

Paper 1 SANHS AGM 2020

Chairman's Report

Since the last AGM, the Board of Trustees met in June, September, and November in 2019, and January of 2020. The board meeting for March was cancelled due to the Covid19 situation and business was dealt with by email. A General Meeting was also held in December with a low attendance. As this is a discretionary meeting, it will only be held if there are matters that need raising before the AGM with the membership.

There were two extra meetings called in July to deal with problems that arose unexpectedly, one was a matter regarding nonpayment of rent from a tenant and the second was to decide management of the Norman Gardens project following the resignation of the vice chair who was the lead for the project and had been responsible for raising the finances, supported by Janet Tall of the SWHT.

The Hon Treasurer had stood down at the 2019 AGM and despite circulating the vacancy it wasn't until late in the year that someone came forward. Kathy Brown has held a similar post where she was living but was moving to Somerset. She had hoped to join us in January of this year but renovations to the property she was moving to have not gone smoothly and she still hasn't arrived. David Victor has continued with a lot of his previous responsibility, the office manager took on some of the work and some Trust members have taken on some of the other responsibilities. We are indebted to David for carrying out those tasks that are required legally.

Unfortunately Tom Winsborough who had joined us in February 2019 as Hon Secretary resigned for health reasons later in the year. We are still without a Vice Chairman or Hon Sec. as I write this. The posts have been advertised on the South West Federation website with no response. Neither of these posts are a full time commitment and do not require presence in the office on a frequent basis. I had no previous experience with management of a society such as SANHS, but we have a very competent office manager who is there to support and point you in the right direction.

Our number of Trustees stands at 10, and we would welcome more members to come forward to help with the work of the Society. If you are considering becoming a Trustee, you would be welcome to attend one of the Board meetings as an observer.

We continue to keep the policies up to date, the risk register is monitored at each Board meeting and completed work is removed from the business plan but without additional help this may fall behind.

Fiona Holmes 100 pot challenge had a spinoff whereby an event was held looking at the William De Morgan collection with talks by specialists in the field of ceramics. This was very successful and people have asked for more of these events to celebrate our collections. These can only be held if people are prepared to come forward to help in the organisation, as the collections cannot be removed from the Heritage Centre. Amal Khreisheh who is one of the curators of SWHT spent a whole day moving furniture and preparing the room, for which we are extremely grateful.

Rob Webley is now the Proceedings Editor, Mary Siraut having finished her final piece of indexing. The Society has made Mary an Honorary Member as a way of showing our appreciation for the years she has carried out the task on a voluntary basis.

Unfortunately, due to a change of publisher, things did not go smoothly but plans have been set in place to ensure this doesn't happen again.

We have been successful in recruiting an editor for the newsletter. Martin plans to retire this year and was looking for an activity he could enjoy doing.

In 2018 Julian Orbach organised access to some of the buildings in Taunton which are not readily available to the general public, and last year, three of the Taunton Town guides from the Museum of Somerset took the volunteers on a history tour of the town.

Christine Jessop