

ARCAID MINUTES

30th Annual General Meeting

Conducted via Zoom

Monday 23rd November 2020

The formal meeting opened at 8.00 pm

1. **Welcome** by Mariola Boyd, who opened with a prayer.
2. **Apologies for absence** received from: Patricia Atkinson, Mark Baines, Karen Bayley, Peter & Mary King, Beth MacCulloch, Mike O'Donnell
3. **Minutes of the previous AGM** – 2nd December 2019, agreed (ie no objections raised in advance or by Zoom participants). Proposed: Nikki Matthews; seconded Mariola Boyd.
4. **Matters arising.** None.
5. **Chairperson's Report – Mariola Boyd**
I'm not going to read out my full report as it's on Arcaid's website for you all to read at your leisure, but I will just make a few key points:

First of all, our heartfelt thanks and a very reluctant farewell to Louise, our treasurer for the past 4 years. Louise has given countless hours of her time to Arcaid and overseen our switch to online banking which has been invaluable in recent months. We wish you well Louise in your new home and thank you again for your contribution to Arcaid. We welcome Mark Baines who has offered to take over as treasurer.

My thanks also, to all the trustees, every one of whom spends time investigating potential projects and following up on them - Arcaid's work is very much a collaborative endeavour.

This year, Arcaid has sent out £46,000 to people in 12 different countries, for many different needs - we've bought an operating table and lights for a hospital in India, software for an eye clinic in Uganda, a laptop for a seminarian in Malawi and the refurbishment of a girls' dormitory at a Ugandan school following a fire.

Not surprisingly, since April, we've responded to many Covid-related requests. Here are some photos of how Arcaid has contributed to the provision of food, masks and washing facilities. Trustees responded quickly to these urgent requests - we can do this in Arcaid but only thanks to your hugely generous support. The sincerest of thanks to all our donors who enable Arcaid to help people who have so little.

6. **Treasurer's Report – Louise McDonald**
This has been an extraordinary year and our donors have responded very generously.

Our overall income is up to close to £41,000, increased from a little more than £36,000 last year. Of this total, the Gift Aid reclaim was approximately £5,800, we received a small amount of compensation from the bank and a tiny amount of interest.

The balance is therefore donations, which stand this year at very nearly £35,000, up from £29,500 last year. This includes some very generous additional donations from subscribers as well as other one-off payments – funds raised by a mufti day at St Polycarp's, a collection from a prayer group and another from a parishioner's workplace and other thoughtful gifts.

Regular giving stands at roughly £2000 a month – we have an increased number of subscribers this year, partly as a result of last year's 30 at 30 campaign, and some increases in the level of subscriptions – I hope that that trend may continue.

Very many thanks to all who contribute in any way and enable us to help so many causes and communities.

Mariola has mentioned that we made grants to projects of £46,000 in this last year – that is an increase of nearly £9000 from the previous year. (If anyone is doing the sums and worrying, we started the year with a bank balance of £7705 and ended with £1703 in the account).

Our only actual costs are bank charges and whilst these have gone up in total (£754) because of the increased number of projects funded (37 payments out this year), they have come down significantly per transaction. These costs have been covered by specific donation and other small admin costs are absorbed.

Thanks are once again due to Brian Fernando, who audited the accounts for the year to end October 2019. Once finalised, audited and filed, the figures for the year to the end of October 2020 will be available for you to see on the Charity Commission website, with the annual return.

I have very much enjoyed my time with Arcaid – huge thanks to my fellow trustees and to you all. I am handing over the very satisfying position of treasurer to Mark, with my best wishes.

And I am handing over 'the microphone' to Nikki, who will deal with the next agenda item, Trustee Elections.

Thank you.

6. Election to Committee – Nikki Matthews

Unfortunately we have received no nominations this year to replace Louise but the committee does have enough members to continue its work for Arcaid, which is good – but if anyone would like to join us, please do contact us. We're very nice – really – and you would be very welcome.

However, we do have some existing trustees whose term of office is up, and so they would like to stand for re-election again. Normally we would do this by a show of hands but given the unusual media with which we are holding this meeting, I am

proposing that we will assume you are all happy with the nomination unless an objection is raised. So, in a moment Fiona will unmute you all and you can raise any objection should you so wish.

We have 2 trustees who have come to the end of their 3-year term of office but are happy to stand for a further year.

Firstly, we would like to propose Mary Nolan. Does anyone have any objection? [No objections] Thank you.

We also have Maggie Putland. Does anyone want to raise any objection? [No objections] Thank you.

Now we also have 3 officers who have come to the end of their term of office and they are also happy to stand again. This will be for a further three years. We have Mariola Boyd, who is Chair, me, Nikki Matthews and I am vice-chair, and Fiona Dick who is our Secretary.

Does anyone have any objection to Mariola standing as Chair again? [no objections]

Does anyone have any objection to me standing as vice-chair? [no objections]

Does anyone have any objection to Fiona standing as Secretary? [no objections]

Thank you.

Finally, we would like to announce the appointment of Louise's replacement as Treasurer [ratified at meeting on November 11]. We are delighted to say that this post is going to be filled by Mark Baines, so a big thank you to Mark.

And now I'm going to hand over to Fiona to deal with any other business.

8. **Any other Business**

- Tony Tunstall asked if the information about amounts donated to individual projects could be made available as it would be to attendees at a 'normal' AGM. It was not included on the website. It was agreed that a list would be sent to attendees after the meeting.
- Ron Potter asked if this had been a record-breaking year for Arcaid. The general view was that, with the exception of one year when a significant legacy had been received, it was indeed the largest number of projects and the largest amount of money disbursed. He asked for a vote of thanks to be recorded, to mark a great year with great challenges and a great response. Mariola Boyd thanked him and stressed that Arcaid's success was solely due to the generosity of the contributors.
- Susie Duffy asked if supporters had ever been explicitly asked to remember Arcaid in their wills. No-one could remember such an initiative, but it was felt to be a very good idea, and the trustees would explore it further.
- Mary Nolan reminded everyone about the benefits of fundraising through easyfundraising.org.uk, and it was agreed that further details would be sent to attendees.

9. **Presentation – Karen Goldsmith** Fiona thanked everyone for attending the meeting, and then introduced Karen Goldsmith. Karen was a parishioner at St Joan's for over 30 years and deputy head at All Hallows School. She then worked

for the Diocese for a number of years before her retirement and has continued to be busy ever since! In 2019 she became a volunteer with Chios Eastern Shore Refugee Team (CESRT), giving humanitarian aid to refugees and asylum-seekers landing on the coast of the Aegean island of Chios, many of whom were victims of people-smuggling gangs. In response to a request from Karen, Arcaid had sent a donation to CERST during the year.

She described how she had decided to find an opportunity to do some hands-on volunteering and was put in touch with the Chios Eastern Shore Response Team; at the time she did not know where Chios was. The group has provided emergency support to every landing by refugees on the island's coast, which faces Turkey a few miles across the water, over the last 5 years. She made the powerful point that everyone of us is, or has been, a migrant at some point in our history. She explained the extremely varied origins of the migrants who travel to Chios, escaping war, violence and oppression.

She showed UN statistics about the routes taken, mainly through Greece, as the first point of contact with the EU. Many didn't get any further, finding themselves in 'holding camps', like the one on Chios. She recommended Khalid Hosseini's book 'Sea Prayer' about the plight of refugees facing the perils of a sea journey, saying that no one would risk the life of their child at sea if the land were not more dangerous. She also commented that she had not met a single 'economic migrant' in her time on Chios – they were all people who had been through the most traumatic situations.

She described how the people-smugglers operated, with overcrowded boats and fake life jackets, and the risks people accepted to escape Turkey – a dirty dirty business, she called it. She showed some of the support services CERST had introduced before lockdown. They provided essential food, water and dry, warm clothing for those who had just landed, but also language classes and support through the immigration process, a gardening project and games for the children.

She also described the changes she saw on later visits as the camp became more and more overcrowded and spilled out into surrounding farmland. The language centre was closed and local hostility increased. Lockdown has changed the situation even further, and she showed a video of the new ways the charity is distributing help.

She stressed that help continues to be needed, more than ever, and reminded us of what Pope Francis had said on World Migrant Day, that we need to get close to migrants and listen to them – they are destitute people with a traumatic past, a ghastly present and a very bleak future. We can try at least to make their life a little better and encourage them as they try to live in hope and find a future.

She finished: "All I can say is that my own experiences on Chios have taught me more than anything else in my life about poverty, about the gospel and about the richness of being human. I've learned so much from so many of those refugees." And she quoted Bishop Oscar Romero: "We are healed by those who are suffering and broken, they reveal to us our authentic life and reveal the presence of God. The Light of God shines in places we would rather not see."

Karen thanked Arcaid for the opportunity to speak, and Mariola thanked Karen for a talk that had been moving, inspiring and in parts, shocking. Karen was happy to take questions.

Bernard Whelan asked if there was any choice other than people smugglers – the answer was no. She suggested that anyone interested in finding out more should go to www.cesrt.org.

Nora Tarrant asked about the impact Covid had had on the island and in the camp. The virus only started to hit when the island opened up to summer tourists. Once it arrived it has been very difficult to deal with effectively, though there have been attempts to section off affected areas. There are efforts to reduce the overcrowding by moving people over to the mainland. The island has been in total lockdown and the hospital has been under great pressure.

Mariola thanked Karen again, for the talk and the amazing work she was involved in, and said that the customary speaker's cheque for the work of CESRT would be on its way. She also thanked everyone for attending and putting up with the technical challenges, and closed the meeting with goodnights from all participants.

The meeting closed at 9.40 pm
There were 42 in attendance