



# DRY STONE WALLING ASSOCIATION OF GREAT BRITAIN

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## Minutes of the meeting of the DSWA Management Committee held on Saturday 5 December 2009 at the Westmorland County Showground, commencing at 10.00am

**Present:** R Love (Chairman); A Devonport (Deputy Chairman); B Jones (Vice President); T Norris (Vice President); R Tufnell (Vice President); S Mitchell (Central Scotland); P Davies (Cheshire); P Adair (Cumbria); A Brown-Jackson (Derbyshire); Ms B Koo (Lancashire); B Moorhead (Northumbria); R Kitchen (Otley & Yorkshire Dales); E Fort (Pennine); M Batty (South East Scotland); R Stockall (South West England); N Coombey (South West Scotland); N Muir (West of Scotland); V Hollings (Elected Member)

ACTION BY

**In Attendance:** M Benge (Cumbria); P Moorhead (Northumbria) & Miss A Shaw.

**M09.46** **Apologies:** Apologies were received on behalf of Lord Cavendish, J Atkinson, M Booth, D Brookes, Q Grosvenor, B Hough, C Jenkins, A Loudon, G Pritchard, D Seed, Mrs J Walker, D Walmesley-Cotham, J Wilson, Mrs S Addy, Dorset branch.

**M09.47** **Chairman's Opening Remarks**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions were made for the benefit of new members attending their first meeting. R Love outlined the purpose of the meetings, which was to conduct the business of the national Association with input from branches and information reported back. It was acknowledged that there is sometimes a difference of opinion within the committee but discussions should take place in a constructive manner in order to find a satisfactory way forward.

The meeting was advised that copies of the 2010 General Information leaflet and updated Craftsman Certification Scheme booklet were now available. Thanks were recorded to Central Scotland branch for its generous sponsorship of these two publications.

The Chairman was also pleased to report that the Association had been awarded a grant of almost £20,000 from the Cumbria Fells and Dales RDPE group towards the cost of the congress.

**M09.48** **To confirm minutes of previous meeting – 5 September 2009**

There were no amendments to the minutes of the previous meeting, which were agreed as a correct record and signed accordingly.

**M09.49** **Matters arising from previous minutes**

**M09.49a** **Website (M09.39b):** The meeting was informed of concerns raised by Miss Shaw about branches having access to amend their own sections of the DSWA website. Although this suggestion had been included in the original proposals, the meeting heard that changes are now being made promptly. One of the main concerns raised was that if branches did alter their own section they may not remember to inform the office of the changes. This would increase the workload of office staff having to search to see if changes had been made. Details of events, etc are used by the office for more than one list and when changes are advised all relevant links are updated. It was also noted that if branches have last minute changes to events or programmes, the national website was not the place to inform members of this, but rather a branch email or phone tree would be appropriate. In conclusion, the Committee agreed to review the matter in twelve months to see whether there had been any major difficulties with updates. Meantime, branches should continue to send in branch programmes including amendments throughout the year.

A SHAW

ALL BRANCHES

**M09.49b** **Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS) (M09.45b):** A Devonport advised the meeting that it had not been possible to produce the information ahead of the meeting. The whole subject of CSCS was complicated but the intention was to provide some general information to people, which would be circulated with the minutes. Details to be sent to the office.

A DEVONPORT

**M09.50** **Correspondence**  
Nothing to report.

**M09.51** **Financial Reports**

**M09.51a** **Current Finances:** copies of the current finances were tabled and the following points noted.

- A suggestion was made that funds received from external sources should be clearly identified within the accounts. A solution would be to include a brief summary of the figures, as is done for the annual report.
- Consideration should perhaps be given to renaming the 40<sup>th</sup> Appeal fund to better reflect its purpose.

S ADDY

S ADDY

- A suggestion had been made at the AGM about possibly using website sales to help boost income. This idea would be followed up. S ADDY/  
A SHAW

Mrs Addy had submitted a suggestion to the Committee regarding the transfer of some of the DSWA funds into a fixed account in order to capitalise on better interest rates. Following a short discussion, the Committee agreed that a sum up to £50,000 should be invested in a two-year fixed account and that Mrs Addy should proceed with this action. S ADDY

**M09.51b** **Current Membership:** As at the beginning of December the membership were as follows; a total of 1301 which includes 1000 Open, 256 Professional, 21 Corporate and 18 Junior members.

**M09.51c** **Gift Aid:** The back-dated claim has now been submitted. It was surprising to note that only a small amount of money was outstanding. A query was raised as to whether donations received by branches could be eligible for gift aid. This would be clarified with J Wilson. A SHAW

**M09.52** **Constitution Review**

The latest draft document (V2.6) had been circulated prior to the meeting and B Jones pointed out that the work on the constitution was an ongoing process, still subject to change. Final details about the structure of the CIO were not expected until April 2010 at the earliest. The possible change in Government was not likely to affect this timescale. The following points were raised/noted during the discussion that took place.

**General**

- Detailed comments had been received from Northumbria branch, some of which had already been dealt with at earlier meetings. Mrs Moorhead suggested that the document should perhaps be written in clear, simple terms in due course. She would be happy to be involved with this process and would contact B Jones directly. B MOORHEAD/  
B JONES
- Once the DSWA has finalised the new documents the changes would have to be approved at an AGM or EGM. A discussion took place about the possibility of bringing forward the September Management Committee meeting to coincide with an EGM in August in order to approve the changes. However, caution was urged about making decisions in haste and perhaps it would be better to have everything in place for the decision to be made at the normal AGM in 2011. This matter would be given further thought at the next meeting in March. B JONES/  
R LOVE
- The geographic representation of trustees was raised and a discussion took place as to how this would be defined. It was acknowledged that there would have to be flexibility for the appointment of trustees, based primarily on specific skills or areas of responsibility required. The nominating committee could specify specific aspects of the Association's work to be covered and it would then be up to the membership to nominate suitable candidates. Trustees must be appointed to work for the benefit of the Association as a whole, not just their own local area. It was noted that the Association has, in the past, tried to ensure Vice Presidents were from one of the home countries but this was not always possible.
- There would continue to be a strong link between members/branches and the board of trustees but it would be up to branches and members to ensure this forum's success. The board of trustees would be foolish to ignore issues raised from the forum but it would be equally important for matters to be taken back to branches/members for discussion. A suggestion was made that minutes could include the name of those raising specific issues, which could demonstrate that matters were being addressed.

**Forum**

- The Committee agreed that the forum should meet at least twice a year and that the Chairman of the Forum should be a trustee. B JONES

**Finances**

- There was still some concern about branch funds being "controlled" by the Association. B Jones would do further work on the wording in this section, perhaps detailing that branch accounts were restricted funds, to be used by the branches for their day to day operations and under their control on a day to day basis. B JONES

**Code of Practice**

- The current document would be updated as necessary. B JONES/  
R LOVE

B Jones advised the meeting that there were still some issues to be addressed, including public benefit of the charity and the inclusion of Scottish branches within the framework. The role/requirement of a Treasurer and the time of changeover also need to be checked. Branches were urged to input to and feedback from this process and ensure they stay up to date with progress. B JONES  
ALL BRANCHES

**M09.53** **Fundraising**

R Love advised the meeting that T Finn, from Collyer Finn, had offered half day meeting, at not charge, to discuss how the original fundraising campaign they had detailed could still be moved forward. He would be meeting Mr Finn on the coming Tuesday in York and would report back. R LOVE

Some of the money raised from the appeal had been specifically to develop the training and educational side of the Association's work and it was noted that a further expression of interest was to be submitted to the RDPE group in relation to this.

R LOVE

The suggestion was made that, once again, an advert should be placed in the Waller & Dyker to see if any members would be willing to take on the fundraising work. It was noted that this had already been tried twice to no avail.

**M09.54** International Dry Stone Walling Congress

R Love was pleased to report to the meeting that a Congress Co-ordinator had now been appointed. Six applicants had responded to the advertisement from which two candidates had been interviewed by the panel, consisting of John Atkinson, Nic Coombey and Richard Love. Catlin Bisknell was the successful candidate and she had started work at the beginning of November. Payment for this post has been budgeted for from DSWA funds in order that an appointment could be made ahead of any grant funding being received. As mentioned earlier in the meeting, a grant of £19,500 has been awarded from the Cumbria Fells and Dales RDPE Group towards conference costs, which was excellent news. Delegate attendance fees should cover most of the remaining costs. An update on work to date was tabled at the meeting. The call for papers and initial details on the conference were due to be issued in the coming week and copies would be included with the minutes. This information would also be placed on the website.

A SHAW

Some concerns were raised about the news that the University of Cumbria Ambleside campus was to close next year. Assurances had been given by staff that conferences booked up to the end of September 2010 would be honoured. However, it was noted that a letter had been sent to the Vice Chancellor of the University seeking his written confirmation that this was the case.

A brief discussion took place about the congress and it was pointed out that members should be encouraged to attend. At past events there has been an interesting mixture of topics covered in the presentations and there is also chance to learn about potential walling opportunities in other countries. There is likely to be in the region of 30 presentations during the course of the congress. Guidelines have been produced for speakers and it was suggested that these should be made available ahead of presentations being selected. R Tufnell agreed to forward a copy to the office.

R TUFNELL

**M09.55** Forward Strategy

A Devonport reported that there had not been much activity with the Membership Group recently but that matters would get moving again in the New Year.

**M09.56** Officer Group

The last meeting had taken place on 27 October and a copy of the minutes would be circulated with the Management Committee minutes. It was noted that A Devonport had represented the Association at the Certificate of Merit presentation that had taken place at the Yorkshire Sculpture Park.

**M09.57** Confirmation/appointment of Officer Group members

This group currently comprises the Chairman, Deputy Chairmen, Treasurer and two co-opted members. Vice Presidents are copied the agenda and papers for information but are not required to attend meetings unless they are dealing with specific issues, as is the case with B Jones. The two co-opted members at present are N Muir and J Wilson, both of whom would be happy to remain on the group for the coming year. It was noted that additional members could be co-opted at any time if necessary. The Committee agreed that the group membership should continue as it is.

R LOVE

**M09.58** Management Committee Co-ordinator Reports & Appointment of Replacement Co-ordinators

**M09.58a** Craft Skills Group: As minuted at the last meeting, P Webley had now stood down from the role of Craft Skills Co-ordinator. The role had been circulated to all eligible members and A Loudon had offered to take over the post, which was agreed by the Management Committee. B Noble had also been invited on to the sub-committee, which the Management Committee agreed to.

The changeover to the new QCF structure had now taken place although this does not affect the way in which tests are carried out. Copies of the updated CCS booklet were available at the meeting. N Muir raised a concern about the increase in costs for the tests, which had been approved at the previous Management Committee meeting. Although the increase reflected only the increase from Lantra Awards, he was concerned about the legality of passing on such an increase as well as the public benefit from such testing. It was agreed that the Craft Skills sub-committee would consider this matter further and report back. There were further concerns raised about the links made with the construction industry and the fact that the dry stone walling qualifications seemed not to be recognised by CITB.

CRAFT SKILLS  
GROUP

In response to a query, it was agreed to check the unit of credit value for the qualifications.

A SHAW

	At the last Craft Skills group meeting, a suggestion had been made to amend the probationary period for new Examiners, which at present is 12 individual tests. The recommendation was for the period to be altered to "a minimum of three test sessions, working with different Examiners and different stone." This should help provide a greater understanding of stone types, perhaps not usually familiar to Examiners. The Committee agreed to this amendment, which would apply to all new Examiners from 2010 onwards.	A SHAW
	The Craft Skills group also agreed to consider the suggestion of arranging "Masterclasses" for Examiners to learn a bout building with some of the lesser known stone types. To some extent this subject is now covered at the Standardisation course but further thought would be given to this idea.	CRAFT SKILLS GROUP
	Consideration needs to be given to the delivery of the Instructor Training courses and perhaps update some of the material used. In response to a request, copies of the course outlines would be sent out with the minutes. It is intended that both the Level 1 and Level 2 course would be run in 2010 although details had not yet been finalised.	CRAFT SKILLS GROUP R LOVE/ A SHAW
	The Examiner Standardisation course would revert to the usual two-yearly cycle and the next course would be held in 2011, provisionally on 8-10 April, subject to confirmation of accommodation.	A SHAW
	A query was raised about there being no specific marks for "Line, straightness or batter" at Initial level. It was noted that at this level the emphasis would be on sound and solid construction and that marks for the above would be awarded under the "Building and packing" section.	
M09.59b	<b>Grants:</b> Money from the RDPE/SRDP projects is now starting to filter through for dry stone walling work in England and Scotland. There were no details available for Wales.  The existing grant co-ordinators were happy to continue in post (B Jones, N Coombey & C Evans)	
M09.59c	<b>International:</b> There are a number of overseas students wishing to gain experience of dry stone walling work in the UK. It was suggested that there should be a standard structure to such visits, which at present are usually organised privately on a one to one basis. If anyone has experience of such ventures, please send details to A Brown-Jackson, who was happy to continue as the International Co-ordinator.	
M09.59d	<b>Pinnacle Awards:</b> Presentations for the two Certificates of Merit agreed at the last meeting have still to be finalised. A replacement co-ordinator is currently being sought as A Loudon advised he wished to step down although he would continue to oversee the awards until a replacement had been found. D Griffiths had expressed in this role, which was being pursued.	A LOUDON
M09.59e	<b>Ronnie Ball Award:</b> There had been no new applications. S Mitchell agreed to take over the role of co-ordinator from P Davies, who had previously expressed his wish to step down.	
M09.59f	<b>Branch of the Year:</b> At present a replacement for J Atkinson had not been found although there were one or two possible candidates, who had still to be contacted. It was hoped that Mr Atkinson would oversee the competition in 2010 and a replacement would be found as soon as possible. Branches were reminded that the <b>annual return should be sent to the office by 11 January.</b>	ALL BRANCHES
M09.60	<b><u>Members' Weekend</u></b>	
M09.60a	<b>Report from 2009:</b> The event hosted by South Wales branch had been a very successful one and a vote of thanks was recorded to branch members for organising the weekend, which was attended by 43 members, including Lord and Lady Cavendish.  In relation to the mining tour, if anyone has information about the dry stone walls that were constructed in the mines, B Jones would be interested to receive details. He felt it was an area of dry stone walling that should be more widely promoted.	ALL
M09.60b	<b>Suggestions for 2010:</b> Northumbria branch were currently looking into possibilities of the event being held in their area although were waiting to hear back from venues about costs. B Moorhead agreed to contact the office by the end of the week with further details.  It was noted that Lord Cavendish had also offered Holker Hall as a possible venue for the event, which was considered a very generous gesture.	B MOORHEAD
M09.61	<b><u>Hundred Club</u></b> The following draws were made: December            2% P Davies (91)                    1% G Houston (47) and A Walton (6)	

**M09.62**     **Any Other Business**

**M09.62a**

- The Committee was pleased to learn that Edd Smith, who had been awarded a bursary from The Prince's Foundation had now successfully gained his Advanced certificate.
- A Devonport informed the meeting of the sudden death of Chris Elliot from Bretton Moor Quarry, one of the DSWA's corporate members. A letter of condolence would be sent to his family. A SHAW
- Confirmation was given that approved minutes from the Management Committee meetings would be placed on the website, in a section headed "Governance" under the main welcome page. A SHAW
- Branch membership lists could be provided to branches at any time on request.
- Crooklands Training Ground: It was noted that, as a national site, attention should be given to ensuring the site is maintained in a tidy and safe way. Guidance notes are available for users of the site and these would be updated as necessary. A further suggestion was made for some type of shelter to be constructed on the site, which could be very exposed at times. This would be followed up. A SHAW
- A request for press cuttings was made by B Koo. There has been a drop in the number of people submitting press cuttings that mention dry stone walling. A similar request had been included in the winter Waller & Dyker.
- Mid-Lancs branch is organising a sponsored cycle ride to raise funds to help fund the walling competition at Trawden Show. Anyone interested in taking part or sponsoring others should contact T Norris for further details.
- Yorkshire Tea: A new system of collecting has been introduced for the DSWA. Small tokens will no longer be printed on boxes; instead bar codes should be collected. New collector cards have been produced and were available at the meeting.
- Details had been received from S Adcock regarding potential funding from the Countryside Commission for Wales, which would include producing a booklet to replace the bilingual leaflet on Clawdd walls. The Committee was supportive of the venture, which should be pursued by the North Wales branch.

**M09.63**     **Date of Next meeting**

The next meeting will take place on Saturday 6 March 2010 commencing at 10am at the Crooklands Hotel. Amendments to minutes/agenda items/papers should be sent to the office by 29 January at the latest.

**Please note that all meetings in 2010 will take place at the Crooklands Hotel.**

Signed .....*R Love*.....

Date .....*6 March 2010*.....

A Shaw /14 December 2009  
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