



# The Old Southendian Organ Society (OSOS)



## MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Wednesday April 26<sup>th</sup> 2017, 19:45 - The Southendian Club, Garon Park

Persons Present: Gerald Usher (GU - Chairman), Joseph Zammit (JZ), Warren Symes (WNS), George Smith (GS via Skype), George Copley (GC via Skype), Graham McKean (GM via Skype).

### 1. Welcome and Apologies for Absence

GU welcomed all those present, the Meeting then starting at 19:53.

Apologies were noted from: John Coleman, Brian Fletcher, James Green, Geoff Kittle, Adrian Lucas, Jonathan Roberts, Roy Simons, and David Townend.

### 2. Approval of Minutes from previous General Meetings and matters arising

The Minutes of the AGM of Thursday 14th April 2016 were proposed by JZ, seconded by WNS and approved unanimously.

The Minutes of the EGM of Saturday 15th October 2016 were reviewed and a correction issued regarding point 2 (the minutes of the AGM of April 2016 were not reviewed or approved by the meeting in October 2016). Following this amendment, the revised minutes were proposed by JZ, seconded by GS, and approved unanimously.

No matters that were not to be discussed as part of the Agenda of the AGM were noted.

### 3. Reports from the Committee

#### Chairman's Report

GU's report reflected on the progress of the Society in the last year, noting the remarkable achievement of progressing towards getting professional work done on the organ. GU remarked on the success of the Society's April and November concerts, the organ recital trips organised for the pupils in the School's Organ Club, and the possibility for those pupils to visit an organ builder's workshop. Other points of note were the links being built with local churches, and the Society's improved administration with a dedicated Membership Secretary, recognised Charity status with HMRC, and affiliation with the Old Southendian Association.

#### Treasurer's Report

Figures from the accounts were provided to the Meeting, which noted in particular the healthy state of affairs: the balance at the end of the financial year (31st March 2017) was £9193.44, following expenditure of £1909.51 and receipts of £5137.00. The Meeting also noted that approximately £800 of Gift Aid was due from HMRC.

### Secretary's Report

The Secretary did not have anything to report to the Meeting.

### Membership Secretary's Report

GC reported that membership renewals have started via email and post. The Society has 120 supporters, including 59 members. Membership cards are being issued, and the new systems in place since GC took up the post were reported to have been working well.

GM suggested considering the use of the Society year to allow all membership subscriptions to be due at the same time annually, and further suggested life membership (perhaps for over 65s). The Committee agreed to take these ideas forward for further discussion.

### Communication and Publicity Officer's Report

JZ reported that work has continued to keep supporters and followers apprised of the Society's activities, with updates provided via the website, social media, and email. The report on Keenan Ngo's organ competition success was particularly well received, and JZ suggested more reports and insights similar to this would be greatly appreciated by our supporters.

Concerts were well received last year, and in spite of slightly lower turnout in the November concert, JZ reports that we are encouraged by the variety and entertainment provided by these events. The next concert is not likely to be before July 2017, after the examination period, and may be held away from the school while the War Memorial Organ is out of action, or may use the electronic organ at the school, which WNS noted has been in use for assemblies in the interim.

JZ further updated on the Society's status with HMRC and the Charities Commission, noting that now that our gross income is exceeding £5K per year, we are in the process of registering with the Commission and will thus be issued with a Registered Charity Number. JZ commended the work of GC in improving the administration of the Society.

## **4. Update on the School's organ activities**

WNS reported on the activities of the organ pupils in the School, noting that a few of the students in the organ club will be leaving at the end of this academic year. To mark their departure, a trip to a recital, perhaps in London, is planned, and JZ and GU confirmed that OSOS would be pleased to support this activity.

WNS reported that the electronic organ (kindly donated to the school by Old Boy Tony Hill) is now being used in assemblies as a temporary solution while the War Memorial Organ is unplayable. The Meeting discussed the possibility for a trip to the local churches the Society is in contact with and WNS will take this forward.

WNS discussed with those present the intention to make audio and video recordings of the organ once it is playable again. These would be made available on the OSOS website for all to enjoy.

## **5. Update on the War Memorial Organ**

GU explained to the Meeting about the fault with the blower which occurred at the start of 2017. The blower is now removed from the blower cupboard and is in professional hands for restoration to as-new (or potentially better!) condition.

GU further reported that in the course of engaging professional organ builders for advice on the blower fault, the Society has been examining the possibility of professional work to the organ as a whole. Some parts of the original organ (in particular some of its fragile mechanism) have required increasing amounts of maintenance in recent years, and so GU reported that OSOS is examining the options to propose to the School to see the 94 year old instrument into its second century. GU also noted that our current financial position plus pledges received from Old Boys mean that the Society is not far off being financially capable of engaging professionals for such work.

## **6. Election of Committee Officers for 2017-18**

The election of Chairman, Treasurer, Secretary, Membership Secretary, and Publicity and Communications Officer for the 2017-18 year maintained, by unanimous agreement, the status quo, and therefore those positions are now held as follows:

Chairman:	Gerald Usher
Treasurer:	Jonathan Roberts
Secretary:	George Smith
Membership Secretary:	George Cobley
Publicity and Communications Officer:	Joseph Zammit

The position of President comes up for election every 2 years, and so Adrian Lucas continues in his two year term.

## **7. Any Other Business**

JZ notes that the organ featured in two editions of the Electronic Organ Constructors Society (EOCS) following contact by Old Boy Trevor Skeggs. JZ has a copy of the magazines in question and Trevor's article, which included reminiscences of his time at the School and the organ.

## **8. Preliminary arrangements for next meeting**

It was agreed that the 2018 AGM will likely be held in April 2018. Details will be circulated in advanced to the OSOS mailing list.

**There being no further business, GU closed the Meeting at 21:18**