



THE RUSSELL SOCIETY

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE RUSSELL SOCIETY

HELD AT 16.30 ON 7 APRIL 2018

AT COLLEGE COURT CONFERENCE CENTRE, LEICESTER

The meeting was attended by 50 members and was quorate in accordance with the requirements of the Constitution of the Society.

Meeting agenda:

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of the 2017 Annual General Meeting (summary published in Newsletter 71 and full minutes available via The Russell Society website)
3. Matters arising
4. Honorary Officers' reports:
 - 4.1 President
 - 4.2 Vice-President including Health & Safety
 - 4.3 General Secretary
 - 4.4 Treasurer
 - 4.5 Membership Secretary
 - 4.6 Journal Editor
 - 4.7 Newsletter Editor
 - 4.8 Conservation Officer
5. Appointment of Independent Verifier of the Society's accounts
6. Appointment of Honorary Officers and Trustees for 2018 - 19
7. Any other business

The Russell Society is a society of amateur and professional mineralogists which encourages the study, recording and conservation of mineralogical sites and material.
Registered Charity No. 803308

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from: Rob Bowell, Nigel Moreton, Pam Moreton, Jill Goltz, Roger Robinson and Mike Rumsey.

2. MINUTES OF THE 2017 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The minutes of the 2017 AGM (available via the Russell Society website and the summary of them published in Newsletter 71) were agreed (1 abstention, 49 in favour) by all present as a true record of the 2017 AGM. This was proposed by David Aubrey Jones and seconded by Marashean Parker. Christine Critchley (Acting President) signed and dated a printed copy of the 2017 AGM Minutes.

3. MATTERS ARISING

None.

4. HONORARY OFFICERS' REPORTS

4.1. Acting President (Christine Critchley)

On behalf of all present Christine thanked Central Branch members, notably Neil, Frank and Marg, for putting together the ASM weekend, it is the highlight of the Society year and is greatly enjoyed by all present. Christine also thanked all Council officers, Branch committee members and field trip leaders for giving their free time to keep the Society, including its general organisation, field trips, website and publications going.

Christine was pleased to note upcoming changes to Council including Steve Warren as President, Mary Starkey as Treasurer and Roy Starkey as General Secretary. She thanked Rob Bowell for his time as Treasurer, noting the effort it must have taken to keep up with the role whilst working abroad so much. Upcoming changes to the Journal Editor role were also warmly welcomed, with David Green agreeing to work alongside Malcolm Southwood during 2018 with a view to taking over the role during 2019. Christine and all present note their appreciation and thanks to Mal for his time as Journal Editor (even though he hasn't quite gone yet ...).

Sadly, we have lost two of our longstanding members over the past year, Doug Morgan will be missed by many as will Martin Ellam.

Christine noted the state of our Branches, and the ongoing struggle to maintain Branch committees. Council will be looking at this issue during 2018. On the positive side she advised that a number of Branches are aiming to hold one-day symposia, similar to the Maisemore event, during 2018. Perhaps this is the way forward rather than having evening meetings?

All present thanked Christine for taking on the role of Acting President over the past year, in addition to her duties as Vice President.

I would like to thank the Central Branch for putting together a wonderful weekend of events for our ASM. I would also like to thank everyone here for attending. I would also like to thank all Council members for their commitment to the society and for giving their time freely in maintaining the operation of our society and hopefully you, our members, can see the results. The society continues to maintain a relatively strong and healthy membership number, but we are all too aware that it has been in a gradual decline for many years and so we need to plan for the future. The introduction of new General Data Protection regulations has kept Council members very busy this year. The new 'rules and regulations' have now been used to format our own Data Protection Policy and Procedures. Our secretary will be providing more information about this, including the updated Indemnity Form for field trips.

In the latest Newsletter Steve Warren's article gave details of how members can help the society. We were still looking for a new President, and I hoped that the 'Job Spec' provided in the Newsletter would give members an incentive to look at the role and volunteer! I am pleased to announce that a 'volunteer' has come forward!

I am delighted to announce that after a couple of years of excellent work as Secretary, when he kept the organisational side of the society in check, Steve Warren will become our new President. As a token of our appreciation of this work as Secretary I would like to make this presentation to Steve. Taking over the position as Secretary I would like to welcome Roy Starkey back to the Council. We all know Roy very well and that he is well equipped to fulfil this role. We have been looking for a new Journal Editor, to succeed Malcolm Southwood and I am pleased to announce that David Green has agreed to work with Malcolm in

the short-term, then he will take over from Malcolm in the not-too-distant future. I would like at this point to take the opportunity to thank Malcolm for his hard work and dedication that has enabled the varied content and high standard of the Journal to be maintained and welcome David onto the Council.

Due to increased work commitments Rob Bowell has unfortunately had to resign from his role as Treasurer of the society. Rob, with help from other Council members, has been looking into the procedures needed to bring our banking methods up to date, on-line banking in particular. I would like to thank Rob for his hard work and dedication to the role of Treasurer. I am pleased to welcome the arrival of Mary Starkey as Treasurer.

You will be aware that Frank Ince was due to retire from the Journal Manager's post, but he has agreed to continue this role for a while, in order that we all still receive the Journal. I think that we should all express our thanks to him. Other officers I would like to than thank include Neil Hubbard for his work as Membership Secretary, Michael Doel for his work on our Newsletter and Tom Cotterell for his work as Conservation Officer. I would also like to thank Michael Dunmore who continues to work in establishing our website and for this we are all be extremely grateful. Members are urged to provide images of minerals for addition to the website pages.

This last year we have lost two of our longstanding members, Doug Morgan will be sadly missed by many as will Martin Ellam, who passed away this February. We pass on our thoughts and condolences to the families, and the family of Alan Edwards, not a current member but someone many members will remember. Earlier this year the society arranged an auction of the late Norman Cogger mineral collection. The minerals have been sorted, catalogued and photographed and the collection has now been auctioned, with proceeds going to the Kent and Sussex Hospital League of Friends.

A new award was announced in the last Newsletter. After reading the details of The Ron Cleevely Award for Best Journal Article, hopefully members have come to the ASM ready to vote for the best article. Society Branches have had a rather mixed year with many struggling to operate due to not enough, or no, committee members. As a result of this Branches have merged. The Northwest and Northern now operate as the North Branch. The South East and Southern have also merged. I would urge you all to think about how you could become more involved in the running of our Society either at Branch or national scale. The more people who get involved, the more we can offer! An addition to the usual meetings we now see a number of 'Day' and 'Weekend' mini symposia being organised. This year Central, Southern and North branches are planning such events along the lines of that annually organised by Wales and West Branch (with Cheltenham M and G S) at Maisemore.

A note about 'staying safe' was included in the Newsletter and I would urge all members who attend field trips to read the reminder and take note of the changes to the Indemnity Form and the coming changes to the Risk Assessment Form (which will have added a consent for images included to bring it in line with the new data protection rules).

Last year most of the field trips were well supported and many written up in the Newsletter. I would like to thank all FTO for their continued work organising events and gaining permissions for all the trips on offer to members.

As part of our 'keeping the society in the public eye' we have new society display cabinets, at Bakewell the wonderful display by Steve Warren was admired by all. No one could possibly miss the new promotional banner there! The banner was designed by Martin Bastable (many thanks Martin) and four of them were produced for promoting the society activities. For this coming year Scavenger Hunts or Lucky Dips had been arranged for the Leyburn, St John's Chapel and Bakewell mineral shows. Looking around the room it is refreshing to see a few new faces, and I would like to take this opportunity to urge all of us, as members, to try and advertise the society whenever we attend mineralogical, or geological, events.

Finally, I would again like to express my thanks to the Central Branch for organising this event and to all of you who have travelled to be part of it.

4.2. Vice President (Christine Critchley)

Christine summarised field trip attendance in 2017: a total of 47 trips with a total of 325 person/visits. This is up from the previous year. Christine was pleased to report there had been no incidents on the field trips. She noted that latecomers were proving a nuisance on some trips and that being late should be the exception rather than the rule, please make sure you are there early or on time in future. In addition, for working quarries, if you are late and have not signed the FLIF you cannot enter the quarry. A reminder was provided

about working safely in the field and Christine advised that FLIF documents have been updated to reflect GDPR image consent.

Scavenger Hunts will again be held, at Bakewell, Leyburn and St John's Chapel shows. Please let Christine have any suitable spare specimens that can be used as prizes. Helpers on the Society stall at these shows would be welcomed, along with offers to put on mineral presentations using the new Society display cabinets.

Health and Safety

H&S documentation was again reviewed, due to quarry recommendations about lace up safety boots and Society recommendations about LATE comers and FLIF. All ATTENDEES on field trips are obliged to read the risk assessment and sign the Field Trip Indemnity Form prior to being 'active' on a field trip. Late comers make this process much more difficult for leaders. We appreciate that traffic and weather conditions can affect arrival times but PLEASE make a point of signing the documentation. All members, and particularly those attending field trips, are encouraged become 'acquainted' with the H&S documentation. Anyone without access to the web can request an email copy from the FTO.

Many thanks to those who submitted the documentation for review and to all attendees who enabled the field trips to be "incident free, showing the responsible attitude which Russell Society members have to health and safety issues". Using the returns from the Field Leader Indemnity Forms (FLIF) a summary of visits has been produced.

Branch	Number of Field Trips Reported (2017)	Field Trip Attendance (2017)
Central	7	76
North	18	111 inc ASM
South West	13	78
Wales & West	3	12
Southern	6	48
Total	47	325

There have been 325 person/visits. 99 different people attended a field trip, including 4 visitors. 3 members have attended field trips organised by four different branches. 11 members have attended field trips organised by three different branches. 9 members have attended 8 or more field trips (one member 17 and one 12 trips!), 6 trips were cancelled by quarry/site management. I am very pleased to be able to include a nil return for incidents occurring during the field trips.

A comparison of field trip numbers with previous years is shown below:

Summary AGM Report	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Person/Visits	381	464	464	439	386	279	287	325
Different people	129	135	135	125	108	92	90	99
Four Branches or more	6	11	9	5	7	2	4	3
Nine Trips or more	6	9	9	13	13	1	6	7
Total number trips	55	53	53	63	52	39	36	47
Cancelled	8	4	4	4	7	10	6	7
Not reported	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Health and Safety Documentation

The insurance documents for this year have been forwarded to Branch Secretaries and Field Trip Officers. Notes and reminders concerning safety on field trips were published in the Newsletter for all members. Updated Health and Safety documents have been forwarded to all Field Trip Officers for use this coming year. There are two changes to the documentation: Guide to Good Practice: Active quarries and pits: Actions Do not work directly above/below people collecting. AND Risk Assessment: Rock movement from unstable rock piles or slopes Do not work directly above or below anyone on a slope. An updated Indemnity Form will be forwarded to FTO very soon, this will reflect the General Data Protection regulations coming into force.

Scavenger Hunt and Society Display at Shows

Scavenger hunts organised for this year are at the mineral shows in Leyburn, St John's Chapel, and Bakewell. Many thanks for those volunteers who assist running these activities and for those who donate

materials for the prizes. At the Leyburn and the St John's shows many visitors took enrolment forms and hopefully this will result in new members.

4.3 General Secretary (Steve Warren)

Steve Warren (General Secretary) advised that Council have been preparing for GDPR, including preparation of a Privacy Policy, issue of consent forms to members and updates to new member application forms and field trip forms. Steve thanked Michael Dunmore for his continuing help in running the website and keeping it up to date.

General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

GDPR comes into force on May 25th 2018. The new regulation will replace previous data protection legislation. A key requirement of GDPR is that the Society obtains your consent for how we may contact you in the future. Many of you will have noticed that Neil sent out an email to members about GDPR, requesting your consent. It is vital that you complete these forms and return to Neil, otherwise we will not be able to contact you after 25th May. Please pass this message on to your branches and local members. We will also put a notice about GDPR on the website. New membership forms and field trip forms have also been updated in line with GDPR.

Public Indemnity Insurance

We continue to procure our public indemnity insurance via the umbrella policy of the Geologists' Association. Branches have been given a copy of the new insurance details and the change has been reflected on the Field Trip Leaders Indemnity Form.

Website

Michael Dunmore continues to keep the website updated and running smoothly. His help is greatly appreciated by me and the Website remains a fitting public face for the Society. We would like to include more pictures of minerals on the website and I have asked members to provide these.

4.4 Treasurer (Rob Bowell)

Steve Warren delivered Rob's report, explaining the financial position for 2017 and running through the agreed budget for 2018. Income from memberships is broadly stable and income/ expenditure is well balanced. Gift Aid tax refunds for 2016 and 2017 have been progressed by Rob. Online banking has now been set up for four Council members, allowing much more speed and flexibility in dealing with payments. The most significant outgoings remain the Journal and the Newsletter. It was noted that postage now accounts for a sizeable proportion of the costs attributed to publications. An account has now been set up with Cardiff University to undertake analysis of member's specimens, via Tom Cotterell.

Steve advised that Rob has stepped down from the role of Treasurer due to ongoing work pressure and all present gave their thanks for Rob's efforts to date. Rob will now help with the transition to our new Treasurer.

Introduction

Please accept apologies for not being here in person. Sadly, work pressures have meant I have an increasing work load and am once again overseas.

Overview

Current finances are very healthy. As of April 2nd 2018 the current account stands at £22,734.25 and the savings account at £19,000. Dependent on agreement with Trustees I propose to move £10,000 from the current account to the savings account in April.

2017 Finances

The 2017 accounts are currently being audited once again by Mr G.Williams, Senior Accountant at SRK Consulting. Due to work pressures of a new management software program he has been unable to complete this in time for the AGM but any notes and the signed accounts will be presented at Council in October. A copy of the 2017 finances was handed out to AGM attendees.

Income

Our income is largely in memberships which has decreased from £8093 in 2016 to £8000 in 2017. Donations and the ASM auction made up the majority of other income along with the sale of back issues of the journal. Donations received includes a figure of £2650.00 associated with the sale of the Norman Cogger collection. This money was then paid to a charity of his choice, in line with Norman's wishes as set out in his will, in

2018 and will show as a payment in the 2018 Society accounts. After taking out the monies associated with the sale of the Cogger collection income for 2017 was £9719.06.

We still have outstanding 2016 and 2017 Gift Aid claims with HMRC which will lift income considerably next year.

Outgoings

Despite a fall in membership and obviously subscriptions once again the society managed to keep outgoings roughly balanced with income.

During the year the most significant outgoings were the journal, £3004 (plus another £3000 paid for the second issue sent in December to members but paid out in January) and the newsletters (£3494, including postage).

We have set up an account at Cardiff University for Tom Cotterell to do analysis for members, those interested should contact Tom. In addition to these outgoings we covered some branch expenses and advertising materials for the society.

2017 Accounts Summary

THE RUSSELL SOCIETY					
Registered Charity No. 803308					
RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT To 28/9/17					
For the year 1 st January 2017 to 31 st December 2017					
	Dec-17	Dec 31 2016		Dec-17	Dec 31 2016
	Receipts	Receipts		Payments	Payments
From COIF Acc	51.43	0.00	To COIF		
			Administration	752.78	49.26
Subscriptions (receipts-refunds)	8000.32	8093.25	Council expenses	271.00	656.43
			Website	79.99	79.99
Journal & Newsletter sales	68.69	73.66			
			Journal costs	3003.86	973.10
Insertions	0.00	50.00	Newsletters	3493.61	3822.72
Interest received	0.01	84.75	Ass. Subscriptions	40.00	60.00
			Refund, subs	50.00	
Tax refund	0.00	1273.46	Insurance	202.72	297.07
			Branch allocations	239.20	344.80
AGM Auction	842.00	949.00			
AGM 2016 receipts	0.00	2537.00	AGM 2016 payments	0.00	2512.06
AGM 2017	400.00	0.00	AGM 2017 payments	470.00	400.00
Donations	2805.00	350.00			
Branch closure	0.00	455.29	Conferences	0.00	169.50
PLS	201.61	211.82	Publicity	632.48	275.00
RS Library sale	0.00	1104.19	Projects	500.00	
Receipts	12369.06	15192.42	Expenditure	9735.64	9639.93
Opening bank balance			Closing bank balance		
Current account	22124.39	16571.90	Current account	24807.81	22124.39
Deposit account	19000.00	19000.00	Deposit account	19000.00	19000.00
Outstanding cheques			Outstanding cheques	50.00	0.00
Total Income	53493.45	50764.32		53493.45	50764.32

A 2017 summary of Branch accounts is not available at this time, due to several Branches not reporting back to the Treasurer in time.

Agreed Budget for 2017

Council has agreed the following budget for 2018:

Treasurer's Proposed Budget Report for 2018, Russell Society			
RECEIPTS	Proposed	Actual	Comments
Subscriptions	£8,100		All sources, current total
Tax refund	£2,433		Expecting 2016+2017 in June 2018
COIF interest	£50		
Journals	£60		
ASM auction	£900		
Royalties	£200		
Donations	£100		
TOTAL	£11,843		
PAYMENTS			
Admin	£500		
Council	£300		
Web	£100		
Journal	£6,000		
AGM Venue	£960		
Insurance	£250		
Trustee Ins	£100		
Newsletters	£4,000		
Branch Grant	£500		
Ass'n Subs	£40		
Show displays	£50		
Publicity	£300		print folded flyers
Refunds, subs	£0		
Projects	£1,200		throughout country 4x 1 day events @ £250; analysis fund £200
TOTAL	£14,300		

In 2018 outgoings are expected to exceed income, largely due to an anticipated larger issue of the Journal and increased support for special projects (in the form of one day symposia). The support of special project and analyses is in line with previous recommendations from your Treasurer, as supported by Council. These additional costs will be offset from reserves.

Acceptance of Accounts

A proposal was made that the 2017 accounts should be accepted. Proposer: Tony Parker; Seconded: Jane Randle. Vote: The Treasurer's Report and accounts were unanimously accepted by those attending.

4.5 Membership Secretary (Neil Hubbard)

Neil provided an overview of membership numbers and trends. The rate of decline in membership numbers seems to have stabilised, although Neil noted that at the time of the AGM 33 members had still not paid their subscriptions. At 1 April 2018 we had 335 members, including 6 new members, compared to 368 for 2017. Assuming the outstanding 33 pay their subscriptions we will have at least 368 members for 2018. We were reminded that all of us should be encouraging new members to join where we can. Neil thanked those members who pay their subscriptions on time and encouraged those not already using Direct Debit or Standing Order to do so.

We have had six new members already this year but we have lost 8 through deaths and resignations and we still have 33 members who have not yet paid their subscriptions.

I would like to thank all those who have already paid their subscription and all those who will be paying before they leave today. Please remember to pay by Gift Aid where possible.

A summary of our membership numbers is provided below:

Year End	Members	New Members
2009	447	43

Year End	Members	New Members
2010	452	43
2011	413	13
2012	402	12
2013	389	28
2014	392	23
2015	379	10
2016	373	11
2017	368	14
1 April 2018	335	6

4.6 Journal Editor (Malcolm Southwood) and Frank Ince (Journal Manager)

Malcolm could not be present at the meeting so, on his behalf, Frank explained the work they had undertaken in 2017 to produce JRS 20. Frank advised that 382 copies of JRS 20 were produced and 302 copies circulated to members. JRS 20 was initially expected to be a larger size than normal but some of the papers were delayed and may now be incorporated into JRS 21. The larger budget originally allowed for JRS 20 has therefore been transferred into the 2018 Council budget forecast.

Frank set out the planned schedule for JRS 21 that will be published in December 2018 and noted that additional offers of new contributions will be gratefully received, either to go in JRS 21 or JRS 22.

Frank advised that Malcolm will be stepping down as Journal Editor due to pressure of other commitments and that David Green has agreed to work alongside Mal during 2018. David will probably take over as Journal Editor during 2019.

Frank once again agreed to stay on as Journal Manager but it really is time someone new stepped up to the plate to help out. We shouldn't have to keep relying on Frank's better nature to keep the Journal going so please come forward.

JRS Volume 20, 2017

Contents/Schedule

- 2 papers and 2 short papers
- 68 pages: 64 text pages + 4 cover pages
- Circulation: early December

Finances

- Income: £6,066.69 (Budget: £6,000.00 + Sales: £66.69) + (Sales: 4 x £13.00 + £14.69)
- Expenditure: £2,996.43 (Printing: £2,001.44 + P&P: £994.99 [33%])
- Balance: +£3,072.26

Publication and Circulation Details

- | | per Copy | per Page |
|----------------------------------|----------|--------------------|
| • 382 copies (370 + 12 reprints) | £5.24 | 7.71 p (68 pp) |
| • JRS 19 (2016) | £4.54 | 8.41 p (54 pp) |
| • 302 copies to members | £8.30 pm | (JRS 19 £ 7.95 pm) |
| • 11 donations | Free | |

Website

- Updated: Various PDFs and Errata; JRS 1–20 Contents/Author Indices

JRS Volume 21, 2018

Planned schedule

- Various papers and notes in preparation
- Cut-off date for manuscripts mid-June

- *Final version to printer in mid-October*
- *Printing and distribution in November*
- *We may publish a larger or 2-part volume*
- *Budget for JRS 21: £6,000*
- *Bob and Sally King Donation: ≈£2,300 remains*

Additional offers of new contributions gratefully received.

New Journal Editor

Mal would like to retire (pressure of other commitments)

David Green has agreed work alongside Mal for 2018

He will probably take over as Journal Editor sometime in 2019

4.7 Newsletter Editor (Michael Doel)

Michael presented highlights of the production and costs of Newsletter 71 (September 2017) and Newsletter 72 (March 2018), noting that he managed to remain within his annual budget. Postage cost continues to be a large part of the budget and can only be expected to rise further.

Michael commented that the flow of contributions to the Newsletter has again just been 'adequate' to fill it and that the same small pool of contributors provides most copy material. 2017 was, again, a good year for field trip reports, with all Branches making a contribution. We should, however, remember that these trip reports are often read by others outside the Society and should be worded carefully. Michael noted that it is desirable to include more articles on UK mineralogy but that he needs more people to contribute to this.

The issue of printing and postage costs for the Newsletter is significant. A number of members have indicated that they are willing to only receive the electronic version of the Newsletter. Starting with Newsletter 73, this September, Michael will instigate a 'pdf only' issue list and encourages all members on email to join in with this approach by contacting him directly.

During the discussion it was noted that Michael has done an outstanding job as Newsletter Editor for eight years now and is looking for a successor. Once again, as a Society, we are reliant on the continuing goodwill of one member to keep one of our key publications going. Now is the time for a new Editor to step forward and help out. In the meantime, please keep the copy flowing through to Michael, it is always gratefully received.

Since my report to the last AGM in 2017 two more issues of the Newsletter have been produced and circulated. These were issues 71 (September 2017, 44 pages) and 72 (March 2018, 48 pages) both of which were printed to a high standard in full colour. I hope that all members received them safely and enjoyed the content.

The total cost of production for the two issues in the calendar year 2017 was £3494 i.e. within the agreed budget of £3500 for the year. For 2018 a budget of £4000 has been agreed for producing the Newsletter and I would expect that two fairly substantial issues can be produced in full colour while remaining within this budget. Postal costs continue to be a major element in the cost of production, comprising £773, equivalent to 22% of the total, in 2017.

The flow of material for publication in the Newsletter was adequate over the year and I would like to thank everyone who sent in material for their contributions. However, I continue to have to use pretty well everything I receive and I regularly need to produce additional "filler" material to achieve an optimum number of pages. Also, I still rely rather heavily on a small number of people who provide the great majority of the copy.

I would – once again - like to encourage more members to contribute. To give one good example, a wish has been expressed for the Newsletter to contain more short articles on specifically UK minerals, localities, parageneses and so on. We have had some excellent examples of this in the past but, of late, such pieces have been less common. As I noted in the last Newsletter, the solution to this lies, at least to some extent, with you. Please get in touch with me with any ideas you may have.

The supply of field trip reports from all branches was very good across 2017. Please keep the field trip reports rolling in as they are of great interest to the general membership and a major cornerstone of the Society's activities. Please remember when writing trip reports that they will very probably be read by representatives of the mine or quarry companies and other private and National bodies who give permission for us to access their land and property.

Both Newsletters in 2017 were sent out in the usual two forms - a paper version to all paid up members within the UK (plus a small, residual number of overseas members) and an electronic (.pdf) version to all those UK and overseas members for whom we have a valid e-mail address.

Feedback on the e-version is uniformly positive and, if you are not currently receiving this, please make sure that the Membership Secretary, has your correct, up to date details. I have recently raised (once more!) the question of whether members would be willing to receive only the pdf version of the Newsletter in future. A number of members have indicated that they would be prepared to do this and I intend to institute a "pdf only" circulation list from the next issue (No. 73, September 2018). This will aid in controlling our production costs and I would encourage anyone else who would be content to receive only the pdf to let me know as soon as possible (m.t.doel@talk21.com).

After editing the RS Newsletter for eight years – and enjoying the role considerably, I have intimated to Council and to the membership generally that I would like to relinquish the post in the near future. I am therefore looking for a successor and would like to hear from anyone who would relish taking on a task for the Society which, although it requires a certain amount of work, is seen as highly important by the Members and induces in its holder a definite sense of achievement and satisfaction. Please get in touch with me if you would consider being that person.

In the meantime, I am always keen to receive feedback from members on any aspects of the Newsletter, including comments or suggestions for its future content and presentation. I also hope that, in the coming year, you the members will continue to enjoy your Newsletter and that more of you will feel able to support it in the most concrete way – by providing copy or ideas for future articles.

4.8 Conservation Officer (Tom Cotterell)

Tom noted that there had been delays with the analysis service set up with Cardiff University but that this has now been sorted out. Analyses will be performed by Energy Dispersive Spectroscopy (EDS) using a Scanning Electron Microscope (SEM). Members are encouraged to come forward to use this facility for identifying their specimens.

There is very little to report on during the past year.

I have received three requests in response to the society's offer of analytical time, but complications in completing the booking payment to Cardiff University have resulted in me only just having been able to confirm a date to undertake the analyses. Analyses will be performed by Energy Dispersive Spectroscopy (EDS) using a Scanning Electron Microscope (SEM). This will now take place on the morning of Monday 16 April and it is hoped that I will be able to complete all of the identifications within the booking allocation.

Hopefully, once this system has been tested, more members will come forward to use this facility in order to get their specimens identified.

5. APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT VERIFIER OF THE SOCIETY'S ACCOUNTS

The Charity Commission has increased the income threshold for independent verification of charity accounts to £25,000, this is well in excess of annual Society income. Therefore, it is no longer a requirement for the Russell Society to have its accounts independently verified. Our current independent verifier, Gerallt Rhys Williams, will no longer be available once Rob Bowell steps down as treasurer. To find a suitably qualified independent verifier, who can operate to the guidelines set down by the Charity Commission is very difficult. Some members present at the AGM thought that it would be a good idea to continue having the accounts independently verified, as an external financial check. SW explained that independent verification only takes place at the end of the year, in the meantime the following checks are in place during the year:

- Four Council members now have online access to the Society current account and can check statements at will;
- The Treasurer sets a budget at the start of each year which officers then work to;
- Our two largest costs are the Journal and the Newsletter, officers in charge of these publications manage their budgets accordingly and report to Council twice yearly;
- Financial updates are provided by the Treasurer twice yearly at Council meetings;
- Branches provide annual updates of their accounts to the Treasurer.

On the basis of the above Council considers that appropriate control and checking mechanisms of the Society's finances are in place. Given this, and the removal of Charity Commission requirements for independent verification an independent verifier will no longer be appointed.

A member queried what the Society constitution required in terms of independent verification.

Post meeting note:

Clause 20 of the constitution states: '*The Council shall comply with its obligations under the Charities Act 1993 (or any statutory re-enactment or modification of the Act) with regard to the*' and goes on to list under this at 21.3 '*Independent examination of the statements of account of the Society*'. In other words, our constitution has been written to reflect a requirement of the Charity Commission at the time, and which no longer applies to us now. For changes to the constitution 28 days-notice ahead of the AGM is required (see 23.1) followed by a two thirds majority of those present voting in favour of the change.

6. APPOINTMENT OF HONORARY OFFICERS AND TRUSTEES FOR 2018 – 19

The General Secretary stated that at the specified closing date of 23rd February 2018, nominations had been received for each Council position for 2018 / 2019. As there was only one nomination received for each position, a ballot of the membership was not required. The nominations received were:

Office	Candidate
President	Steve Warren
Vice-President	Christine Critchley
Treasurer	Mary Starkey
General Secretary	Roy Starkey
Journal Manager	Frank Ince
Membership Secretary	Neil Hubbard

A proposal was made that all nominations should be accepted by Chris Finch and this was seconded by Oneta Wilson. The nominations were unanimously approved.

7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Council and all those present thanked the Central Branch for all their hard work in organising a very enjoyable weekend.

Steve Warren presented suggestions for changing the constitution in relation to Branches, to address the problem of Branches having to be closed because reduced levels of attendance do not allow them to meet the current requirements of the constitution. A useful discussion ensued with members, the general conclusion being that running field trips and organising the ASM weekend are the key functions of the Branches, with other aspects being less critical. Council will consider the matter of Branches during 2018 and will consult members with a view to holding a vote on possible changes to the constitution, in relation to Branches, at the 2019 AGM.

The 2019 AGM, will be hosted by the Southern Branch, on 13th April 2019 (provisional), with venue to be confirmed. Further details about the event and a booking form will be circulated to members with JRS 21 towards the end of 2018.

Roy Starkey advised that Mike Rumsey was no longer promoting the Society on Facebook/ Twitter and encouraged members to promote the Society online. Tom Cotterell reminded members that a Russell Society 'closed group' has already been set up on Facebook, it does not appear anyone is using this though. Members could consider joining the Collectors of British Minerals and British Micromount Society groups on Facebook, or other mineralogy groups. Just remember to keep the comments sensible though!

Marashean Parker reminded attendees that the Maisemore Event would be held on 21st October 2018, 10.30 until 16.00 at Maisemore Village Hall as usual.

The meeting closed at 17.50
Steven Warren (18 April 2018)

Footnote

Unfortunately, Pam and Nigel Moreton could not attend the ASM weekend due to Pam's illness and Pam sadly passed away on the Saturday morning of the ASM. Our condolences and best wishes go to the Moreton family and we will remember Pam fondly.