

Somerset Archaeological & Natural History Society

MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
Tuesday 12nd September 2023 at 14:00 in the Somerset Heritage Centre

MINUTES

Present: Lizzie Induni (Chair), Martin Salzer (Treasurer), James Spencer, Nigel Pearce (Vice President), Christine Webster (HonSec)

It has been agreed that due to not being quorate any proposals will be emailed to all trustees at a later date.

1. Apologies:

David Reid
Emma Turk
David Dawson

2. Declarations of Interest:

None declared.

3. Minutes and matters arising from the meeting of the board held on 13th June 2023

Minutes accepted as an accurate record of the meeting and signed by the chairperson.

Matters Arising

- CW would contact Roberts about the Asbestos that needs painting in the Wyndham Hall.

4. Reports

4.1 Chair's Report

No report was available.

4.2 Risk Register

JS went through the main risks.

- The shortage of trustees was an issue at the moment but would not be once the CIO was set up. NP offered his services as a trustee to attend meetings and vote on proposals. The Board thought this was an excellent solution since NP usually attended meetings.
- The state of the website was another high risk. Some parts were still not functioning properly e.g. bookshop. LI had spoken to Mark Francis and was sure it was now secure. LI had been considering access to the website in the future. It was decided that restricted access was preferred. The conflict of interest of ET's partner being paid to "mend" the website was pointed out.
- Castle Gardens remains a risk but rent is now being received.
- Major repairs in Northern Gardens remain to be tackled by Somerset Council. NP thought it would be a good idea to make our concerns known to the new council. *LI to contact council.*
- The potential drop in member numbers after the rise in subscriptions and CIO conversion – JS thought we should consider more adverts in papers etc. CW pointed out that we weren't

yet making full use of free opportunities because we do not have a leaflet to be distributed to museums, libraries and tourist centres.

- Transference of assets to CIO from SANHS requires very careful handling.

4.3 Treasurer's Report

The apparent difference for CIO had now been resolved because the £6,000 from the Fairfield Trust had been put in donations rather than CIO. MS also pointed out that a number of legal bills would have to be paid soon (about £3,000).

4.4 Report and accounts of Early Dunster project

This project had now finished although there was a lot of writing up to be completed. It was hoped that some of the articles would appear in the Proceedings in the future. Their exhibition was being displayed in the Wyndham Hall.

4.5 Reports on SANHS Estate

4.5.1 Castle Gardens – NP reported back from his meeting with the Castle Hotel Manager. The hotel wishes to use all parts of the garden but would like to remove some beds to make maintenance easier. They would like the gardening team to help with maintenance. However, this is unlikely to happen after the abusive confrontation between a trustee and hotel staff. The hotel were supportive of the erection of railings and NP was awaiting a response from a second contractor. NP provided a map of the location of the railings and discussed the need of a wider access point for disability scooters. The Board wondered whether the hotel had ever sought permission to erect their shelter in the alcove. *CW would check with LG.* MS wondered if members of the public were covered by the hotel's insurance.

4.5.2 Northern Gardens

There had been no repairs to the Mill Leat in Goodland Gardens although the fencing had been made more secure. LI had contacted the council about the trees overhanging the museum. The council were also looking into creating a new footpath between the new Travel Hub (old bus station) and the back of the museum. It was wondered whether this might help to open out the escape route from the back of the Wyndham Hall.

4.5.3 Wyndham Hall

The first 2 heritage open days had been a success with about 60 people visiting each day. A number of people had sponsored a seat. Keith Gould had most kindly donated all his display boards, tables and chairs to the society and were being used to display the Early Dunster Project. *CW to write a letter thanking him for his donation.* LI had consulted Liz Cheadle about painting the Tudor doorway at the entrance to the Wyndham Hall. *LI agreed to do an electricity reading at the Wyndham Hall at the middle of every month.*

4.5.4 Ine's Cottage Garden – not discussed.

4.6 Committee Reports – reports from the Archaeology Committee, Museum Collection Panel and Heritage Grants Committee had been received and were perused by the Board. The template of a summary of committee discussions proposed by the Communications Working Group was rejected. It was decided they preferred to receive full minutes.

4.7 Proceedings – Rob had reported that work on Proceedings 166 were progressing well and it was expected that the volume would be out in November.

4.8 Report on Engagement and Marketing

There had been 2/3 events a month over the summer but some had been cancelled. A request for details of events had been put out last month but there had been a poor response from Historic Buildings and Natural History.

4.9 Membership Report

LG had provided a full report on the present situation and what work needed to be done before the new year and the start of SANHS CIO. It was agreed that the correspondence between SANHS and members about the required changes needed immediate attention.

4.10 CIO update – not discussed.

4.11 Report from Communications Working Party – it was decided to have a further meeting on Wednesday 8th November at the museum. CW to book room.

5 Proposals

These could not be considered because the meeting was non-quorate.

6 AOB

6.1 General Meeting /Christmas Event at Wyndham Hall on Saturday 4th December – it was decided that this would be an excellent opportunity to invite members to the hall.

6.2 Holding Board meetings outside Taunton – this was considered a good idea and David Reid has offered to organise the next one in Castle Cary.

6.3 Brian Murless Legacy - £350,000 had now been received from the solicitors responsible for the arrangements of Brian's estate. The Executive's proposal of where this money should be invested will be distributed to all trustees by CW.

6.4 Document Management – MS discussed the importance of having a traceable filing system for all documents whether emails, papers, minutes or correspondence. He went through a numbering system he had used in the past and strongly recommended SANHS considered a system that was used in the future for all important documents.

Actions

LI

- Write letter to council about our concerns in relation to the Mill Leat.
- Take an electricity reading at the Wyndham Hall at the middle of every month.

CW

- Contact Roberts about the Asbestos that needs painting in the Wyndham Hall.
- Check with LG whether the hotel had ever sought permission to erect their shelter in the alcove.
- CW to book room in museum for next Communications Working Group.
- Write a letter thanking Keith Gould for his donation of display equipment.

Next Meetings

Executive - 24th October

Board – TBC

