

# THE RUSSELL SOCIETY

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE RUSSELL SOCIETY  
HELD AT 16.15 ON SATURDAY 1<sup>ST</sup> APRIL 2023 AT BUCKFAST ABBEY  
CONFERENCE CENTRE, SOUTH DEVON. TQ11 0EG**

**THE MEETING WAS ATTENDED BY 48 MEMBERS AND WAS QUORATE IN ACCORDANCE  
WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE CONSTITUTION OF THE SOCIETY.**

## **AGENDA**

Following notification of the agenda to members no additional AGM items were raised or received by the closing date of Friday 10th March.

1. Apologies for absence.
2. Approval of the minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Russell Society held at College Court Conference Center Hotel. (Full minutes are available on the Russell Society website) No comments received.
- 3 Matters arising.
4. Honorary Officers' reports:
  - 4.1 President
  - 4.2 Vice-President including Health & Safety
  - 4.3 General Secretary
  - 4.4 Treasurer and Approval of the accounts
  - 4.5 Membership Secretary
  - 4.6 Journal Editor
  - 4.7 Newsletter Editor
  - 4.8 Conservation Officer
5. Appointment of Honorary Officers and Trustees for 2023 – 2024  
Nominations received as follows:-

Honorary President:	David Aubrey-Jones
Honorary Vice-President:	Ian Dossett
Honorary General Secretary:	Alistair Napier
Honorary Treasurer:	Stuart Wagstaff
Honorary Membership Secretary:	Philip Taylor
6. AOB

## **1. Apologies for Absence – David Green.**

## **2. Minutes of the 2021 Annual General Meeting**

The minutes of the 2022 AGM (available via the Russell Society website and the summary of them published in Newsletter 81) were agreed unanimously as a true record of the 2022 AGM. This was proposed by Nigel Morton, seconded by Susan Tyzack. Vote: unanimous 48 in favour. None against. No abstentions. David Aubrey-Jones (Hon. President) signed and dated a printed copy of the 2022 AGM Minutes.

## **3. Matters Arising.**

We received two emails expressing concerns about the following: -

Paper copies of the newsletter / cost,

Publication of the membership list and GDPR.

**Discussions on the above covered under AOB**

## **4.1 President**

Great to meet face to face after a 2-year gap at the 50th anniversary ASM weekend in Leicester.

Climax was an after-dinner talk by Christopher Russell on memories of his father.

Long-term members provided fond memories.

Enjoyable quiz by Roy Starkey completed a memorable evening.

The Russell Society - "50 Years of British Topographical Mineralogy" book printed as a lasting memento.

Monthly online meetings continued on Zoom. Roy Starkey has done a great job of organising and hosting.

- February meeting on field trips last year. Many thanks to Ian Dossett, Chris Finch, and Tom Cotterell.
- Southern branch has continued with online meetings.
- North branch has also started online meetings.
- These branch meetings now open to other members of the Society no matter where based.
- 18 online meetings have been arranged in total this winter.

### **Field Trips**

Fairly complete field trip programme was organised for the summer, following an extensive review of H&S documentation.

Trips included some SSSI sites – seems some applications could in future cover multiple years.

Recently consulted by LDNPA over an application to collect in Caldbeck Fells.

Ian Dossett guidance on trip reports.

Report from every field trip to be produced, which forms a valuable record.

Another excavator dig was organised at the Benallt Mine following the successful one at Penberthy Croft in 2021. I hope further similar digs will follow over the coming years.

### Russell Society Journal

David Green has done a wonderful job editing and producing the Journal over last few years. Volume 25, runs to 221 pages, and is outstanding.

Sadly, David now has to stand down. Have been unable to find a replacement Editor. Instead we are putting together a small team for the role. Several have offered to be part of the team: Tom Cotterell, Norman Moles, Steve Plant, Gary Morse, Jim Robinson and Ray Robinson plus occasional help from David.

### Newsletter

82 issues of the Newsletter produced!

Electronic versions of all Newsletter issues have been collated by Gary.

If members wish to identify older Newsletter reports, contact Gary who will search and send relevant articles.

I would like to see a full digital set of newsletters with a search capability.

The Russell Society Newsletter is emailed to members and is published under the 'Members only' section of the website.

### Membership

RS has weathered the storm of the Covid-19 pandemic well and membership is stable.

- Total membership 352 on 15 Feb 2023.
- 21 joined as new members, and 24 members left.

We had stands at the Bakewell and SMLS shows.

- 10 new members recruited.
- At SMLS show, books and minerals kindly donated by relatives of Gerry Mead and Frank Sharp were sold, Chris Finch and Alistair Napier manned a display, and Stuart gave a talk.

Thank you:

- To Ian, Phil, Stuart, Alistair, and other Council members.
- To Branch and Field trip organisers, coordinators and others involved in running Branches and Field trips.
- To David Green, the Journal team, reviewers and contributors.
- To Gary Morse and contributors to the Newsletter.
- To Gary and authors for wonderful 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary book.
- To past Council and branch organisers.
- And to all our members....

David Aubrey-Jones, Honorary Russell Society President.

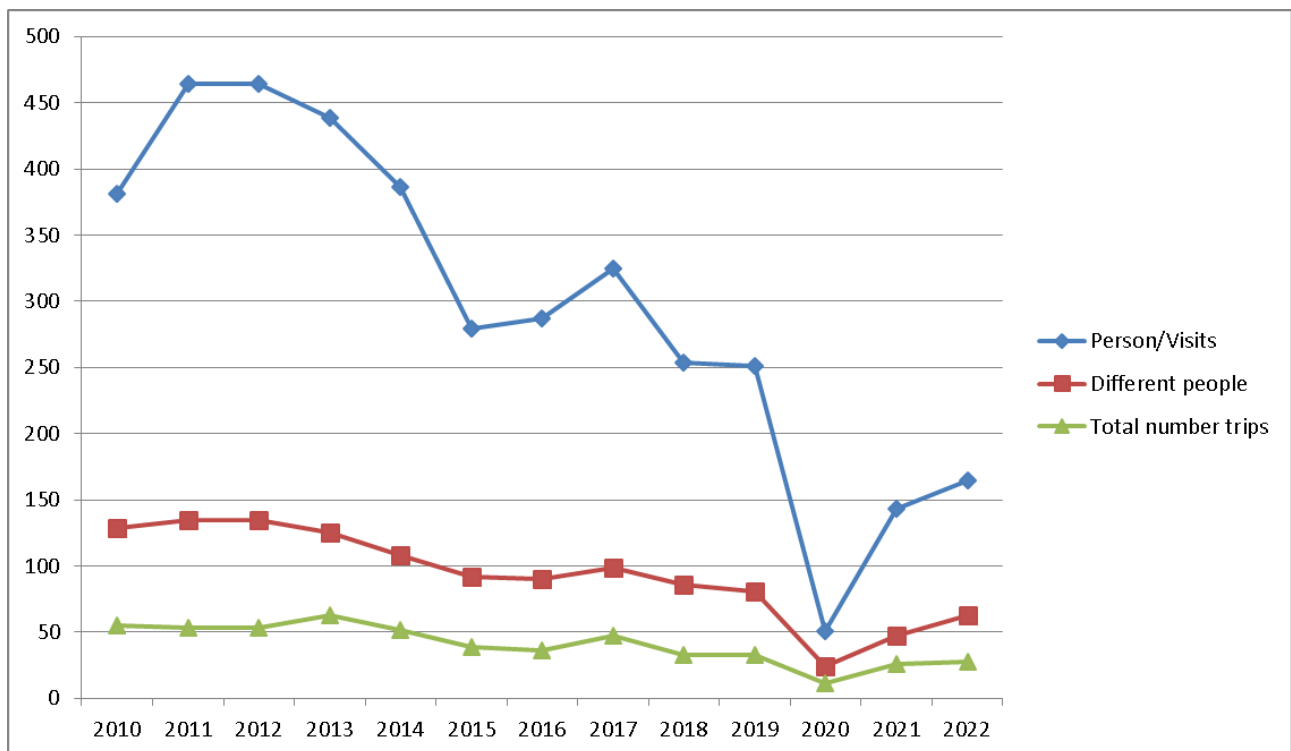
## 4.2 Vice President

### 4.2.1 Overview

The number of field trips (28) and attendances (165) increased over the numbers for the previous year, however these were well below previous peak levels.

- No Incidents or accidents were reported.
- Field trip reports were produced for most field trips. The new reporting guidelines have made producing a report easier.
- A major 'dig' was carried out at Benallt mine.
- All field trip H&S and other documentation was reviewed.
- 36 field trips are planned for 2023.
- Many thanks to all FTO's, FTC's and Field Trip report authors for their efforts on our behalf.
- Penberthy Croft and Benallt formal reports to be held for members on the RS website.

### 4.2.2. Field Trip Statistics



### 4.2.3 2022 Field Trip Breakdown

Branch	Planned	Completed	Cancelled	Outstanding	Attendance
South West	10	3	7	-	17
Central	6	6	-	-	32
South	8	7	1	-	46
Wales & West	3	2	1	-	11
North	11	10	1	-	59
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>165</b>

Cancellations do not include field trips that were successfully rescheduled.

- 63 different individuals attended the field trips over the year.
- The Benallt dig was jointly sponsored with Wales & West but included only under North.
- 17 people attended 4 or more trips and 3 people attended 9 or more trips.

#### 4.2.4 Confirmed plans for 2023.

Branch	Planned
South West	8+6 ASM
Central	4
South	7
Wales & West	-
North	11
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>36</b>

#### 4.2.5 Health and Safety Documentation

- **2022** FTO's and FTC'S (those shown for 2022) consulted to obtain their views re the Field Trip related documents, Roles and Responsibilities and Reporting Guidelines. The documents were subsequently amended in June 2022.
- **2023** FTO's consulted re the Field Trip related documents. No changes to content were required. Risk Indemnity Form 2023 - January 2023
- Incident Report Form 2023 January 2023; Now includes a sentence so that the document can be used to record any H&S concerns as well as incidents.
- All other documents remain unchanged:
  - Competence of Field Trip Coordinators June 2020
  - Safeguarding Policy
  - Guidance for the use of Field Trip Coordinators
  - Field Trip Coordinators Check List June 2022
  - Guidance for use of Excavators Nov 2021
  - Guidance for Digs on Spoil Heaps June 2022

### 4.3 General Secretary

In the continuing drive to become a paperless society as from the 2024 AGM the council nomination forms will be email only further reducing any postal costs.

The Whatley Quarry open day is going ahead this year after its postponement due to HM the Queen passing. It will be on Sunday April the 23<sup>rd</sup> 10.30 am – 3.00 pm, it promises to be great day out for the family with quarry tours, machinery exhibitions classic cars and of course a display of Whatley minerals by Russell Society members, including giveaways for the younger visitors and joining information for the Russell Society. The Society currently sponsors four pages on Mindat, two minerals arthurite and russellite and two localities Boltsburn Mine and Hopes Nose, this is to be reduced to just sponsoring the two minerals arthurite and russellite.

Thanks to Mary Starkey, for looking after our website and Roy Starkey for the winter Zoom programmes.

Thank you, Alistair Napier, General Secretary.

### 4.4 Treasurer's Report and Approval of the Accounts

<u>Income Description</u>	<u>2022 Receipts (£)</u>	<u>2021 Receipts (£)</u>
Subscriptions	7,419	7,146
Journal & Newsletter sales	201	13
Publishers License	0	0
COIF Interest	311	36
Gift Aid refund HMRC	1,603	1,453
ASM Auction (Donations)	2,145	0
Bank Sundry	0	100
Other Donations	1,422	1,545
Sundry	0	54
Field Trips	461	0
ASM 2022/2023	6,276	0
<b>Total Receipts</b>	<b>19,837</b>	<b>10,346</b>

<b><u>Payments Description</u></b>	<b><u>2022 Payments (£)</u></b>	<b><u>2021 Payments (£)</u></b>
Administration	0	109
Council Travel Expenses	38	0
Gifts / Awards	0	230
Website & ZOOM	340	14
Insurance & GA Fee	333	362
Publicity / Mindat	368	677
Projects / Symposium / Events	1,287	446
Journal costs	11,439	661
Newsletters	1,690	96
Sundry	0	198
Courses	49	0
PayPal Fees	8	0
Refunds	125	0
ASM 2022	5,841	0
<b>Total Payments</b>	<b>21,518</b>	<b>2,793</b>

**Bank for the year 1 January 2022 to 31st December 2022**

<b>Opening bank:-</b>	<b>2022 (£)</b>	<b>2021 (£)</b>
Current account	15,108	7,690
COIF Deposit account	32,000	32,000
Petty cash with SW branch	150	150
PayPal	203	0
<b>Opening Balance</b>	<b>47,461</b>	<b>39,840</b>

<b>Closing bank:-</b>	<b>2022 (£)</b>	<b>2021 (£)</b>
Current account	13,591	15,108
COIF Deposit account	32,000	32,000
Petty cash with SW branch	150	150
PayPal	39	203
<b>Closing Balance</b>	<b>45,780</b>	<b>47,461</b>

# Budget

Treasurer's Budget for 2023 Activities				
RECEIPTS	2022 (£)	2022 Actual (£)	2023 (£)	Comments
Subscriptions	7,000	7,419	7,400	Slight increase in subscriptions 2022 unlikely to increase significantly
Tax refund	1,000	1,603	1,600	Gift aid
COIF interest	5	311	960	Average Nominal 3%
Journal Sales	120	?	120	
Royalties PLS	35	0	0	Changed system now to self administered
ASM auction	2,000	2,145	2,000	Not considered to rise significantly
Donations	100	1,422	250	More individual donations in 2022. Mineral sales, prints etc.
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>10,260</b>	<b>12,900</b>	<b>12,330</b>	Revenue from 2022 - 13,560 (inc. reduction for ASM payments)
PAYMENTS				
Admin	100	100	100	Nominal inc. Paypal fees
Council Travel	100	100	100	Nominal
Web & Zoom Subscription	285	340	375	incl domain registration
Journal	6,300	11,439	7,000	2022 Reflects 2 journals. Inc print, type set & proofs
Newsletters	200	1,690	200	After this year, 100% digital. Nominal for some prints & post
Insurance & GA	365	333	366	Up 10%
2023 ASM subsidy	500	1,000	1,200	Up 20%. Expected inflation raise (plus)
Publicity MinDat	250	360	500	2 x Mindat sponsors. Posters quarry PR
Projects	500	360	600	Contribution to Bennalt dig. Extra provision for 2023
Miscellaneous items	200	50	525	Contingency 5% variable costs. Banksman Courses etc..
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>8,800</b>	<b>15,772</b>	<b>10,966</b>	

The Treasurer's accounts need a proposer, a seconder and a vote of those present to accept the previous year's (2022) accounts.

Proposer: Roy Starkey, Seconded: Oneta Willson, For: 48, Against: 0, Abstentions: 0

## Comments from the floor:

A member asked about the cost of printing the Golden Anniversary publication, which did not appear as a separate item on the accounts. This was confirmed as having been included in the cost of printing JRS Vol 25, the biggest ever issue. Future Journals will be smaller.

It was also noted that membership rates had stayed the same for many years, and offered good value for money which made it cheap in comparison with some other organisations. The Treasurer confirmed that they will continue to monitor costs as the Society still very much relies on donations and interest from reserves in the COIF account.

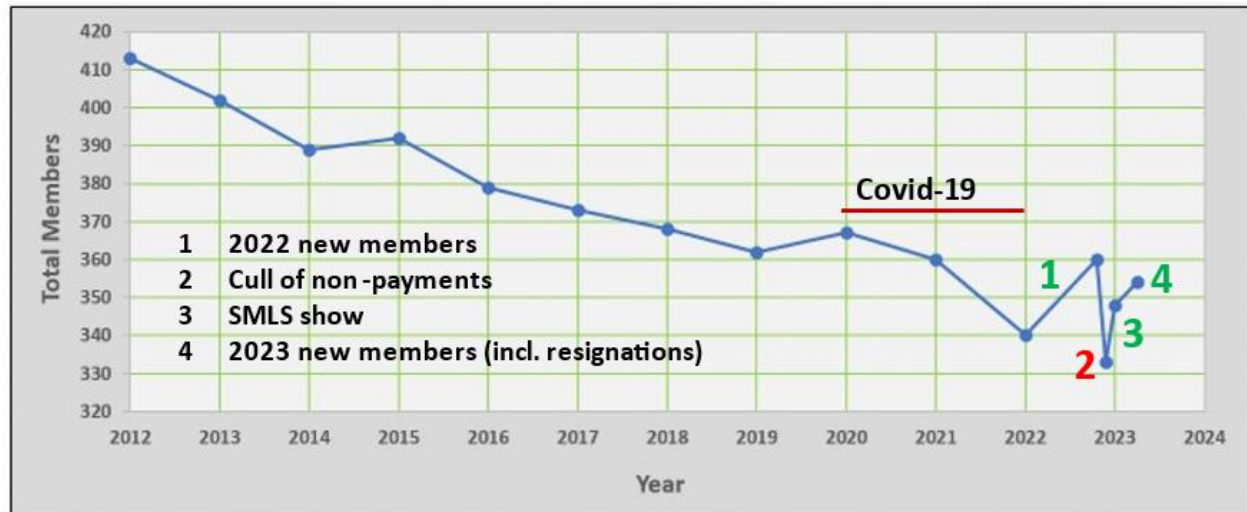


## 4.5 Membership Secretary

Current membership as of March 2023 = 354

New members since 31 <sup>st</sup> October 2022	23
Died	0
Resigned	3
Removed/evicted due to non-payment	23
Overall Change	-3

About 35 new members joined in 2022



Membership List: March 2023:

New list just issued: previous issue August 2019.

Internet security considerations; data protection.

Late subscriptions:

Ran until November in 2022. Cut-off 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023.

Lapsed members re-joining.

Forfeit otherwise no incentive: only auto-payment accepted.

Members with no email address:

Neil had got the number down to about 36. Now down to 7.

Printed Newsletter for postal addresses (not on email):

2023 last year for any form of printed Newsletter with additional fee of £36 (in addition to subscription).

Issued letter start Feb 2022: 5 replies, 7 no reply.

Monthly Zoom talks: National (Wednesday evenings)

Informative, disseminate, terrific feedback, 14% attendance.

Zoom Talks: Local Branches (Friday evenings)

North & Southern Branches.

Platform for regional and niche

Recordings of Zoom talks

National: copyright concerns.

Southern: some recorded.

Zoom guests

Invite a friend.

**Comments from the floor:** Some concerns were raised regarding members who had not paid their subs on time. It was pointed out by the Membership Secretary that it was essential to give members an incentive to pay on time. The constitution states that members who don't pay by the end of March are deemed to have left the Society. A number of members go past this deadline, then, when they realise they no longer have access to resources, try to pay late or apply to re-join. This gives the Membership Secretary additional, unnecessary work.

Also raised was the ongoing issue that individuals who haven't paid can still get access to the Members' Page of the website after they have left the Society. There have been a number of technical issues with the website, but the password will be changed in April to avoid this.

Mary Starkey requested that Branches inform her of their Branch Zoom programme in good time so she can get the information onto the website, allowing all members the opportunity to participate.

#### 4.6 Journal Editor

JRS25 production is complete.

- Much appreciation and recognition should go to David Green – Editor, and Robert Preston – typesetter. Both are now sadly stepping down.
- JRS25 was the largest volume to date, at 221 pages.
- Print run was 350 copies.; 16 remain for new members.
- Printing of the journal was held over the Christmas/New Year period due to holidays and postal strikes.
- Copies were posted out at the start of January 2023.
- Despite the padded envelope being the same grade as previous years, the additional thickness and weight of JRS25 did cause some issues. There were a handful of reports of damage and 2 replacement copies had to be sent.

JRS	Income (£)			Expenditure (£)			Balance		
	Pages	Budget	Sales	Total	Layout	Printing		P&P	Total
22 (2019)	110 +4	5500	97.9 6	5597.9 6	550	3359.2 3	1037.5 0	4946. 73	651.23
23 (2020)	121 +4	4800	89	4889	650	3742.7 0	1183.5 0	5576. 20	-1087.50
24 (2021)	144 +4	6150	33	6183	828	3918.4 3	1130.1 1	5876. 54	306.46
25 (2022)	221 +4	6300	85	6385	1130	5436.5 5	1668.9 2	8235. 47	-1850.47

- The budget for JRS26 is based on the number of pages expected, at a budget cost of about 40p per page.

Ray Robinson, Journal Manager

#### 4.7 Newsletter Editor

1. The RS Newsletter cover first introduced from issue 81 September 2022
2. Two Society Newsletters have been published since I took over as Editor from Susan Tyzack in April 2022. Issue 81, September 2022 and issue 82, March 2023.
3. RS Newsletters are now produced in Portable Document Format (PDF) which are emailed to members or can be downloaded from cloud storage or the Society website.
4. Supply of printed copies to members without email access ceased after issue 81 unless they pay the extra cost involved. From issue 82 inclusive there should be no cost to the Society due to the publication of the Newsletter. (But see AOB 6.1)
5. Issue 81 contained 61 pages and issue 82 60 pages including covers. File sizes are in the range 5 to 8 MB. There is a compromise between image quality and keeping the file size acceptable for emailing as an attachment.
6. Being an electronic document it now allows for the inclusion of hyperlinks to references, further information and sources of original information direct from the document.
7. No feedback has been received from members regarding any issues with the format, readability or access to links. One must assume that the new system is working and acceptable. Feedback is always welcomed so that we can improve the Newsletter in future.

8. Field trip reports are an important part of the Newsletter and the Editor is grateful to those members who submit well written reports with supporting photographs. There are guidelines for the completion of reports on the RS website.
9. The Russell Society Newsletter is a means for members to communicate items of mineralogical and related interest to other members. The Editor is extremely grateful to the small number of members who regularly submit articles of interest for the Newsletter. If you have any information, items for possible inclusion or require information why not get it published in the Newsletter?
10. The next edition will be published September 2023 and I am accepting items for publication now.

Gary Morse, Newsletter Editor, March 2023.

**Comments from the floor:** A few members had not received their newsletter or had found it later in their spam folder. This may be due to either their email provider's attachment size limit or an issue with the individual member's spam filter. To avoid this, future editions of the Newsletter will be put on the website and/or The Cloud for members to download directly. Moving to a downloadable version will allow more hyperlinks, and more and better images.

#### **4.8 Conservation Officer**

In May 2022, I attended the Russell Society Northern Branch excavation at Benallt Mine SSSI near Aberdaron, Gwynedd. Organised by Ian Dossett in consultation with Natural Resources Wales and the landowner I was available for on-site advice and mineral identifications. During the site visit discussions with Raymond Roberts of Natural Resources Wales regarding future projects were fruitful.

Subsequent mineral analysis at Amgueddfa Cymru has identified some of the rare species for which the mine is the type locality.

It is becoming harder to be able to analyse non-Welsh material through museum enquiries, but a small number of members have submitted material to me during the last year.

With my museum and RS hats on, I have recently joined a consultation panel looking at the future mineralogical displays at the Royal Cornwall Museum.

Tom Cotterell, Conservation Officer.

The Conservation Officer reported that he and other has formed a relationship to support the Royal Cornwall Museum. He also pointed out that it can be easier to get permission to collect on SSSIs than on non-SSSIs thanks to the good relationships formed with authorities and landowners.

#### **5. Appointment of Honorary Officers and Trustees for 2022 – 2023**

The General Secretary stated that as at the specified closing date of 10 March 2023, nominations had been received for each Council position for 2023 / 2024. As there was only one nomination received for each position, a ballot of the membership was not required. The nominations received are as follows: -

Honorary President: David Aubrey-Jones (Prop. I. Dossett; Sec. A. Napier)  
Honorary Vice-President: Ian Dossett (Prop. D. A. Jones; Sec. A. Napier)  
Honorary General Secretary: Alistair Napier (Prop. D. A. Jones; Sec. I. Dossett)  
Honorary Treasurer: Stuart Wagstaff (Prop. D. A. Jones; Sec. I. Dossett)  
Honorary Membership Secretary: Philip Taylor (Prop. D. A. Jones; Sec. I. Dossett)  
A vote to accept the nominations.

Proposer: Oneta Wilson. Seconder: Christine Critchley.

For: 48, Against: 0, Abstentions: 0.

## **6. AOB**

### **6.1 Newsletter Printing**

Concerns were raised regarding the move to digital-only communications, and specifically with ceasing physically printed copies of the Newsletter. The trustees sought to reassure the meeting that this was certainly not the case. The intent was to advise that printed copies of the Newsletter would no longer be covered by the standard membership subscription.

A letter was sent to the seven individuals who had not yet advised the Membership Manager of an email address by which the Newsletter could be distributed to them. This letter laid out the issues and a number of options, including the provision of having a copy printed and distributed to them. The cost was based on 2 copies per year for a professionally printed version as previously received. The individual would have to pay the additional costs associated with this in addition to their normal membership subscription. As a final backstop and if no other solution would work, then the individual was offered the option to withdraw from the society and receive a refund of their membership. The intention was to be as supportive and helpful as possible. Another member said that he wanted anyone who still desired a printed copy of the newsletter to be able to have one. The trustees attempted to explain the costs associated with printing of the newsletter against donations by way of subscriptions to the charity and the constraints imposed by the Charity Commission rules i.e. effectively redistributing funds to a small number of beneficiaries, which is not permitted. It was pointed out that members were at liberty to print a copy of the newsletter for themselves or to ask another person to do this for them if they didn't have a printer.

A member stated that they had found a cheaper printing option using laser printing, and offered to arrange for the printing and posting out of these cheaper copies to those members who haven't supplied an email address or have any other means to obtain a printed copy. This kind offer was agreed by the President and the member will be reimbursed for costs.

Trustees were still of the opinion that these additional printing and postage costs should be borne by those requesting copies due to the charity regulations. This was considered a questionable point with a few members of the opinion that the Charity should fund the printing from its reserves. As the meeting was overrunning and the conference centre manager wanted us to vacate, a motion was tabled by the President to keep the digital approach and to charge the few members remaining who had not supplied an email with

any additional printing and distribution costs required via the cheaper offer mentioned above.

This was Proposed by Roy Starkey, Seconded by Susan Tyzack and carried with voting as follows: For = 30, Against = 4, Abstentions = 14.

## **6.2 GDPR**

A number of comments were made in relation to the recent issuing of the Members list via email and GDPR. The President confirmed members had been consulted previously, and only those who had opted in by informing the Membership Secretary were included in the list. The President and others with experience in such matters confirmed and that the process was in compliance with GDPR requirements.

2024 AGM, details will follow.

Meeting closed at 5.45 pm.

Alistair Napier,  
General Secretary.  
07 April 2022