



Somerset Archaeological & Natural History Society
MEETING OF THE SANHS BOARD OF TRUSTEES
Held at Castle House 17th September 2021 at 14:00

MINUTES

Present: Chris Jessop (Vice-Chair), David Dawson (Chair of Archaeology Comm.), Sue Goodman (Trustee, Chair of Library Comm., Minutes), Lizzie Induni (Trustee, Chair of Historic Buildings Comm.), Gerardine McHugh-Soliman (Trustee), David Reid (Trustee, Chair of NH Comm.), Martin Salzer (Trustee).

Welcome: new Trustees Martin Salzer (Hon. Treasurer) and Gerry McHugh-Soliman.

1. Apologies

Chris Chanter, Harriet Induni (formally elected Trustee at the AGM), Christine Webster (third new Trustee), Louisa Gillett

2. Declarations of Interest

None declared.

3. Minutes and matters arising from the meeting of the board on 12th June.

The Minutes were adopted after one amendment; to be signed by the Chair at the next meeting.

Item 6.6.4 – Wyndham Hall. The Hall is definitely not a listed building, but is in a scheduled area.

ACTION: LI to pursue possible listing for the Hall.

4. Reports

4.1. Report from AGM, 11 Sept. 2021.

None received.

4.2. Chairman's Report. Report had been circulated. Queries concerned the proposed display on the Debenhams building boarded windows. Confirmed that the plan is going ahead, posters are being prepared by SHC staff, SANHS will be given proper accreditation, the entire cost is being borne by SWAT council.

4.3. Risk Register The RR was not presented as amendments are still needed. Suggested that Office Manager could take back responsibility.

ACTION: CJ to amend current document as far as possible, and liaise with OM.

4.4. Financial report to May 2021. MS, as newly elected Treasurer, made the following points and outlined his proposed action plan:

- He now has access to the new online version of (finance software) Paxton. This feeds into a budget spreadsheet [see item 5.1 below].
- He will get a full update on the new version of Paxton from the Office Manager on her return, and hopes to be fully up to speed with the whole system,

- including the budget spreadsheets, by early 2022
 - He will be able to start preliminary work on 2022 budgets before the end of 2021. For this he will assume a draft budget, based on current figures and running costs as known.
 - He suggests an extra Board meeting, solely in order to present and discuss the draft budget, to be organised for early November.
 - The financial report should be integrated with the strategic/business plan.
 - ACTION: MS & LI to discuss such integration.
- 4.5. *Report from meeting with Brewin Dolphin.* The meeting took place on 2nd September, attended by CJ, MS, SG and Louisa Gillett, Office Manager. The report had been circulated. There were no queries.
- 4.6. *Report and accounts of Early Dunster project* LI delivered a verbal report, based on Marty Ewing's report, which was circulated after the meeting. No accounts were presented.
- 4.7. *Report on the Castle Garden project* CJ gave a verbal report. No accounts were presented, but the figures are all in Paxton and could be extracted when needed. (Paxton has recently moved to an online format and there have been teething troubles.) The shortage of reports and supporting paperwork for the project was queried. It was noted that formal reports have been made to the AGMs, along with details of grant incomes and expenditures, and informal progress reports, with photographs, have appeared in the *Newsletter* and the *e-bulletin*. As of now, we have received most of the promised grant monies, with a final £5,000 due soon from Historic England. The construction work is all but finished, with only the fencing at potential danger spots to be done.
- ACTION: CJ will approach Duncan Hill for a technical report.
- ACTION: CJ will inform Historic England of the need to change the fencing to a safer design, and get their permission to make the change.
- ACTION: CJ to liaise with Nigel Pearce on the fencing design.
- 4.8. *Report on the SANHS Estate.* There was no overall report as such. During specific discussions [see below], it was decided that SANHS could usefully appoint a land agent to oversee all the properties. David White (of Hadfield White, property surveyors) knows SANHS' estate and could be very useful in the role.
- ACTION: CJ to approach David White about land agent role, and if he is amenable, so ask what retainer fee he would require.
- 4.8.1. *Castle Hotel lease* The position re Castle Hotel as tenant of the Garden remains muddled. David White is in contact with both Nick Chapman and Tom Mayberry, and is progressing the discussions.
- ACTION: CJ to find the quote from David White for this work.
- ACTION: CJ to inform the Holding Trustees of the position regarding the Castle Hotel lease.
- ACTION: CJ to email Nick Chapman to remind him of SANHS' legal duty to send invoices for the tenancy.
- 4.8.2. *Wyndham Hall.* Further to remarks by the Chairman in her report, it was noted that Castle Lodge, adjacent to Wyndham Hall, is for sale. SANHS' access to the Hall crosses this property; we need to check the deeds for Wyndham Hall to ascertain the exact legal position.
- ACTION: CJ and LI to look for, and search in, the deedbox currently thought to be stored in Building 2 at SHC (not easily accessible at present).

- 4.8.3. *Lease of Ines Cottage Gardens* The lease for Ines Cottage Garden ends on 2nd January 2022 and the tenant must not be permitted to use the premises without a new lease in place. CJ has contacted the tenant (Mr Kreshi, Mambo's) for details of his intentions regarding the garden. No reply has yet been received.
ACTION: CJ to send a copy of this lease to the Trustees for information.
ACTION: CJ to request David White to work on renewal of the lease.
- 4.8.4. *Lease of the Castle Garden* . Following very unsatisfactory discussions with the Castle Hotel, SANHS is clear that we should terminate Castle Hotel's lease on the garden. SWHT has declared an interest in taking over the lease; a meeting was held with Tom Mayberry and others on 8 September. However, we must be legally free of the Castle Hotel tenancy before any further decisions are made. This includes liaising with the Brewhouse, who are keen to stage further shows there, after their very successful promotion of "A Midsummer Night's Dream" in August.
- 4.9. *Committee reports*
- 4.9.1 *Historic Buildings*. LI gave a verbal report – paper report followed after the meeting.
ACTION: LI to investigate the copyright (and other) regulations regarding charging for webinars, rather than just asking for donations. She will draw up a paper for Board discussion at a later meeting.
- 4.9.2 *Archaeology*. DD had sent a letter to the Vice-Chancellor of University of Worcester, expressing concerns over the closure of their School of Archaeology. A copy of the letter was sent to the Chair of SANHS for the record.
- 4.9.3 *Natural History*. DR gave a verbal report – paper report followed after the meeting.
 No further committee reports.
- 4.10. *Report on Proceedings* The report had been circulated, including details of costs. Income will depend to some extent on the number of print copies, at £10 each, required by members. The Board accepted the figures as presented. Volume 164, for 2020, should be published early in 2022.
ACTION: SG to include a reminder in the October e-bulletin about payment for print copies of vol. 164.
 Discussion of inclusion of lists of Board members in the journal, as was formerly the case, resulted in a further proposal:
 "That the names of all Board members and a summary of the accounts for the relevant year be included in every volume of *Somerset Archaeology and Natural History: the Proceedings of SANHS*"
 Proposed – DR / Seconded – LI
VOTE – all were in favour, no abstentions.
- 4.10.1 *Pricing*. SG had circulated a discussion paper, starting from the decision already taken by the Board [18th Feb. 2021] to abolish institutional membership and instead offer institutions the chance to subscribe to the *Proceedings*. The journal price could therefore be independent of (and above) membership payments, and available to non-members at the same rate. The printed *Newsletter* would also be included in any subscription to *Proceedings*.

Proposal: "That the annual cost of *Proceedings* (print format only) for institutions and other non-members be set at £50 for UK customers, £70 for overseas. This cost to include post & packing, and a copy of the annual print Newsletter."

Proposed – SG / Seconded – CJ

VOTE – all were in favour, no abstentions.

ACTION: SG to contact the institutional members and inform them of the change in procedures, which will take effect starting with vol. 165 (for 2021) due for publication at the end of 2022

- 4.11. *Report to Board re complaints received.* The working party set up following a formal complaint received in June 2021 submitted its final report to the Board. The report was received and noted, and the Board is most grateful for the way in which the complaint was handled.
- Following this incident, the working party drafted a complaints policy and procedure for the Board's consideration. The existing complaints policy is due for review in November; the new draft will now be studied by three trustees (CJ, CW and G M-S) to make comments, before coming to the full Board.

5. Proposals

- 5.1 Budget 2021 from 1st September to 31st December
ADOPTED – *subject to scrutiny by the Treasurer [see 4.4 above].*
- 5.2 Welfare Policy 2021/22
NOT ADOPTED. ACTION: CJ to review.
- 5.3 Purchasing and financial delegation policy 2021/22
NOT ADOPTED. ACTION: MS to scrutinise details
- 5.4 Recharging Administration costs policy 2021/22
NOT ADOPTED. ACTION: MS to scrutinise details.
- 5.5 Volunteer agreement 2021/22
NOT ADOPTED.: ACTION: CJ to review
- 5.6 Strategic Plan
ADOPTED – *subject to ongoing review by Board, LI leading.*

6. AOB

MS queried the proposed leaflet for the Roman Museum at The Newt. The Museum opening has been delayed, and will probably not now happen until 2022. The proposed leaflet will be referred to the Publications Committee.

ACTION: CJ to liaise with the Publications Committee

7. Date of next meeting

24 November 2021. Venue and time to be confirmed. ACTION: CJ to confirm provisional venue of SHC .