

THE RUSSELL SOCIETY

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE RUSSELL SOCIETY

HELD AT 15.45 ON 13 APRIL 2019

AT BUCKFAST ABBEY CONFERENCE CENTRE, BUCKFASTLEIGH, DEVON

The meeting was attended by 51 members and was quorate in accordance with the requirements of the Constitution of the Society. (Note there is a small discrepancy between the recorded numbers attending and the sum of the counted votes in some cases due to people leaving the room at various stages of the meeting but this does not affect the outcome of the votes).

Meeting agenda:

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of the 2018 Annual General Meeting (summary published in Newsletter 73 and full minutes available via The Russell Society website)
3. Matters arising
 - 3.1 Amendments to the Constitution – branch organisation (see item 6 below)
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 Honorary Officers and Trustees for 2019 - 20
6. Amendments to the Constitution – branch organisation
7. Any other business

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from: Jill Goltz, Brian Brett, David Green, Frank and Margaret Ince, Yolande Ifold, Linda Garfield and Dave Wellings.

2. MINUTES OF THE 2018 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The minutes of the 2018 AGM (available via the Russell Society website and the summary of them published in Newsletter 73) were agreed unanimously as a true record of the 2018 AGM. This was proposed by Susan Tyzack and seconded by Frank Bouweraerts. Steve Warren (Hon. President) signed and dated a printed copy of the 2018 AGM Minutes.

3. MATTERS ARISING

None.

4. HONORARY OFFICERS' REPORTS

4.1. Honorary President (Steve Warren)

Firstly, I am very pleased to see such a tremendous turnout for our ASM weekend and offer thanks on behalf of Council to Southern Branch for making it happen.

Secondly, I offer my thanks to members of Council and Branches for all your hard work in running the Society over the past year, it is most appreciated by me and, I am sure, our members as a whole.

The main focus of Council over the last year has been on the proposed changes to our Branches and Constitution. As many of you will know the old Northern and South East Branches closed due to member apathy and a failure to fill committees. This is not a problem that will go away and the amalgamated North and Southern Branches face a clear risk that they may not be quorate in the future, indeed, Southern Branch cancelled their Branch AGM this year due to a lack of numbers.

As a Society we can try to continue dealing with the Branch problem on a firefighting basis, or we can take stock and set ourselves up for the future in a manner that is sustainable. Your Council has decided to take the latter course of action. Council has consulted with Branches and members over the past year and has put forward proposed changes to the Constitution for members to comment on. No better ideas have come forward than the proposals that you will be asked to vote on later.

I appreciate that not everyone will agree with the changes, and those of you in the better performing Branches may even wonder why we need to do this. In light of the big picture, however, your Council is very clear that it believes the proposed changes are the best way forward for the Society as a whole and I sincerely hope that you will support them.

Succession at Council and Branch level is critical to the future of our Society at both Branch and Council level. We have a number of changes on Council occurring this year:

After 10 years as Vice President and a Trustee of the Society Christine Critchley is stepping down to be replaced by David Aubrey-Jones. On behalf of the Society I offer our sincere thanks to Christine for her energy and enthusiasm which have been a great boost to our Society. Christine developed our H&S systems and has since kept us up to date on H&S developments. She has organised our field trip records (or should I say marshalled and extracted records from our field trip leaders!). She has cheerfully and enthusiastically represented the Society at many shows, including running the ever-popular children's activities. When we lacked a President, Christine stepped up immediately and represented us most ably as Acting President. In short, Christine has made an outstanding contribution to the field of mineralogy in her support for our Society.

As part of the proposed Constitution changes Council has identified that there is no obvious reason why the Journal Manager should be required to be a Trustee of the Society. Frank Ince will therefore step down as a Trustee but will continue in his role as Journal Manager. His knowledge of the Society from its early days has been invaluable and his forensic approach is always helpful. On behalf of the Society I offer our sincere gratitude to Frank for efforts as Trustee over the years and his seemingly endless ability to keep producing our Journal.

To keep the succession ball rolling, Roy has 'convinced' Phil Taylor that he will make a great Membership Secretary. Phil will therefore shadow Neil over the next year and replace him as membership secretary at the 2020 AGM.

I look forward to working with David and Phil in due course and am delighted to see new faces stepping forward to help run our Society.

Looking at the field trip programme for 2019 I am very encouraged to see that our Field Trip Leaders remain very effective at getting into sites, despite continuing issues around 'protection' and health and safety. Partnership and co-operation with Government and private bodies is proving effective in a number of cases and, whilst this approach is demanding of our Field Trip Leaders, it is bearing fruit and indicates a good model moving forward. We do need to encourage our members to help their Field Trip Leaders more though, the days of turning up, bagging the specimens and heading off into the sunset are likely to be numbered.

Our publications remain strong and we have new blood emerging in both, with David Green and Susan Tyzack easing into their future roles.

Membership numbers appear to have broadly stabilised, although I expect the long-term trend to remain one of gradual decline, due to what is, effectively, a niche hobby with an ageing membership and a diminishing collecting base.

I have suggested to Council that we should put a strategy in place for the future of our Society by the time of the 2020 ASM. This remains my aim and will be progressed once we have consolidated our proposed Branch changes.

Despite earlier calls on the matter, we still have significant financial reserves that should be used to further the enjoyment and understanding of British minerals. Working more closely with, and providing financial support to our professional colleagues in museums could be one way forward to achieve these objectives. Whilst we face clear challenges there are many positives in this Society. It will continue to play an important role in developing and illuminating knowledge of British mineralogy for some time yet.

4.2. Vice President (Christine Critchley)

Health and Safety: 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	Field Trip Attendance
Central	7	80 inc ASM
North	8	49
South West	10	57
Wales & West	4	24
Southern	6	44
Total	33	254

There have been 254 person/visits. 86 different people attended a field trip, including 4 visitors. 2 members have attended field trips organised by four different branches. 10 members have attended field trips organised by three different branches. 6 members have attended 8 or more field trips, 1 member has attended 10 trips. 2 trips were cancelled due to lack of interest from members and 1 by the quarry. I am very pleased to be able to include a nil return for incidents occurring during the field trips.

Summary AGM Report	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Person/Visits	407	381	464	464	439	386	279	287	325	254
Different people	122	129	135	135	125	108	92	90	99	86
Four Branches or more	2	6	11	9	5	7	2	4	3	2
Nine Trips or more	8	6	9	9	13	13	1	6	7	3
Total number trips	60	55	53	53	63	52	39	36	47	33
Cancelled	7	8	4	4	4	7	10	6	7	3
Not reported	0	0	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. The new FLIF and Guide to Good Practice have been forwarded to FTO and are on the web page.

Scavenger Hunts: Scavenger hunts organised for this year are at the mineral shows in Leyburn, St John's, and Bakewell. Many thanks for those volunteers who assist running these activities and for those who donate materials for the prizes. At the St John's show many visitors took enrolment forms and hopefully this will result in new members.

Standing Down: This year I stand down as Vice President. I would like to thank all FTOs and Council members for working with me on the required health and safety issues over the years, and to all trip attendees for enabling me to say each year 'I am very pleased to be able to include a nil return for incidents occurring during the field trips'.

4.3 General Secretary (Roy Starkey)

My major focus over the past year has been work on society and branch organisation. Extensive consultation and discussion has been undertaken with the membership and branches, and much time spent on the

development of necessary documentation and constitutional amendments to facilitate the proposed changes, of which, more later.

I have also been developing ideas for succession planning and identifying potential candidates to take on Council positions. Shortly we shall also be seeking candidates to take over from Mary and myself as Treasurer and General Secretary respectively, so expect a tap on your shoulder!

The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) came into force on May 25th 2018 and the Society has addressed the various requirements of the new regulation.

Our Public Indemnity Insurance continues to be provided via the umbrella policy of the Geologists' Association, and copy certificates are issued to Branches.

Michael Dunmore continues to keep the website updated and running smoothly and his help is greatly appreciated. The Website remains a fitting public face for the Society but we would like to include more pictures of minerals on the website – so do please contribute!

4.4 Treasurer (Mary Starkey)

At the end of 2018 the Society had accumulated funds of £41k, including £2k advance payments for the 2019 ASM. Income from subscriptions remains static.

There are significant differences between both receipts and payments in 2017 and 2018. Tax refunds for both 2016 and 2017 were received during 2018 and JRS20 costs were paid in 2018, rather than when the Journal was published in 2017. Similarly, costs of Trustee Indemnity Insurance for both 2017 and 2018 were met in 2018. Monies raised from the sale of the Norman Cogger Collection in 2017 were paid out to his chosen charity in 2018; this has resulted in an excess of expenditure over income.

The introduction of online banking has proved enormously beneficial. It facilitates prompt payment of expenses, provides easy 'real-time' tracking of receipts, and in the future, will help to avoid some of the problems outlined above.

Central Branch ran the ASM in 2018. Their branch funds were only £46 at the beginning of that year so they received a significant advance from Society funds to facilitate the ASM. The venue offered discounts for block bookings and so Central Branch handled the booking of accommodation. This made the ASM income £10k which has inflated the total Society income that must be reported to the Charity Commission. It is strongly recommended that the Society does NOT handle accommodation costs for future ASMs; the financial exposure is disproportionate to the rest of our funding, it distorts the overall picture and the bookings require a lot of administration (However, the ASM was a great success and as an attendee I thank Central Branch for their efforts).

No other branch received funds from the Society during the year. All had modest expenditures for room hire and speaker costs for evening meetings.

Total income remains under the £25k threshold at which an independent verifier is required by the Charity Commission.

RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS SOCIETY ACCOUNT : To 31/12/18

For the year 1 January 2018 to 31st December 2018

	2018	2017		2018	2017
	Receipts	Receipts		Payments	Payments
Subscriptions (receipts-refunds)	£7,923.57	£8,000.32	Administration	£165.33	£184.23
Journal & Newsletter sales	£120.00	£68.69	Council Travel Expenses	£294.00	£433.75
Insertions in Journal/Newsletter	£50.00	£0.00	Gifts and Awards	£0.00	£225.80
PLS (Royalties)	£27.23	£201.54	Website	£104.99	£139.99
Interest received COIF deposit	£70.23	£51.43	GA affiliation fee	£40.00	£40.00
Tax refund	£2,602.81	£0.00	Insurance	£482.46	£202.72
AGM Auction	£917.00	£842.00	Publicity	£150.02	£752.40
Donations	£216.35	£155.00	Journal costs	£7,801.60	£3,003.86
ASM2017 Llandudno		£400.00	Newsletters	£3,702.29	£3,493.61
ASM2018 Leicester	£215.00		Transfers to Branch Accounts	£300.00	£590.00
ASM2019 Buckfast Abbey	£2,065.00		Branch costs paid directly	£0.00	£149.20
Extraordinary items			Projects	£180.00	£0.00
Sale of Cogger coll'n		£2,650.00	Extraordinary items		
			Cogger proceeds to Charity	£2,650.00	
Total Receipts	£14,207.19	£12,368.98	Total Payments	£16,830.69	£9,685.56
Opening bank balances:-			Closing bank balances :-		
Current account	£24,807.81	£22,124.39	Current account	£22,184.31	£24,807.81
COIF Deposit account	£19,000.00	£19,000.00	Deposit account	£19,000.00	£19,000.00
Total Bank Deposits	£43,807.81	£41,124.39	Total Bank Deposits	£41,184.31	£43,807.81
Total Income	£58,015.00	£53,493.37	Total Income	£58,015.00	£53,493.37
Excess income over expenditure	-£2,623.50	£2,683.42			

Notes

Tax refund shown in 2018 is for both 2016 and 2017 gift aided subscriptions

The receipt for the 2017 ASM was the refund of a deposit paid in 2016, from the Hotel that was unable to fulfill our booking.

Journal and insurance payments were higher in 2018 than 2017, as some costs incurred in 2017 were paid in 2018

The Society reimbursed Council members for travel expenses to attend Council meetings. A Trustee and partner were also reimbursed for 2 nights accommodation to allow them to man a stand to publicise the Society at the North Pennines Mineral Expo. They covered their own travel and food costs.

The Society gratefully acknowledges donations from Gary Lord and the widows of Ron Cleevley and Nigel Trewin

The Society sold the collection of a past member, Norman Cogger, and acting on the instructions of his executors, passed the proceeds to The League of Friends.

RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS BRANCH ACCOUNTS : To 31/12/18

For the year 1 January 2018 to 31st December 2018

CENTRAL BRANCH					
	2018	2017		2018	2017
	Receipts	Receipts		Payments	Payments
Transfer from Society Account	£300.00	£590.00	Speaker's Expenses	£80.00	£175.00
Advance from Society Acc for ASM	£960.00		Administration Expenses	£0.00	£0.00
ASM Income from Attendees	£9,905.00		Room Hire - Meetings	£0.00	£96.00
			Room Hire - Symposium		£45.00
			Committee Travel Expenses	£0.00	£0.00
			Rocks Exhibition		£393.41
			ASM Expenses	£10,735.11	
Total Receipts	£11,165.00	£590.00	Total Payments	£10,815.11	£709.41
Opening bank balances:-			Closing bank balances :-		
Central Branch	£46.11	£165.52	Central Branch	£396.00	£46.11
Total Income	£11,211.11	£755.52		£11,211.11	£755.52

Note: Costs of providing overnight accommodation and ASM dinner were included in the fees paid by attendees

NORTH BRANCH					
	2018	2017		2018	2017
	Receipts	Receipts		Payments	Payments
Transfer from Society Account	£0.00	£0.00	Speaker's Expenses	£100.00	£0.00
ASM Surplus		£326.80	Administration Expenses	£0.00	£0.00
			Use of Room	£60.00	£30.00
			Committee Travel Expenses	£0.00	£0.00
Total Receipts	£0.00	£326.80	Total Payments	£160.00	£30.00
Opening bank balances:-			Closing bank balances :-		
North Branch Current account	£470.58	£173.78	North Branch Current account	£310.58	£470.58
North Branch Deposit account	£144.00	£144.00	North Branch Deposit account	£144.00	£144.00
Total Income	£614.58	£644.58		£614.58	£644.58

WALES and WEST BRANCH					
	2018	2017		2018	2017
	Receipts	Receipts		Payments	Payments
Transfer from Society Account	£0.00	£0.00	Speaker's Expenses Evening meetir	£0.00	£0.00
Horstman Bequest	£250.00	£250.00	Administration Expenses	£42.37	£13.46
			Room Hire - Meetings	£25.00	£50.00
Maisemore (after food costs)	£152.50	£166.70	Committee Travel Expenses		£13.40
Tom Levison Book Sale	£63.90		Room Hire - Maisemore	£185.00	£169.00
			Speakers expenses - Maisemore	£0.00	£50.00
			Donation to NMW for hosting visits		£250.00
Total Receipts	£466.40	£416.70	Total Payments	£252.37	£545.86
Opening bank balances:-			Closing bank balances :-		
W&W Branch	£1,906.73	£2,035.89	W&W Branch	£2,120.76	£1,906.73
Total Income	£2,373.13	£2,452.59		£2,373.13	£2,452.59

SOUTH WEST BRANCH					
	2018	2017		2018	2017
	Receipts	Receipts		Payments	Payments
Transfer from Society Account	£0.00	£0.00	Speaker's Expenses Evening meetir	£100.00	£0.00
Branch- Income from AGM Auction	£65.50	£142.00	Administration Expenses	£0.00	£0.00
Branch- Income from AGM Buffet	£0.00	£110.00	Room Hire - Meetings	£60.00	£60.00
Donation	£1.50		Committee Travel Expenses		£0.00
			Refreshments / Buffet	£71.44	£61.10
Total Receipts	£67.00	£252.00	Total Payments	£231.44	£121.10
Opening balances:-			Closing balances :-		
Petty Cash	£284.44	£93.54	Petty cash	£0.00	£284.44
SW Branch bank	£521.43	£581.43	SW Branch bank	£641.43	£521.43
Total Income	£872.87	£926.97		£872.87	£926.97

Income:

	2018	2017
Society Account	£14,207.19	£12,368.98
Central Branch	£9,905.00	£0.00
North Branch	£0.00	£1,568.00
W&W Branch	£466.40	£416.70
SW Branch	£67.00	£252.00
Total	£24,645.59	£14,605.68

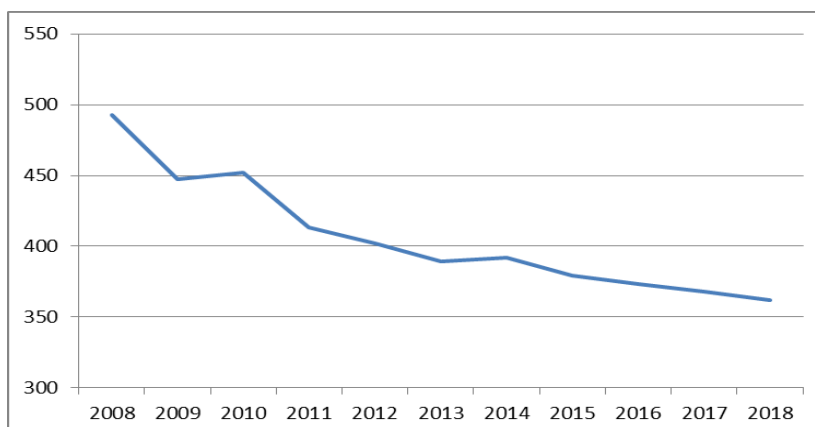
2019 Budget Forecast: In 2019 outgoings are expected to exceed income, due largely to an anticipated larger issue of the Journal, outsourcing of type setting and increased support for special projects. These additional costs will be offset from reserves.

Acceptance of Accounts: A proposal was made that the 2018 accounts should be accepted. Proposer: Phil Taylor; Seconded: Tom Cotterell. 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 and Neil reported that as at 10 April we had 348 paid-up members, 13 new members and 20 members who have not yet renewed their subscriptions. It seems probable that we may finish up with a slight increase in numbers.

Year End	Members	New members
2008	493	
2009	447	43
2010	452	43
2011	413	13
2012	402	12
2013	389	28
2014	392	23
2015	379	10
2016	373	11
2017	368	14
2018	362	19
25 March 2019		11



Only 60% of our subscriptions are gift-aided and members are encouraged to do this if they pay UK income tax. Neil will email those people who do not currently gift-aid their subscription to encourage more people to participate in the scheme.

4.6 Journal Editor (David Green, Malcolm Southwood) and Frank Ince (Journal Manager)

None of the Journal Team were able to be present at the meeting so, on their behalf Roy Starkey presented the report.

2018: JRS Volume 21

Contents/Schedule - 6 papers and 2 book reviews; 132 pages (128 text pages + 4 cover pages; the largest-ever issue); Circulation, late November.

Finances - Income: £6,122.00 (Budget: £6,000.00 + Non-member Sales: £122.00 [5 x £15.00 + 2 x £13.00 + 3 x £7.00]); Expenditure: £4,843.24 (Printing: £3525.76 + P&P: £1317.48 [27%]); Balance: +£1,278.76.

Publication and Circulation - 372 copies (360 + 12 reprints per author): £9.63 per copy, 7.09p per page (132 pp), JRS 20 (2017), £5.13 per copy, 7.54p per page (68 pp); 300 copies to members: £13.42 per member, JRS 20 (2017) £ 8.23 per member.

RS Website - Updated with various PDFs, including JRS 1–21 contents/author indices.

2019: JRS Volume 22

New Journal Editor - David has worked alongside Malcolm during 2018 (JRS 21) and he has now taken over as Journal Editor; Many thanks to Malcolm for his contributions to JRS: as a memento he has received a framed print of John Mawe's 1829 watercolour of Cromford Moor Mine, Derbyshire (donated to the Society by Phil Jackman).

Planned schedule for JRS 22 - Various articles and notes are in preparation and/or review; The cut-off date for manuscripts is the end of May; The printing and distribution should be in November; We may publish another larger issue; Budget for JRS 22: £5,500.

All offers of new contributions will be gratefully received.

JRS: The Future - David welcomes discussions with anyone about JRS.

Various small changes of format and scope will be trialed.

A summary of the guidelines for authors was published in Newsletter 74 (full version available from David); Robert Preston (ex. Mineralogical Magazine) has agreed to do the layout of JRS 22–25 (this will cost £500–600 per issue); Frank will continue as the contact with the printer and with the organisation of non-member gifts (libraries, etc.), subscriptions and sales.

JRS is the Society's flagship publication and the intention is to maintain the academic standard.

The direction the JRS takes is in your hands; It's over to you!

4.7 Newsletter Editor (Michael Doel)

Since the report to the last AGM in 2018 two more issues of the Newsletter have been produced and circulated. These were issues 73 (September 2018, 48 pages) and 74 (March 2019, 52 pages) both of which were produced to a high standard in full colour by our printers (Printed Solutions, High Wycombe). 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 2018 was £3702 i.e. within the agreed budget of £4000 for the year. For 2019 a budget of £4000 has again been agreed and I would hope that two similarly sized issues can once more be produced while remaining within this budget. Postal costs continue to be a major element in the cost of production, amounting to £732, which is equivalent to roughly 20% of the total cost, in 2018. In recent years I have personally addressed, stamped and mailed out each issue but, starting with Issue No. 74 (March 2019), we have moved to a system where the printers perform these functions. This is expected to lead to a small increase in overall cost.

The supply of material (aside from field trip reports) for publication in the Newsletter was adequate – although not overly generous. I would like to thank everyone who sent in contributions, however, I invariably need to use pretty well everything I receive and it is usually necessary to produce additional “filler” material to achieve an optimum number of pages. I am still reliant on a small number of people who assist me in this and I would

very much like to encourage more members to contribute - so please get in touch with me with any draft articles or ideas you may have.

The supply of field trip reports from all branches was very good across 2018. Please keep them rolling in as they are of great interest to the general membership and a major cornerstone of the Society's activities. The guidance for people writing visit reports has been revised and this can be found on the Society's website in the section on publications.

The Newsletter continues to be sent out in two forms - a paper version and an electronic (.pdf) version to all members for whom we have a valid e-mail address. Feedback on the e-version is uniformly positive and anyone not currently receiving this should make sure that the Membership Secretary has their correct, up to date e-mail address. Anyone wishing to receive only the pdf version in future should let me know as soon as possible (m.t.doel@talk21.com).

I have said previously that I wish to relinquish the post of Editor in the near future and I am therefore happy to report that Susan Tyzack has agreed to take over from me. Susan has already begun to involve herself in the production process and her involvement will increase through remainder of 2019. The plan is for her to take over fully in 2020.

We are both keen to receive feedback from members on any aspects of the Newsletter, including comments or suggestions for its future content and presentation. I hope that you, the members, will continue to enjoy what is in every sense your Newsletter and that some 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)

No analyses have been conducted for members during the period April 2018 to April 2019. Unfortunately, following the successful trial of hiring Cardiff University's Scanning Electron Microscope (SEM) for Energy Dispersive Spectroscopy X-ray analysis (EDS) in 2017 an electrical surge damaged their equipment and so far a repair has not been made.

An easily accessible alternative has not been found and therefore I have several sample stubs awaiting analysis when the opportunity arises. I continue to run the occasional Powder X-ray Diffraction analysis (PXRD) at the National Museum of Wales on behalf of members although time constraints at work continue to limit the capacity that I can run.

Recent analyses used in society publications include the identification of millerite from Linton Quarry described by Roy Starkey and Tom Cotterell in the latest Journal of the Russell Society (Vol. 21). Other analyses will feature in forthcoming publications on manganese occurrences in Northern England and Scotland.

On a fieldwork front I have provided advice to three fieldtrip organisers in assisting the approach to contacting conservation bodies (Natural England and Natural Resources Wales) and quarrying companies for access to Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI's) and quarries. Some success has been achieved in gaining access, but all of the credit lies with the respective field trip organisers who have done the legwork in communicating with these organisations and companies.

5. APPOINTMENT OF HONORARY OFFICERS AND TRUSTEES FOR 2019 – 20

The General Secretary stated that at the specified closing date of 2nd March 2019, nominations had been received for each Council position for 2019 / 2020. 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	David Aubrey-Jones
Treasurer	Mary Starkey
General Secretary	Roy Starkey
Membership Secretary	Neil Hubbard

A proposal was made by Nick Hawes that all nominations should be accepted and this was seconded by Ian Dossett. The nominations were unanimously approved.

6. AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

The General Secretary Roy Starkey briefly outlined the background to, and reasons for, the proposed changes to the Constitution, which have been widely communicated and discussed over the past year, before inviting comments and questions from the floor.

Tom Cotterell and Marashean Parker (Wales and West Branch) raised a number of questions concerning the proposed changes and why these were being 'forced' upon a viable group such as Wales and West. The General Secretary and Hon. President did their best to explain that there was no need for Wales and West to change how they are operating, simply that there would be no constitutional requirement for them to have a full committee, maintain branch accounts, or to hold a branch AGM. It was stressed that the new structure and organisation is intended to be a minimum, which it is hoped will facilitate existing branches being able to continue to function, and new branches to form in parts of the country where we do not currently have any representation.

After a lengthy discussion, with a number of additional contributions from the floor, the General Secretary drew the discussion to a close and put the proposed constitutional amendments to a vote by those present.

Vote on the proposed constitutional amendments en-bloc: For 41; Against 4; Abstentions 3. The proposed changes were approved by the meeting.

7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

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

Oneta Wilson notified the meeting that Alan Dyer is now in a care home where he is very happy and well looked-after. Alan is most grateful to those members who have taken the trouble to write or to visit him.

Rupert Harrison raised a point about the structure and layout of our standard risk assessment form being 'generic'. It is felt by Council that the form is satisfactory for our needs, includes space for 'customisation' for specific visits, and we have been complimented upon it by quarry managers and it has also been adopted by a number of other organisations. The form will be kept under review.

The 2020 ASM will be hosted by the Wales and West Branch, from 3-5 April 2020. The venue will be the Cheltenham Chase Hotel, Shurdington Road, Brockworth, Glos. Further details about the event and a booking form will be circulated to members towards the end of 2019.

Marashean Parker reminded attendees that the Maisemore Event would be held on 20 October 2019 at a new venue – Shurdington Social Centre, GL51 4TB.

The meeting closed at 17.15.

Roy Starkey
General Secretary
13 April 2019