

CAPEL UNDODAIDD GELLIONNEN A'R GRAIG
GELLIONNEN AND GRAIG UNITARIAN CHAPEL
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 6 SEPTEMBER 2022

PRESENT: Lawrence Bowen. Robert James. Sandra Beynon. Rev. Rory Castle Jones. Marian Littlepage. Megan Price. Geraint Price. Jane Hallett. Gwynne Williams. Carol Nicholas. Diane Healey. Beti Wyn Williams. Bronwen James. Aeron Jones. Hayley Rowden Cooper. Sarah Marie Gregory. Eleanor Bishop. Rachel Evans. Sian Evans. Hannah Mitchell

WELCOME.

Music was played at the beginning of the meeting.

REV. RORY CASTLE JONES.

Rory gave a reading and a prayer.

APOLOGIES

Andy and Delyth McNally. Elen Bowman.

PREVIOUS A.G.M. MINUTES.

Copies of 2021 minutes were distributed to all attendees.

MATTERS ARISING.

Nothing to report.

CHAIR PERSON'S ANNUAL REPORT.

Chairman thanked everyone for attending. He thanked the committee for their work over the past year and thanked Rory for his wonderful inspiration in leading us. Thanks was also given to Robert, Sandra and #Blessed for their work during the past year.

SECRETARY'S ANNUAL REPORT

Sandra reported that the chapel activities have increased since COVID. We will be celebrating our 1st year with Rory on 25th September with a shared lunch after the Harvest Festival. We had a barbecue on 1 July.. Our new kitchen is fantastic after completion.

We have also welcomed new members. We are still looking for a minute secretary and also for a cleaner. Aeron will ask his daughter if she is interested.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Robert had distributed copies of the accounts prior to the meeting and asked if anyone had any questions. He thanked Marian for her help during the past year.

The committee had asked Robert to bring two issues to the meeting that would have an impact on our direction.

Last year we employed Rory for 10 hours per week. He is on average working 20 hours per week. Therefore the committee agreed to increase his hours to 15 hours per week but we must have a sustainable plan to back it. In order that funds are available for repairs and insurance etc, a decision has been taken that the stipend should be based on the income of standing orders, envelopes and loose collections.

By using this method there will be a shortfall of approximately £5,000 per year equivalent to £100 per week. In order to make up the deficit the committee decided that we suggest a guide for each member's voluntary contribution to be £40 per month. Robert emphasised that this is **voluntary**

Another way to achieve this would be for each member to increase their voluntary contribution by £12 per month. Again this is voluntary.

Discussion took place regarding the amount of £218,000 in capital and if this was excessive to our needs. Robert added that the funds had grown from £165,000 to £218,000 due to the capital increase of the funds. The average yield of about £5,000 per year is an important help to our income. There is also a responsibility of holding enough capital for the upkeep of three buildings. Work needs to be done at Gellionnen. Gwynne commented that painting the building and roof repair etc needs to be done. We will also probably need to match fund on some of the renovations at the Graig Hall. Sandra stated that she has signed up with another chapel regarding grants.

After discussions all agreed to the proposal of increasing Rory's hours.

Robert is of the opinion that there will be a capital loss to the charitable funds this year.

GRAIG HALL, CHAPEL AND LAND

Robert gave a report on the above.

A 4 yearly treatment for the knot-weed has been completed.

Searches have been carried out with the land registry and the Richard Burton Archives. Robert thanked Hannah Mitchell for her help in assisting with the deeds.

The boundary between us and our neighbours has been agreed.

A fence has been erected between us and Mr and Mrs Roberts of Swansea Road.

We need to install a fence between us and the land owned by Mr and Mrs Sykes.

Discussion has taken place with the surveyor.

We now have a refuse collection facility.

A new bank account has been set up for the garden project.

£10,000 has been received from Neath & Port Talbot County Borough Council with help from Cllr Rebecca Phillips and another £800 approximately from local donations.

The water leak has been sorted and the sewage drain cleared.

An enormous amount of clearance work has been done in the garden thanks to all the volunteers.

Scaffolding has been erected in the chapel to check the ceiling where the architrave had fallen.

Robert has checked the remaining architrave close to the problem area and found it to be solid. Rob Roderick (builder) has also inspected the area and agreed.

We now have a temporary electric supply to the hall.

Rory stated that we have some amazing volunteers with the garden project. Some have left and new ones have joined.

The school have been actively involved with the garden project, building bird boxes, painting and creating a bug hotel.

Rory has also taken assembly in the school and a mock wedding was held earlier in the year.

At the moment the Graig hall is open every Thursday morning from 10 until 12. and a coffee morning is held the 2nd Thursday of each month.

My Green Valley is also using the hall to store their equipment.

A Book Sale was held in the hall in August.

The hall is also being used for various activities with the chapel.

SAFEGUARDING REPORT

Jane informed us that at the moment the safeguarding team are herself, Geraint Price, Andy Farrell and Rachel Evans.

Meetings were started in January via zoom. Work is on-going with several projects having been completed.

A water butt is in place. The application for a defibrillator has been successful and a cabinet will be bought and a custodian and a deputy will be appointed. Geraint will organise training as soon as it is in place.

The graveyard has been inspected twice and some gravestones have been found to be unsafe. This has been reported back to the committee. It was suggested that this be included in the Pontardawe magazine in order to trace living families of the named gravestones.

The team is responsible for DBS checks. A risk assessment has been made by Paul Griffiths.

Several issues have been raised such as a handrail on the path leading down to the chapel.

A yearly subscription is paid to 'thirtyone:eight.'

YOUTH GROUP #BLESSSED REPORT.

Sian represented the Youth Group. There are nine members with ages ranging from 18 – 27.

The group was formed 2 years ago. Since then it has developed into a proud group, passionate about making lasting friendships, fighting for the environment and connecting communities.

Since last September several successful litter picks have taken place. There has been an incredible support from the community, My Green Valley and Cllr Brigitte Rowlands.

Signs have now been erected on the mountain to deter the fly tippers.

Sian and Laura have joined the organising team of the Malvern Festival. This turned out to be a really successful event with much support from the chapel congregation and the #Blessed team , .

The team attended the General Assembly in Birmingham. Several new friends were made and they also hosted a session which again was successful.

Every month since March this year the team have participated in organised social gatherings via zoom with other young Unitarians from the UK, USA, Canada and the Czech Republic..

Sally the Snake is another project. This is a community based snake which welcomed hand painted stones formation on Gellionnen mountain.

Books have been wrapped in ribbon with a note of positivity enclosed and left in busy areas.

So far nearly 30 books have been left to find, including one in Scotland and one in Rome outside the Coliseum.

A trip to Rome took place at the end of August where each member thorougly enjoyed themselves. Several projects are planned for the future.

- a) focus on a new relationship with the charity S.T.O.P. - promoting period positivity and environmentally friendly menstrual products.
- b) working further on individual attempts to increase biodiversity in our local area.
- c) Sian and Laura are already planning the Malvern Festival of Ideas 2023.
- d) to continue a relationship with the Inquirer magazine.
- e) to return to the 2023 General Assembly.
- f) might be another international trip.

The team are eternally grateful for all the support and kindness they have received from everyone.

SOCIAL EVENTS REPORT

Megan gave her report on the above.

A pub club takes place on the first Thursday of each month.

Several trips have taken place. Last November a trip to Oxford was arranged as well as attending the Malvern Festival of Ideas, and the General Assembly. A trip to Porthcawl is arranged for 10 September as well as a trip to Exeter and Bristol in November. A trip to Bruges is also planned for next year.

We had our Gellifest and Summer BBQ combined with an open day in the Summer.

A graveyard tidy up took place and also our monthly mutt walk.

The shoebox appeal .took place.

We attended Swansea Pride.

A very successful fund raising event took place in Trebanos community hall to raise funds for the Ukraine appeal.

We had a summer concert with Lawrence. A small choir has been formed and have performed a few times.

The monthly coffee mornings are still on-going at the Graig Hall. We have also had 2 book sales there. Cleaning days were organised for both Gellionnen and Graig, a painting party in our new kitchen. We had our famous dog nativity with and we are wondering now what we will plan for this year.

Megan thanked everyone in the chapel and also friends who have helped plan, run and attend our events throughout this time. The group are looking forward to the next twelve months and welcome anyone who would like to become involved.

CONGREGATION PARTICIPATION (questions)

Rachel commented on how well we are developing.

Rhys raised concerns regarding our maintenance plan due to lack of manpower. Could we persuade some members to train in the work of the officers. Can non-members be more involved?

Sian offered her assistance to the Treasurer.

Geraint volunteered to help with maintenance.

The Safeguarding Team is hoping to increase its members.

AUDITOR PROPOSAL AND ADOPTION

The accounts have been audited and accepted. It was agreed to re-appoint our present auditor Ferguson and Peters Chartered Accountants. Sandra proposed. Marian seconded.

ELECTION OF COMMITTEE

As there were no new nominees all present officers were re-instated. All agreed.

A.O.B.

At the end of the meeting, Sarah Marie Gregory agreed to be our new Minute Secretary.