

EXECUTIVE ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2016

CENTRAL READERS' COUNCIL – charity No 271916

A. Management and Objectives

1. Executive Committee

The management and administration of the Council is vested in its Executive Committee. The members of the Executive Committee during 2016 were:

Chair:

The Rt Rev Robert Paterson, Bishop of Sodor and Man (until November)
The Rt Rev Martyn Snow, Bishop of Leicester (from November)

Elected members and trustees:

Mrs Gertrud Sollars (vice-Chair)
Rev Canon Dr Christopher Bracegirdle (Elected Warden)
Rev John Knowles (Elected Warden)
Mrs Angela Mirani (Elected Reader)
Mrs Julie Shield (Elected Reader – until November)
Mr Michael Lee (Elected Reader)
Mrs Kathleen Bradshaw (Elected Reader)
Mrs Carol Lidgett (Honorary Treasurer – until April)
Mr Richard Havergal (Honorary Treasurer – from April)

Ex-officio members:

Ven Julian Hubbard (Director of Ministry, CofE)
Rev John Collier (temporary representative of the Church in Wales)
Ms Pam Odam (temporary representative of the Church in Wales)
Mrs Julie Batchelor (Chair, Conferences Committee - until July)
Mr John Marshall (Chair, Website Committee)
Rev Heather Fenton (Editor, *the Reader*)
Dr Marion Gray (Chair, Editorial Committee)
Mr Morgan Bunday (Website Editor)
Mrs Mo Cheesman (Database Administrator)
Mrs Lynn Comer (National Consultant for Reader CMD)
Miss Imogen Clout (RACSC representative – until October)
Miss Rosemary Walters (National Consultant for Selection & Training)
Dr Alan Wakely (Secretary)
Mr Jeff Heaton (Associate Secretary – until September)

2. Organisation

The Central Readers' Council (CRC) is a registered charity, number 271916. Its address is Church House, Great Smith Street, London SW1P 3AZ. The secretary is Dr Alan Wakely, who is due to retire during 2017 and will be replaced by Mr Andrew Walker.

The charity is governed by its constitution which was last revised in March 2012.

Banking facilities were provided by the CAF Bank, West Malling.

CRC continues to work in close association with the Ministry Division of the General Synod of the Church of England, and is grateful to the Archbishops' Council for the continuing provision of office facilities at Church House, Westminster.

3. Objects

The objects of CRC are to advance the religious and other charitable work of the Church of England by supporting the training, education and development of Readers for their ministry. Thus enabled, Readers offer public benefit through teaching and pastoral activities under the auspices of the church.

CRC works to enhance the contribution of Readers to the overall ministry of the Church, particularly to encourage the most effective integration with other forms of ministry, ordained and lay. As well as administrative co-ordination and services for diocesan Readers' boards, it arranges training conferences, publishes a quarterly magazine (*The Reader*), maintains a website and provides a forum for the exchange of ideas between individual Readers, and also diocesan Readers' boards.

Members of the Executive and the sub-committees of the Council give their time voluntarily, not only in committee work but also in ensuring that the activities of the Council continue.

B. Review of Activities

1. Executive Committee

The Executive committee held two full meetings during 2016. Exceptionally, both of these were residential. The first, in February, was involved in dealing with the events planned to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the re-establishment of Reader ministry in the Church of England. The second, in November was extended into two days because of the pressure of business associated with the changeover to a new Chair, and the unusually high number of members who left posts on the Executive during the year. The meeting also included a formal farewell to Bishop Robert Paterson, who generously agreed to stay in post until November, instead of leaving in July as was notified in the report for 2015, because his successor was not available to take over any sooner.

In addition to the two meetings of the full Executive, the Trustees held a further meeting in July, chiefly to review financial issues.

Unquestionably, the major events of 2016 were the two celebrations to mark the 150th anniversary. At the earlier of these, on Ascension Day, we were honoured by the presence of our Patron, HRH the Duke of Edinburgh, at the festal Eucharist in All Souls Church, Langham Place, London, celebrated by the Most Rev Dr John Sentamu, Archbishop of York. The Executive records its thanks to the Rector and staff at All Souls for their immense help in the organisation of this event, with a special mention to Dr Noel Tredinnick their director of music who arranged the voluntaries and hymn-singing superbly with much less freedom of choice than he might reasonably have expected. Over 40 English bishops were present along with the Archbishop of Armagh and a sizeable contingent from Wales, because both Wales and Ireland were also celebrating 150 years of Reader ministry. A welcome was also extended to the episcopal representative of the Primus of the Scottish Episcopal Church.

The second event was called “Follow!” and was a celebration of discipleship in all its various forms. This was described as being a “gift from the Reader movement to the Church as a whole”, and was focussed on promoting all forms of ministry, and not that of Reader alone. The function was held at de Montfort Hall, Leicester, in July, and we were welcomed there by the bishop of the diocese, Rt Rev Martyn Snow – without there being at that stage any hint that he was within months to be appointed as our new Chair. Various inspiring speakers were involved including Paula Gooder and Debbie Thrower, both of whom are Readers. There were also displays and stands from various organisations both inside the Hall and on the lawns outside, and worship sessions in the main auditorium.

The basic work of the Council has continued. The lack of a disciplinary procedure, mentioned in last year’s report, has continued to be a matter of concern, exacerbated by the fact that Imogen Clout lost her place on the church’s Recruitment and Conditions of Service Committee (which considers such matters), following a re-constitution of that body in the wake of the quinquennial elections at General Synod. Mrs Carol Wolstenholme, a Reader from Newcastle Diocese, who was elected to RACSCS during the year has kindly agreed to keep the Executive informed about any developments. The sub-committees of the council with responsibility for, respectively, the maintenance of the website and the production of the magazine continued under the competent oversight of the Committee Chairs, Mr John Marshall and Dr Marion Gray.

The Trustees agreed a substantial one-off grant of £10000 to the Diocese in Europe to assist with funding travel to its planned Diocesan Reader Conference in Cologne in the Spring of 2017. This is in recognition of the unique difficulties the diocese faces in coping with the much larger distances involved in travelling to and from Diocesan events compared with those in England.

Interviews were held in November to find a replacement for Dr Wakely as Secretary to the Council, who announced his retirement at the end of March

2017. Mr Andrew Walker of Peterborough Diocese was appointed, and will start duties at the beginning of January 2017, thus overlapping with his predecessor for three months, the funding for which had been agreed by the Executive.

2. **Annual General Meeting**

The Annual General Meeting of CRC was held in London at the Church of St Botolph Without, Aldgate, London on Saturday 16th April 2016.

The Chair's address was delivered by a video link in view of his indisposition. It included a formal notification of his intention to retire later in the year, and the meeting recorded its thanks to him for seven years of immensely dedicated work in the service of Readers and of lay ministry in general.

Carol Lidgett, Treasurer, retired at the AGM and Richard Havergal (Salisbury) was elected to replace her. Consequently, the budget for 2017, which had been prepared by Mrs Lidgett, was approved subject to any amendments the incoming treasurer might seek to make – which would then be placed before the Trustees.

3. **Readers-in-Synod Lunch**

Having cancelled this event in 2015, it was intended to re-instate the lunch in 2016 when new members would have been elected to General Synod, but logistics of the timetable in York, coupled with the proximity of the General Synod with the date of the celebrations in Leicester, made this impossible. The Executive have not abandoned the concept of holding this event, which will be reviewed in 2017 under the guidance of the new Chair.

4. **Staff**

Jeff Heaton left office as Associate Secretary at the end of September. The post was advertised and interviews for his replacement were planned to take place at the start of 2017. The Executive continues to be very grateful to Mo Cheesman for all the work she undertakes in the maintenance of records both at home and on visits to Church House, Westminster. The continuing support and advice of our National Advisers, Rosemary Walters and Lynn Comer, is very greatly appreciated.

Signed on behalf of the Executive Committee,

Alan Wakely,

Secretary

Martyn Snow

Bishop of Leicester - Chair

