

**Somerset Archaeological and Natural History Society
Meeting of the SANHS Board of Trustees**

**Tuesday 13th June 2023 at 14.00
Somerset Heritage Centre**

MINUTES

Present: Lizzie Induni (Chair), Martin Salzer (Treasurer), David Reid, James Spencer, Emma Turk (attended via Zoom and took minutes), Nigel Pearce (Vice President), David Dawson (Vice President and Chair of Museum Collections Panel),

It has been agreed that due to not being quorate any proposals will be voted on at this meeting and noted with CW to vote at a later date.

1. Apologies:

Christine Webster (Secretary)

2. Declarations of Interest:

None declared

3. Minutes and matters arising from the meeting of the board held on 14th March 2023

Minutes accepted as an accurate record of the meeting.

Matters Arising

- ET has not printed the leaflets due to being unable to get to the office today.
- MS has not written a letter to the museum reporting concerns about flaking stonework – this action has been cancelled.
- It is reported that the asbestos in Wyndham Hall has now been partially done. The protective paint needs adding and will be chased.
- Louisa completed the papers for the AGM. These were added to the website.

4. Minutes and matters arising from the meeting of the board held on 28th March 2023

Minutes accepted as an accurate record of the meeting.

Matters Arising

- The list of the Heritage Grant Committee members has been corrected.

5. Minutes and matters arising from Annual General Meeting held on 20th May, 2023

Matters Arising

- JS highlighted that we are without a vice chair, however it was proposed and agreed by the members at the AGM that the board are able to appoint their own vice chair.
- New trustees are needed. The CIO already has two new trustees and two further interested parties.

6. Reports

6.1 Chair's Report

- "A Day in Dunster" event by Early Dunster Project was well attended with 70+ people in attendance.
- The tour of SWHT at SHC by Tom Mayberry was very informative and very much appreciated by all who attended.
- £4,000 grant has been awarded towards Proceedings 166 which can hopefully go ahead this year. There is an additional £6,000 grant from Fairfield Trust towards CIO conversion and £9,800 from Heritage Lottery Fund for CIO conversion and website repairs.

6.2 Risk Register

No additional consideration needed.

6.3 Treasurer's Report

- The CIO grants from Heritage Lottery Fund and Fairfield Trust have now been added to the budget as has the £4,000 towards Proceedings 166. Due to the budget being healthier than originally thought an additional £100 is being added to the library allowance.
- Payment for the museum was delayed but is now in
- Payment for Ine's Cottage Garden is not in. Louisa has emailed Mambo about this and they will be paying the money owed in January ASAP. They aim to make the March payment by next week however would like information on the lease before this happens. NP believes that the lease is dated 1996 and the land may be misfiled or incomplete with the Land Registry. The office copy of the lease is different to the copy filed with Land Registry. NP has copies of these documents and will send them to Matthew Blows for him to check over. **NP to send lease to MB (also LI for reference)**. With thanks to Rachel Crocker (retired solicitor) for obtaining documentation for us.
- Brewin Dolphin has been lower than expected but the Q1 report is not in. MS has chased and told that they are experiencing system problems. **MS to chase again at end of week if nothing heard**
- Insurance for Wyndham Hall has been added against the Wyndham Hall project
- There is still c.£18,000 for the Norman Gardens Project. MS would like this closed by the end of the year.
- A pay rise of 3.5% for Louisa is proposed within the budget

Proposed by LI and seconded by DR

6.4 Report and accounts of Early Dunster project

- LI is still waiting on a report and the accounts from Mary Ewing

6.5 Report on Castle Gardens

- It has been noted by several trustees that there are trees overhanging the museum and one of the sets of steps appears to have been vandalised and certainly steps are getting worse. ET commented that the manager of the museum and Ronan Hunter (Castle Hotel manager) said to her that teenagers have been seen throwing stones so this may be the source. MS wants to look at insurance to cover wall damage however this will need to be

after the fencing is sorted to show that we are trying to solve the problems. DR suggested security cameras.

- NP has received a quote from Western Fabrications for the fencing in the gardens however it is more than expected. The gates and fencing for the lower area is £8,031 + VAT and fencing for the upper area is £7,944 + VAT. This includes installation and would be galvanised steel coated black. The fence is to go on the boundary. The height was discussed however it cannot be too high or this could be seen as an obstructive feature. A hedge added in front of the fence may be an added deterrent. It is noted that since obtaining the lease for Castle Gardens that the boundary is the wall newly found during the gardening works. The car charging points, although in a scheduled ancient monument, are not on SANHS land. **NP to ask if Western Fabrications would be able to do the fencing at a lower cost. Also to ask Mr Chedzoy for a quote**
- The bench currently in Wyndham Hall is to be installed in Castle Gardens by the first week in September to coincide with the visiting twinning organisation. Bridgwater and Taunton College have offered to paint this for us and Clarke Willmott have offered to transport for us. There is to be an official opening ceremony and Castle Hotel are enthusiastic about getting involved and have offered to cater. The Radcliffe bench also needs treating. **NP to ask if BTC will also do this whilst painting the other bench.**

6.6 Report on Northern Gardens

The issues with the mill leat are currently with the council and being processed. There are also trees brushing up against the museum. A letter will be written to the council. It was discussed and agreed that it would be preferable to keep Chris Chanter involved and to designate him as an estates manager.

6.7 Report on Ine's Cottage Gardens

Nothing further

6.8 Report on Wyndham Hall

- MS and DR concerned about fundraising. Sponsoring a chair was brought up which ET has been researching. There is concern that there may be those who think that if they sponsor a chair then that is a personal seat. ET suggested that some organisations have plaques on a nearby board. **ET to send sponsor a chair research to all trustees.**
- NP raised the idea of corporate membership. **NP to ask CW**
- Opening for Heritage Open Days is important. ET said that it had been discussed in the marketing group that HOD coincides with The Independent Market on one day which would help footfall.
- Brendan Books has repeatedly expressed an interest in using the hall for Taunton Literary Festival
- James Verner, Chris Sidaway and Bruce Induni are all happy to help with work needed on Wyndham Hall

6.9 Committee Reports

- None. DD has sent one but to Louisa rather than CW. **DD to send report to CW.**
- A Communications Working Group is needed in order to better the lines of communication within SANHS.

6.10 Responsibilities of trustee on MCP?

JS is happy to join

6.11 Proceedings Report

DD says Rob Webley is getting on well with 166 and should be fine for publication this year

6.12 Report on Engagement and Marketing

- ET reports that social media engagement is going well. Facebook and Instagram are currently being used. Cat Lodge is going to be giving advice on Twitter next week. The SANHS Story of the Month is proving popular. There is a steady growth of followers on both platforms being used so far.
- ET commented that more use of Wyndham Hall could be useful especially when The Independent Market is on especially as the organisers seem very keen to get us involved.
- There is a marketing meeting next week.

6.13 Membership Report

Membership is not in a healthy position and there is a worry that more members will be lost in 2024 with the increase in subscription fee and new forms. January to June 2023 we have 7 new members (6 individual and 1 institutional) but have lost 28 (20 individual and 8 institutional).

6.14 CIO update

- The report was submitted to the Charity Commission today along with the constitution. Everything is currently progressing well.
- The grant money should hopefully be received soon
- There are currently three trustees: Matthew Blows, David Jones and Christine Webster. Fiona Holmes was previously involved but has now resigned.

7. Proposals

7.1 Budget

Agreed above

7.2 Approval of Office Manager's salary increase.

Agreed above

7.3 Approval of 4.5 hours of Office Manager's time to complete membership integration work and Paxton training

More information is needed on this as is this to be within normal office hours or is this to be considered overtime?

7.4 Proposal and approval for website work

Quote from Cosmic received. And discussed. Mark Francis was able to talk to the Board via Zoom to discuss his proposals for the website. The Board asked for a quote from Mark Francis. **ET to ask Mark Francis to quote. Quotes for the website work and decision to be made via email.**

7.5 Approval to buy a new phone for SANHS office £100

The phone, although running through MS Teams does not require the PC to be turned on however does it rely on an internet connection? The current phone is not working well however it is felt further information is needed before making a decision.

7.6 Acquisitions and Disposal Policy

- This has been delayed due to COVID-19.
- DR suggested that item 12 of the policy should be passed by the board before any decisions are made due to issues and conflicts especially surrounding loan to The Newt.
- Importance of communication between the panel and the board
- Caveat to the policy in that anything falling under item 12 must be made as a suggestion to the board prior to decision making with enough time to be discussed.

Proposed by LI, seconded by MS

- DD offered to do a tour of SWHT museum collections to talk through the management and administration of the collections. Suggested date of 18th July at 10am subject to Amal's availability. Invite to CIO trustees.

7.7 Data protection policy

Proposed by JS, seconded by LI

7.8 Safeguarding Policy

Proposed by JS, seconded by LI

7.9 Appoint a Communications Working Group

JS, LI and ET to be in this group. CW and Sue Goodman to be asked.

7.10 Set a price for Proceedings for Agents (UK and Overseas)

Item to be revisited

8. AOB

8.1 Nominate a trustee to the Library Committee

JS appointed

- Noted that when Wyndham Hall is open to the public that it would be good to have items from the SANHS collections on display as a mini exhibition.
- Roger Leech has expressed an interest in becoming a trustee however would appreciate his transport costs covered. The setting of a precedent needs to be considered as this would then need to be available to all board members should it be requested. A bursary may be something to consider where there are funds available for varying types of help requested eg, a reduction in membership fees for those on benefits. **MS to consider how this may work.**

Next board meeting date – Tuesday 12th September 2pm, Research Room SHC

Meeting end – 16.50