOURCES					
Incoming resources from generated funds					
Voluntary income					
Collections and donations	11,518	-	150	11,668	9,909
Gift Aid on donations	1,936	-	-	1,936	2,074
Activities for generating funds					
Lettings	125,512	-	-	125,512	115,252
Investment income					
Dividend income	2,891	-	4,742	7,633	4,878
Bank interest	3,874	-	-	3,874	8,067
Other incoming resources	189	-	-	189	74
Total incoming resources	<u>145,920</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>4,892</u>	<u>150,812</u>	<u>140,254</u>
RESOURCES EXPENDED					
Costs of generating funds	2	41,195	-	41,195	52,325
Costs of charitable activities	3	88,666	-	88,956	87,012
Governance costs					
Accountancy costs	2,004	-	-	2,004	1,746
Independent Examiner	2,040	-	-	2,040	2,040
	<u>4,044</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>4,044</u>	<u>3,786</u>
Total resources expended	<u>133,905</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>290</u>	<u>134,195</u>	<u>143,123</u>
Net incoming/(outgoing) resources before transfers	<u>12,015</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>4,602</u>	<u>16,617</u>	<u>(2,869)</u>
Transfers between funds	4,602	-	(4,602)	-	-
Net incoming/(outgoing) resources before other recognised gains and losses	<u>16,617</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>16,617</u>	<u>(2,869)</u>
Realised gains on disposal of assets	-	-	-	-	-
Unrealised gains/(losses) on revaluation of investments	9,846	866	18,213	28,925	11,161
Net movement in funds	<u>26,463</u>	<u>866</u>	<u>18,213</u>	<u>45,542</u>	<u>8,292</u>
Balances brought forward	520,535	1,366,482	93,715	1,980,732	1,972,440
Balances carried forward	<u>546,998</u>	<u>1,367,348</u>	<u>111,928</u>	<u>2,026,274</u>	<u>1,980,732</u>

**ESSEX UNITARIAN CHURCH
BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2013**

	Notes	2013 Unrestricted Funds £	2013 Endowment Funds £	2013 Restricted Funds £	2013 Total Funds £	2012 Total Funds £
Fixed assets						
Tangible assets	6	4,921	1,322,709	-	1,327,630	1,326,418
Listed investments	7	371,694	13,392	111,465	496,551	142,084
		<u>376,615</u>	<u>1,336,101</u>	<u>111,465</u>	<u>1,824,181</u>	<u>1,468,502</u>
Current assets						
Current asset investment	8	-	-	-	-	325,000
Accrued interest on Bond		-	-	-	-	6,094
Other debtors - Gift Aid		2,046	-	-	2,046	1,094
Trade debtors		3,370	-	-	3,370	620
Cash at bank and on deposit		179,343	31,247	463	211,053	190,144
Cash held for rent deposit	9	4,331	-	-	4,331	4,298
Cash held by Stockbroker		1,905	-	-	1,905	358
		<u>190,995</u>	<u>31,247</u>	<u>463</u>	<u>222,705</u>	<u>527,608</u>
Creditors : amounts falling due within one year						
Social security & pensions		5,287	-	-	5,287	1,531
Held as agent		229	-	-	229	-
Accruals and deferred income		10,765	-	-	10,765	9,549
Rent deposit		4,331	-	-	4,331	4,298
		<u>20,612</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>20,612</u>	<u>15,378</u>
Net current assets		<u>170,383</u>	<u>31,247</u>	<u>463</u>	<u>202,093</u>	<u>512,230</u>
Net Assets		<u>546,998</u>	<u>1,367,348</u>	<u>111,928</u>	<u>2,026,274</u>	<u>1,980,732</u>
Capital and reserves						
Endowment funds	7	-	1,367,348	-	1,367,348	1,366,482
Restricted funds		-	-	111,928	111,928	93,715
General funds		546,998	-	-	546,998	520,535
		<u>546,998</u>	<u>1,367,348</u>	<u>111,928</u>	<u>2,026,274</u>	<u>1,980,732</u>

Approved by the trustees on 1st June 2014 and signed on their behalf by:

S M Tinker (Minister)

H Hague (Chairman)

ESSEX UNITARIAN CHURCH

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2013

1 Accounting policies

a) Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, with the exception of investments which are included at market value. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP), "Accounting and Reporting by Charities" published in 2005 and applicable accounting standards.

b) Grant income

Grant income is recognised on a receivable basis.

c) Collections and donations

All congregational giving and donations are included on a cash received basis.

d) Legacies

Legacies are recognised on a receivable basis, once the conditions for the receipt have been satisfied and the amount can be measured with certainty.

e) Tangible fixed assets and depreciation

Fixed assets (excluding investments and the freehold property) are stated at cost less accumulated depreciation. The costs of minor additions, or those costing below £400 are not capitalised.

Fixtures, fittings and works of art are depreciated at rates of 10% or 20% on cost per annum, depending on the estimated useful life of the asset. Computer equipment is depreciated on a straight line basis over 3 years.

Freehold property is included at the balance sheet at an historic valuation plus the cost of subsequent improvements. The policy is a departure from the charity SORP (2005), which requires the use of either cost less depreciation or revaluation as appropriate for fixed assets. The trustees believe it offers a more true and fair view, and consider that the market value of the property is not less than the amount at which it is stated in the balance sheet.

f) Resources expended

Resources expended are included in the Statement of Financial Activities on an accruals basis.

Resources expended are analysed between the following headings:

Costs of generating funds - represents the direct costs of running the church for lettings, including the warden, and the costs incurred to support this.

Charitable activities - representing the direct costs of the church, including the Minister and Outreach officer, and the costs incurred to support these.

Governance costs include those costs associated with meeting the constitutional and statutory requirements of the charity and include the annual accounts and costs linked to the strategic management of the charity.

Support costs have been allocated across the the costs of generating funds and the costs of charitable activities based on an estimated use of the church and building spaces.

g) Investments

The investments are held in a variety of investment funds see note 7 and these are valued at the market value in the balance sheet. All movements in the valuations of the investments are taken to the statement of financial activities as they arise.

h) Pension costs

The charity contributes to the Ministers Pension Fund. The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the charity in an independently administered fund. The pension cost charge represents contributions payable by the charity to the fund totalling £6,078 (2012: £2,954).

ESSEX UNITARIAN CHURCH

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2013

i) Fund accounting

General funds are unrestricted funds which are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the charity and which have not been designated for any other purpose.

Designated funds comprise unrestricted funds that have been set aside by the trustees for particular purposes. The aim and use of each designated fund is set out in the notes to the financial statements.

Restricted funds are funds which are to be used in accordance with specific restrictions imposed by donors or which have been raised by the charity for particular purposes. The cost of raising and administering such funds are charged against the specific fund. The aim and use of each restricted fund is set out in the notes to the financial statements.

Endowment funds represent those assets which must be held permanently by the charity, principally the church building and the investments. The income arising on The Carlisle endowment fund can be spent at the discretion of the minister. The income arising on the other endowment funds can be used in accordance with the objects of the charity and is included as unrestricted income.

	2013 Unrestricted Funds £	2013 Endowment Funds £	2013 Restricted Funds £	2013 Total Funds £	2012 Total Funds £
2 Cost of generating funds					
Staff costs	17,094	-	-	17,094	15,331
Support costs (Note 4)	24,101	-	-	24,101	36,994
	<u>41,195</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>41,195</u>	<u>52,325</u>
3 Costs of charitable activities					
Staff costs	46,819	-	-	46,819	43,663
Staff courses & training	5,011	-	-	5,011	2,420
Congregational costs	13,255	-	290	13,545	9,498
Sunday school	1,204	-	-	1,204	1,096
Music	9,032	-	-	9,032	9,308
Donations, grants & projects	1,294	-	-	1,294	2,530
Support costs (Note 4)	12,051	-	-	12,051	18,497
	<u>88,666</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>290</u>	<u>88,956</u>	<u>87,012</u>
4 Support costs					
Insurance	2,691	-	-	2,691	2,521
Utilities	9,468	-	-	9,468	6,915
Cleaning	5,514	-	-	5,514	5,141
Repairs and maintenance	8,859	-	-	8,859	22,984
Office costs	8,032	-	-	8,032	8,690
Depreciation	1,588	-	-	1,588	9,240
	<u>36,152</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>36,152</u>	<u>55,491</u>

ESSEX UNITARIAN CHURCH

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2013

5 Employee costs

There was an average of three employees in the financial year. The significant volume of voluntary contribution to the life of the Church by members of the congregation is not quantified in these accounts.

	Ministry £	Church Running £	2013 Total £	2012 Total £
Minister	25,975	-	25,975	25,950
Outreach Officer	12,645	-	12,645	11,613
Warden	-	14,981	14,981	14,367
Social security costs	3,221	1,013	4,234	4,110
Pension contributions	4,978	1,100	6,078	2,954
Employee costs	46,819	17,094	63,913	58,994
Locum Preachers	943	-	943	558
Total staff costs	47,762	17,094	64,856	59,552
Average number of staff:				
31 December 2013	2	1	3	
31 December 2012	2	1	3	

No employee earned over £60,000 during the year.

The trustees are not remunerated. Fees are paid to trustees for officiating at services and preaching. During the year the following fees were paid to three trustees for such services: preaching fees £315 (2012: £355), choir fees £1,645 (2012: £1,785). One of the trustees was reimbursed £84 for stationery and other supplies (2012: £102 for travelling expenses) incurred on behalf of the charity.

6 Fixed tangible assets

Cost or valuation	Freehold Property £	Fixtures & Fittings £	Total £
At 1st January 2013	1,322,709	84,750	1,407,459
Additions	-	2,800	2,800
Disposals	-	-	-
At 31st December 2013	1,322,709	87,550	1,410,259
Depreciation			
At 1st January 2013	-	81,041	81,041
Charge for the year	-	1,588	1,588
Written off on disposals	-	-	-
At 31st December 2013	-	82,629	82,629
Net Book Value			
At 31st December 2013	1,322,709	4,921	1,327,630
At 31st December 2012	1,322,709	3,709	1,326,418

The Freehold property relates to the Essex Church building in Palace Gardens Terrace.

ESSEX UNITARIAN CHURCH

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2013

7 Listed investments	General Fund £	The Stock Bequest £	The Carlisle Fund £	Endowment Funds £	Total £
Market value at 1 January 2013	36,306	93,252	8,298	4,228	142,084
Add: Additions at cost	325,542	-	-	-	325,542
Net gain/loss on revaluation	9,846	18,213	440	426	28,925
Market value at 31 December 2013	<u>371,694</u>	<u>111,465</u>	<u>8,738</u>	<u>4,654</u>	<u>496,551</u>

Non-UK investments total £128,324 as at the year end. UK investments total £368,227.

8 Current asset investment

The current asset investment represents £Nil (2012: £325,000) that was held in a fixed rate 1 year bond maturing in early 2013. The interest accrued up until the year end is shown separately as a debtor on the Balance Sheet.

9 Cash held for rent deposit

This balance represents a rental deposit received from Lucy Williamson under a revised Rent Security Deposit Deed dated August 2007. According to the revised terms of the Deed, the deposit represented half of the revised annual rent in the prior period, and approximately one month's rent for the current period, and must be held in an interest bearing account in the name of the trustees. All interest earned on this account is payable to Miss Williamson on written request.

10 Analysis of funds

	Brought forward £	Net movement £	Movement on investments £	Carried forward £
Endowment Funds				
* Permanent Endowment	1,316,255	-	-	1,316,255
Carlisle Capital Fund	8,298	-	440	8,738
Theophilus Lindsey	2,378	-	-	2,378
Percival North	535	-	-	535
Harriet Pearson	1,464	-	-	1,464
Thomas Scott	2,162	-	-	2,162
Mrs M L Whyte	2,825	-	-	2,825
Lindsey Hall	32,565	-	426	32,991
Total endowment funds	<u>1,366,482</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>866</u>	<u>1,367,348</u>

Endowment Funds:

The endowments listed above comprise the original charity, known from 1793 as the Essex Unitarian Chapel and Minister's House, together with a number of other charities founded between the 19th and 20th centuries. These have been brought together by a number of Schemes of the Charity Commissioners, the most recent dated 18 April 1986. Under the terms of the Scheme, these charities are administered as a single charitable body. The smaller charities are accounted for as Endowment Funds, with the exception of the Stock bequest (for the Choir Fund).

* The permanent endowment fund consists of the estimated value of the property from which the charity operates and is not a readily convertible asset.

ESSEX UNITARIAN CHURCH

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2013

10 Analysis of funds (cont.)

	Brought forward £	Net movement £	Movement on investments £	Carried forward £
Restricted Funds				
A E Stock Bequest	93,715	-	18,213	111,928
Total restricted funds	<u>93,715</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>18,213</u>	<u>111,928</u>
Restricted funds:				
AE Stock Bequest: These funds were a bequest for the use of the choir.				
Unrestricted Funds				
General Fund	520,535	16,617	9,846	546,998
	<u>520,535</u>	<u>16,617</u>	<u>9,846</u>	<u>546,998</u>
Total Funds	<u>1,980,732</u>	<u>16,617</u>	<u>28,925</u>	<u>2,026,274</u>

Net movement in funds, included in the above, are as follows:

	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	Net movement £
Endowment Funds				
Permanent Endowment	-	-	-	-
Restricted Funds				
A E Stock Bequest	4,440	-	(4,440)	-
Carlisle Fund Income Fund	302	(290)	(12)	-
Africa Education Project	150	-	(150)	-
	<u>4,892</u>	<u>(290)</u>	<u>(4,602)</u>	<u>-</u>
Unrestricted Funds				
General Fund	145,920	(133,905)	4,602	16,617
	<u>150,812</u>	<u>(134,195)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>16,617</u>

Treasurer's Report

Essex Church continues to get the majority of its income from premises letting, and again we are grateful to our warden, Jenny Moy, for the efficient way she manages this process. We are also helped by the generosity of members and those who attend on a Sunday morning; it is valuable that some are able and willing to gift-aid their donations.

The majority of our assets are now invested, following further advice from financial advisor and friend of the church William Featherstone in a safe and balanced portfolio of investments, and these seem to be doing well. We have some assets in designated ethical funds, and have applied to increase this proportion somewhat in 2014.

As our financial situation seems stable for the time being, we have continued the process of designating one collection a month for a chosen charity. We have chosen a mixture of Unitarian charities (such as Send a Child to Hucklow), local ones (a local MIND group; the West London Churches Homeless Concern) and international charities such as Sightsavers and Freedom from Torture. In addition we have continued to sponsor two orphans in Swaziland who are cared for by SOS Children's Villages, and have received reports that they are well and happy.

Our building continues to be of some concern, with regular water leaks, but we believe that we have sufficient reserves immediately available to address any reasonably likely catastrophe regarding building repairs. Our finances are in a healthy state, and we hope that this will continue to be the case.

Caroline Blair
Congregational Treasurer

Chairperson of the Congregation's Report

As you will see in the Annual Report, 2013 has been another busy year for our church community. Not only have we been able to provide nurturing and challenging worship on a Sunday morning but there is also the monthly alternative worship on Thursday evenings, as well as regular workshops that have involved members of the wider District and those seekers who may not yet be ready to join us on a Sunday morning. We should be particularly proud of the Worship Studies course run by Sarah and Jane. As I have moved around the District on Sunday mornings, many of the worship leaders who took part have told me how much they valued the course.

I would also like to thank all those reliable committed people who week by week support our community of Kensington Unitarians in so many ways: those who greet people as they come into our services, a very important ministry especially for people who may be coming through our doors for the first time, the stewards, readers and tea and coffee makers. As always, I would like to thank Harold and Margaret and the wonderful group of musicians who add so much to our Sunday worship.

Like any good organisation we wouldn't function without those who work behind the scenes. We are fortunate in having our excellent cleaner Gitana who works late on a Saturday evening to have the place ready for us on a Sunday morning. I would also like to pay tribute to Mark, the gardener who keeps the gardens looking loved and cared for and to Fraser for keeping the fabric of the building together

We are very fortunate that we are able to employ a small staff team: Jenny, who not only oversees the building but also arranges the letting of rooms that allows us to remain solvent and who helps Caroline with her work as Treasurer; Jane, who spends much more than her paid hours ensuring that the Church is well known, the quality of our literature is of a high standard and we have groups and events that help people to grow in their spiritual lives; and, of course, Sarah who ministers to and with us with such care, compassion and wisdom. On behalf of the whole congregation I offer them sincere thanks.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Howard Hague who for over thirty years has been a gentle and efficient servant of this church. He has served on the management committee and as librarian and archivist and has an amazing knowledge of what has happened over the years. Now that he and Gill have moved to Leicestershire he has resigned from the management committee but I am glad that he has agreed to stay on as Chair of the Trustees.

As we move into a new year let us be proud of what we have achieved but not rest on our laurels. Let us continue to work together to provide a welcoming, inclusive, compassionate and stimulating community to all who walk through our doors.

David Francis Darling
Chairperson of the Congregation

Minister's Report

'Ours is a community created by all who walk through our doors.'

That's a statement you'll often hear from me at the beginning of our Sunday services. It's a reminder that we are engaging in 'public worship' during which our doors must by law remain open. It's also a reminder that we are surely one of the busiest Unitarian congregations here in the UK. Placed as this building is in the midst of bustling central London, we receive so many visitors. Our congregational membership list is not the largest but I doubt there is a Unitarian congregation here in Britain that has more visitors or more groups using our building.

Such busyness brings both gifts and challenges. Visitors bring new energy and insights. They also bring a transitory quality at times to our community. A busy building brings us a healthy lettings income and such heavy use puts a strain on the fabric of our building. We are fortunate in having a staff team – rare in Unitarian congregations – but a staff team is essential for the running of Kensington Unitarians.

Each year I thank the people who make ministry here at Essex Church both possible and so very positive an experience. Our warden Jenny Moy lives, as I do, here at the church. Jenny's calm energy pervades our building and her steady command of finance ensures our healthy income stream. Jane Blackall, our Arts, Education and Outreach Officer, contributes way beyond the hours she is contracted for and maintains such high standards in everything she does, including our publicity materials, shaping our small group programme, filling endless rotas and bringing vision and commitment to all our activities.

We are blessed with a forward-thinking committee, with officers who hold their responsibilities with grace and good humour. Thank you to Caroline for being our treasurer and for her determination in sorting out pensions and investments – crucial matters – but not the easiest nor the most rewarding. Thank you to David for being chair of our committee and for regularly reminding us of our spiritual purpose. Thank you to everyone else who serves on our committee and a particularly heartfelt thanks to Howard Hague who has now stepped down from our management committee on leaving London. Howard is continuing at present as a Trustee of Essex Church and deserves a trumpet fanfare for all that he has done to guide this community through a significant time in its history. I would like to record my personal gratitude to both Howard and Gill for their support since I arrived as minister to this congregation and to wish them all the very best in their new life in the Midlands. Thank you to everyone who volunteers here at the church. We need the support of those who give up some of their own time to help things run smoothly here, especially on a Sunday morning. We are also always interested to hear ideas from people who want to get more involved or who have good ideas for a new use of the church resources. In the past year people have organised trips and outings, workshops and lunches, as well as helping out with regular tasks. Volunteering is at the centre of church life and is a great way to get to know people better and to develop a sense of ownership within the congregation.

During the year we took part in a national Unitarian census on numbers of people attending our Sunday services and it was pleasing to note a gentle increase in attendance numbers. Numbers aren't everything but it's a good sign when visitors want to return and when they let us know that our Sunday services have touched them in some way. During 2013 we hosted the Worship Studies Course here at Essex Church, a foundation level training in leading worship with attendees from around the south east and beyond. Co-ordinating the course with Jane Blackall and working alongside our various guest tutors, helped to re-awaken my own interest in the theory and practice of worship. We are fortunate to have so many worship leaders here in our congregation: I commend their commitment to excellence and thank them for enabling me to take some Sundays off and to lead worship in other congregations. As always, I encourage people to give us feedback on our Sunday services and to come up with ideas for favourite themes and music, and do let me know if you would like to give a reading one Sunday. Our worship is greatly enhanced by our committed musicians and I offer especial thanks to trustee Harold Lorenzelli who organises our beautiful musical programme and to our regular vocalist Margaret Marshall and pianists Peter Crockford and Sandra Smith. Their professionalism and willingness are much appreciated. During 2013 we said farewell and thank you to Glenn Van Lint and Esther Hamelink as children's leaders and welcomed Sam Boyero who is keen to support a children's programme here at Essex Church. One of a number of delightful rites of passage ceremonies held here during the year was a blessing ceremony for Sam's son and it is always a pleasure to support people in creating ceremonies that are unique to them.

When I look back over 2013 some favourite moments emerge: standing beneath one of the stones at Avebury as our group listened intently to a guide speaking of ancient spirituality; feeling proud of this congregation as we all sang with such enthusiasm on a Sunday morning; laughing with the group that studied 12 Steps to Spiritual Health; watching a new member getting involved in the kitchen after a congregational lunch. I wonder what your favourite 'Kensington Unitarians' moments from the last year might be.

I'll also remember the quiet conversations I've had with so many people over the year. It is one of the privileges of ministry that people trust me with their hopes and concerns. Please do ask if such a conversation might be helpful for you. We were saddened to say farewell to Will Lyons who died in August 2013 and we miss his commitment to our community and his thoughtful, poetic as well as scientific approach to life.

Essex Church is affiliated to the General Assembly of Unitarian & Free Christian Churches and as a congregation we take an active part in national events as well as activities organised by the London and South East Provincial Assembly to which we also belong. During 2013 I continued to work as member of the Ministry Strategy group and as chair of the Interview Panel, which oversees the training of students for ministry. I also attended various training courses as part of continuing professional development and went on several retreats.

A church is not a club, nor merely a community centre. Our task is to create a spiritual centre strong enough to then reach out to the world, to do our bit to make life in central London more meaningful, more hope-filled, more loving for as many people as we can reach. This is our mission – to let as many people as possible know that a community such as ours exists and welcomes them in - offering people both the freedom and the responsibility of exploring our own spirituality alongside others and finding ways to put our faith into action, each and every day. Let's not ever take what we have for granted. We have been bequeathed our church by those who went before us. It does not belong to us, but is given us to hold in trust for a while, to maintain and to use its resources for the greater good of all and to ensure that we pass on its legacy in good shape to all those who are yet to come. I give thanks for the year that has passed and for the opportunities that await us all here at Essex Church in the year to come.

Rev. Sarah Tinker
Minister with Kensington Unitarians

Chairperson of Trustees' Report

The church's main governing document, the Charity Commission Scheme dated 18 April 1986, specifies that the trustees should meet at least once a year. Since most of the trustees are also members of the management committee, the arrangement in recent years has been that a trustees' meeting is held just before a meeting of the committee. The 2013 meeting was held on 16 September. I gave details of the two firms of solicitors who have been used for church business in recent years (Clyde & Co for premises matters including leases and Charles Russell for personnel matters and staff contracts of employment). Full details with contact names and addresses will be found in the minutes of the meeting of 16 September. Sadly Jo Ridgers had indicated that she wished to step down as a trustee. This means that the current trustees are now: Caroline Blair, David Francis Darling, Juliet Edwards, Heidi Ferid, Howard Hague, Harold Lorenzelli and Roy Parnell. I have been asked whether I would be willing to remain as a trustee for the time being, following our move to Leicestershire in January 2014, and I am happy to do so. We will be attending the church from time to time when visiting London.

It is worth mentioning that the 1986 Charity Committee Scheme confirms that the church premises are registered with the Land Registry under Title No. NGL 228773. The same Scheme also confirms continuity with Theophilus Lindsey's Essex Street Chapel, following its first conveyance to trustees in 1783. A Charity Commission Order dated 28 April 1885 had given permission for the Essex Street premises to be sold and a new chapel to be erected in Kensington with the proceeds. This building opened in 1887, survived two world wars but was then demolished in 1973 prior to the redevelopment of the site. Our present 'new' church opened for worship in 1977 – it is difficult to believe that it is now almost thirty-seven years old. Perhaps it is not surprising that the roof and guttering gives us problems from time to time!

As part of the recent archives project, the church now has a full set of trustees' minutes from September 1975 to date (in two lever-arch files). The listing of the meetings has been annotated to pick out some of the key developments over the years.

Howard Hague
Chairperson of Trustees

Outreach Officer's Report

In my role as outreach officer for the congregation I am responsible for our newsletter, website, podcasts, leaflets, posters, signage, and other occasional projects. I am also involved in planning the programme of church events with a particular focus on adult religious education (RE) courses, workshops, and engagement groups.

One major achievement to be proud of in 2013 was the initiation of our monthly 'Heart and Soul' spiritual gatherings. The impetus for this came from an email enquiry, asking if we ever held worship on a weekday, from someone who worked at weekends and thus was never able to attend services at any of the London Unitarian churches. We decided we would experiment with an alternative form of worship, quite contemplative and prayerful in style, with a regular framework which would make it easier for less experienced worship leaders to take turns in leading a session. These spiritual gatherings take place on the first Thursday of each month from 7-8pm. An important aspect of the evening is that we stay for refreshments and fellowship afterwards (it has become traditional to share a home-made cake). 'Heart and Soul' has gone from strength to strength in 2013.

Another significant achievement was the Worship Studies Course that we ran at Essex Church through the year. The WSC is a course which is administered by the Unitarian General Assembly and run in districts across the UK to help new worship leaders develop their skills. It had not been run in London or the South for at least 15 years and so when we decided that we would like to offer it there was a lot of demand and thirty people signed up. It was good to make links with Unitarians from across the district and beyond and we got great feedback from participants. We were grateful to guest tutors Rev. Elizabeth Birtles, Rev. Danny Crosby, Rev. Patrick O'Neill, Rev. Lindy Latham and Rev. David Usher for sharing their experience and wisdom with us. It was a lot of hard work to put the course on but well worth it.

At the suggestion of Natasha Drennan, we have started organising 'Cultural Outings' every six weeks or so, and we are always keen to hear from people who are willing to coordinate one of these activities. So far we have been to the Sebastião Salgado 'Genesis' exhibition at the Natural History Museum; on a 'Bat Walk' at the Wetland Centre; to London Zoo for a late-opening evening; to the Horniman Museum to meet the famous Horniman Walrus; on a (rather wet) autumn colour walk in Epping Forest; to an exhibition about Zoroastrianism at SOAS; and to the Esterhazy Singers Christmas Concert. These outings have been a good opportunity to get to know each other a little better.

We have a number of long-running once-a-month activities at the church: A Nia class for holistic movement and dance is led by Sonya Leite on the 2nd Sunday of each month and every Monday lunchtime; a 'Finding Your Voice' singing workshop is offered by Margaret Marshall from our choir on the 4th Sunday; and small-group communion services continued throughout the year on the 2nd Sunday with a variety of members taking turns to lead them. A monthly 'Rediscovering the Bible' group ran for a year and came to an end in September. Our monthly reading group also came to an end in 2013 after ten great years. We tackled our 100th book in March 2013 which felt like a great achievement. We decided to give it a rest to make space in the programme to try new things but it may be revived in the future.

In addition, there were a number of adult RE courses and one-off events during the year, including:

'Art Meditations' – a very popular 3-session course in January with a 4-session follow-up in summer. Led by Jane.
'Avebury Stone Circle' – a day-trip to Avebury Stone Circle by minibus organised by Jeannene Powell and Sarah.
'Summer Solstice Walk' – an evening walk along the Thames Path from Westferry to Island Gardens. Led by Jane.
'True Heart Theatre' – Veronica Needa's Playback Theatre company came to Essex Church and will return in 2014.
'Painting the Spring' – a creative Sunday afternoon workshop, exploring springtime through art, led by Heidi Ferid.
'Life's Ultimate Questions Special: "What is God?"' – one-off Sunday afternoon workshop led by Jane and Sarah.
'Lammas Gathering' – a Sunday afternoon gathering to mark the festival of Lammas and give thanks for harvest.
'New U' – a Sunday afternoon gathering to introduce newer members to the congregation and reflect on Unitarianism.
'Open Studio' – an art exhibition in October as part of Kensington and Fulham Open Studios. Coordinated by Jenny Moy.
'Twelve Steps to Spiritual Health' – a six-part evening course based on the book by Rev. David Usher. Led by Sarah.
'The Spirit of Christmas' – a one-off evening workshop to prepare for Christmas in a reflective way. Led by Sarah.

Many thanks to all those who have inspired, organised, led, and supported all these events by participating in them.

We are planning a new venture for 2014 and will be focusing attention on a series of 'Spiritual Life Skills' workshops. These will be one-off events, either day workshops on Saturday, or half-day workshops on Sunday afternoons. We will be inviting external facilitators from the wider Unitarian movement and beyond to help us run these events. It is our hope that they will help to deepen the experience of current congregation members, build connections with fellow Unitarians from across the district, and attract spiritual seekers to come in and find out more about our community.

On a personal note, I would like to express my gratitude to Sarah and the committee for their support, encouragement, and flexibility as I have pursued my studies in Philosophy, Religion and Ethics at Heythrop College. Thank you.

Jane Blackall
Outreach Officer (Arts and Education)

Warden's Report

The increased in letting charges at the beginning of this year has led to a significant increase in income, from 65k to over 75k. As the UK economy comes out of recession, we've also had several enquiries from new groups wanting to meet here and we decided at the end of the year to make Tuesday available for regular bookings as well as Monday. This also reflects a decrease in the number of days the Associated Board booked in for music exams this year – down from 43days in 2012 to 16 in 2013 – as they have opened additional exam rooms in their own building. Hosting more daytime children's activity groups means the building requires more cleaning and we're, as ever, grateful to Gitana Kleitane who maintains such high standards for us through her cleaning and building management expertise.

Transferring the bookings diary to Google calendars has worked very well – enabling me to access it from my mobile phone and deal easily with enquiries when I'm not in the office (or even in the country!) Jane has now also set up a Google calendar for congregational events which can be overlaid on the non-congregational bookings, making it easier to spot potential clashes.

Having had a positive experience in 2012 of opening the building to display the Forgiveness Exhibition, we decided that this year we would get involved in the Kensington and Fulham Open Studios weekend and invited members of the congregation and other users of the building to submit artwork. We had a very positive response with 12 congregation members and 9 user groups exhibiting. Jane created a beautiful colour booklet to serve as a catalogue during the exhibition and a valuable souvenir. We intend to participate in this event again in October 2013, so do contact me, Jane or Sarah if you'd like to show any 2 or 3 dimensional art or craftwork.

Although I'm still responsible for getting cheques signed after the service on Sundays, the volume of these has greatly decreased as we now pay regular musicians and others by online transfer. As these show up directly on our bank statements it simplifies the task of creating monthly spreadsheets and reconciling the accounts. Next year we intend to start encouraging all hirers to pay by online transfer where possible in a further attempt to simplify our book-keeping.

It has been another quiet year in terms of work on the building. The main church roof continues to leak a little in the back left corner, but on the whole the new paintwork has remained in good condition. However there have been more serious leaks from the patio of the Minister's flat causing staining to the foyer ceiling and we intend to go ahead with renewing this balcony roof as soon as possible, along with the shed roof at the back. We have also had intermittent problems, both with the hall radiator and the heaters in the church and we've learned that the latter have now been discontinued, so if any more break down completely we won't be able to replace them with an equivalent.

An unhappy incident at the end of 2013 was an attempted break-in to my flat. This happened during the daytime, when the front door of the church was most probably locked, so the intruder may have climbed over a side wall – not an easy task, since we've already taken measures to increase security in these areas. Having reached my garden, he attempted to break in through my patio window – first using a brick, and when this failed to penetrate the double-glazing, a large paving stone. This did break the glass, but luckily the noise alerted a group using the hall upstairs, who looked out and frightened the intruder away. As this was only the second incident of someone gaining access to the back of the church in six years, we still feel we are relatively secure from this direction, but it has raised our awareness once again with regards to church security.

Notting Hill is a busy place and I'm glad that our building is used so well by our local community as well as by the many interest groups that hold their meetings here. They really appreciate our friendly welcome and we appreciate their positive attitude towards us.

Jenny Moy
Essex Church Warden

Church Music Report

Music continues to play an integral part of the service and we endeavour to provide as wide an experience as possible. This includes quartets, trios, duets and solo items of a vocal nature where appropriate as well as instrumental contributions. We are fortunate in being able to draw on a wide choice of experienced musicians, instrumentalists and singers. Where possible we try to provide music that complements and enhances the spiritual dimension of the congregational worship.

Harold Lorenzelli
Church Music Coordinator

Essex Church Congregational Library and Archives: Librarian's Report

The library continues to be used on a regular basis and is available to all members of the congregation – please fill in the loans book if you want to borrow an item. At the end of the year, prior to our move from London, I handed library matters over to Jane. Most of my efforts during 2013 were devoted to sorting and listing the church archives. I have tried to ensure that we have as complete a collection of recent annual reports and minutes (for both management committee and trustees) as possible. The following are some of the archives that have been found and sorted:

A: Annual Reports: 1890 – 1916, 1929 - (lacks 1903, 1908, 1910, 1911, 1913, 1917-1928, 1938, 1942, 1943, 1945, 1984)

B: Minutes: Committee/Management Committee: complete from 1961 onwards (there are old minutes books for 1961-1966, 1966-1970, 1970-1975, then six Lever Arch files from 1975 onwards)

Trustees: complete from 1975 onwards (in two files: 1975-2002 and 2003 -)

C: Church Newsletters: 1896 – 1935 (bound copies in sixteen volumes)
1936 – 1941 (incomplete)
1958 – 1973 (incomplete)
1977 - (complete from 1995 onwards)
(the newsletter is available on the church website from June/July 2007 onwards)

D: The Tin Box: During the year we managed to open a mystery 'tin box' that had been found in one of the hall cupboards. It was found to contain some interesting items, including several that relate to the old Kensington congregation 1867-1885:

Framed inscription 'A Free Christian Church' (with words spoken by Mr Channing on the transfer of the church to Linden Hall, Linden Grove, W. in Spring 1868)

Illustration of Rev William Henry Channing, first minister of the congregation founded in Kensington (he was the nephew of the Rev William Ellery Channing)

Annual reports of the Mall 'tin' church 1877-1884, 1887/8

Sunday School Committee Record Book February 1874 – June 1886

Marriage Register December 1887 – July 1917 (i.e. from the rebuilt Essex Church)

Copies of 'Endowed Charities' reports for 1900 (Parish of Kensington) and 1901 (Parish of St Clement Danes) – these give very useful historical information.

Old printing block labelled 'Essex Church Manse', probably dating from the 1920s/1930s – see the article and photo on this in the November 2013 church newsletter.

E: Essex Church Sunday School: various items, including Minute Books 1899-1910, 1936-1939, Registers 1904, 1909, 1914-1915, 1916, 1918-1919, Cradle Roll 1957-1964

F: Other Miscellaneous Items: - various items are still to be listed in detail, but include:

Visitors' Books 1956 – 1969 & 1969 – 1973

Membership/Subscriptions Book c. 1952 – 1966

Lindsey Literary Society: minutes 1933-1939; press cuttings & record book 1933-38

Various files of correspondence and finance records

Howard Hague
Honorary Librarian

Minutes of the Essex Church AGM - 19th May 2013

1. Opening Words

2. Welcome and Apologies for Absence

In attendance: Gina Bayley, Caroline Blair, Jim Blair, David Darling, Niall Doherty, Juliet Edwards, Annie Fowler, Heidi Ferid-Hands, John Hands, Jill Inskip, Alice Lambert, Sonya Leite, Jo Ridgers, Carol Sheppard, Sue Smith, Sarah Tinker, Liz Tuckwell, Michaela Von Britzke, Diana Ward.

Apologies: Jane Blackall, Joe Darling, Margaret Darling, Betty Evans, Carole Grace, Gill Hague, Howard Hague, Harold Lorenzelli, Will Lyons, Veronica Needa, Stephanie Saville.

3. Review of 2011 AGM Minutes:

The minutes were accepted as a true record and signed by David Darling as congregation chair.

4. Review of Reports:

a. Treasurer's Reports and Accounts

Treasurer Caroline Blair reported on a stable year financially and the generally healthy state of the church finances. She mentioned that the Kensington Temple congregation take a collection at the start of each service and if insufficient has been given, a further collection is taken. She will not be suggesting this strategy for us but did thank people for their generosity in giving to our monthly charity collections, which show a significant increase on our general weekly collections. Sarah noted that the slight dip in our lettings income reported by our warden Jenny Moy was due to a few classes being reduced, but that we had otherwise fortunately not been too affected by the recession.

b. Chairperson of Congregation's Report

Chairperson David Francis Darling noted that his was possibly the easiest role as so much was done by others in the church, pulling together and doing their bit, for which he was very grateful.

c. Minister's Report

Sarah remarked that our Annual Report showed 2012 to have been a very busy year indeed for our congregation and our staff, particularly with the completion of various building tasks as part of our 'Five Year Building Improvement Project'. Hosting the Forgiveness Project in the autumn had been a highlight and a lot of work for everyone involved, but such a worthwhile effort in engaging with the wider community. Our list of engagement and small group activities run in 2012 was impressive. 2013 would probably seem a quieter year, in which we are focusing particularly on worship. Michaela thanked Sarah for her care for congregation members especially through phone calls, texts and emails and for pastoral care skills that 'go beyond the extra mile'. Sarah reminded people to ask if they want to keep in touch in such ways or by meeting for a chat.

d. Warden's Report

Jenny Moy was thanked for all her work as warden of the church, bringing everything to order both in the building and in our finances. Heidi thanked her for being the 'best warden we've ever had'.

John Hands enquired about the noisy church heater, which Sarah thinks has now been fixed. She reminded us that anyone can turn any of the six heaters off if they are noisy and the whole system can be silenced by turning down the thermostat on the right hand side wall (from foyer door).

e. Sunday School Report

Jordan McCrindle has now left as our children's leader and was thanked for his work over the last few years. Glenn Van Lint is the new children's leader.

f. Outreach Officer's Report

Sarah brought attention to the extensive list of groups run here at Essex Church over the last year and their delightful diversity. She thanked Jane for her skilful organising of our programme and our publicity. This year is a quieter year in which we are focusing on worship training and on running more monthly activities. She reminded everyone to make suggestions if there are particular groups or activities they would like to encourage.

g. Librarian's Report

David Darling drew the meeting's attention to our extensive library and thanked Howard Hague for organising it and also for his most helpful on-going work in tackling the church archives.

h. Church Music Report

Jo Ridgers remarked that we are blessed to have such high quality music and Sarah thanked Harold Lorenzelli for his organising of the programme. John Hands reminded us all to thank the musicians personally more often. In discussion of funding, Juliet Edwards pointed out that although the Stock Bequest helps to fund our musicians the committee is happy to pay more than the income of this bequest. Sarah explained that we were now arranging regular instrumentalists as well as singers and that the musicians are happy to take requests for favourite music, songs and hymns. Carol Sheppard suggested seeking student musicians from the Royal College of Music down the road. Sonya Leite suggested that we renovate the organ and ask Peter Crockford to play it occasionally. David Darling agreed that the committee would investigate this possibility and that they had investigated if the organ could be sold at one point but that despite it being of high quality there was no market now for such instruments.

i. Chairperson of Trustees' Report

David Darling explained the structure of the church's governance with a management committee that meets roughly every six weeks and a group of trustees (in effect the same group of people) that meet once a year, the latter being responsible for legal matters. Caroline Blair explained that Carol Sheppard was now a trustee but her name had mistakenly not been added this year to the list in the Annual Report. Sarah invited people to speak to the chairperson or to her if they felt they would like to serve on the committee or had any suggestions to make about how we run the congregation.

5. Acceptance of 2012 Reports and Accounts

Heidi Ferid-Hands proposed and Jim Blair seconded the acceptance of the 2012 Annual Reports and Accounts. This was agreed unanimously.

6. Election of Management Committee Members

The list of committee members going forward for re-election was read out as: Caroline Blair, David Darling, Juliet Edwards, Howard Hague, Heidi Ferid-Hands, Harold Lorenzelli, Jo Ridgers, Carol Sheppard. Sonya Leite proposed and John Hands seconded that these should be re-elected en-bloc and this was agreed unanimously.

7. Any Other Business

Annie Fowler asked if the work on the church sound system was now complete and Sarah reported that the only thing to be decided on was a possible new lectern mike as the committee is investigating possible new lecterns. Annie agreed that a new and more sensitive lectern microphone was a good idea as quieter speakers are sometimes not heard. Sue Smith explained that when the loop system is on it definitely works but Sarah agreed that it is occasionally switched off by other groups by mistake. We need to ensure that a number of people are trained to check that it is actually on every week. She thanked people who make a clear gesture or wave when they cannot hear and encouraged everyone to tell us if there is ever a problem.

Annie mentioned that it had been lovely to take part in the recognition of new members in today's service but that we might need to think about people from previous years who get missed if they are not at church when it happens. Sarah also suggested that people think of other ways we could celebrate and promote our valuable members and friends.

Jo Ridgers asked us all to consider taking more photos to help Jane with publicity. Jane hopes to update the photos of members and friends soon for the foyer display. Sarah explained that generally we assume that once a photo is taken people have given their permission for it to be used, although of course people can veto a shot they dislike. Jim Blair wondered if buying a simple camera to keep at church would help us take more photos. He would appreciate assurance that people accept him taking photos.

Michaela gave thanks for the fact that we now employ a weekly gardener Mark and celebrated how great the garden is looking. Jim mentioned that Glenn our new children's leader is also a gardener in case people are looking for help with their own garden projects.

8. Closing Words and Votes of Thanks

Sarah asked everyone to remember those who died in the last year: member Gordon Deaville, Rev Eirion Phillips (minister here for 12 years) and Peter Roots (warden here 2002-2006).

Sarah called for a vote of thanks for David as our chair, Caroline as our treasurer, all our committee members and trustees, Jane as our outreach and publicity officer and Jenny as our warden, and all our greeters, stewards and drinks makers and everyone who makes our community what it is by their presence, their time and their effort. Jim Blair responded by thanking Sarah for another year of caring and committed ministry with our congregation. The meeting was closed at 1.10pm.

Minutes taken by Jo Ridgers