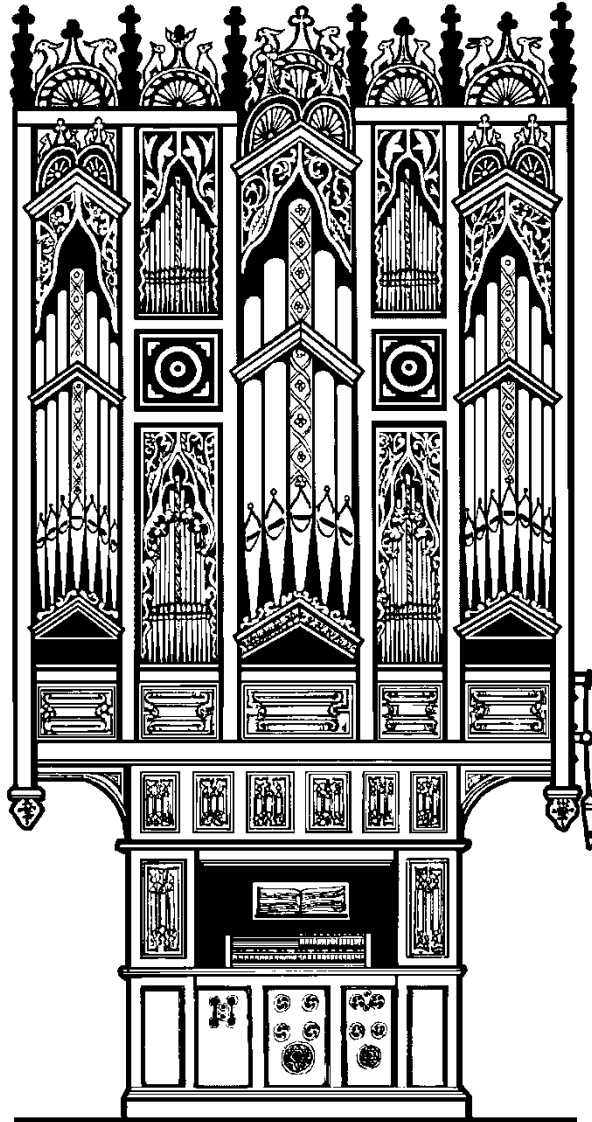


BRITISH INSTITUTE OF ORGAN STUDIES

Registered Charity No: 283936

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2026



**Agenda and Reports to be presented at the
Annual General Meeting to be held at the**

**The Grosvenor Chapel
24 South Audley Street, London W1K 2PA on**

Saturday 30 May 2026 at 14.00 hours

Annual Report for the period ended 31 December 2025

The British Institute of Organ Studies, is registered with the Charity Commission (No 283936) and administered through the Hon Secretary at Ashcroft, 10 Ridgegate Close, Reigate, Surrey, RH2 0HT under its revised Constitution adopted at the Annual General Meeting in 2023.

The management of the Charity is carried out by a Council, comprising:

Chairman	Dr William McVicker
Secretary	Melvin Hughes
Treasurer	Adrian Mumford
Membership	Melanie Plumley
Meetings	Richard Hobson
Publications	Dr Katharine Pardee
Casework	Nigel Stark
Other Members	Christopher Gray
	Dr David Shuker
	Paul Tindall
	Leonard Sanderman
	Mark Venning
	Owen Woods

1. The aims of the Institute are:
 - To promote objective, scholarly research into the history of the organ and its music in all its aspects, and, in particular, into the organ and its music in Britain;
 - To conserve the sources and materials for the history of the organ in Britain, and to make them accessible to scholars;
 - To work for the preservation and, where necessary, the faithful restoration of historic organs in Britain and to encourage their use and appreciation;
 - To encourage an exchange of scholarship with similar bodies and individuals abroad, and to promote, in Britain, a greater appreciation of historical overseas schools of organ-building.
2. Details of the current financial position will be found in the Financial Report and Accounts. Reports from individual Officers and others are provided, describing details of the Institute's activities during the year. Further information about the Institute is available at the BIOS Website:
www.bios.org.uk
3. Council is supported by a number of sub-committees as follows:

LISTING COMMITTEE

Terms of Reference

To receive applications, to consider and assess them and to make recommendations to BIOS Council for decision, within the agreed criteria and policy for the listing of historic pipe organs as laid down by BIOS Council, and otherwise deal with such routine matters on the subject of listing as may arise.

Membership

Dr John Rowntree - Chair
Jeffrey Williams - Administrator
Dr William McVicker - BIOS Chairman ex-officio
Dr Andrew Hayden
Matthew Hynes
Colin Menzies
Nigel Stark
David Wood
Owen Woods.

NPOR JOINT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Terms of Reference

To co-ordinate and monitor practical issues relating to the usage and management of the National Pipe Organ Register (NPOR) and to provide direction and oversight.

To report proceedings to the British Institute of Organ Studies (BIOS) Council.

Membership

The Committee currently comprises the NPOR Manager and 5 members of BIOS viz Chairman, Secretary, one Member acting as NPOR link to Council, one Member offering specialist IT advice and the Webmaster. The 2025 Membership is recorded under Item 4.8 of the Agenda 'National Pipe Organ Register'.

The Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Studies of the Royal College of Organists (RCO) receives papers and may attend JMC Meetings.

Background

BIOS owns and maintains the NPOR which aims to record details of every pipe organ in the country.

It is made available to the public as an online resource free of charge.

Under a Service Level Agreement with the RCO, day-to-day management services are provided by the RCO Administration Manager.

Under a second and separate SLA, BIOS had contracted (through the RCO) for the services of eStirling to host and maintain the NPOR Website. This arrangement was terminated in 2023 and the NPOR server is now hosted by Codeveloped Ltd.

The BIOS NPOR Joint Management Committee is a joint body which normally meets twice yearly at venues in London.

The Chairman of BIOS acts as Chairman of the Committee whilst the Secretary of BIOS acts as Secretary.

Proceedings of the JMC are reported to BIOS Council by the NPOR link nominee which includes including any issues which need to be discussed and resolved.

BRITISH ORGAN ARCHIVE STEERING COMMITTEE

Terms of Reference

To discuss and co-ordinate practical issues relating to the usage and management of the collection and policy with regard to matters such as acquisitions and storage.

To report proceedings to BIOS Council.

Membership

The Committee currently comprises two members representing the Cadbury Research Library (CRL) and four members of BIOS plus by invitation the Librarian of the Royal College of Organists. Membership during 2025 was:

BIOS: Nicholas Thistlethwaite, Dr David Knight, Richard Moore (since May 2025), Dr David Shuker, William Reynolds (since May 2025) and Dr William McVicker (the latter attending as BIOS Chair)

RCO: Andrew McCrea

CRL: Sue Worrall and Ivana Frlan (until summer 2025)

Background

The British Organ Archive (BOA) is owned by BIOS and housed in the Cadbury Research Library at the University of Birmingham. The collection is professionally managed and curated by the staff of the library.

The arrangement for the deposit of the Archive in the Library is governed by a signed agreement under which both parties reserve the right to give six months' notice of termination but in which the intention of the deposit is described on both sides as being 'for all time'.

The BIOS Organ Archive Steering Committee is a joint body which normally meets twice yearly.

PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE

Terms of Reference

To oversee the publishing of the Reporter and Journal, and work with the editors-in-chief of those publications: currently Paul Tindall (Reporter) and David Force (Journal).

To deal with all practical matters pertaining thereto: liaising with RILM, overseeing matters with the designer of the Journal (Julian Littlewood)

To handle special publications: accept submissions and vet them; oversee and review the proposals and make a recommendation to Council for approval or rejection; prepare the submitted material for publication (edit the material, prepare a budget for the publication, work with other editors who may or may not be paid depending on what they are asked to do; work with the book designer, handle ISBN numbers); ensure legal Book depository submissions; commission reviews; liaise with author; and all other matters related to presenting and publishing a book.

To report proceedings to BIOS Council.

Membership

Katharine Pardee (Chair), Nicholas Thistlethwaite and David Knight.

*Dr William McVicker
For and on behalf of the Council*

May 2026

AGENDA

Annual General Meeting to be held at The Grosvenor Chapel, 24 South Audley Street, London W1K 2PA on Saturday 30 May 2026 at 14.00 hours.

All members whose subscriptions have been duly paid are entitled to attend (free of charge) and to vote.

1. **Apologies**
2. **Minutes of Annual Meeting held on 12 April 2025 (see pages 6 to 10)**
3. **Matters arising**
4. **Reports (see pages 10 to 20)**
 - 4.1 Chairman
 - 4.2 Secretary
 - 4.3 Treasurer
 - 4.3.1 Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2025)
 - 4.3.2 Appointment of an Independent Examiner
 - 4.3.3 Subscription rates
 - 4.4 Membership Secretary
 - 4.5 Publications Officer
 - 4.6 Meetings Officer
 - 4.7 Publicity
 - 4.8 Information Services: British Organ Archive (BOA); National Pipe Organ Register (NPOR); Historic Organs Sound Archive (HOSA); BIOS Website
 - 4.9 Casework Officer
 - 4.10 Committee for the Listing of Historic Organs
 - 4.11 Historic Organs at Risk Register
 - 4.12 Heritage Adviser.
5. **Any other business**

Note on Elections

There is no election of officers and ordinary members in 2026. Since the changes to the Constitution made at the AGM in 2023, Officers serve for a period of 3 years (previously 2 years) and are eligible for re-election thereafter. Ordinary Members serve for a term of 3 years (previously 2 years) and are then eligible for re-election for one further period of 3 years (previously 2 years).

Council comprises 7 Officers and 6 Ordinary Members. At the AGM in 2024, 5 Officers and 3 Ordinary Members were elected – thus their term of office extends up to the AGM in 2027. At the AGM in 2025, 3 Officers and 3 Ordinary Members were elected – thus their term of office extends up to the AGM in 2028 (Note: A resignation had necessitated the Election of a further Officer in 2025). Therefore, there are no Elections falling due in 2026.

AGENDA ITEM 1 - Apologies

AGENDA ITEM 2 - Minutes of previous AGM

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held at The Dutch Church, 7 Austins Friars, City of London, London EC2N 2HA on Saturday 12 April 2025 at 14.00 hours.

31 Members were present.

The list of members who had died was read as follows:

Martin Ball, Philip Carter, Gordon Curtis. J M Emmerson, Dominic Gwynn, Richard Hird, Dr Christopher Kent, Dr Julian Litten, John Norman, Barbara Owen, Dr Alan Seymour, Dr Christopher Storr Peter Taylor, David Welch, David Wickens and Peter Wood.

1. Apologies

These were received from: Stephen Alliss, Paul Hale, Henry Macey, Christopher Moore, John Rowntree, David Shuker and Mark Venning

2. Minutes

The minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Saturday 18 May 2024 were agreed subject to minor typing errors which would be corrected in the file version.

3. Matters arising

There were none.

4. Reports

4.1 Chairman's Report: The Chairman's Report (printed in the AGM booklet) was read to the Meeting by the Chairman. In summary, William McVicker (Chair) noted that

Brainstorming Session

- A Brainstorming Session had taken at a meeting of Council on 21 September 2024 wherein Council members were able to express their views, to make observations, and, where necessary, to provide a critical commentary on the Institute's progress across a range of our activities. Of the follow-up actions, progress had been made on various fronts and with new initiatives.

New Website

- A new Website had been launched in November 2024 the outcome of a great deal of work by a sub committee and the fulfilling of requests made to them by Matt Dixon of Codeveloped Ltd who designed the new Website,

Holdich Book of Watercolours

- An album of ephemera relating to the work and life of the organ builder G M Holdich including specifications, handwritten and printed lists of his work, watercolours and letters, etc. had been acquired for the British Organ Archive. The contents had been photographed and the images would be made available to members through the Website. Further research into the album was expected in due course and it was hoped to produce a BIOS publication based on it.

PhD Studentship at the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire (RBC)

- A PhD studentship at the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire (RBC) had been agreed in principle relating to the English Organ and its repertoire, focusing on a mutually agreed area of study from the seventeenth to mid-nineteenth centuries and capitalising on the significant resources in the British Organ Archive (BOA), and almost 50 years of published material in the *Journal* and *Reporter*. A generous legacy from Mr Gary Rant, had enabled BIOS to commit funds to this new initiative.
- Provisional costings had been obtained for digitising items in the British Organ Archive in order to make them accessible online, and to release additional space for new acquisitions (by placing digitised items in long-term, off-site storage). However, the services of an archivist were needed to undertake a systematic review of the archive and to compile a complete catalogue and accurate handlists of the holdings. A formal proposal with costings to engage an archivist would be brought to a future meeting of Council. The legacy from Gray Rant would help to underpin both the cost of the archivist and digitisation of material.

Publications

- The publications team had been developed in order to share the considerable workload, as well as looking at ways of developing BIOS's digital presence. A good deal of work has been undertaken in preparing for future publications: not only to new books, but to the process of making BIOS resources available to members through digitisation of the *Reporter* and *Journal*.

Collaboration with other Groups

- Progress had been made in joining forces with other groups. There had been recent joint activities and autumn 2025 would see more. For example, BIOS was joining with Reading Borough Council on 13 September 2025 for its annual Heritage Open Day, linked this year with the RCO's *Play the Organ Year*, and would be presented in collaboration with the IAO, IBO, SWO and Berkshire OA as a mini-festival. In late October it was hoped to see a collaboration with the Cambridge Academy of Organ Studies (CAOS) at a study day looking at performance practice of English 17th and 18th century repertoire.
- Collaborating with groups in the heritage sector provided an interesting challenge and required further development work. A recent discussion with Dr David Knight, Church Buildings Council had identified other bodies BIOS should be in touch with.
- The general loss of pipe organs was of great concern to BIOS; some were to be made redundant, others require rehousing, and, of course, there were instruments *in situ* which were under threat and challenged by the lack of finance to keep churches open. One way to make an impact might be to pursue themed topics to drive a wider campaign of awareness. In the coming years BIOS might consider regional presentations in respect of organs under threat, in order to heighten local and national awareness of the problem and to raise public interest in the fate of heritage items under duress.
- BIOS also needed to monitor the effect of casework intervention, to explore potential for further coverage in the listing of historic organs and making NPOR coverage more proactive to update and improve information.

Golden Jubilee Trail

- BIOS's Golden Jubilee Year (2026) promise to be a major celebration with a range of new publications and a Residential Conference in Oxford featuring international speakers.
- Earlier editions of *BIOS Reporter* often carried a column entitled 'Notes and Queries' written by Bernard Edmonds and it would be of interest to hear what BIOS members were researching and exploring. Please could BIOS members send in their own queries, short articles, points of interest, observations and matters relating to their own research (solved or unsolved) to the Editor of the *Reporter*.

Correspondence

- The Chair had written a number of letters on behalf of BIOS, including to his own MP and to the DCMS in respect of the Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme (LPWGS), which was to continue for one year from March, with a cap of £25k per place of worship. A further letter was written to the new owners of Adlington Hall emphasising that they own an important organ and heritage asset. No reply was received to the latter.
- Correspondence with *Positif Press* in respect of the residual stock of Journals had continued with a resolution to the issue believed now to be in sight.

RIP

- A number of BIOS members have died in recent times, including a former Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer. Their passing has been noted in the pages of the *Reporter* and formal obituaries would appear in the *Journal*.

Thanks

- The Chair was conscious that BIOS generated a huge range of activity and he was grateful to every individual who fulfil the various roles within the organisation

4.2 Secretary's Report:

4.2.1 The Report was printed in the AGM Booklet.

The Secretary was thanked for his Report which was accepted by the Meeting.

4.3 Treasurer's Report:

Annual Report & Accounts

4.3.1 *Presentation and approval of accounts for the period ended 31 December 2024:* The BIOS Annual Report and Financial Statements for the period ended 31 December 2024 were printed in the AGM booklet. This was in the prescribed format required under the Charities Act 2011.

4.3.2 *Financial Review of the Year & Statement of Financial Activities* - Adrian Mumford (Treasurer) drew attention to a number of salient points:

- *Incoming Resources (Unrestricted Funds):* Net incoming resources for the year were £5,124 and the balance carried forward was a healthy £113,481.
- *Resources Expended (Restricted Funds):* The most significant expenditure was from the NPOR Fund, an amount of £10,739. This fund was supported by donors with a net incoming resource of £2k routinely transferred each year from Unrestricted Funds.
- *Net Incoming Resources (Restricted Funds):*; An amount of £7,457 had been expended on front loading a number of significant forthcoming publications. Previous publications had achieved a surplus and it was to be hoped that the new ones when they appear would achieve the same result.
- *Balance Sheet:* Total Funds as at 31 December 2024 were £168,936. Assets were shown as £6,000 (i.e. the cost of purchasing the Holdich book).
- *Notes to the Accounts (Contingent Asset):* It was noted that during the year we were notified that BIOS was a residuary legatee to the estate of a deceased member. Since this involved sale of property at year end it was not possible to measure reliably the full amount of the legacy which initially was estimated to be around £135k.

4.3.3 *Legacies to BIOS:* The full amount of the Gary Rant legacy would show in next year's accounts. There had also been a legacy from Richard Owen which was specifically for the NPOR – an amount of £24k which would be a very useful reinforcement to the NPOR Fund.

4.3.4 *Donations to NPOR:* The question was asked as to whether it was clear that donations made through the Website went to the NPOR Fund specifically rather than into general BIOS Funds. The Treasurer confirmed that every one-off donation was acknowledged by him and his response made clear that the donation would be wholly dedicated to the NPOR.

4.3.5 *Approval of Accounts:* This was proposed by Owen Woods and seconded by Mervyn Hogg and agreed unanimously.

Appointment of Independent Examiner

4.3.6 *Retirement of Independent Examiner:* Jonathan Hunt (present at the AGM) was not seeking to be reappointed this year and he was thanked for the number of years over which he had discharged this role.

4.3.7 *Appointment of New Independent Examiner:* Council had not identified a candidate and the Meeting agreed that an appointment might be made by Council.

Subscription Rates

4.3.8 *Subscription Rates:* The Treasurer noted that there had been a financial surplus many years in succession. There was no reason to propose any increase in subscription rates. This was agreed by the Meeting.

4.4 Membership Secretary:

4.4.1 The Report was printed in the AGM booklet. There was an upward trend in membership currently which the Chair hoped to reinforce with a recruitment campaign later in the year.

4.4.2 Melanie Plumley was thanked for her Report which was accepted by the Meeting.

4.5 Publications Officer:

4.5.1 The Report was printed in the AGM booklet.

4.5.2 Following questions it was reported that the Editor for JBIOS 49 (2025) was David Force and that JBIOS was not yet available to Members digitally although pdf copies could be requested from the Publications Officer.

4.5.3 Katie Pardee was thanked for her Report which was accepted by the Meeting.

4.6 Meetings Officer:

4.6.1 The Report was printed in the AGM booklet.

4.6.2 The Meetings Officer reminded the AGM that he was always pleased to receive offers from Members to organise Conferences. Also, it was hoped to hold a Bernard Edmonds Research Conference in Birmingham in February 2026 and papers would be welcome especially from new contributors.

4.6.3 Richard Hobson was thanked for his Report which was accepted by the Meeting.

4.7 Publicity: The Report was published in the AGM booklet.

4.7.1 No Report had been received.

4.8 Information Services:

4.8.1. The Nicholas Thistlethwaite's Report on the *British Organ Archive* ("BOA"), Mark Venning's Report on the National Pipe Organ Register ("NPOR"), Anne Page's Report on the *Historic Organs Sound Archive* ("HOSA") and Melanie Plumley's Reports on the Website and Social Media were all printed in the AGM booklet.

- It was reported that the BOA handlists were currently unavailable. Nicholas would follow this up.
- On HOSA, an increase in the number of recordings would be welcome.
- The use of 'X' (formerly Twitter) was being kept under review

4.8.2 The authors of the Reports - Nicholas Thistlethwaite, Mark Venning, Anne Page and Melanie Plumley - were thanked for their Reports which were accepted by the Meeting.

4.9 Casework Officer:

4.9.1 The Report was printed in the AGM booklet.

4.9.2 The organ (and case) in *St Cybi, Holyhead* was understood to be still in place.

4.9.3 Nigel Stark was thanked for his Report which was accepted by the Meeting.

4.10 Committee for the Listing of Historic Organs:

4.10.1 The Report was printed in the AGM booklet.

4.10.2 It was confirmed that the Listing Committee met 3 times a year immediately before Council meetings. If an urgent need arose to consider an application for Listing, then mechanisms existed to deal with any such request.

4.10.3 John Rowntree was thanked for his Report which was accepted by the Meeting

4.11 Historic Organs at Risk Register:

4.11.1 The Report was printed in the AGM booklet. There were currently 8 organs on the Register, one had been added and one removed.

4.11.2 It was not clear when organs were reviewed from the List whether this was for a negative or positive reason. Recording instruments on the list might be potentially persuasive in demonstrating the quality of that particular organ.

4.11.2 Jonathan Goodchild was thanked for his Report which was accepted by the meeting.

4.12 Heritage Adviser:

4.12.1 The Report was printed in the AGM booklet.

4.12.2 Jonathan Goodchild was thanked for his Report which was accepted by the Meeting.

The Chair was thanked by the Meeting for the leadership he had provided and the manner in which BIOS was moving forward.

5. Elections

5.1 The following election of Officers and Ordinary Members of Council was set out in the Notice of the Meeting published in BIOS Reporter (February 2025): Membership Secretary, Casework Officer, Publications Officer and 3 Ordinary Members of Council.

5.2 Details of the nominations received were set out in the AGM Booklet.

5.3 Since only 1 nomination had been received for Membership Secretary, Casework Officer, Publications Officer and 3 Ordinary Members of Council. where there were 3 vacancies, then, in accordance with the Constitution, the following election were made:

Membership Secretary: Melanie Plumley (proposed by William McVicker, seconded by Adrian Melvin Hughes);

Publications Officer: Katharine Pardee (proposed by Anne Page, seconded by Melvin Hughes);

Casework Officer: Nigel Stark (proposed by David Shuker, seconded by Melvin Hughes)

Meetings Officer: Richard Hobson (proposed by Christopher L Bacon, seconded by Melvin Hughes);

Ordinary Members of Council:

- David Shuker (proposed by Paul Tindall, seconded by Melvin Hughes);
- Paul Tindall (proposed by David Shuker, seconded by Melvin Hughes);
- Mark Venning (proposed by Adrian Mumford, seconded by Colin Menzies).

6. Any Other Business

The Chair thanked the Treasurer, Secretary and Publications Officer for their contribution to the work of BIOS throughout the year.

7. Close

The Meeting closed at 15.12.

AGENDA ITEM 3 – MATTERS ARISING

AGENDA ITEM 4 - REPORTS

CHAIR'S REPORT (Agenda Item 4.1)

The last twelve months have seen continued activity across the range of BIOS's interests. Some of these activities have been shaped, at least in part, by the brainstorming session held on 21 September 2025.

Website

This is now up and running and has been largely free of problems, thanks to the sterling work by Matt Dixon and continued support from webmaster Melanie Plumley. The site has been targeted by external forces trying to find system weaknesses, but these have been largely aimed at the 'book store' and sales of items. So far these spam requests have been resisted and are recognised for what they are.

The website is home to the Holdich watercolours and I'm pleased to report there has been much activity looking at the images. This interest has resulted in an article which will form part of Journal 50.

There has been much activity in tidying up the site and adding new pages, including a short history of BIOS suitable for its 50th anniversary.

PhD studentship

After a considerable administrative hiatus at the RBC the project is beginning to gain traction. We are currently stuck in contractual matters, but we look forward to the flowering of this collaboration over the next months.

Archivist

We have now appointed an archivist. In addition to the day-to-day activities of the BOA we hope that progress can be made on the compilation of an inventory of holdings. This is necessary to assess how much the digitisation of the archive (or part thereof) will cost. More on this below.

Publications

Gerry Sumner's book on Cavallé-Coll's organs in Britain was launched at Reading Town Hall in September 2025 and continues to sell well. In addition to that volume, we continue to enjoy the Reporter and the Journal. The residual stock of material from Positif Press was secured last year. The team of people involved includes David Force, David Shuker, Julian Littlewood (who has been busy behind the scenes preparing my own book for publication), headed by indefatigable Katie Pardee.

Collaboration

In September last year BIOS collaborated with the RCO, IAO, IBO, BOA and SWO in a major event at Reading Town Hall. This was very well attended and we are grateful to the Town Hall staff for enabling it. It is hoped to undertake a similar collaboration at Reading in the future in order to develop our relationship with the heritage sector. Plans for a similar event this September have been shelved, as the proposed approach was not agreed by one of the collaborative partners.

Golden Jubilee Conference

Planning work for the conference has occupied a good deal of time for a range of people, including Mel, Melvin, Adrian, Richard and — most of all — Katie. We can confidently announce this to have been a success. I heartily thank the team— especially Katie — for their diligent work covering every aspect of the preparation and delivery of the event.

Digitisation of the BOA

Behind the scenes (and in collaboration with Melvin and Adrian) I have been developing a few strands looking specifically at fundraising for the possible continuation of the post of archivist and the costs of the digitising the holdings. I do not intend to say more about this at present, but I hope that we will be able to pursue these matters with greater rigour through external relationships with grant awarding bodies.

Intangible cultural heritage

The topic of how to deal with organ redundancies has received a good deal of press attention in recent times. I wrote (via the IAO) to all organists' associations to ask whether they knew of organs at risk in their area and whether they would be prepared to hold some kind of investigative meeting based around a particular at-risk instrument. I had hoped this could be done collaboratively with BIOS. However, I received only a limited response from individual regional organisations, mainly noting that they did not know of organs under threat. On account of this I have begun pursuing another collaborative event which I hope will take place on the 19 September this year at Reading Town Hall where it would be possible to look at the question in a broader context. For example, issues relating to the future of the pipe organ include education and outreach, the loss of intangible cultural heritage, endangered heritage crafts (organ playing, manufacturing skills), apprenticeships, organ building, maintaining and enhancing the NPOR, digitising the BOA, organs on the At-Risk Register (HOAR), Pipe Up's organ-rehousing successes, encouraging organists — especially women through SWO — and strengthening regional and national activities.

Correspondence

BIOS engaged in the Heritage Crafts' call to identify endangered crafts (<https://heritagecrafts.org.uk/craft/organ-building/>)

A further letter was written to the new owners of Adlington Hall. No reply was received.

RIP

A number of BIOS members have died in recent times and their passing noted in the pages of the Reporter and Journal. As we go to press, we have learned of the very recent deaths of Nicholas Plumley and David Patrick. Deaths of colleagues are a salutary reminder that any important historical material amassed by members in their own collections is at risk unless steps are taken to ensure that the future of such documents is assured. Members might like to think about 'Acceptance in Lieu', which can be extremely tax efficient for an estate. Some members might like to consider naming BIOS as a beneficiary in their Will. We have already received several legacies which will be put to good use in furthering BIOS's aims.

Outgoing Members of Council

We extend our thanks to outgoing member of Council — Chris Gray (Publicity Officer) — and look forward to welcoming his successor.

Thanks

Since taking office in May 2024, I have been ably assisted by the Secretary and Treasurer in order to pick up from where previous Chairs have steered the BIOS ship. I am grateful for the support of all those involved in Publications, Meetings, Publicity, Casework, Listing, At-Risk Register and Heritage as well as the specialised areas of the British Organ Archive, National Pipe Organ Register, Historic Sound Archive (where exciting new recordings have been added), the new Website and Social Media.

BIOS could not function as it does without the contributions and dedicated work of those who fulfil these roles. The work of the Institute is quite extraordinary and far-reaching and I thank everyone personally for their contribution, especially the Secretary, Treasurer and new Membership Secretary-cum-Webmaster, all of whose attention to detail is noteworthy.

William McVicker
BIOS Chair

SECRETARY'S REPORT (Agenda Item 4.2)

Council met 4 times during the year under review.

The Committee for the Listing of Historic Organs Committee met on three occasions (one in person, 2 via Zoom).

The Joint Management Committees for the National Pipe Organ Register (NPOR) met twice during the year.

The Joint Steering Committee for the British Organ Archive (BOA) met twice during the year.

Melvin Hughes

TREASURER (Agenda Item 4.3)

Annual Report & Financial Statements (2025) - See separate Document

MEMBERSHIP REPORT (Agenda Item 4.4)

Our membership total of 492 as we began 2026 was identical to that at the start of 2025. This is perhaps a positive feature to be celebrated when many organisations are seeing reductions in numbers. To maintain the total when in 2025 we recorded the deaths of twelve members, the resignations of fifteen (often for reasons citing advancing age and disconnect from pipe organ matters) and eight who were removed for non-payment of their subscriptions is perhaps cause for celebration. It reflects thirty-five new memberships sold. At the time of finalising this report membership numbers had risen to a total of 495, despite ten members being declared lapsed or having resigned. Of this total, 14 are students which is a larger proportion than at any previous time.

We cannot be complacent as it seems inevitable reaping will continue and an increasing proportion of the membership becomes entitled to the age concession. Our definition of the age concession is left vague as many members opt to continue supporting BIOS at the full rate long after their retirement dates. When pressed for a formal definition of the age entitlement it is given as 'being of at least the UK state pension age, and having retired from whatever was the professional career'. As we have no record of the age of members this has to be left to individuals to claim it when they feel it is reasonable.

When first introduced the student concessionary rate required providing sight of a full time student card from any recognised educational establishment but more recently the guidelines have become unclear. As many organists and other craftspeople rightly consider study to be a lifelong activity, the working definition now in use is that our student members should be in some form of education and not to have commenced the fee-earning, salaried or other paid stage of their profession.

In earlier years BIOS has taken a very flexible approach to late arriving subscription payments, even allowing underpaying standing orders to accumulate arrears carried from year to year. This is no longer the case and in 2025 the non-payment deadline of 1st August defined in the constitution was applied and will be again this year. Unsettled accumulated arrears have also resulted in the termination of some memberships. Members are reminded that subscriptions are due, not on the anniversary of joining, but on the 1st of January every year.

If you suspect you could be one of the 29 members who have not yet paid, please make contact! The Membership Secretary will always be happy to clarify the status of an account and takes questions by email, text message, WhatsApp, social media and posted letter.

A new edition of the List of Members was published in November 2025 and reflects the latest information we had on file at that time. The next edition is not expected to appear until November 2027 but it is important we have accurate contact details. Fortunately, we now have email addresses for the majority of members. Even if you do not wish your contact details to be published in the list of members, it saves our administration costs if we can use email. During 2026 we will be refreshing both our GDPR records and also our Gift Aid records and hope to minimise the use of posted letters.

Melanie Plumley
Membership Secretary

PUBLICATIONS OFFICER REPORT (Agenda Item 4.5)

The 49th issue of the BIOS Journal, edited by our new Executive Editor Dr David Force, was distributed in the early autumn of 2025. It was a particularly long and rich issue, and both congratulations and thanks are owed to David for his work and expertise. The 50th anniversary issue of the Journal, planned for autumn 2026, is well underway.

Thanks to Dr David Shuker for his excellent work on the Reporter which he has continued to put together faithfully four times a year. After several years in his current and second stint as Reporter Editor, David is passing the baton to Paul Tindall, who will take over with the next issue. Thank you very much, David, for your extremely hard work, creativity, and efficiency. We look forward to a continuation of the informative and interesting Reporter in the hands of Paul.

The entire run of BIOS Journals has now been uploaded to the BIOS website and is available free of charge to all BIOS members. This could prove to be an excellent incentive for membership. Full text of the Reporter, with the exception of some recent years, is also available to all, whether members or

not. It is hoped that we will soon be able to overcome the technical difficulties of the missing issues so that this run will be complete.

It has been a busy year with the publication of BIOS books. Gerald Sumner's long-awaited book on Cavallé-Coll's organs in Britain finally was brought out in September 2025 and is available for purchase on the website. Following that, William McVicker's massive two-volume work, *The Tonal Architecture and Music of the English Organ*, was launched at the 50th anniversary residential conference in Oxford in April 2026. Because BIOS seeks not make a surplus but only to cover costs with these books, the prices are able to be kept low (before long in some cases the postage may cost more than the books themselves.)

The 50th Anniversary publication Biographical Dictionary, edited by Nicholas Thistlethwaite and Paul Tindall is in production as well.

The Publications arm of BIOS continue to try and be a beacon for the organisation in the wider world, and an important source of information for all those interested in the British organ, and its global influence.

Katharine Pardee
Publications Officer

MEETINGS OFFICER REPORT (Agenda Item 4.6)

Saturday February 22nd 2025

**Bernard Edmonds Research Conference at the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire
Papers:**

Dr David Shuker

The organs and women organists of Eaton Hall, Cheshire in the Georgian and Victorian era.

Owen Woods

Harrison & Harrison and the History of the French Horn Stop

Dr William McVicker

The Holdich Album – recently acquired for the English Organ Archive

Dr Anna Stepler

In defence of the organ: Pipes and Politics in Anhalt, 1596

Drew Cantrill-Fenwick

English influences on nineteenth-century French organ culture.

Dr Maggie Kilbey

Church barrel organs: some questions and answers

Daniel Mould and Godfrey Leung

Visit to the Organ Studio to see the new Drake organ

Attendance: 37

Saturday 12th April

Day Conference and AGM 2025

The Dutch Church, 7 Austin Friars, London EC2N 2HA.

The morning programme included a talk about the history of the church and its library by the Minister Ds Bertjan van de Lagemaat.

Wills, Willis and St Monica's Care Home, Westbury-on-Trym, the history and technical detail of what was the Wills family house organ presented by Dr William McVicker and Owen Woods.

The AGM at 2pm was followed by a talk by Dr David Titterington, Organist of the church, on the background to the new organ installed by Willem van Leeuwen of Leiderdorp in 1954 following the destruction of the church in 1940. A recital was then given by two pupils of Dr Titterington:

Hamish Wagstaff

Dietrich Buxtehude (1637-1707)

J S Bach (1685-1750)

Nicolaus Bruhns (1665-1697)

Praeludium in F sharp minor BuxWV 146

Allein Gott in der Höh sei 'Ehr BWV 676

Praeludium in E minor

Jason Tang

Georg Muffat (1653-1704)

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

Michael Praetorius (1571-1621)

Toccatà Octava

Schmücke dich, o leebe Seele

Ein feste burg

Saturday 7th June 2025
St John's, Chichester

Opened in 1813, St John's Chapel is a rare surviving example of a Georgian proprietary chapel retaining most of its original early nineteenth century features. Proprietary chapels were a solution to the problem of insufficient capacity within existing parish churches to meet the spiritual needs of a growing 18th and early 19th century urban population. The chapel is now in the care of the Churches Conservation Trust and the Friends of St John's Chapel, and is used for concerts and a wide range of cultural events. An organ was provided by George Pike England when the chapel was opened, but after a number of 'rebuids' was eventually dismantled in 1980. It has now been reconstructed by Goetze and Gwynn with largely original pipework and a copy of the original case.

Margaret Phillips

William Russell – Voluntary IX in A minor Largo & Fugue

Dr Alan Thurlow

The history of St John's Chapel and the G.P.England organ.

Dr Nicholas Thistlethwaite

G.P.England and the reconstruction of the organ with a demonstration of individual stops.

Rob Balfour-Rowley of Goetze and Gwynn

The reconstruction of the organ.

Martin Renshaw

The story of the chapel and organ, as told by John Marsh.

Jane Warner Jones, Conservation Projects Manager at the Churches Conservation Trust, and Dr David Knight, Deputy Director for Church Buildings, Church Commissioners, Cathedral and Church Buildings Department, who spoke about redundant churches and their organs.

Recital by Margaret Phillips

Voluntary in G Op 5 no 3 John Stanley (1712–1786)
Voluntary no. 5 in A minor Charles Wesley (1757–1834)
Four pieces for small organ Op. 18 Hugo Distler (1908–1942)
Variations on Mijn God, waar zal ik henegaan Klaas Bolt (1927–1990)
Four pieces from Twelve Short Pieces Samuel Wesley (1766–1837)
Piece no 6 (from An Overture and Six Pieces) John Marsh (1752–1828)

Attendance: 27

Saturday 26 July 2025

IBO AGM

The IBO has once again invited BIOS members to attend the morning session and lunch on the day of their AGM in London, 26th July. There will be visits to the organs of St Andrew's, Holborn (Mander 1989), and St Alban's (Compton 1961, recently restored by B.C.Shepherd & Sons).

Saturday 13th September

Reading Town Hall Heritage Open Day

Come and hear and play the famous 'Father' Willis organ

A joint event celebrating the Royal College of Organists' Play The Organ Year 2025 in collaboration with Berkshire Organists Association (BOA), The British Institute of Organ Studies (BIOS), and the IBO

Heritage intro to the Town Hall and its Organ Nicholas Thistlethwaite

Andrew Scott from H&H -- how does an organ work?

Recital by Tom Bell

Come and play the organ

Masterclass with Tom Bell

BIOS in the Waterhouse Chamber

Organ Restoration : why bother?

Bruce Buchanan on the Willis dynasty fall-out

Copies of Gerry Sumner's new book on Cavaillé-Coll in England were on sale for the first time.

Saturday 29th November

Lunch at the Grosvenor Chapel

Attendance 19

Richard Hobson

PUBLICITY (Agenda Item 4.7)

No report received.

INFORMATION SERVICES: BOA/NPOR/HOSA/WEBSITE/SOCIAL MEDIA (Agenda Item 4.8)

British Organ Archive

During 2025-2026, the membership of the British Organ Archive Joint Steering Committee (Nicholas Thistlethwaite, David Knight, Andrew McCrea, William McVicker, and David Shuker) was augmented by the addition of Richard Moore and William Reynolds. The Cadbury Research Library was represented by staff members Susan Worrall and Ivana Frlan. The latter had been the first point of contact for both BIOS officers and BOA users for many years, but retired from her post at the CRL in the summer of 2025. The committee expressed BIOS's gratitude to Ms Frlan for her outstanding support for the BOA and the ready assistance that she and her colleagues had offered to enquirers and visitors.

Discussions continued about the feasibility of digitising some of the collection in order to permit selected items to be put into off-site storage in order to release space for new accessions. This would also enable parts of the collection to be made available for consultation online. The matter is urgent, because BIOS regularly receives enquiries about possible accessions and currently there is virtually no space to house new items. The committee fears that, sooner or later, a major and important collection of material – either the archives of an organ-builder, or a significant personal collection of manuscript or photographic materials – will be offered, and BIOS will be unable to accept it.

Alongside this concern, the committee has become increasingly aware of the need for (again) a suitably-experienced Archivist to review and expand the catalogue, consider demands of conservation, and advise on the digitisation project. The current BIOS Chairman, Dr McVicker, pointed out that the society has received a number of generous financial bequests in recent years, and that some of these might be applied to the support of an Archivist for at least a limited term, and that financial support from BIOS might attract matched-funding from another charitable body. A proposal was therefore taken to the BIOS Council, and it was agreed that a sum of the order of £54,000 should be transferred to the Cadbury Research Library to support the post. On this basis, a recruitment process has been successfully undertaken, and the appointment will shortly be announced. The new Archivist will necessarily be managed as a member of the CRL team, but with regular input and guidance from the Joint Steering Committee. They will also deal with external enquiries and visitors to the BOA.

A highlight of 2025-2026 was the acquisition of the Holdich manuscript, described in the BIOS Reporter (November 2024). Also added to the BOA collection this year was the notebook of Herbert Charles Tuckwell, containing details of his work for Gray & Davison during the latter part of the nineteenth century; this was conveyed to BIOS by Bruce Buchanan, and it has been added to the Gray & Davison archive. Finally, Professor Ian Needleman gave two letters of Ralph Downes to the BOA.

A catalogue of the David Graebe drawings (case designs) in the BOA was completed by Peter Vessey, to whom BIOS owes its thanks.

Tribute was paid to Dr David Wickens who served many years as a volunteer archivist, and who died at the end of 2024.

*Nicholas Thistlethwaite
Chairman of the BOA Joint Steering Committee*

National Pipe Organ Register

The National Pipe Organ Register is owned by BIOS, managed by Andrew Macintosh under an Agreement with the Royal College of Organists, and operated by a team of loyal and dedicated volunteer editors. The webmaster is Matt Dixon. The cost to BIOS of providing this free service, some £10,000 per annum, is offset by donations to the NPOR Fund.

The functions of the NPOR are overseen by a Joint Management Committee, representing BIOS and the RCO, which meets twice a year.

1. **Events.** In March we were saddened by the death of John Norman, a long-standing member of the management committee, at the age of 93. His far-reaching memories of organ-building firms and individuals had recently made a great contribution towards the updating of the Directory of British Organ Builders.

In May, our President hosted a meeting of NPOR editors in Cambridge. This was a valuable opportunity not only to discuss technical developments, share problems and exchange views, but also for BIOS to thank the editors for their sterling work behind the scenes.

2. **Administration of the Register.** It's gratifying to report that the NPOR and its website continue to operate well, thanks to the good work of those involved: Andrew Macintosh as manager, Matt Dixon as webmaster, and of course our team of indefatigable editors.

Most submissions are now made on-line: this, together with Matt's improvements to the editing technology, is helping to streamline the editors' work. Plans are in hand to update the guidance for those making submissions in order to make it more user-friendly.

3. **Donations to the NPOR Fund.** We were delighted and touched to receive a very substantial legacy from the estate of Richard Owen, Bristol architect and organ aficionado, specifically designated for the NPOR. This will greatly help to safeguard its future and support its development.

Running costs remain a major responsibility for BIOS. The Treasurer reports a significant drop in the number of donations, although they still contributed £8644 to the annual running cost of some £10,000. A subvention of £2,000 is added annually from BIOS funds.

The reduced number of donations is hardly surprising in view of the current economic climate. Once again I invite members, and especially users of the NPOR, to assist BIOS by supporting the NPOR Fund. Standing orders are the ideal way of doing this, and can easily be set up via the NPOR website.

4. **Directory of British Organ Builders.** The excellent news here is that Paul Graham has finished the major task of updating the lists of Firms and Persons in the DBOB, bringing its terminus forward from 1950 to the present day. Paul is to be congratulated on this achievement, which was initiated by our past-chairman Alan Thurlow. Naturally we expect more information to come to light as time goes on: updates and corrections are always welcome and should be submitted via the NPOR manager (npor@bios.co.uk). Paul will continue to monitor any developments.

*Mark Venning
Council member and NPOR Link*

Historic Organ Sound Archive

Two recordings have been added to the Historic Organ Sound Archive since the last AGM: the Sutton organ in Jesus College Chapel (after recent work by the Drake Workshop) played by Benjamin Sheen, and St John's Chichester (restored by Goetze & Gwynn) played by Margaret Phillips. The sound engineer for both recordings was BIOS member Dr Julian Sale. They join the collection on the HOSA YouTube channel and have been added to the relevant playlists, Cambridge City (six videos including St Andrew the Less which is on the Historic Organs at Risk Register) and Georgian Style 1750-1825 (eleven videos).

*Anne Page
Curator of the Historic Organ Sound Archive*

BIOS Website

The BIOS website rebuild has now been in use since November 2024 and has proved very successful. Being built on a WordPress platform, it allows quick and easy editing, even from the web manager's phone. Like any new resource it has taken a little while to gain familiarity and overcome problems.

Our first attempt to manage on-line events bookings using Eventbrite created difficulties for some, had greater fees than initially expected, and so was abandoned. A new system developed for us by our web design company, Codeveloped, has proved successful handling recent events bookings including the 2026 AGM.

A section of the website accessible only to paid-up members was included from the start but only in summer 2025 did it gain content; the images from the Holdich notebook. Later in 2025, a full archive of BIOS Journals from Volume 1 (1977) to the most recent were added allowing them to be browsed on line and, if required, downloaded to user's own devices. All members are encouraged to take advantage of this resource. Assistance getting logged in is available by contacting the Membership Secretary.

The webstore facility allows selling of all the books and other products BIOS has available which at the time of writing total 62 items. In 2025 this created sales well over £8,000, not including subscriptions. Post and packing costs have risen dramatically, especially to overseas destinations and our shipping cost formula has been refined and is kept under review to ensure it covers our costs.

During 2025, the BIOS website, a separate resource from the NPOR site, had over 14,000 visits with surges of interest when social media promoted events or the publication of new books. Some technical issues exist with the management of membership information for web access purposes and background work will continue on this and other areas as resources permit.

Melanie Plumley

Social Media Report

Whether a Facebook user or not, anyone can view the page by visiting www.facebook.com/BritishInstituteofOrganStudies. The page has been live since October 2013 and has had many thousands of views. There are now over 2,500 followers, a major increase from the 350 ten years ago.

Items posted to social media can be more wide-ranging than we publish in our website news which tends to be only content directly connected with BIOS. Social media might feature anything likely to be of interest to those with an interest in pipe organs, whether the story relates to BIOS or not.

The X feed (previously Twitter) established at the start of 2014 sometimes gets a précis of material posted to the Facebook page. Since we began using it, the nature of X has changed, the reach it gives us is now uncertain and so we make fewer postings. An Instagram account now exists and is found at the link [@biosorgan](https://www.instagram.com/biosorgan). Links to all BIOS social media feeds are found in the footers of our webpages.

Melanie Plumley

CASEWORK OFFICER'S REPORT (Agenda Item 4.9)

There have been thirteen casework enquiries during the last twelve months.

These can be summarised thus:

- Advice on proposed changes to existing organs.
- Advice on how to go about starting an organ restoration project.
- Information requested on the historical significance of instruments.
- Finding information about particular organs.
- Information about available grants for organs.

- Advice on disposing of unwanted organs. Unfortunately, this is the most common request.

*Nigel Stark
Casework Officer*

COMMITTEE FOR THE LISTING OF HISTORIC ORGANS (Agenda Item 4.10)

The Committee has met on three occasions over the past year. The principal results of the meetings can be seen in the organs which the BIOS Council have approved for Listing. Details of these are published in the BIOS Reporter and on the Website.

The Committee continues to maintain a close working relationship with the Historic Organs at Risk Scheme

I cannot stress sufficiently the care, thoughtfulness, and efficiency of Jeffrey Williams, as Secretary, and to express my thanks, once again for the support, expertise and sense of humour of the Committee members - Dr Andrew Hayden, Matthew Hynes, Colin Menzies, David Wood, Owen Woods and Nigel Stark. The Committee has also greatly benefitted at recent meetings from the presence of the BIOS Chairman, Dr William McVicker.

While some organs proposed for listing are essentially intact, and are coherent artistic entities, others can contain layers of work or interventions. How far is such an instrument a historic entity where the layers are important? How far is a particular aspect of the organ of high significance, or to what extent has the organ simply lost what historic integrity it had? Such questions demand much thought by the Committee and such discussions are not straightforward. I am very conscious of the care and thought given by the Committee members to applications where the organ, as so often in Britain, has layers of past work or interventions.

A further matter arising from the Listing of Historic Organs is their use. Most organists in Britain appear to want a two-manual organ with a full pedalboard. Many historic organs are not like this and pose questions or problems for those who play them. If historic instruments are not simply to moulder away, is there not an important role for BIOS to assist those, especially relatively unskilled players, to make the most of such organs in terms of repertory and technique, rather than bemoan their suggested deficiencies. Might a programme of education by BIOS not only help with the music where such organs exist but draw attention to their significance?

Whilst again urging members, church officials and organ builders and their staff to propose organs for listing, I would also urge applicants to read with care the Criteria for Historic Listing, given in each Reporter and on the BIOS website.

*Dr John Rowntree
Chairman of the Committee for the Listing of Historic Organ*

HISTORIC ORGANS AT RISK REGISTER (Agenda Item 4.11)

During 2025, the organs at Kelton, Cornholme and Ipswich, St Clement were removed from the Register; those at Stenhouse and Carron, New Deer, Liff and Fraserburgh were added. The last three organs were unlisted at the time of the application; therefor, a procedure for spot listing was developed and agreed by the Council.

There were ten organs on the Register at the end of 2025:

Place	Date added	Organ	NPOR	Listed
Cambridge, St Andrew the Less	April 2017	c. 1856 Dawson, 1885 Miller.	N05165	HOCS
Devizes St Mary	June 2018	Sweetland 1855	N08432	HOCS
Tollington Park, St Mark	June 2019	Gray & Davison 1849, 1877-9	N16847	Grade II*

Edge Hill, St Mary/All Saints	September 2020	Bewsher and Fleetwood 1825-45	E00369	Grade I
South Pickenham, All Saints	April 2024	Dawson of Cambridge 1857, casework by Bethune, all based on a sketch by Sir John Sutton	N06659	Grade I
St Erth Methodist Chapel	October 2024	Forster and Andrews 1864	K00170	Grade II*
Stenhouse and Carron Church	June 2025	Binns, 1902	G01473	Grade I
New Deer Church	August 2025	Willis, 1887	N18129	Grade II*
Fraserburgh Church	August 2025	Forster and Andrews, 1892	R00308	Grade II*
Liff Church	August 2025	Young, 1880	E00082	Grade I

Jonathan Goodchild
Co-ordinator, Historic Organs at Risk Register

HERITAGE ADVISER (Agenda Item 4.12)

The following issues have been discussed by the Council:

- The demise of the Listed Places of Worship Grants Scheme and its replacement with a different and more limited grant scheme.
- A debate in Westminster Hall in May 2025 on churches and religious buildings.
- The Culture, Media and Sport Select Committee report on Protecting Built Heritage.
- Capeli Cymru, Preserving the Nonconformist Heritage of Wales, a new lottery-funded project by the Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of Wales.
- Intangible Cultural Heritage, the DCMS/UNESCO Inventory.
- War memorials, funding for the National Heritage Memorial Fund to support the repair and conservation of war memorials across the UK.
- Church of England guidance on organs, which had been refreshed.

Jonathan Goodchild
Heritage Adviser

AGENDA ITEM 6 - ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The cover illustration is based on the Old Radnor case
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