

MINUTES...

60th NATIONAL ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Speaking for Scotland's Buildings

14TH OCTOBER 2016, 3.35PM, FYVIE CASTLE, ABERDEENSHIRE

Present: Caroline McFarlane, Hamish Macbeth, Simon Green, Dave Chouman, Val Juhasz, Susan Macpherson, Barbara Pickford, David Pickford, Margaret Stewart, Robin Wardhall, Nancy Davidson, Amanda Booth, Mike Tait, Charles Smith, Michael Cunliffe, Jocelyn Cunliffe, Jilly MacLeod, Anina Hutton, Martin Robertson, John Gerrard, Margaret Mackay Gerrard, Peter Davidson, Gavin Farquhar, Iain Wotherspoon, Jean K Gowans, Eleanor Smith Morris, William Brogden, John Coyne, Adam Swan, Sheila Rhind, John Rhind, David Coughtrie, Jan Coughtrie, Elaine Kuwahara, Philip Tracy, Anne Tracy, Charles McFarlane, Dale Idiens, David Ballok, Morag Austin, Richard Austin.
Sarah Pearce taking minutes.

1. Apologies

Apologies received from Dimitris Theodossopoulos, Iona Roberts, Graham McNicol, Hamish McPherson, J. A. Wardrop, Andy McNab, Debbie Mays, Ian Begg, John Knight, Margaret Gilfillan, Oliver Barratt, Peter Drummond and Mario Cariello.

2. Approval of Minutes of the 59th AGM, held at Verdant Works, on Saturday 24th October 2015 at 2pm

Accepted as a true record of the meeting.

Proposed: Dr John Coyne

Seconded: David Coughtrie

3. Approval of the Trustees' Report for the year ended 31st March 2016

Proposed: Iain Wotherspoon

Seconded: Jocelyn Cunliffe

4. Approval of the Independently Examined Accounts for the year ended 31st March 2016

Treasurer's report attached in full. Hamish Macbeth thanked the Finance & Management Committee, AHSS volunteers and staff for their support over the past year.

Proposed: Gavin Farquhar

Seconded: Richard Austin

All thanks were given to our National Treasurer for the enormous amount of work required to complete the annual accounts.

Adam Swan gave a report on the Arisaig Conference in April 2016, marking the centenary of the death of Philip Webb, in conjunction with SPABiS. A very successful event which raised in the region of £1000.00 for the AHSS.

Richard Austin requested further clarification on the Historic Environment Scotland grant which we no longer receive. Hamish Macbeth clarified that we submitted an application for funding for regional volunteer training in September 2015, this was refused as it was considered too close to our Cases Panel work, which HES will not fund. We are now taking a small break from putting in another application, as it consumes a great amount of time, and currently there are no guidance notes for the new funding system. HES have been very generous to us over the years. Simon Green noted that HES are a new public body, we must be careful not to contort our work to fit a frame for funding, thus losing the focus on our core casework.

Gavin Farquhar questioned whether members could help by writing to MSPs or if the AHSS could sponsor an architect intern for a year to do casework. This would help improve architects' understanding of heritage.

Robin Wardhall praised the quality of the Architectural Heritage Journal and noted delight to see that we are doing all that we can to keep producing it.

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5. Appointment and Relief of Council Members

Richard Austin and Jean Gowans stepped down from Council. Michael Davis retired from the position of Chairman.

Simon Green thanked Richard Austin, Jean Gowans and Michael Davis for their excellent work and tireless commitment over the years, it is greatly appreciated by the Society. Simon also thanked our office bearers across the country and our supporting members, we work in a number of different ways but successfully come together for our heritage. Martin Robertson and Peter Drummond were both welcomed back to the Council.

Proposed: Jocelyn Cunliffe

Seconded: Jean Gowans

6. Appointment of Independent Examiners for 2016-2017

Henderson Loggie were appointed.

Proposed: Margaret Gerrard

Seconded: Peter Davidson

7. Group Reports

North East Group

Dr John Coyne noted that the group has had some excellent visits over the past year. The Cases Panel are finding recurring issues, which appear to be negatively affecting heritage in the North East. Such as the purchase of historic properties by wealthy individuals who then allow the buildings to sit empty, there have been multiple cases where arson has consequently occurred. The local Planners are looking at the situation yet, not enough seems to be done to make owners care for and secure their properties. Unfortunately the Council's duty of care does not seem to materialise and the owners appear to have too much local influence.

Strathclyde Group

Iain Wotherspoon noted a recent concerning case in Strathclyde, at Kirklee terrace, where an A listed building collapsed during renovation works, an enforcement order to rebuild exactly was issued, this was appealed against but the Order was upheld; at the same time a Planning Application to rebuild differently was granted. The rebuilding, as per the Planning Application, is now taking place--even though the Enforcement Order has been upheld. The legislation is there in Glasgow, but it is not being used as it ought to be. During the year, 1329 cases were looked at on the Panel, under the leadership of Audrey Gardner. Audrey was nominated by the Society for a Heritage Angel Award, for which the group was very proud. Attendance at the Winter Lecture Series increased last year. An invitation to the Strathclyde Group Gala Dinner was extended to all.

Forth & Borders Group

Jocelyn Cunliffe was pleased to announce the appointment of a new Convenor, Mario Cariello, thanks were given to Caroline McFarlane and the Committee for holding the fort for the last year. The Winter Lecture Series has an excellent venue and range of speakers. The latest update of the former Royal High School in Edinburgh can be read on the AHSS website. The hotel appeal has been sisted (to which we objected) and a new application is to be submitted, there is to be a public consultation on the 3rd November 2016, the group will continue to fight any inappropriate development.

Tayside & East Fife Group

Adam Swan noted that the Group operates with three individual Cases Panels spread out across their region. Adam also commented on recent success cases where the local Council has issued compulsory purchase orders. There was a very full Winter Lecture Series in the region last year, many thanks to Elaine Kuwahara for offering a B and B service to the speakers, this was a terrific help. Forthcoming lecture series is on its way. Many thanks were given to the committee for a series of excellent events including a walking tour of St Andrews by Euan McCulloch which is highly recommended to other groups.

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Jocelyn Cunliffe noted the 'Buildings at Risk Toolkit' which is now available online and offers good advice – local authorities have tools that they can use, if willing.

Dumfries & Galloway

Martin Robertson was pleased to note that the long-suffering Ann House in Stranrar has a new owner, consequentially there is hope for the future of the building. The Photographic Competition for Young People has been completed and the winners announced at a successful Prize Giving Ceremony.

Simon Green summarised from the Group reports that we operate a highly complex organization, offering many lectures and events which clearly conveys the hard work and passion of a relatively small number of people. We are impressive, and the organization is most grateful to our members and volunteers.

8. Any Other Business

The Society was sad to note the loss of Anthony Wolffe and Peter Willis in the past year, both were stalwarts and good friends of the AHSS.

Members were encouraged to look at the new AHSS website, this will develop over time, and we are pleased to have received excellent feedback already.

The meeting closed at 4.40pm.

